GLOBALISM, SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSITION

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"Democracy and the market": the ideology of the new globalism. Now, for better or worse, this phrase also epitomises a great deal of the currently dominant political discourse in South Africa as that country prepares for its first non-racial election on April 27th–29th 1994. For better? Obviously, we must celebrate the resonance of a moment that will mark – if all goes well – the removal of the last vestiges of the most resolutely institutionalised racist system in the world and the entry into office of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC). But – for worse? – there does seem to be something all too anti-climatic about what is now likely to emerge from the current "transition to democracy" in South Africa, even assuming a reasonably clear passage to consolidation of a majority-elected government. Certainly, on the left (both inside that country and abroad), rather more was expected from the dramatic mobilisation of popular energies that, during the 1970s and 80s, came to stalemate the activities of the apartheid state and to pave the way for “negotiations”. Recall Magdoff and Sweezy's confident assertion, less than a decade ago, that South Africa's system of racial segregation and repression is a veritable paradigm of capitalist superexploitation. It has a white monopoly capitalist ruling class and an advanced black proletariat. It is so far the only country with a well developed, modern capitalist structure which is not only objectively ripe for revolution but has actually entered a stage of overt and seemingly irreversible struggle.

Or the formulation, of somewhat earlier vintage, of so astute an observer as Michael Burawoy who wrote that "by virtue of its history of struggles, its powerful state, its developed forces of production, the immiseration of its proletariat, the increasing insecurity of its white intermediate classes, and the merging of race and class, South Africa has become the arena of the prototypical Marxist revolution". How romantic such expectations now sound.

There are, of course, those who will be quick to say "I told you so", leftists of various persuasion who have been, all along, suspicious of the ANC's own particular brew of petty-bourgeois African nationalism and
quasi-Stalinist leftism. But more often than not such critics' points have been scored from abstract and rhetorical positions so far removed from the likelihood of being exposed to any "reality check" of their own as to be almost entirely unenlightening. Not that criticisms of the ANC are necessarily out of order. But if the real lessons of the current transition in South Africa are to be learned, any such criticisms cannot merely be extrapolated, with doubtful relevance, from some pristine set of revolutionary first principles. They must, instead, be grounded with reference to the real complexities of the situation - complexities dictated by the apparent imperatives of both global capitalism and the country's internal structure of power - that have challenged the popular movement there. More generally, the difficulties of the ANC in sustaining an on-going transformation of South Africa actually evoke dangers and dilemmas that confront the left the world over. What alone distinguishes South Africa, perhaps, is that certain of these "dangers and dilemmas" are etched there all the more vividly against the backdrop of the high hopes that until so recently prevailed.

The present essay can say, concretely, only a limited amount about the details of the current election-centred transition itself, a transition which is still very much in train as this is being written (in February, 1994) and whose immediate implications will, in any case, be much clearer to the reader by the time (after April) that this essay is finally published. Nor will it attempt a blow-by-blow account of the process of negotiations which, since Nelson Mandela's release from prison in February 1990, has prepared the ground for the forthcoming elections and set the stage for their immediate political aftermath. What it can seek to do, however, is to situate both these negotiations and the electoral process itself more firmly with reference to broader issues, in particular-those embedded in the couplet "democracy and the market", invoked above. What, we should ask, is "democracy" actually likely to mean in the present South African context? Will the current situation draw to the fore the more empowering connotations of democratic practice, or its less empowering ones? What is both possible and "realistic" in this respect? And what of "market forces", world-wide and local, the centrality of which is now so crucial a premise in the ANC's thinking about the economy? How much space can be granted the free play of such market forces before the new government (or, more broadly, the popular movement itself) forfeits any real prospect of dealing with South Africa's vast social inequalities and pervasive discrepancies of economic power in a productive and "progressive" manner? And - a closely related query - what meaning, if any, can one hope to see attached to the notion of "socialism" in an emergent, post-apartheid South Africa?

To attempt to ground these difficult questions entirely adequately in South African realities would also stretch the limits of the present essay, of course. Perhaps it will be enough to demonstrate that such questions are
those that many South Africans continue to ask themselves as they reflect on the profoundly contradictory nature of the transition that is unfolding in their country. There is, in any case, a second dimension to our discussion that is of even more general relevance. It concerns the notion with which we began this essay: "the ideology of the new globalism". In keeping alive a debate about transformation in their country, those South Africans who are now doing so also find themselves forced to face down a particular "tyranny of concepts" – regarding "democracy", regarding "socialism" – quite specific to the current global conjuncture. In accompanying their efforts, therefore, we can also learn something about the challenges – conceptual, practical – that confront us all.

I. To Craft Democracy: Delimiting the Transition Agenda

We will return to the question of "socialism". Can we not at least hail, quite unequivocally, the coming of democracy to South Africa? It would be difficult not to answer in the affirmative – but there are issues to be dealt with nonetheless. Certainly the process that is drawing South Africa towards elections remains a fragile one. Moreover, there is some question as to what meaning can be attached to this process even if it should prove to be successful in its own terms. Here much will depend on what, more generally, we take "democracy" to mean. This is not an innocent undertaking: the fact is that no word in the political lexicon is so ideologically charged as "democracy" has become. To understand fully the import of the South African case we must unpack this concept, and also take note of the considerable struggle that now, in the post-Cold War world, centres on attempts to assert ownership of it. At the same time, the very complexities of what is happening in South Africa provide a privileged opportunity for exploring issues – about "democracy", about "socialism" – that are of crucial importance to the redefinition of the left's project more globally defined.

Of course "democracy" has been placed on the agenda not by theorists, but by peoples: in Eastern Europe, in Latin America, in the Far East, in Africa. What is only slightly less remarkable, however, is the speed with which liberal and right-of-centre intellectuals (especially in the United States) have seized upon this world-wide popular initiative, seeking not only to turn "democratization" into an academic growth industry (the new *Journal of Democracy* is an important site for this activity) but also to direct, even domesticate, the process – precisely by taming and tailoring the concept itself. What we are witnessing, in essence, is a recycling of "modernization theory", that earlier attempt to make the American political system – or, rather, an heroic abstraction of it – a model for the world. "In fact", it is stated, "liberal democracies today are widely regarded as 'the only truly and fully modern societies'". Startling, too, in
this respect is the fact that many once familiar figures from the netherworld of American political science have resurfaced astride the current "global resurgence of democracy" – Samuel Huntington for example, and, *mirabile dictu*, the likes of Almond and Verba. Take, for example, the deployment of the hoary old ideas of the latter by Larry Diamond, a more youthful but already quite ubiquitous theorist of "democracy's third wave":

Perhaps the basic tension in democracy is between conflict and consensus. Democracy implies dissent and division, but on the basis of consent and cohesion. It requires that the citizens assert themselves, but also that they accept the government's authority. *It demands that citizens care about politics, but not too much.* This is why Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, in their classic book *The Civic Culture*, call the democratic political culture "mixed". It balances the citizen's role as participant (as agent of political competition and conflict) with his or her role as subject (obeyer of state authority) and as "parochial" member of family, social and community networks outside politics. *The subject role serves governability while the parochial role tempers political conflict by limiting the politicization of social life.* (emphasis added)

Much of the flavour of the current democratisation industry is captured in this passage. Central to the exercise is a reining in of the claims of democracy. But note that this self-conscious narrowing of the definition of global democratic possibility is consistent with emphases long current within mainstream (especially American) democratic theory. As Philip Green has argued extensively, such theorising has come to collapse the notion of democracy into that of "liberal democracy", the specific type of "democracy" familiar in the West. This system, defined by its theorists variously as "pluralism" and "polyarchy" and "democratic elitism" but labelled "pseudodemocracy" by Green, he describes as "representative government, ultimately accountable to 'the people' but not really under their control, combined with a fundamentally capitalist economy." As he adds, this kind of democracy is "preferable to most of the immediately available alternative ways of life of the contemporary nation-state. But it is not democracy; not really."

To this limited version of democracy Green does juxtapose another "hidden" or "popular" face of democracy. For it is "the popular masses, not elites, who set the democratic agenda":

We would do better, at least initially, to understand this hidden face of democracy as a series of moments: moments of popular insurgency and direct action, of unmediated politics, . . . We would do better to conceive of the real history of democracy as the history of popular struggle, in which the people learn, as Rosa Luxemburg put it, how to govern themselves. . . . To argue that only formal elections eventuate in representation is simply to argue by definition or to assume what has to be painstakingly proved. In this way the "democratic elitist" tends to make elections into virtually absolute trumps – the only legitimate method for ascertaining the will of the only definable cast of characters known as "the people". But then the "necessary condition" becomes the enemy of all attempts to eliminate injustices that are intrinsic to it; the good becomes the enemy of the better.'

"The great moments of the creative process", Green concludes, "are not parliamentary sittings or elections but strikes, demonstrations, marches,
occupations, even funerals" and he proceeds to specify some of the ways in which the "direct expression" of "demands for equal rights" might possibly burst through the constraints of polyarchy. Moreover, it is in just this spirit that the noted Tanzanian writer and activist Issa Shivji has himself distinguished "liberal democracy" (as "part of the ideology of domination") from "popular democracy" – seen to be "an ideology of resistance and struggle".8

What these writers are grasping for is a definition of democracy geared to facilitating and/or expressing a wide-spread mobilisation of the hitherto powerless against the structures of their socio-economic subordination. Of course, identifying the programmatic substance of such a project (socialism?) in the face of the kind of difficult-to-discipline global capitalism that is presently so dominant is no easy task; we will have to discuss this issue more directly below (section III). It is also the case that the practical, day-to-day modalities of such a politics are much easier to conceptualise in an insurrectionary phase (South Africa, 1984–6, for example9) than in a situation of more "normalized" politics – when finding ways of consolidating the practice of "popular democracy" against the pull of routinisation dictates a search for entry points for struggle within relatively stable institutions. Still, the fact that the dominant voices seeking to frame the discourse about democracy in the current global conjuncture are not those of the Greens and the Shivjis does help render such a search that much more difficult to imagine. As a result, "what is missing" (in Anderson's pungent epitomisation of contemporary democratic thought) "is any conception of the state as a structure of collective self-expression deeper than the electoral systems of today. Democracy is indeed now more widespread than ever before. But it is also thinner – as if the more universally available it becomes, the less active meaning it retains."

