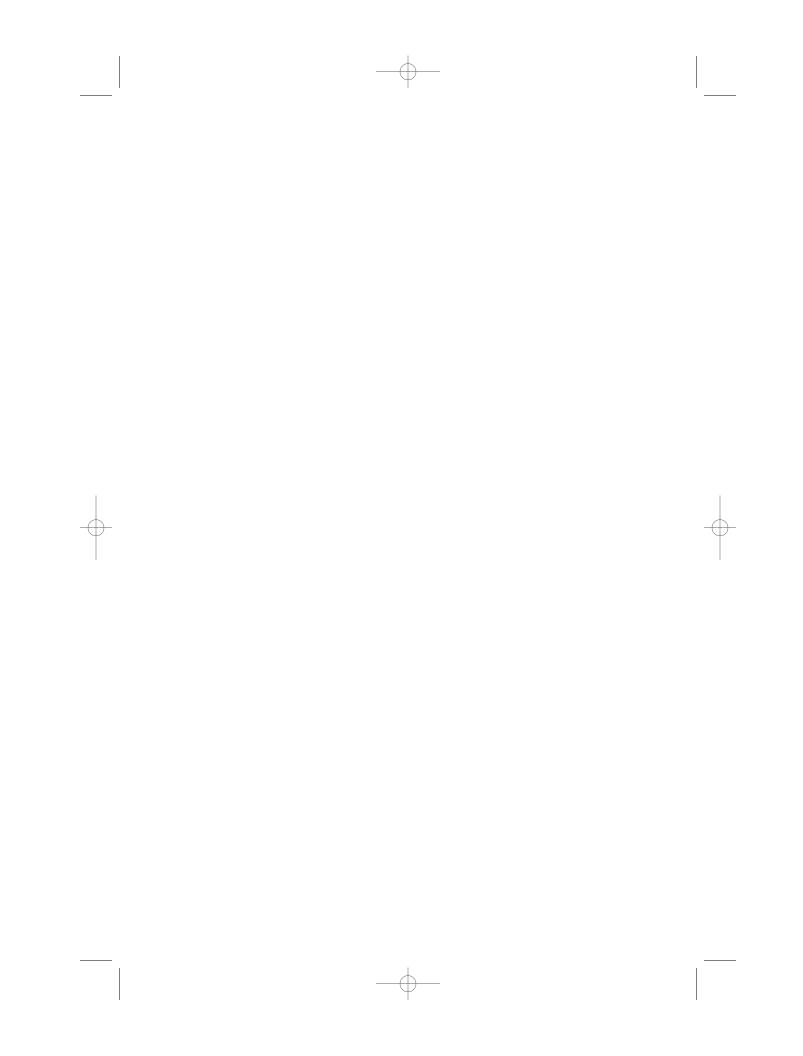
# Trust in the Capacities of the People, Distrust in Elites



## Trust in the Capacities of the People, Distrust in Elites

Kenneth Good

LEXINGTON BOOKS
Lanham • Boulder • New York • London

Published by Lexington Books An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc. 4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706 www.rowman.com

Unit A, Whitacre Mews, 26-34 Stannery Street, London SE11 4AB, United Kingdom

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

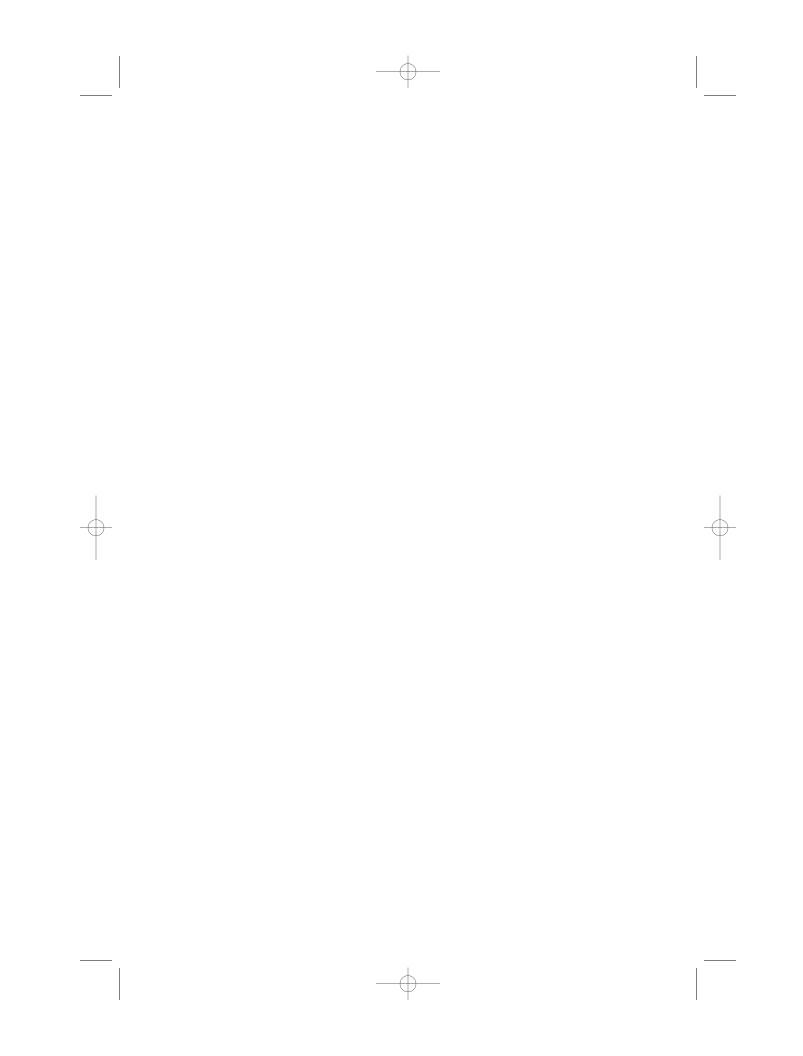
Good, Kenneth, 1933-.
Trust in the capacities of the people, distrust in elites / Kenneth Good.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4985-0243-6 (cloth: alk. paper) — ISBN 978-1-4985-0244-3 (ebook)
1. Democratization—Case studies. 2. Elite (Social sciences)—Political activity—Case studies. 3. Legitimacy of governments—Case studies. I. Title.
JC421.G66 2014
321.8—dc23
2014030920

<sup>™</sup> The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Printed in the United States of America

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## Introduction

Democratization at its basic level is a socio-political process and a society and politics that may grow out of it where people make the decisions on matters affecting them. Secondly, democratization is an unending struggle for such rights and power: to win them, hold on to them, to extend them. On the examples considered here, this contention has stretched over two and a half millennia and no end is in sight. The clear lesson seems to be that those who hold power strongly resist giving it up or even sharing it, and do so grudgingly, slowly, partially and deceptively. Thirdly, the contending classes or groups are essentially the poor and weak majority of the people, on the one hand, and an elite of wealth, education, status and power, on the other. It is hoped that the reality of this perhaps contentious interpretation, polarizing the majority against a small economic and political elite, will be demonstrated through the studies presented in this book.

Politics in democratic Athens 508–322 BCE, the first and still the greatest participatory democracy, revolved around the sharp socio-economic divisions between an uneducated poor majority and a small elite of wealth, education, and status—but not power. Democracy was initiated and deepened as the former gained political empowerment through active, institutionalized citizenship. All citizens were deemed equally capable of holding political office regardless of formal learning, and growing up in democratic Athens was held to be an education in itself through the wide political experience a citizen necessarily acquired: the original, democratic meaning of the term *idiote* was a person with no interest in public affairs. Athens was a dynamic, imperialistic, wealthy class society to which the elite were persuaded to subscribe, because their military skills were rewarded, they were free to pursue their leisure and moneymaking, and because over time the popular democracy manifestly worked. Their public activities were however tightly

controlled: the political disempowerment of the elites was the vital accompaniment which made possible and extended the empowerment of the people. Athens endured for almost two centuries, in an environment of almost constant warfare, and was brought down, not by internal failings, but through the superior external force of Alexander the Great.

The second study below is of Britain's long and profoundly incomplete democratization, beginning in the embryonic capitalism of the English Revolution in the mid-seventeenth century, in an active and fairly overt struggle between, on the one hand, an inchoate class chiefly of the urban poor, represented by the Levellers, and on the other, the Grandees in parliament, in landed and merchant wealth and, not least, in command of military power. The former may have represented some 100,000 people in the late 1640s, a sizable proportion of London and the soldiery of the army, while the Grandees were just a few, and very conscious that only they had a stake in the country and were thus fit to rule. The Levellers were forcibly suppressed, but they bequeathed notions of popular sovereignty, accountability, and of the rights of even "the poorest he that is in England", which were taken up again and extended by the Chartists during the industrial revolution. For more than two centuries a small and very wealthy oligarchy dominated over the mass of the people, who never ceased to resist their suppression through crime, riot and insurrection—the limited means available to them. But their rights were notably extended through a range of self-help organizations—sick and burial groups, coops, benevolent societies, educational groups—which they set up in the new urban environments of the industrializing nineteenth century. They also established trade unions, social movements, and then a Labour party, and in a century-long struggle, won voting rights. The record shows that democratization in these disparate cases was indeed a harsh, unending struggle between a poor majority and a small, highly determined and uncompromising ruling elite. Even as popular organizations were constructed in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, new elites arose within the unions and the Labour party, to feather their own nests and limit further democratization.

An important third exemplifier is contemporary South Africa, initially in the crucial period of the 1960s to the 1980s, when an external armed struggle against apartheid, organized by the African National Congress (ANC) was nearing an end, and when a popular, autonomous democratic movement was highly active inside the country, under the guidance of the United Democratic Front (UDF). It was formed in 1983, joined just two years later by the dynamic and militant Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The Front was developing, through the late 1980s, path-breaking new methods for combating elitism within popular organizations, notably their highly innovative 'Principles of Our Organizational Democracy', while also promoting a wide range of self-determining community groups and social move-

ments. But the established leadership of the ANC saw this independent domestic democratization as a threat to their predominance in the black population and moved to subvert the UDF's autonomy and aspirations, much as they had earlier forcibly suppressed their own pro-democratic rank and file soldiery in *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK). Apartheid collapsed, but what replaced it was not new participatory forms but an elitist, militaristic and authoritarian democracy obsessed with secrecy and espionage, the shortcomings of which have become increasingly apparent in recent years: a second stage of South Africa's delayed but latent democratization. This is examined in the final chapter.

The democratization that emerges here is thus a matter of aspiration and impulse by determined men and women, which fail more often than they succeed, given the power disparities between the people and the elites, yet appear and reappear again in other times and places. A prominent Leveller leader, 'Freeborn John' Lilburne, said at the end of the 1640s that, though they fail, their principles would shine on in the future, as they did with the Chartists 180 years later, whose leaders were in their turn harshly suppressed: killed, imprisoned, transported for life. Popular aspirations that failed and were nonetheless renewed, commemorated in Samuel Beckett's words: "Ever tried; ever failed; Never mind; try again; fail better."

It is not surprising that democratization also represents an ideology and a record intentionally filled with obscurities, deceptions and lies; the insistence that ordinary people are incompetent and irrational, and that only elites are able to think for them and are fit to rule. On the one side in history, the 'idle mob', the 'turbulent mob', men as Cromwell sneered 'with no interest other than in breathing'; and on the other 'responsible men', those with landed and commercial interests, or the 'Struggle Heroes' in South Africa recently. It also suggests that democracy is the gift of great men who sometimes come together in almost 'miraculous' circumstances, like Nelson Mandela and F.W. De Klerk, 1990-1994, to confer good government on their fortunate people. The distortion of the record stems from the aftermath of democratic Athens, notable for the active and direct political role of poor and uneducated men, later deliberately ignored or traduced in the conservative British and American historiography. In smashing Chartism in the 1840s the oligarchy intended to obliterate even the memory of the many ordinary men and women who had been highly active socially and politically up and down the country for over a decade. From the late 1980s, the political and military elite of the ANC aimed to erase the memory of the United Democratic Front and the thousands of men and women in community groups associated with them.

Not only different countries and societies, but also two main forms or models of democracy are in historical contention. A representative, liberal model revolving around free elections, in which people as voters periodically choose those who decide in their name, or more realistically, where competing liberal elites 'get themselves elected' making good use of their wealth and celebrity. The liberal form arose over centuries within capitalist development in Britain and the United States, achieved preeminence over some 150 years, but is now under perhaps terminal threat, from both its own dysfunctionalities and the alienation of its citizens from its institutions and their elitist, self-serving values. And there is the participatory model, first seen in Athens where a strong ideology of equality, and an institutional array, upheld the capacity of uneducated, poor citizens to govern themselves actively and directly. Participatory democracy was aspired to over centuries in Britain, but its forms and values are now being approached again since the 1970s in many places, from Portugal and Poland, to South Africa, Tunisia, Egypt and Iceland. Even in the heartlands of liberal capitalist democracy, the proposition has gained strong recent currency that advanced western democracies are sharply divided into a 1 percent of the rich and powerful and a 99 percent of the poor and weak: the 'Have Yachts' versus the 'Have Nots.'

In Egypt a number of participatory ideas and practices have appeared in the overthrow of despotism by a great upsurge of literally millions of people in the streets of Cairo, Alexandria, and other towns: in plans to document the full scope of the revolution as something broader and longer than the ousting of Hosni Mubarak; in an aim to 'take Tahrir to the factories and work places, wherever there is a mini-Mubarak who needs to be overthrown'; and in independent trade union organization and the efforts of other social movements and protest action. But all these aspirations have had to contend with the influence of Islamism in the Moslem Brotherhood, the power and pretensions of the Egyptian military and the interests of the United States. Democratization is also severely restricted by the absence of strong political organizations in the hands of the people. The process is thus long term, and inherently contentious. Tunisia too has made perhaps bigger advances in strengthening civil society, in active, inclusive constitutionalism, and through the conciliatory role of a pluralist Islamist party, Ennahda.

But contrast these uncertainties with liberal Britain today, where majorities of citizens express their contempt for orthodox political institutions but take part in demonstrations and community groups, while their supposed representatives reject even the consideration of participatory adaptations. The exemplars of democracy now are patently no longer the United States and Britain, not the established liberal systems, but popular movements built on civic groups imbued with resonant ideas about inequalities, in the struggles for democratization in South Africa, Tunisia and elsewhere. Failures will almost certainly be more numerous than successes, but democracy as a process of struggle and revolution is again center stage, and is being separated off from liberal, elitist Anglo-American models. In Iceland the greed of some 30 individuals collapsed the financial system, but the other 320,000

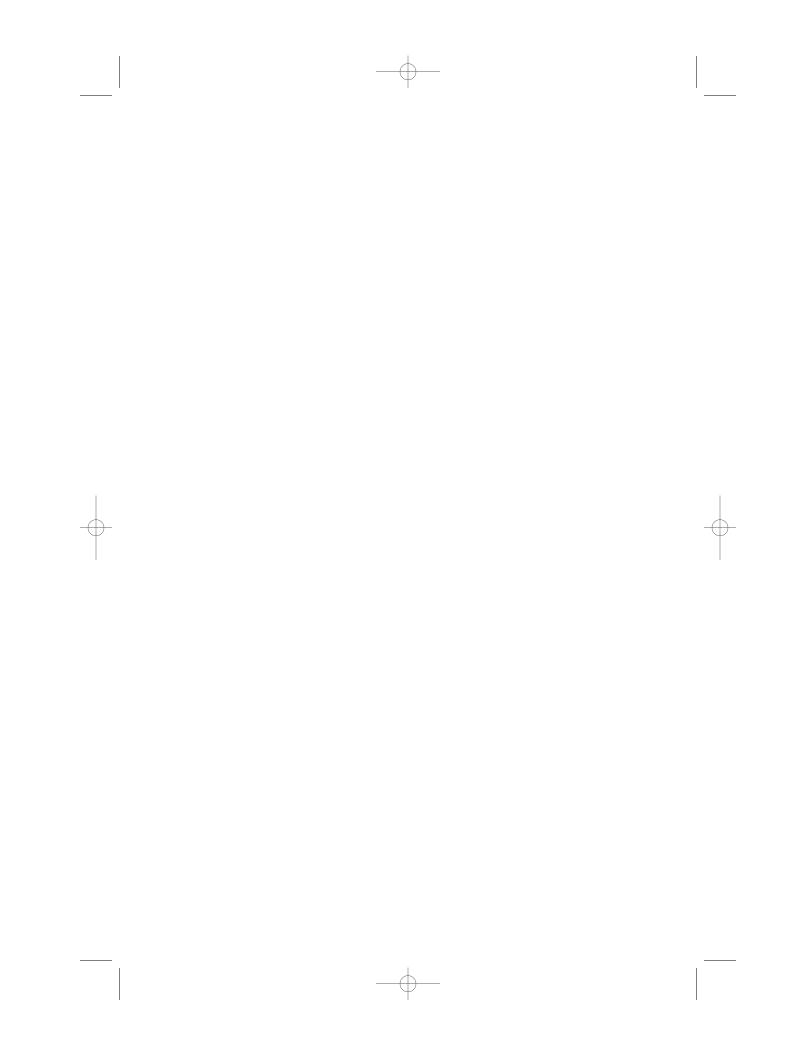
people have been reconstructing the framework of their government since 2009 in innovative and participatory ways reminiscent of Athens.

One of the key theses here is the argument that the liberal capitalist democratic model has failed, while participatory forms are rising in many places. Some or many of these are likely to fail in whole or part, but others may progress and offer hope and the chance of a more meaningful life to their people.

Another more minor proposition is that no country—not even Mandela's South Africa—is to be properly understood in and of itself. Some of the achievements of the UDF in the 1980s had earlier parallels in Britain, especially in the dangers of internally generated elitism. The old adage retains relevance: "Who knows London who only London knows".

The body of theory and analysis that have been most influential here is historical materialism, with its stress on development and the possibilities of progress, on class formation and struggle as the engine of change, and in its interest in addressing the big questions of 'what happened in history'. Classical elite theory, represented by Michels, Weber and Mosca, arising significantly at the start of the twentieth century when socialism was high on the agenda in Europe, is also relevant to democratization. Michels and Weber had the explicit aim of showing people that popular democracy was impossible: the people had never ruled, they falsely claimed, and would never do so. Even the people's own organizations were elitist, and their leaders were detached from and superior to the rank and file. Mosca tried to liberalize elite rule, recommending a plurality of political elites, and open electoral competition. People as voters would choose the elites who would represent and rule them. He placed emphasis on the role of ideology or 'political formula': if it was to truly integrate the society with its ruling elite, it would have to be responsive to the felt needs of the people, and change over time in accord with changing circumstances.

Intended to serve anti-democratic ends, elite theory is seen here as critical perspectives on the reality of elite or liberal democracy in not least Britain and the United States today. It seems relevant to South Africa too, where the ANC represents its armed struggle as the foundation of its legitimacy and its right to rule. But an ideology of armed struggle in the 1960s to 1990 is vulnerable to the truth being revealed about what the armed struggle actually entailed, and the truncating of popular home-based democratization that accompanied it. And this ideology, additionally, appears increasingly irrelevant to the democratic needs of an educated urban population today. The ANC's struggle formula seems in much the same fix as does Anglo-American liberal capitalism.



## Chapter One

# Athenian Participatory Democracy, 508–322 BCE

Empowering the People and Controlling Elites

Athenian democracy arose in what Ober has termed a 'leaderless uprising' against Spartan occupation, where the prominence of a leader like Cleisthenes was based on his ability 'to persuade the Athenian people to adopt and act on the proposals he advocated.' The democracy was not a gift from a benevolent elite, but grew from the collective decision of ordinary men who had begun to conceive of themselves as potential citizens, 'responsible for one another's welfare', rather than as the exploited subjects of landlords or great men. <sup>1</sup> The democracy which emerged victorious from the Persian invasion—first in 490 then again in 480–479 BCE, not 30 years from its outset was revolutionary, dynamic and innovative, both radically exclusionary in its definition of the citizenry, and even more radically inclusionary in the political predominance it accorded to the poor majority of citizens; a veritable 'dictatorship of the proletariat', in the words of Cartledge.<sup>2</sup> It endured for 186 years despite the prevalence of warfare for three out of every four years of its life, that it was never at peace for a decade consecutively, and was 'constantly' at risk of destruction.3 Contrast such longevity with the brevity of the great twentieth century totalitarian states, Hitler's proclaimed Thousand Years' Reich which collapsed after 12 years, and the Soviet Union which fell in its 74th year.

Athenian democracy was erected in a class society within a pre-capitalist economy with very limited energy resources. The polity was some 2,500 square kilometers in size, comprising the city, the port of Piraeus and the surrounding countryside of Attica. Its population around 400 BCE was some

220,000 (but it had been 335,000 thirty years earlier), making Athens roughly comparable in size to contemporary Iceland, with its population of 311,000 and an area of 103,000 square kilometers, or to the size of the city-state of Singapore of 639 square kilometers. The year 400 came just four years after the 27-years-long Peloponnesian war, which reduced the city-state's population from some 335,000 pre-war to the drastically lower figure of 400 BCE, and ended with the 'defeat and humiliation of Periclean Athens.' Athenian class relations, however, remained much the same. Economic and social inequalities were deep, but under an active, participatory democracy their pervasiveness was not allowed to extend into the political realm.

#### THE BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

On Waterfield's post-war set of data, there were c. 400 BCE some 120,000 free men, women and children; some 70,000 slaves; 30,000 resident foreigners or *metics*; and 30,000 male citizens. Though women were prominent in Athenian theatre and literature, and they performed what Cartledge calls 'public citizenship roles as priestesses', they were denied participation in politics. It should be recalled that such exclusion was a world-historical phenomenon until late nineteenth century democratization brought the vote to women in New Zealand in 1893, in Australia in 1902 and in Norway in 1915; Britain only extended the vote to women in 1928, and Swiss democracy excluded women until 1971.<sup>5</sup> Slavery existed almost world-wide until 1838, when some 800,000 black men, women and children became officially free in the British empire, leaving the system firmly in place in the southern United States, the Caribbean and most of South America, and in different forms in Russia, most of Africa and in the Islamic world. 6 The slave trade continued, for example, through Zanzibar, the main conduit for slaves from Africa to Arabia, with only mild admonition from Britain, and serfdom prevailed in Botswana well into the 20th century. It is anachronistic and ahistorical to single out Athens for denying rights to women and slaves.

The denial of political rights to *metics* was perhaps more eccentric. This quasi-elite social category included many of those most active in the commercial, entrepreneurial, and intellectual life of the city—Aristotle, for one, was a metic—whose contribution helped lift Athens to leadership in the eastern Mediterranean. Their exclusion related to the city-state's citizenship rules; initially it was accorded to a person with one parent born in Athens, but tightened by Pericles in 451 BCE to a restrictive two-parent requirement. But variability and flexibility was shown in practice to the political rights of *metics* over time. According to Ober, Athens 'granted major honors to foreigners, including citizenship, more readily in the fourth century', involv-

ing access to property and religious rights and the right to speak on invitation in the Assembly, in order to make the city more attractive to foreign traders and stimulate its dynamic economy.<sup>8</sup>

Waterfield's data indicates the extent of the socio-economic inequalities in Athens. There were 1,200 men whom he terms 'super-rich' who were liable to liturgies, or extremely expensive and mandatory benefactions to the state, for example, the funding of a religious festival or the command and operational costs of a *trireme* warship, each with 170 oarsmen, for a year (some 6,000 drachmas, which Waterfield assesses as some 600,000 British pounds today). Additionally among the wealthy there were some 3,000 men who owned large estates, who did not need to work and were able to speculate with their capital, and another 3,000 who enjoyed income from varied sources, and were in turn liable for emergency taxation during wartime, *eisphora*, which Ober suggests was a property tax of one talent on an estate; a liturgy was a similar tax but it was three to four times greater in value. <sup>10</sup>

Below this wealthy elite totaling some 7,200 men, there were about 14,000 small farmers who Ober sees as owning and living with their families off some ten to fifteen acres of land, 11 with income sufficient to be *hoplites*, the heavy infantry backbone of the city-states's military. And below this rich peasantry, were some 9,000 *thetes*, or small peasants and manual workers, living off wages and other income worth about 300–350 drachmas a year around the 480s BCE. Such a class of poor peasantry, artisans and shopkeepers, with little or no property, 'worked on their own account' at or near subsistence levels, says Ste Croix, and constituted the majority of the citizenry.

He notes also that the possession of property, primarily in land, represented the social and economic power of the upper class, and which, before the advent of democracy, 'gave them command over the labor of others' and the many advantages that flowed from that—including a good and comfortable life, devoted to gentlemanly pursuits, politics and military command, intellectual or artistic pursuits, hunting or athletics. These men produced Greek art, literature, science and philosophy. They also provided part of the Greek armies which defeated the might of the Persian empire at Marathon in 490 BCE and at sea at Salamis and on land at Plataea in 480–479 BCE—some of the hoplites, all of the cavalry (the preserve of the 'very wealthiest citizens')<sup>12</sup>, and then after the 480s, the commanders, or 'trierarchs', of the new and almost invincible navy. Athens fielded perhaps some 9,000 hoplites against Persia, or some one-fifth to one-third of the total citizenry then. The cost of hoplite weaponry and armor in the late sixth century was some 30 drachmas (a sum well beyond the earnings of a worker-peasant). Slave ownership was similarly class-based. The price of a slave in the late fifth century and over most of the fourth century was about 200 drachmas, or on Ste Croix's estimates, about half of an artisan's annual income. 13 Waterfield

offers further insight into the economic strength of rich Athenians, noting that the wealthiest man in the city-state around 410 BCE, Oeonias Oenonocharous, had property which produced an income of about 81 talents (or 486,000 drachmas), 'a billionaire by today's standards'. <sup>14</sup> The economic advantages possessed by an elite of some one-third of the citizenry, and their potential and actual leadership roles in military and financial affairs, were clearly considerable.

Ober recognizes that 'substantial economic inequalities' existed between the elite and the poorer two-thirds of citizens, and that 'endemic tensions' prevailed between ordinary citizens (the *hoi poloi*) and elites. These were normally bridged by a prevailing ideology of over-riding political equality, supported by a very active participatory practice, considered in detail below.<sup>15</sup>

# SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: LOCAL AND NATIONAL

Local or community government was based on two new social units, introduced in the first generation of the democracy, which fostered unity and cohesion among the geographic and economic diversity of the city-state; the deme and the tribe. The former was either a village, a suburb or a district, and a tribe was not a primordial or ascribed entity but an artificial grouping of three demes, one urban, one from the hinterland of Attica, and one from the coastal region, ten in all. It was the basic socio-political unit. The Council of 500, charged with the implementation of the decisions of the Assembly, which served as the linchpin of the political system, was composed of 50 men from each tribe. Associated with these innovations was a new conception of citizenship. It was in his deme at age 20 that a man acquired citizenship on the basis of parentage and the knowledge and voting decision of his fellow demesmen and citizens. <sup>16</sup>

Athenian participatory democracy was built on the belief that all citizens, regardless of wealth or education, were equally capable politically, and that growing up in Athens constituted something of an education in itself, in the diversity of experience in public office that the average citizen could acquire. Closely related was the idea that decision making by large numbers of participants was better and sounder than those made by the few.

The Assembly, or *ecclesia*, was the decision-making body on the big issues of war and peace; the making of treaties, declarations of war, assigning generals to specific campaigns and determining what forces they should command; confirmation of officials or their removal from office; deciding whether or not to hold an ostracism; matters of religion, public works, finance and taxation; and virtually all issues of civic concern. <sup>17</sup> It was open to

all citizens and it normally met around 40 times a year with some 6,000 in attendance; decisions were made by a simple majority on a show of hands.

Political institutions were designed to bring together different groups of citizens in multi-layered arenas and institutions, and the whole system, says Ober, articulated and aggregated individual knowledge. How this was achieved in the Assembly and in the Council of 500 (or Boule) will be considered below. The latter body was responsible for the daily administration of public affairs, and for ensuring that the Assembly's decisions were properly implemented; membership was reserved for those over 30. It reviewed the performance of outgoing magistrates, some 700 annually, and it prepared the agenda for the Assembly and chaired its meetings. The latter was a task of the *Epitaste* or President-for-a-Day, who also chaired the Council and, as head of state, met visiting ambassadors and held the keys to the treasury. Council membership was effectively structured to promote circulation and democracy. A citizen could serve on the Council for only two annual terms and never consecutively. The frequency of its meetings—daily except when the Assembly was meeting—and its large and rotating membership, gave most citizens experience in political office while the rotational requirements also prevented the Council from acquiring a strong and possibly elitist institutional identity. 18 It remained 'the servant of the Assembly' which could vote down a bill drafted by the Council, change it in debate, send it back with instructions for redrafting or replace it with an entirely new bill. 19

The People's Courts (or *dekasteria*) were based on the annual random selection of 6,000 citizens over 30 years to serve as a panel of jurors and judges, or dikasts, 600 from each tribe. The courts like the Council met every day and jurors were assigned to specific courts and cases. Jury size varied around a figure of 501, depending on whether a case was public or private and its political importance—the larger juries were believed to reduce the possibility of bribery or partiality. Complaints were registered and argued by private citizens, and both plaintiff and defendant each argued his case, rebutted his opponent, cited the law, produced witnesses, and offered a concluding summary, all within a brief and tightly controlled time. The decision then went to the jury, who immediately voted by secret ballot. A simple majority decided the outcome. Penalties included a possible heavy fine (which could be incurred for filing a frivolous suit), confiscation of property, disenfranchisement, exile or death. The jurors had earlier sworn an oath to follow the law where it was clear, and to seek justice where it was not. Kagan says that the system was open, simple, and understandable to the citizenry. It placed no barriers of legal technicalities or expertise between the citizens and their laws, relying 'as always on the common sense of the ordinary Athenian.' Ultimately, suggests Kagan, the distinction between the Assembly and the law courts was 'almost a technicality', since both shared the same principle of reliance on 'full, direct popular sovereignty.' <sup>20</sup>

Waterfield adds that the jury constituted a fair cross section of the citizenry, in terms of age, wealth and employment, with 'something of a bias towards the poor.' Dikasts received state pay for their frequent attendance; since the 420s, this was three obols a day, 'enough to improve the quality of a poor man's life.' <sup>21</sup>

From the middle of the fourth century BCE, 700 magistrates were annually selected by random lot, to serve on boards or committees supervising, with the assistance of a small staff of public slaves and working citizens, the operations of key institutions like the army and navy, and activities like the management of public works and festivals, and the disbursing of welfare payments; orphans of men who fell in battle—presumably not an insignificant number—were raised by the state, their daughters were given dowries, and handicapped citizens received a stipend. Very strict accountability procedures were enforced upon magistrates both before and especially after their year of service. They, together with the members of the Council of 500, were directly responsible for the daily administration of government in Athens.

