

# Features

## South Africa: The Death of Apartheid, Part One

by Dr. Manning Marable

We are witnessing the beginning of the death of apartheid in South Africa. The glue which has held the oppressive system of racial domination together for over forty one years has been the unity of the Afrikaner white minority, which has armed itself with the most sophisticated military weapons to ensure its survival. This month's elections in the white house of Parliament illustrate that unity of the white electorate has shattered, in the aftermath of worldwide pressure from economic divestment and political isolation. The ruling Nationalist Party, the architect of apartheid, suffered heavy losses to political rivals on the right and left.

The recent political crisis for white supremacy in Africa began with the forced resignation of former President P.W. Botha and the ascension to power of F.W. de Klerk as head of the Nationalists. De Klerk recognized that he had to cultivate a "liberal" image if apartheid had any prospect for regaining international support and investor confidence. The remaking of apartheid's "image" was unveiled at the Nationalists' party congress in late June. De Klerk called for "limited power sharing" between the nation's five million whites and the twenty eight million oppressed and disfranchised Africans. The Nationalists adopted a so called "ac-

tion plan," which called for the removal of criminal penalties for violating segregated housing laws, and expanded government support for nonwhite education. De Klerk was prepared to amputate the party's neo-Nazi, ultraracist right wing, which had formed the new Conservative Party, and to appeal to the more moderate sentiments of middle class whites in the Democratic Party.

Coinciding with de Klerk's policy shift was a visit by an all-white, 115 member delegation from South Africa to Lusaka, Zambia, for meetings with the outlawed leadership of the African National Congress, headed by imprisoned martyr Nelson Mandela and exiled president Oliver Tambo. The majority in the white delegation was clearly unsympathetic with many of the ANC's policies, including the use of armed struggle against the apartheid regime. Most also opposed the use of economic or military sanctions against the all-white government. But on the central issue at hand, the ultimate elimination of the apartheid policy of racial segregation, and the establishment of a multiracial democracy with full constitutional rights for people of color, the white delegation and the ANC had no disagreements. Optimistically, Tambo declared at the end of the negotiations: "Today we can truly say that the end of the apartheid system is in sight."

The media, long intimidated by the goons in the apartheid propaganda department, began to give some space to the antiracist opposition. Sections of the ANC's 1955 "Freedom Charter" are now circulated widely in the press. In late June, a statement by Nelson Mandela was published in the country's largest white daily newspaper.

Even in the area of social equality, the steel barriers of racism are slowly collapsing. This summer, a formerly whites-only swimming pool in Johannesburg was desegregated in a protest in which several liberal white members of the city council participated. Police were called in when neo-Nazi racists blocked the integrated group's entrance to the pool. However, it was discovered that Johannesburg's city council had never actually ratified the law reserving specific pools for whites only, and that technically, Blacks were within their legal rights to use the facility. Consequently, the police removed the racist protestors, allowing the integrated group to use the public pool. Ten years ago, this little episode would have been unimaginable. The Blacks in this demonstration would have been swiftly arrested, clubbed senseless, and perhaps shared a common fate with antiapartheid martyr Steven Biko.

Why has this political change occurred within South Africa? There are several fundamental reasons for the new flexibility coming from Pretoria. International pressure against the regime, firstly, has been building since the early 1980s, despite former President Reagan's notorious policy of "Constructive Engagement" with apartheid, which aligned the U.S. behind the domestic terrorism and brutality of the government against progressive forces. The divestment of several hundred U.S. and European firms from South Africa placed economic pressure on the government. Most of these foreign firms were capital-intensive with substantial numbers of white collar employees. Given the racial stratification of the South African labor force, divestment meant that the overwhelming number of employees whose jobs were in jeopardy were not Black, but white. When American multinationals began to pull out, white politicians in the Nationalist Party recognized that some sort of liberalization policy was necessary to keep the economy going.

Secondly, the progressive forces of racial reform resurfaced in the 1980s, with the development of the United Democratic Front in 1983, and the rapid expansion of a non-white, militant labor movement. Even after the apartheid regime initiated a draconian state of emer-

gency in 1986, these liberal social forces were not completely eradicated. Thousands of nonwhites began to disobey apartheid laws, and it became impossible for the government to arrest and imprison them all. Although South Africa still has the highest per capita prison population in the world—incidentally, the United States is second—the country's legal system could not accommodate millions of dissenters. By 1989, thousands of nonwhites began living in formerly whites-only neighborhoods, in direct violation of the law.

