

## South African bantustans

Continued from page 8.

up is the result of a government decision to push separate development as far as it can, so that the nation's blacks will be fragmented and unable to claim any hold on the country's wealth.

Ever since the Nationalists came into power in 1948, South African blacks have objected to the bantustan policy. None of the bantustans is a viable economic unit; they contain no natural resources, no industry, and little arable land. In 1976, the nine bantustans together had an average annual per capita domestic product of R64: about \$6 a month. If you exclude white residents of the bantustans, the figure dropped to a monthly product worth \$5 per capita. The people who live on the bantustans survive on almost nothing—unless a member of their family has obtained a pass to work in South Africa, and can send wages back to them.

Poor islands in one of the world's richest countries, the bantustans were created as a dumping ground for unwanted laborers, a method of population control and a way of defusing black protest. South Africa's infamous pass laws give it the right to send any black back to the bantustan to which he or she has been assigned; the unemployed, the blacks who are too old or too young to work, and the politically active can be removed from white areas without appeal—sent back to starve, or to serve as a reserve of cheap labor for white South Africa.

### Tribal opportunists.

The men who have accepted independence for their bantustans are fairly unsavory characters, and are widely hated by South African blacks. Because the bantustans are supposed to be organized along tribal lines, the government appointed chiefs, claiming to follow traditional patterns. In fact, the tribal base is ridiculous in itself as the bantustan system, since over a third of South Africa's blacks live in urban areas, and many are about as connected to their tribes as an Italian-American is linked to the village his grandfather came from.

Chief Mangope, like Chief Kaiser Mantanzima in Transkei, is a ruthless opportunist; in both BophuthaTswana and Transkei, the opposition has been disbanded or jailed, and government officials are free to use their positions for personal gain. In both countries, too, about half the legislature is directly appointed by the chief, making a farce of the democratic process in the only parts of South Africa where blacks can vote for their national government.

A similar situation is developing in Venda, which is slated for independence early next year. Just after the pre-independence elections last month, Chief Patrick Mphahlele detained more than 50 members of the opposition, without charges or trials. The opposition had just gained 31 of the 42 seats, 42 other members are government-appointed chiefs, but apparently he felt that margin was too close for comfort.

Pretoria seems to have agreed. The Venda detainees were picked up by South African police, and held in South African cells. And throughout the uproar that followed the jailings, South African government officials continued to describe Mphahlele's move towards independence as "the kind of democratic, peaceful change that should serve as an example for the rest of black Africa."

### Holding out against independence.

One bantustan leader, KwaZulu's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, has stood firmly against independence, and since 1976, he has begun to suffer for it. He has said repeatedly that he will not sell his people's birthright—he will not let the Zulus cut themselves off from the rest of their country.

Until recently, Pretoria allowed Buthelezi to speak freely, pointing to him as an example of South Africa's free speech.

But for the last two years, it has put increasing pressure on him to accept the kind of independence given Transkei and BophuthaTswana. The subsidy that Pretoria gives Buthelezi, who governs the most populous of the bantustans, is substantially smaller than that given to any other bantustan leader; last year, KwaZulu's entire subsidy was barely three-fourths the amount it needs to run its school system, which is only one of the four departments the subsidy theoretically covers.

Buthelezi has been forced to levy additional taxes on his people; not surprisingly, they are beginning to grumble. There are indications that Buthelezi will be forced to accept independence or be thrown out by his own people—a situation that his more radical critics have predicted since he accepted the bantustan post.

Along with the push to speed up independence has come a redoubled effort by South Africa's regime to remove blacks living illegally in white areas. The well-publicized raids on Crossroads, a squatter township outside Capetown, have been repeated in other townships throughout South Africa, as policemen sweep through whole cities of corrugated iron and cardboard houses, looking for blacks who are not legally employed. Crossroads was remarkable only because its inhabitants organized resistance. (Incidentally, Crossroads also showed up the absurdity of the tribal basis of the bantustans: when Transkei refused to accept those Crossroads residents assigned to live there, the South African government simply reassigned them to Ciskei, the homeland for another, though related, tribe.)

