

ON SOUTH AFRICA

by Kamau Anderson

Remember back in March of this year when Mozambique and South Africa signed the Nkomati Accord? The Nkomati Accord is popularly known as the non-aggression pact in which the two countries agreed to cease hostilities toward one another, Mozambique was allowing the African National Congress (ANC) to launch military operations against South Africa from across its borders and South Africa was assisting the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) in destabilizing the Mozambique government of Samora Machel. Well, twenty-five of the talks that led to the agreement dealt exclusively with restoring the power connection between South Africa and the Mozambique hydroelectric project called Cabora Bassa. The Cabora Bassa is a 1600 megawatt capacity

project located in western Mozambique on the Zambezi river. Under the March agreement, the 1400 kilowatt high voltage direct current power line that connects Cabora Bassa to South Africa would be restored to full operation. A supplemental agreement signed in May of this year in Cabo, Mozambique by South Africa's Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM), Portugal (the builders of the project during their colonial rule of Mozambique) and Mozambique mandated that the line be restored to full power and secured from MNR attacks by August 2, 1984.

That date has come and gone and the line is still down. But South Africa's ESCOM isn't overly concerned because as long as the power line is down, the South African government will be compensated by the Hidro-electrica de Cabora Bassa (HCB), the

Portuguese power agency whose losses as a result has been running more than \$35 million a year since 1980. The May 1984 Cabo agreement does provide some future protection for the HCB. It states that ESCOM will not be compensated unless the power line outage is due to an electrical fault. Once the Cabora Bassa project is up and running, South Africa will be entitled to 1450 megawatts of the total project's capacity. That is more than 90 percent of the project's installed capacity. From this arrangement Portugal will make approximately \$45 million annually from the energy generated at Cabora Bassa while only \$4.32 million will go to Mozambique. Furthermore, Mozambique will have to buy electrical power back from South Africa to serve areas not directly served by the Cabora Bassa project. But South

Africa is not selling unless they are receiving power from Cabora Bassa.

Regardless of the status of Cabora Bassa, South Africa will be in a win situation; they are compensated for no power and get 90 percent when there is power. Clearly, Mozambique was forced into the Nkomati Accord because of this type of economic destabilization. Although the Mozambique people are not receiving the full benefits of the Cabora Bassa project, South Africa simply won a minor battle with the Nkomati Accord and Cabora Bassa. The war is against apartheid and the freedom loving people of Southern Africa will win the war. Very soon, when the war is won, the full power potential of Cabora Bassa will benefit the indigenous majority as opposed to the racist minority of South Africa.

South Africa detains Black union leaders

In recent weeks we have seen widespread protests in South Africa. Hundreds of thousands of students and workers in the Transvaal Province and the Johannesburg area have boycotted schools and participated in strikes and demonstrations. Trade unions and community-based organizations have come together in a new and unprecedented coalition to defy the continuing degradation of apartheid. They brought the South African industrial heartland to a standstill during their two-day stay-away strike.

The South African government has reacted frantically, with wholesale arrests and massive repression. Last week the police detained, among others, a top leader from each of South Africa's largest black and multi-racial trade union federations—Phiroshaw Cemay, general secretary of the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), and Chris Dlamini, president of the Federation of South African Trade Unions. Together the two federations represent around 300,000 workers, among them many thousands of miners and factory workers.

The detentions of Camay and Dlamini illustrate the importance of the black-led labor federations in the struggle against apartheid and for democracy and majority rule in South Africa. When, in 1979, blacks were given the legal right to organize trade unions, it was with the understanding that the unions would have the authority to bargain on wages and work-

ing conditions with their employers. The South African government even set up an Industrial Court to arbitrate in difficult cases, and the court has often decided in the union's favor. Employers in South Africa have come to recognize the need for collective bargaining to assure stability in the black work force.

But the unions cannot confine themselves in such circumstances to questions only of wages and working conditions. The black worker in South Africa is subjected to daily humiliations outside of his work life, which affect his dignity, his family and his people. To negotiate in dignity with an employer about the conditions of his work life is incompatible with his participation in a political system that has a place for his labor but not for his citizenship.

A similar lesson was learned by the Polish authorities when they granted Solidarity legal bargaining power over wages and working conditions. When the government said, all right, let's talk about wages, Solidarity leaders said, yes, but also let us talk about freedom of speech, and freedom from arbitrary arrest, and human dignity. Just as in a democracy trade unions use collective bargaining to protect themselves from employer abuses, so in a dictatorship unions will seek to expand that process to bring a greater measure of freedom to their people.

Now the South African authorities are compelled to react to hundreds of thousands of organized

blacks, whether as workers, students, or community activists. The government severely exacerbates its problems by detaining union leaders, who

are among the few who know how to negotiate, and who are essential if the process toward majority rule is to be peaceful.

Avoid fire hazards

The holiday season has arrived, and with it have come the many sales promotions that all stores employ to attract shoppers. Whether it's the "Pre-Christmas Sale," the "Day Before Christmas Sale," the "Day After Christmas Clearance Sale," or even an East Coast chain's "Christmas Sale in July," it is likely that in the next couple of weeks you will spend many hours in crowded stores of all shapes and sizes.

You can expect to get squashed, elbowed, stepped on, jostled and physically mistreated in every other way common to the holiday season. So you might as well get ready for it.

It is also important that you prepare for the unexpected, according to the Dictograph Security Information Bureau. Fire is always a danger, and it doesn't simply strike other malls, other stores and other people.

"It can happen anywhere," said Bill Mabey, a former public safety official and currently the director of the Dictograph Security Information Bureau. Dictograph Security Systems of Florham Park, N.J.

The No. 1 rule is simple: When walking into a store, restaurant or public place of any kind, take a mo-

ment to locate the emergency fire exits. Once you have made a mental note of these locations, try to keep this in mind as you move around the store. It takes just a split-second, and yet this could be a life-saver.

Be sure to inform store management if you observe any potential fire hazards. For example, the lack of floor space in some stores often makes it necessary for boxes to be stored in out-of-the-way places. But be on the lookout for boxes or displays that block fire exits. Inform store management of the problem and, if they refuse to rectify the situation immediately, phone the fire department.

"This type of fire hazard is not a game," Mabey stressed. "In a very real sense, it's a matter of life and death."



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Free haircuts

The Salvation Army's Moore Street Corps Community Center is sponsoring free haircuts for low-income youngsters, age 15 and under, December 17.

Haircuts will be provided by beauticians from the Cut, Curl, Care Salon in the Moore Street facility, 5335 N. Williams, between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Seventy kids showed up for this event last year.

For more information contact Captain John Godley at the Moore Street Corps Community Center, 282-2571.

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