A third, and in many ways the most overlooked factor in South Africa's internal change has occurred because key elements of the white minority population no longer support apartheid. Significant sectors of the educated middle class, business executives and financial leaders have never been members of the Nationalist Party. Like liberal white politician Helen Suzman, they oppose the brutalities of apartheid as irrational, inefficient and antidemocratic. Clearly, they do not share the ANC's political commitment to social equality, which would require the economic redistribution of power and ownership in a post-apartheid state. But they also have no intention of sitting silently on a white, racist Titanic, as the ship of state slips into the waters. Key groups of moderate whites are

searching desperately for a strategy which will guarantee a sort of Zimbabwean solution—Black and Indian domination of the political system with a multiparty democracy, and continued white domination of the banks, industry, land and investment.

The harsh reality of "moderate apartheid" was also apparent during recent weeks, with the unjustified arrest of Nobel prize winner Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu in Cape Town, and the arrests and beatings of thousands of antiapartheid protestors from religious, labor, and educational groups. In Durban, over two hundred medical students were arrested by police in protests. In Cape Town and other cities, police used heavy whips, tear gas, rubber bullets and occasionally live ammunition to break up non-violent demonstrations.

While the recent steps toward liberation in race relations are encouraging, it would be a mistake to suggest that the system of apartheid will gradually disintegrate and will be replaced by a multiracial democracy without struggle. The essence of apartheid is a system of white privilege and nonwhite exploitation, generating a surplus which is equally distributed within the social order. Those who have materially benefited from apartheid will never willingly surrender their power and privileges.

## Part Two of Apartheid

Former President Ronald Reagan was the chief political ally and supporter of the racist, white minority regime of South Africa. His policy toward apartheid, dubbed "Constructive Engagement," meant in effect support for expanded U.S. investment inside South Africa, while saying virtually nothing critical of the regime's massive violations of human rights. George Bush is pursuing a more sophisticated strategy, which recognizes that apartheid will self-destruct within the next decade, and that civil relations have to be established with the Black-majority leadership which will emerge into power. Consequently this June, Bush met at the White House with Albertina Sisulu, co-president of the United Democratic Front, the country's largest anti-apartheid formation.

Simultaneously, however, both Bush and South African apartheid leader F.W. de Klerk are striving to alter the "image" of the regime as being more moderate. Members of the Bush administration state that de Klerk is "more willing" to negotiate with African leaders on measures to dismantle apartheid. Herman J. Cohen, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, states that de Klerk "ought to be given a chance... We'll wait and see what he does." For his part, de Klerk has endeavored to project a flexible stance toward some type of Black participation in a new future legislature.

Nevertheless, the bestial realities of apartheid have not changed. When de Klerk announced the new liberalization policies of the ruling Nationalist Party, he also added that the two central laws of apartheid—the Group Areas Act creating racially segregated districts, and the Population Registration Act, which tracks all people by "racial classification"—will never be overturned. The illusion of reform is fostered, but not the reality. For example, early this year when hundreds of political prisoners initiated a hunger strike, the regime released nearly one thousand under "restriction orders." They were "free" to live under house arrest with their families. Technically, the antiapartheid protestors had been released, yet their activities continued to be closely monitored by authorities and their telephones tapped.

What practical steps can be taken to accelerate the inevitable democratization of South Africa and the demise of apartheid? First, and foremost, is the continuing campaign for divestment. Last month, the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted to divest \$85 million in pension money in companies which still conduct business inside South Africa. The 5.3 million member denomination's action was not unexpected. Forty four of the 65 regional synods of the Evangelical Lutherans had previously demanded

the total divestment from apartheid related corporations, but they had not set firm deadlines. The new action set a two year timetable, and represented a sharp challenge to other religious groups which have not yet divested their holdings from South Africa. Religious organizations, churches and synagogues must be forced to confront this issue at every opportunity, calling into question the ethics of receiving profits from human misery and exploitation.