#### EMPOWERMENT OF THE POOR MAJORITY

Over the years, the empowerment of the majority was achieved in good part through the promotion of wide political participation by poor citizens. In sum: 500 citizens sat daily on the Council where the detailed work of government went on. 6,000 were enrolled annually as jury members available in the People's Courts, while another 700 held prestigious magisterial positions. Thousands attended Assembly meetings many times a year, where they might participate directly, as will shortly be noted, in sovereign decision making on all the big issues affecting Athens. Rotating memberships with limited tenure ensured that two-thirds of citizens served at least once on the Council, while some one-quarter became President-for-a-Day. Through the Assembly, Council and the courts, says Raaflaub, 'the people controlled the entire political process', involving a very large proportion of citizens constantly in public business.<sup>23</sup>

Wide majoritarian participation was assisted by the reliance on random selection for office, as both an extension of the principle that all citizens were equally capable politically, and a reflection of the belief that elections were an 'aristocratic method' which inherently favored elites of wealth, status and education. In Athens an allotment (or randomization) machine called a *kleroterion* selected citizens to serve on the Council and assigned hundreds of jurists daily to specific cases and courts, virtually eliminating tampering and bribery.<sup>24</sup> An exception was made for military command, where ability and

experience were vital, and Athens' 10 generals were annually elected for extendable terms.

Payment for office greatly facilitated the participation of poor citizens. In the 420s BCE, dikasts were paid three obols daily by the state, and payment expanded into other magisterial services. Payment for attendance at the Assembly began around 410, at the same level as for jury service. It was doubled to one drachma, around 340 BCE, and then tripled to nine obols for the ten 'principal' Assembly meetings of the year. Ober estimates that the annual costs of democratic government in Athens were then about 100 talents, and most of that amount was devoted to payment for office.<sup>25</sup>

In the military affairs of the imperialistic city-state, popular participation was even greater. From age 18 to 60 years, every citizen was on standby for service in a branch of the military appropriate to his class and wealth, the very rich historically in the cavalry, and a middle-income man, or rich peasant, as a hoplite; the percentage of citizens mobilized in the latter category at critical times, such as the Persian wars, was almost one-third. Hoplite fighting was based on a phalanx, 8 or 16 men deep, in a tight formation of bristling shields and spears, where highly trained and disciplined soldiers never broke ranks; the complete subordination of the individual to his unit and community. In Athens the rise of hoplite tactics was linked to 'enhanced constitutional rights for non-aristocrats' after 508 BCE. <sup>26</sup> But the important role of the military as a vehicle for both development and democratization was transformed when a large navy of some 200 advanced triremes was introduced in the early fifth century, utilizing both Athens' new silver resources and the foresight of its poorer citizenry.

Powered by 170 oarsmen in three tiers, with the lowest level seated just above the waterline, the 120-foot vessel from its battering ram at the bow to the stern, the highly maneuverable trireme could maintain a speed of 10 knots over a full day. Themistocles, as elected chief archon for 493-492 BCE, had 'inaugurated the turn to the sea', and when the silver revenues became available 10 years later, he proposed to the Assembly that the new wealth should be devoted, not to the gratification of immediate consumption, but to the building of a new and large fleet, with Piraeus as both Athens' main naval base and commercial harbor; it offered three natural harbors and could be better protected than existing facilities at Phalerum.<sup>27</sup>

The costs and consequences of the new naval force were both large. Even under fleeting peacetime conditions, keeping some 60 triremes at sea for an eight-month year cost 480 talents, and required a crew of some 12,000. According to Hale, the right to serve as oarsmen was reserved for citizens who held parentage on both their father's and their mother's side, and the pay that came with naval service was an added prize for commoners. <sup>28</sup> The ships required time to build, large sums to maintain, and constant practice to operate effectively. On board the triremes, the common citizens 'learned the

discipline of silence and instant obedience' to trierarch and steersman, in battle tactics demanding skill and prioritizing deception of the enemy. The Athenian democracy passed a large part of the naval costs on to the less than one-third of very wealthy citizens, who were encouraged to compete publicly with each other in the number and value of their annual trierarchies, the fittings of their ships and the speed and dexterity of their crews.<sup>29</sup>

The navy produced imperial wealth and defrayed its costs of construction and maintenance. By around 450 BCE, Athens controlled some 160 subject city-states, from which it gained revenue, according to Ober, of some 1,000 talents annually, some 400-600 talents of which came as direct tribute. Twenty years later, on Hanson's assessments, the empire had grown to about 200 states, run by 700 Athenian overseers, bringing wealth worth 6,500 talents annually, the equivalent perhaps of some \$3 billion today. The rise of the navy was contemporary, notes Ober, with the 'flowering of Athenian democracy.' As naval power became increasingly decisive for Athens' role in the Mediterranean, the poorer majority of citizens 'took a correspondingly larger role in the governance of the state.'30 Pericles in particular, though also following Themistocles in part, saw a crucial linkage between a new fleet and Athenian military domination, and that the potential role of the demos therein was an untapped source of power.<sup>31</sup> Democratization was perhaps inherent in a force reliant on the skill and endurance of many thousands of common citizens, which was soon both victorious and valuable economically.

#### THE MAKING OF SPECIFIC DECISIONS IN THE DEMOCRACY

The Despatching Decree to establish a naval base and colony in the Adriatic in 325 and 324 BCE, to protect commerce in the area both Athenian and foreign, was recorded and preserved in detail in stone. It shows how the democracy had taught its citizens in the Assembly how to think through complex issues; how the various rotating offices chosen by lot, the institutions of local government, the army and navy, were able to work cooperatively together, to produce new information and knowledge with speed and efficiency.

The primary decision-making body was a principal meeting of the Assembly, of approximately 8,000 citizens. The motion was moved by Cephisophon of the deme Cholargos, an otherwise unknown individual citizen who had chosen to speak out and move the successful motion. It gave orders to a wide variety of government agents and leading persons, such as the curators of the shipyards and trierarchs, to provide the right ships in a timely manner, and instructed other magistrates and public bodies to play their part. The motion specified both incentives and sanctions for malfeasance in the opera-

tions, where punishments in the form of crippling fines stand out, together with the Assembly's promotion of a competitive, elitist 'race to the docks', where the carefully graded winners of notable honors would be those trierarchs who could most quickly assemble the skilled and experienced crews—riggers, outfitters, a full complement of expert rowers and steersmen—on well-equipped ships for dispatch from Piraeus. The conjunction of knowledgeable trierarchs, well-equipped ships and skilled crew was, says Ober, the key to the immediate success, and also constituted the 'complex matrix of specialized knowledge that had enabled the Athenian fleet to dominate the Aegean in the fifth century.'

In the words of Cephisophon's decree—for the good fortune of the Athenian demos, in order that what the demos had resolved may be done as quickly as possible, the following was decreed:

The curators of the shipyards are to hand over the ships and equipment to the trierarchs;

That the trierarchs who have been appointed are to bring the ships up to the docks in Piraeus before the 10th of the month of Mounichon (mid-June), equipped for sailing;

That the demos is to crown the first trierarch to bring up his ship with a crown of 500 drachmas, the second with a crown of 300 drs, and the third with a crown of 200 drs;

In order that pleas for exemption from trierarch service may be heard efficiently, the judicial magistrates are to man People's Courts with 201 jurors under the elected general in charge of the *symmories* (ie, syndicates for financing trierarch duties) on the 2nd and 5th of Mounichon;

That the treasurers of Athens are to provide the money for the courts in accordance with the law (nomos);

If anyone to whom each of these things has been commanded does not do them in accordance with this decree, whether he be a magistrate (archon) or a private individual (idiote), is to be fined 10,000 drs., and the magistrate (*euthonos*) in charge of accountability proceedings and his assistants are of necessity to condemn them or themselves owe the money;

The Council of 500 is to look after the despatch, punishing any lack of discipline among the trierarchs;

The Council is to sit in continuous session on the docks in Piraeus until the dispatch takes place;

The demos is to choose from the whole body of Athenians ten men as Dispatchers to look after the dispatch as the Council has ordered;

The Council, when they have looked after the despatch of the ships, is to be crowned by the demos with a gold crown of 1,000 drs;

All this is to be done for the security of the homeland.  $^{32}$ 

Much of the work of the operation, and overall responsibility is, on Ober's summary, assigned to the Council of 500, who were simultaneously responsible for a great deal of other work, assisted by ten temporary Dispatchers.

Most of the rest of the work was to be done by collegial boards of magistrates chosen by lot and from among the 10 annually elected generals. The work of establishing the naval colony was chiefly to be done, in other words, by average citizens, although the need for skill and experience in military affairs was recognized on the ships. Athenian politics was a complex and effective system designed to identify (to articulate, aggregate and organize) relevant knowledge in the hands of thousands of citizens. The fate of the Adriatic colony is unknown, but Ober believes the Athenian state flourished over the many years through carrying out many complex policies by similar processes. Even when disasters occurred, such as defeat in the Peloponnesian War, the democracy displayed a remarkable 'bouncebackability' to recover and redevelop again. 33

In such a period, around 378–355 BCE, precise steps were taken in the Assembly to protect the integrity of the currency, the tetradrachmas (or silver Owls), which constituted a standard means of exchange throughout the central and eastern Mediterranean. The Athenian owls were nearly pure silver and standardized in weight. It was dependable as an exchange medium, and this dependability lowered transaction costs. But the very success of the coins had led, by the mid-370s, to the introduction of many so-called 'owl-like coins' or 'imitation owls', some from foreign states, into the eastern Mediterranean. Some of these were good coins, comparable in silver content to the Athenian original, while others were bad coins, deceptive in appearance and with a low silver content.

New magistrates were appointed as 'Approvers' of silver coinage, with offices in the city-states' main markets in the Agora and at Piraeus, charged with guaranteeing the quality of the coins exchanged by merchants trading in Athenian territory. Transparency was one principle of the new system, and an exact wording of the new currency law was displayed on stone stelai, one in the Agora and another in Piraeus, where the Approvers worked. Speed, and hence low cost, and summary decisions were others, partly on the democratic belief that heavy punishments should be levied by large bodies rather than individual magistrates. The new currency law defined the Approvers essentially as umpires, says Ober, required to make quick and absolute judgment calls guaranteeing the quality of the coinage in inherently ambiguous cases. The need for expertise on the part of the Approvers and for close coordination between them were reasons why the vital but invidious task was assigned to public slaves. Drudgery, from thousands of hours of scrutiny in acquiring expertise and consistency in decisions, was something which lotteried, short-term amateur citizens could not be expected to endure and acquire. Only slaves too could be subjected to heavy physical punishment for failure. Some 20,000 to 30,000 slaves had been harshly exploited in the stateowned silver mines at Laureum from the beginning. Slave Approvers could be whipped for dereliction, when the comparable penalty for a citizen would

be a monetary fine. On the other hand, says Ober, slave Approvers were otherwise assumed to be full parties to transactions, and could be paid a regular salary.<sup>34</sup> The coinage laws were thus a speedy, effective and open response to a serious commercial problem, transparent in key aspects and reliant on the overall harshness of slavery.

Another example of wise decision making in the Assembly was of course the decision, already alluded to, to build the new navy. There was already a counterproposal before the citizenry. It was reckoned that the silver strike of 483/2 would have been enough for a universal distribution among the citizenry of a sum worth around two weeks' wages for a skilled artisan. This was an attractive proposition for the poor majority. But Themistocles argued successfully for a formidable trireme fleet, and the deferred but ultimately substantial gratification, financial and political, which developed naval power would bring primarily to the whole community and significantly to the demos.<sup>35</sup>

#### CONTROLLING ELITES

This was a continuing problem, which was substantially addressed through the empowerment of the poor majority as indicated above, especially in the construction of an institutional array of interlocking agencies and institutions expressing the power of the demos—excluding or limiting elite penetration—bolstered overall by an ideology of political equality. Elites of wealth, status and education actively existed, and the democracy sought to utilize their skills and experience in specific areas, while controlling their powers and restricting their oligarchical tendencies. In long and highly turbulent times, there were only two brief interruptions, in 411 and 404–403, to the democratic dominance of the common man.<sup>36</sup>

The threat of ostracism was one of the most visible of such control devices. Introduced by Cleisthenes around 507 BCE, it was often used by the Assembly between 487 and 416, but never in the fourth century; on Thorley's estimate, only about a dozen ostracisms occurred in total. <sup>37</sup> It gave the citizens the annual opportunity to exile a prominent person for a maximum of 10 years—without loss of property or honors—because he was believed to be a threat to stable democracy. The Assembly first voted on whether to hold an ostracism, with a minimum of 6,000 votes required that day for the process to proceed; secondly, the question was subsequently put, Who was it?, and the person most often named in writing was banished. The device acknowledged that the people were aware of the tensions created in the democracy by the presence of wealthy, highly competitive and ambitious men in public life, who were nonetheless needed for their knowledge and experience in specific areas. Ostracism along with other controlling techniques helped to create a

'good middle ground', suggests Waterfield, between the chaos of aristocratic feuding and what he calls a possible totalitarian collectivism. <sup>38</sup>

The principles and practice of universal fitness for office, for rotational, short-term appointments, and the almost complete reliance on random, lotteried selection, all in close working association, helped check elite power. Athens recognized that election conferred potential prestige, and sharply restricted its use. Only 10 generals, each over 30 years, held annual, renewable elected office, along with key naval architects, some treasurers and the superintendents of the water supply. <sup>39</sup> The powers possessed by the generals were high, but the controls exerted over them by the Assembly, Council of 500 and the Courts system were as great and implicitly greater.

Some instances of ostracism and deposition: Pericles (ca. 495–429) was an elected general for 15 years, and he won repeated reelection based on his experience, age, character, eloquence and powers of persuasion. He became, says Waterfield, the 'undisputed first man of Athenian politics', and as such chiefly responsible for the building of the Acropolis, the expansion of the empire, but also what became the long disaster of war with Sparta. Pericles was by birth 'an aristocrat of bluest blood.' But as the war brought plague to Athens around 430–429, the people turned sharply against him and his policies. The essential fragility of his position, and his dependence on popular support in the Assembly and the courts, was quickly revealed.

Aspects of his character and experience were perhaps earlier thrown into question when he divorced his Athenian wife and brought a Milesian woman, Aspasia, a *metic*, into his household and public life; she was known as a high-class courtesan (or *hetaira*), and as someone of intellect sufficient to attract the attention of Socrates. As Kagan has it, 'the scandal surrounding Pericles' liaison with Aspasia was immense.'

The position of general was a strategic office, <sup>40</sup> representing military and societal prestige, and the lion's share of war booty, but it remained open to recall and public trial, and around 430 Athenian politics were highly volatile. Pericles in that year was deposed as general by vote in the Assembly. He was charged with embezzlement of public funds, tried before a large jury, convicted, and fined, says Kagan, an 'extraordinarily large amount'; one estimate suggests between 15 and 50 talents. He was reelected general the following year but died of the plague in 429.<sup>41</sup>

Themistocles (c. 524–429 BCE), father of the navy, was in the minds of many Athenians the victor over Persia at Salamis. But after charges of corruption and treason in the Assembly, he was ostracized around 471; recalled to Athens on formal treason charges five years later, he defected to Persia and died there an outlaw. Cimon (c. 510–450 BCE), was born into the nobility through his mother and his father was the celebrated general Miltiades. One of his own great exploits as a general was the destruction of Persian forces at the Eurymedon River in 466, but after an unsuccessful expedition

four years after, he was dismissed and ostracized in 461 BCE. Thucydides (c. 460–395 BCE), the aristocratic historian, was sent as a general to Thasos in 424, but after failing to rescue Amphipolois from Sparta, he was exiled in the 420s.<sup>42</sup>

Alcibiades (c. 453–404) personified most of the values and pretenses that the demos most disliked in their aristocratic elites. At age 20 he was already, on Waterfield's description, the darling of Athenian high society, the leader of the fashionable young bloods, and notorious for his arrogant, flamboyantly anti-social behavior. He was born into two of the greatest Athenian families, and was very rich, owning exceptionally large estates, with an income sufficient to include among his slaves his own personal goldsmith. He had the best of teachers, and was prominent in the company of Socrates at this time, though the pot-bellied philosopher was only a hoplite while the elegant young aristocrat was of course a cavalryman.

In 415 Alcibiades persuaded the Assembly to attack Sicily, and to name him as one of three generals in command. The rash move necessarily confronted Syracuse, a prosperous Greek city and ally of Sparta. 43 The expedition is seen by Hamel as one of the greatest naval forces ever assembled by a Greek city, with nearly all of Athens lining the shore to see it off. It represented 'an enormous financial outlay,' 44 and it ended in disaster: the entire force destroyed, with 200 ships, some 4,000 soldiers and sailors lost, and the exhaustion of Athens' capital reserves. The defeat helped bring Persia into the war on Sparta's side. On one succinct summary, Alcibiades then defected to advise the Spartans on how best to attack Athens, and defected again (after sleeping with a Spartan king's wife) to Persia. In 411 he conspired with a group of aristocrats to overthrow the democracy, promising Persian support. He was tried in absentia, condemned to death and his property sold. Though subsequently pardoned, he remained on the margins of Athenian life and, after further maneuverings with Persia, was assassinated in Phrygia in 404. 45 Aged 22 at the start of the Peloponnesian War, his career paralleled and contributed to the decline in Athenian power, facilitated by democratic overtolerance and forbearance towards an intemperate and treacherous upper class individual.

Waterfield notes that aristocrats all over the Greek world were, in fact, 'prepared to betray their city into the hands of a foreign occupying power, if that was the price of their holding political power.' The common man, on the other hand, tended to be steadfast in his commitment to democracy. Piraeus, the home of the navy and its sailors, was 'the heartland of the opposition to the oligarchs' in the early 400s. 46

Heavy taxation, swingeing fines in the courts, and liturgies represented important financial controls on the rich, and helped to underwrite a redistribution of income in favor of the poor majority in the form of payment for office and the state's limited welfare benefits. Liturgy obligations like those a

trierarch faced—some 4,000 drachma a year—harnessed the competitive drives of elites to outdo their rivals and win goodwill from the people. As Athenian resources plummeted towards the 420s, a direct tax (eisphora) of 200 talents was imposed exclusively on the wealthy. Kagan says that this was regarded by the propertied classes as an extraordinary and painful move, sapping their enthusiasm for a war in which their own imperial incomes were falling. 47

The trial of Socrates was related to the defeat at Syracuse and how it came about. Stone believes that Athens had been extraordinarily tolerant of dissident opinion, but that what happened towards the end of the great philosopher's years served to alter this. What converted prejudice into prosecution was, he says, the move by disaffected upper-class elements in connivance with the Spartan enemy to overthrow democracy, set up dictatorships, and a reign of terror in 411 and 404, just a few years before Socrates's trial and execution in 399 BCE. The first dictatorship, that of the Four Hundred, lasted only four months, and the second, of the Thirty, eight months, but each was accompanied by many horrors. The type of rich young aristocrats prominent in Socrates's entourage, typified by Alcibiades, played a leading role in both, and were scheming a third coup in 401 which failed. 48

Socrates was suspect by association with the plotters, his sympathies shared with Plato—for Sparta, and his unhidden distaste for democracy. Charged with corruption of the youth and impiety, Socrates never addressed the charges before the jury but attempted a dialectical exchange with his accusers, insulting them further. Nonetheless, to the credit of the democracy, the verdict was close, on Stone's estimate, 280 voted guilty, 220 innocent. In his second speech on his sentencing, the philosopher increased his invective and mockery. Xenophon reportedly believed that Socrates wanted to die in order to expose the willfulness of democracy. The margin in the second vote grew, to 360-140 in favor of execution. When his friend, Crito, offered him an escape plan, he chose to stay in Athens and drink the hemlock; a preferable death to that by slow strangulation. Socrates possibly succeeded in part: his trial was an over-reaction, a betrayal of Athenian values, not least their proclaimed tolerance for 'the company of our critics.' But as Ober emphasizes, democratic ideology demanded that all citizens 'conform to a stern ethical code of behavior predicated on duty to self and community.' It enforced, in Dunn's terms, a permanent, intensely personal accountability, built on 'fierce directness.' Like Socrates himself, the democracy developed some powerful provisional arguments about good citizenship, and those ideas acted as irritants among some Athenian elite intellectuals. 49 The code constituted the framework of the community and indicated the expected role of the citizen therein; the irritant of the elite was the bolster of the common man.

Nonetheless, the long term post-coup situation in Athens was one favoring, says Stone, the reconciliation of the contending classes. For him, this

was based on a sweeping and admirable amnesty, while for Arblaster perhaps more accurately, the restored democracy treated the Thirty Tyrants with 'excessive leniency.' 50

Realism won out. For some decades elites like Plato and Socrates had insisted that democracy was unnatural in promoting equality. But, says Waterfield, 'the debate was won by the democrats . . . because their opponents had the worst track record'—Alcibiades' arrogance and disloyalty, the brutality of the Tyrants—'were plain facts.' The oligarchs never recovered moral stature, and 'active dissent fizzled out in the fourth century.' Ste Croix adds that it was 'taken for granted by virtually all citizens' that there was no practical alternative to democracy for Athens; for two generations, the upper classes abandoned hopes for constitutional changes and devoted themselves to immediate pursuits. <sup>51</sup>

# THE WORKER-CITIZEN AND THE DEMOCRATIC HISTORIOGRAPHY

Ober notes that the role of the demos in the Athenian revolution around 508 BCE 'simply disappears in some respectable scholarly accounts.' 52 The people, or more specifically the worker-peasant, however, is the focus of Wood's attention, in arguing that 'the free labourer, enjoying the status of citizenship', the peasant-citizen with juridical and political freedoms, was the most distinguishing feature of Athenian democracy. Not only was there considerable 'hardness' or restrictiveness in society, as Ober and Dunn allow, but citizenship was defined to effectively exclude the majority of the population—resident foreigners, along with women and slaves; with slaves at perhaps an estimated 20–30 percent of the total population in the fourth century BCE. While such discriminations were in fact universal until recently, in Athens they had the unusual and decidedly positive consequence that the majority of citizens were people who labored for their livelihood. The need to work for a living, and the lack of property, were not in Athens grounds for exclusion from full political rights. Totally unlike modern liberal freedoms, Athens upheld the freedom of the demos from masters; not the oligarchs right to speak (*eleutheria*), but the eleutheria of the laboring man.

As well as being a geographical unity, the polis was most significantly, Wood believes, 'the union of labor and citizenship.' The Athenian civic community constituted a 'direct relationship between landlords and peasants as individuals and as classes'—fraught, challenged, disrupted, renegotiated and remade. The Athenian citizenry were democratic after 508 and more substantially through the economic and political development of the Periclean period. From the beginnings, elite interests were unable to oppose them effectively in establishing political institutions and in the allocation of re-

sources like silver, and the utilization of human resources like slaves was determined by the daily economic needs of worker-citizens. Slavery was crucial in the mines, and farm slaves were important on large estates, but their usage was restricted elsewhere. Wood believes that 'landholdings were generally modest' and the small-holder on his own land 'was at the heart of agricultural production'. The freedom of the peasantry from heavy economic exploitation—one of the well-springs of 508—was the determining factor which lead to the growth of slavery (and most slaves worked for rich men). The freedom of the laboring citizen, she therefore says, 'defined the bondage of slaves'. 53

But Athenian free labor was marginalized in early modern British and United States' historiography, with the aim of warning readers against democracy, in the proto-revolutionary late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; lampooned as 'the turbulent mob'/ 'citizens without property'/ 'the idle mob'/ or as Oliver Cromwell earlier sneered, men with no interests other than in breathing.<sup>54</sup> The hard-working Athenian jurors and Councilors, the thousands of soldiers who served actively until age 60 were ignored. The rewriting of history 'forged a new pedigree for the concept of democracy' traceable from Magna Carta, through the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and the Founding Fathers of the American constitution—all largely aristocratic or elitist events with an absent or passive people—taking precedence over Athens, the Levellers and Diggers, and the Chartists and many others of the 1830s and 1840s. In this heritage, political rights in modern capitalist society, no longer had the meaning and potency of citizenship in Athens. There was no clear division between state and civil society, no distinct and autonomous economy. With perhaps an especial contribution from American experience, modern capitalist democracy would be confined to a formally separate sphere while the market economy followed rules of its own, and socio-economic inequalities would coexist with civic freedom and formal political equality. Though new urban working classes struggled for self-determination through nineteenth century Britain, democracy moved away from active citizenship to 'the passive enjoyment of constitutional rights and safeguards'; checks and balances, the division of powers, the rule of law. The idea of democracy was identified with American and British liberalism, and then in the early twentieth century, when socialism was firmly on the European agenda, by elite democracy—as Mosca, Michels and Weber universally asserted, rule by the common man and woman was an impossibility and had never existed. The iron law of oligarchy and the law of the small number barred the way, and the best they could reasonably hope for was the chance to choose among competing elites in periodic elections.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY DYNAMICS IN DEMOCRATIC ATHENS

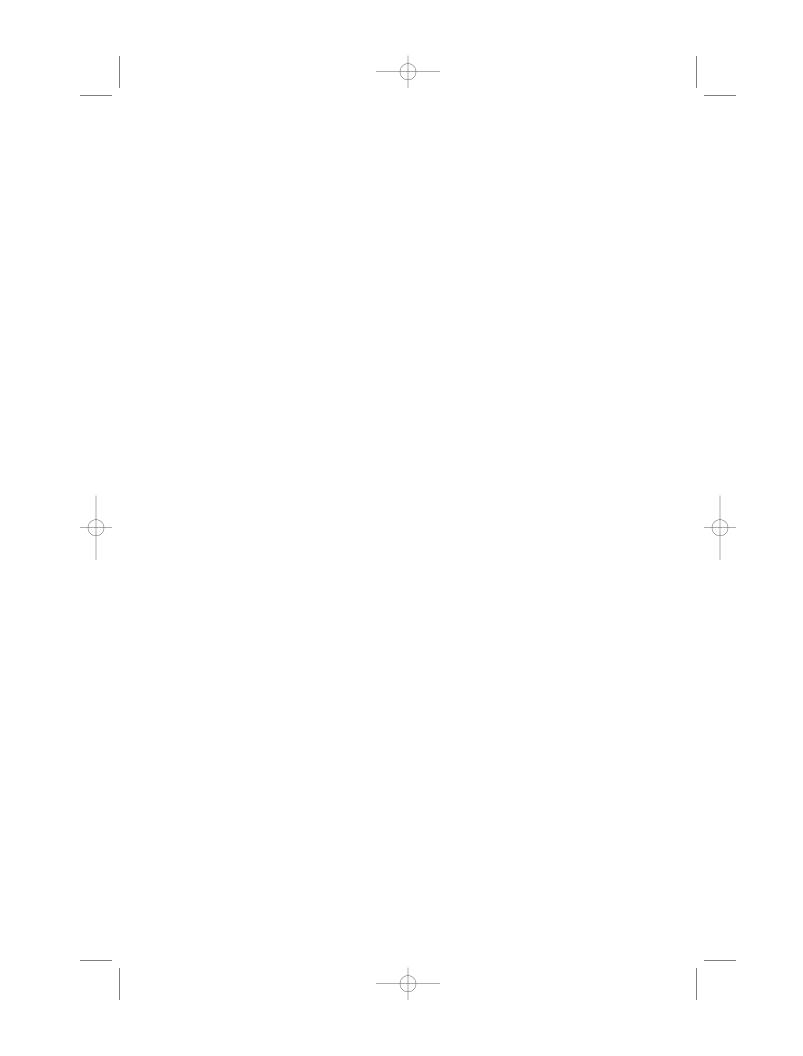
In such static, elite-dominated circumstances, Ober's stress upon the revolutionary qualities of Athenian democratization is highly salutary. The events of the year 508-507 constituted 'a genuine rupture' in Athens' political history because they marked the moment when 'the demos stepped on to the historical stage as a collective agent'. The energy released by the revolution, he says, was 'a key factor in Athens' subsequent political evolution': in the short term in the "Cleisthenic" innovations affecting citizenship, local authority, the Council, the army, and control over leaders; in the longer term in the panoply of democratic institutions that developed over the fifth and fourth centuries. Revolutionary action (against Spartan forces besieged on the acropolis) 'made democracy possible', he emphasizes, 'by changing the terms of discussion, by enlarging the bounds of the thinkable, and by altering the way citizens treated one another.' Leaderless revolts, he recognizes, are extremely rare in human history, and 'the appearance of democracy is also a historical rarity' (his emphasis). In Ober's perspectives, it is precisely the rarity of collective action without formal leadership that makes it so important. Democracy became both a possibility and a reality in Athens when the demos became a self-conscious and a determined actor in its own right. Athens' economic and political development through the Periclean period, noted above, proceeded on the same dynamics: the successes of the navy were made possible by 'the faith that Athenian citizen society had in itself,' and the rise of the navy and the empire were 'artifacts of democracy' not preconditions. 55 A revolutionary democratization was fuelled by the capacities of the common man over almost two centuries.

#### **NOTES**

- 1. Josiah Ober, *The Athenian Revolution*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1999, pp. 34–38.
- 2. Paul Cartledge, *Thermopylae: The Battle That Changed the World*, Woodstock and New York, Overlook Press, 2006, p. 52.
- 3. Cartledge, op. cit., p. 6, and Josiah Ober, *Democracy and Knowledge: Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2008, p. 80.
- 4. Victor Davis Hanson, A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War, London, Methuen, 2005, p. xiv.
  - 5. 'Rights', The Economist, 31 December 1999, p. 30.
- 6. Adam Hochschild, Bury the Chains: The British Struggle to Abolish Slavery, London, Pan Macmillan, 2006, pp. 348–49.
- 7. Points made by John Gretton in a letter entitled 'Resident Aliens', London Review of Books, 12 February 2009.
  - 8. Ober, Democracy and Knowledge, p. 252.
- 9. Six obols equalled one drachma; four drachmas equalled one tetradrachm (the main Silver Owl Athenian coin) and 6,000 drachmas equalled one talent. Ober, 'Athenian, Money, Taxes, Revenues', frontispiece, *Democracy and Knowledge*.
  - 10. Ibid., 'Athenian Money, Taxes, Revenues.'

