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25 August 1994

Mandela

David Beresford on the first hundred days

THE GUARDIAN
Wednesday August 17 1994

THE GREAT Constitutional Debate (Part 2) got under way this week in the Cape Town Parliament where Harold Macmillan made his "winds of change" speech 33 years ago. The tired rhetoric and the boredom on the faces of nearly 500 parliamentarians gathered in the great debating chamber suggested that less than a hurricane was blowing outside. But that was merely a pointer to the fact that the miracle continues quietly in South Africa.

One of the many, if more minor, misfortunes that Nelson Mandela has suffered over the years has been the tradition set by Roosevelt's New Deal in establishing 100 days as the mark against which a new administration is to be judged. Newspapers in South Africa and abroad are indulging in an orgy of analysis, much of it critical, as the ANC-dominated government reaches its 100th day tomorrow. Superficially, at least, the criticism appears well founded. If ever a society cried out for a New Deal it is South Africa, after decades of exploitation and discrimination against the majority population. Yet the grim statistics which have been trotted out for so long by anti-apartheid activists are still there to illustrate the hideous warp of its society.

A recent string of sometimes bloody strikes has been a reminder of the continued, massive, disparities between the incomes of the haves and have-nots (those who are fortunate enough not to belong to the 40 per cent of the population who do not even enjoy a formal income). A survey by a labour monitoring group was reported at the weekend to have found that South Africa's corporate executives are earning more than 40 times the wages of blue-collar workers and, in the face of sliding profits, persist in awarding themselves increases well over double the rate of inflation.

The continued dislocation of society is suggested by the maintenance of appalling levels of violence, with 50 murders a day reported. The resentment, perhaps hatred, of the forces of law and order — despite their transfer to ANC political command — is seemingly underlined by the killing of more than 150 police so far this year, 10 last week alone.

Bitter protests by educational groups underline the new government's failure to set right what many regard as the fundamental atrocity of the apartheid era, Bantu Education — the Verwoerdian attempt to cripple the intellectual capacity of blacks and make them fit only for the hewing of wood and the drawing of water. More than twice as much is still spent on the schooling of white children as against blacks under Mandela's rule.

The vehicle which was to have transformed South Africa, giving blacks their New Deal — the much-talked-about Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) — appears to have bogged down. There are real fears in the ANC leadership that they could see the year's end with little, if anything, spent on it.

Apparent confirmation of the failure, so far, of majority rule is expected to be provided by Mandela himself tomorrow, when the South African president is due to deliver a landmark speech announcing urgent initiatives to meet what is seen as a crisis of expectations.

It was the self-delusion of National Party governments in South Africa that their problems lay not with them but with poor public relations. There is more justification for President Mandela's slightly belated appreciation that, in politics, appearances mean a lot. Whether or not his speech tomorrow conveys the point, it is a lack of appreciation of what he and his government have achieved that lies behind the present appearance of failure. In Africa, as foreigners so often discover to their frustration, time is of limited importance. "Go slowly" is a traditional farewell to friends leaving on a journey, recognising that the real issue in life is whether, rather than when, they arrive at their destination. It is a perception which appears to underpin Mandela's philosophy of government.

The journey on which he has embarked is that of national reconciliation. And it is the extraordinary measure of the distance he has travelled that a country which seemed to many to be teetering on the brink of civil war is capable of producing the languid scenes to be discovered in Parliament on Monday, when the two Houses met in joint session to begin the lengthy and potentially divisive task of thrashing out a final constitution for the country.



AMIDST the polyglot jumble of black, brown and white faces, the saris of Indian, the suits of Afrikanerdom, the Mao jackets of Marxists, sat Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the man who threatened Zulu secession and now proudly heads, of all departments, the Ministry of Home Affairs. A few seats away was the familiar blaze of white hair of General Constand Viljoen, the "Rommel of Southern Africa" who was to have led Afrikaner secession. He has been so caught up in the reform drive that he has proposed ways of lopping further millions off the already savagely-reduced budget of his beloved Defence Force to help finance the RDP. ANC leaders are currently considering stepping aside to allow the general, who led such a vicious campaign against them during the war of apartheid, to take the chairmanship of the powerful Parliamentary Committee on Defence.

The mood of the country is so transformed, since those not-so-distant days when foreign governments were considering evacuation plans for their nationals in South Africa, that the Nationalist leader, F W de Klerk, has been fighting a crisis of expectations in his own party. Marooned in a no-man's-land between responsible participation in government and the opposition role as leader of the second strongest party, he has been stung by complaints of political somnambulism into promising that his team will adopt a more aggressively critical approach to his ANC coalition partners.

There is unquestionably much to criticise, even if there is also much that needs to be understood about the governance of the "new" South Africa. The Ministry of Education is being derided as the "crippled ministry", an unfortunate reference to the fact that its lacklustre performance is partly due to a stroke suffered by the minister, Sibusiso Bhengu, which has reduced him to working half-days.

Bureaucratic Luddites in the Afrikaner-dominated civil service might have been tackled more effectively. The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Dr Zola Skweyiya, did make a half-hearted attempt with a scheme by which ministerial "advisers" were imported from the private sector, but backed down when the civil service unions threatened court action.

Even implementation of the new (interim) constitution is proceeding at an agonisingly slow pace. The Constitutional Court, which is to give effect to the jewel-in-the-constitution — the chapter on fundamental rights — still has to be appointed. The nine provincial premiers have been complaining (with a vehemence which suggests the constitution may still prove more federal than generally appreciated) that they have not even been able to begin their 100 days, central govern-

ment having failed to transfer the necessary regional powers.

But the central complaint remains Mandela's failure to play Robin Hood. The criticism may have some justification but it fails to appreciate the delicate balancing act demanded of Mandela by the ramshackle economy he has inherited.

The famously easy life-style of South Africa's whites obscures the fact that, thanks to the economic distortions of apartheid, they have long been one of the more heavily taxed communities in the world. The lack of investor confidence is demonstrated not only by the massive

flight of capital over the years but by the frustrating inability of the new government to rid itself of the millstone represented by the two-tier currency system. Economic growth, at some 2.6 per cent, remains less than the rate of population growth. Inflation is dangerously buoyant at 7.5 per cent, with average wage settlements reportedly running at more than 12 per cent. Again as a result of the distortions of apartheid, labour is alarmingly uncompetitive compared to other industrialised nations, for which the country could pay dearly with the fall of tariff barriers under Gatt. Estimates that a 5 per cent "wealth" levy, imposed on those earning more than £10,000 a year in the last budget, would affect fewer than a million South Africans indicates the limits of the tax base.