### Ten children die each day.

Dawn "crime swoops," in which the police and army block off a black township and move through it checking passes, have also become commonplace in the last year; since 1976, it has become too dangerous for police to patrol the townships regularly, and the swoops are the only kind of police protection offered urban blacks. But the swoops only catch one kind of criminal, the pass offender. Where once blacks without the proper permit might, with luck, hope to avoid arrest, now they are almost inevitably faced with "endorsement" back to unemployment on the bantustans.

The pass raids and crime swoops seem to have been prompted by a combination of factors. In addition to increased black unrest over issues like the system of bantustan education, black unemployment has reached an all-time high. No official figures exist, but estimates range as high as 16 percent in Johannesburg to 40 percent in the bantustans. As a leader of Black Sash, an organization of liberal whites, said recently, "Black unemployment is being pushed out to the homelands," where the regime need not concern itself with unemployment relief or medical aid, where the only work is subsistence-level agriculture, and where any political unrest will not disturb the structure of apartheid.

Blacks who are sent back to the bantustans may spend years in resettlement camps set up by the South African government, waiting to be sent somewhere else. Conditions in Thornhill, in Ciskei, are probably typical. Last year, the only doctor working for the camp's 10,000 residents revealed that ten children a day were dying of malnutrition and complications. She was transferred. This year, a typhoid epidemic broke out at Thornhill; the medical facilities were enlarged to meet the emergency, and the camp now boasts a six-bed hospital and a full-time nurse.

Everyone from South Africans to the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations has long recognized that the policy of separate development has meant development for South Africa's whites and underdevelopment for its blacks. But as the regime speeds up the independence process, and as more passes are exchanged for passports, more of South Africa's blacks will find themselves in positions similar to that of BophuthaTswana's citizens: migrant workers in a foreign state, aliens who have no claim over their country's wealth or political process, laboring for white South Africa and living in poverty and powerlessness. ■

## CANADA

# Dudley Do-right done did wrong



By Doug Smith

WINNIPEG

**F**EW CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS are as well known as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Their boy scout hats and scarlet tunics have for years been a Canadian tourist symbol. For the past year, however, Canadians have been treated to a continuous revelation of criminal acts by the plainclothes security service of the force.

It started when a former Mountie, on trial for trying to blow up the home of a supermarket executive, admitted that the police had been involved in the burglary of the offices of *Agence Presse Libre du Quebec*, a leftist community news service. The officers who authorized the break-in were found guilty last summer but retained their positions with the RCMP. The Quebec provincial government set up a commission of inquiry into the activities of the police. In order to avoid embarrassment, the federal Liberal government used the courts to shut down the provincial inquiry and appointed its own inquiry headed by a former Liberal party official.

Despite the committee's composition, last winter saw a virtual flood of stories concerning the clandestine activities of the RCMP. While the police claim they have been combatting terrorism, most of their activities have been made against social democrat and non-violent left groups.

The most surprising of these activities is the burglary of the offices of the separatist *Parti Quebecois* (PQ) in 1973. The Mounties stole computer tapes containing the names of party members and financial information on the party. In 1976 the PQ became the provincial government in Quebec under Rene Levesque. When Levesque was told of the break-in, he said he had always known those "RCMP jerks" had been watching the party.

The RCMP said they were afraid the party had been infiltrated by extremists.

But at the hearings another reason for the break-in emerged. It seems the RCMP wanted to know which members of the federal civil service had separatist sympathies.

When in 1971 separatist theorist Pierre Vallieres urged people to support the PQ and to forego violent tactics, the RCMP sent out a fake communique denouncing Vallieres. The communique, which was supposed to have come from a separatist cell called "La Minerve," stressed the idea that "revolution by violence" is the only way to liberate "us from the capitalist hordes." A lawyer for the RCMP recently said he was trying to protect "the public's right not to know" when he prohibited discussion of whether or not senior officials of the RCMP had authorized the communiques.

