

# Another endgame in South Africa?

Our letter to the Gazette (Nov. 12) predicted a protracted struggle in South Africa before any meaningful change could come towards the liberation of South Africa from Apartheid, in spite of the survival of the Commonwealth after the Vancouver Summit. We maintain that position and call upon those concerned to get more involved in the struggle. However, just before we went to press, the Pretoria regime released some political prisoners who were serving long terms of imprisonment for their dare to call for justice in that country. One of those released was a key and noted ANC veteran and activist, Govan Mbeki. It is our intention to put the development into its proper perspective. Who indeed were those released and what had they (especially Mbeki) achieved before detention?

*Mbeki: a profile of the man and his times*

Govan Mbeki was born in 1914, two years after the formation of the African National Congress (ANC). As a member of the ANC, he directed his activities against the oppressive system. As a freelance journalist, he wrote in the columns of the New Age, exposing the tyranny of white supremacy, raising the consciousness of the oppressed masses, directing their energies against exploitation and oppression, and focussing their attention on the seizure of political power without which a non-racial, free and democratic South Africa is not possible. Mbeki's vision of the bright future for the toiling majority in South Africa made him see what Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan fail to foresee today. It is only yesterday in Vancouver that Thatcher refused or was unable to come to grips with the demands and realities of the South African situation. Mbeki raised the inevitable end of Apartheid twenty-six years ago, a reality Thatcher is unable to capture today. In December 1961, Mbeki wrote in the New Age: "But human beings are not cattle, sheep, or pigs, and that is a lesson all oppressors

throughout history have failed to learn. Despite the fate of Hitler, Mussolini and Battista, the Nationalist government thinks that tyranny will succeed here because it is practiced by Afrikaaners, a super-breed . . . They too will yet learn that man is man, and will resist efforts to trample him under the jackboot of tyranny." Mbeki was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1962 for his share in bringing about peace and justice in South Africa. The Dutch universities have honoured the South African oppressed by creating the Govan Mbeki foundation under which many ANC and South African democrats are receiving research training in the various disciplines. Now the man is out and life has begun and the struggle is sure to continue.

### Analysis

It is clear from the foregoing the Mbeki, like Mandela, belongs to the many generations of peace-loving South Africans and ANC leaders who tried all possible peaceful means towards change in South Africa. They failed, and instead received long jail sentences. As we write, Mandela and others are rotting in jail. We do emphasize, however, that Mandela, Mbeki and others, whether released or not, have done more than enough of their share for the struggle. Today they are already powerful symbols and concrete historical reminders of Pretoria's inhumanity. A liberated South Africa could benefit enormously from the leadership and guidance of these great men, the present ANC vanguard, and the democratic opposition groups against Apartheid at large.

It is too early to speculate on what the South African regime is up to in the course of the release of Mbeki and others, and in any case, the nature of the dictatorship and oppression under Apartheid renders any speculation worthless. Let us, however, be perfectly clear:

1. The release of South African political prisoners (who should not have been jailed in the first

place) is a right for those concerned, and for which opponents of Apartheid have been fighting all along. The release of Mbeki and others is therefore goodwill. A regime that arrests and detains children has right to take pride in releasing political prisoners "because of old age", as South Africa has said of Mbeki — assuming that is humane reasoning in the first place.

2. We demand the release of Mandela and others as a right. So far, the Botha regime has treated Mbeki's release as some kind of "Exercise" for further releases.

We find that insulting to those great men who have sacrificed all their active lifetimes. Two and half decades in a South African jail is certainly no kid-glove "exercise".

3. In the absence of a democratic framework in the South African political system for dismantling Apartheid, we are left with no alternative but to conclude that South Africa is laying further traps for more repression. This endgame amounts to substituting jail sentences for leaders such as Mbeki (and possibly Mandela at a later date)

with house arrests. The trick here is that any organized opposition at this stage would then be regarded by Botha as evidence of the inability of black people in South Africa to govern themselves, and pave way for further repression.

### Conclusion

We reaffirm our call for action against Apartheid (see Gazette, Oct. 29) and are confident that victory lies in the people's democratic movement and not in Pretoria's endgame.

**by the ANC-South Support Group**

## l e t t e r s

### Accused of sexism

#### To the Editors:

I am a student at Mount St. Vincent and I am also a member of the Picaro staff. The position I hold here has nothing to do with the words you are about to read. This is my own opinion.

In the Thursday, November 5, edition of the Gazette, there was a CUP article picked up from the Picaro. The article was on page three and was retitled "Sexism at the Mount". The CUP version was vastly different from the original in that the person responsible for picking it up did so in the intention of proclaiming the Mount as the breeding-ground of sexism. I, personally, have never much trusted CUP when it comes down to unbiased stories, but the Gazette had to get in it's (sic) own twenty-five cents worth.