For all the apparent administrative failures, there are signs of some welcome surprises. The minister in charge of the RDP, Jay Naidoo, a passionately committed ex-union leader, has been keeping a low profile but when to be seen he nurses an air of fierce determination which suggests that the programme could have a (hopefully beneficial) explosive effect when finally introduced.

The Communist Party chief, Joe Slovo, as Minister of Housing, is proving an inspired appointment. Abruptly firing his department's civil service chief within days of taking office and bringing in his own director-general, he is, by all accounts, putting in place a dynamic building programme which is likely to have a significant impact on the economy as well as the desperate housing shortage.

Minister of Defence Joe Modise — whose less than glorious reputation as commander of the ANC guerrilla army, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), held out little hope for his performance in government — is enjoying unexpected success. Although the Herculean task of integrating homeland and guerrilla armies into a unified defence force is proceeding slowly (about 8,000 MK veterans out of more than 23,000 have been inducted), he has introduced seven black generals, including a chief of staff, Lt Gen Siphiwe Nyanda, without as much as a public whimper from white commanders. The announcement by Modise's deputy, Communist Party stalwart Ronnie Kasrils, of a ban on the export of land mines from South Africa has provided one of those humanitarian gestures ANC sympathisers long to see from the newcomers to Pretoria.

The seemingly harmonious interaction between the likes of Kasrils and the men who used to boast they defended the world's bastion of anti-communism points to one of the most remarkable features of post-apartheid South Africa: the co-operative attitude of the *ancien régime* towards the new, which at times smacks of atonement. It is even manifest in policing, where Law and Order Minister Sydney Mufamadi's switch from a repressive to community approach is being pursued with apparent good faith by the infamous commanders of a notorious force.

IT IS also true of the one National Party politician other than deputy president De Klerk to hold a key position in the government of national unity — Finance Minister Derek Keys. ANC politicians, who regard Keys virtually as one of their own, reacted with genuine regret to his recently-announced retirement (for seemingly uncontroversial domestic reasons). A similar relationship appears to be developing with his designated successor, Chris Liebenberg, an Afrikaner banker who has forsworn any formal party allegiance.

It is a difficult path, on a tough continent, that Mandela and his government are treading — a journey on which they are likely to find themselves often caught between the proverbial rocks and hard places. Slovo is already having a taste of it, being forced into a corner where he may have to move against squatters, whose occupation of public land has already brought one of his construction schemes to a standstill. The prospect of Mandela's government sending in bulldozers to replicate those scenes which horrified the world during forced removals is chilling. Almost as chilling as the possibility that they might succumb to pressure to turn on the current in "the Snake" — the lethal electrified fence on the Mozambique border — to help stem the tide of immigrants pouring in in search of the South African dream.

But Mandela recounted, in an interview at the weekend, how he recently visited a congregation of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, the church of Verwoerd and Vorster, Strydom and Malan: "If I had gone there four years ago the security would have protected me against assault — against people who would want to kill me. This time they were there to protect me from being killed out of love."

That could be the true measure of Nelson Mandela's 100 days.

Mandela warns of shallow change

NELSON MANDELA

marked his first 100 days as South African president yesterday with a speech to parliament warning that the new-found spirit of national reconciliation would remain "shallow" if not accompanied by "thorough-going changes" in all areas of life. The yardstick that "we shall all be judged by is one and only one: and that is, are we, through our endeavours, creating the basis to better the lives of all South Africans?"

So far, Mr Mandela indicated, change had been most visible in the political arena. "We have at last a robust and vibrant democracy, with broad consensus on the most important national questions; we have forged an enduring national consensus; we have a government that has brought together bitter enemies into a constructive relationship."

Mr Mandela spelt out the

JOHN CARLIN in Cape Town

issues which required immediate attention: crime was first on his list, notably "the wanton killing of security force members" (160 policemen have been murdered this year) and increased drug trafficking. He promised "urgent, visible and effective measures to eradicate these problems".

On the economic front, funds would soon be forthcoming from the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the lynchpin of government policy, to finalise arrangements for a major clinic-building programme; for a primary school feeding programme in the poorer communities; for rebuilding townships, particularly in areas which have been prey to political violence; for new water and sanitation schemes; and for the restitu-

tion and distribution of land to some 40,000 people made homeless under apartheid.

Initiatives were necessary to promote foreign and domestic investment. This would require a "critical merger" of bodies representing labour, business and government. In a veiled criticism of the recent spate of strikes, he said that while workers had every right to engage in collective bargaining, "the new situation obliges all of us to take on board questions of increased investments".

Mr Mandela, who has been accused by ANC critics of molycoddling the white establishment, also said the government would move rapidly to make the civil service "truly representative of South African society".

In another response to demands from his own support-

ers, he signalled the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to supervise an amnesty for violators of human rights "on the principle of disclosure". The past should be overcome but not forgotten for otherwise it threatened "to live with us like a festering sore".

He also promised "the rapid dismantling of all the networks which kept members of the public under surveillance simply because they were opposed to the government of the day".

At the end of the speech, as if to reinforce Mr Mandela's faith in the new national consensus, Deputy President F W de Klerk and Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi joined in the applause which broke out from every corner of the chamber, including — in a significant break from the protocols of the past — the packed public gallery.



Deadly Opportunities

New Markets for South Africa's Arms Industry

MULTINATIONAL MONITOR MAY 1994

by Frank Smyth

THE INVOICE FOR THE WEAPONS is addressed to the attention of Major Cyprien Kayumba of the Rwanda army, with a note to contact Conrad Kuhn, telephone (012) 428-0871 in Pretoria in case of query. That phone is answered by a man with an Afrikaner accent who gives the short greeting: "Conrad Kuhn." But when asked if this is the same Kuhn who handled a \$5.9 million arms sale to Rwanda, Kuhn says no.

The sale included 10,000 hand grenades, 20,000 rifle grenades and 10,000 grenades for a hand-held multiple rocket launcher, as well as assorted 60mm mortars, munitions and automatic rifle ammunition. Reflecting merely one transaction, this October 19, 1992 invoice does not include at least 3,000 R-4 automatic rifles in use by Rwandan army troops, as well as a full portfolio of other small arms carried by Rwandan soldiers.

"They offered quality arms at a good price," said then-Rwandan Defense Minister James Gasana in June 1993, explaining why Rwanda began to buy arms from South Africa in contravention of the United Nations arms embargo against the apartheid state. Later in the year, Rwanda decided to standardize its 30,000-person army with South African military equipment, and continued to buy South African military equipment until April 1994, according to South African arms executive Feet Smith, when Rwanda exploded with ethnic and political violence.