It will come as no surprise then that the bulk of the current literature on "the transition to democracy" is very far from allowing any notion of "popular democracy" to cast the claims for democracy in the Third World expansively. In fact this literature seeks, by and large, to define the terms of any such transition ever more narrowly. A classic instance is the much cited work of Giuseppe Di Palma in which he emphasises the importance to the "crafting" of democracies – defined as the "setting up [of] government in diversity as a way of defusing conflict" – of accepting certain stem limitations upon such efforts. As he argues, "one factor that reconciles to democracy reluctant political actors tied to the previous regime is that in the inaugural phase coexistence usually takes precedence over any radical social and economic programs".

Such precedence [Di Palma continues] stems from understanding the limits of democratic (and other politics) as natural harbingers of material progress. It stems as well from a fuller appreciation that wilfully using democracy as a Jacobin tool of progress not only is ingenuous but may also raise intolerable political risks; namely, authoritarian backlashes and, in anticipation, escalation into a virtuous "guided" democracy. Past democracies – the
most instructive example from the 1930s being the second Spanish republic – have foundered on such Jacobin instincts. By giving reform precedence over coexistence and making support for reform the test of legitimacy, they have unintentionally fulfilled a prophecy: the losers would be unwilling to reconcile themselves to a nascent democracy. The example looms large among political practitioners in Europe and Latin America. Indeed, the importance of coexistence has not gone unnoticed, despite its significant policy sacrifices, by those who still sympathise ideally with a more Jacobin democracy.

There is some bluff "good sense" in this, of course. A preoccupation with the way in which a would-be democratic society develops norms of tolerance and due process is not an irrelevant one. Yet how easy it is for such an approach to emphasise this issue at the expense of any real concern about socio-economic outcomes, how easy for it to underwrite, conservatively, a tendency to "blame the (wilfully unrealistic) victims" rather than their oppressors for any transitions that fail. Di Palma, for example, is quick to identify "mobilisational models for the Third World" based on dependencia paradigms and undue popular suspicion regarding the role played by the "advanced industrial democracies" in the "global economic order" as representing a particularly clear danger to "democratic crafting". Not surprising, then, his comfortable conclusion that, currently, "democracy's disengagement from the idea of social progress [is] a silver lining because it has actually given democracy more realistic, more sturdily conscious grounds for claiming superiority in the eyes of public opinion and political practitioners" (emphasis added)."

To be sure, there is amongst such theorists some concern about the fact that, in Larry Diamond's words, "democracy cannot endure if massive inequality and exclusion go unchallenged". Moreover, "getting reform on the agenda requires that the disadvantaged and excluded economic groups organize and mobilize politically." Nonetheless, Diamond warns, . . . if reform is to be adopted without provoking a crisis that might destroy democracy, the costs to privileged economic interests of overturning democracy must be kept greater than the costs of the reforms themselves. This requires realism and incrementalism on the part of those groups pressing for reform. It also requires sufficient overall effectiveness, stability and guarantees for capital on the part of the democratic regime so that privileged economic actors will have a lot to lose.12

Moreover, this concern for the sensibilities of capital, phrased here, commonsensically enough, in tactical terms, is merely one dimension of a much more fundamental conceptual slide – expressed in its most unabashed form in Diamond's influential work, but present in the bulk of this transition literature – from "democracy" through "liberal democracy" to (Diamond's own phrase) "liberal capitalist democracy". Fortunately, he writes, "the past four decades of Third World economic development have furnished invaluable lessons for distinguishing the policies that work from those that do not. Broadly speaking; market-oriented economies develop while state-socialist economies fall behind. Internationally open and competitive economies work; closed (or at least rigidly and persistently closed) economies do not. Economies grow when they foster savings, investment
and innovation and when they reward individual effort and initiative. Economies stagnate and regress when bloated, mercantilist, hyperinterventionist states build a structure of inflexible favouritisms for different groups, curtailing change, experimentation, competition, innovation and social mobility. This, then, is the loaded way in which Diamond and his colleagues lay the foundations of the case for their brand of "democracy". Small wonder, then, that for Diamond the effort to create "a balanced [democratic] political culture — in which people care about politics but not too much" requires, "in Eastern Europe and much of the developing world, restraining the partisan battle [by] deflating the state and invigorating the private economy"! And beyond that — once again, at the conclusion of his text, we have the invocation of polyarchy and of "democratic elitism" — there lies the crucial role of "political elites" and of the pacts they create amongst themselves: “[E]lite actions, choices and postures can have a formative impact in shaping the way their followers approach political discourse and conflict. Opposing party leaders must take a lead in crafting understandings and working relationships that bridge historic differences, restrain expectations and establish longer, more realistic time horizons for their agendas. . . . [C]ompeting party elites must set an accommodating and civil tone for political life.”

We do well to be on our intellectual guard, then, as regards the "global resurgence" of democratic theory. Much of it carries a very conservative political charge. But it is not just conservatives who introduce narrowing perspectives into their vision of what a transition to democracy must imply in most contemporary settings. Take the analysis by Adam Przeworski of those transitions that involve the "extrication" (his term) of democracy from authoritarian regimes in which "political forces that control the apparatus of repression, most often the armed forces" remain strongly positioned. Under such circumstances, he argues, protagonists will agree (if it proves possible for them to agree at all) "to terminate conflicts over institutions because they fear that a continuation of conflict may lead to a civil war that will be both collectively and individually threatening. The pressure to stabilize the situation is tremendous, since governance must somehow continue. Chaos is the worst alternative for all" (emphasis added).15

This does suggest a limiting condition certainly and, since it is one that will prove most germane to the discussion of the current transition in South Africa, we will have to return to it. But there is more to Przeworski’s argument. He seeks to remind his readers of other limitations on the transition by taking note, in terms that the Di Palmas and the Diamonds would be less inclined to use, of "the traditional dilemma of the Left": "that even a procedurally perfect democracy may remain an oligarchy: the rule of the rich over the poor. As historical experience demonstrates, democracy is compatible with misery and inequality in the social realm and
with oppression in factories, schools, prisons, and families." As for the Right its "traditional dilemma" has been "that democracy may turn out to be the rule of the many who are poor over the few rich"! Small wonder, he continues, that, in seeking to reconcile such polar opposites, "democracy has been historically a fragile form of organizing political conflicts".

The implication? "[A] stable democracy requires that governments be strong enough to govern effectively but weak enough not to be able to govern against important interests. . . . [D]emocratic institutions must remain within narrow limits to be successful." Under such circumstances, Przeworski concludes, the best case scenario for the transition is one in which "Reformers" within the erstwhile power structure distance themselves from their own "Hardliners" and agree to negotiate a form of democratic outcome with "Moderates" within the democratic camp – those who, in turn, are prepared to distance themselves from the "Radicals" who occupy a position further over on the ideological spectrum. A Left bending over backwards to avoid chaos; a Left propitiating the powers-that-be; a Left that is nothing if not "prudent": such, then, is the shrunken vision of the transition to democracy that the realism of the epoch, advanced by both Right and Left, would seek to fashion for us.

II. Negotiations, "Elite-Patting", Democracy: The South African Case

In many respects the current transition to democracy in South Africa would seem to fit, quite neatly, Przeworski's model. As Joe Slovo – senior ANC and South African Communist Party leader and an active player, both as participant and theorist, in the negotiations process that has unfolded in South Africa since Mandela's release – put the point in a celebrated 1992 intervention:

The starting point for developing a framework within which to approach some larger questions in the negotiating process is to answer the question: why are we negotiating? We are negotiating because towards the end of the 80s we concluded that, as a result of its escalating crisis, the apartheid power bloc was no longer able to continue ruling in the old way and was genuinely seeking some break with the past. At the same time, we were clearly not dealing with a defeated enemy and an early revolutionary seizure of power by the liberation movement could not be realistically posed. This conjuncture of the balance of forces (which continues to reflect current reality) provided a classic scenario which placed the possibility of negotiations on the agenda. And we correctly initiated the whole process in which the ANC was accepted as the major negotiating adversary.

"But what," Slovo then asks, "could we expect to achieve in the light of the balance of forces and the historical truism that no ruling class ever gives up all its power voluntarily? There was certainly never any prospect of forcing the regime's unconditional surrender across the table." Stating a similar point more prosaically, Steven Friedman summarises the negotiations moment as one in which "the balance of power and the potentially catastrophic effects of a descent into civil war dictate that negotiated transition rather than revolutionary transformation is the order of the day
– and that a settlement... requires significant compromises to allay the concerns of the white elite”.

Has the very process of negotiations witnessed a taming of the impulse towards genuine democratic empowerment in South Africa, as "Moderates" within the popular movement have had to rein in the "Radicals" in the name of realism? Clearly, if this were to prove to be the case it would be a particularly sorry outcome – especially so in light of the process that actually brought South Africa to the brink of its present "transition to democracy" in the first place. For that process has been defined, over the past two decades, by a remarkable series of those "great moments of the creative democratic process" identified earlier by Green as being so important: "strikes, demonstrations, marches, occupations, even funerals." Without doubt, mass action – first stirring in Durban and Soweto in the 1970s, then peaking in the near insurrection of 1984–6, and, ultimately, reviving in the late 1980s in the very teeth of the government's imposition of draconian emergency regulations – has been the key factor forcing the apartheid government onto the path of "Reform". And it has continued to be an important ingredient of the negotiations round as well, massive popular demonstrations demanding more rapid advance towards a democratic outcome having punctuated the negotiations at various key points during the past four years.