- 11. Ibid., p. 58.
- 12. Ober, The Athenian Revolution, p. 59.
- 13. G.E.M. De Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*. Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1981, pp. 114, 227, 479 and 490.
- 14. Robin Waterfield, Why Socrates Died: Dispelling the Myths, London, Faber and Faber, 2010, pp. 20–22, 96 and 100.
  - 15. Ober, The Athenian Revolution, p. 181 and Democracy and Knowledge, p. 182.
- 16. Ober, 'I Besiged That Man: Democracy's Revolutionary Start', chapter in Kurt A. Raaflaub, Ober and Robert W. Wallace, *The Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, Berkley, University of California Press, 2007, p. 96.
- 17. Donald Kagan, *Thucydides: The Reinvention of History*, New York and London, Penguin Books, 2009, p. 108.
  - 18. Paul Vallely, 'Democracy: Whose Idea Was This?', Independent Online, 12 May 2010.
  - 19. Kagan, op. cit., p. 109.
  - 20. Ibid., pp. 111-13.
  - 21. Waterfield, op. cit., p. 4.
  - 22. Ober, Democracy and Knowledge, pp. 156-57 and 256.
- 23. Kurt A. Raaflaub, 'Introduction', in Raaflaub, Ober and Robert W. Wallace (eds.), *Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, Berkley, Los Angeles and London, 2007, p. 5. and Vallely, op. cit.
- 24. Sterling Dow, 'Aristotle, the Kleroteria, and the Courts,' chapter in P.J. Rhodes (ed)., *Athenian Democracy*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, pp. 62–94, and Raaflaub, op. cit., p. 4,
  - 25. Ibid., pp. 63, 65-66, and 68.
  - 26. Charlotte Higgins, It's All Greek to Me, London, Short Books, 2009, p. 117.
  - 27. Cartledge, op. cit., pp. 97–98, and 'Themistocles' in Wikipedia, 21 June 2011.
- 28. The citizen-sailor was usually paid around three obols daily in the late fifth century, which could be doubled on important expeditions, and there was the possibility for plunder, M.M. Markle, 'Jury Pay and Assembly Pay at Athens', chapter in Rhodes, op. cit., pp. 107–8.
- 29. John R. Hale, Lords of the Sea: The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy, London and New York, Viking Penguin, 2009, Introduction and pp. 126–27.
  - 30. Ober, The Athenian Revolution, pp. 64–65, and Hanson, op. cit., p. 27.
  - 31. 'Pericles' in Wikipedia, 21 June 2011
  - 32. Ober, Democracy and Knowledge, 125-27
- 33. Ober, *Democracy and Knowledge*, pp. 124–33 and David Runciman, 'Bouncebackability', *London Review of Books*, 29 January 2009.
  - 34. Ober, Democracy and Knowledge, pp. 67, 227-29, 237-38, 241 and 245.
  - 35. Cartledge, op. cit., p. 98.
  - 36. Waterfield, op. cit., p.24.
  - 37. John Thorley, Athenian Democracy, London and New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 43.
  - 38. Ibid., p. 24.
  - 39. Kagan, op. cit., p. 110.
- 40. The Assembly retained control over the size, composition and use of naval and land forces.
- 41. Waterfield, op. cit., pp. 53 and 100; Kagan, op. cit., 83, 106 and 113, and Hanson, op. cit., pp. 47 and 321.
- 42. Hale, op. cit., pp. 88-89 and 245; 'Cimon' and 'Thucydides' in Wikipedia, 21 June 2011.
- 43. Alcibiades' command position probably derived more from his Olympic achievements and over-payment of liturgies than his military capacities. Simon Hornblower, 'Creation and Development of Democratic Institutions in Ancient Greece.' Chapter in John Dunn (ed.), *Democracy The Unfinished Journey*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, 11.
- 44. Debra Hamel, *The Mutilation of the Herms: Unpacking an Ancient Mystery*, Create Space, March 2012, p. 11.
  - 45. Waterfield, op. cit., cs. 4-7 and 'Arguing to Death', The Economist, 19 December 2009.
  - 46. Waterfield, op. cit., pp. 101 and 130.

- 47. Waterfield, op. cit., 149-50, and Kagan, op. cit., 90-91.
- 48. There may have been an earlier attempt in late May or early June in 415, when over one night, many of Athens' numerous Herms—popular images of the god Hermes—were vandalised. It could have been the work of drunken revellers, except that, as Green notes, the incident was 'too widespread, too well organised, too deliberately selective'. Most Athenians 'took it very seriously' indeed, and official inquiries, arrests, imprisonments and some executions followed. Thucydides concluded that the mutilations seemed to have been done 'as part of a conspiracy for revolution and the overthrow of democracy.' Cited in Peter Green, 'Questions of Class', *London Review of Books*, 25 April 2013 (a review of Hamel's pamphlet). The attempt, if that was what it was, failed to get off the ground then, but it contributed to the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, and perhaps to the debacle soon after in Sicily.
- 49. Ober, *The Athenian Revolution*, pp. 11–12, and John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy*, London, Atlantic Books, 2006, p. 37.
- 50. I.F, Stone, *The Trial of Socrates*, Boston and Toronto, Little, Brown and Company, 1988, chapter 11; Waterfield, op. cit., *The Economist*, 19 December 2009, and Anthony Arblaster, *Democracy*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 1994, p. 17.
  - 51. Waterfield, op. cit., p. 154, and Ste Croix, op. cit., pp. 291-2).
  - 52. Ober, The Athenian Revolution, p. 43.
- 53. Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 181–86 and 236).
- 54. Wood sees the 1640s to 1670s in Britain as representing the first clash between democracy and the elitist interpretation of constitutionalism, with the Levellers at Putney demanding government by consent and to know what they had fought for, and the Grandees saying they had gained enough through constitutional parliamentary rule; after 1688 it was clear that the reality of constitutional monarchy—rule by the king in parliament—represented oligarchy. As subsequently noted, this became increasingly palpable over the two following centuries.
  - 55. Ober, 'Democracy's Revolutionary Start', pp. 86–101.



### Chapter Two

## **Democratization in Britain**

A Long and Repeated Aspiration

Nineteenth century Britain experienced an unprecedented leap forward, economically, socially and politically. But the advances eventually achieved then in society and politics by new industrial working classes built upon the precedents of the English Revolution of the mid-seventeenth century, and the elevation then of principles of popular sovereignty, accountability and democracy, in debate, documentation and in people's consciousness. In the eighteenth century too, when an oligarchical constitutional monarchy was firmly emplaced and mercantilism and imperialism rampant domestically and globally, when endemic corruption was the glue holding the whole system together, popular resistance to repression remained constant and insurrection occurred in the imperial capital near the end of the century. Two centuries of embryonic working-class struggle offered important precursors in values and ideas, especially of solidarity and resistance. Yet the industrial revolution was transformative as never before, allowing rising urban working classes and a lower middle class to construct a wide range of new self-help organizations, from friendly societies and cooperatives to trade unions. It also produced the Chartist revolt which mobilized hundreds of thousands of people over a decade into the 1840s, to which the state reacted with savage repression. Later it created as well a worker-orientated political party. The process was both broad and deep. It built upon a historically existing democratic culture, and extended this through a vibrant autodidact workers' society. It aimed, not only at universal suffrage and political representation, but also, in the face of an entrenched corrupt state system, at clean government and a participatory and self-determining democracy. After a further century of struggle the successes of the popular classes were intermixed with failure,

as elitism arose within their own organizations. Their efforts nonetheless represented an exemplar of democratization founded on a self-governing working-class and burgeoning civil society.

#### THE LEVELLER ASPIRATION

The English Revolution took its name from the titanic forces in conjunction at this time: a dying feudalism and a rising capitalism in commercial agriculture and trade; intense religious conflict between Roman Catholicism and a diverse range of new protestant faiths; and extending from those two socioeconomic forces, parliamentary power versus absolute monarchy in the personage of Charles I until January 1649, with parliament representing not the people but landowners and merchants, the Grandees. The king initiated war, which became the bloodiest in British history. Vallance states that, as a proportion of the adult population, more men died in England's civil war than in the carnage of 1914–1918. Estimates suggest that some 85,000 died in the fighting, a further 100,000 died from wounds or disease, and 120,000 became prisoners of war. 1 It is suggested that England's population around 1601 may have been some 4.1 million.<sup>2</sup> Casualty figures may not include the thousands killed in conflict in Ireland and Scotland. Horspool suggests that a total of half a million people died in conflict in the three kingdoms.<sup>3</sup> Atrocities occurred in many places. It was an early modern form of total war, as food was plundered and grazing land destroyed by the armies. As refugee numbers increased, so did food in price and scarcity in towns like London. Large swathes of the population were affected. War and the issues surrounding it also affected the people intellectually and politically. The printing and distribution of pamphlets soared. On one indication, there had been some 24 in 1640, 721 the following year and 2,134 in 1642.4 The year 1645 was critical. Presbyterians were in the ascendancy in parliament; Oliver Cromwell gained prominence in the parliamentary army; their forces were triumphant at the battle of Naseby on 14 June, and soon after Royalist forces at Oxford surrendered; in February the New Model Army was instituted; and by the autumn, men (and women) grouped around John Lilburne in London, subsequently known as Levellers, were 'recognizable', 'coherent and purposeful' in their programmer and acknowledgement of "Free-born John" as their leader. His pamphlet, England's Birth-right Justified, expressed grievances, named reforms, promoted excitement in its readers, and became the 'first manifesto of a party in the making'. 5 Lilburne (1615–1657) had by then two-and-a-half years' experience of war as captain and lieutenant-colonel and half of the rest of his life was to be spent in prison and exile.<sup>6</sup> For Linebaugh he was a 'champion of the people', pamphleteer, agitator in the parlance of the day—or deputized activist agent—prisoner who even used

prison as a platform for his ideas—and the organizer of 'the first democratic political party.' <sup>7</sup>

The soldiers of the New Model Army, were directly affected by the war, and influenced its political outcomes. To an extent unknown in monarchical armies, and probably not seen again until Napoleon's time, recruitment was based on merit and conviction, as Oliver Cromwell famously acknowledged: "I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call gentleman and is nothing else." Well-trained, hymn singing Ironsides gained political victory, and an awareness of their corporate political identity and innate equality. Despite the fact that over half of the foot soldiers of the army were pressed men, the valor and commitment of the Ironsides, influenced and integrated the conscripts. 9

According to Caute, service in the New Model Army offered a transformative experience: men whose 'vision of life' had previously been limited to a corner of one county, 'discovered large sweeps of England, encountered new ideas, recognized their universal conditions of life.' Leaders arose within each regiment, 'men prepared to organize their fellows in a political and religious spirit, frequently in direct opposition to the commands of their officers.' Fundamental questions were asked, and 'theories were circulated among poor soldiers who had not previously thought beyond the obvious facts of material existence.' 10

Authority in the army was based on the principle of the sovereignty of the rank and file, enshrined in the 'Solemn Engagement' signed by the officers and the soldiers' agents at Newmarket on 5 June 1647. They resolved that the army would not be disbanded, nor the officers separated from their men, until the army's conditions, concerning pay, indemnity and freedom from forced deployment to Ireland, were satisfied. They also created a General Council of the Army, consisting of the general officers, 11 plus significantly two officers and two soldiers as representatives of each regiment as agitators. This body was the forum in which major decisions were made in the army over the next 12 months. It was then, on Foot's judgment, 'the most powerful and democratically representative body in English history.'12 Piety was soon supplemented among the soldiery by a sense of political unity and purpose. The soldiers had by 1647, as Lilburne found, 'a sense of common purpose, a feeling for organization . . . and enthusiasm for a common cause': in the conditions of the time, 'the most detailed Leveller organization was that achieved by the army.' 13

Popular military power was the grounds on which Cornet George Joyce—a junior officer—justified his necessarily swift action to secure the person of the king from untrustworthy, possibly royalist, parliamentarians in June: he acted, he said, on the authority of "the soldiery of the army", where in his large troop of cavalry, "all commanded and yet were under command." On

Braddick's description, this had been a political intervention from within the rank and file. <sup>14</sup> It was a potent expression of shared decision making in the victorious army, and Joyce's summation of the operations of his cavalry echoed key principles of Athenian participatory democracy.

Absolutism was falling, but what would replace it was uncertain in the latter half of 1647, and the bounds of change were tightly constrained within the narrow limits of early capitalist development, its rudimentary infrastructure and communications, limited class formation and religious intolerance so pervasive that tolerance itself was widely seen as evil. Nevertheless, over the last weeks of the year, debate occurred on the rights of the people and political legitimacy that had never previously been heard in Britain, and the differences between the common man in the army and in London, represented by the Levellers, and the rising bourgeoisie, led by Cromwell and his fellow generals and parliamentarians, Fairfax and Ireton, came to a head. The vehicles of the argumentation were the agitators, the Council of the Army, and the army in general asserting pressure on parliament. Discussions in Council, Gregg says, showed the grandees slower to move than the ranks, uneasy at the participation of the rank and file, but deeming the presence of the agitators unavoidable. Though the army ruled all in late 1647, the agitators ruled the army, and to a large extent, Lilburne and the Levellers 'ruled the agitators'. As the army approached London, the rift between the Levellers and the grandees widened. Lilburne and army Levellers were disgusted by the closeness between the grandees and the king, and Lilburne, who remained in the Tower, advised the soldiers to "trust your great officers . . . no further than you can throw an oxe."15

The primary idea put forward at Putney in November was that the sacrifices of the soldiers in fighting a just war, and the people in London supporting them, demanded reward in thorough change. (With the articulate Lilburne imprisoned, the burden of debate fell on Rainborough, Sexby and the civilian John Wildman, against the formidable duo of Cromwell and Ireton. 16) The cry of 'what have we fought for' was widely heard at the army debates. For Edward Sexby, the soldiers had ventured their lives "to recover our birthrights and privileges as Englishmen". If they were now to be denied such rights, they would be no better than mere mercenary soldiers. Sexby was an agitator in Fairfax's regiment of horse, in close contact with civilians in London. Thomas Rainborough, colonel of a foot regiment, made the same point more strongly, saying that they had fought only to enslave themselves to new masters, and "give power to men of riches, men of estates." Rainborough was the strongest proponent of manhood suffrage at the debates, and probably also, according to Robertson, a committed republican. <sup>17</sup> His funeral in London in October 1648—after he was killed in a surprise attack by a royalist group—was a demonstration of Leveller support at which some

3,000 mourners moved through the city wearing ribbons of his regimental color, sea-green.

The principle that all, including the King and Grandees, were subject to the law, was forcefully expressed at Putney. King Charles must be charged with treason, for making war on his own people, as "a man of blood".

Government must be accountable to all 'freeborn men', not just to property owners and aristocrats. This was tied in by the Levellers with the notion of consent to government, precipitating a sharp clash with Ireton and Cromwell. Rainborough was memorably explicit: "the poorest he that is in England has a life to live as the greatest he . . . every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government." Voting should be in the hands of all, equally, or almost all. Ireton responded as a Grandee that no person has a right to vote who has not "a permanent fixed interest in this kingdom" and Cromwell contemptuously added that manhood suffrage "must end in anarchy", when men "who have no interest but the interest in breathing" had a voice in elections. 18

The basis for just and legitimate government was the free consent of the governed, and this must come from the propertyless as well as from the propertied.<sup>19</sup>

Trial by jury was seen by the Levellers as an effective bulwark against arbitrary arrest, "12 sworn men of the neighborhood" as preservation of individual rights against state power or an unrepresentative parliament. For John Lilburne, this was no abstract principle. Cromwell twice unsuccessfully had Lilburne on trial for his life. Characteristically of Leveller leaders, Lilburne was actively supported by his wife, Elizabeth. Petitioning, marching, agitating, printing radical texts, and bearing two of his children in prison, one in Newgate the other in the Tower (christened "Tower"). <sup>20</sup> The civil war also saw the introduction of the printed weekly newsbook, a forerunner of the modern newspaper. <sup>21</sup>

A free press, critical of the powerful, was another important defense of liberty, while in an age of virulent religious intolerance, the Levellers upheld freedom of conscience, <sup>22</sup> with a tendency towards secularism.

Freedom seems to have been understood within the Leveller movement as a form of self-determination promoted by a just state. Severe inequalities would negate citizenship and undermine society, weakening and ultimately negating political equality. Gerrard Winstanley, the Digger (or 'True Leveller') leader, probably expressed this notion most cogently when he suggested that the freedom the poor seek was freedom from poverty; in his words, "the bondage that the poor complain of, that they are kept poor . . . in a land where there is so much plenty for everyone." However Linebaugh quotes Rainborough explicitly stating, 'Either poverty must use democracy to destroy the power of property, or property in fear of poverty will destroy democracy.' 24

Ambivalence surrounded the issue of who the Levellers would exclude from the vote. The three successive versions of *The Agreement of the People* denied the vote to beggars, servants and wage-earners, although they purported to speak, in Lilburne's words, for the "hobnayles and clouted shoes and leather aprons", and for Rainborough's "the poorest he". Their notions of freedom and sovereignty brooked no exclusions. On Linebaugh's understanding, their goal was nothing less than 'the right, freedom, safety, and well-being of every particular man, woman and child in England.' On 11 September 1648 the Levellers submitted the Large Petition to parliament, with 40,000 signatures. It contained 24 demands of which the following were prominent: popular sovereignty; religious tolerance, including atheists, Moslems and Jews; trial by jury of peers; no conviction without two witnesses; no self-incrimination; release of debtors from prison; opposition to enforced military service; and the opening of all late enclosures of fens and other commons.<sup>25</sup> The Levellers appear to have harbored few illusions about parliament of the day and the efficacy of the non-existent vote. The principle of popular sovereignty was their big concern, along with freedom of speech and an effective legal system that would protect the common man. Gregg says that the *spirit* of Leveller teaching was more revolutionary than its *content*, and a spirit of equalitarianism was present in their doctrine. But this egalitarianism did not encourage them to ally with the dispossessed below them. <sup>26</sup>

The significance of the Diggers, according to Hill, was that 'they called on the poor to organize themselves for practical action.' The colony at St George's Hill was small in size, and faced repeated assault from local landowners, but in 1652 Gerrard Winstanley seems to have thought that it could be possible to turn the earth into "a common treasury". 27 Hill states that St George's Hill was part of a trend 'repeated in many other places', in Northamptonshire, Kent, Buckinghamshire and Leicestershire and elsewhere. If a series of collective communities could have endured, he claims, they 'would have overcome the dispersion of forces which bedevilled the Levellers.' 28 But this was no more possible for Winstanley than it was for Rainborough and Lilburne. Cromwell lumped Levellers and True Levellers together as "a despicable and contemptible generation of men . . . differing little from beasts". 29

In mid-November, a few days after the end of the Putney debates, Cromwell initiated a calculated and ruthless assault on the Levellers in the army, dividing and dispersing the soldiery then seizing and quickly sentencing to death men who opposed disbandment or deployment to Ireland. The victorious generals had the respect of many soldiers after long years of fighting, and military discipline in the field demanded unquestioned obedience. Solidarity was lost among the dispersed soldiery, and counted for little against the unity and power of the small army elite. On Foot's critical assessment, the General Council 'meekly disbanded itself', and the strength of the agitators was

'weakened beyond repair by their separation from one another.' When King Charles escaped from detention, the generals gained an effective diversion. Speaking in front of just seven regiments at Ware on 15 November, <sup>30</sup> Fairfax won over the rank and file by 'his customary modesty and sense of purpose'. The issue he said was the unity of the army, which depended on discipline and loyalty. He promised that parliament would at last meet their arrears of pay. <sup>31</sup> All that the New Model Army had achieved should not now be threatened by ideological splits—soldiers had appeared at the rendezvous wearing Leveller papers in their hats declaring "England's Freedom! Soldiers' Rights". When some of them shouted for freedom, three were singled out and summarily charged and convicted. 'They were forced to throw dice for their lives. The loser, Richard Arnold, was shot at the head of [his] regiment by the other two.' <sup>32</sup>

Opposition in the army was not quickly quelled. Mutinies occurred in many places. One of the largest involved some 1,200 soldiers at Burford in May 1649. 400 were captured or surrendered and were imprisoned by Cromwell in Burford Church, before a Council of War the following day condemned them to death. Four were sentenced to be shot in front of the others. The shooting of Robert Lockier was a particular exemplar. He was 23 and had served in the army since he was 16. He had actively supported the Levellers and had been an agitator. He was among 60 men stationed in London who opposed service in Ireland, six of whom were sentenced to death, and all but Lockier pardoned. His last words to the crowds on 27 April 1649 were his hope that his death would serve as an encouragement to others. The Levellers accorded him the funeral honors of a General. About a thousand soldiers paced before the hearse in files of five or six, and some two to three thousand citizens and soldiers followed. All the attendants were seagreen ribbons. At the churchyard thousands more waited. The publication Mercurius Pragmaticus declared: "Let Cromwell and Fairfax both know . . . that this is not the way to crush the Free People of this Nation."33 This was one of the biggest demonstrations of the Revolution. Among other indicators of strong popular support, was the petition demanding the release of four Leveller leaders, Lilburne, William Walwyn, Thomas Prince and Richard Overton, in April 1648, signed reportedly by some 10,000 women and delivered to parliament by 500.34

The Levellers' short term achievements were far from negligible. *The Agreement of the People*, possibly a hoped for draft constitution, had by 1 May 1649 reached a third draft. On 6 January the House of Commons acted on the army's resolution at Putney, when they passed an Act on their own volition establishing the court which would try King Charles soon after. This was an assertion of the Commons' supremacy, based on the then abstract notion of the sovereignty of the people. <sup>35</sup> Lilburne's last published statement, *England's New Chains Discovered*, appeared in London bookstalls in March

1649, by which time Charles had been executed, the House of Lords abolished, and the people declared the origin of all just power in parliament. A vote of 4 January 1649 had declared that "the people under God are the original of all power" and established the House of Commons as the supreme authority in the land; when political and military power was 'already in the hands of a small minority. <sup>36</sup> 'England's New Chains' received support from sections of the army and claimed thousands of signatories. <sup>37</sup>

The Levellers had won the support of common men and women in London, a large but inchoate movement in the restrictive conditions of the time, wherein apprentices and especially printers were important as agitators and writers; when printers were arrested their wives often continued their work. But the New Model Army was their only organizational base, and herein they agitated precariously under the strictures of military discipline. Having vanquished absolutism and its aristocratic attendees by circa 1649, Cromwell turned against his earlier class ally, the common man, for him now an incipient anarchist. <sup>38</sup> On the eve of their suppression, said Hill, the Levellers were beginning to win support in the North and West, from Cornish tin-miners to Northumbrian farmers, from Bristol, Hull, York, Somerset and Lancashire. This may have been another reason for their suppression. <sup>39</sup>

Lilburne's last published statement stressed the need for a long-term struggle for the achievement of democracy and justice: "Our cause and principles do through their own natural truth and lustre get ground in men's understandings; so that where there was one, twelve months since that owned our principles, we believe there are now hundreds: so that though we fail, our truths prosper. And posterity we doubt not shall reap the benefits of our endeavors whatever shall become of us." 40

Linebaugh depicts the Levellers as 'the first democratic political party in world history', but they were rather a movement, an aspiration and tendency bent upon influencing people's thinking, and limiting the arrogance of the rich and powerful. The hopes which Lilburne placed in future generations have been borne out through passing centuries. <sup>41</sup> The weaknesses of the soldiers and Levellers were those of their age, not least so relative to Cromwell's power and harshness. <sup>42</sup> So-called 'failure' in this context was inevitable, and detracts little from their legacy.

John Lilburne gained personal vindication at his trial for high treason at the Guildhall in October 1649. His friends and supporters outnumbered the government's by some twenty to one. As during his many previous imprisonments, Freeborn John repeatedly contested many points of fact and law with the judges and witnesses. Denied rest during the second day of the trial, Lilburne urinated into a chamberpot in court. At 6 pm on that day the foreman of the jury loudly declared that the prisoner was not guilty of all of the charges against him. As the acquittal was pronounced, the people in the hall gave such a loud and unanimous shout that was never heard there before.

Bonfires were lit that night up and down the streets. A commemorative medal was struck by the Levellers showing on one side the head of Lilburne and on the other the names of the jurymen, with the words "John Lilburne saved by the power of the Lord and the integrity of the jury who are judges of the law as well as fact."<sup>43</sup> The victor was then 31.<sup>44</sup> He went into exile in 1652.

The Levellers pioneered many aspects of modern protest politics: mass petitioning, cheap-print pamphleteering and large public demonstrations. But it was the quality of their ideas about sovereignty, legitimacy and equality that were outstanding. Over more than a decade mostly in bloody warfare, when both armed and then unarmed, they endeavored to speak for and with the people, rarely or never speaking down to them. Many of them, Rainborough, the youthful Lockier, John and Elizabeth Lilburne, sacrificed much. Their endurance and integrity were outstanding.

Petegorsky says that 'the political and social programmer of the Levellers was far in advance of their time', but they failed to analyse the socio-political power of the new ruling classes which opposed them and the reforms for which they argued. <sup>45</sup> Two centuries elapsed before the Chartists arose embedded within an industrializing capitalism and a new urban working class. But they too underestimated the ruthlessness of the ruling oligarchy which they faced.

# CORRUPTION, THANATOCRACY AND POPULAR OPPOSITIONAL CULTURE IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

With the supremacy of 'the Crown in Parliament' after 1688, corrupt practices, says Peck, were instrumental in 'maintaining coalitions of interest between royal ministers and the House of Commons, welding together major financiers and the aristocracy as a single, highly stable oligarchy'. The division of spoils became 'the lifeblood of the British system', and reinforced the status quo in the oligarchy's interest. <sup>46</sup> Endemic corruption was a large part of the governmental equation until well into the nineteenth century. Another factor, seemingly of almost equal importance, was repression of the people—systemic, wide-scale, and remorseless.

Key legislation was comprehensively enacted. Among the first such instruments, the Riot Act of 1715 represented a simple and effective weapon against popular collective action. If twelve or more people were unlawfully or tumultuously assembled, and the act was read by a magistrate, any person who failed to disperse was guilty of a felony. The Transportation Act of 1719 offered an additional heavy punishment of slave labor for seven years or more on plantations in North America and the West Indies. The Combination Act of 1721 rendered illegal the joint efforts initially of journeymen tailors to

increase their earnings or reduce their work hours, and the Workhouse Act of 1723 authorized any parish to establish its own workhouse. Children age 6 to 14 were soon in Irish workhouses laboring 10 hours a day at spinning machines, <sup>47</sup> the start of a long process of child enslavement in British factories.

Poverty in London was at crises levels in the 1690s, as the demographics suggest; 'beggars, hawkers, peddlers filled the streets' and through the eighteenth century, some two-thirds of the population were deemed to be impoverished (pp. 55 and 78). <sup>48</sup> The popular heroes of the day were those who actively opposed the rich and powerful. Jack Sheppard was a robber famous not least for having escaped from prison five times. After his penultimate escape from Newgate, he had flaunted his freedom through the most densely populated parts of London for 15 days before he was retaken. His hanging at Tyburn on 16 November 1727 attracted crowds only comparable in size to the funeral of the soldier Robert Lockier in 1649 (pp. 37–39).

The active and constant element in oligarchical domination was what Linebaugh terms the thanatocracy. Every six weeks a handful of the poor and propertyless were selected at Newgate and the Old Bailey for what an observer of the day called 'the legal massacre' at Tyburn. Working typically over three days, from six-thirty in the morning till nine at night, the jurymen, not 'peers' of the defendants but small landowners, determined who would die during London's eight or so hanging days each year (pp. 74–78). It was not hard to qualify for the noose. Glancing at just a few of the victims, John Burton had unstable employment with wages, without food, of 4s a week, hanged for stealing two woolen caps; <sup>49</sup> a woman, aged 25, hung for stealing clothes worth 18d; a woman hung for 6d; another, 22 years, hung for a leg of pork. Domestic service to the upper classes constituted a large sector of the London workforce. The master-servant relationship was deemed to require annual 'examples' to enforce discipline, and servants were prominent at Tyburn. Janas Walton was a servant for 15 years until she was hanged for stealing 16 yards of silk, and Elizabeth Stevens, washerwoman, was hanged for pilfered laundry. Clothing represented for the poor a storable resource, exchangeable for food or shelter. Among those who were hanged, the Irish, sailors, servants, weavers and butchers were prominent. They belonged to the laboring poor or the class of proletarians (whose only property is their labor). The deeply corrupt oligarchy was hanging multitudes of the poor for trivial and often necessary theft (for survival's sake), while they themselves practiced theft and avarice on a giant scale. Linebaugh believes that 'hundreds upon hundreds' were hanged (p. 4).

The 'deep-sea proletariat' constituted the labor force of mercantilism, and about 20,500 men sailed on merchant ships around 1720. Only agriculture and textiles were larger sectors. Twenty-four ships arrived daily in London, Britain's, and one of the world's, largest port. The country's first factory, in textiles, originated in 1718 to 1721, and a factory essentially became a place

where production and punishment were united (p. 285). But shipboard discipline was even worse than factory discipline (p. 130).

Conditions in specific occupations and sectors illustrate the transition the working class was experiencing from a moral to a market economy in the eighteenth century. Work conditions for porters, on the docks and shipboard, lifting loads perhaps of half a ton, were both harsh and cooperative. A porter's working life in the 1720s was commonly some 10 years (pp. 167–68, 184). Tailors' conditions were little better. Winter was their time of employment, laboring in darkness by candle, from six in the morning till nine at night. The result was blindness and a hunched back and shoulders. They were unemployed for 15–25 weeks a year, when their upper-class clients left London, and a tailor was rendered less valuable than 'a cucumber', as Covent Garden saw it. Yet in two waves of militancy, 1720s and 1740s, tailors were among the first to begin their struggle to form trade unions, using of necessity enforced secrecy. <sup>50</sup>

Weavers experienced severe poverty. Thomas Beck worked as a weaver's drawboy for 3s a week before he was hanged in 1732. John Lancaster, a journeyman velvet-weaver, was recorded at Newgate saying, "What signified working all Day for a Trifle?", before he was hanged in 1748, and John Ross, took to highway robbery 'having no way to get Money' for his wife and three children, hung in 1750. Journeymen weavers might earn average wages of 5s to 8s a week, but this excluded working expenses such as the hire of drawboys, candles or the loom. Sixty-four of those hanged at Tyburn were silk workers, and of all apprenticed victims, weavers were the most numerous. In the eighteenth century silk was the fabric of wealth and power, and a single dress might cost 50 pounds in materials alone (256–59).