On May 25, three weeks after Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa, the UN lifted its arms embargo; now, the new South Africa has the freedom to market its arms openly and aggressively for the first time.

On par with Israeli weapons, South African arms are among the most durable, reliable, accurate and sophisticated in the world. The R-4 automatic rifle, for example, was designed as a technological improvement over both the Soviet-designed Kalashnikov and the Israel-made Galil. "The modifications consist, in the main, of improvements in the strength of material and construction to better withstand the severe conditions of bush warfare," writes Jane's Information Group, the world's leading authority on arms.

Until recently, most of those operations were to keep the South African apartheid state in power. In 1977, South Africa created Armscor, its state-owned arms corporation, in anticipation of the imposition of a UN arms embargo. Similarly, in anticipation of the lifting of the embargo, South Africa created the Denel corporation out of Armscor in 1992. Armscor has since served as the government's defense procurement organization, while Denel has operated as a private manufacturing consortium. Now representing 60 percent of South Africa's arms industry, Denel has already become an aggressive exporter, averaging \$127.5 million in annual exports in the early 1990s, and increasing to \$222.2 million in 1993.

"We are sitting with an order book of \$500 million in military export orders," Johan Alberts, managing director for Denel, told Defense News in March 1994, two months before the lifting of the UN arms embargo. "Some of those orders stretch out to 2003, and we expect to double the amount of export orders by the late 1990s."

Where will these exports wind up? South Africa "looks at conflict or potential conflict areas to expand its market," said Armscor chief Tielman de Waal, two years ago at an industry exhibition. In addition to African regimes like Rwanda's that use South African weapons to repress their own citizens, South American, Middle Eastern and Far Eastern nations are among the recipients of South African arms.

Its arms industry will be one of the new South Africa's best earners of foreign exchange. The as-yet-unanswered question is what the Mandela government's policy will be on sales to human rights abusers. African National Congress spokesperson Madala Mthembu told Defense News, "The new government will be in full compliance with international standards governing exports of technologies and materials that would threaten world security." That policy would stop sales to states like Libya which are subject to an ongoing UN embargo, but would permit weapons exports to states like repressive Rwanda before its present crisis.

Building on existing technology

South Africa's production of generally superior weaponry is a direct result of its domestic history and resulting isolation in the world. "Our country has gone through a difficult period," said Denel's Alberts. "We had to learn how to develop and manufacture in a very efficient, isolated way. So I think potential customers will look at South Africa and realize they have a reliable supplier of technologically superior products that can deliver."

More so than any other producer, South Africa has demonstrated an ability to analyze existing weapons systems made by other states, and produce, not mere clones of the original, but modified and improved hardware in their place.

The Eland Light Armored Car, produced in the 1960s, was one such South African innovation. South Africa obtained a license from Panhard Corporation of France to produce a light armored car with 60mm mortars and 7 62mm machine guns. It was dubbed the Eland MK 1. By 1967, that model was replaced by the MK 2, which had a better running and more reliable engine. Its design was improved over five more generations until the MK 7, which was in a class of its own.

Many of South Africa's earlier weapons systems were developed in response to Soviet equipment used against the apartheid regime by Angolan troops. It began to develop the 127mm Valkiri Multiple Rocket Launcher System in 1977, for example, as a counter to the Soviet BM-21 122mm Multiple Rocket Launcher. Completed in 1981, the South African version is designed for use against broad targets, such as guerrilla camps. It is highly mobile and conducive to "shoot and scoot" operations, involving the quick firing of the launcher's rockets and a subsequent rapid retreat.

Frank Smyth, a freelance journalist and investigative consultant, is the author of Arming Rwanda by the Human Rights Watch/Arms Project based in New York.

Tactical mobility of "shoot and scoot" artillery is a quality that Armscor continued to develop in the 1980s with its 155mm G5 Howitzer long-range gun. Also developed in response to Soviet artillery used by Angolan forces, the G5 went through several generational modifications "to such a point that [it] bears little resemblance to the original," wrote Jane's.

Armscor, Denel and their dozens of subsidiaries continue to produce improved generations of weapons the same way in the 1990s, with Denel subsidiary Atlas Aviation, for example, remaking the Soviet-made Mi-8 Hip attack helicopter. In April 1994, Armscor executive André Buys told Defense News: "We can maintain and upgrade Soviet equipment, possibly in cooperation with Russia, and we are looking at this business."

But while the upgrading of Soviet designs is one of South Africa's oldest practices, the new South Africa's greatest strength is in new high-technology battlefield systems. Categories where it has a competitive edge include field artillery, base-bleed ammunition, laser-designated missiles, aircraft electronic warfare systems, tactical radios, anti-radiation bombs and battlefield mobility vehicles. South Africa's arms portfolio also consists of high-technology combat aircraft, including an improved design of French Mirage combat aircraft, as well as its own Rooivalk helicopter.

In addition to Atlas Aviation, subsidiaries of Denel include Kentron, specializing in electronics; Lyttleton Ingenieurswerke (LIW), which makes the G5 and G6 Howitzers and other conventional weapons; Mechchem Consultants, specializing in explosives and mine-clearing equipment; Naschem, making munitions, mines and detonics equipment; Aserma and Avitronic, making fragmentation and cluster bombs; Somchem, designing and producing propellants for infantry weapons, mortars, guns, artillery and rockets; Barcome Electronics, specializing in tactical electronics and navigation equipment; Reutech Radar Systems, producing air-defense and tracking radars; Grinaker Avitronics, another electronic warfare specialist; Grinel, making radio and computer communications equipment; TFM, making vehicles and cargo-hauling equipment; Sandock Austral, building wheeled combat vehicles; OMC Engineering, making repair and bridging vehicles, as well as dozer blades, mine roller and brush-bar kits for tanks; Aerotek, providing scientific aerodynamic support to other industries; Airconcor, making bomb fuses and retard systems; and several other subsidiaries.

South African industry executives are confident that they will be able to compete with world-class weapons makers in certain categories of weapons. "I cannot compete with [the U.S.-based] McDonnell Douglas," said Alberts from Denel, the parent firm for most of the subsidiaries listed above. "But I can compete for some of the products and some of the components they buy from someone else."

A supplier of choice

Almost everyone involved in the business of war is interested in South Africa's arms. "We've been invited to major international arms exhibitions in Dubai, Malaysia and now Singapore," said Alberts. "[But] we are not disclosing who our customers are. That is the prerogative of the client."