This political process has also meant the creation in South Africa of an infrastructure of popularly-rooted groups and organisations quite beyond anything seen elsewhere in Africa. Perhaps the trade unions have been closest to centre-stage in this, but civic associations, youth groups, education-focussed bodies (the NECC, principally), women's organisations and the like have all been a part of it. It is true that, especially beyond the union sphere, one could easily overstate the actual efficacy in organisational terms of many of these initiatives as well as the degree of internal democracy that, in practice, they manifested. Nonetheless, the mounting of such initiatives – which came to interface actively with the ANC and also to take its leadership when appropriate – did represent a major political accomplishment. Moreover, the whole process has seemed to promise the possibility that a populace so organised would to be able to continue to advance its claims in the post-apartheid period – even, if necessary, against the claims of its own ostensible political vanguard. There also developed, alongside this kind of practical politics, an important theoretical practice, a mode of discourse that served, simultaneously, both to encapsulate and to reinforce the most positive attributes of South Africa's emergent "Mass Democratic Movement". Created as much by those directly engaged in the political process as by professional intellectuals, this discourse highlighted a quite radical notion of the importance of "civil society" to the on-going struggle in South Africa, both before and after any elections that might occur.
At the same time, to return to the formulations of Slovo with which we began this section, there has been a strong counterweight within the negotiations process to any such positive pressures as are coming from below. This counterweight lies in the threat posed by both the potential for "chaos" and the exercise of countervailing power by "important interests", and it has come to loom large in the eyes of ANC negotiators. Thus the hard Right, both white and black, undoubtedly has demanded attention, as it has threatened, by word and by increasingly evil deed, to undermine the viability of any possible transition to democracy. This continues to be true to the present moment, of course. As I write, today's newspaper finds Mandela accusing Gasha Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement—quite plausibly in light of all that has happened in recent years—of a massacre of 15 young ANC election workers in a Natal village. And, on my desk, a recent issue of Southscan highlights a "warning from the general staff of the SA Defence Force to President FW de Klerk about an extremely dangerous security situation in which the loyalty of a large number of officers could not be guaranteed".

Nor has De Klerk, the ANC's main interlocutor during the negotiations, been an innocent bystander to all of this. Opinions differ as to how to interpret the role he has played. Still, it seems safe to say that, throughout the negotiations' process, he has proven himself to be a "Reformer" of a very particular type. Moved by circumstances quite literally beyond his control to a level of concession—the release of Mandela, the unbanning of the ANC, the entry into negotiations—towards the democratic forces far beyond anything deemed acceptable by his predecessor P. W. Botha, he has nonetheless continued, deep into the negotiations' process, to try to have it both ways: appearing to offer a measure of reform sufficiently expansive to possibly coopt ANC "Moderates" into settling for a "liberal capitalist democracy", while also attempting, rather incompatibly, to safeguard certain essential features of white minority rule. No mere prisoner of his police and military (although these have proven to be potentially crucial wild-cards in the situation), De Klerk seemed himself to have sanctioned wide-ranging efforts seriously to weaken the ANC.

How are we to evaluate the compromises embraced by the ANC that such varied emanations of Right-wing intransigence have produced? It is too early to say definitively, of course, since many important constitutional details remain to be ironed out by the newly elected parliament—sitting, as it also will, as constitutional assembly. But should one have misgivings about the acceptance of a "Government of National Unity" principle that will lock the ANC—for five years (should it win the election)—into working through a cabinet compulsorily inclusive of its chief rivals? And have too many concessions already been made in the direction of regional decentralisation? Or in the direction of ensuring the continuity of the present civil service? Certainly the ANC is a very long way from "smashing
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the state". But Joe Slovo, in his recent overview of this process, has insisted that such concessions be measured against how very much more both “Reform” and “Hardline” forces were actually demanding from the ANC going into the process. And on this score he may well be right: perhaps historians will come to grant the ANC considerable credit for having managed to produce, out of such unforgiving conditions, even the relatively favourable constitutional results that they have.

But the main costs of negotiations may lie elsewhere, in any case—in the price exacted politically from the popular movement by the very nature of the process that has produced the new constitution. True, in Joe Slovo’s opinion, this price need not prove to have been very high: he presents negotiations as offering "the possibility of bringing about a radically transformed political framework . . . which will result in the liberation movement occupying significantly more favourable heights from which to advance" towards "real people's power". But has the politics of negotiations really provided so promising a stepping stone for the further mobilisation of continuing popular-democratic struggle? The fact is that there are already many within the ANC leadership who find themselves rather more comfortable with the kind of elite-pacting politics (polyarchy-in-the-making!) negotiations have encouraged than with any conception of "real people's power" and deep-cutting socio-economic transformation. And the kind of horse-trading politics that the GNU and other new structures will invite may merely reinforce such tendencies. Moreover, there is available within the ANC a discursive practice that could lend itself quite easily to a narrowing of the political agenda, a practice that, historically, has juxtaposed a "national-democratic" phase of struggle to any transformative/socialist one.

The pressures upon the ANC to identify "upwards" within the world-wide and local class systems are strong, in any case. That there should be those within the movement who will be inclined to so identify need not surprise us. After all, it is well known that some within the ANC-in-exile had all along harboured aspirations that were quite petty-bourgeois nationalist in character, and they have been joined by others of similar stripe upon return. Indeed, as the elections approach an accelerating bandwagon effect is drawing even more such elements to the ANC's colours. These are not actors who, if "democracy" is to be the name of the game, will be terribly sorry to see a liberal democracy substituted for a popular one." (And, of course, the same is true of the various international forces—the IMF and World Bank, the corporate sector and international aid community—that now crowd in upon the movement from all sides.)

Note, too, the irony that even some of the more progressive cadres within the leadership ranks of the ANC may find themselves lending support to such tendencies. After all, like all southern African liberation movements, the ANC had its own internal political practices moulded, at
least in part, by the hierarchical imperative of organising for military purposes and protecting security in quite a hostile environment—and this within an exile milieu that surrounded the movement on all sides with few models besides the authoritarian practices of both conventional nationalist regimes in the host African countries on the hand and the Stalinist regimes of their Eastern European backers on the other. Many cadres formed by this experience are, on their return, at least as likely to be drawn—even if "for the very best of reasons"—towards top-down, hierarchical models of change management in which the populace is directed, disciplined, "mobilized, as they are to the rather messier business of helping facilitate more direct and unmediated expressions of popular energies and class demands. There are, in short, lessons in democracy for the ANC to learn as well as for its opponents.

It is worth reminding ourselves, therefore, that some critical discussion has continued, alongside the negotiations, as to whether the ANC might not in fact have pushed harder—perhaps realising thereby a less compromised constitutional outcome while also consolidating a rather more militantly democratic politics. Indeed, such discussion has occurred even within the ANC itself, some expressing the fear that concessions made by the ANC do indeed threaten to gut the capacity of a post-apartheid government to sustain any serious attack upon the severe socio-economic inequalities that characterise South African society. Near the mid-way point of the negotiations, for example, senior ANC cadre Pallo Jordan responded to the movement's own "Strategic Perspective" document by suggesting that the ANC might have lost track of its broader goals of democratic transformation and begun to make the lowest common denominator of constitutional agreement an end in itself. Of course, there was a plausible, if predictable, response to this, the claim that Jordan ran the risk of substituting mere rhetoric for political realism—with Jeremy Cronin, SACP activist and one of the clearer thinkers in the camp of the democratic movement, writing in criticism of Jordan that, "to be sure, there are sometimes epic, all-or-nothing moments in politics. But when one is simply not in such a moment, then all-or-nothing tactics are liable to yield . . . nothing."

And yet things were not quite so straightforward as this suggests, either. After all, it was Cronin himself who raised, at about this same time, closely related questions regarding the dangers of a negotiations process in which "mass action" came to be viewed merely as a "tap" to be turned on and off at the ANC leadership's whim as short-term calculation of advantage at the bargaining table might dictate:

It is critical that in the present we coordinate our principal weapon—mass support—so that we bring it to bear effectively upon the constitutional negotiations process. But we must not confine or inhibit mass struggle to this purpose. Instead we need to encourage, facilitate and indeed build the kind of fighting grassroots organizations that can lead and sustain a thousand and one local struggles against the numerous injustices our people
suffer... Democracy is self-empowerment of the people. Unless the broad masses are actively and continually engaged in struggle, we will achieve only the empty shell of a limited democracy.  

For Cronin, as for others, it is the fact that such powerful popular energies continue to bubble up from the base in South Africa that gives politics there its peculiarly vibrant potential. Yet the question remains: will the emerging "democratic practice" of the ANC actually permit these energies to become focussed in such a way as to drive forward a process of genuine social transformation? Time alone will tell, although it is sobering to note, in this respect, a comment made by another prominent SACP/ANC militant, Raymond Suttner, in reflecting on Joe Slovo's recent celebration of the outcome of the negotiations process:

JS [Joe Slovo] is absolutely right to underline the massive victory we have scored at the negotiations. He fails, however, to mention that the past three years have also seen the transformation of our organisations, particularly the ANC. This transformation could have a serious, long-term impact. In particular, the negotiations have had a dissolving effect on mass organisation, a tendency for our constituency to become spectators. If we conduct the coming election campaign in a narrow electoralist manner, the dissolution could be deepened. Whatever the victory, we should not underrate the strong sense of demoralisation in our organisations.