In the 1760s weavers too began to organize for better wages and conditions. In August 1762, Spitalfields weavers composed their first 'Book' of prices, which for 10 years became the pricing standard within the craft. The next year, 2,000 of them, disguised and armed with cutlasses, proceeded to looms working at under-rates and cut the work from them. In 1766 parliament made it a felony to cut work from a loom, but cuttings continued against those "Breaking the Book". As the journeymen's clubs became more effective in enforcing compliance with the Book, the workforce in silk had fallen in size to half of what it had been six years before, and more than 5,000 weavers were without work or pay. Armed clashes occurred between the military and journeymen clubs such as the Combinators, the Committee Men and the Liberty Men.

London was then the hub of an expanding and increasingly intense mercantilist and imperialistic network, where what happened in America or India affected metropolitan workers directly. Through the 1760s and 1770s, the East India Company acquired direct control over Bengal's revenues and labor, and in consequence of the Company's actions—which embraced imprisonment, flogging and bond slavery—famine occurred in 1769–1771 wherein a third of the population died. Millions of farmers and weavers were killed in Bengal. But wages fell, factories were built, and England acquired a source of raw silk directly under its control (pp. 272, 283). The company expected its officials to extort their own rewards, and among the greediest and most successful was Robert Clive. He was able to buy an Irish peerage, various London mansions and country estates, and a clientage of some eight MPs. Arraigned, unsuccessfully, before the House of Commons for forgery and peculation, he boasted that Bengal's richest bankers "bid against each other for my smiles" and of walking through "vaults thrown open to me alone, piled on either hand with gold and jewels".51

The attacks on rich silk manufacturers in London reached a peak in August 1769. In two nights of rioting, 70 looms owned by Lewis Chauvet were destroyed and some 10,000 pounds worth of damage was inflicted on him. He had anticipated an attack by training and arming his own guard. Unlike in distant Bengal, the ruling class managed its metropolitan working class through the ritualized massacre, on any one hanging day, of a few. John Doyle and John Valloine had participated in the attack on Chauvet's property, and they were executed in an elaborate display right across London.

Led by weavers' wives, the accompanying crowd kept up the spirits of the condemned men. Valloine was recorded as calling to people to "remember your Promise". After the execution the crowd tore down the gallows and reerected it at Chauvet's premises. Some 4,000 to 5,000 people were involved in smashing his windows and burning his furniture in the streets on 6 December 1769 (pp. 280–81).

State terror was followed by popular counter-terror against Daniel Clarke, who had sworn evidence against Doyle and Valloine. People's memories remained strong. On 16 April 1771, Clarke was apprehended, stripped, dragged through the streets, spattered with muck and repeatedly ducked in freezing water before he eventually expired. Some 3,000 adults and children took part in what Linebaugh sees as 'a defiant and brazen answer' to the manufacturers, magistrates and ministers for the hangings of 1769. It did not end there. Henry Stroud and Campbell, a Scottish weaver, were indicted for the murder of Clarke, and hanged in Hare Street, Woolwich, on 8 July 1771, with a hundred soldiers with bayonets fixed deployed around the gibbet (pp. 280–83).

Over a decade, weavers had experienced joblessness, emigration and hanging, resulting from their collective struggle. But they had also made gains, when in 1773, parliament passed the first Spitalfields Act, introducing a system of binding collective bargaining between workers and employers. It was another stage in the transition from domestic production to the factory system, as work by hand was replaced by the machine, and new forms of

conflict replaced the old. Four years earlier, another milestone was passed when 'Arkwright created order' in patenting his spinning machine 52 (285).

Old forms of protest remained intermixed with the new. Since early in the century, Irish, Americans and Africans, Linebaugh stresses, were an 'essential presence' in the London proletariat (p. 70). The contributions of Irish emigrants were important in organization and resistance, building on their own institutions of mutualism. New friendly societies were initiated among London's river proletariat, where agreements for mutual defense utilized socalled 'knots'. The Irish experience was also a rebellious one. The Whiteboy Outrages, 1761-1785, saw bands of 200 to 400 people, dressed in white, pulling down fences enclosing land in Ireland, maiming cattle and opening jails. The movement used secret oaths and was cloaked in mystery. Its membership included cottiers, laborers and urban craftsmen. By the late 1760s, the London Irish had an awareness of arms and armed struggle, and contributed an 'insurrectionary impulse' to the London working class (pp. 308–9 and 317–21). This was additional to the existing oppositional culture from at least Jack Sheppard's time, the traditional anarchy of the wake, and the popular counter-terror meted out to Clarke, as a tool of the Thanatocracy (pp. 321, 325).

From 4 to 9 June 1780 the most serious urban insurrection of the century took place in London, when its multi-national proletariat directly attacked the wealth and power of the imperial oligarchy. Parliament and the Bank of England, and the houses of aristocrats, magistrates and leading jurists were assaulted. London's parks became military encampments, and hundreds were killed. The rioters were 'on the whole, journeymen and wage-earners'. The culmination came with the Delivery of Newgate, the opening of London's largest and most notorious prison (pp. 330–35, 356–57).

The metropolitan working class of 1780 had knowledge of war, slavery and revolution, and it was well acquainted with the linkage between property and theft. Burglaries had increased some eight-fold over the previous decade, as the growing material wealth of the urban bourgeoisie was flaunted. Sailors, by contrast, had experienced six years of warfare with America, when press-gangs marauded the streets of London and other seaports. 54 While the size of the navy had increased from 16,000 to 114,000 by 1797, seamen's pay remained as it had been in 1653, they were denied shore leave and their food was as bad as the discipline they endured. Communication, however, occurred among sailors of the Channel Fleet whose ships lay together at Spithead, in February 1797, and demands for increased pay resulted. The mutiny soon spread to ships at the Nore anchorage off Plymouth, gathered to blockade the Dutch republic, allies of revolutionary France. At war against two revolutions, the Admiralty and government accorded the Nore mutineers no quarter. Twenty-nine were hanged from the yardarms of their ships on 30 June 1797.55 Commander John Paul Jones and his ship, Bonhomme Richard,

helped bring the American issues directly home in operations around Ireland and Scotland, and in a famous engagement, in September 1779, when HMS *Serapis* surrendered and Jones took 500 prisoners. Sailors participated in the Delivery of Newgate (pp. 343–44).

London's black community numbered then some 10,000 to 20,000, in a total population of around 1 million. Linebaugh believes that 'the American experience was as important a feature as the Irish' for Londoners in 1780. Two prominent participants in the Delivery, John Glover and Benjamin Bowsey, were African Americans and ex-slaves. Charlotte Gardner, known as 'a negro', was also hanged in July for the crime of 'marching with the mob' (pp. 349–51 and 354).

Another dimension impacting increasingly on London and Britain drew together the new imperial commodities, coffee, tea and sugar, the shipping and sailors that transported them, and the slave trade and Haiti where some of them were produced. Sugar and tobacco were known as hunger suppressants, and in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the former had become a necessity of the impoverished working class. British per capita consumption, four pounds a year in 1700, had reached 18 pounds annually in 1800.

Haiti was the locus of sugar production and colonial slavery in the Caribbean. By the end of the 1780s, nearly 40,000 slaves were being imported annually, and production nearly doubled. It was the richest colony in the Americas. About 500,000 slaves worked on 8,000 plantations, in what were 'factories in the field'. A revolution in the cause of universal emancipation broke out in August 1791, and it became, in Nesbitt's view, 'one of the singular events of human history'. Sugar production quickly fell to some 20 percent of pre-revolutionary levels (p. 411). <sup>56</sup>

Serial imperial crises, metropolitan working class resistance, and the rise of the factory system, brought big changes in social relations in Britain. American independence ended transportation there, and 1783 saw the last hangings at Tyburn. Britain's military intervention in Haiti lasted five years, and cost the metropole some 100,000 casualties and 10 million pounds (pp. 411–12); the costs to Haiti were immeasurably greater.

Olaudah Equiano, born in Nigeria, a slave on sugar plantations and a sailor with knowledge of their customs, became a leading activist in London in the Abolitionist cause. The 'tens of thousands' who read his autobiography or heard him speak, obtained a uniquely effective insight into the realities of slavery. He cultivated relations with the influential, but also befriended radical democrats.<sup>57</sup>

Resistance against Britain's oligarchy, at home and overseas, ended the thanatocracy, but not before great loss had been inflicted on poor people. Linebaugh's qualitative assessment that hundreds upon hundreds were hanged was noted; he also reckoned that 1,242 people were hanged on just 243 hanging days between 1703 and 1772, but notes that this is an incom-

plete figure, representing just three or four annual hanging days, when the common number was actually six. Nor does this figure include the hangings performed in Kennington Common (p. 91). So perhaps some 1,500 on about 450 days spread over the 80 years that Tyburn operated?

Comparisons with colonial situations in the contemporary period are relevant. In Kenya, an especially significant British possession in Africa, 1,090 Kikuyu, the country's largest ethnic group and the one most affected by colonialism, went to the gallows as so-called Mau Mau insurrectionists between 1952 and 1960. According to Anderson, in no other place and in no other time in the history of British imperialism, 'was state execution used on such a scale as this. This was more than double the number of executions carried out against convicted terrorists in Algeria, and many more than in all the other British colonial emergencies of the post-war period.'58 And in South Africa, an even more systemically oppressive settler colonial situation, at the height of the apartheid wars of the 1980s, 'more than a hundred [blacks] a year' were executed (p. xvii).

But the thanatocracy was also rendered redundant by the rising industrial capitalism and the new combination of the calibrated wage-system and the intense factory discipline accompanying it.

# NINETEENTH CENTURY DEMOCRATIZATION AND ENTRENCHED STATE POWER

Writing near the epicenter of the industrial revolution in 1848, Marx and Engels proclaimed that the new bourgeoisie had already 'created more massive and colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together'. The 'constant revolutionizing of production' was being accompanied by 'uninterrupted turbulence of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation'. <sup>59</sup> For Landes too it was a 'revolution like nothing ever experienced', a transformation in a triple sense, of the means of production, of its organization, and in consequence of the lives of workers in the new factories and the people in the growing towns. The middle and upper classes were enjoying the 'marvelous inventions of science and technology, the increasing mass and variety of material goods, the growing speed of movement and convenience of everyday activities', and they experienced 'a world getting better all the time', the embodiment of progress. <sup>60</sup>

The modern industrial world really began, it might be said, circa 1830, when the first passenger train screamed through the land, 'burrowing among the dwellings of men, flashing out into the meadows with a shriek and a roar', as Dickens recorded. 61 For Judt more recently, trains and railways 'stands for modernity' more than any other technical design or social institution, in a multiplicity of ways. One obviously was with regard to time and

distance, where change previously had hardly occurred over millennia. The steam engine could not work without the coal which it helped bring to the surface. Most of the technical achievements of industrialization, telegraphic communications, the large-scale usage of water, gas and electricity, the construction of very large buildings, and the movement of people in big numbers, were all introduced by railways. 62 Painters were soon celebrating the beauty of speed and steam, as in Turner's 'Rain, Steam and Speed', and the great potentialities of rapid, regularized transportation. Until the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, people did not travel together in large numbers. 63 William Power Frith's, 'The Railway Station' of 1862 showed masses of people readying for departure on the 5.04 from Paddington. The trains quickly found it imperative to offer distinctions or 'classes' of travel: by price, comfort, service, 'and above all the company a voyager was likely to keep.'64 Victorian painters soon noted too the differential social impact of trains, the upholstered parlors in first class, and the fetid wheeled prison of Daumier's 'Third Class'. But the defining image of the new age of time and motion regularized was possibly James Tissot's 'Gentleman in a Railway Carriage', in which a prosperous, fur-coated gent holds fast to a strap as the train rushes on, the view through the window a blur. On his knee is an open timetable, in his hand a fob watch, as he flashes the viewer a knowing look as if we were also checking progress. For a contemporary critic, this was the very essence of nineteenth century bourgeois man. 65

Those known as the laboring poor were 'undoubtedly of another mind' on the meaning and actuality of progress, but Landes was mistaken when he also concluded that they 'said little' about their lives of impoverishment and exploitation. <sup>66</sup> They said in fact a great deal, as they began to constitute, for Marx and Engels, 'a self-conscious, independent movement'. <sup>67</sup>

The transformation of the organization of production, the construction of a factory wage-labor force, was a potent, totalizing process. 'By 1830 there were hundreds of thousands of men, women and children employed in factory industry. They had entered the mills in spite of a strong fear of the unknown, an aversion to supervision and discipline, and resentment of the unremitting demands of the machine.' The rules of the early factories were indicative of the issues and pressures involved: 'the heaviest fines were reserved for absence (the cardinal sin, often worth several days' pay), lateness and distraction from the job.' The creation of an industrial proletariat dependent on wage labor was an accomplishment involving enormous social change. 68

Child labor was prominent in this process. It was, according to Humphries, 'endemic in the early industrial economy, entrenched in both traditional and modern sectors and widespread geographically.' In the classic era of industrialization, 1790–1850, there was an upsurge in the use of child workers. Those called pauper apprentices were the vanguard of the factory

proletariat, widely found in traditional and small-scale manufacturing. Children comprised between one-third and two-thirds of all workers in many textile mills around 1833 and over one-quarter in many mines in 1842. She speaks of 'astonishing levels of child labor' throughout the period of industrialization and throughout the economy. It was 'cheap child labor', and it accompanied the expansion of the division of labor. The children's working conditions were severe, with the memoirs of Robert Collyer (published in 1908) referring to many children of around seven and eight 'standing at the spinning frames 13 hours a day five days a week and eleven on Saturdays.' The effects on bodies and minds of such early physical labor were harsh and long-term. J.R. Clynes' autobiography of 1937 mentioned a 'mill worker whose childhood had been ruined by hard labor and little sleep, and who, in manhood, looked shrunken and white-faced.' Humphries concludes that children bore many of the social and economic costs of the industrial revolution. 69

People had every reason to be fearful of the factories. Children and adult workers experienced unrelenting pressure and control throughout an intense 15 to 17 hour working day. While the machinery was running, full use had to be made of expensive steam and gas. As a report said in 1832, 'Whilst the engine runs, the people must work—men, women and children are yoked together with iron and steam.' Penalties for infringement of myriad rules might be financially crippling for an adult worker. At a spinning mill near Manchester in 1823, the fine for being five minutes late was one shilling; for 'spinning with gas light too long in the morning', two shillings; and for being sick without finding a satisfactory replacement, six shillings, or about two-thirds of a weekly wage. <sup>70</sup>

Wages were very low, barely adequate for survival. One estimate suggests that, around 1840, one pound (20s) a week was a typical wage for an artisan like a tailor; a coal miner or adult male spinner working in a cotton factory could earn perhaps five shillings more, and a handloom weaver would get more than five shillings less. <sup>71</sup> A 'West Midland nailer'—an intelligent man by reference to the protest letter he wrote to a local paper in 1842—with a wife and five children, and with four of them working, received a total family wage on average of one pound and sixpence a week. Their weekly expenses totaled one pound, three shillings and ten pence (including coal, rent and tools totaling seven shillings, and food costing 13 shillings). Shoes, candles and soap were prominent on their expenses list. Their food largely comprised bread and potatoes, and there was nothing in the way of entertainment. Their expenses exceeded their wages by over three shillings each week. <sup>72</sup>

The constraints that working-class people faced went beyond the rigors of the factory system and the greed and exploitation of their owners. The booms and slumps inherent in the industrial capitalist economy had to be contended with at a time when charitable, public relief for poverty was being deliberately restricted. In the eighteenth century, the agricultural laborer was poor but was 'relatively secure in his employment', and in needy times could expect to receive 'outdoor relief' as cash, coal, food and other necessities from the overseers of his parish; additional help in kind might be available from his local employer. But access to relief in the towns in the nineteenth century was dependent on a worker possessing a settled lodging in a parish, and poor newcomers were normally excluded. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 aimed to well nigh close down assistance, and offer food and shelter only to those willing to enter a forbidding, punitive and tightly disciplined workhouse regime: the depersonalization of the individual, the wearing of uniforms, the splitting up of families, and a regimented existence amounting. Wright notes, to 'psychological terrorism'; the denial of sexual intercourse, tobacco and alcohol, the imposition of silence at meals in crowded conditions, the inability to go out or receive visitors. 'Horror of the workhouse and the final indignity of a pauper's funeral remained deeply ingrained in working class consciousness until the twentieth century.'73

Living conditions over the greater part of the nineteenth century provided most of the working classes, in the words of a contemporary observer, with only 'a low and groveling mode of existence'. 74 In an environment where urban squalor was rife and commonplace, Glasgow, circa 1840, was extreme for its 'undisguised profligacy, offensive brutality, squalid wretchedness, and unbearable filth', in the words of a visiting sanitary specialist, while for another at the same time, 'penury, dirt, misery, drunkenness, disease and crime' culminated in Glasgow. 75 Seventy-eight percent of Glasgow's population, circa 1830, was working-class, according to a Government Commissioner quoted by Engels. They lived in parts of the city which exceeded in wretchedness the worst parts of St Giles and Whitechapel in London, in 'illventilated, high- piled, waterless and dilapidated houses'. These were swarming with inhabitants. They contained three or four families upon each floor, perhaps 20 persons. Each story was let out in sleeping places, so that 15 to 20 persons are packed one on top of each other. In another place, the same Commissioner found 'a complete layer of human beings stretched upon the floor, often fifteen to twenty, some clad, others naked, men and women indiscriminately. Their bed was a litter of moldy straw, mixed with rags. There was little or no furniture'. 76

Forty to 50 years later, near the height of the nation's industrialization, destitution and poverty persisted in the metropole. The Nichol was a slum on the boundary of Bethnal Green, notorious for its poverty and squalor in the 1880s. There were 5,700 people crammed into 15 acres of decaying dwellings. Some 380 were squashed into each acre mainly below street level, with adults and children often working 12 hours a day making matchboxes and clothes pegs literally for pennies. Large families lived and worked in single

rooms in a jumble of courts, workshops, stables. By local and by national standards life in Nichol was appalling. Its inhabitants were shorter, weaker and more likely to die young than their Bethnal Green neighbors, even though the life expectancy of mechanics, servants and laborers in that parish was only 16 years. While the death rate for infants (those under one) in England and Wales was 150 per 1,000 live births, in Nichol it was 252. The proportion of people living in poverty in the East End generally was 35 percent, but in Nichol it was 83 percent. All of this was intentional, systemic. Overcrowding meant sickness and death for the inhabitants of the slum, but great profits for the landlords—rents per cubic foot, Wise notes, were between 4 and 10 times higher than those in the finest streets in the West End. Profits of 150 percent were obtained, by owners who were sometimes politicians, churchmen and peers of the realm. And from the ranks of the owners came the supervisors who determined who would get what poor relief in the parish. 77

Progress for the working class remained generally elusive and limited; according to Wright, 'poverty continued to plague the lives of the majority of workers throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.' Little improvement occurred in the health, housing and sanitation of urban workers before the 1870s. At that time London still lacked a constant supply of running water, and the capital's annual death rate had recently increased. Urban overcrowding was exacerbated, he notes, by the demolition of much city-center housing to make way for offices, railway lines and stations. But rather than renovating slums, such clearances moved them a mile or two into conditions of even more intense overcrowding. Thinton reports that the average working week of 60–72 hours, in mid-Victorian years, had only fallen to some 56 hours at the turn of the century. At that later date, 40 percent of the working class remained poor, in receipt of wages of 21s a week or less, without any system of social security apart from the Poor Law.

If poverty was the worst affliction of workers in Britain, the way out was clearer and more to hand in the nineteenth century than it had been in the seventeenth. The state patently offered nothing positive: 'no matter how foul their living conditions', Wise states, most destitute people sought to avoid the workhouse. You Workers had of necessity 'to help one another or die. And now there was an expanding urban working-class and the infrastructure and organizational capacities of an industrializing economy to build upon.

## THE PRE-DEMOCRATIC CULTURE OF DEMOCRACY

While the mass of the people were impoverished, constrained and subordinated, they were simultaneously seeking socio-economic and political rights, with the new urban working class and lower middle class at their head. They

were increasingly articulate, active and self-determining, as they drew upon the ideals of the Levellers and the oppositional popular culture of the eight-eenth century. These aspirations confronted a totally inequitable and static political establishment. Some 3 percent of adult men had a vote in 1800. Almost 2 million people in Lancashire were represented in parliament by two county members and another two for Liverpool. Manchester, Bolton, Stock-port and many other rising mill towns did not have a single Member of Parliament (MP). Major landowners might control six or eight constituencies, and in many of them, 'pocket' and 'rotten' boroughs in the parlance of the time, only a handful of people voted. In Midhurst in Sussex, for example, there were just two voters, and Old Sarum in Wiltshire was a constituency without a single voter.<sup>81</sup>

But people were to some extent aware that they lived, however inequitably, under a rule of law—heritage perhaps of 'Freeborn John'—and within a new culture of public engagement. Fifty percent of the population were literate. Reading was popular, and a dozen newspapers were published daily in London, some 50 elsewhere in the country. Newspaper circulation rose rapidly in the early nineteenth century in the heady atmosphere of the French Revolution; from some 12.2 million in 1776 to 24.4 million in 1811, despite the imposition heavy stamp duties and the government's fear of the press. 82 Papers moved with increasing speed by mail, and there were 1,000 or more bookshops in the country.

Civil society groups were unknown in 1750 and novel around 1780. But people denied the right to vote were ready to engage in path-breaking protest on the big issue, already noted, of the abolition of the slave trade. When an unrepresentative parliament failed to act, a popular sugar boycott was initiated. A hundred thousand were participating in the action in 1791 and 300,000 soon after. Sales of sugar fell by one-third to one-half in a few months, with women playing a prominent role as both the buyers and cooks of family food. People who conceived of themselves as aspirant citizens took responsible action themselves. An abolition committee arose in every major city or town linked to a central organization in London, and the issue of slavery moved to center stage in public life. By 1830, civic groups had become common, and the country possessed a pre-democratic 'culture of democracy'.83

Workers enthusiastically participated in elections long before they were allowed to vote. According to Wright, there was 'considerable and unprecedented participation', especially in industrializing boroughs, by working class non-electors at five general elections between 1830 and 1837, in debates on the press, unequal taxation and other matters. This participatory drive by the voteless was supported by 'a network of booksellers, newsagents, publishers and street vendors', agitating for press freedom and for the vote. One paper was outstanding, the *Northern Star*, founded in Leeds in 1837, acquired a circulation of 50,000 and a readership, in pubs, coffee

houses and workplaces, 20 to 50 times larger. <sup>84</sup> A pre-existing democratic culture was fundamental to the struggle for the development of democratic government through the century—that is, to a thorough-going process of democratization from the ground up. By 1830, perhaps 25 percent of all male workers were members of friendly societies, others were engaged in Sunday school educational activities, and through various forms of workers' self-help, working class literacy was approaching 70 percent in Britain by 1840. <sup>85</sup>

### THE BREADTH OF DEMOCRATIZATION

As bourgeois liberalism stressed individual rights and competition, workingclass self-help was characterized by cooperation and mutuality—combining resources and efforts to safeguard jobs, as tailors and weavers had tried to do much earlier, and also now to make provisions for sickness and injury. Hopkins sees three major forms of workers' self-help organization emerging through the nineteenth century and growing into the next century. It began with the friendly society movement, at a local and informal level, beginning around 1800 chiefly on the initiative of better paid workers who alone had the necessary money to set up sick clubs, burial societies and penny banks. Secondly, but overlapping chronologically with the first, was the cooperative movement after 1830, which expanded on earlier mutuality and diversified activities into building societies and workers' institutes. Both forms offered conviviality and mutual assistance to their members at a time when nothing otherwise was available to them. Cooperatives began with ideals of social transformation through communitarian production, but grew rapidly after 1850 when they focused on the practical needs of consumer cooperation. 86

Third, and most significant in developmental terms, was the trade union movement, initially designed to safeguard working conditions and pay, but viewed with hostility by employers and the state as a restraint on free trade and a possible cloak for revolutionary conspiracy—illegal until 1824, and without firm legal status until the 1870s, even then with legality unassured.<sup>87</sup> As industrialization advanced, they moved into the forefront of democratization through political action to win worker representation in parliament. In 1874 the first working-class MPs were elected, both of whom were miners. The formation of a working-class party to press for workers' rights directly in government came later. This cause and that of welfare and democracy went closely together. In 1890 Claire Booth found that that a tenth of the entire population remained in direct (abject) poverty, and in the Anglo-Boer war, 1899–1902, between one-third and over one-half of recruits were found physically unfit for service. In 1900, the unions, together with the Fabian Society, the Scottish Labour Party (founded 1888) and the Independent Labour Party (founded 1893), established the Labour Representation Committee (LRC). 88 Just after the turn of the century, one-third of all workers were in manufacturing, while those in that sector and in mining and construction together totaled 46 percent of the workforce. Agriculture, which had employed 25 percent of workers in 1831, now employed only 9 percent. By 1911 the working class was the clear majority of the population, with skilled workers representing 28.7 percent of the total, semi-skilled 34.3 percent and unskilled workers 9 percent. The cooperative movement had 600,000 members in 1880, and had grown to 3 million nationwide by 1914. Trade union membership was nearing 4 million, representing 25 percent of the workforce. In 1914 there were 36 Labour MPs. 89

This was then a century-long process in the immediate sense, though it built upon an earlier century and a half of proto-democratic struggle. New working classes had 'helped themselves collectively' to organize their own protection against sickness and poverty, to cooperate in the distribution of food and clothing, and to better their working conditions. Though friendly societies too were initially viewed with suspicion, for most of the nineteenth century they were the largest workers' civic grouping, with a larger membership than the unions. <sup>90</sup>

#### POPULAR PROTEST AND STATE REPRESSION

Oligarchical power was backed at home by strong military power. In 1814, 890,000 men were under arms: 250,000 in the regular army, 500,000 militia, and 140,000 in the Royal Navy. Over the greater part of the nineteenth century, the military was 'routinely employed' against demonstrators. 91 Professional and militia forces were ready to use deadly force against unarmed civilians, and the state consistently ignored the demonstrators' repeated demands.

On 16 August 1819 at St Peter's Fields in Manchester, some 60,000 men, women and children assembled, moving into position behind banners reading 'Liberty and Fraternity', 'Parliaments Annual' and 'Suffrage Universal'. The crowd was unarmed and cheerful, festive in some accounts. Regular and yeomanry cavalry, infantry and other units totaling more than 1,000 troops, plus 400 special constables, were already deployed in the area, under the command of Colonel Guy L'Estrange, a veteran of the Peninsula War. Magistrates read the Riot Act, called for the arrest of the demonstrator's speakers, and the cavalry charged. People ran in every direction to avoid the sabres and hooves. Even when the orators were arrested, the bloodshed continued as cavalrymen pursued panic-stricken people into narrow alleys, while the main exits from the field were blocked by infantrymen. Soldiers scrambled to seize the banners of the demonstrators as if they were the standards of Napoleon's regiments. The result was Peterloo, with some 400 wounded and 15 killed. 92

According to Hernon, 'those most directly responsible for the massacre were never held to account.' When the London *Guardian* asked its readers in 2006 to name the radical events in British history which most deserved commemoration, the Putney debates came first, and Peterloo second. 94

Bristol had a history of insurrection. In the eighteenth century there were riots over bread prices, cuts in weavers' wages and toll-booth charges on the roads. On one day in 1793 the Riot Act was read six times and firing by soldiers killed ten people. In 1831 the issue was parliamentary reform. Bristol had a population of 104,000 adults, but those with a vote numbered only 6,000. When a long awaited reform bill failed in the House of Lords, sporadic disturbances erupted in many places, but popular fury was sharp in Bristol.

The local recorder, Sir Charles Weatherall, was an outspoken opponent of reform, and on 29 October his carriage was pelted with stones and he was forced to flee on foot. The military commander ordered a cavalry charge which left one person dead. A crowd of up to 10,000 people returned the next day and looted and burnt the house and adjacent shops in Queen's Square where Weatherall sheltered. Dragoons, known for their zeal in crushing dissent, slashed their way across the square leaving 'women and children running and screaming in every direction.' Soldiers chased a group of colliers into the country and left roads and fields strewn with wounded bodies. <sup>95</sup>

The rage of the demonstrators was precise—around 100 houses owned by unpopular grandees were reportedly destroyed. But the costs to the people were very high. Estimates of the dead and wounded ranged between 500 and 1000. Four were hanged above the gate of the Old Gaol where the gallows had been dumped by the rioters. A further 88 local people were transported or jailed. Workers had good reason to be affronted by the 1832 reforms—known in the history books as the Great Reform Act. It increased the electorate from some 500,000 to 700,000, that is, to only 7 percent of the adult male population; plural voting persisted for the next century, and the Lords retained their veto power over legislation until 1911. The working-classes remained largely excluded from the vote. Facing a rising democratization movement, the strategy of the oligarchy was to drive a wedge between the working class and middle class, 97 and of a certainty within the working classes too.

The formation of Chartism was a response to the failures of 1831 to 1832. It began in London in 1838, and grew quickly into one of the most striking and biggest working-class movements of the century. Foot notes that the People's Charter, published in May 1838, 'unleashed tremendous agitation throughout Britain's big cities', and Charlton says that it became 'the first national workers' movement in history.'98 The Charter echoed and extended Leveller demands: equal representation based on equal constituencies; universal male suffrage; annual parliaments which regularly renewed the people's mandate; secret ballots; salaries for MPs; and abolition of property

qualifications for MPs. As vast meetings gathered to hail and sign up to the Charter the focus shifted from political to economic demands, from 'passivity to activity', and from 'moral force to physical force'. Feargus O'Connor, a skilled orator who launched the *Northern Star* in 1837, cautioned that their demands would not be conceded without a fight. <sup>99</sup> But the moral and emotional character of Chartism was distinctively working class in its rhetoric, support and self-identity; celebratory, earnest and opposed to corruption. Most supporters were men who worked with their hands, <sup>100</sup> rallying around the slogan 'Peaceably if we may, forcibly if we must.' The movement's strategy was conciliatory and moderate: to demonstrate overwhelming mass support for their demands. Their petition of 1839, with 1.2 million signatures—a second in 1842 claimed even larger support—was contemptuously dismissed by parliament. <sup>101</sup> Mass arrests, heavy sentencing, and savage repression was utilized by the state almost immediately.