But perhaps the most important role we can play in accelerating the struggle for democracy inside South Africa is to ensure that this issue remains in the forefront of public policy debates inside the United States. Students have an obligation to demand academic courses and workshops on the issue of apartheid, and that their university regents or trustees divest holdings from firms which continue doing business in South Africa. We should encourage the selective use of nonviolent, civil disobedience, blocking the entrances of banks, corporations and religious institutions with apartheid investments. The Bush administration has absolutely no commitment to majority rule inside South Africa. By increasing our political pressure in this country, we can push the apartheid regime toward meaningful negotiations with the forces of progressive change.

## The Two Faces of Racism

As in South Africa, Blacks had to fear for their personal safety if they walked through certain all-white districts.

A typical reaction was that of Devin S. Standard, a Black executive, in the *New York Times*. Despite Standard's education, white business associates, white girlfriend and Republican Party affiliations, "I am intrigued by the fact that apparently there are gangs of white people just waiting to kill me. What have I done?" Standard asked for an entire generation of young Black men. "What have we African-Americans done that makes so many white people hate, fear and disdain us so much that they want to deprive us of our lives, liberty and pursuit of happiness? Do white people aspire to intern us all?"

Standard and millions of Black Americans under twenty five years of age have no personal memories of Jim Crow segregation, and were two young to participate in the Black Power movement. They have grown up in the era of Reaganism and the decline of the civil rights movement. Overt discrimination has given way to more subtle forms of racism. Because younger African-Americans believed the illusion of American democracy and equality for people of color, they were shocked and stunned by Hawkins' murder. They can't comprehend that Klan-style violence still exists today.

Vigilante violence, police brutality and other forms of brutality are the most obvious face of American racism. But far more pervasive and influential is the second face of discrimination, institutional racism. Systemic racism exists within political, economic and social institutions. In electoral politics, it is expressed in New York by the policies and rhetoric of Mayor Ed Koch, who more than any other individual was responsible for creating the climate which led to Hawkins' murder. Mayoral candidate David Dinkins correctly observed that "the Mayor sets the tide and tone with respect to race relations." Koch was more than willing to feed the flames of racial bigotry in order to secure his reelection to office.

Institutional racism means that young African Americans have fewer opportunities to pursue a college degree today than in the early 1970s. The system would rather incarcerate the poor and undereducated, than to provide the programs necessary for productive lives. For example, Black males total about 6 percent of the U.S. population. They represent only 3.5 percent of all college enrollments, but nearly 46 percent of the prison population.

Institutional racism within the economic system today means that the rhetoric of equal opportunity in the marketplace remains a hoax for

most people of color. Between 1973 and 1986, the average real earnings for Black males age 20 to 24 actually fell by 50 percent. When thousands of African American families struggle to save enough for home mortgages and loans to start small businesses, they are frequently denied funds from banks. According to a recent study commissioned by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, for instance, the percentage of loans made in predominantly Black communities is substantially lower than that for white neighborhoods. From 1982 to 1987, mortgages were issued on 6.9 percent of properties in white areas, but only 2.7 percent in areas which are virtually all Black. By denying credit to Blacks and other people of color in the central cities, this accelerates the process of gentrification, permitting thousands of middle class whites to seize minority-owned properties at bargain basement prices in the central cities.

The murder of Yusuf K. Hawkins highlights the terrible face of racial violence, which is the most visible manifestation of racism. But let us not forget that even if racist lynchings and shootings disappeared, the more fundamental reality of institutional racism within America's political economy and social system would still continue to challenge us.

## Dr. Wu Speaks at Headquarters Library

By DORIS BIHLMAYER

Dr. Thomas Wu, a Political Science professor here at FSU, was speaker for a seminar on Chinese political traditions. Focus was on the unequal distribution of resources in China that led to the uprising in Tiananmen Square last June. The following is an interview with Dr. Wu:

QUESTION: Dr. Wu, on what exactly did your talk focus?

DR. WU: "It focused on the unequal distribution of resources that caused the problem in Tiananmen Square. China was poor before they 'opened up' to the West in the 1970's. People were contented because they were all poor. There was a lack of incentive among the people because they were all paid the same wages and prices were set by the government. In the late 1970's, the Chinese government began to allow farmers to sell their own produce at a higher rate than what the government offered and also encouraged college students to open small businesses such as stores and restaurants. As a result, they were making very high wages. But the government workers were still being paid the same low wages as before, and this made many people very angry. To give an example, a person

with a computer science degree makes less than \$40 per month, a math professor makes about \$50 per month, while a person in business for himself can make three times as much. The students involved in the Tiananmen Square uprising were trying to make the government realize that they should open up to free enterprise for all.