Need the drive for genuine democratic empowerment in South Africa find itself to be quite so compromised by the logic of negotiations and electoralism as this? And what, in any case, might such a drive actually mean in practice beyond these still relatively abstract invocations by Cronin and Suttner? It will be important, in this regard, to keep an eye on various concrete policy spheres in order to monitor whether assertions by the popular classes that promise both to redress their grievances and advance their long-term interests in structural change are to be facilitated by the ANC. A recent analysis by Henry Bernstein of developments linked to the agrarian question serves to give some sense of what a substantive politics of empowerment might actually begin to look like in that sector. Unfortunately, Bernstein's findings might also be considered to represent a particularly unsettling straw in the wind.

Thus Bernstein, after a careful analysis of the need for dramatic changes in the allocation of land and rural opportunity, suggests the need for grassroots mobilisation to make this possible. As he argues,

It is the political dynamic itself that provides a radical and potentially transformational content to any process of land and agrarian reform, rather than the scale of the immediate gains. The latter—how much land is redistributed in the foreseeable future, the conditions of redistribution and of the development of black farming—will be constrained by both the general balance of forces, and the time it will take for the rural masses to develop their political capacities and cohesiveness. However, the limits imposed by the balance of forces in any conjuncture of struggle are only known by pushing against those limits, and the developing capacity of popular social forces itself shifts the balance and extends the terrain of political possibility.

The perspective outlined here is not a fantasy of immediate and total ("revolutionary") transformation: it envisages individual (if not absolute) title to land and individual or
household farming, not socialist property or production. It is rather an assessment of the politics of potential "structural reform"... as opposed to what is otherwise on offer: a limited "deracialization" of land and farming designed by experts, delivered by the state, and driven by the logic of the market. This path excludes the agency of those whose daily struggles for existence bear the deepest imprint of apartheid.

As Bernstein concludes his article (its themes dovetailing in many ways with those of the present paper), the "energies, hopes and ideas" of this latter group are "the most important political resource for 'structural reform' in the countryside". "It is not too late", he says, "for the ANC to start to connect with them". Unfortunately the overall thrust of his analysis does not find him overly confident that such a prospect will be realised.

And yet we must be careful not to overstate the case. It will not be entirely easy for any who have come of political age within an ANC culture to ignore the fact that there is a massive population of genuinely deprived people in South Africa. There is also the fact, emphasised earlier, that this population itself has certain organisational and ideological resources for pressing its own claims. Note, for example, the moment late in the negotiations process when COSATU demonstrated to ensure provisions favourable to labour (regarding lock-out clauses and other issues) in the draft constitution: in Slovo's words, "there cannot be the slightest doubt that the COSATU intervention, and the massive COSATU led demonstration outside the World Trade Centre, at the beginning of November[1993], had a positive outcome on the negotiating process." Moreover, as Slovo continues, "the capacity for this kind of pressure will remain critical in the coming weeks, months and years".

Some would see another promising sign that the popular classes may indeed be empowering themselves in South Africa to lie in the burgeoning, as part of the on-going emancipation process, of forums for sectoral struggles – for, in effect, sectoral democratization – that have grown up alongside the more high profile negotiations' forum where national democratization has been on the agenda. Particularly important in this regard is the role played by the trade union movement. The alliance between the ANC and the country's largest trade union, COSATU, has been crucial to underwriting the politics of transition in South Africa. And recent efforts to consolidate a "Reconstruction Accord" between unions and the ANC represents a front where COSATU is seeking to extend that alliance in order to consolidate a workers' agenda for a post-election government. But a second front upon which the unions are attempting to flex their class muscle more independently has been, precisely, the tripartite (unions-business-government) venue of the National Economic Forum.

Although some critics have seen-participation in any such forum as representing a slide by the unions in the direction of cooption and corporatism, the unions themselves have felt this to be an important context within which they can assert themselves. True, there is evidence
that some ANC leaders are uneasy about this kind of autonomous realm of economic decision-making, however important it may have been in the past as one front of the popular challenge to the old system. Would they prefer, eventually, to draw national level decision-making back more firmly into the hands of the ministries they are about to inherit? Certainly activists in the education sector express parallel concerns. ANC cadres returning from exile are seen to have turned more easily to educational technicians (from SACHED, for example) than to the National Education Conference (born in the fires of mass struggle in the early to mid-1980s), for example. Here there is some suspicion that the nascent Education Forum – designed to facilitate, precisely, a sectoral democratisation of the education sphere – may already be losing pride of place amongst the ANC leadership to a more technocratic, government-centric definition of future education decision-making.

We will return to related themes in the next section of this paper, when we assess the possible programmatic content, in socio-economic terms, of policy-making by a future ANC government. Can we at least suggest here that the fate of the forums will be one significant index of the strength of impulses towards "popular democratization" in the new South Africa? In fact, unease regarding the ANC's possible long-term transformative intentions can run deep – the floating, at the National Union of Metalworkers' 1993 Congress, of the idea of launching a worker's party in order to keep progressive positions more firmly on South Africa's agenda offering a suggestive case in point in this respect. Nonetheless, most trade union efforts are still very much directed towards struggles within the ANC-led alliance itself in order to safeguard progressive policy initiatives at government level; COSATU's decision to place a number of its most prominent leaders on the ANC's electoral list offering a clear case in point of this."

Not that the unions are the only actors in this process. Indeed, there are even those on the Left who fear that the better organised workers could take on some of the trappings of a "labour aristocracy" in the next round in South Africa: unless, that is, they become ever more integrally linked to other South Africans – in the rural areas, in the townships, in the shanty-towns – as part of a much broader alliance of social forces. Hence the importance of Bernstein's preoccupations regarding the politics of the agrarian question. Hence the concern as to what kind of mobilisation for progressive, transformative purposes will prove possible in the townships (whether through the civic associations or their successors, whether within the fold of the ANC or outside it). And what of other assertions - on the gender front for example - that also bear democratic promise: the promise of helping to confirm the continued existence of a popular, potentially hegemonic, political project and of contributing to the further deepening of it?

There remains, in short, a strong popular pull - from the streets, the country-side, the shop-floor - on the ANC and this must still be considered
a real term in the South African political equation. Will the ANC come to
embrace warmly such pressures from below, even further shape them
towards progressive ends, as a way of beating off demands from the Right?
Perhaps some promise in this respect can be found in a recent statement by
Mandela when he warned workers gathered at the COSATU annual
congress to be "vigilant": "How many times", he asked, "has a labour
movement supported a liberation movement, only to find itself betrayed
on the day of liberation? There are many examples of this in Africa. If the
ANC does not deliver the goods you must do to it what you did to the
apartheid regime."

True, this might merely be an invitation to trade unions to act as one more pressure group within a pluralistic model of
democracy – even if the language used might seem to promise something
more. But does it at least suggest that it is too early to despair of the
possibility of a genuine struggle within the ANC over what form democrat-
isation will take in the new South Africa?

Perhaps, with any luck, such a struggle could then produce a more
promising outcome than Steven Friedman – one writer who has actually
sought to view South Africa through the optic of the orthodox transition
literature cited above – can readily envisage. In his article "South Africa's
Reluctant Transition" – published in the Journal of Democracy, no less –
Friedman has drawn centrally on a distinction of Benjamin Neuberger's:
one that juxtaposes "two strains within African nationalism – the 'liberal
democratic approach' which seeks pluralist democracy, and the 'national
approach', which seeks 'national self-determination', defined as a state in
which 'the citizens of the nation are ruled by kith and kin". For Friedman
the latter pole, pulling towards authoritarianism, is very much a part of the
ANC's political baggage. Nor is he entirely wrong; for this (and other)
reasons there are, as noted above, lessons in democracy for many in the
ANC to learn.

But what follows from this for Friedman? The very best that can possibly
happen is that "leaders... strike a compromise that is finely balanced and
sturdy enough to prevent destabilisation from both left and right and then
to maintain support for it through a series of severe trials". Friedman is too
well informed about the complexities of the South African case not also to
emphasise that "the solutions required may not lie within the realm of
possibility if divisions are as truly intractable as they seemed for much of
1992". (And continue to be, in some ways, in 1994!) But he does ignore
something else: not merely the difficulties but also the probable costs to
vast numbers of South Africans of only going so far as to establish a
conventional liberal democracy. Liberal democracy vs. authoritarianism,
full stop: these are, in effect, the only resting places on his spectrum. And
what of the inequalities that persist; must they merely be endured in the
name of prudence and realism? Friedman, like many other contemporary
students of the transition, does give us some plausible reasons to think that
this might be so. Nonetheless, the fact—canvassed in this essay—that there is another form of democratic empowerment that must be considered is something he merely defines out of the analysis.

III. Stigmatizing Socialism: The Market as “Common Sense”

Why is this foreshortening of democratic expectation happening, even in places like South Africa where something more liberating might have been expected? Self-evidently, it has something important to do with the renewed strength of the Right in the post-Cold War epoch. But it also has something to do with the state of the Left. Consider the question: towards what end would any alternative, more "popular", form of democracy actually need to be mobilized? The conventional answer would once have been unequivocal: towards "socialism". Now few people seem quite so sure.