After parliament's rejection, rioting occurred in Birmingham and most significantly in Newport. Chartism had won 'a mighty following' in Wales, two riots there 'bordered on insurrection', and repression there was especially severe. 102 An organized and armed march of some 7,000 miners and ironworkers from the South Wales coalfields to Newport in Monmouthshire, on the night of 3–4 November 1839, was fired upon by some thirty troops concealed inside a hotel in the city center, leaving at least 22 dead and scores wounded. This uprising was 'the most serious clash between government and people in modern industrial Britain.' Triumphant magistrates and employers, according to Wright, inflicted severe retribution on Chartists and Radicals of any description. 103 Three leaders, John Frost, Zephaniah Williams and William Jones were convicted of high treason, and each was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered. After a campaign in their support, the sentences were commuted to transportation for life, and the men were hastily bundled out of the country. 104 According to Foot, 'The Whigs [in power at the time] and their judges had two aims—to cut the head of Chartism and to expunge forever the chilling memory of the revolutionary year of 1839. In the first they were entirely successful, in the second not so.' Twice again, in 1842 and 1848, the Chartist revolt broke over the heart of bourgeois England, with steadily diminishing force. 105

The size of Chartism's mass base was undeniable: at its peak, 1839 to 1842, according to Wright, it had the support of 2 to 3 million people in a total adult population in 1842 of ten million. The movement offered people who would ordinarily have been known only to their families and immediate neighbors a chance to become activists, organizers, and public speakers, delegates to other towns and villages 'where the same infectious revolution was taking place.' The real achievements of the Chartists was the 'glimpse they afforded [over nine years] of human emancipation.' 106 Such develop-

ments became the hallmarks of democratizing movements in later times and places.

It was 'the strength, confidence and self-activity of the rank and file' which convinced the government and its allies in the judiciary and military that the revolt 'must be crushed with the utmost despatch—and hidden from history' for as long as possible. <sup>107</sup> That intention to obliterate the memory of a democratizing movement was seen again in South Africa at the end of the 1980s, discussed in chapter 3.

By the late 1840s Chartism had been 'beaten down by state repression' and it was no longer a mass movement. <sup>108</sup> They rallied in Hyde Park on 24 June 1855 against the Sunday Trading Bill, which banned the opening of pubs and the printing of newspapers on the Sabbath. A bigger rally a week after met truncheon wielding police and 104 demonstrators were arrested. England was then acquiring, in Marx's view, a large and sophisticated metropolitan working-class, and class contradictions were both acute and shameless. But insurrection was not the way forward when the people were confronted by state power, the law and the truncheon. England possessed a strong and growing proletariat, but what they faced, he said, was 'an immensely self-confident bourgeoisie, the rock against which revolutionary waves broke in vain.' <sup>109</sup>

Conservatives and Liberals within the political elite 'were determined to preserve the essentials of the existing order' while slowly broadening the electorate. 110 They were assisted in these aims by the highly diverse nature of the mid-nineteenth century workforce, with its sharp distinction between the 'skilled' and 'organized', on the one hand, and the mass of workers, both unskilled and unorganized, on the other. It was chiefly the skilled and semiskilled who actively participated in the range of self-help organizations. Such organized workers tended to see themselves as distinct from the 'street and pub culture' of the poor, but they remained, says Hinton, 'an elite within the working-class' which collectively embraced mutuality and cooperation. 111 A second reform act of 1867 enfranchised about 30 percent of men in urban working-class constituencies, as Liberals made determined attempts to capture the votes of organized workers—by then one-quarter of the electorate and rising—and consolidate a 'Lib-Lab' coalition in working-class politics. It was a time when the Reform League could get 'hundreds of thousands of people on to the streets' with unsurpassed discipline, and when 'the bulk of working-class electors remained wedded to Gladstonian Liberalism. 112

Poor workers retained their proclivity for direct action, as the mid-Victorian poor remained 'tumultuous, violent.' Bad harvests produced bread riots in the towns, and Sabbatarian attempts to restrict Sunday shopping and drinking led to a successful series of riots in Hyde Park in 1855. Fifteen years later, restrictive Liberal licensing laws saw large demonstrations by builders' laborers, navvies and dockers, as 'important sections of the poorest and most

oppressed workers asserted their presence.' 113 This upsurge from the poor continued into the 1880s, as people in the London streets 'fought for the right of public assembly', led chiefly by a Land and Labour League (opposed both to repression in Ireland and unemployment in London) and the Social Democratic Federation. Trafalgar Square in the summer of 1887 was used by the homeless unemployed as a place to sleep, and as police and troops moved to evict thousands of demonstrators, three men were killed. Shortly after, mounted police guarding the square killed a bystander, Alfred Linnel, and tens of thousands of Radicals, Irish and socialists attended his funeral.

Unskilled workers were also showing a capacity to organize. The 1888 match-girls strike at Bow in the East End highlighted both the conditions and capacities of marginalized poor women workers. 114 Trade union membership doubled to 1.5 million, 1888–1892, with a 'dramatic upsurge among the unskilled.' Organizational growth continued as also did the poorer workers' militancy. Around 1910, general trade unions based on semi-skilled or unskilled workers showed 'spectacular' growth within unionism. Railwaymen and dock workers were highly militant. Troops and armed force were used in many places. 'Virtual military occupation' resulted in Salford, and in Liverpool two strikers were shot dead after what was called three days of guerrilla warfare in the streets. Later, strikers' wives led a march declaring 'Our Poverty is Your Danger. Stand by Us.' 115

#### THE DEPTH OF THE DEMOCRATIZATION

Democratization in nineteenth century Britain was not a stark choice between revolution or subordination but a broad and deep process of incremental but essentially radical reformism. It was directed against a government and parliament that was not only anti-democratic and based on force, but also corrupt, oligarchical and broadly discriminatory. Cleaning up corruption became integral to the success of working class self-determination through their varied self-help groups and such Chartist demands as payment for MPs, the secret ballot and an end to rotten boroughs, and important also to an expanding professional middle class of doctors, lawyers and teachers in the towns.

In pre-industrial Britain, the division of spoils—access to office, fee for service, preferment, contracts, patronage, and so on—was, as Peck noted, the veritable lifeblood of the governmental system. Soon after victory over France, parliament in 1815 passed the protectionist Corn Laws, which guaranteed the price of grain and the livelihoods of landowners, but raised the cost of living of impoverished urban workers increasingly dependent on bread, and affronted middle-class supporters of free trade; government and parliament maintained them until 1846. Through the insurrectionary 1830s, the oligarchy 'resisted every movement toward change', until unwillingly

and under growing popular pressure it agreed to share some of its power with other groups. 116 Democratization and the reduction of corruption went of necessity hand-in-hand. The former could not be approached without the latter, and cleaner government implied rising democracy.

While some towns expanded by more than 300 percent in population in the nineteenth century and what had previously been only villages in the north and Midlands blossomed into towns, others stagnated or declined. Development was a multi-faceted process, economic, demographic, socio-political. A big contrast existed between what can be seen as the old political world of the counties and small towns which looked back to the years before 1832, and the new world of the rising industrial cities. It was in these growing towns that 'the Anti-Corn Law League, trade unions and political associations were more active, and the rising industrial and commercial classes were most apparent.' If development is understood as the socio-cultural transformation of a town or region, the process can be measured in terms of population growth and by analyzing its class structure, and the attitudes and values of those involved. Such analysis indicates the existence of a relationship between development and the reduction of corruption. 117 This transformation underpinned and reinforced the bigger but fraught association between capitalist development and democratization. 118

Within nineteenth century Britain, 'two political sub-cultures antagonistically co-existed, the pre- or non-industrial and the industrial. The older culture 'encouraged the continuation of certain pre-democratic forms of political persuasion'. Little emphasis was placed on the need for an active, interventionist state, for a political party possessing a platform, on campaigning on a program, and on the winning of a mandate for its implementation. In the old culture the franchise was 'a piece of property' and voting was intended to 'satisfy a social better or to acquire a material reward. <sup>119</sup>

The new emerging political society, by contrast, 'emphasized the creativity of the state.' It encouraged discussion and debate, and implied that elections were occasions when informed and active citizens chose between competing programs. Friendly societies, chapels and trade unions 'all instilled into their members the virtues of listening, discussing and voting'. Literacy significantly increased, as popular radical newspapers stressed the use of the vote as a means of winning reforms. It was in the most rapidly developing constituencies that elections became 'the rational choice between competing programs', and political corruption consequently declined.

The people enfranchised in 1832 were mostly from the commercial and industrial middle-classes. Reforms conceded by the ruling classes were as noted slow and limited. But after 1867, the newly enfranchised classes were 'undeniably part of developing England'. They wanted 'program-focused, issue-oriented elections'. Many of the artisans and those known as the shopocracy were engaged in the burgeoning self-help societies. Where constitu-

encies became predominantly working-class, the incidence of electoral corruption became less than was normal in the older electorates. As the 'political awakening of the masses took place, and the voter began to value his suffrage as a lever of political power . . . corruption became outmoded and gave way to democracy.' <sup>120</sup>

The milestones of the change indicate the complexity of the democratization process and the unremitting opposition of the government. The 1833 Corrupt Practices Act increased the penalties for corruption and encouraged a more active central control over bribery. The growth of the modern political party, first liberal then later working-class, was 'itself a factor in the decline of corruption'. The Corrupt Practices Act of 1854 defined bribery more effectively as not merely a monetary bribe but as including excessive travelling and campaigning expenses and what was called 'treating'—the 'offer or promise of any meat, drink or entertainment' and it made the central party organizations responsible for the conduct of elections in the constituencies.

Socio-economic change on the ground remained slow and uneven. In mid-Victorian England, 'the traditional landed classes still ruled' and fewer than 25 percent of MPs were manufacturers, bankers and the like. Into the 1860s, the 'electorate disproportionately represented pre-industrial society'. and it unevenly impacted upon the working classes. Working-class voters were skilled craftsmen for whom Radical Liberalism had strong appeal. Many of the lower working-class stood outside the workers' movement, and some were open to the corrupting electoral influences of Conservatism and patriotism in the imperial heartland. Elections offered, says Wright, the pleasures of free food and beer and, 'not infrequently, a saturnalia of mob violence.' In Blackburn on the eve of the 1868 municipal elections, 'rival mobs, well lubricated by open treating, fought in the streets'. At the Trinity Ward polling station, a cart of stones was reportedly kept in readiness by the Tory party, blood was soon flowing and the polls were disrupted for hours. Liberals, he notes, had viewed the franchise as a privilege rather than as a right, and by the late 1860s conceded that the behavior and attitudes of skilled workers had earned them that right. Conservatives, however, at the electoral level continued to rely on attracting the more deferential working men utilizing what Wright calls 'the politics of beer and Britannia.' The formation of a dedicated worker-orientated party was in consequence delayed. Not until the 1880s did the idea of a separate working-class party make substantial progress. 121

Only with the Ballot Act of 1872 was the secret vote conceded—40 years after the first reform act—leaving the briber no longer certain of a return on his money. The Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 limited election expenses and increased the penalties introduced in 1854. Party organization improved after 1867, with increasing control at the center and in the constituencies. 122

The development of 'a concerted move to wipe out corruption' only came after the bigger and still incomplete reform acts of 1867 and 1884—which still left some 40 percent of adult men voteless. 'Deriving partly from the new political sub-culture, and from the new circumstances created by [socioeconomic development], this movement was responsible for the legislation attacking corruption', and responsible also 'for its vigorous enforcement.' <sup>123</sup> Political reform, enfranchisement and anti-corruption, was only achieved, as noted, through large scale mobilization of the people and strong, persistent action. Since the 1830s in growing cities like Birmingham, hundreds of thousands demonstrated for reform. The Reform League 'successfully mobilized trade unionists, cooperators, members of friendly societies, republicans and secularists' behind the call for manhood suffrage. <sup>124</sup>

The partial enfranchisement of the new middle classes in the 1830s was accompanied by the abolition of slavery in British colonies. Issues like independence and civil war in the United Sates, Jamaica and Ireland gained working-class and middle-class support. 'Women abolitionists', for example, 'were crucial' in campaigns around slavery and its aftermath. 125 In July 1867 the Reform League determined on another demonstration in Hyde Park, regardless of banning orders and the presence of troops and police, and over a hundred thousand people turned out. Parliament was debating Fenian violence and the excesses of the British army in Jamaica, and the Reform Act was passed. In so doing divisions in the working-class were again exploited. Some 35 to 40 percent of adult male urban workers got the right to vote. those who were, as it was said, the registered and residential—men who were household heads and had been in residence in rented property for a minimum of 12 months—'respectable' men with jobs, homes and families. This was a franchise intentionally constrained within a complex system of registration, residence qualifications and the exclusion of paupers. 126

# WORKERS' SELF-HELP IN EDUCATION

In acquiring and using their voice, the supposedly inarticulate masses constituted the foundations of democratization in Britain. The expanding culture of print opened up opportunities to working men to speak, write and act in the public sphere. It was essentially 'an autodidact culture', with roots among the Levellers and Diggers, and it 'surged', says Rose, in the nineteenth century.

'Mutual improvement societies' engaged in cooperative education, where perhaps 6 to 100 men from both the working and lower middle classes met periodically, often under the auspices of a church. Usually one member would present a paper on a subject loosely understood as 'useful knowledge'. The aim was 'to develop the verbal and intellectual skills of people who had never been encouraged to speak or think.' In addition, 'the working-classes

organized innumerable adult schools, libraries, reading circles, dramatic societies', all of which necessarily 'relied on working-class initiative', rather than on non-existent state provision or middle-class philanthropy. Mutual improvement operated within the broad friendly society movement to which about 25 percent of all male workers belonged in 1830, and 75 to 80 percent by 1880.<sup>127</sup>

It was a highly-interactive self-help culture. *The Dundee, Perth and For-far People's Journal,* for example, encouraged readers to contribute letters, reports of meetings and notes on folklore and history; it commissioned articles, and in turn, its 'To Correspondents' column advised contributors on the strengths and weaknesses of rejected articles. The editor, William Latto, was a classic autodidact; a Chartist weaver who had read from books propped against his handloom, and learned Latin from a church minister. <sup>128</sup> Founded in 1858, the *People's Journal* was selling 100,000 copies by 1866, a quarter of a million by 1914—the largest circulation of any weekly outside London. This culture produced the future Labour Party leader J. Ramsay MacDonald, who won a prize of 10 pounds for a dialect story sent to the *Journal*. He served as secretary to the Lossiemouth Mutual Improvement Association, which in 1884 debated such issues as payment of MPs, emigration and capital punishment. <sup>129</sup>

Most nineteenth century Sunday schools functioned as workers' self-help institutions. In 1834, one in every five Sunday schools offered a library. 'The organizers and teachers were largely drawn from the working-class, where the Sunday school experience was nearly universal.' Reading rooms established by workers were a parallel initiative. In Carlisle, at least 24 were founded between 1836 and 1854, with a total of some 1,400 members and 4,000 volumes, in a town population of 25,000. These schools 'boosted literacy before the 1870 Education Act'—in one working-class parish the proportion of those who could sign the marriage register rose from 70 percent in 1841 to 93 percent 30 years later. <sup>130</sup>

The leading ideologist of mutual improvement was Samuel Smiles, whose *Self-Help* (1859) sold a quarter of a million copies and was widely translated. The book grew out of the lectures he delivered to a Leeds society in 1845. Smiles was a radical who favored universal suffrage, and supported Chartism and the 10-hour day. His readers included Labour MPs William Johnson, Thomas Summerbell and MacDonald, and a future Communist miners' leader.

The career of George Gregory (b. 1888) offers a study in what the ideas of *Self-Help* promoted. His father was an illiterate Somerset miner and his mother a servant who read only the Bible. He had no access to serious reading until mid-adolescence, when an acquaintance introduced him to Smiles' book. He returned to his old school for evening classes in chemistry, arithmetic and mining engineering, where he won a prize book of world

history. He began to read widely on history and capitalist development. "My mind underwent an expansion", he later recalled, "and ambition began to stir." He gained a diploma in mining engineering but, fearful that he might lose his class identity, he returned to work as an ordinary miner. He became a socialist, a trade union organizer, a Cooperative Society manager, a peace activist, a branch secretary for the Workers' Educational Association and for the League of Nations Union and the owner of more than 1,000 books. Gregory said in his old age that Self-Help had "lived with me, and in me, for more than sixty years." <sup>131</sup>

Working men in the early nineteenth century rarely acknowledged women as their intellectual equals, but in the 1860s this began to change. By the 1870s, 21 out of 27 Methodist mutual improvement societies in London admitted both men and women. The Women's Cooperative Guild, founded 1883, gained its peak membership of 88,000 in 1938. The Guild encouraged Deborah Smith (b. 1858), a Nelson weaver, to read, talk and think for herself. She was raised by parents who were poor and illiterate, and she obtained only a brief period of part-time schooling. The Guild's meetings and lectures, "opened up a new life to me. . . . I got new ideas, a wider view of life. It taught me to think for myself on all questions." 132

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, 'working-class culture was saturated by the spirit of mutual education.' Groups of activist workmen came together 'everywhere' for intellectual discourse. This included a circle of radical intellectual constables in London—the 'Turneymen'—which flourished for some 20 years. They read Proust, Spengler, Gibbon, Paine and others. They circulated among themselves a collective season ticket to the Promenade Concerts, never missed a Harold Laski lecture, and went as a group to debates by Shaw and Belloc. The tailoring factories of the Jewish East End presented a similar ferment. The shop steward in Hymie Fagan's sweatshop introduced him to Jack London, Upton Sinclair and The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist. In what Fagan called "my university", they held passionate and serious shop-floor debates about Tolstoy, Gorky, Zola, Zionism and the Russian Revolution. The Whitechapel Public Library was then welcoming a second generation of avid readers, already famous as a haven where Jewish slum kids could escape overcrowded flats and enjoy books. Here also 'study was a social activity.' 133

But the most pervasive form of mutual education was simply reading aloud. In pubs, on street corners, at Chartist meetings and Methodist circles, the communal reading of newspapers multiplied the audiences for information. In workshops, one labourer commonly read aloud while the others shared his work. There were indications that about half of all working-class people between 1870 and 1918 practiced reading aloud in their homes. Such different influences combined to produce the 'shared literary culture' of the working classes at the end of the nineteenth century. 134 It was an open and

questioning culture, and it constituted the life and strength of democratization.

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) was one of the most successful organizations that brought higher education to working people. Founded in 1903 by Albert Mansbridge, a Cooperative activist, it was supported by trade unions, cooperatives, churches, Labour and some Liberal political groups. It sponsored university summer schools, art exhibitions, courses for Sunday school teachers, and wide-ranging lecture programs. Mansbridge aimed to give WEA students a great deal of control over course content, and he believed that the essential characteristic of their classes was 'freedom'. The Association worked to create 'an articulate and obstreperous working-class intelligentsia.' A 1936 survey found 'hundreds' of students who had published articles in local papers, and some who had written for leading national dailies and journals. George Norris, a student who rose to the executive council of the Union of Post Office Workers, found he could not express himself properly in writing and debate until he learnt to "use books as tools, and the necessity of bringing some order into my studies." WEA's enrolment in 1948 and 1949 was 11,000 students. 135

Early Labour Party politicians, Keir Hardie, MacDonald, John Wilson and Robert Smillie, arose within the autodidact and democratization process. Like countless others, they had used publications like John Cassell's *Popular Educator* to teach themselves mathematics, science, literature and languages. In 1906, Pearson's Weekly published a series of mini-autobiographies by 26 new Labour MPs, entitled 'How I Got On.' All of them emphasized their education and reading experiences, hailed the cheapening of good literature in their lifetimes, and described a lifelong effort to read "everything I could lay my hands on." <sup>136</sup>

# THE DOMINANCE OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

The democratic culture produced a political leadership which was initially integrated into the class from which they came. All of the first Labour MPs had been born into the working class, 'nearly all had been industrial workers', and none had a university degree. The type of men prominent in European socialist parties—marginal bourgeoisie, journalists, theoreticians, Marxists—were largely absent. The British working class had succeeded in forging both 'its own organizations and its own leaders.' 137

But the early workers' MPs had to maneuver between friendly societies, popular movements and trade unions, on the left, and Liberal and Conservative forces on the right, while confronting the ongoing issues of the poor and women's rights at the same time. The Labour Representative Committee (LRC) was created in February 1900, at a time of Liberal disarray, as what

Hinton sees as a triumph of independent labor representation; a few years later there were five LRC MPs, and after elections in 1906 there were 29. At the next sitting of parliament the LRC MPs simply renamed themselves the Labour Party; it was then in Hinton's view an 'integral part' of a Liberal revival. Labour's dependent position in parliament, he says, prevented any determined effort for independent political reform. <sup>138</sup> Votes for women contended unequally with the principle of the 'family wage', upheld for long historical reasons by the trade unions; since women's wages were much lower than men, they were seen as a threat to the male wage. Around 1901, when women constituted 30 percent of the labor force, they were in consequence only 7.5 percent of trade unionists. <sup>139</sup>

The Women's Social and Political Union, formed in October 1903, with a working-class activist base and an educated middle-class leadership, organized demonstrations by some 30,000 in Hyde Park in 1908, 150,000 in Manchester and 100,000 in Leeds, and embarked on a highly militant and innovative campaign of active law-breaking and violent resistance; window smashing, physical assault of important personages, arson and bombing, hunger-striking (in response to prison conditions and forcible feeding) and martyrdom. Horspool sees the suffragettes as the reappearance of 'direct, rebellious tactics aimed at the ruling classes.' 140 Such highly publicized illegality made for an uneasy relationship with the Labour Party, bent upon establishing its capacity for moderate, responsible government. Both the Labour party and the unions failed to recruit and mobilize women. Not till 1912, says Hinton, when Labour resolved not to support any extension of the franchise that excluded women, was an alliance with the suffragettes possible. 141 Hinton sees the formation of the Labour Party as the 'containment of the socialist impulse' especially towards women and the poor. <sup>142</sup> A serious weakening, in other words, of democratization.

The trade unions represented considerable political support. When the Miners Federation affiliated with the Labour Party in 1909 they brought 16 MPs into the parliamentary party, and by 1914, it was the organizational and financial resources of the trade unions, says Runciman, that enabled Labour to overtake the Liberals as the representative of working-class interests. <sup>143</sup>

But it was the interests of the parliamentary leadership which won out over those of the poor majority. As the jobless figures rose above 1.5 million in the early 1920s, and a new and militant National Union of Unemployed Workers Movement led the country's first national hunger march, the Labour Party readied itself for government. In 1924 Labour was the second largest party in parliament, and for the leadership it was the opportunity to show their capacity to govern responsibly and moderately. Under MacDonald Labour formed its first government with a cabinet of experienced Liberal and Conservative politicians. For an unnamed Clydeside shipbuilder, it was "a bloody [top] hat government like a' the rest." 144 Despite MacDonald's patri-

cian pose and his taste for gracious living, his government soon collapsed in a hysterical Red Letter scare orchestrated by the Conservatives. 145

In this milieu, striking miners striving to protect their jobs and wages against rapacious coal owners—under the firm slogan, 'Not a Penny Off the Pay, Not a Second On the Day'—were given short shrift. Their leader, Arthur James Cook, had an informal manner, spoke of class struggle in comprehensible terms and attracted wide worker support. From the summer of 1925 to the spring of 1926, the new Tory government of Stanley Baldwin directed the resources of the British state towards 'defeating the miners in open conflict.'146 The police were trained to deal with demonstrations, the press lords got special briefings from cabinet ministers, and a new strike-breaking force, the Organization for the Maintenance of Supplies (OMS) was set up for the distribution of food and raw materials. The executive of the Communist Party was charged and convicted of seditious libel. A senior minister warned that the question that had to be fought over was whether England was to be "governed by parliament and the cabinet or by a handful of trade unionists?" The coal owners expected the miners to accept pay cuts and longer work hours, and the government remained determined to challenge the union movement to open warfare. 147

In total contrast, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) did nothing positive to respond to the government's plans and preparations. Instead they effectively undermined the strike. On 2 May 1926 they wrote to Baldwin's Cabinet offering, "in the event of a general strike . . . to enter into arrangements for the distribution of essential foodstuffs"; Todd adds that these discussions 'were kept secret from ordinary trade unionists.' 148 The call to a general strike was approved by acclamation in the TUC with only the Labour leaders seemingly alienated from the step. Workers from every union called out on 4 May 1926 responded with speed and enthusiasm. Between 1.5 and 3 million of a unionized workforce of 6 million joined the strike that day, while 'millions more' offered their support to the strikers. 149 By the end of the first week, there was 'increasing confidence that the strike could be won and the miners' wages protected. The growing example of self-help and popular organization by local elected committees heralded, says Foot, a new democracy far more vibrant than parliament. The balance was shifting towards the workers and the outcomes were very much in doubt. 150

But from hardliners in government, like Winston Churchill and Lord Birkenhead, there was uncompromising resolve—'if the strikers can tell us what wages we should pay the miners, they are seizing from us the control of society.' It was for them an all or nothing issue, like the franchise at Putney.<sup>151</sup> Coal miners had contributed immeasurably to Britain's industrial development. But Baldwin represented the strikers as disloyal and a sectional interest, while the interests of the mine owners were those of the 'community'. <sup>152</sup> The General Council of the TUC, initially irresolute, was terrified by

association with radicalism and the prospect of a miners' victory, with the revolutionary outcomes it might entail. On 12 May the TUC leaders called off the strike and opted for unconditional surrender. In the last hours union and Labour leaders urged the miners to accept a sell-out: when Ramsay MacDonald asked if he could address the miner's executive, Cook replied "No", and "you have already taken your stand in appealing to us to [accept pay cuts]". 153 They abandoned the miners to a lone struggle and inevitable defeat seven months later. The humiliation heaped on the union leadership is said to have embarrassed even Lord Birkenhead. MacDonald and Labour emerged no better. But the party's right wing 'were relieved to see the strike out of the way so that they might continue again the parliamentary work in which they believed, [and where] the true future of the Labour movement [lay].'154 The union and labor party elite used the strike to their advantage. The labor movement they led became 'firmly committed to constitutional change', wherein demands for greater social and economic equality were outlawed. 155

Votes for women came in the established slow, qualified and limited fashion, not as a right too long withheld, but as a reward for their war work in February 1918. Women over 30 gained the vote, but only if they were householders, wives of householders or university graduates, or if they occupied property with a rental value of more than five pounds a year. Male conscientious objectors were simultaneously disenfranchised. The 1918 Representation of the People Act left most working-class women without a vote. 156 'Suffrage Universal' was not conceded until 1928.

The elevation of the Labour parliamentary leadership approached its apogee in 1929 when the party became the largest in parliament, but it was rendered hollow shortly after when Ramsay MacDonald, in the midst of global capitalist crisis, emerged as Prime Minister in a National Government of Conservatives and Liberals.

Elitism's triumph in the Labour Party did not detract from the achievements of democratization in the nineteenth century. Conjoined with the popular drive for clean government, its successes were striking. King is fairly explicit: the movement for social transformation 'was responsible for the legislation attacking corruption . . . [and] for its vigorous enforcement.' By the turn of the century, 'the new political [culture] had become the normative one used in English elections. Corruption was almost extinguished.' <sup>157</sup> For Rose, the working-class autodidact culture which had surged in the nineteenth century, 'crested' with the Labour Party landslide victory in 1945. The Attlee government was a highly effective reformist force which established a framework for social democracy in Britain, but of its senior cabinet ministers, only four—Herbert Morrison, Ernest Bevin, Emmanuel Shinwell and Aneurin Bevan—came from 'strongly working-class backgrounds.' <sup>158</sup> Detachment from the working class was accompanied in many cases by incor-

poration into the ruling elite. The titles that working-class leaders chose for their memoirs—*Workman's Cottage to Windsor Castle; From Workshop to War Cabinet*—says Marquand, 'exuded the same incredulous delight' at their personal success. Aneurin Bevan was a lion of the labor left for over 30 years and an heir to Chartist traditions. He knew that in parliament he was expected to indulge in "ancestor worship", and he oscillated between contrasting understandings of democracy; he was a democratic centralist and a wayward rebel, 'a practitioner of top-down reform who dreamed of bottom-up defiance.' He thought universal suffrage had brought democracy to Britain, but saw that liberal democracy was a pale representation of its participatory forms.<sup>159</sup>

The trade unions, however, revived in their size and composition from 1926 and the Great Depression. In the latter thirties, light manufacturing industry expanded producing new consumer goods. In 1939 just over 1 million women were trade unionists, 16 percent of the female workforce, and almost 5.3 million men too were unionists, 39 percent of the male workforce. <sup>160</sup>

The long movement for working-class self-determination was, for Rose, 'a success story with a downbeat ending'. After a century of struggle the successes of the working-classes were intermixed with failure. They had placed trust in their own capacities to construct a range of self-help organizations, and their trust had been vindicated broadly and deeply in improved living and work conditions, in their heightened participatory capacities and in the reduction of corruption. But they had failed to control the elites which eventually arose in the Labour Party, their supposed political representatives in daily contact with the ruling elites in parliament and government. Participatory values and institutions were gradually incorporated into a passive and elite-dominated liberal model of democracy, and caused to atrophy. The erosion of the cultural world of labor neared completion by the 1990s. <sup>161</sup> The cultural world of popular democracy largely went with it.

## **NOTES**

- 1. Edward Vallance, A Radical History of Britain, London, Little, Brown, 2009, p.148.
- 2. Wikipedia's 'Demography of England', pers com Ivor Morgan, Lincoln, July 2012.
- 3. David Horspool, *The English Rebel*, London and New York, Viking, 2009, p. 251.
- 4. In the collection of the London bookseller George Thomason. Pauline Gregg, Free-born John: A Biography of John Lilburne, London, George Harrap and Co, 1961, p. 94.
  - 5. Ibid., p. 134.
  - 6. Ibid., p. 98.
- 7. Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto*, Berkley and London, University of California Press, 2008, p. 81.
- 8. Quoted by Geoffrey Robertson, in *The Levellers: The Putney Debates*, London, Verso, 2007, xiii.
  - 9. Gregg, op. cit., p. 159.