One of those clients was Rwanda, among the poorest nations on the planet. Rather than buy high-tech weapons, Rwanda's purchases were limited to mostly small arms; after machetes, automatic rifles and hand grenades have been the weapons of choice in Rwanda. For example, at the Christ Spirituality Center in Kigali, soldiers separated Rwandan priests from foreign ones, and then opened fire with automatic rifles, killing five diocesan priests, nine congregated women, three Jesuits and their cook. In Rukara in

northern Rwanda, journalists found about 500 corpses, most of them bloated, in a church. Maria-Jose Usaba, who survived by hiding behind the altar, said militiamen first surrounded the church, and then threw dozens of grenades inside it.

But wealthy states are even more interested in South African arms. "Last year, Armscor broke into the Gulf market with the sale of 78 G6 155mm self-propelled howitzers, made by Lyttleton Ingenieurswerke, to the United Arab Emirates," wrote Jane's in 1992. "Additional contracts are now being sought in Oman and Qatar." Today, Denel has replaced Armscor as the new face of South African arms exports. In March 1994, Denel Managing Director Alberts said, "We are having discussions within Europe the Middle East and in the Far East."

At a policy crossroads

Speaking at the South African Embassy in Washington, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said South Africa will implement a "responsible" policy concerning arms exports and human rights, but added that all states have legitimate defense concerns. President Mandela has yet to articulate a policy on arms exports. While Defense News reports that the policy will include parliamentary oversight, that has yet to be defined. Finally free from the stigma of its apartheid origins, South Africa's arms industry is forging ahead with an aggressive export campaign. No one expects Mandela to turn his back on what promises to become one of the new South Africa's best earners of foreign exchange. But few would expect, either, a man who has devoted his life to his country's struggle for justice, equality and human rights to turn his back on current and future victims of other abusive regimes.

He wouldn't necessarily need to. Small arms like rifles and grenades, rather than jet fighters and battleships, are among the weapons most frequently used in committing human rights abuses. And compared to expensive, high-technology weapons, small arms account for only a small part of South Africa's total exports. Rwanda's purchase of \$5.9 million in such arms, for example, made only a tiny addition to Denel's balance sheet. The new South Africa expects to make most of its export profits from the sale of high-technology weapons systems.

Already, South Africa has given a few encouraging signs about its future export policy. Its aggressive marketing of Mechchem Consultants' mine-clearing services is one. This includes the carrying out of minefield audits in post-conflict situations, directly needed in nations like Rwanda, the Sudan and Cambodia. Another encouraging sign is South Africa's announcement that it will terminate all landmine exports as of March 1994. Although it could be argued that this decision was motivated more by public-relations consciousness than principle, it demonstrates that the new South Africa's arms industry is concerned about its image and thus susceptible to political pressure. Certainly, its executives would not want international outcry over small sales to countries like Rwanda to impede its overall export policy.

It remains unclear whether Mandela will move to exclude arms sales of any kind to clearly abusive states, though he is surely aware of the connection between arms flows and abuses. "The humanitarian situation in Rwanda is grave: innocent women and children continue to be killed, thousands of wounded are without medical treatment, the country's infrastructures continue to be destroyed, a horrific war is raging in the hills, in the streets and in innocent people's homes," Mandela said in a recent statement along with other prominent African leaders. Unfortunately, however, he failed to note the role that his own country has played in the bloodletting. ■

The Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC) was established in 1983 by the Black Sash in response to the demand from rural black communities for assistance in resisting forced removals and incorporation into ban-tustans. It quickly became apparent that women were the most directly affected; yet they were almost always excluded from meetings or deliberations about strategy and struggle. Beyond crisis prevention, TRAC's organizers worked to build women's groups to articulate women's voices in community fora. Recent emphases include working for a just land reform policy and adequate development of rural areas.

TRAC The Rural Women's Movement, Holding the Knife on the Sharp Edge (Jan. 1994) Local level: Moutse

MOUTSE

Moutse is a collection of 43 villages just south of Groblersdal in the Northern Transvaal. The community has become politicised through bitter struggles during the late 1980's against incorporation into the homeland of KwaNdebele. The area remains strongly traditional, though traditional leaders participated actively in the political struggles. There is also a civic movement which co-exists (though conflicts do arise) with the traditional tribal authority.

TRAC started working in the area in 1986 in response to a call for assistance to prevent a forced incorporation of the community into KwaNdebele. There were no formal women's group in Moutse when MamLydia first worked with the community. MamLydia says she took a similar approach to organising as she had at Mogopa. The crisis that was confronting the community also made it imperative for the women to be organised and strong enough to support the resistance. The objective of organising was to help strengthen the resistance since women were often vulnerable to pressure from authorities and too fearful to play an active role in the struggles. TRAC also worked with the youth who were often at the forefront of the conflict. The youth expressed the need for support from their mothers when they were in hiding, to bring them food and bail them out of jail when arrested.

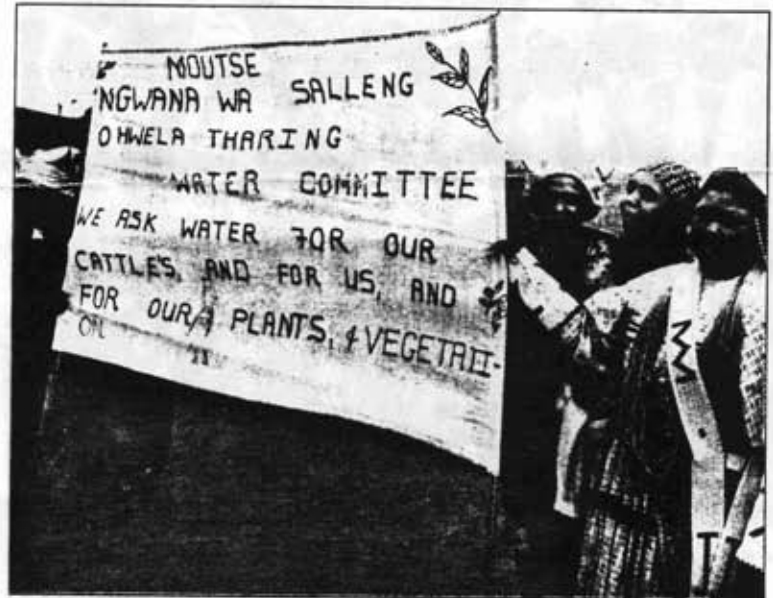
Since women were often present when the police and vigilantes attacked the community, they needed to be able to observe the actions with an eye for detail so that they could be used as witnesses in statements taken by lawyers. MamLydia helped them to gain confidence to peep out of their windows, looking for registration numbers of vehicles, recognising the kinds of vehicles, uniforms and guns used in the incidents.