By this I mean that the paper you people produce over-stepped your authority (sic) by changing the article to an out-right attack on Rod Benteau. The Gazette totally ignored the other elements of the article, such as Rick Collins' and Karen Seaboyer's comments. The omission of the article only intensified the comments Mr. Benteau made, comments he believes to be based on fact. Without knowing the full

scope of the issue, how could the Gazette pass judgement on the comments found in an article on student union elections?

I feel that the Gazette and the people involved in the design of that story owe Mr. Benteau an apology.

**R.E. Bowness**  
1st year BA

### Je me souviens

Ca fait deux semaines. Deux semaines depuis René Lévesque fut enterré dans une funéraire d'état au Québec. Je me souviens. Je me souviens de lui.

Il était une grande présence; dans la politique, dans la culture, à l'esprit. Il a traîné les québécois(es) au dehors de leur attitude d'infériorité. L'hydro-Québec, ça voulait dire "maîtres chez nous". C'était lui, avec Pierre Trudeau, qui ont créés le besoin d'être bilingue, pour les canadiens et canadiennes anglaises. Il a assisté à la création du Canada qu'on voit aujourd'hui. Surtout, il était démocrate, ouvert à la presse, et aux gens du pays.

Mais tout cela c'est aux historien(ne)s à garder. La vraie perte, de sa génération, de sa race, de son province, c'est son soin. Car René Lévesque, d'abord, était un homme qui avait soin de tout

cela, et plus. Dans une époque où l'attitude ascendant dit "Je m'en fiche", Lévesque disait "Je suis capable d'en changer". Il s'est mis au milieu d'une cause plus grande que soi-même, et c'est pour cela qu'on va se souvenir de M. Lévesque.

Comme un ami m'a dit; il a bien vécu sa vie. Cela est certain. Il a vu du monde, et il a entendu le monde. On va attendre un long après-midi l'arrivée d'un autre comme René Lévesque

**Scott Inniss**

### Academic fraud

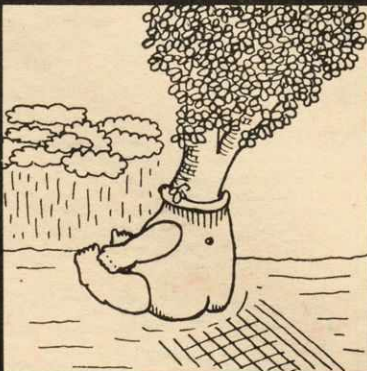
#### To the Editors:

I find it offensive that the Gazette would publish an advertisement that so blatantly advocates academic fraud. I am referring to the ad published on Nov. 12, 1987, offering research papers for sale. If the Gazette truly advocates the rights of students, surely it must also promote the responsibilities of students. The most important of these is original academic work. The Gazette has lowered itself to the standards of the National Enquirer in publishing this ad. To claim that the ad is not the view of the newspaper does not excuse the paper from responsibility concerning academic issues.

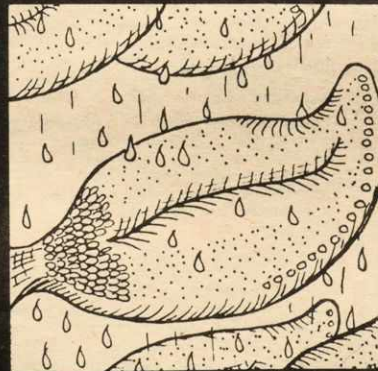
**Russ Adams**

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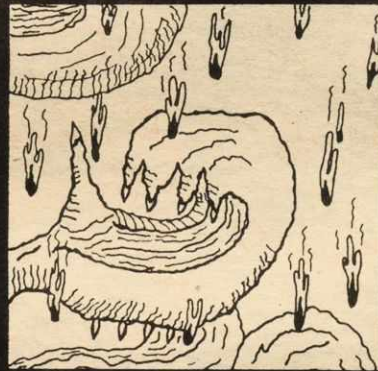
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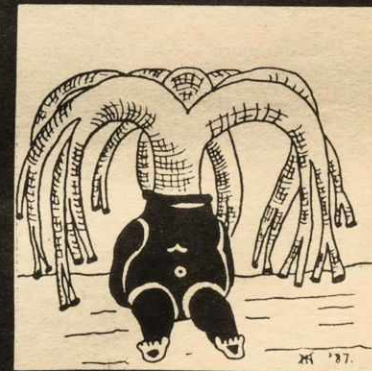
I used to look forward to rain.



I would spread my leaves and drink.



But now, it burns



And I become dark.