- 10. David Caute's historical novel of Winstanley's life, *Comrade Jacob*, London, Andre Deutsch, 1961, pp. 69–70.
- 11. Notably, Sir Thomas Fairfax as commander-in-chief, Cromwell as lieutenant-general and Henry Ireton as commisary-general.
- 12. Paul Foot, *The Vote: How It Was Won and How It Was Undermined*, London, Bookmarks Publications, 2012, p. 39.
  - Gregg, op. cit., p. 158.
- 14. Vallance, op. cit. p. 151 and Michael Braddick, God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars, London, Penguin, 2009, p. 494.
  - 15. Gregg, op. cit., pp. 186-93.
  - 16. Ibid., pp. 212-13.
  - 17. Robertson, op. cit., xxxix.
  - 18. Ibid., 69-70 and 75.
- 19. David Marquand, Britain Since 1918: The Strange Career of British Democracy, London, Phoenix, 2009, p. 13.
- 20. Stevie Davies, *Unbridled Spirits: Women of the English Revolution*, 1640–1660, London, The Women's Press, 1999, p.73.
  - 21. Horspool, op. cit., p. 251.
  - 22. One of the soldiers' core demands, says Vallance, op. cit., p.152.
- 23. Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution,

London, Temple Smith, 1972, pp.104–07. As he also said on 8 December 1649: 'England cannot bee a free Commonwealth unless all the poore commoners have a free use and benefit of the land.' George H. Sabine (ed.), *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, New York, Russell and Russell, 1965, p. 348.

- 24. Without providing date and place for this quotation. Peter Linebaugh, *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century*, London and New York, Verso, 2006, p. 121.
  - 25. Linebaugh. The Magna Carta Manifesto, p. 83.
  - 26. Gregg, op. cit., p. 353. Her emphasis.
- 27. Introduction to David W. Petegorsky, *Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War: Gerrard Winstanley and the Digger Movement*, London, Sandpiper, 1999, 2nd edition.
  - 28. Hill, op. cit., pp. 95, 97, and 103–5.
  - 29. Ibid., p. 98.
- 30. In October 1647, when 'An Agreement of the People' was first presented, the Army comprised 16 regiments, listed in Robertson, op. cit., p. 52.
- 31. By May 1649, the soldiers' arrears of pay stood at 1.3 million pounds. Vallance, op. cit., pp. 125–6.
  - 32. Foot, op. cit., pp. 39-40.
  - 33. Gregg, op. cit., 276-78.
  - 34. Davies, op. cit., pp. 68-69.
  - 35. Braddick, op. cit., p. 569.
  - 36. Petegorsky, op. cit., p. 105,
  - 37. Robertson, op. cit., pp. 104 and 124.
- 38. Popular militancy was 'driven underground, forced into exile or immigration, or petrified in sectarian rigidty', but 'its influence was by no means crushed.' Linebaugh, op. cit., pp.42–43.
  - 39. Hill, op. cit., p. 97.
  - 40. Robertson, op. cit., p.114.
- 41. Most notably with the Chartists considered below, and in smaller example on 'Levellers' Day' since 1975 commemorating the suppression of the mutiny at Burford on 17 May 1649. Vallance, op. cit., p. 126.
- 42. Given full vent in Ireland after August 1649 in war crimes, religious persecution and ethnic cleansing. Thousands were massacred at Drogheda and Wexford, scores of Catholic clergy executed, and thousands more of women and children transported to sugar plantations in the Caribbean. Over the four subsequent years, Ireland experienced 'demographic catastrophe',

with mortality of some 20 percent, due to fighting, famine and disease (cf. a population fall of some 3 percent in England in the 1640s). Michael O Siochru, *God's Executioner: Oliver Cromwell and the Conquest of Ireland*. London, Faber and Faber, 2008, pp. 1–2 and 223.

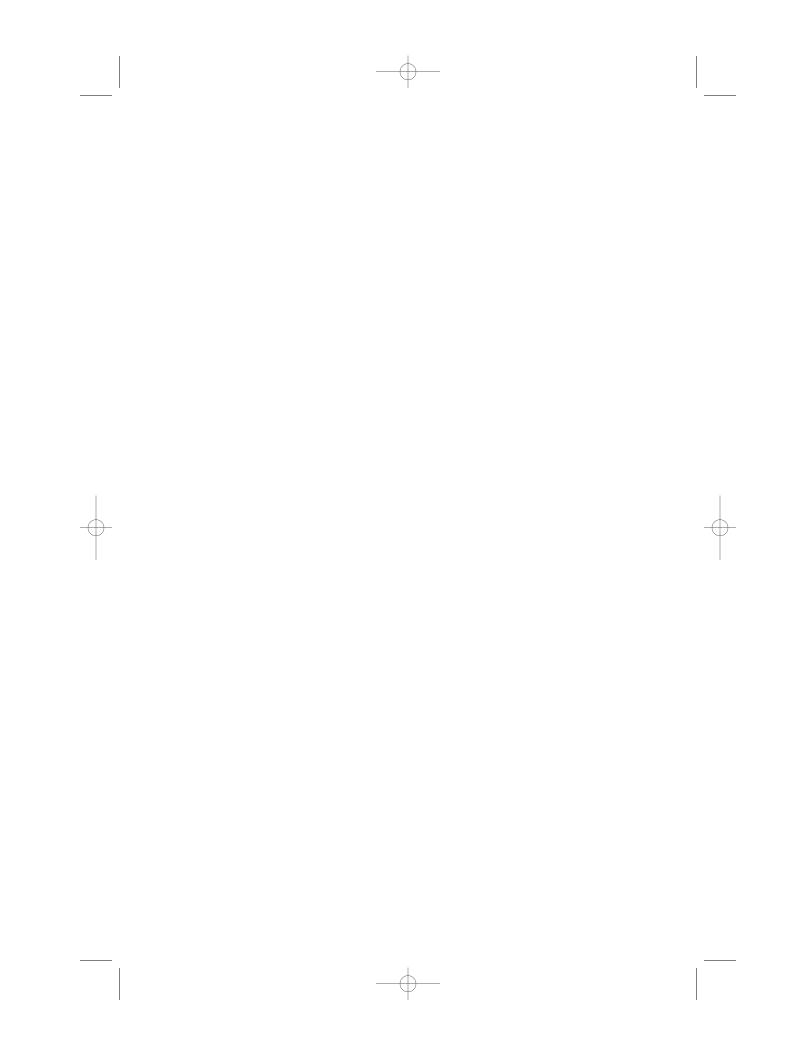
- 43. The judges had insisted that only they were able to determine the law, and Lilburne had repeatedly insisted that he and the jury possessed this power.
  - 44. Gregg, op. cit., pp. 294-301.
  - 45. Petegorsky, op. cit., pp. 118-19.
- 46. Linda Levy Peck, 'Corruption and Political Development in Early Modern Britain', chapter in Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Michael Johnston and Victor T. LeVine (eds), *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers, 1989, pp. 226–29.
  - 47. Linebaugh, The London Hanged, p.17.
- 48. This section is reliant on Linebaugh and references are simply by page number in brackets in the text, unless otherwise indicated.
  - 49. There were 12 pence (d) to a shilling (s) and 20 shillings to a pound.
- 50. Vendors called out 'Cucumbers two a penny, tailors twice as many', Linebaugh, op. cit., pp. 242-44.
- 51. Robert Harvey, *Clive: The Life and Death of a British Emperor*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998, c. 23 and pp. 341 and 346.
  - 52. Words of Andrew Ure in The Philosophy of Manufacture, 1835.
- 53. Another interpretation of these events portrays them in religious terms as the Gordon Riots, where an M.P., Lord George Gordon, opposed to Catholic emancipation, led some 50,000 people to parliament to press their cause. Twenty-five of Gordon's followers were hanged but Gordon was acquitted of treason. Over 11,000 troops were in action in London at this time. Ian Hernon, *Riot: Civil Insurrection from Peterloo to the Present Day*, London and Ann Arbor, Pluto Press, 2006, pp. 2–4. But rights for Catholics were here intertwined with American independence, and there were realistic suspicions that what the British government really wanted was to raise Catholic soldiers from the Highlands for its war against the American colonists. Horspool, op. cit., p. 319.
- 54. In the American Revolutionary War, 'the press kidnapped more than eighty thousand men, provoking riots in at least twenty-two British seaports'. Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: The British Struggle to Abolish Slavery*, Basingstoke and London, Pan Books, 2006, p. 224.
- 55. Four years earlier, the Liverpool seamen's strike saw merchant sailors combining together to oppose pay cuts on one ship in the port, using direct mutual action. Troops were called in, and several unarmed sailors were killed and more injured. Horspool, op. cit., pp. 311 and 326–28.
- 56. The huge slave population and the nearly 8,000 plantations were concentrated in a terrain of only 10,700 square miles, much of that mountainous. Nick Nesbitt, *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment*, Charlottesville and London, University of Virginia Press, 2008, p. 199.
  - 57. Hochschild, op. cit., pp. 169 and 250.
- 58. David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*, New York and London, W.W. Norton, 2005, p.7.
- 59. Karl Marx and Friederich Engels, 'The Communist Manifesto', in *Selected Works*, vol. 1, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1950, p. 37. Material in this section builds upon Good, 'The Drive for Participatory Democracy in Nineteenth Century Britain', *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 47, no.3, July 2009.
- 60. D.S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe 1750 to the Present*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp. 114 and 122–23.
- Laura Cumming, 'All Aboard for the Modern Age', Guardian, London, 4 May 2008, p.
   60.
- 62. Tony Judt, 'The Glory of the Rails', in *The New York Review of Books*, 23 December 2010, p. 60.
  - 63. Ibid.

- 64. Ibid.
- 65. Cumming, op. cit.
- 66. Landes, op. cit., p. 123.
- 67. Marx and Engels, op. cit., p. 42.
- 68. Landes, op. cit., 114-15.
- 69. Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 1–9 and 366–71. See also David Keys, 'Revealed: Industrial Revolution was Powered by Child Slaves', *The Independent*, London, 2 August 2010.
- 70. Eric Hopkins, A Social History of the English Working-Classes 1815–1945, London, Edward Arnold, 1979, pp. 12 and 25.
- 71. Malcolm Chase, *Chartism: A New History*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2007. p.403.
  - 72. Hopkins, op. cit., pp. 24–26.
- 73. D. G. Wright, *Popular Radicalism: The Working-Class Experience*, 1780–1880, London and New York, Longman, 1988, pp. 9 and 110.
  - 74. Hopkins, op. cit., pp. 24-26.
  - 75. Chase, op. cit., p. 5.
- 76. Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, London, Penguin Books, 1987, pp. 79–80.
- 77. Clare Clark, 'Thieving was Work, and Work was Good', *Guardian*, 5 July 2008; Lynsey Hanley, *Estates: An Intimate History*, London, Granta Books, 2008, pp. 53–55; and Sarah Wise, *The Blackest Streets: The Life and Death of a Victorian Slum*, London, Bodley Head, 2008, pp. 8–9. The statement 'Thieving was work . . .' was that of Arthur Herding, a Nichol resident and lifelong criminal, whose reminisicences were recorded in the 1970s when he was almost 90.
  - 78. D.G.Wright, Democracy and Reform 1815–1885, London, Longman, 1970, p. 154.
  - 79. Wise, op. cit., p. 86.
- 80. Eric Hopkins, Working-Class Self-Help in Nineteenth Century England: Responses to Industrialisation, London, UCL Press, 1995, p. 2.
  - 81. D.G. Wright, op. cit., appendix 1, and Hernon, op. cit., p. 13.
  - 82. Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution, London, Chatto and Windus, 1961, p. 185.
- 83. Hochschild, op. cit., pp. 6–8 and 216–18. He is mistaken, however, when he says that newspapers and books were 'completely uncensored'. The Newspaper and Stamp Duties Act of 1819 was directly aimed at suppressing press opinion, specifically 'blasphemous and seditious libels' and the power of a new popular (or 'pauper') press. Postal services were intercepted, and letters to and from Radicals and other agitators were routinely copied by the Home Office. Williams, op. cit., p. 187 and Hernon, op. cit., p. 14.
  - 84. Wright, op. cit., pp. 116 and 143.
- 85. Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 58–65.
  - 86. Hopkins, Working-Class Self-Help, pp. 1-5 and 221-25.
- 87. The Taff Vale court decision, January 1901, destroyed the trade union's right to strike, but their legal immunity was restored by the Liberal government in 1906. Hinton, op. cit., pp. 68–69.
- 88. Donald Sassoon, One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century, London, Fontana Press, 1997, p. 16.
- 89. Hopkins, *The Rise and Decline of the English Working-Classes 1918–1990: A Social History*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991, pp. 1–9, and Hinton, op. cit., p. 24.
- 90. Around 1874, all self-help organisations had an approximate membership of 4 million, while in 1880, the figure for friendly societies was about 2.2 million, or 30 percent of all adult males. Hopkins, *Working-Class Self-Help*, pp. 3 and 51.
  - 91. Hernon, op. cit., p. 6 and forward.
- 92. The Hussars had fought at Waterloo, and a contemporary cartoon by Cruickshank showed them hacking away at men, women and children, while an officer ordered them to

'Chop them down, my brave boys . . . and remember the more you kill the less poor rates you'll have to pay.' Hopkins, *A Social History of the English Working-Classes*, pp. 36–37.

- 93. op. cit., p. 45 and c.3.
- 94. Guardian, 16 October 2006.
- 95. Tristram Hunt, 'I Predict a Riot', Guardian, 21 August 2006.
- 96. Hernon, op. cit., pp. 66-67.
- 97. Marquand, op. cit., pp. 4 and 23.
- 98. Foot, op. cit., p. 92, and John Charlton, The Chartists, London, Pluto Press, 1997, p.1.
- 99. Foot, op. cit., p. 97.
- 100. Charlton lists some 15 distinct occupations, op. cit., p. 1.
- 101. Marquand, op. cit., p. 25.
- 102. Foot, op. cit., p. 107.
- 103. Wright, op. cit., pp. 121-22 and Hernon, op. cit., pp. 84-85.
- 104. Frost survived harsh imprisonment of seventeen years in Tasmania, and came home to a rapturous welcome. Foot, op. cit., p. 108.
- 105. Ibid.
- 106. Ibid., p. 117.
- 107. Ibid., p.118.
- 108. Wright, op. cit., pp. 132, 144-45 and 187.
- 109. Francis Wheen, Karl Marx, London, Fourth Estate, 2000, pp. 195–205.
- 110. Marquand, op. cit., p. 31.
- 111. His emphasis, op. cit., pp. 8–9.
- 112. Wright, op. cit., 178-79.
- 113. Hinton, op. cit., pp. 3–17.
- 114. Girls as young as twelve worked in the Bryant and May factory for up to 12 hours a day, standing, in conditions permeated by phosphorous, under a system of fines for trivial offences and casual brutality from foremen. The Fabian writer, Annie Besant, highlighted their situation, some were sacked, and through a number of demonstrations, the Union of Women Match Workers was formed and gained notable concessions. Horspool, op. cit., pp. 365–6.
- 115. The established craft unions adopted superior attitudes towards the newcomers. Ibid., pp. 45 and 87–88.
- 116. Peck, op. cit., p. 228.
- 117. John King, 'Socio-Economic Development and Corrupt Campaign Practices in England', chapter in Heidenheimer, et. al., (eds), *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, New Brunswick, NJ, and Oxford, 1989, p. 233.
- 118. Dietrich Rueschemeyer, E.H. Stephens and J.D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992, Introduction.
- 119. King. op. cit., p. 234. Old values of unquestioning submission to authority were current among rural labourers in Oxfordshire in the 1880s, with an interlocutor informing Thompson, 'Brains were no good to a working man; they only made him discontented and saucy and lose him jobs. She'd seen it happen again and again.' Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1973, p. 38.
- 120. Ibid., pp. 137, 235 and 240.
- 121. Wright, op. cit., pp 171 and 180–81.
- 122. King, op. cit., pp. 242-45.
- 123. Ibid., pp. 247–48.
- 124. Catherine Hall, 'Rethinking Imperial Histories: The Reform Act of 1867', *New Left Review*, 208, November/December 1994, pp. 7 and 11; and Keith Flett, 'The Suffrage Campaign', *New Left Review*, 212, July/August 1995, p. 119.
- 125. Hall, op. cit., p. 27.
- 126. Ibid., pp. 10 and 18–19 and Hinton, op. cit., p. 77.
- 127. Rose, op. cit., pp. 3, 10-11 and 58.
- 128. Rose notes that weavers had to be literate for their work and they had a history of both friendly society activity and self-education.
- 129. Rose, op. cit., p. 61.
- 130. Ibid., pp. 62-65

- 131. Ibid., p. 69.
- 132. Ibid., p. 77.
- 133. Ibid., p. 84. The cover of Rose's book carries a photo of the Free Russian Library in East London, circa 1900, showing a room filled with men avidly reading papers and journals.
- 134. Ibid., pp. 83-84.
- 135. Ibid., pp. 265-77.
- 136. Ibid., p. 298.
- 137. Ibid., pp. 188-89.
- 138. Hinton, op. cit., pp. 72-75.
- 139. Ibid., p. 31.
- 140. Horspool, op. cit., pp. 352-63.
- 141. Ibid., pp. 78–79, and Vallance, op. cit., pp. 409–507. The latter notes the large funds which the suffragettes enjoyed thanks to their wealthy donors, and suggests that it was the eventual availability of such resources which transformed Labour from a party dependent on backroom deals with the Liberals into a national political force.
- 142. op. cit., p. 24.
- 143. Hinton, op. cit, p. 80 and W.G. Runciman, 'Blame Lloyd George', *London Review of Books*, 27 May 2010.
- 144. Hinton, op. cit., pp. 131-33.
- 145. Christopher Farman, *The General Strike*, London, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1972, pp. 10–11.
- 146. Foot, op. cit., p. 273
- 147. Ibid., pp. 273-5.
- 148. Selina Todd, The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, London, John Murray, 2014, p.49.
- 149. Ibid., p. 46.
- 150. Foot, op. cit., p. 276, and Farman, op. cit., ch. 10 'The Rank-and-File'.
- 151. Foot, op. cit., p. 277.
- 152. Todd, op. cit., pp. 50-51.
- 153. Farman, op. cit., p. 230.
- 154. Brockway cited in ibid., p. 243.
- 155. Todd, op. cit., p.58.
- 156. Vallance, op. cit., pp. 523-24.
- 157. King, op. cit., p. 248.
- 158. Hopkins, The Rise and Decline of the English Working-Classes, p. 114.
- 159. Marquand, op. cit., pp. 39-40.
- 160. Todd, op. cit., p, 104.
- 161. Rose, op. cit., p. 11, and Sassoon, op. cit., p. 121.



### Chapter Three

## **Democratization in South Africa**

The People versus a Militarist, Predominant Ethno-Nationalist Elite

South Africa possessed in the early 1990s a relatively industrialized and diversified economy. As the country approached the year of majority rule, 1994, industry contributed some 37 percent of gross domestic production (GDP), of which manufacturing represented 25 percent. It was easily the strongest capitalist economy in Africa. It's GDP of some \$133 billion ranked it around 30th in the world, or 23rd in terms of purchasing power. In regard to employment, agriculture contributed about 10 percent of the national total, industry 25 percent and services 64 percent. There was a well-developed infrastructure built upon roads, railways and sea and air ports, extensive urbanization, and technological and scientific resources superior to anything else in Africa. Despite the manifold distortions and wastefulness of the apartheid system, the developmental capacities of the state were high. <sup>2</sup>

The exigencies of advanced capitalist development offered big opportunities to black workers. In the 1950s they had been confined to unskilled labor, but a burgeoning economy and an ever-growing state bureaucracy required increasing numbers of black clerical and junior executive workers, and thus in turn a big increase in black secondary and tertiary education. Between 1965 and 1975, the numbers of black pupils attending secondary schools rose almost fivefold to some 319,000. Industrial capitalists made their own contribution to new class formation from the end of the 1960s, reorganizing the labor force towards reliance upon black skilled workers, and pressured the state into corresponding policy changes; from the early 1970s, government made 'far more money available for urban black schools'. In greater Soweto, for instance, there were eight secondary schools in 1972; 20

by 1976, with a threefold increase in their student intake, and 55 by the end of 1984.

The 1980 census had revealed that a majority of the black population were under 21. Secondary student numbers rose from 600,000 in 1980 to more than 1 million in 1984, boosted by a new school building program at that time.<sup>3</sup> In consequence, secondary schooling was transformed from being the privileged resource of a black elite into a 'mass phenomenon' with an 'urban school-based culture and consciousness'.

High school students in the conglomerate of Soweto, Johannesburg, were well placed to draw together literate youths on a large scale, utilizing networks of extra-mural associations, and assuming, graphically in June 1976, political leadership; protests against inferior education and enforced Afrikaans teaching, met police repression and spread nationwide. New activist local leaders emerged. Popo Molefe, for example, was born in 1952 to a father who was a day laborer and his mother a domestic worker; all the family, he later recalled, were 'extremely poor'. He was trucked to Soweto from Sophiatown when the latter was declared a white area in 1955 and achieved Standard 10 (the leaving certificate). He helped organize the march of 16 June. Murphy Morobe was born a little later in Soweto to a father who was a driver. In 1976 he was in Standard 10 at the Morris Isaacson High School, and also helped organize the student demonstration. Both were active in various groups and became prominent in the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Access to tertiary education also broadened. In 1960 there were fewer than 800 blacks at universities, excluding distance-learning programs offered by the University of South Africa (UNISA), but by 1983 there were about 20,000 at university with another 12,700 enrolled at UNISA. Within the 12 year period, 1958 to 1970, the numbers had arisen in excess of 200 percent.<sup>6</sup> A big step forward in black student organization came in 1969 with the formation of the South African Students Organization (SASO) led by Steve Biko and a harbinger of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). SASO, in Gwala's view, transformed black universities into 'major sites of political struggle' and connected students to the wider political struggles. By 1972 SASO was represented on all black campuses and it had an estimated membership of about 6,000. Biko's ideas were radical and profound. He aimed to revitalize a demoralized older generation, and he believed, according to Halisi, that political action had to approximate to a way of life. Mass education could be extended by committed intellectuals armed with a knowledge of popular culture who would energize the oppressed. But for an emancipatory politics to achieve success, new values and practices would have to be prefigured in the opposition movement. 7 Natal Medical School offered Mamphela Ramphele not only socially important knowledge and skills, but also, she said, 'an environment for the transformation of my life'. She became an activist in SASO and a close collaborator with Biko, and the 1970s were for her 'a time of immense personal growth.' She went ahead through various community activities, 'growing up the hard way.'8

Black workers employed in manufacturing mushroomed in number from 308,000 in 1960 to 781,000 in 1980. In the country's industrial heartland of Gauteng, the workforce rose from 169,000 to 375,000 and by the latter year around Johannesburg 'unskilled labor accounted for less than half' of all black employment there. <sup>9</sup> By the 1980s black workers had become the dominant social force in manufacturing.

What these big changes represented politically was the emergence of key new social categories, the overlapping groups of youth and students, and of skilled and semi-skilled urban workers, each of whom, and particularly the latter, possessed a capacity for organization and action. This was their vital new acquisition within an advancing capitalist economy. Organization was precisely what the Levellers and Diggers had so gravely lacked in 1650. Gerrard Winstanley had sought to establish a living communism of small cultivators on England's unutilized lands, but he knew, notes Hill, 'the danger of appealing to an uneducated democracy, and could not find in contemporary conditions of society the social force which would put through the changes necessary even to make the common people aware of what might be done.'10 Black students and workers were altogether of a different mind and capability in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, and it was their potential strengths which made them dangerous to established nationalist elites. When Thabo Mbeki, senior leader of the African National Congress (ANC) in exile, became aware in the early 1970s that Black Consciousness was beginning to radicalize young men and women, he did not see this as a creative development but as a potential challenge to the ANC's proclaimed vanguard position and its strategic fixation on external armed struggle. He started to identify the leadership of the movement, working towards their incorporation into the established party and the dilution of their ideas. 11

#### THE UDF

The internal dynamics nevertheless continued to develop and gather momentum. From the late 1970s, a ramifying range of community groups had arisen, first in Soweto and the Eastern Cape and then nationwide, campaigning around issues such as housing, rents, bus fares and education. These struggles, says Swilling, steadily consolidated a political culture emphasizing principles of non-collaboration with government institutions, non-racialism and, he notes, 'democracy and mass-based direct action aimed at transforming urban living conditions.' In January 1983, Allan Boesak called for the formation of a front to oppose specific apartheid constitutional changes, and

after a series of regional conferences, the United Democratic Front was launched in Cape Town in August. Boesak says that 1,500 people were present, representing 500 organizations and all sectors of society. The listing of the Front's eventual affiliates included trade unions, youth and student movements, women's and religious groups, civic associations, political parties and a range of support and professional groups. Within the next few years, the Front embraced almost 1,000 affiliated groups. Because of the UDF's capacity to provide national political and ideological coordination to these affiliates, radical political action 'assumed an increasingly organized form', says Swilling, 'enhancing its power and effectiveness.' 12

As previously with the BCM, the arrival of the UDF was not welcomed by the ANC. It 'came as a shock to Thabo and the rest of the ANC leadership', note Hadland and Rantao, and they quote Mac Maharaj adding, 'they didn't believe it would happen.' The well-informed Shubin agrees, and recalls an ANC friend telling him soon after, 'If some of our people say that the UDF was made by us, don't believe them.' <sup>13</sup> The distortion, however, was unquestioningly accepted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with possible impact on its findings (discussed further below). It is part of the ideological obfuscation that surrounds the UDF that it is still confidently asserted that the UDF was 'essentially a front for the outlawed liberation movement.' <sup>14</sup>

The UDF did not look, sound or act like the highly centralized, secretive ANC. It had three levels of leadership: national, regional and local, with much or most action concentrated in the lowest tier. A National Executive Committee (NEC) was composed of three presidents, a secretary, a publicity secretary, treasurer and representatives of the regions. Initially only the secretary, Popo Molefe, and the publicity secretary, Patrick Terror Lekota, were paid and full-time. Mohammed Valli Moosa was soon added as assistant secretary, and eventually the number of officials grew to 'about eighty.' The NEC made administrative decisions, and in 1985, given the great difficulty of convening large conferences, a National Working Committee became in practice the top policy-making body. Local UDF affiliates 'maintained their autonomy.' <sup>15</sup>

For Boesak, who became the elected patron of the Front, it was the spirit of the new group which provided its distinctiveness. 'Spontaneity was one of the strong points of the UDF', he says, 'and this would time and again catch the government, and by the same token, the ANC, off guard.' As its affiliates grew in number, 'every town, every township with any kind of organization' wanted to join. From the very beginning, he goes on, 'the UDF knew (and the ANC feared) that much action in the course of struggle was perforce going to be spontaneous', unplanned and uncontrolled. 'It was also the UDF's hallmark of authenticity, and it was unavoidable in a truly people-driven move-

ment.' The UDF coordinated its affiliates, brought them under a reasonably strong national umbrella, and provided a platform and political stature.

Small associations also gained access to funding, some of which came through the Foundation for Peace and Justice (FPJ) which Boesak headed. <sup>16</sup> Above all, he adds, there was 'the power of the UDF to inspire'. Within a year, the UDF became a formidable organization with support at levels and among people that no organization in South Africa had ever achieved before. <sup>17</sup>

According to Swilling, the most important and politically sophisticated leaders in the UDF came from the ranks of BCM of the early and mid-1970s. These included he says Mkhuseli Jack from Port Elizabeth, and Popo Molefe, Terror Lekota and Aubrey Mokoena from Johannesburg. Many UDF activists of the 1980s had been politicized earlier within BCM. Activists also came from the experiences gained in the construction of community, youth, trade union and student organizations during the late 1970s and early 1980s, and these people became increasingly important during the mid-1980s. According to Swilling, two other characteristics of the UDF's leadership stood out: its 'heterodox social and class composition', and the fact that it was both multi-class and that a high proportion came from 'poor working-class backgrounds.' 18

Moving from an initial reactive phase to pressing state initiatives, and from the Front's failures to cope with the levels of mobilization that arose, the UDF established by early 1985 'the beginning of strong working relationships between community organizations, student movements and the trade unions.' Swilling enumerates them at some 400,000 students and 800,000 workers.<sup>19</sup>

Mkhuseli Jack became a prominent community activist and a UDF leader with both feet firmly on the ground. He was born in the Eastern Cape in May 1958, the son of a farm laborer and a domestic worker. He led protests in Port Elizabeth in 1975 for youths from rural schools—including himself—to be admitted to city schools, and after three months the schools relented. He was arrested in 1976 for protesting against the poor quality of black education, and shortly after he was among the founders of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the high school equivalent of Biko's SASO, later the UDF's largest affiliate with 42 branches. In 1983 he was elected to the executive of the Port Elizabeth Civic Organization (PEBCO), where he became known, according to Mufson, for his good nature, pragmatism and selfconfidence. As a spokesman for the consumer boycott movement in the city, the 28-year-old Jack 'strode about as though he were mayor'. White businesspeople negotiated with the UDF for safe passage for their vehicles, while the Front also fixed prices for staple commodities in black-owned stores to prevent price gouging during boycotts, and issued permits to street vendors. He was said to have an instinct for what ordinary people wanted and the

burdens they could bear. The first consumer boycott was called off after four months, to the apparent annoyance of some national UDF leaders (who wanted to stage a so-called 'Black Christmas'); but when businesspeople urged him to bring a second boycott to an early end in November 1985, Jack declared, "We must talk, but not yet. It isn't the mood of the people." He was frequently detained from 1976 onwards, including two six-month stints in solitary confinement and torture in the form of 'the helicopter'.<sup>20</sup>

Matthew Goniwe also seems to have typified the activist, communitybased core of the UDF. Born in 1948 in Craddock in the Eastern Cape, he was the son of a domestic servant and a firewood trader, a former political prisoner, who became a magnetic young teacher and headmaster. He founded the Craddock Residents' Association (CRADORA) in 1983, in opposition to rent increases in the town's Lingelihle township, home to 17,000 people. He set about organizing the community. The township was divided into seven zones, and about 40 cadres travelled from house to house to explain CRA-DORA's purpose and to encourage attendance at public meetings and in electing representatives from each street. The representatives then underwent training to 'emphasize that as leaders they had to be exemplary in every respect.' This was the time-consuming but effective process of mobilizing participation in the street committee system. If CRADORA called a meeting at four in the afternoon, the entire population of the township would be assembled by six. The system created, in Goniwe's words, an activist gridiron so dense that 'even the family is seen as a structure of the organization.'