Another problem that the students were addressing was the rampant corruption that exists in the Chinese system. Most officials must be bribed in order for a person to have something done. Even doctors must be given a 'gift' before they will examine or operate on a patient. There is also the problem of the chieftain of high officials getting preferential treatment in all areas. The students tried to bring attention to this in order to rid this corruption.

There were several reasons for the failure of the student uprising. One is that China has a paternalistic society. In a paternalistic society, the people are not equal to the leaders. The leadership is like a father, the people like children. The students proposed a system wherein they would be more equal to the leaders, and that is not possible in such a society. The students also did not have a plan, no program for implementation of their plans for

democracy. On the one hand, they still supported communism while, on the other hand, they wanted a Western form of democracy. Democracy and communism are not reconcilable. China still believes that political power comes out of the barrel of a gun, not from the people."

QUESTION: Has anything been done by the Chinese government to prevent such an uprising from occurring in the future?

DR. WU: "Several measures have been implemented by the Chinese government. They have reinstated their policy of indoctrination for first-year freshmen at all universities. Students are required to take in-depth studies in Marxism and Leninism. In the larger cities such as Peking and Beijing, students will be required to attend military training where indoctrination is stricter. The objective behind this is to keep the students in line by 'brainwashing' them. Freedoms to do business have also been curtailed. The consequence is that economic and democratic development will be pushed back. This is due to the fact that the Chinese government is attempting to regain control of society and consolidate their power. But development is definitely going to be curtailed."

## Where Are All The Pencil Sharpeners?

By DORIS BIHLMAYER

Like most students on campus, you have probably needed to sharpen a pencil at some point in time since you have been on this campus. If so, you know exactly how hard it is to find a sharpener. Well, I did just that. I set out on a trek for the elusive pencil sharpener.

It was a bright and sunny day when I began my search. My first stop was the Butler building. This is, by far, the building with the most pencil sharpeners, though they are far from being strategically placed. On the first floor there are no sharpeners; don't get caught here with a broken pencil. The second floor has two, one in room 236 and the other in room 237. They both work, but the one in 237 sharpens pencils lopsided. Oh well, I guess sharpened on one side is better than not at all. On to the third floor. Lo and behold, there are three on this floor. Rooms 307, 310, and 323 all have sharpeners, but the one in 323 has this problem of falling off the wall. Too much stress, I guess.

My next stop was across campus, the Lyons Science building. It was just too amazing to me to find that there are no pencil sharpeners in this building, especially considering that

math classes are held here. It was always my assumption that math was a lot easier to do in pencil, but I guess that was just my mistake. Granted, there were a lot of locked doors on the first floor, but, from what others have told me, there are no sharpeners in the science labs.

The Rosenthal building was my next stop, and there I found three pencil sharpeners. But they weren't three ordinary pencil sharpeners: the one in room 209 has no handle, the one in the art department is so wobbly that you can barely use it to sharpen a pencil, and the one in room 211 looks and sounds as though it is going to fall apart while you are using it. This one is especially comical because the middle actually separates itself from the sides when the handle is turned. It looks kind of like an accordion with no folds.

The Taylor Social Science building contains three pencil sharpeners, and they are locked in rooms 101, 103, and 203. Amazingly, they two on the first floor work and even sharpen a pencil on both sides. But the one in room 203 has a handle that doesn't turn. I guess you just have to go downstairs when your pencil breaks.

If you have any classes in Taylor Science Annex, Lilly Gym, or the Women's Gym, you'd better have your pencils sharpened before you go because there are no sharpeners in any of these buildings.

All of this raises some serious questions. If you do not have class in a room with a pencil sharpener, how can you use one if your pencil breaks during class? Can you just walk into a classroom that has a pencil sharpener and say something like "Excuse me, but I need to use the pencil sharpener", or must you wait until the end of class before sharpening your pencil, sacrificing the remainder of your notes (or test) just because your pencil lead broke? I suppose that there are only three simple solutions to the problem, seeing as getting more pencil sharpeners is about as likely a June snowfall in Fayetteville.

If you do use pencils, be sure to take plenty of extras to class (just be sure that they are pre-sharpened). Otherwise, bring both a pen and a pencil, or just get into the habit of using a pen. But if you do find yourself in need of the ominous, evasive pencil sharpener, now you'll know where to find them.