The New Democratic Party was also the subject of intense scrutiny as well. In

1972 the Mounties infiltrated the government of British Columbia to see if Trotskyists held important positions in David Barrett's government. Federal NDP party leader Ed Broadbent has charged that the party office in Ottawa was broken into in 1972.

The Canadian Labour Congress has charged that the RCMP has infiltrated trade unions and passed information that they have obtained to corporations that the unions are dealing with. The Congress also charged the Mounties with engaging in disruptive tactics during strikes.

The Mounties have also been opening mail for the past 20 years in violation of the post office act. When this became public, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau commented that it did not bother him if the police had been reading his mail. He said if it was illegal for the police to open private mail, there was only one thing to be done—change the law.

This has generally been the government's attitude to the whole affair. At first they said the press break-in was an isolated affair. When it became apparent that this was anything but the case the government attitude has been that there is nothing wrong with what has been happening. Again and again cabinet ministers and senior police officers justify their actions by saying that the law may have been "technically broken" but higher interests were served.

The government justified its mail opening operation by saying that a Japanese Red Army terrorist had been arrested through information obtained in mail openings. It has since been determined that the man was arrested on the strength of information obtained through legal wiretaps, rather than through the mail. (Although the matter of the legality of wiretapping is another touchy issue.)

The Mounties have also conducted over 400 illegal entries or "fishing trips," as they call them, to see if they can get information on groups suspected of being a threat to the national security. They have also bugged student assembly rooms in various Canadian universities. The Mounties have even been accused of bugging the conversations of Warren Allmand, when he was the minister in charge of the force. Many force members felt that Allmand, who was instrumental in abolishing the death penalty in Canada, was a communist.

At first the Mountie affair made daily headlines for months as the opposition parties continually flung new charges and revelations at the Liberals, the most dramatic being the announcement by a Conservative MP that a bugging device had just been found in his office. But the Liberals have managed to play on the sympathies of a public that still holds the RCMP in high regard. The NDP are now soft-peddalling the issue for fear of being thought of as "pinkos."

Doug Smith is Prairie Bureau Chief for Canadian UMW Press.

## BRITAIN

## Labour government plays fool in secrets trial

By Steve Weissman

LONDON

**T**WO BRITISH JOURNALISTS and a former corporal in Army Signals Intelligence were convicted in mid-November of conducting an unauthorized interview in violation of the hard-hitting Official Secrets Act, and were then set free with an unexpectedly light slap on the wrist and a warning from the judge that Britain "will not tolerate defectors and whistle-blowers from our intelligence services."

This surprise ending rings down the curtain on nearly two years of partly closed-court proceedings, an earlier mistrial in September, and a spectacular 34-day trial, in which Britain's tight-lipped Labour government initially tried to nail the defendants with more serious Secrets Act charges normally used only against spies and carrying prison sentences of up to 14 years.

The dropping of the "spy charges" midway through the trial and the token sentences at the end are widely seen here as a stinging set-back for the intelligence services and the government, which has long promised to reform the present "blunderbuss" of an Official Secrets Act.

**Official overkill.**

In the trial, the 11-person jury took an unprecedented 68 hours to return verdicts of guilty on catch-all charges of illegal receipt of official information against the two journalists—free-lance scientific writer Duncan Campbell, 26, and reporter Crispin Aubrey, 32, of the London entertainment weekly *Time Out*. The verdict against ex-corporal John Berry, 34, came on direct instructions from Justice William Mars-Jones, who ruled that Berry had offered no defense to the air-tight charge of illegally communicating information gained during his military service in Signals Intelligence.

Normally regarded as a hard-boiled hanging judge, Mars-Jones then gave Berry a suspended 6-month sentence and the journalists conditional discharges. He also imposed costs of some 17,500 pounds (\$34,000), which will be paid by *Time Out* and the Aubrey-Berry-Campbell (ABC) Defense Committee. Mars-Jones had earlier in the trial persuaded Attorney General Sam Silkin to drop the "spy charges" as "oppressive" and "not apt."