Goniwe's legacy was to create over six months a string of tightly coordinated, small-town community movements. He helped to launch civic associations and youth organizations in Adelaide, Fort Beaufort, Cookhouse, Kirkwood, Hanover, Colesberg, Alexandria, Kenton-on-Sea, Steytlerville, Motherwell and Noupoort. It was such deep organizations that made the UDF 'a formidable force in the small towns and villages of the windswept Karoo plateau.' While Goniwe was a member of the ANC, he appeared to have been influenced by Biko's ideas. Shortly before his death he wrote, "if we are instruments of change, we must epitomize the society we want to bring about." <sup>21</sup>

As many activists indicated but only a few analysts realized, much more than just resistance against apartheid was going on. In Mufson's important recognition: as millions of blacks were swept into political activity, participation on a scale, he stressed, never before witnessed, 'they were not only trying to destroy a repressive system, but attempting to create a new nation.'22 Key characteristics of the new society they were striving to establish were democracy and open, popular participation. Writing in the later 1980s, Swilling, like Boesak, reported that there were very few black communities where UDF affiliates did not exist. The strength of the UDF, furthermore, 'derives primarily from the popularity and organizational capacity of its affil-

iates,' even though they differed considerably in size and effectiveness. The Front's national executive did not constitute a significant organizational force, partly because most of the leadership had spent years in detention or hiding, but the UDF's activities were nonetheless rooted among the exploited people. When the UDF was hardly one year old, a survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council found that the largest single reason why people supported the UDF—expressed by 35.6 percent of those surveyed—was that it 'fights for democracy'. The second main reason—identified by 17.1 percent of respondents—was that 'it solves our problems'. 23

A few years later, democratization assumed organizational forms, as alternative organs of people's power were promoted by many UDF activists. The concept of people's power, <sup>24</sup> or rudimentary organs of self-government, emerged in late 1985–1986. The dynamic was first observed in Craddock, where CRADORA began taking over some of the state's defunct administrative roles, such as the payment of pensions, setting up a literacy program and a child and family welfare center. The process was endorsed by Popo Molefe, and from early 1986, the Front's theoretical journal *Isizwe* stated that the call 'the people shall govern', enshrined in the Freedom Charter, was 'beginning to happen in the course of our struggle. It is not for us to sit back and merely dream of the day that the people shall govern. It is our task to realize that goal now.' Involved were street committees and people's courts, and services such as dispute settlement, policing, refuse collection and health care. UDF leaders acknowledged that they were 'learning from the creativity of the masses.' <sup>25</sup>

By 1987, the UDF's conceptualization of democracy embraced an awareness of the inadequacies of liberal parliamentary representation, taking it well beyond the ideas and practice of the liberal model. Existing parliamentary institutions were insufficient, not just because they excluded the bulk of the people, but for more substantive reasons. For *New Era*, a Cape Town publication affiliated to the UDF, democracy meant 'the ability of the broad working masses to participate in and control all dimensions of their lives', not just 'some liberal pluralistic debating society'. Many UDF statements accepted, say Lodge and Nasson, that real democracy implied popular participation, where leaders were the bearers of a popular mandate and were accountable directly to the organization's membership. Two further propositions were entailed: community-based self-governing initiatives would establish the foundations of democracy before a formal transition to majority rule, and that such emerging structures would be non-hierarchical. <sup>26</sup>

Morobe presented a comprehensive statement of the UDF's thinking in 1987: he accepted that 'parliamentary-type representation in itself represents a very limited and narrow idea of democracy'.<sup>27</sup> The UDF's view of democracy was much broader and deeper, it involved participatory forms and it was being built dynamically in the here and now. Democracy was 'one of the

aims or goals of our struggle' and also 'the means by which we conduct the struggle. This refers to the democratic character of our existing mass-based organizations. . . . By developing active, mass-based democratic organizations and democratic practices within these organizations, we are laying the basis for a future democratic South Africa.'

The creation of democratic *means* is for us as important as having democratic *goals* as our objective. . . . What is possible in the future depends on what we are able to create and sustain now. A democratic South Africa will not be fashioned only after transformation of political power to the majority has taken place. . . . The creation of a democratic South Africa can only become a reality with the participation of millions of South Africans in the process—a process which has already begun in the townships, factories and schools of our land. . . .

Our democratic aim is therefore control over every aspect of our lives, and not just the right (important as it is) to vote for a central government every four to five years. . . . A democratic solution in South Africa involves all South Africans, and in particular the working-class, having control over all areas of daily existence—from national policy to housing, from schooling to working conditions, from transport to consumption of food. . . . When we say that the people shall govern, we mean at all levels and in all spheres, and we demand that there be real, effective control on a daily basis. . . . In other words, we are talking about direct as opposed to indirect political representation, mass participation rather than passive docility and ignorance, a momentum where ordinary people can do the job themselves, rather than waiting for their local MP to intercede on their behalf. . . . The rudimentary organs of people's power that have begun to emerge in South Africa (street committees, defense committees, shop-steward structures, student representative councils, parent/teacher/student associations) represent in many ways the beginnings of the kind of democracy that we are striving for. 28

The Front's participatory democracy not only invested faith in the capacities of working-class men and women to govern themselves, but also adopted a highly critical approach to the power and action of their own political elites. In the 'basic principles of our organizational democracy', the UDF presented vital and creative measures for combating elitism within its own ranks and other democratic bodies: (1) Elected Leadership, at all levels, periodically reelected and recallable; 'No single individual must become irreplaceable'; (2) Collective Leadership; 'leadership skills, experience and knowledge must be spread, not hoarded'; (3) Mandates and Accountability; leaders must 'operate within the delegated mandates of their positions and delegated duties'; (4) Reporting and Reporting Back (by leaders to the membership); and (5) Criticism and Self-Criticism of and by elites; 'we do not believe that any of our members are beyond criticism, neither are organizations and strategies beyond reproach. These principles, he said, were 'fundamental weapon[s] of our struggle'.<sup>29</sup>

Under worsening circumstances the Front strove to uphold its democratic norms. Pressures built up on the Front as state violence escalated, children as young as six were deliberately killed by police, and youthful activists responded with cruel punishment against informers real and imagined. Boesak relates that he was taken by 'utter surprise at the speed of events' as 'our own brutalization' began. Between 1984 and 1987 there had been rather more than 300 deaths through 'necklacing' but in just six months in 1986 there were 220. For Boesak, the principle of non-violence ranked for the UDF along side that of spontaneity, inspiration and democratization, where it raised immense problems for the means and ends equation, of the good future society arising in the practice of the here and now. Violence was antithetical to the establishment of democratic norms and institutions. Others took a different view, and he quotes Cheryl Carolus, a leading figure in the Front later close to the ANC—observing, 'Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword.' Support for Carolus's thinking came from Winnie Mandela when she said, on 13 April 1986 in Munsieville, that it was 'with our boxes of matches and our necklaces' that liberation would be achieved.<sup>30</sup> Violent struggle had been most authoritatively and exclusively endorsed by the ANC at its Kabwe Conference in Zambia in June 1985 when Joe Slovo, then chief of staff of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK), affirmed that there was 'No Middle Road', and the only acceptable strategy was the revolutionary overthrow of apartheid.<sup>31</sup> The democratization movement was seemingly on notice.

These developments impacted heavily on the internal dynamics of the UDF. By late 1987, most of its activists were either in prison (70 percent of detainees then were believed to be members of UDF affiliates), in hiding or dead, and the Front's national and regional leadership had been 'decapitated': 32 it was banned shortly after, but regrouped as the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) later in 1988. State repression ensured that power shifted in practice within the UDF to key officials—Valli Moosa as acting general secretary, Morobe in charge of publicity, and Azhar Cachalia as national treasurer. Decisions could rarely be made at this time on the basis of mandated positions, and the national leadership necessarily exercised 'considerable latitude'. The Front nevertheless 'maintained an impressive level' in terms of its leaders reporting back to the membership and in the recognition of the importance of criticism of leadership and their own self-criticism—the UDF's leaders were in fact 'among the most focused of its critics'. It was Molefe, for instance, who reported to the 1985 national conference that the organization was 'trailing behind the masses'; and Moosa, as acting secretary in Molefe's absence, who informed the 1987 national general council that the Front had been unable to maintain its regional structures. 33 And it was in the same principle that elites should be accountable to the people for their actions, that Morobe and Cachalia publicly condemned the depredations in

Soweto of Madikizela-Mandela, the touted Mother of the Nation, in February 1989, considered in detail below.

### THE TRADE UNIONS AND COSATU

But the UDF was not alone inside South Africa in upholding democratization as its primary concern. The ANC's decision in 1960–1961 to embark upon an externally based armed struggle had centralized political attention upon the apartheid state and its supposed overthrow, and a decade of quiescence resulted. This changed dramatically, however, in early 1973, when over 100,000 black workers in Durban and Pinetown embarked on a series of spontaneous strikes against their work conditions signaling, in Webster and Adler's terms, the emergence of 'a democratic movement within the country harnessed to independent working-class organization.' Thereafter, in uneven fashion and with many setbacks, the unions embarked on a 'radical reform strategy', utilizing their organizational capacities to both mobilize and restrain their members in negotiations with the state and capital for agreed upon settlements. Through the late 1970s, Freidman stresses, they 'survived', and demonstrated to their members that they had a voice in an economy in need of skilled black workers. Through incremental means they gradually forced the powerful 'to share decisions they [we]re accustomed to take alone.' This was a broad and reformist democratization far more radical and practical than the strategy pursued by the ANC.<sup>34</sup>

The then trade union leader, Alec Erwin, wrote in 1985 that they aimed to win 'both full democracy and non-racialism', building them now in the factories and townships, 'through organizations whose leaders were accountable to their members and in which activists shared their skills with workers.' Unions would be 'laboratories for democracy' where workers made their own decisions and resisted anyone who tried to decide for them.' <sup>35</sup>

Embedded in the capitalist economy, employment, union membership and trade union density all grew rapidly from 1979 to 1986<sup>36</sup>:

In November 1985 the country's biggest black unions merged to form the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). It was South Africa's largest and most potent popular organization, with 450,000 dues-paying members, soon to be doubled in number. It immediately called for wider union rights, equal pay for equal work and the introduction of a national minimum wage, and emphasized its political goals including disinvestment by foreign companies, the withdrawal of troops from the townships and the unbanning of COSAS. Its president was Elijah Barayi, a 53-year-old personnel assistant at a gold mine, and its general secretary was Jay Naidoo aged then not quite 31.<sup>37</sup> COSATU, says Mufson, united 'the most powerful forces and personalities' in the black unions. Firstly, the unions which had

Table 3.1. Trade Union Strength 1979-1986

Year	Employment (non-agricultural)	TU Membership	Density %
1979	4,560,868	701,758	15.4
1980	4,712,051	701,758	17.1
1981	4,868,951	701,758	21.6
1982	4,915,636	701,758	24.9
1983	4,839,555	1,273,890	26.3
1984	4,900,571	1,406,302	28.7
1985	5,036,393	1,391,423	17.6
1986	5,093,918	1,698,157	33.3

Source: Ian Macun, 'Growth, Structure and Power in the South African Union Movement' in Adler and Webster, op. cit., p. 60.

been part of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) which arose in the wake of the 1973 Durban actions. The second component in COSATU was unions affiliated with the UDF, which had grown quickly after the labor reforms of 1979 but remained largely only at a regional level.

The third element was the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Its importance was more than the fact that it was the country's largest union. It had potency as well as size. Half a million workers had labored in the gold and coal mines that built South Africa's industrial economy, bringing, for instance, 606 tons of gold to the surface in 1986, accounting for 42.3 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings. Mining was no ordinary job. In the 1980s about 600 miners died every year, and the experience of hazard and death affected and drew together all miners and their union. James Motlatsi was trapped by a rock fall deep underground in a gold mine, and it took other miners over an hour to dig him out; three weeks later he was back at the same job: "When you work in the mining industry, you will end it like a soldier. If someone is trapped and killed you just take him out and continue with the same job."

Motlatsi seems to have been representative of his class and times. He had entered the mines at age 19 in 1970, travelling from his village in Lesotho, working his way up the ladder of mining jobs, from 'lasher', cleaning drains underground, to 'box attendant', hauling rock away from the work-face, to 'timber boy', building the packs of material that supported the mine ceiling, then as a machine operator drilling rock. Four years had brought him a wage of just 82 cents a shift. He went on as a winch driver, team leader and a position in the personnel department. The latter was safe but corrupt—bribes, he found, were often taken from job-seekers—and the job 'he hated most'. In

1982, he read of moves to establish a mineworkers union, and a friend put him in touch with Cyril Ramaphosa, a young lawyer in Soweto. 38 Together they formed a seven-person planning committee, and within weeks recruited 18,000 members. Three months after their first meeting, a congress of 1,800 workers elected Motlatsi the first president of the NUM, Elijah Barayi from Cradock as vice-president, and Ramaphosa as secretary general, then the only full-time official. The latter, according to Butler, immediately sought links with wealthy unions in Scandanavia, Britain and the United States, while he and Motlatsi together built up the union's organizational strengths. By the mid-1980s, the NUM was a huge organization, with a 'multimillion dollar' annual budget, and nearly 300,000 dues-paying members, 'bringing substantial internal funding to the union.' 39

But the NUM's real strength derived from the nature and importance of mining: as Marcel Golding, a journalist at the Union, wrote at the time, 'the life of a miner is terrible'; He awakes around 2 a.m. to prepare to go on shift at 4 a.m. He works 'for eight hours in an eighty-two-centimetre hole in a crouched position with rock above your head that can cave in at any moment. Around you is heat at an unbearable temperature and noise like the sound of a drill.' He works under a white miner who shouts abuse, and at the end of the day, goes back to living conditions miserable almost beyond belief, a concrete cubicle in a hostel room 18 feet by 25 feet shared by twenty men.

In sum, miners worked in a terrifying environment, under the constant threat of arbitrary dismissal, and they were 'paid a pittance'. 40

The NUM, says Mufson, 'radically altered' such labor relations 'by suggesting that miners no longer act as willing participants in their own exploitation.' Like Black Consciousness among students, trade unionism 'fomented a revolution in the minds of workers.' Their assertive mood was present at the NUM's fifth congress in February 1987, when the union bussed shop stewards from all over the country to a hall in Soweto. Huge banners hung from the ceiling, one with the words 'Socialism Means Freedom,' another 'Organize or Starve.'

Their anger and determination was evident in the three-week walkout by the 300,000 NUM members at almost the same time. It was the biggest strike in the country's history, and it revealed the effectiveness of union organization that, against big handicaps, commanded the loyalty of a work-force unafraid to voice its demands. 41

The action was preceded by months of negotiations. The union demanded an average wage increase of 55 percent, to meet an inflation rate of some 17 percent and to narrow the gap between white and black miners, then cut their demands to 40 and then 30 percent as deadlines neared. The Chamber of Mines, representing the companies, offered increases between 16 and 23 percent depending on job categories. Anglo American, the largest mining house, whose workers represented 70 percent of the NUM's membership,

offered more money. But for three weeks the miners stayed out, displaying a determination exceeding their leaders' expectations. In late August, Anglo fired 45,000 workers including Motlatsi, while other companies sacked another 15,000. Two days later, the NUM accepted an offer it had previously rejected. "We made a tactical retreat. It was better than starting from scratch", said Motlatsi.<sup>42</sup>

The costs were high. Eight miners were killed by police and security guards, 500 injured and 400 arrested. Although only 20 percent of unionists were in fact fired, 70 percent of shop stewards were lost. But during the strike some 50,000 miners applied to join the NUM, and despite the inadequate settlement, an impressive show of trade union force had been made. Bobby Godsell of Anglo American allowed that "the NUM showed it can take guys out for a long time." Labour laws demanded a protracted bargaining process which had allowed the companies time to stockpile gold and coal and make contingency plans. But, aside from the police shootings, the state had not intervened throughout the three weeks. Godsell paid further respect to the miners and the union, and their key role in democratization: "Labour relations are a little patch of post-apartheid South Africa, because it is where blacks have some real power. . . . Our relationships with unions are based on an acceptance of common dignity, because we recognize the black worker's power." They had in fact bargained terms of employment with the most powerful corporate chiefs in South Africa, 43 and in so doing advanced democratization further.

The trade union movement strived to achieve its ideal of democratization both in general and in its organizational detail. Mufson believes that the idea of the mandate began with the trade unions and spilled over into other organizations. The equally important principle of leadership accountability and recall, had seen community groups learning from FOSATU. In some townships, union shop stewards played important roles in community groups. If the commitment to workers' control was initially sometimes a show, to the rank and file it was real. Union leaders ignored it at their peril. The old FOSATU unions and the NUM, he states, maintained strong worker-education programs for the rank and file. The president of every union was required to be a full-time worker. The NUM's full-time professionals, such as Ramaphosa and Golding (as a negotiator) earned the same amount as top mineworkers: \$500 to \$700 a month. The relationship between ordinary workers and their domestic political leaders altered qualitatively through the 1970s and 1980s: earlier, organizers had to coax workers to join unions, but in the latter period workers 'displayed boundless enthusiasm and expectations'. 44 Trade union membership continued to grow strongly in size. 45 South Africa's union density figures of some 59 percent were one of the highest in the world.

# THE ANC, ARMED STRUGGLE, AND THE SUBORDINATION OF THE PEOPLE

The underground South African Communist Party (SACP) resolved in December 1960 to create a military force and embark on armed struggle. The decision was taken by fewer than 20 people, with Nelson Mandela in a prominent intermediary role between the Party and the ANC. Moses Kotane, however, general secretary of the SACP and a senior ANC figure, believed plausibly that those who advocated military action were uninformed of the possible consequences. After June 1961, Joe Slovo and Mandela moved quickly to form MK: within six months MK had some 250 members drawn from both the ANC and the SACP, and the latter was implementing its plans for foreign training for the recruits, with priority to the creation of an MK High Command. This consisted of Mandela and Slovo, who were to recommend additional members, and supposedly establish regional commands and MK units in all urban centers. 46 Some 32 recruits had left for training in African countries in June 1962, followed by 162 in September that year. MK's strategic planning, bearing out Kotane's belief in unpreparedness, was highly optimistic.<sup>47</sup> The apartheid state was assessed as 'brittle', and likely to be overthrown by a determined offensive. MK would be the basis for the rapid establishment of a people's liberation army. Trained guerrillas would soon return and establish bases in remote areas of South Africa, from which they would launch attacks and train others. In the meantime, some 400 largely small scale and symbolic sabotage attacks were carried out inside the country by various groups between December 1961 and 1963. 48 Only minimal efforts were made, however, to organize among the peasantry, on Barrell's assessment below, and the role accorded to the urban working-class was to supply MK recruits under SACP auspices. Slovo believed that between 1960 and 1963, the SACP played a uniquely 'seminal role' in close association with the ANC.<sup>49</sup> Yet military unpreparedness ruled. 'Theory apart', said Slovo, the move to armed struggle 'found us ill-equipped at many levels. Among the lot of us we did not have a single pistol. '50

Table 3.2. Trade Union Strength 1989-1993

Year	TU Membership	Density %
1989	2,130,000	39.9
1990	2,459,000	46.3
1991	2,719,000	52.3
1992	2,906,000	57.1
1993	2,890,000	59

The capture of the bulk of the national leadership at Rivonia in July 1963 smashed the rudimentary MK inside South Africa and destroyed much of the ANC, leaving a remnant in exile and prison. By 1965, there were some 800 MK guerrilla trainees chiefly in Tanzania, the Soviet Union and, before the Sino-Soviet split, in China. Modise was MK commander, following the loss of his three predecessors. For the ANC and SACP, MK was supposed to 'revive the spirit of revolt' at home but, as Barrell puts it, exile 'created a special set of problems.' The frequently urban and sometimes self-interested lives of the exiled party leadership, in say London and New York, and the harsh conditions faced by the cadres in remote rural camps, differed considerably, and grievances among the latter were ignored or suppressed. At times, a gulf opened up between the ANC leadership and the MK rank and file.<sup>51</sup> But the depths of this gulf, and how badly the elite responded to the needs and values of the soldiery, has only recently begun to be properly considered.<sup>52</sup>

There were early signs of forthcoming strategic and leadership problems. MK's hopes of building a supposed 'Ho Chi Minh trail' to South Africa via Rhodesia—attempted, for example, in the Wankie Campaign in August 1967—was an early indication of the gross inadequacies of planning and the separation of the top commanders from the soldiers; the Luthuli Detachment did not have enough weapons or men, maps were out of date and knowledge of the terrain was inadequate, even their food was short. Under constant attack from superior Rhodesian and South African forces, such inadequacies forced Chris Hani and other members of the Detachment to retreat into Botswana, where they were imprisoned for up to two years. When they returned to Lusaka, however, Hani found that the leadership did not seek to learn from their experiences or even to debrief them. He therefore put his name on a memorandum which accused the ANC of cynicism and indifference, and Modise, specifically, of authoritarianism and arbitrariness, and of promoting a culture of sycophancy in MK. His interests were greatest, they said, in his Zambian commercial enterprises. A military tribunal in Livingstone voted for the execution of the signatories, but the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) decided on their suspension. Hani's biographers note his sense of betrayal at this exclusion. The party's conference at Morogoro in Tanzania in 1969 was, according to Barrell, 'a very angry assembly of men and women' who had lost confidence in many members of the NEC, opening a dangerous chasm between leadership and rank and file. But Hani himself had growing stature, and he was elected to the SACP's central committee the following year.<sup>53</sup>

The 1976 Soweto uprising, Barrell states, 'caught the ANC unprepared', unable to offer protective military activity, national political guidance, or even such basic necessities as food and clothing. <sup>54</sup> Over two years, some 3,000 to 4,000 young men and women went into MK abroad. <sup>55</sup> The experi-

ences of MK recruits in the 1980s, especially in Angola, at the hands of their commanders, were a travesty of their ideals and expectations.

One of the most culpable was Joe Modise. He was born in Doornfontein, Johannesburg, on 23 May 1929. He joined the ANC Youth League in his early 20s, and participated in resistance to forced removals in Sophiatown and in various criminal activities noted below. When the ANC was banned, openings quickly came and were retained seemingly without regard for his performance. He was appointed to the MK high command in 1961 and became commander in 1965, and around 1963 he began to conduct operations from abroad while still undergoing military training in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. From the early 1960s until formal negotiations began with Pretoria three decades later, MK appears to have been effectively under Modise's control. <sup>56</sup> Over that period, as a commentator has phrased it, 'it is hard to find a significant MK success for which Modise could claim credit.' MK's soldiers were consistently ill-prepared and under resourced, and the main charges against the commander from within Umkhonto were 'inertia' and a 'lack of concern for MK troopers.' Unlike Chris Hani, he was known to be 'never in the camps', as he devoted prime time to his business interests in Lusaka and elsewhere. 'I never heard a good word about him', one ANC exile said in the 1980s, while another was at a loss to explain his enduring power and seniority within the armed struggle.<sup>57</sup> It is argued below that Modise not only retained but magnified his negative characteristics—his militarism, greed, corruption, irresponsibility in office—during the transition to majority rule and throughout his time as Nelson Mandela's defense minister

When the TRC made its investigations into the liberation movements from 1960 to 1990, it recognized that the ANC was an internationally recognized body conducting a legitimate struggle against the apartheid state. Nonetheless it made the vital distinction between a 'just war' and 'just means', and it went ahead to find that the ANC, and its organs like the NEC and MK, 'committed gross violations of human rights in the course of their political activities and armed struggles, acts for which they are morally and politically accountable.' 58

For brevity's sake, and in an endeavor to do justice to available material and the people concerned, only certain incidents will be concentrated on here: the mutinies among MK members in Angola around 1984; the abuse and killing of some 16 young men and women at the hands of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela in Soweto in the late 1980s; the killing of MK commander Thami Zulu in Lusaka in November 1989; and Operation Vula (from *vulindlela*, or 'open the road') circa 1988–1990. These different events occurred in proximate sequence, and all were characterized by decision making by aloof, arrogant political elites and the extreme subordination of ordinary people, as rank and file, vulnerable youth or loyal members, and the friends

and relatives of those victims. Much is now known about these terrible occurrences, but much remains hidden chiefly by the now ruling elite. Collectively they throw sharp light on how and why the democratization movement was caused to fail from 1988–1994.

### The Assault on the MK's Rank and File

The issues in the mutinies among MK soldiers in Angola in 1984, according to Trewhela, were an end to involvement in counter-insurgency warfare against UNITA (the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), their redeployment to the struggle against South Africa, and the immediate suspension of the activities of the ANC's security apparatus, known variously as National Security (NAT) and Mbokodo (the grindstone/the stone that crushes). The soldiers levelled their strongest criticism against three NEC members, all directly involved in MK. They held Joe Modise most responsible for MK's failure to engage effectively with Pretoria; secondly, Mzwandile (or Mzwai) Piliso, the chief of Mbokodo, <sup>59</sup> responsible in their eyes for the suppression of dissent and democracy in the ANC; and thirdly, Andrew Masondo, previously jailed on Robben Island, who had joined the ANC leadership in exile after 1976, where he allegedly abused young women, and was a key figure in the running of the prison camp called Quatro (camp 32). The mutiny had been brewing in various MK camps in Angola since the late 1970s, and its mainspring was 'the suppression of democracy by the ANC leadership.'60

This suppression concerned much more than the personal weaknesses of leaders, and involved Mbokodo's struggle for dominance over MK. When Mzwai Piliso was appointed in charge of all camps in Angola in August 1980, he was also made head of NAT/Mbokodo. On Ellis's assessment, this gave him 'comprehensive control over [MK] rank and file.' Some cadres, he notes, saw this as the subordination of the whole of MK to NAT. Dire consequences followed for MK: soldiers disappeared, some were beaten to death. The SACP's control over NAT, which had existed since at least the Morogoro conference of 1969, was also strengthened, Ellis states. 61

A heavy purge, known as *Shitahita* (to sweep), occurred. Dagga smokers would be shot—this harsh announcement was played in all camps—and on 5 March 1981 it was decided that corporal punishment would be reintroduced within MK. Such arbitrary brutality towards young male and female recruits produced strong popular reactions, worsened as it was by the non-accountability of the leadership. When ANC president Oliver Tambo, visiting Angola in early 1984, failed to meet protesting cadres, they determined to press their grievances. Hundreds of armed and angry soldiers gathered near Luanda, their numbers representing up to 90 percent of MK cadres in the region. 'For the first time', Ellis notes, MK soldiers 'found their collective voice.' In

a series of meetings involving up to a thousand people, speakers attacked three leaders: Modise the army commander; Andrew Masondo the national commissar; and Piliso of NAT<sup>62</sup>, and the strategy they favored that accorded a low priority to direct action against South Africa.

Hundreds of angry soldiers were also active in Viana camp, where they elected a representative committee. After a series of mass meetings and discussions with figures like Hani—who sided firmly with the loyalists—a Committee of Ten drew up their demands which concentrated on the suspension of Mbokodo, an investigation into affairs at Quatro; and the convening of a fully representative democratic conference to review the development of the armed struggle, prepare new strategies and hold elections for the NEC. The committee was chaired by Zaba Maledza (his MK name), a former Black Consciousness activist in SASO who had subsequently served prominently on the ANC's radio programs.<sup>63</sup>

The mutineers were ruthlessly crushed. So-called dissidents at Pango held out until an assault force stormed the camp. According to Ellis, a 'pitched battle' resulted, some 16 people were killed, and Pango was turned into 'a slaughterhouse'. <sup>64</sup>

Some were executed by firing squad, a group of about 15 who tried to escape were beaten and shot in the bush. Another group were kept naked and tied with ropes for three weeks at the prison in Pango, until Gertrude Shope, the visiting head of the ANC's Women's Section, was said to have ordered an end to the tortures and executions. Zaba Maledza died in an isolation cell in Quatro. 65

The hearings of the TRC deepened understanding of these events. Discipline and security were initially handled by MK command structures, headed as noted from 1965 by Modise. Mbokodo was established in the mid-1970s, 66 and it was responsible for many—if not most—of the violations of human rights carried out by the ANC in exile. Significant violations took place at Quatro and elsewhere in Angola, at ANC headquarters in Lusaka, in Botswana, Tanzania and Uganda.

The TRC noted the bitterness felt by those who were loyal to the ANC and the causes it represented and who felt betrayed by the ANC's failure to deal openly with the abuses. Joe Seremane's brother, Timothy Seremane (aka Kenneth Mahamba), was executed in Quatro, and he testified in July 1997: 'I want somebody to come and tell me what my younger brother actually did that he deserved to be shot like an animal being put down after being brutally disfigured so that his best friends could not recognize him. . . . Suddenly nobody has ever known him, suddenly nobody has a record to show what kind of trial he had'<sup>67</sup>

The Commission heard that a supposed spy scare in the ANC in 1981 had led to paranoia about infiltration by apartheid agents, and in this context a number of MK members were detained and tortured; some died as a result,

while a few were executed; Mbokodo claimed credit before the TRC for uncovering spies in 1981. The 1984 rebellion among MK soldiers in Angola—known to the ANC as *Mkatashinga*—led to further extensive violations. Some protesters were held for years without trial, and the Commission received statements from detainees who were tortured and assaulted between 1986 and 1991.

The Skweyiya Commission of Inquiry, reporting to ANC president Nelson Mandela in August 1992, heard that detainees were held for three to seven years without trial, some in solitary confinement, in overcrowded unhygienic cells, where food deprivation was used as a punishment. They also found that maltreatment at Quatro was persistent and brutal. Before internment, torture was used to extract confessions. According to the TRC, the Skweyiya report contained a confidential list of Mbokodo members believed responsible for the violations. <sup>68</sup>

The Motsuenyane Commission was appointed by Mandela in 1993 with broader terms of reference.<sup>69</sup> It held public hearings, and among those it heard were eleven alleged perpetrators. It concluded, in August 1993, that while victims of abuses have been heard and catalogued, 'they have not yet received the full measure of justice due them [*sic*].' <sup>70</sup>

Before what was termed a 'recall hearing' of the TRC on 12 May 1997, the ANC acknowledged that a code of conduct was only introduced in 1985, and before then the tribunals which sentenced people to death were *ad hoc* and did not allow the accused any form of legal representation.

A number of official listings in 1996 and 1997 offered rough and approximate statements of deaths suffered and perpetrated by the ANC. An appendix to the ANC's Final Submission contained the names of some 900 people who died in exile, but it said that the list was not entirely accurate. The TRC commented that many deponents who had relatives missing in exile could be accounted for in this listing. <sup>71</sup> The Commission also noted that Piliso admitted to the Skweyiya tribunal that he had ordered the beating of suspected agents in 1981 in order to obtain information, as he said, 'at any cost.' Mac Maharaj, senior ANC figure, observed that 'we made no provision for legal defense of the accused in 1981 and 1982.' <sup>72</sup>

The ANC also submitted, as a further Confidential Appendix, a list of MK members who died violently, they said, 'after committing breaches of discipline'; included here were 22 names under the heading 'Agents executed on order of tribunals.' The name, Timothy Seremane (aka Mahamba), already noted, was here. 73 The August 1996 Statement supposedly provided the names of all ANC members who died in exile between March 1960 and December 1993. Some of the numbers and the categories of their deaths read strangely. While the total of deaths from 'natural causes', worldwide over 33 years, was 379, those who 'died at the hands of the enemy' totaled only 231, plus an additional 99 who were killed as a result of 'UNITA ambushes'—

330 deaths in battle over three decades is no tribute to the combativeness of MK, while 99 killed by UNITA is an implicit recognition of the scale of the fighting which MK soldiers had denounced as wasteful and diversionary. Deaths in Angola also included a category of 'Accidents' (other than in Training or in Motor Vehicles) numbering 27, while that of 'Suicides' in Angola totaled 41, by far the largest such number worldwide—the next largest number of suicides were in Zambia, only 6; implied testimony to the extreme traumas of the Angolan camps. Those 'Executed by Order of Our Military Tribunal' in Angola totaled 34. This list too was officially described as 'not complete', <sup>74</sup> as it rather obviously was.