Women's groups were formed in Ratanang, Mpeleng, Matlala and Naganeng during 1986 and 1987. The women collected money to bail their children out of jail and buy food to take to detainees. The groups were formed to give women the strength to resist. It was a politicised form of organisation but approached from the perspective of women as the mothers and wives of activists under attack. The groups had an agreement to help prevent the intimidation of women. Often police or vigilante groups would arrive at an activist's house when only the woman was present. She would be subjected to beating and interrogation to reveal the hiding places of her husbands or sons. Women in the neighbourhood who formed part of the women's group would rush to that unfortunate woman's house to give her support. With 5 or 10 shouting women, the intruders would usually give up and leave.

Since the struggle against incorporation was won, the focus of the women's groups has shifted to broader issues of living conditions.

MamLydia also linked the women to other women's organisations in the region in order to build their confidence. Moutse women participated in some Federation of Transvaal Women (Fedtraw) events which opened women's eyes and gave them a vision of what other women have achieved. The opportunity to meet prominent women "...made them feel very important, that they were being recognised," said MamLydia.

Though the area was traditional with strong belief in the authority of chiefs and elders, as with Mogopa, the crisis loosened the rigidity of the social system. When pitso (general community meetings) were called to discuss the political crisis, women were allowed to attend because they needed to be well briefed. The struggle forced the traditional leadership to include and rely on those sectors which are normally excluded from mainline community decision making — the youth and the women. This legacy has affected the present day attitudes. Although there is still re-



▲ The Moutse Water Committee demonstrating in front of magistrate's office

spect for the chief and old traditions, the civic is active in the community and the women believe they are entitled to some recognition. Women are still not on the *kgotla* but they attend pitso and will sometimes speak.

There has been an ongoing problem with water supply in Moutse for years. The drought in 1991-1992 made the situation worse. The women bear the brunt of the problem since they are the ones who are responsible for water collection.

Since I arrived here in 1970, there has been this problem of shortage of water, and no-one ever worried about it. We go quite a distance to fetch water with buckets (25 litres). When you get home you pour water into a water pitcher. Children use it to bath in the morning to get ready to go to school. After that you're left with little water, enough to make them tea. Our work for the whole day is to fetch water because you take time to and from where we fetch water.

[Margaret Mohlamonyane, Moutse, November 1990]

At a sub-regional meeting in August 1992, 9 women's groups met to discuss problems in the area. The water problem came out as the single most urgent problem. There are water committees in many of villages on which some of the women present were serving. But there has been a long process of discuss and negotiation with local officials, but consistently no results.

In group discussions on what to do, the women decided to hold a march to the magistrate's office to present their demands. The women decided to invite other organisations in the area to attend a planning meeting. They decided to request the assistance of the *Moshate* (chief's kraal) in getting permission for the march. The meeting place was made at the office of the tribal authority where the women were to brief the chief, *kgotla*, civic and youth on their plans. They hoped to get support from these sectors but still maintain the women's initiative. A planning committee for the march was elected comprising of 2 women from 6 different groups. They were to help publicise the march and get women there.

At the planning meeting there were many organisations represented — including the Teachers' Union, the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA), as well as the ANC Youth League and the civic. Women lead the discussion for the march plans.

At the planning meeting tasks were allocated to the different participating groups (for example, the chief was asked to get permission and negotiate for bus transport; the civic was asked to help produce the memorandum; TRAC was asked to organise publicity). The politicised context of the community is evident in the memorandum compiled which in-

was given, which the women considered a victory in itself.

In the follow up meeting there was a dispute about the quality of water, the issue of whether drivers of water trucks were selling water and finances. In order to overcome some of these disputes of fact, a system of monitoring was established. Groups of women were appointed to supervise the delivery points. These women were to stand at the appointed spots and check whether the trucks stopped, the water was clean, and to keep a note of the driver's name and truck's registration number. These tasks were done by members of the women's water planning committee for a 2 week period. Members of the civic were given responsibility to check where the water was being collected from to ensure the source was clean. After two weeks of this monitoring, the water delivery system was operating more efficiently and the process was suspended. The people still complained that the quantity and reach of the water supply programme was inadequate. But the problems of selling water, discriminating against certain areas and the purity of the water were dealt with.

At the sub-regional meeting of the Moutse Rural Women's Movement in July 1993, it was decided to formalise the water march planning committee. It was resolved to convert the planning committee to a permanent Co-ordinating Committee for the groups participating. The initial groups from 7 villages — Ntwane, Marapong, Stomp, Gabokwange, Mpeleng, Matlala Lekgwereleng, Naganeng — were joined by two more areas — Stoplite and Magakadimeng. The Co-ordinating Committee is comprised of 2 representatives from each village...

The main issue facing the Co-ordinating Committee is how to build its own capacity to respond to all the needs of the women they serve. They need to develop skills in fund-raising and financial management; motivation and organising skills to strengthen the groups and practical ways to help groups launch income-generating projects.

Rural Women's Movement



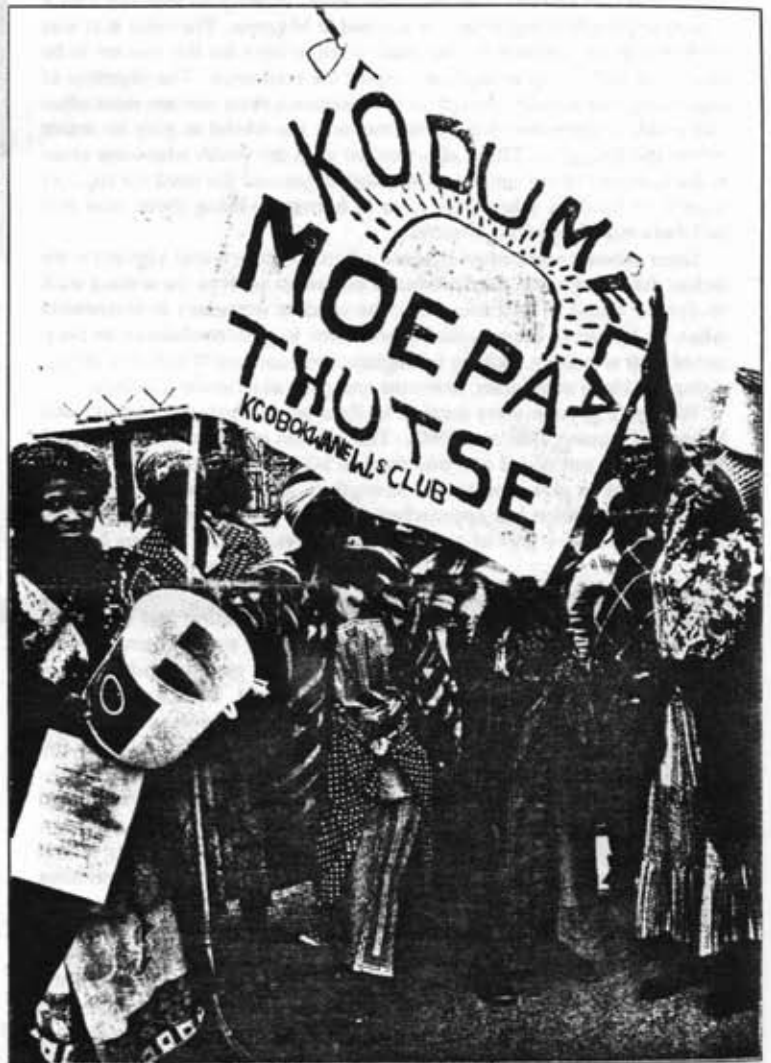
▲ Moutse water march — women wearing traditional dress to make the authorities take them seriously