The government's attempted overkill followed from last year's deportation of former CIA whistle-blower Philip Agee and the young American journalist Mark Hosenball. An investigative reporter at

*Time Out* and then the *London Evening Standard*, Hosenball had co-authored with Campbell an expose of the electronic eavesdropping of the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) and the British Signals Intelligence group (SIGINT), General Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). It was—and is—widely believed that this article was the key to Hosenball's still officially unexplained deportation. Early in February 1977 the possible connection provoked a crisis of conscience for the idealistic ex-corporal, John Berry. A former Signals Intelligence analyst with GCHQ and now a professional youth worker, Berry contacted the Agee-Hosenball Defense Committee and offered to throw whatever light he could on the background to the then-pending deportations.

**Big secret.**

The two journalists—Aubrey and Campbell—rushed to Berry's North London flat, and only minutes after they had completed a three-hour interview, a squad of plain-clothes police from Scotland Yard's Special Branch arrested the three men—apparently on information gleaned from mail surveillance and telephone tapping.

The police also seized Aubrey's tape-recording of the session, which became the key evidence against Berry and the journalists.

No one in the press or public knows for sure what information Berry revealed. The government prosecutors refused to play the tell-tale tape through in open court, and the Justice permitted them to play it *in camera* without press or public present.

But the big secret seems to be that there really weren't any secrets at all. A recognized expert on Signals Intelligence, the youthful Campbell testified that he already knew most of what Berry told him. And the defense lawyers introduced literally hundreds of pages of excerpts from semi-official military journals, from British and foreign newspapers and magazines and from the proceedings of the Canadian Parliament and the U.S. Senate investigations of the CIA and NSA—all to prove that the alleged SIGINT secrets on the tape were already anything but secret.

**The mysterious Colonel B.**

Super-secrecy backfired even worse when the government attempted to introduce secret witnesses, notably the former chief of Army Signals Intelligence, the now famous "Colonel B." Permitted by the Magistrate at the initial committal hearing last November to testify without giving his name in open court, Col. B appeared as the government's key witness, using his authority and the aura of secrecy to hammer home the case that Berry's information was secret and of potential danger to British security.

But Col. B gave away clues to his own identity, soon confirmed in the Signal Corps magazine *Wire*, and two radical papers—*Peace News* and *The Leveller*—openly challenged the government and the courts by publishing the name for all to see. The National Union of Journalists then repeated the sin in their monthly newspaper, followed by four Labour MPs in the House of Commons, and soon Col. Hugh A. Johnstone was the world's best-known secret witness.

The naming of Col. B. proved the turning point in the entire official secrets case. *Peace News*, the *Leveller*, and the journalists union were themselves prosecuted and convicted of contempt of court. But everyone was laughing so hard that the government and their star witness, now plain Col. Johnstone, found it difficult to convince even themselves that national security was really at stake.

The government then suffered a second set-back during the mistrial in September, when it was publicly revealed that the prosecution had been granted the unheard-of right to screen the prospective jurors "for loyalty." As it happened, three of the screened jurors had themselves been subject to the Official Secrets Act, including the highly active jury foreman, who was a former commando in Britain's Green Berets, the largely undercover Special Air Service.

Now, with the costly new trial completed and the ABC defendants set free, the government faces a new flare-up in the press and Parliament over why they agreed to prosecute the case, why they brought the initial "spy charges" and what they intend to do about the long-promised reform of the Official Secrets Act, especially as it applies to journalists.

But for all the fury in the coming weeks, no one here seriously expects the lame-duck Parliament to find the consensus needed to change the law. And many reformers believe it better not to try, since any new law would only replace the widely discredited "blunderbuss" with a streamlined new "Armalite." ■  
Steve Weissman is now a free-lance journalist in London.



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