True, it is difficult to avoid the power of Marx’s argument about democracy in On the Jewish Question, one that underscores the possible discrepancy between the appearance of formal political equality on the one hand and the reality of class inequality on the other. Recall Marx’s argument. For him, "political emancipation certainly represents a great progress... It is not, indeed, the final form of human emancipation, but it is the final form of human emancipation within the framework of the prevailing social order." Still, the freedom political emancipation embodies serves to reduce "man" (sic) to "abstract citizen", "infused with an unreal universality". In contrast, "human emancipation will only be complete when the real, individual man has absorbed himself into the abstract citizen; when as an individual man, in his everyday life, in his work, and in his relationships, he has become a species-being; and when he has recognized and organized his own powers as social powers so that he no longer separates this social power from himself as political power." The main effect of political revolution in the modern (capitalist) world is therefore quite paradoxical, in Marx’s view: it has merely helped to "abolish" (or, perhaps better put, to obscure) "the political character of civil society", "emancipating [that] civil society from politics and from even a semblance of a general content" while "dissolving" the social relations that characterize it (notably class relationships) into an apparent congeries of (abstract) "individuals". Marx came to see the overthrow of the particular system of class power that so deeply shaped civil society under capitalism as necessary to giving real, human substance to any more narrowly-defined political emancipation."

Of course, some on the Left have come to resist forging the link between democracy and socialism that would seem to follow from this analysis. Take, for example, the recent polemics of John Keane who actually sees the aspiration towards socialism as an impediment to realising progressive
outcomes. Thus, the demand for socialism, in its desire to "destroy the division between civil society and the state" (!), is "undemocratic", while "the demand for democracy is much more subversive because it calls into question all heteronomous forms of power"." In this way Keane also seeks to remind us — as do Laclau and Mouffe in making related claims for the centrality of a non-foundationalist "radical democracy" — of the danger of allowing any excessive emphasis on class struggle to silent consideration on the Left of other liberatory assertions (premissed on gender and racial grounds, for example).

Over-stated? Perhaps most readers of the Socialist Register will find the terms of Andrew Gamble's riposte to these remarks by Keane (as well as to Laclau and Mouffe) more congenial. Gamble associates himself with critics of these theorists who are "disturbed [at] how sweeping is their condemnation of classical Marxism, and how flimsy and rudderless is the radical democratic politics they are proposing". "In order to give it some coherence", Gamble asserts, "they still have to draw on the concept of socialism and the socialist tradition". And "a socialism . . . without a workers' movement, without class analysis and class politics would hardly be socialism at all . . . [and] would become just another variant of liberalism." To think otherwise, he implies, would cede far too much ground to those practitioners of capitalism who do know just how much their own class interests drive their undertakings and would like nothing better than to see the class struggle downgraded in importance.

There is also the simple fact that Marx's analysis of the logic of capitalism seems more relevant than ever in explaining the dynamics and depredations of capital's current global reach. As Perry Anderson argues, "intellectually, the culture of the Left is far from being demobilized by the collapse of Soviet communism, or the impasse of Western social democracy". After all, "the central case against capitalism today is the combination of ecological crisis and social polarization it is breeding", especially on the global plane, and "market forces", Anderson affirms, "contain no solution to these". And yet: things are not really quite that simple either. After all, the real drag on the Left's self-confidence regarding the claims of "socialism" is not primarily to be found in the kinds of considerations raised by Keane, Mouffe or Laclau. Doesn't it lie, much more fundamentally, in the fact that we are much less confident than in the past about the possibility of actually realizing, in practice, a socialist alternative to globally ascendant capitalism? Thus Anderson qualifies the remarks just cited with the sobering reflection that "the case against capitalism is strongest on the very plane where the reach of socialism is weakest — at the level of the world system as a whole. . . . [T]he future belongs to a set of forces that are overtaking the nation-state. So far they have been captured or driven by capital — as, in the past fifty years, internationalism has changed sides. So long as the Left fails to win back the initiative here, the current system will be secure."
Even more pertinently for present purposes, we can simply return to Przeworski's grimly "realistic" analysis regarding the necessary pull towards the Centre/Right in most, if not all, democratic transitions. For the fact is that this conclusion is framed for him by the simultaneous belief that there exists only very limited room for socio-economic manoeuvre in "Southern" settings: as he memorably states his point, "capitalism is irrational; socialism is unfeasible; in the real world people starve – the conclusions we have reached are not encouraging." "If socialism has long been the dream of those on the Left, many will see in Przeworski's stark formulation the very essence of their present-day nightmares. What, indeed, can the democracy of "popular struggle" possibly mean within the constricting circumstances dictated by an all too arbitrary but enormously powerful global capitalist system?"

It is cold comfort to realise that liberal democratic thinkers have themselves virtually no resources within their own chosen framework with which to theorise the implications for them of the power relations of the new global economy: their response is, by and large, simply to ignore the issue and get on with the further thinning out of their definition of democracy. The Left, of necessity, has had to take the question of global socio-economic structure more seriously as a constraint on their own hopes for meaningful democratisation – not least in the context of the South African transition. Must we lapse into Przeworskiian pessimism in this regard? Certainly, in the first instance, it must be acknowledged that there is absolutely nothing straightforward about developing a progressive economic policy, in South Africa or anywhere else for that matter, under current global circumstances. No-one but perhaps the more obtuse of "ultra-leftists" can any longer expect a revolutionary alternative to emerge full-blown or very quickly anywhere on the globe – even if South Africa, with its running start of mass mobilisation and popular contestation, did seem momentarily to be better positioned than most to keep the revolutionary flame alive. But has the momentum that might at least have sustained there a more subtle and apposite struggle for transformation also been lost?

It is perhaps too early to say so definitively, although there is good reason for concern. What, for example, are the implications of remarks like those of senior ANC negotiator Thabo Mbeki when he stated that, on economic matters, the National Party's positions "are not very different really from the position the movement has been advancing?" Or the resonance of the following kind of smug report to be found in a 1993 issue of South Africa's Business Day:

*We can look with some hope to the evolution in economic thinking in the ANC since the occasion nearly three years ago when Nelson Mandela stepped out of prison and promptly reaffirmed his belief in the nationalization of the heights of the economy. By contrast, after delivering his organization's anniversary message last week, Mandela – supported by SACP chairman Joe Slovo – went out of his way to assure a large group of foreign (and
local) journalists that the ANC was now as business-friendly as any potential foreign investor could reasonably ask. He indicated further that ANC economic thinking was now being influenced as much by Finance Minister Derek Kays and by organized business as anyone else.51

And a plethora of recent statements by ANC leaders have rubber-stamped this apparent acceptance of the centrality of capitalist impulses to ANC economic plans – from the almost slavish solicitation of foreign and domestic investment and the easy acknowledgement of a key role for the IMF and the World Bank to the sometime temptation to reduce the concept of black empowerment to the question of creating a black business class!"

Make no mistake: this is what one brand of "realism" has come to mean in South Africa. However, there are counter-tendencies – and they do have some real social weight behind them, notably within the circles of organised labour. While recognising as naive the notion of some immediate seizure of economic power and subsequent dictating of an entirely new logic to the South African economy, the bearers of such counter-tendencies do manifest a conviction that class struggle over social-economic outcomes can and must continue in South Africa. They seek to blend "realism" and militancy in such a way as, cumulatively, to hedge in the writ of capital and eventually, they hope, to tilt the balance of power away from it in some recognisably socialist manner. At its best, as I have argued, such activity begins to exemplify a project of what (drawing on the writings of the early Gorz and Kagarlitsky) I have characterised as "structural reform", and what others in South Africa (albeit with somewhat different emphases) have labelled "radical reform" or "revolutionary reform". This defines a project that promises to sustain the momentum of revolutionary change because it insists both that forces engaged in day-to-day contestation develop an increasingly clear and self-conscious sense of the long term goal of structural transformation that frames their immediate undertakings and that every such undertaking also contributes to the building of a stronger organisational base for other struggles that will be necessary in the future.

A statement by Enoch Godongwana, prominent trade unionist and presently Acting General Secretary of the National Union of Metal-workers (NUMSA), in a recent debate captures the tenor of this approach quite neatly. Acknowledging that, "if we want a socialist alternative in the absence of an insurrection, that poses a challenge for us", he proceeds:

So we argue a socialist alternative, but within the constraints of saying we cannot simply storm and seize power tomorrow. Therefore we should be creative – how do we make sure that, in the process of struggling for socialism, we assert ourselves as a class with the objective of having a class rule... We must begin, while we assert a leading role in various areas of society, to build certain alternatives within the capitalist framework that will tend to undermine the capitalist logic. (emphasis added)59
Moreover, in the same debate, we find a senior ANC leader, Pallo Jordan, also expressing interest in this kind of strategy "which doesn't necessarily imply grabbing hold of the state or nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, but in a sense establishing a number of strategic bridgeheads which enable you to empower the working class and the oppressed, and from these bridgeheads you begin then to subordinate the capitalist classes to the interests of society in general." And there is even a recent statement by Mandela himself in which he states that he does "not believe South African businessmen could be trusted to develop a post-apartheid economy without state intervention":

'We are convinced that left to their own devices, the South African business community will not rise to the challenges facing us. . . . While the democratic state will maintain and develop the market, we envisage occasions when it will be necessary for it to intervene where growth and development require such intervention.'

Of course, just what meaning contending class forces can be expected to breathe into such formulations in the post-election round in South Africa is an open question. This is already a controversial matter on the Left in South Africa, with a number of economic planning exercises already underway within the democratic movement being particularly worthy of attention in this regard. One of the most controversial of these is the work of the Industrial Strategy Project (ISP), an off-shoot of the COSATU-linked Economic Trends Group. The ISP has developed the model of an industrial strategy motored by a preoccupation with export markets, high tech production and the need to be competitive in international terms — with significant income and wealth redistribution seen as then flowing from the success of this newly burgeoning manufacturing sector (and from, in addition, a relatively unspecified programme of "urban reconstruction and rural reconstruction"). Class struggle? The problem, as ISP co-ordinator Dave Lewis sees it, is that "key fractions of capital do not necessarily have an interest in successful industrialisation or in high rates of economic growth". Just as the authoritarian military state disciplined capitalists in Korea, so workers in South Africa — acting through their unions and through worker participation in boards of directors — must now act "to subordinate the narrow interests of capitalists to the logic of capital"!