cludes very far-reaching political demands for a new South Africa. The women asked the civic to compile the memorandum because they felt they lacked the skills and because they did not have a formal letterhead. The women later expressed dissatisfaction with the final product because it did not acknowledge the leading role of the women.

The women on the planning committee met to make plans for the march organisation. The women were very thorough in the planning. They appointed people to be at the venue early to welcome people. Certain women were appointed as first aid nurses and some to provide water for the marchers. The memorandum was distributed and posted in villages as an advertising leaflet. The women were to lead the march, and asked the youth to help with marshalling as they were uncertain how the police would respond. In the planning, certain issues on the memorandum were prioritised and different women given the task of speaking on topics. It was resolved by the women that they would not leave the magistrate's office until he had agreed upon a date for a meeting to discuss the demands.

Women decided to wear traditional dress for the march as they wanted to ensure that the authorities would take their march seriously. There had been so many marches organised by political organisations, that the women wanted to distinguish themselves. They decided that by wearing traditional dress, they would be very visibly identifiable as being women from this area. They also hoped that their march would look different and the leadership of the women would cause the officials pay attention to their problems.

Women had intended to hand in the memorandum, but on the day, other organisations demanded their right to be part of the delegation. There were about 3 000 people present, much fewer than expected because the buses that were supposed to transport people did not materialise. The other organisations had not been part of the women's strategy discussion, where they had resolved to hold a sit-in until a date for a follow-up meeting was given. Some male members of the delegation left the magistrate's office after the memorandum was handed over. The women stayed on and demanded a date be finalised before they would leave. This upset the men because they felt they had been excluded. The magistrate responded to the pressure and a meeting for one week later



▲ Moutse women organise — one of the many women's groups in the area

Back to the Land: South African Blacks Walk a Legal and Economic Maze

THE NEW YORK TIMES INTERNATIONAL FRIDAY, JULY 29, 1994

Undoing decades of expulsions under apartheid.

By BILL KELLER

Special to The New York Times

CLARKSON, South Africa — Stanford Mtselu does not measure the drapes, but there is no mistaking his proprietary air as he visits the dairy farms that green the rain-drenched coastal hills of the region called Tsitsikamma.

"How often do you milk each day?" Mr. Mtselu, a black retired stock clerk, asks one white dairyman as they admire the oats and rye that stretch beyond the farmer's picture window. "How's your electricity here?" he asks another. "Is it expensive?"

The questions are pertinent, even desperate, because Mr. Mtselu is a trustee for 600 families of the Mfengu tribe. They are the first South African blacks to win back land — this land, where the dun-colored Jerseys and the black-and-white Friesian cows now graze — that was taken from them and sold to white farmers under apartheid.

And now that their victory is sealed and celebrated, the Mfengu have discovered their troubles just beginning.

Trying to Build Allure

Restoring land to the displaced people of South Africa, Mr. Mtselu says, turns out to be surprisingly easy. The real problem is restoring the people to the land.

So many questions trouble Mr. Mtselu. Which of the scattered Mfengu will give up city jobs to resettle in the countryside? Who will build them houses? Which of their children will forgo their dreams of business and computer science to be among the first lonely blacks studying agriculture?

"They want to hear nothing of farming," sighed Mr. Mtselu, speaking of his own five grown children, and implicitly of all the young Mfengu, some of whom even argued for abandoning the land quest and taking a cash settlement.

Who, the elders ask, is really Mfengu, entitled by blood to share the fruits of restitution? Will the land remain as it is, lush dairy farms, or revert to its earlier subsistence crops of corn and sweet potatoes, cattle and sheep? How long will the white farmers be allowed to stay — and as what? Tenants? Foremen? Instructors?

The Claims Process

More than 90 displaced black communities have, like the Mfengu, claimed land from which they were uprooted in the cruel sorting of the races.

Derek Hanekon, President Nelson Mandela's Minister of Land Affairs, said he hopes most cases can be settled by negotiation, but a claims court is to be set up.

After this restitution is complete, there will still be individual rural and urban claims, and finally a more sweeping land redistribution aimed at ending the white monopoly on

farming and easing the congestion of the landless majority.

In all, Mr. Mandela's Government has promised to redistribute 30 percent of the whites' farmland, about 60 million acres, in five years, using the carrot of buyouts and the stick of taxes or expropriation.

A Reward From Victoria

The Mfengu, also known as the Fingoes, were one of several tribes driven south by the empire-building Zulus in the last century. They collaborated with the British in frontier wars against the Xhosa, and were rewarded by Queen Victoria with several tracts of land, including Tsitsikamma, where one Mfengu community lived in clusters of mud-brick huts and corrals.

In 1975 the state decreed that the Mfengu were really Xhosa, and that their traditional "homeland" was 300 miles away, in a Xhosa pseudostate called Ciskei. Selly Mntambo, now 63, remembers that the police came with a clamor of trucks a few hours before sunrise one morning, roused her and her nine children at gunpoint — her husband was away on a dam-building crew — and loaded them up, terrified children, humiliated grownups and heaps of furniture. By 1978, Tsitsikamma was empty.

In Ciskei, the barren place they were told was their birthright, Mfengu sickened and died. Families lived in plank houses so flimsy you could see into them, Mrs. Mntambo said, like wooden tomato boxes. It took her three years to get a vegetable garden going in the parched red soil. Retirees had to come all the way back to Tsitsikamma to collect their Government checks, a journey that cost a third of the pensions.

