

Mozambique seeks Canadian student support

By Ellen Reynolds
with files from CUP

In Mozambique, they're known as the "armed bandits". Their name evokes a mixed reaction of terror and hatred marking a seven-year brutal war that has left the country scarred and struggling for survival.

After gaining their independence from Portuguese colonial rule in 1975, the people of Mozambique were very successful with national health and educational programs and economic development.

But since 1980, they have been locked in a bitter war against an insurgent army of South African-

sponsored 'rebels', or the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

Now, after a two-month trip to Southern Africa, a Dalhousie student, two UBC students, and two others at McGill and York universities are setting up a national network to mobilize student support for the people of war-torn Mozambique.

Juanita Montalvo, Community Affairs Coordinator this year at Dalhousie, was chosen, along with UBC student Mary McAlister and two other students from a group of 30 Canadian students travelling in Zimbabwe this summer to tour Mozambique. The tour was co-sponsored by World University Service of Canada and the Mozambican government.

"The government sponsored us so we would go back to Canadian campuses and mobilize people for support," said McAlister.

"Hopefully, what they will get back will be a good investment of their time and money," she said.

Both Montalvo and McAlister

said the situation in Mozambique is critical. A country of about 15 million people, most of whom are peasants, Mozambique is ravaged by poverty, malnourishment, and a drastic cut in production due to the war.

"One of the biggest contrasts I saw was how run-down the country is, but the spirit of the people is inspiring. They are strong visionaries," said Montalvo.

As a vital trade link to the neighbouring states of Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania, Mozambique poses a major strategic target for the regional destabilization aims of the South African regime.

"Bandits are hitting on key targets — ports, railroads, roads — to try to bring the economy to a halt, and in doing so force the other frontline states to use South Africa," said McAlister.

"Because the MNR is active in much of the countryside," said McAlister, "government officials would not let the group travel outside the capital city of Maputo."

The group's powerful impressions did not come only from contact with government officials, teachers and international volunteers.

"We met with two survivors of the July 18th Homoine massacre where 400 people were killed (by the MNR)," McAlister said.

"We met street kids who come into the city from rural areas — their parents killed by bandits —

and live and sleep on the streets, eat out of the garbage, who wear rags and beg for money."

Canadian students can play a vital support role for Mozambique, said McAlister.

At Dalhousie, Montalvo is looking to make OXFAM the student union's charity this year for funds to go to Mozambique. "There will be a lot happening with this across Canada," said Montalvo.

"I think students have the time and resources to put into solidarity work," McAlister said. "They can really have an impact."

Students Support Mozambique has several objectives. The most immediate is a petition to be presented to Prime Minister Mulroney at the Commonwealth Conference in Vancouver this October.

The petition demands that the Canadian government send bilateral aid to Mozambique, impose full economic and diplomatic sanctions against South Africa, and take a leading role in providing aid and support to Mozambique.

The group's other objectives include speaking/film tours on Canadian campuses, fundraising for non-governmental organizations, working in Mozambique through cultural events, and networking with other anti-apartheid groups to expand their focus to include all of Southern Africa.



PHOTO: MARY MCALISTER

Juanita Montalvo, Community Affairs Coordinator, confers with Manuel Alberto Alima of Mozambique Youth Committee.

Discriminating Angels

by Eleanor Brown
Canadian University Press

HALIFAX (CUP) — Members of the Hell's Angels chapter here aren't saying whether a recently removed 'no blacks' sign will be re-hung on the clubhouse door.

And if the sign does go back up, there's nothing the Human Rights Commission (HRC) can do about it.

"Maybe yes, maybe no. We haven't really had time (to get another sign), said a blond, bearded club member sporting a "Free the Hell's Angels" t-shirt picturing a skeleton on a motorbike. "But you can buy them anywhere."

The sticker features a stylized black person wearing an afro haircut and protruding lips with a large red line slashing through the silhouette. The biker said the sign was a gift.

The door itself was recently switched in favour of a two-inch-thick steel portal with a tiny glass window near the top. A coded identification number must be punched in to unlock it.