This model is certainly subject to criticism, Cronin, for example, balking at the image of workers mobilising to submit the capitalist class to the logic of capital and looking instead to the possibility of their submitting "the capitalist class to the logic of social need, of social demand, to the logic of a working class political economy". In addition, the ISP's powerful emphasis on "competitiveness" and an outward-looking growth strategy has been queried — not least by Canadian trade unionist Sam Gindin in a suggestiveseries of interventions." It is also the case that a second model — one proposed, more recently, by the ANC's Macro-Economic Research Group (MERG) — has an economic agenda that seems more tilted towards
creating an internal dynamic for the economy around the servicing of "basic needs"; this model foresees a beefing up of the state's role for this purpose, although it remains less clear on the question of just how directive an ANC state may have to be in pressing capital to play a more effective developmental role. But such an approach can at least begin to touch base with other writings on the South African economy that have emphasised the possibilities of inward industrialisation, of "growth through redistribution" and of much more active kinds of direction of investment.

Do such projections at least represent a thin edge of the wedge for eventual realisation of the kind of on-going and intensifying struggle on the socio-economic terrain envisaged by Godongwana and Jordan, as quoted above. Perhaps an even greater effort to close in on the prerogatives of capital along these lines could be expected to bear significant fruit – helping frame the choices of capitalists more firmly within a progressive, increasingly expansive definition of South Africa's possible socio-economic direction. A more transformative vision could also help tip the balance of current projections towards additional kinds of economic activities – less state-centred perhaps, but popularly and cooperatively driven. Might these not find South Africans being empowered to act to service their own immediate and pressing needs (housing is a good example) in creative, productive ways, ways that would help, precisely, to give socio-economic substance to the kind of broad-gauged, hegemonic political project hypothesised in the previous section?

To left and right, there are activists and analysts of the South African economy who think such "possibilities" are fanciful, of course. For some, the terms in which options are thus being cast are far too narrow, and they suggest, instead, the need for a shift "from basic needs to uncompromising class struggle" in which working-class leadership now positions itself to "give leadership to the spontaneous uprisings" that are sure to spring up in response to the anti-climatic nature of the post-apartheid dispensation for most South Africans." Consider, as well, the arguments of Lawrence Harris, the well-known Marxist economist who, though British, has been close to ANC decision-making circles off and on over the years.

Not so long ago papers by Harris were instrumental in forging for the ANC a definition of a "mixed economy" that he presented, precisely, as able to keep alive the struggle for the long-term transformation of the South African economy. A more recent article finds him now dismissing any possibility that the ANC can hope to lay the ground-work for socialist transition. His present position rests on a critique of the claims of a revolutionary-cum-structural reform strategy (which he insists on caricaturing in presenting as a singularly unpromising corporatist tailing of capital). And he concludes with an extended attack on Joe Slovo for the latter's apostasy in moving away from his far more straightforwardly militant positions of the 1970s. Harris is too good an economist not to offer
some very compelling arguments in support of a pessimistic outlook on South Africa's future. We know what he is talking about when he quotes Slovo, against himself (circa 1976), as prophetic regarding the present moment in South Africa: "The national struggle is stopped in its tracks and is satisfied with the co-option of a small black elite into the presently forbidden areas of economic and political power"! Yet what is so depressing about Harris' approach is that – except for an all too abstract invocation of the good old days of the "Leninist tradition" (once also embraced but now abandoned by Slovo) – he spares himself, in his dismissal of current positions, the task of discussing what an effective revolutionary strategy for the present, actually existing, South Africa could possibly look like. This brand of intervention is probably as stultifying for development of the radical imagination in South Africa as any more self-consciously right-wing approach could possibly be.

Not that models that try to keep alive some sense of struggle vis-à-vis capital have been spared the scorn of more orthodox economists in South Africa. Harris may now think those in play to be far too meek, but Nicoli Nattrass, in a recent (and quite symptomatic) paper, attacks even the relatively mild proposals of the ISP and MERG as being notably adventurist. While raising a range of more detailed questions regarding the specific modalities of intervening to shape capital's choices, her chief preoccupation remains, therefore, "the limits to pushing capital around". These limits, she suggests, are very strict . . . and, in her formulation, quite familiar: "Capital simply leaves (or does not enter) if the policy environment is unfriendly. Given the weakening of labour world-wide (as a result of prolonged recession), the increase in capital mobility and the expansion in overseas investment opportunities . . . the bargaining power of labour, like that of state planners, has been significantly eroded. Her conclusion: "It simply suggests that capital has to be courted rather than coerced."

Unfortunately – she represents a kind of mirror image of Harris in this respect – Nattrass excuses herself from the necessity to consider seriously the probable upshot of her own narrowing of alternatives. Is there any reason for us to think that capital – left free, in effect, to determine the terms of its own seduction – will actually produce any real economic transformation in South Africa? And if not, does she think the political situation is then likely to produce a viable equilibrium? In truth, for Nattrass politics is most likely to be defined as a vector for irrational intrusions into the technocratic world of rational economic decision-making. However, back in the real world of class struggle – where capitalism can still be deemed to be 'irrational' – we find ourselves drawn back to a more positive vision of politics, and to the link, apparently necessary, between real democracy and economic transformation 'socialism'.

For the model of revolutionary-cum-structural reform that might keep such transformation on the agenda premises a politics of popular empowerment in order to drive the process from below. As we have seen, there are tendencies at work within the ANC that might be narrowing its definition of democracy and the possible scope of popular assertions that might otherwise press against the apparent limits of the status quo. Moreover, the ANC’s reluctance to present itself as an organisation that focuses, essentially, a class project (in however nuanced a form) can prove highly demobilising in its own right. Certainly left/social-democratic parties elsewhere that, once in power (as, now, "the government of all the people"), retreat from presenting themselves in these terms have usually wound up acting – in the name of "realism" and "pragmatism" – as spokespersons for the very worst kinds of market-liberal/monetarist policy packages. Could an intensification of differences over such issues ever find an ANC government turning repressively on the Left – "the Moderates" against "the Radicals", in effect – in the post-election world?"

Or will class struggle within and around the ANC draw from that organisation a level of creativity and leadership appropriate to the challenge that faces the popular movement in South Africa? Self-evidently, the realisation of an alternative vision of societal transformation, one premissed on the goal of socialism and the practice of structural reform, will not be an easy task. It is even possible that, between them, Harris and Nattrass are correct and that there is no "middle road" between an all too vague and nostalgic “revolutionism” and mere subservience to global capital's dictate. Small wonder if, under such circumstances, there are those now comfortably situated in the upper echelons of the ANC who can come to think socialism an irrelevance. As Colin Bundy has put the point: "There will be many who remain unconvinced. They believe that would-be socialists in South Africa are doomed to defeat; epochally quixotic, tilting forlornly at windmills driven for the rest of history by capitalist energies. To speak of 'prospects' for socialism, they say, requires a leap of faith." And “perhaps it does," Bundy concedes; at the very least it "requires stamina, creativity and collective resourcefulness."

But there is also something more that drives the search for such an alternative, an understanding (succinctly epitomised by Bundy) of the negative implications of not making it real:

On the other hand: to imagine that a milder manner capitalist order can secure a decent future for the majority of South Africans – or that deracialising bourgeois rule will meet the aspirations of exploited and oppressed people – or that South Africa can somehow be absolved of its economic history and enter a future like that of Sweden or Taiwan: now that really requires a leap of faith.6

Does it also bear noting that, just as some within the ANC seem inclined to make just such a "leap of faith" to the right, it is possible to perceive the first indications of a waning self-confidence amongst the very western intelligentsia who so recently brought us the notion of a post-Cold War
"end of history"? Take, for example, Robert Kaplan’s recent, widely-read article on "The Coming Anarchy" (in The Atlantic Monthly), an article which seeks to demonstrate "how scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet". It is true that, as Kaplan slouches from one catastrophic Third World setting to another, the general tone of his article remains far more sensationalist than analytical. And certainly he traces none of his litany of desperate conditions and escalating barbarism back to any possible contradictions in the global production system. Nonetheless, there are signs of an interesting failure of nerve to be found in this and various other current writings. After all, we might ask, how many basket-case economies can capital afford to walk away from before the shrinking horizons for expanded reproduction offered by such a world become a problem for it? Are these the circumstances under which the pendulum of power might begin to swing back in the direction of the popular classes, including within national boundaries? Might the space for imposing hegemonic, left-leaning projects on capital — in South Africa, more globally — and releasing socio-economic energies, creative and collective, from the base open up sooner than we think?

IV. Beggaring the Imagination: The High Costs of Global Ideology

Unfortunately, for the moment (as Bundy himself acknowledges), "leaps of faith" to the left are much less the norm than mere "commonsensical" acceptance, for better or worse, of the "inevitability" of a pretty unalloyed capitalism. In his response to John Keane, cited earlier, André Gamble wondered aloud as to "socialism's fate" in the contemporary world. At best, might this not amount to socialism's merely "lingering on as a critique of the shortcomings of liberalism, and as an analysis of the destructive effects of capitalist economics on individuals and communities"?"