"It was a terrible place I never liked from that time until now," she said with a shudder.

Sale of the Ancestral Lands

In 1983 the state sold the land in Tsitsikamma at cut-rate prices to 19 young Afrikaner farmers with proven skills but little capital.

The farmers say they knew little of what had been done to the Mfengu, and accepted the official claim that the blacks had been compensated. Besides, it was not the kind of question one pursued in those days.

"The moral outlook was quite different," said Willie du Plessis, who was in high school 30 miles away when the Mfengu were trucked away. He now farms the land from which Mrs. Mntambo was evicted.

With low-interest state credit, the farmers bought their herds and stainless steel milk tanks, built their houses and settled in deep.

"We learned to love this ground," said Riaan van Schoor. "It grew into us. We expected to be buried on it."

The Road Back

Certainly, the whites did not expect to be expelled from it.

But soon after their removal, the Mfengu began a tireless campaign of petition and protest and publicity-seeking that accelerated into a high-profile crusade as the authority of apartheid waned.

Surprisingly, say lawyers for the tribe, the more conservative white farmers proved the most willing to strike a deal. Perhaps they were more alarmed by the prospect of black rule. Or perhaps, as the farmers say, they understood better than any city liberal what the land meant to the Mfengu.

"If you've got the feeling inside that certain things are precious to you, then it's easy for you to understand that it's precious to someone else," said Mr. van Schoor, a member of the right-wing Conservative Party.

In January, with the first universal elections threatening to weaken their hand, the farmers and the state made an offer. The state paid the farmers \$10 million for their 15,000 acres, and the land was returned to the Mfengu.

"The easy part has been to deliver final settlement," said Kobus Pienaar, a lawyer for the Mfengu. "The real work starts now."

Owning a farm may be easy; making it productive is not.

The settlement left the Mfengu with land but little money. They cannot afford to buy the herds and tractors and milking machines and feed.

They can mortgage the land, but unless they prove to be adept farmers they risk losing it again in the more conventional way, by foreclosure. They could sell some of the land, but they are determined to keep it intact and communally owned, to be used for the benefit of everyone.

The Mfengu are now dispersed by force and urban gravitation, some still living in their assigned Ciskei homeland, others in cities.

For the past 18 months Mrs. Mntambo has lived with a few dozen other elderly Mfengu here in Clarkson, an 1837 German mission station at the edge of their lost land. They came as a vanguard, hoping their presence would bring pressure on the white farmers to settle.

While she awaits a decision on the future, she lives in a corrugated metal shed, partitioned with cardboard walls to which she has glued a newspaper advertising supplement. Her dwelling is furnished with photographic tableaux of cheap dinette sets and living room suites.

Visions of Compromise

After much debate and the advice of several consultants, the Mfengu are leaning toward letting the white farmers stay.

The whites would lease the land and milk their cows. The Mfengu would use the rental income to build a modest new town to live in while some learn modern dairy farming.

This is not what most had envisioned, and a few of the more militant Mfengu still want to drive the white farmers away.

But the Mfengu trustees have another vision that frightens them even more: the meadows overgrown, the dams broken, the neat farms in collapse, their celebrated example turned to failure.

"It would be an absolute embarrassment," said Roger Matlock, a housing planner who is a consultant to the Mfengu. "The whites in South Africa would say: 'That's it, you just can't give farms over to black people. That's proof of it.'"



The New York Times

Elderly Mfengu wait in Clarkson for a decision on how they will take control of their land.

A state remade to the United Nations' design

Freed from civil strife, Mozambicans go to the polls in October. But the shape of their new government, **Victoria Brittain** explains, has already been largely determined

THE United Nations has undertaken in Mozambique the most ambitious political remodelling of a country ever, under the label of a peace-making mission and in the hope of rescuing its dismal record in Africa. It has fundamentally transformed the country's political forces in the past year, and is now pressing them to complete the task by forming a government of national unity on the model of South Africa's power-sharing deal.

The government, with its back to the wall, is being pressed to recognise that it not only lost the war, but is not trusted to win the peace.

Somehow a social explosion in the capital Maputo in response to exceedingly strained economic conditions, is being contained, but strikes in various sectors, plus a transport crisis, have hit Maputo and other towns this week. The new, ostentatious consumer society floats like a soap bubble. The situation is so volatile and the power vacuum so palpable that a violent attempt to take control could come from several quarters before, or more likely, after, elections in October.

The UN, traumatised by its failure in Angola's elections in 1992 and the continuing catastrophes caused by its misjudgments in Somalia and Rwanda, rethought its peace-making mission to Mozambique after 15 years of war, and sent a force of 7,000, including military and police, at a cost of about \$1 million a day. Its special representative, Aldo Ajello, has become the most powerful man in the country. On his office wall a photograph shows President Joaquim Chissano sitting with Alfonso Dhaklana, the Renamo leader, who Mr Ajello describes as "a politician to his fingertips", and who has in recent months taken on the allure of the third political figure in the country.

A million people died in Mozambique, killed in what the US deputy assistant secretary of state, Roy Stacey, called "one of the most brutal holocausts against ordinary human beings since World War Two". His description of Renamo's "systematic and brutal and war of terror against innocent civilians", and Robert Gersony's 1988 report for the state department of 100,000 civilian murders by Renamo, have been quietly shelved as out of tune with the new realities.

"People will not forgive any party which chooses to raise the past, or run an election

campaign on a negative image. It would create an impossible atmosphere here," Mr Ajello says.

Sixteen political parties have appeared for the October elections to be held under the auspices of the UN, and a handful of independent candidates are standing for the presidency, but there are only two serious contenders for power: Frelimo, which led the country to independence from Portugal by fighting a 10-year guerrilla war in which its first President, Eduardo Mondlane was killed by a letter bomb; and Renamo, created by the Rhodesian security services in the days of Ian Smith and later run from South Africa as a key part of its defence of apartheid.

On a wall in a provincial town the faded words "down with Ian Smith" are a reminder of days when people lived by the confident certainties of a just war. Then, in the late 1970s, Mozambique was a country where every day after work tens of thousands of people spent their evenings at free mass literacy classes and the vaccination record was one of the best in Africa.

Unspeakable horrors and degradation of humanity were the deliberate policies taught to Renamo by the Rhodesians and the South Africans as the way to control this largely rural society in transition from the backwardness of colonialism. Ears, noses, breasts were cut off, children were forced to kill their parents, mothers were forced to kill their children.