The Hell's Angels are perhaps best known for the Harley Davidson motorbikes, partying, alleged drug dealings, and a membership policy which leaves women and non-whites out in the cold.

According to Ed Russell, an HRC intake office who handles most complaints, anti-discrimination laws don't include the regulation of private clubs. That's what the Hell's Angels is.

"You can discriminate privately. The prohibition deals

with institutions, with the state. It doesn't deal with personal prejudice," Russell explained.

"We think this sort of thing is bad, but with the law being what it is, we have no jurisdiction," he added.

The 'no blacks' sign was up for at least two years before a woman who walked by the clubhouse every day on the way to work complained to the Commission. Russell said that was the first he'd heard of it.

The story was picked up by Halifax's local black-issues monthly, **The Rap**.

"It was first brought to my attention two years ago," said **Rap** editor George Elliott Clarke. "There was a sense that nothing could be done. It's not really apathy. They (the community) just felt they weren't getting anywhere."

Clarke is angry that the HRC is powerless. And he questions the values of a society which allows such prejudice.

"Permitting that kind of thing is not healthy for a democracy. Whether or not they're making blacks welcome is their business. But a sign that's up publicly — that's going too far. I don't mean to be extreme, but Hitler's Germany started out with signs," said Clarke.

Jega Nathan, the HRC's chief human rights officer, said the Hell's Angels are simply identifying who can be a member and who can't.

"If you put a swastika outside your house, there's nothing we can do," said Nathan.

Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act provides protection in such areas as housing and employment, ensuring that discrimina-

tion on the basis of colour, sex, creed, and national or ethnic origin is arrested.

Hate literature laws are also useless, according to the HRC's Russell. That charge involves proving the intentional promotion of hate towards an identifiable group through literature. Russell said a single sign identifying membership requirements isn't enough.

While many prominent members of the black community are calling for an amendment to the law to deal with these types of situations, officials within the HRC say that's not likely to happen.

"If we strengthen the Criminal Code, which already provides for hate literature, civil libertarian groups will be up in arms," said Nathan.

And officials don't see any changes in the near future for the Human Rights Act.

Every penny counts

ST. JOHN'S (CUP) — Students at Newfoundland's only university will be asked to finance their own scholarships by plunking pennies into a giant piggy bank.

And Memorial University (MUN)'s student council is challenging post-secondary institutions across the country to follow suit.

The students will place a huge piggy bank in a cafeteria during National Universities Week, schedule between October 24 and November 1. The money raised will be doled out by MUN's Scholarships and Awards Committee.

"We hope that because the stu-

Tentative agreement signed by DSA staff

by Geoff Stone

A second tentative agreement has been negotiated between the Dalhousie Staff Association Staff Union (DSASU) and the Dalhousie Staff Association.

The two-member union, the smallest union which can be registered with the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, hopes to have an agreement in the next six weeks.

dents are contributing to themselves, they will give freely of their funds. We welcome any contribution, be it \$1 or \$50," said Anne Marie Vaughan, council president.

Vaughan hopes other universities will pick up the idea, and compete in a "Generosity per Capita" contest. She co-chairs a Canadian Federation of Students Commission which is seeking ways to involve students in the awareness-raising week.

No other universities have, as yet, responded to the challenge, says Mary Elizabeth Archer, MUN's Coordinator for National Universities Week activities.

The first agreement was rejected by the 700-member DSA after a vote this past summer.

Bette Yetman, chief negotiator for the DSASU, said the main problem with negotiations is the procedure for management. "We think it is time that our employer, the DSA, straighten out its internal decision-making powers," said Yetman.

Yetman said other unions allow their elected officers to hire staff and sign contract with their union, with the members having the power to fire officers who are negligent or irresponsible. "It is impossible to allow 750 people control over your conditions of work (as in the present situation), especially when some of the don't even know you are employed by them," said Yetman.

With a contract just signed between the DSA and Dalhousie University, Yetman says she is aware this dispute could affect future relations between the DSA and Dalhousie.

But Yetman said the DSA still "has rights under the trade union act, same as any other unionized worker in the province, and we will exercise those rights in order to clean up this mess, if that's what it takes."