For Gamble "there is another possibility": "The waning of belief in the methods and politics of state socialism makes possible the intellectual and political rebirth of the socialist project by setting free once more hopes of emancipation." But what if the "waning of belief" is in the very feasibility and efficacy of "the socialist project" itself — and of the practice of a genuinely "popular democracy" that might accompany it? For in South Africa, as elsewhere, it is not merely the strength of structural determinations that encourage people to reach this conclusion. There is also an autonomous cultural charge to what is happening. As we have seen, the threatened foreclosure of any sense of socio-economic possibility beyond "liberal capitalist democracy" involves both a hollowing out of language and a beggaring of the historical imagination. In part, this culture of ascendant global capitalism crystallises spontaneously, but it is also driven by active efforts at ideology-creation on the part of liberal and right-of-
centre intellectuals. And the costs of the grim fecundity of such an ideology are likely to be very high indeed – not least in South Africa.

This is not the case simply because the operations of capitalism, unalloyed and "irrational", will, in all probability, have little if any positive impact on the material lot of the vast majority of South Africans ("in the real world people starve"). It is also true because, at the cultural level, imaginations do not stand still. Thus, as argued above, the sidelining of socialist democracy may prove, in a world of continuing scarcity and inequality, to be a pyrrhic one for global capitalism in many settings. Frustrated, balked of a sense of alternative purpose at the level of socio-economic vision, feeling merely disempowered as potential class actors and therefore cast into a political vacuum, people begin to look elsewhere for presumptive routes to their salvation.

Sometimes this frustration may still be framed in broadly "Leftist" terms, the kind of populist-cum-racist rhetoric that has become the stock-in-trade of Winnie Mandela and others like her in their appeals to potentially disaffected youth." In such a politics, South Africa's democratic imperative can be seen merely to curdle and fester dangerously. But even more often, perhaps, popular frustrations will find voice through the politicised expressions of competing fundamentalisms; various extremes of religious, of racial, of national, of regional and ethnic mobilisation. "Chaos" can spring at least as much from such sources as from the threatened backlash of the powerful classes highlighted by Przeworski, and the unravelling of the social fabric that is currently occurring in various countries around the world offers grim testimony to that fact. How ironic if "barbarism" should break out not in spite of, but precisely because of, the limited nature of the transition to democracy that is currently being granted – in both theory and practice – global sanction.

South Africa does run great risk of unravelling along such lines: as is well known, virtually all of the divisions mentioned above are present and available for potential politicisation. True, there are many activists in South Africa, within and without the ANC, who are striving to avoid such a tragic denouement to their liberation struggle and wishing to attach a more expansive meaning to the transition currently afoot. Perhaps it is here that progressive theory also has a role to play: as guardian – against the pull of "the ideology of the new globalism" – of the political imagination. More than twenty-five years ago, Roger Murray asked pointedly of the future of socialism in Africa whether the "historically necessary" was really likely to prove the "historically possible". We now have a much clearer sense of the costs to Africa of its not, as yet, having done so. All the more reason for us to ensure that, as a pendant to on-going struggle in South Africa and elsewhere, the historically necessary at least remain the historically thinkable.
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1. Harry Magoff and Paul Sweezy, "The Stakes in South Africa", Monthly Review 37, 11 (April, 1986); they went on to state that "a victory for counter-revoultion—the stabilization of capitalist relations in South Africa even if in somewhat altered form—would be stunning defeat for the world revolution."


3. I have discussed some of these complexities in my "South Africa: Between 'Barbarism' and 'Structural Reform'". New Left Review, #185 (July—August, 1991) and, in an exchange with Alex Callinicos, in New Left Review, #195 (September/October, 1992).


5. Larry Diamond, "Three Paradoxes of Democracy" in Diamond and Plattner, op. cit., p. 103. See also Huntington's essay, "Democracy's Third Wave" in the same volume.

6. Philip Green, Retrieving Democracy: In Search of Civil Equality (London: Methuen, 1989), p. 3. On the "pluralist" analysis (and endorsement) of liberal democracy see also David Held, Political Theory and the Modern State (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), chapter 2. As Colin Leys and I have summarized the relevant point elsewhere (in chapter 10, "The Legacy: An Afterword") of our Namibia's Liberation Struggle: The Two-Edged Sword (London: James Currey, 1994), "In reality, . . . liberal democracy does not imply that citizens rule themselves, but that rule by elites is made legitimate by periodic elections, and—very importantly—by various ancillary mechanisms, above all the mediation of political parties." In that chapter—we with reference to this definition and in ways suggestive for an understanding of the South African case—we also discuss the limitations of the "transition to democracy" in Namibia in the wake of that country's recent liberation from South African colonialism.


8. Issa Shivji, "The Democracy Debate in Africa: Tanzania" in Review of African Political Economy, #50 (March, 1991); as he further notes, "democracy, for most of us [African intellectuals], whether we like it or not, is associated with the organization of the state and government structures (Parliament, courts, parties, accountability, elections) rather than a summation of the experience of struggles of the majority. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive: indeed we will all swear by our political science text-books that they are not. And yet in practice, and in our theoretical and political practice, we rarely let loose of the apron strings that bind us to imperialism or the African state or both, we rarely deviate from liberalism; and in our case therefore compradorialism". What this demonstrates to Shivji is, among other things, "a total lack of faith in the masses of the African people".

9. Perhaps too easy: it could be argued that, in the South African insurrection, the favoured rallying-cry of "ungovernability" (as in: "making the townships ungovernable") substituted all too easily for the more firmly grounded and organizationally developed politics that might have borne even greater long-term promise.


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Reiner, 1993]. For evidence that this is an extremely one-sided way in which to present the development record in Africa – to go no further afield – see the more balanced approach in Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Africa’s Economic Recovery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and also Colin Leys, "Confronting the African Tragedy" in *New Left Review* (forthcoming [1994]). Diamond’s formulations ignore, for Africa (to go no further afield), the catastrophic outcomes of most capitalist development strategies on the continent, as well as the crucial role the state (authoritarian, interventionist) has played in settings (the Asian NICs, for example) where capitalism has been more successful. Here, as so often in their "scientific" writings, Diamond and his colleagues in the democracy business are marketing almost pure ideology.


16. Przeworski, ibid., p. 34. Bracket for the moment the fact that Przeworski seems here to be working with a concept of democracy that Green would probably label mere "pseudodemocracy".

17. Przeworski, ibid., p. 37.

18. Joe Slovo, "Negotiations: What room for compromise?" in *The African Communist* #130 (3rd Quarter, 1992), pp. 36-7. This particular paper also found Slovo proposing—as a way of *breaking* the negotiationslog-jam and hedging against right-wing backlash—"sweeping concessions to the government in the form of 'sunset clauses' in a new constitution", including a period of compulsory power-sharing and a significant guaranteeing of existing civil service and security force contracts, (as summarized by Paul Stober, "Slovo's 'sunset' debate is red-hot", *The Weekly Mail*, October 30–November 5, 1992, p. 16). Quite similar ideas were embraced, almost immediately, by the ANC leadership itself in its own important "Strategic Perspective" document.


20. "ANC blames Buthelezi for massacre", *The Toronto Star*, February 21, 1994, p. 14; Mandela cites Buthelezi—accurately enough, apparently—as having "gone so far as to say, he does not want to lie and to promise the people of Natal that there will be no bloodshed in the course of their campaign to disrupt the election".


22. Future assessmentsof this period may actually find the extent of De Klerk's intransigence to have been, in some ways, "imprudent" from a "Reform" point of view. Permitting the ANC to advance more readily as a legitimately hegemonic force might have helped preempt some of the unravelling of South African society—evidenced in the rising tide of criminality, for example, and the increasingly fissiparous political tendencies— that has occurred Since 1990. Perhaps some in the business community had reached this conclusion rather earlier, increasingly confident that the future policies of an ANC could be hedged in, in any case, by economic pressures. This will be a complex process for future historians to untangle; it is, for example, equally possible that at the outset of negotiationsimportant elements in the business community were less confident than they were to become of their ability to control the socio-economic fall-out from political democratization. If so, they may have felt that De Klerk's delaying tactics bought them time to further soften up the ANC for their own purposes. Still, the fact remains that for such members of the corporate class nostalgia for racial domination in and of itself is likely to have been less of a complicating factor than for De Klerk and his fellow "Reformers" within the National Party. On this subject, see the section "Explaining De Klerk" (pp. 7–19) in my earlier essay "South Africa: Between 'Barbarism' and 'Structural Reform'", op. cit.

23. Note, too, that it is the very depth of such intransigence that, after a successful South African election, may force an ANC government into a (necessarily?) heavy-handed crack-down against various of the "Hardliners". If this should happen, it can be expected significantly to compromise the prospects of consolidating any kind of democratic culture in the new South Africa.

24. Especially if more such concessions were to come to this front: the recent offering by Mandela of even "greater regional powers and a constitutional principle that could be the
first step to an Afrikaaner *volkstaat*—designed further to mollify the right-wing whites—is a particularly unsettling development in this regard. See Phillip Van Nie Kirk, "ANC, de Klerk reach out to right wing: Mandela, Pretoria offer concessions to lure black-white alliance back into election", *The Globe and Mail*, February 17, 1994.


26. Slovo, "Negotiations: What room for compromise?", *op. cit.*, p. 36. Moreover, he continues, "the negotiating table is neither the sole terrain of the struggle for power nor the place where it will reach its culminating point. In other words, negotiations is only a part, and not the whole, of the struggle for real people's power."

27. Perhaps this is why one will look in vain in the pages of the recent book which draws together Nelson Mandela's various public pronouncements since his release from prison in 1990 (Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa [New York: Pathfinder, 1993]) for the making of any real connection between the current process of ensuring democratisation (much discussed) and the prospect, near or afar, of socialism (virtually unmentioned).

28. It is such actors who will be most ready to avail themselves of the ANC's "discursive practice", cited above, in order to breathe new life into the movement's time-honoured distinction between the "national democratic" and the "socialist" *phases/moments* of struggle. And they may also be quite happy to cede to the union movement and the SACP the role of safe-guarding that socialist moment in the struggle—the better to insulate the ANC from any such requirement! For background on this subject see the present author's "South Africa: The Question of Strategy", *New Left Review*, #160 (November 1, December, 1986).