But there is a special factor which makes Mozambique's war, and thus its peace, unlike any other, even Cambodia's under the Khmer Rouge to which it has often been compared. Mr Dhaklana's army was almost entirely composed of kidnapped people. Thousands of these soldiers and their porters were children, some as young as eight, including little girls.

A recent Unicef report said these children were completely dependent on orders from the military, even for when to eat and sleep. Beatings were commonplace, complete obedience was demanded, they learned to identify utterly with Renamo military culture.

Nothing has been more damaging to Renamo's image than the existence, long denied, of these children. An American voluntary group is currently working on clearing them from the "tightly guarded bases within Renamo's strongest military zones" and reuniting them with families, but one Western

psychiatrist familiar with this highly charged issue expressed extreme scepticism about the rapidity with which they were being reintegrated.

Fernando, a young civil servant, described going over and over again to the film *Schindler's List*, looking for a clue to what made people collaborate with the Nazis. Only after some hours of talk to a psychiatrist did he reveal that close relations had recently returned after six years with Renamo, stayed a few days, and then gone back to a Renamo base area.

"There was no way I could ask about that past, what had they done, what had they seen, what did they feel... I know there is a syndrome in which people come to 'identify' with their torturers, but I never imagined having to cope with it in my own life."

Fernando's struggle with an imagination which portrays his closest relatives alternately as victims and perpetrators of horror is mirrored in every town and village of Mozambique. Ambivalence, confusion, memory, and forgetfulness come up in every conversation. Forgiveness does not.

The elections, a year later than envisaged in the peace agreement painfully hammered out in two years of negotiations in Rome, are the end-game in a struggle for power which, since 1975, has pitted a panoply of outside interests against Frelimo.

BESIDES the South African army, 600,000 or so Portuguese who fled to South Africa at independence have invested heavily in Renamo, planning to have their farms, ranches, and businesses back. US right-wingers in the circle of Major-General John Singlaub of the World Anti-Communist League, Richard Secord of Iran-contra fame, Sybil Cline of US Global Strategy Council, and businessmen dreaming of making Mozambique the Hong Kong of Africa, were an important part of the mythologising of Renamo as an alternative to a government originally defined as socialist. American fundamentalist protestant missionaries, and the Roman Catholic church have also been key backers of Renamo, and remain so.

The Kenyan government was part of the cover for South Africa, and military training of Renamo and diplomatic contacts were organised in Kenya. The former government of Malawi also served as a launching pad for some of the South Africans' biggest military operations into Mozambique.

An echo of this cold war past surfaced on US Independence Day last month when the US ambassador, Dennis Jett, made a thinly veiled attack on the government. "Voters will ask questions like the following: Who has helped the peace process by finishing the assembly



Population: 16 million
Income per capita: Lowest in the world
President: Joaquim Chissano since 1986 following death of Samora Machel.

of their troops and their demobilisation on time? Has stability been ensured by making the arrangements necessary to share power or is stability threatened by those who only seek to accumulate power?"

"The speech was not an accident, but a real message that the international community is waiting for this government of national unity," said Mr Ajello later. "We established the pressure of the international community to give Chissano something to balance against his hardliners."

In fact many Mozambicans, including Frelimo members, believe there is no longer any alternative to a government of national unity. "Though why are we having an election if we are going to share power anyway?" one said.

A year ago this would have been unthinkable. The entire peace process was stalled by Renamo's refusal to negotiate on the political future, although the ceasefire was holding. Mr Dhaklana then emerged from three months of intensive training seminars and recruitment in his headquarters in Maringue.

"I gave them a safety net — three months to retire from the process and prepare themselves, they came into it with absolutely no cadres and no capacity to organise the complex process of demobilisation, forming a new army, and moving to elections, which they had agreed in Rome," said Mr Ajello.

Renamo was completely dependent in Rome on American, South African and other foreign advisers to draw up their negotiating position, and many of them remain the power behind the scene.

With at least a modicum of trained Renamo personnel then in Maputo, Mr Ajello pushed Mr Dhaklana into serious negotiations, using the stick of "threatening to withdraw the five battalions of UN troops who were here to assure his safety", and the carrot of a UN trust fund of \$12 million given to Renamo to make itself into a political party.

"The trust fund has been a most valuable instrument: with it Dhaklana accepted giving up the military option and saw his

1975: Independence from Portugal after 10 year guerrilla war led by Frelimo. New government aids Zimbabwean guerrillas and imposes sanctions on breakaway white regime of Ian Smith.

1978: Rhodesian security creates Mozambique National Resistance, later called Renamo, to fight Frelimo and Zimbabwe nationalists.

1980: Zimbabwean independence under Robert Mugabe, Renamo headquarters moved to South Africa, destabilisation of Mozambique begins.

1984: Mozambique and South Africa sign non-aggression pact at Nkomati, ANC militants expelled from Mozambique.

1985: Gorongosa documents reveal continuing South African involvement with Renamo.

1990: New multi-party constitution approved. Renamo and Mozambique government begin peace negotiations in Rome.

1992: Rome agreement signed, both sides promise demobilisation and elections under UN supervision.

vital interest in Renamo's transformation into a political party," says Mr Ajello.

Mr Dhaklana now has a bullet-proof Mercedes and a beautiful house with a swimming pool overlooking the Indian Ocean.

The transition period has been marked by the progressive politicisation of the mechanics of the election, with Renamo given an effective veto in the electoral process. It has obtained, against the government's wishes, an electoral law which will almost certainly keep all the smaller political parties out of parliament, and a ban on the tens of thousands of Mozambicans abroad voting.

Even more serious has been the UN's use of the two commissions provided by the Rome accord to have both parties sitting with it to monitor the transition, bypass state structures, and further weaken the government's ability to function.

"You have Renamo people in the commissions being consulted by Onumoz [the peace-keeping operation] on all kinds of things they have not the slightest competence to deal with and therefore stall for as long as they can, when for 12 years donors and UN agencies have run an emergency operation in this country with the government — weak and corrupt though it is — which has worked," a western diplomat said.

The political impact of all this will become clear in the elections. Mozambicans, if they vote, will vote for peace.

With the Catholic church and several large NGOs actively campaigning for Renamo, and cloth, soap and money being distributed lavishly by its local representatives, no one will ever disentangle the voters' real motives. Frelimo has no money for such campaigning tools.

As one senior UN figure said: "The one thing this isn't is democracy and individual votes — in the rural areas people will vote as their community leaders tell them." And in Maputo a young, highly educated Mozambican man said: "Everyone in my family from my mother down will vote as I tell them to."