30. Jeremy Cronin, "Nothing to gain from all-or-nothing tactics", *The Weekly Mail* (*ibid.*), p. 9; in Cronin's view, "Slovo reminds us we are dealing with a chastened, crisis-ridden but still powerful opponent. Both sides find themselves locked in a reciprocal siege. From our side the objective remains the total dismantling of apartheid. But we simply cannot will this objective into being. So how do we move from here to our longer term goals? Slovo suggests principled compromises . . ."

31. See Jeremy Cronin, "The boat, the tap and the Leipzig way", *The African Communist*, #130 (3rd Quarter, 1992). Note also Joe Slovo's own acknowledgement of this "shortcoming" of the negotiations process: "The balance between negotiations and mass struggle was not always perfect. We were not always clear of what we were trying to achieve with mass action. Remember the debate about the 'tap', our tendency to turn mass action on and off in a very instrumentalist way?" (in his "The Negotiations Victory: a political overview", *op. cit.*, p. 10).


36. There are also some grounds for viewing this effort quite critically, however; thus Roger Etkind and Suzanna Harvey, two NUMSA organisers, are particularly scathing about the moderate terms in which the Accord is being cast, suggesting that "the roles and interests of COSATU and the ANC are clearly opposed" and that the workers 'must not adapt to a 'realism' dictated by leadership" (see their article, "The workers cease fire", *South African Labour Bulletin/SALB*, 17, #5 (September–October 1993), p. 85.

37. In the event, however, the ANC placed many fewer of the twenty COSATU nominees in the upper part of its electoral list than had been originally anticipated. This is a recent move that may prove to have been of some importance but its full implications are as yet difficult to decipher.
38. For a particularly effective statement of such concerns see Adrienne Bird and Geoff Schreiner, "COSATU at the Crossroads: towards tripartite corporatism or democratic socialism", *SALB*, 16, #6 (July/August, 1992). At least for the moment, however, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the trade unions remain the most progressive of actors within the new South *Africa-in-the-making*.


40. Nelson Mandela, quoted in Karl von Holdt, "COSATU Special Congress: The uncertain new era", *SALB*, 17, #5 (September–October,1993), p. 19; Mandela is also quoted there as saying that "the SA Communist Party must also not be complacent. With our background I do not think it would be possible for the ANC to betray the SAPC. But it would be foolhardy for the SAPC to be complacent and rely on the goodwill of the ANC".

41. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 58.


45. Andrew Gamble, "Socialism, Radical Democracy and Class Politics", in McLellan and Sayers, *op. cit.*, p. 29. Of course, it is also true (as Gamble concludes) that "socialists cannot assume any longer that socialism and democracy go hand in hand. It has to be demonstrated. The really testing time for the relevance of socialism to the modern world may only just be beginning".


47. Anderson, *ibid.*, p. 366-7. This is suggestively phrased, although one might wonder about the pertinence to the efforts of South African socialists on their own turf of a vision of struggle cast so exclusively in terms of contestation at the global level (whatever that might mean).


49. Is Larry Diamond, for example, merely being disingenuous when he deals with the new global realities – significantly enough, as a kind of unproblematic aside – with the thought that "the new democracies will also need economic assistance, access to Western markets, and debt relief if they are to show that democracy can work to solve the staggering economic and social problems they face. The international system can play an acrual role in creating the economic space for struggling democracies to undertake badly needed economic transformation with a social safety net and a human face, thereby making them politically sustainable" (in his "The Globalization of Democracy" in Robert O. Slater, Barry M. Schutz and Steven R. Dorr [eds.], *Global Transformation and the Third World* [Boulder: Lynne Reiner, 1993], p. 61). From an interview with Mbeki in the ANC journal, *Mayibuye* (March, 1991), p. 2.


52. Thus, in a recent speech – delivered at the University of the North (January 20,1994/– Mandela spoke in praise of Investec's sponsorship of a *new Business School there*, citing "the skilling of Black prospective business-persons...[as]solid investment in the future of our *country*"; "Up until now Black business persons have been restricted to the role of taxi owners, shebeeners, tuckshop owners and the like. Notwithstanding, they have performed with remarkable aplomb. [But now] we can have the kinds of candidates for senior position in South Africa's financial and industrial world. *Now we can begin to talk about empowerment far more convincingly*" (emphasis added). As it happens – as part of a process that is not problematised by Mandela here – the speed with which this "financial
and industrial world" is snapping up such "candidates for senior position" is, presently, one of the most crucial processes redefining the South African class structure.


54. See, for example, Eddie Webster and Karl von Holdt, "Towards a socialist theory of radical reform: from resistance to reconstruction in the labour movement", paper presented to the Ruth First Memorial Colloquium held at the University of the Western Cape in August, 1992, and also the thoughtful evocation of related themes by Jeremy Cronin in his contribution to the debate on "Social democracy or democratic socialism" in SALB, 17. #6 (November–December, 1993).

55. Enoch Godongwana in his own contribution to the debate on "Social democracy or democratic socialism" (ibid.), p. 86.

56. Pallo Jordan, ibid., p. 92; Jordan does suggest, however, that there may be limitations to a perspective on the transition to socialism that underplays the importance of a "decisive rupture" (a "decisive transformative moment", as he also puts it) in the movement from the old society to the new.

57. Patti Waldmeir, "Mandela warns of need for change", Financial Times, February 15, 1994. Note, too, that even Archbishop Tutu is quoted to the effect that, "After sanctions are lifted, it must not be business as usual. There has got to be a code of conduct for business in South Africa for a kind of investment that seeks to turn around the dispossession of power and empower the dispossessed" (cited in Linda Freeman, "The New Rules of the Game", SAR, 9, #4 (March–April, 1994)).

58. Dave Lewis, ibid., p. 86–87. but see also, inter alia, the paper prepared by ISP Co-Directors Avril Joffe, David Kaplan, Raphael Kaplinsky and David Lewis, "Meeting the Global Challenge: A Framework for Industrial Revival in South Africa" and presented to the IDASA meeting on South Africa's International Economic Relations in the 1990s, April 27–30, 1993.

59. "Mutually searching": Trade Union Strategies, South Africa and Canada" (an interview with Sam Gindin) in Southern Africa Report (SAR), 8, #5 (1 May, 1993) and "Trade Union Strategies: The Debate Continues" (an exchange between Gindin and the ISP's Avril Joffe). SAR, 9, #3 (January, 1994). This debate also surfaced provocatively at a workshop held in Toronto between delegations of South African and Canadian unionists; for a report on this workshop see "Workers of the World, Debate". SAR, 9, 1 (July, 1993).

60. Surveying the ISP and MERG undertakings, as well as the ANC's broader reconstruction and development programme (RDP), Jenny Cargill (in her article, "Superman State: Nothing less is needed to implement ANC 'reconstruction' proposals", Finance Week, December 9–15, 1993) suggests there to be an underlying assumption among the ANC and its alliance partners that they have the capacity to organise a thoroughgoing reconstruction of a new society for South Africa. "At issue", she suggests, "is not state intervention per se, but the faith placed in the deitised 'democratic state' to fix everything . . . However, substantively (in Cargill's judgement), the various proposals are actually not so very radical, seeking, in practice, to bend the existing production very little and implying, centrally, the need for "a more rigorous search for incentives to pull in the private sector"! Indeed, she argues, the RDP is likely to involve such a range of compromises vis-à-vis capital and the presumed imperatives of the global economy as to risk the ANC's alienating its popular constituency.

61. See, for example, Stephen Gelb, "Democratising Economic Growth: Alternative Growth Models for the Future", Transformation, #12 (1990) and subsequent writings by the same author.

62. Etkind and Harvey, op. cit., pp. 86–7. Compare, however, the rather more modest, though still critical, tone in a second article on COSATU and its Reconstruction Accord with the ANC in the same edition of SALB. Thus, for Jenny Cargill, COSATU's "challenge is how
to tailor strategies to political and economic realities on the one hand, but avoid abdicating to the status quo on the other!

63. See Lawrence Harris, "Building the Mixed Economy" and "How are we going to Pay for Economic Reconstruction", papers presented to the seminar held by the ANC's Department of Economic Planning, Harare, April–May, 1990.

64. Lawrence Harris, "South Africa's Economic and Social Transformation: from 'No Middle Road' to 'No Alternative'", Review of African Political Economy, #57 (1993), pp. 91–103.

65. I have noted some of Harris' distortions of my own position in my Recolonization and Resistance, (op. cit.), pp. 183–4.


67. As it happens, Nattrass cannot quite decide whether authoritarian or democratic structures are more conducive to capitalist development. She is, in any case, even more preoccupied with the likely capacities of the South African bureaucracy to play the "rational" role required of it than she is with the class character of the state itself.

68. The danger of such an outcome was amongst the possibilities discussed in an illuminating paper presented by Stephen Gelb to the "Political Economy Seminar" series at York University, February 14, 1994 and entitled "Democracy and Development in South Africa".


72. Thus Ms. Mandela, so deeply compromised by the excesses of her own political practice, nonetheless struck a potentially powerful note — one that may well be heard again — when, in the wake of the ANC's "Strategic Perspective" document (cited above), she criticized the "so-called power sharing deal between the elite of the oppressed and the oppressors" and spoke of the "looming disaster in this country which will result from the distortion of a noble goal in favour of a shortcut to parliament by a handful of individuals" (Winnie Mandela as quoted in "Swinging attack by Winnie indicates populist dissent," Southscan, 8, #2 (15 January, 1993).