Andrew Masondo, political commissar of MK at this time, told the TRC that he was a member of a review committee that sentenced Gabriel Moshoeu to death. This victim appeared rather typical of those swept up in the 'spy scare'. Masondo stated that they had information that Moshoeu 'joined the enemy' while in combat with MK in Rhodesia. He had disappeared in the course of battle, and later reappeared. In Masondo's words: 'They investigate, they find out that he had had contact with the enemy. . . . When he got to Angola he was court martialed and sentenced to death.' 75

Gabriel Mthembu, described as camp commander, testified that Gabriel Moshoeu was tried by an *ad hoc* tribunal comprised of Joe Modise, Andrew Masondo and Mzwai Piliso, and admitted that 'he might have been beaten in the process of investigation when people were trying to get him to confess given the overwhelming nature of evidence against him.' <sup>76</sup>

The TRC heard that in the suppression of the second mutiny at Pango, 13–18 May 1984, some eight named individuals were killed, another was said to have 'committed suicide with a pistol' and another died because 'he refused treatment [for malaria].' Another seven named men were said to have been executed following an investigation, and a further nine were sentenced to death, though the number of these who were killed is uncertain.<sup>77</sup>

The ANC's own summarized account of these events is as follows: since 1979, Quatro was its 'formal detention center.' In 1981, a 'rash of bizarre incidents of indiscipline' occurred. Protests followed in late 1983 and early the next year which were defused with no loss of life. There was also a mutiny at Viana transit camp which was put down with the death of two mutineers. A 'far more serious mutiny' at Pango in 1984 was 'suppressed mercilessly', and seven cadres were sentenced to death.<sup>78</sup>

Torture directly involved top people in the ANC and Mbokodo, and its use was not restricted to the first spy scare period. At the 'recall hearing', the ANC acknowledged the use of torture. Before the Skweyiya Commission, Piliso said that he had taken part in the beating of suspects in 1981, when MK personnel were interrogated over some two weeks. They were beaten on the soles of their feet in Piliso's presence. Among victim statements presented to the Commission were the following. Diliza Mthembu was one of the

'Soweto generation' who had left to join the ANC in 1976. Detained for over four years at Quatro and at Viana, he was given electric shocks, suffocated with gas masks and beaten all over his body with sticks; Gordon Moshoeu was also detained for four years. Among the abuses he endured at Quatro was having wild chilies smeared, he testified, 'on his private parts and anus'; Kenneth Sigam had melted plastic poured on his back, and he was hit on the head with a steel rod. After six years at Quatro, he was held in Tanzania, eight months of which were in solitary confinement, and not released until 1991; Ronnie Masango had disagreed with the decision to deploy MK against UNITA, and was detained for fourteen months in Luanda, where he was beaten and kicked all over his body; Daliwonga Mandela was held at the ANC so-called 'Green House' in Lusaka, Mbokodo's headquarters, tortured daily for six months, and threatened with death, he claimed, not only by Modise, but also by Alfred Nzo, Steve Tshwete and Jacob Zuma, all most senior figures in the ANC then and later; and Ms Ntombentsha Makanda, detained in Lusaka in 1980 and 1985, when she was kicked and punched with her hands tied behind her back, and sexually abused. <sup>79</sup>

The TRC concluded on the evidence presented to them that torture was routinely used by Mbokodo from 1979 to 1989. They noted that members of MK selected for intelligence were trained in the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Gabriel Mthembu, for example, had trained in counter-intelligence, including the thorough screening and assessment of new recruits, and he acknowledged that the standard of training in the GDR was high. <sup>80</sup>

Official opinion and some facts presented at the Recall Hearing in May 1997 merit attention. The ANC asserted that 'no systematic or widespread' abuse had occurred, and rejected with contempt the suggestion that any cadre was trained specifically in torture. It claimed that some of those involved in the 1984 mutinies had long histories of destructive behavior, and some also had—as the Stuart Commission had revealingly phrased it—"illusions of power and leadership," <sup>81</sup> a backhanded reference perhaps to their beliefs in accountability and consultation. It allowed, again following Stuart, that 'nearly all petty offences [in the camps] had been dealt with in a destructive manner' since 1979. The Kabwe Conference of June 1985 was the ANC's first consultative assembly since 1969: some 40 percent of the delegates were supposedly from the camps, heavily vetted and supervised by Mbokodo. Issues of corruption and non-accountability were ignored. <sup>82</sup>

Piliso was 'removed' as head of NAT and Andrew Masondo was 'censured by the leadership'. The ANC also allowed that 'most of the excesses' took place between 1981 and 1985, but reiterated that 'no "extra-legal executions" were carried out in areas where the ANC leadership had control'. Quoting further findings of the Stuart Commission, it admitted that the conditions in its camps were dreadful: "the total isolation from the outside world,

the desperation and frustration of not being deployed, ma[d]e it practically impossible for cadres to survive (politically, morally and psychologically) in the camps for several years." Trapped in such conditions were some 6,000 young people: the ANC's statement of 19 August 1996 (above) said that each camp contained a minimum of 1,200 cadres, and it noted that qualified medical attention was extremely inadequate. But in answer to a specific question from the TRC, it confirmed that Piliso and Masonde indeed 'retained senior posts in the post-1994 administration': 'to continue punishing these officials endlessly would be contrary to humane practice'. 83 Yet Piliso's responsibilities for the gross abuse of cadres were of the highest. Harshness to the soldiery was thus combined with extreme leniency to their commanders.

Despite the weight of evidence, the ANC at the end of the 1990s, did its best to avoid accountability. Party president, Thabo Mbeki, took the TRC in late 1998 to court to prevent the release of its Final Report, but the High Court of the Western Cape ruled that the Commission had adequately considered the ANC's responses to its findings. State President Mandela appeared to agree partially with his party comrades when he received the report, as he observed, 'with all its imperfections'. Bishop Desmond Tutu expressed his 'devastation' at Mbeki's action, and the Commission noted that a 'great deal of acrimony' was created between itself and the ANC by the attempted interdiction. Nonetheless, in a statement to a special sitting of parliament convened to discuss the Report, Mbeki, as deputy state president, reiterated his complaints.<sup>84</sup>

In a section entitled 'Holding the ANC Accountable', the TRC endeavored to clarify its position after the handing over of the Final Report. They rather over-generously declared that, while the ANC 'at a leadership level made frank disclosures, the same cannot be said for the welfare desk': in more than 250 instances, where the Commission tried to verify information supplied by victims and their families, they were 'unable to obtain any response' from the party.

The TRC reconfirmed its findings: under international law, 'the fact that persons died in custody at the hands of the ANC places responsibility for their deaths on the ANC.' Chiefly two categories of people had suffered at the hands of the ANC and its military/security structures: suspected 'enemy agents' and 'mutineers'. People were routinely tortured, charged and convicted by tribunals, without due process, sentenced and executed. The subsequent failure of the ANC to communicate properly with the families of victims 'constituted callous and insensitive conduct.' The forms of torture detailed by the Motsuenyane commission involved the deliberate infliction of pain, severe ill-treatment in prison and solitary confinement, and the deliberate withholding of food, water and medical care. <sup>85</sup> These practices amounted to gross violations of human rights. Motsuenyane also found that 'adequate steps were not taken in good time against those responsible for such viola-

tions.' Thus, 'The information that the Commission received subsequent to the submission of its five-volume Final Report has confirmed that the Commission was correct in making the findings that it did.' 86

But on the TRC's own evidence, as well as on other analytical and biographical material, the ANC and MK leadership has shown no accountability to its own members, most culpably to the thousands of youth who joined its ranks after June 1976, whose supposed mutinies resulted from their leaders' refusal to heed their justified complaints. There was little accountability either to the uninformed and grieving relatives of the victims, and to the South African people. A leader like Joe Modise, criticized in detail by Hani and repeatedly by the soldiers, persisted in his derelict and corrupt conduct over three decades, and then acquired, as did others, high ministerial office. The TRC was overly helpful to the ANC in allowing the admission of lists of named violators as confidential appendices, beyond the reach again of relatives and an uninformed public. And Mbeki was prepared to take extraordinary eleventh-hour measures to try to suppress one of the best available insights into what the ANC's armed struggle actually represented. Whatever 'imperfections' the report contained, one not inconsiderable failure was its inability to discern the reality of the origins and role of the UDF; the TRC simply assuming without supporting evidence that the ANC 'played a direct role' in their establishment, 87 undermining their autonomy and obscuring the great wave of democratization that most characterized them and South African domestic politics of the 1980s. 88

Skweyiya had been firmer on both the issues of elite accountability and assistance to the victims. They strongly recommended 'urgent and immediate attention be given to identifying and dealing with those responsible for the maltreatment of detainees.' Those who were detained without trial, 'should have the allegations against them unequivocally and unconditionally withdrawn', and 'a clear and unequivocal apology' given to them. All who were detained in ANC camps should receive monetary compensation. Since it was clear that 'many people' suffered in the camps, an independent body should be established to document the abuses. <sup>89</sup>

Instead, the ANC endeavored to enforce secrecy and non-accountability. As they left Quatro, both prior to 1988 and during the evacuation from Angola, surviving prisoners were 'threatened with death if they ever were to relate to anyone the events that had transpired during their internment.'90 When the first group of 32 ex-detainees arrived in South Africa in August 1991, they were publicly labelled by the ANC as 'the most notorious' suspected agents, though they had never been tried or found guilty of any offence, and the party endeavored to impose a 'moratorium on accusative statements' upon them. They and others like them experienced, according to Skweyiya, a double punishment; lengthy imprisonment without trial for unproven crimes and 'ostracism upon their release.'91

### The Crimes and Immunity of Madikizela-Mandela

With Nelson Mandela in prison and other leaders in exile, Winnie Madikize-la-Mandela (as she is now known) assumed, says her biographer, that the leadership role was automatically hers: 'I was ready to deputies for Nelson', she reportedly wrote. In her semi-official role as wife of the ANC leader, and as her reputation as an opponent of apartheid spread, she became regarded internationally as *de facto* First Lady, as her association with Danielle Mitterand of France and Lisbeth Palme of Sweden appeared to suggest. In 1986, with her return to Soweto from harsh banishment conditions in Brandfort in the Free State, she acted, according to the TRC, 'as an operative' of MK, supposedly providing assistance to cadres infiltrating into the country, and appearing publicly in military uniform. Trewhela notes the 'extraordinary status' she acquired, and sees its substance in her role 'as oracle to the unseen leader on Robben Island.' But in Soweto in the late 1980s, her actual following was composed chiefly of homeless children. 92

She had received for some time financial support from foreign sources one check, for instance, from a UN anti-apartheid committee, was apparently for \$100,000—some of which may have gone into the building of a 15–room mansion in Orlando West (aka 'Winnie's Palace'). In 1986 and 1987 this became home to the Mandela United Football Club (MUFC), which she founded. Fear and intimidation radiated from this gang and their creator. On 28 July 1988, the house was burned down by high school pupils, while residents watched in silence. But terrorism continued out of her new residence in Diepkloof, 93 as the fate of four abducted youth, Lolo Sono, Stompie Seipei, Pelo Mekgwe and Thabiso Mono, acquired publicity in early 1989. Dr Abu-Baker Asvat was shot dead in his surgery on 27 January and soon after the body of Seipei was identified. 94 These killings were flagrant and interconnected but only two, it emerged, among other barbarities. Asvat had been summoned to examine the boy on 1 January, after he had undergone a prolonged period of 'Break Down' in Madikizela-Mandela's hands—the victim was repeatedly thrown into the air and allowed to fall to the floor—and the physician pronounced him brain damaged and in dire need of hospitalization; she and her accomplices decided instead to dispose of Seipei.

With the police barely active, the leadership of the democracy movement spoke out on 16 February; it was the prime example of the UDF's unflinching criticism of elites. Flanked by COSATU president, Elijah Barayi, and by UDF co-president Richard Gumede, Murphy Morobe of the MDM-UDF, read a public statement directly linking Madikizela-Mandela to Seipei's killing, and affirmed that the football team and "the reign of terror" which it carried out was "her creation." He went on: "We are outraged . . . and not prepared to remain silent when those who are violating human rights claim to

be doing so in the name of the struggle." The MDM therefore "distance[d] itself from Mrs. Mandela and her actions." 95

The TRC held a Special Investigation into the MUFC, restricted to a seven-month period between August 1988 and the end of February 1989 (however the Commission noted some cases outside this period). They found that 'the residents and associates of the Mandela household, including Ms Madikizela-Mandela herself, were implicated directly or indirectly in . . . assaults and abduction, and the murder and attempted murder of at least a dozen individuals.' The investigations involved public hearings in late 1998, which included testimony from Morobe, Cachalia and Madikizela-Mandela. Former security police were interviewed. The public hearings were, however, constrained by time limitations which restricted cross-examinations.

Among the assaults were the following. The torture and mutilation of Peter Makhanda and Phillip Makhanda; on 26 May 1987, the brothers were taken by force to the back rooms of the Mandela home, where they were assaulted and had ANC slogans carved into their bodies by MUFC members, the wounds exacerbated with battery acid. Ms Phumlile Dlamini was assaulted by Madikizela-Mandela and MUFC members in late 1988. The TRC determined that she was taken from her house on more than one occasion and that Madikizela-Mandela and her followers were responsible for the assaults. The abduction and killing of Lolo Sono and Anthony Tshabalala: Nicodemus Sono, the father of Lolo, testified that on 13 November 1988, Madikizel-Mandela and her driver came to his house, and he saw Lolo sitting in the back of her vehicle, his face swollen and bruised. Madikizela-Mandela told him that Lolo was a police spy, and that an MK cadre had been killed because of him. Despite Sono's pleas for his son's release, Madikizela-Mandela declared, 'I am taking this dog away. The movement will see what to do with him.' The Commission found that Lolo Sono was severely assaulted at the Diepkloof residence with the knowledge of Madikizela-Mandela. They found that he was killed by Jerry Richardson, her close confidant. Sibuniso Tshabalala's fate was 'linked to that of Lolo Sono', assaulted at the same place and murdered by Richardson. The allegations regarding both men 'were unfounded and false.' Jerry Richardson himself 'was a police informer.'

Ms Koekie Zwane was the girlfriend of an MUFC member, and she died of multiple stab wounds on 18 December 1988. She too was an alleged informer, and was murdered by Richardson. The latter applied to the TRC for amnesty and stated that Koekie was killed on Madikizela-Mandela's instructions. The Commission also found that four youths, Thabiso Mono, Pelo Mekgwe, Kenneth Kgase, and Stompie Seipei were abducted from the Methodist manse in Soweto on 29 December 1988 by Richardson and other followers on the instructions of Madikizela-Mandela. The boys were accused of engaging in sexual relations with the Rev Paul Verryn, who ran the manse,

and Seipei was singled out as an alleged informer. All four were assaulted in Diepkloof, and Madikizela-Mandela 'initiated and participated in the assaults.' Seipei was 'last seen alive' at her residence, and as the Commission oddly phrased it, she 'failed to act responsibly in taking the necessary action required to avert his death.'96

The killing of Dr Asvat on 27 January 1989 and the assault on Seipei were inter-related. Evidence exists that shortly before the latter's death, Asvat, known as 'the people's doctor', told Madikilzela-Mandela: 'This boy is seriously ill. . . . You must take him to hospital.' Asvat also vehemently refused to provide her with confirmation that an abducted youth had been sodomized. Asvat was shot dead in his surgery by Zakhele Mbatha assisted by Thulani Dlamini without robbery occurring. Both men told the TRC in considerable detail that they were promised R20,000 by Madikizela-Mandela for the murder. Ebrahim Asvat, brother to the slain doctor, also told the Commission that the written statement of the two killers (eventually sentenced to 30 years jail) implicating Madikizela-Mandela was never produced in court, and that the police were unwilling to pursue the matter. The TRC said that Madikizela-Mandela had 'deliberately and maliciously slandered Verryn' in an attempt to divert attention away from herself. But they too seemed reluctant to take matters further, They found that the death of Asvat and the linking of his death with the sexual abuse allegations 'raised serious concerns which the Commission was unable to unravel.' They appeared to pin the blame on the police; the detectives investigating Asvat's murder were 'hasty' in their assumptions and 'negligent' in their subsequent work. 97

But of greater importance were the lies and evasions of the woman concerned and how she was consistently supported in these endeavors by seniormost persons in the ANC. Katiza Cebekhulu was a participant and material witness in the events concerning Asvat, and he was, in the findings of the Commission, 'taken out of the country and placed illegally in a Zambian prison at the request of the ANC'. They note that President Kenneth Kaunda had 'admitted that the ANC requested his assistance with Cebekhulu.' Madikizela-Mandela was 'involved in at least the initial hand-over' of the man, who was then held for three years without trial. 98 Aubrey Mokoena was once prominent in the UDF, and by 1997 an ANC MP and parliamentary committee chair. He had accepted Madikizela-Mandela's lies about the four abducted youth, and told the TRC in 1989 that 'Mama' had been so overcome by the 'altruism' of a social worker that she had mistakenly associated with thugs. The Rev Frank Chikane had been a member of the ineffectual Crisis Committee which Nelson Mandela set up to contain the scandal, and in 1997 was deputy head of the deputy-president's office; he too liked to refer to Madikizela-Mandela as 'Mama,' and acted evasively before the TRC. Cyril Ramaphosa had also been a member of the Crisis Committee, but repeatedly declined to offer his testimony to the TRC. Before the public hearings began on 18 November 1997, Dullah Omar, Minister of Justice, voiced his support in the terms which Madikizela-Mandela was herself inclined to use, that the struggle exonerated everything: murder charges against her were not comparable to the atrocities of the former minority government, and they had to be seen in the context of apartheid.<sup>99</sup>

The views and actions of Morobe and Cachalia were totally different. Appearing before the TRC in November 1997, they recalled the situation a decade earlier, when they were acutely aware that Madikizela-Mandela's victims were chiefly weak and vulnerable boys and girls, and that the UDF had campaigned for the release of children from government detention. Stompie Seipie's body had been discovered, and "community anger was at boiling point", Cachalia said. As national leadership of the UDF "we knew we had to do something bold and imaginative". The public statement of 16 February 1989, Morobe admitted, had a profound effect on him both "as an individual [and] on my relationship with Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela (though always coming to me in undercurrents). . . . [But] this was an issue of principle that my organization had to confront." Cachalia added, "It was one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made." A part of me, he said, now wants to forget the nightmare; "but another part says we cannot go forward until there's some accountability." This was not just an issue of the past but of the present and future in South Africa. Cachalia recommended that anyone found guilty by the TRC of gross human rights violations should be debarred from holding public office thereafter; the penalty of lustration. 100

But the evasions continued, and over four days of hearings Madikizela-Mandela could watch, on the summary of Antjie Krog, powerful men 'bend over backwards to avoid saying anything bad about her.' Tutu went further and added his own and the Commission's prestige to a gratuitous endorsement of her claims. It was as if Morobe and Cachalia and the relatives of her victims had not spoken: 101 "Many, *many* love you. Many, *many* say you should have been where you ought to be. The First Lady of the country. . . . I love you very deeply. . . . You are a great person." 102

On the TRC's conclusions, Madikizela-Mandela's methods were similar to those of Mbokodo, in their pursuit of agents, spies and informants, and their reliance on torture and killing. 'Those who opposed Madikizela-Mandela and the MUFC or dissented from them were branded as informers, then hunted down and killed.' She was 'politically and morally accountable' for gross violations of human rights. But their conclusions on the role of the ANC was muted and repeatedly qualified. It 'must bear some responsibility', they said, 'for not taking a more determined stance regarding the controversy surrounding Ms Madikizela-Mandela, particularly in the period following the unbanning of the organization. The apparent complicity of elements within the ANC to obstruct the course of justice by removing witnesses and coaccused . . . is a case in point.' 103

But the TRC ruled out Cachalia's specific recommendation of lustration, on the grounds that 'it would be inappropriate in the South African context.' It offered no clarification of this conclusion. The Skweyiya Commission, however, had earlier reached a contrary position, finding unambiguously and pertinently that 'no person who is guilty of committing atrocities should ever again be allowed to assume a position of power. Unless the ANC is prepared to take decisive action, the risk of repetition will forever be present.' <sup>104</sup>

### The Killing of Thami Zulu, Lusaka, 16 November 1989

The killing of Muziwakhe Ngwenya (aka Thami Zulu or TZ) was complex, calculated and callous, and it resulted from the involvement of top ANC leaders, Modise, Hani and Jacob Zuma, with Thabo Mbeki in a supportive position. It also closely involved the on-going struggle between Mbokodo and MK, and the ethnic concerns of Zuma in particular, in which Zulu became unwittingly embroiled. He was born in Soweto and educated there, in Swaziland and briefly at the University of Botswana from whence he joined MK. His military potentials were reportedly spotted by Slovo and Hani, who invited him to attend a meeting of the SACP in East Berlin in 1979. As a commander in southern Angola, Ronnie Kasrils described him as 'an exceptionally handsome individual [who] looked every inch a soldier'. He was then appointed by Modise and Hani as regional commander of MK operations in Natal, based in Swaziland. This appointment, says Ellis, was 'strongly opposed' by Zuma, who wanted someone from Natal, not a Sowetan in this critical position. <sup>105</sup>

He successfully stepped-up MK's attacks, but his career ended abruptly after two disastrous incidents in 1988, in which some nine infiltrators from Swaziland were massacred. Zulu's deputy, Cyril Raymond (or Ralph Mgcina), and his wife, Jessica, were summoned to Lusaka. Raymond subsequently died in detention, reportedly drowning in his own vomit, 'after refusing to sign a confession to being a South African agent.' Zulu was formally detained, without being informed of the basis for this action. Jacob Zuma had been a member of Mbokodo, 1985–1988, and became its deputy director in 1988. After some 12 years in Swaziland and Mozambique, he had moved to Lusaka in early 1987 where he became 'Chief of the Intelligence Dept'. <sup>106</sup> According to Mac Maharaj, the operational principle within the enclosed spheres of security and intelligence in Mbokodo and the ANC, around 1988, was that 'no one was beyond suspicion.' <sup>107</sup>

Zulu spent 14 months in detention, part of which was spent in an isolation cell lying all day on a mattress on the floor. After two months of interrogation, Mbokodo had found no conclusive proof of his collaboration with the enemy, but recommended that he should be 'disciplined for criminal neglect' in the case of the June 1988 deaths. At the TRC's Recall Hearing, the ANC

specifically denied that he had been tortured or subjected to cruel or degrading treatment. <sup>108</sup> But on the findings of the Skweyiya Commission, Zulu had gone into Mbokodo as 'a large, well-built slightly overweight person, and came out gaunt, frail and almost unrecognizable.' He was released on 11 November on orders emanating from the office of Oliver Tambo, following a medical examination at the University Teaching Hospital (UTH) in Lusaka which showed he was HIV positive. He was taken to stay at the house of a long-time friend, Dr Ralph Mgijima, head of the ANC Health Department. He died four days later.

When the TRC considered the case they had evidence from Skewiya and other sources to draw on. They also had a medical report noting that 'his death was brought about by poisoning which must have been taken in within a day or at most two days prior to his death.' Thabo Mbeki testified at the 'recall hearing' in May 1997, that it was accepted that our investigations into the extremely high casualty rates in the MK forces under his command constituted 'sufficient grounds for his recall'. He declared, 'At no time was he tortured or subjected to any undue pressure.' 109 Mbeki accepted that the former commander died of poisoning, but insisted that it was a matter of conjecture as to who administered this poison. Nonetheless he concluded, 'Our own security department has reason to believe that an agent or agents of the regime was responsible.' The TRC's findings were equivocal and negative: Despite the fact that 'no conclusive evidence' that Thami Zulu was a South African agent had emerged, the TRC 'was unable to make a conclusive finding.' 110

Trewhela and Beresford suggest that conclusions can in fact be reached about how Zulu was poisoned. Samples of his blood and stomach contents showed traces of diazinon, an organic phosphorous pesticide, and the equivalent of some three pints of beer. Diazinon is pungent, it does not dissolve in water or tea but is soluble in alcohol. A forensic scientist in London, shown these samples, concluded that 'three pints of beer taken within a twenty-four hour period and each containing a teaspoon full of diazinon could have been fatal.' But it would have had to be taken within the one or two day period as noted. Skweyiya accepted that this was the likely way in which Zulu was killed. For Trewhela, the murderers were thus to be found among those who had access to Zulu between 13 and 15 November. And 'if poison was administered in three bottles of beer, those who supplied it were almost certainly members of the ANC and perhaps very senior members.' Arguably there would have had to be understanding and some degree of trust between Zulu and the potential poisoners if the former was voluntarily to drink beer with them over a period.

On the known record, the last days of Zulu proceeded as follows. On Sunday 12 November, Mgijima himself was taken ill and rushed to hospital for emergency operation. On 13 November, he phoned Hani from hospital

and asked him to check on Zulu. Hani accompanied by Modise entered Mgijima's house and found Zulu unwell. On evidence provided earlier by Hani to journalists Phillip van Niekerk and Beresford, two MK men known to be loyal to Hani were sent to the house to look after Zulu. The identity of these men has not been revealed. On 14 November Hani returned, and Zulu, on Hani's account, 'appeared to be worried that the Security Department [Mbokodo] is going to finish him off' if he fell into their hands. On 15 November Hani called an unnamed doctor to attend to Zulu, and he again left two MK men to keep watch at his bedside, where he suffered attacks of vomiting and diarrhea. On 16 November Thami Zulu was rushed gasping for breath to UTH, where he died aged 35. 111 By this time, MK and Mbokodo were 'bitter rivals.' 112

Beresford notes the 'missing' 15 years in Jacob Zuma's biography, between 1975 when he left South Africa for training in Russia and 1990 when he was among the first of the notable exiles to return. Zuma's biographer states that there is 'very little information' about those crucial years; one of Zuma's main tasks then was 'running Swaziland/Natal operations', and he purposefully 'did not want to be known.' Beresford states that these silences 'justif[y] an assumption, if not a presumption of guilt.' What knowledge did he have about the deaths of Zulu and Cyril Raymond? He was in legal terms 'at all material times in a position to know, which in turn attracts an assumption that he did know.' Politically, at the top of ANC intelligence, he was in a position to know, and he had direct experience in the area where Zulu had operated. At the very least, why did he not act to secure the release of Zulu from the organization of which he was deputy director? Armed with the power and aggressiveness of Mbokodo, Zuma had also become, after 1986, the ANC's 'pre-eminent Zulu leader'. 115

Thabo Mbeki believed in 1997 that Thami Zulu was a suspected agent of Pretoria, falsely declared that he was neither tortured nor pressured during the 14 months that dramatically altered his health and appearance, and firmly implied that Pretoria's agents poisoned him. For Beresford, however, Thami Zulu 'had all the courage of a warrior but lacked the knowledge as to where the enemy lay.' Perhaps, more precisely, he was denied knowledge through the lies and prevarication of an Mbeki and Zuma, and the duplicity and ambivalence of Modise and Hani. If the latters' funeral oration at least was true, MK held no real doubts about Zulu's loyalty and competence. He was buried in Swaziland in November 1989, with the mourners limited to family. A statement signed by Modise and Hani, respectively Commander and Chief of Staff of MK, declared: The 'Glorious army of our people salute you. . . . [W]e remember your efficiency and competence. . . . [W]e recall with sheer pride and emotion . . . this giant and gallant fighter.' 116 Or the obfuscations were compounded further, as they continued to be over coming years and decades. There is no explanation in the public domain about Dr Mgijima's

sudden, inexplicable incapacitation, which may have exposed Zulu to his poisoners, and no indication either of what he knew about his friend's condition and circumstances on the eve of his death. His recent career is at a senior level outside medicine, as director and chairman of the Acquisition Committee of the board of Armscor, the state's arms procurement agency. 117 What is certain is that the missing information concerning Zulu's killing remains in the hands of the ANC's leadership. When Skewiya reported to Mandela in 1992 it recommended that 'secret ANC internal reports' about his death 'should be made public'. 118 Jacob Zuma, however, holds the view that such material remains the property of the ANC.

### Operation Vula

This significant politico-military intervention came in the midst of the talks which the imprisoned Nelson Mandela had initiated with Pretoria, after he was moved in 1985 from Robben Island to the private conditions available to him at Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town. From there he wrote to Kobie Coetsee, minister of justice, asking for a meeting to discuss talks between the ANC and the government. "It was clear to me", he subsequently wrote, "that a military victory was a distant if not impossible dream. It was time to talk." Between around 1985 and Mandela's release in February 1990 at least 48 meetings between Mandela and government representatives followed. When informal talks were succeeded by formal negotiations, 1990 through 1994, the detailed settlement which was then hammered out, on O'Malley's reasoned judgment, 'was within the framework [the informal talks] had established.' <sup>119</sup> Over much the same earlier period, Thabo Mbeki had held his own separate and largely secret discussions with official and non-official government representatives in various world capitals.

But as late as August 1989, president Tambo in Lusaka remained unclear about who Mandela was talking to and what he was saying. (319) Even more, other senior ANC figures did not believe that a military victory was either distant or impossible. Vula was a clandestine military-political operation with at least dual aims, devised and substantially implemented by a very small and highly secretive elite. Vula would locate senior ANC in South Africa, chiefly to 'take overall charge of the struggle', and simultaneously, in Maharaj's words, 'to move towards a people's war.' (251)

This was to be the implementation of Slovo's formulation at Kabwe, which accorded a deeply subordinate, highly abstract and contentious role to the people: those who were simply referred to as 'the risen masses' would be turned by unstated means into 'organized groups of combatants', while an externally based 'core' elite would function as an 'officer core'; it would culminate with the 'seizure of state power'. President Tambo in Lusaka was in overall charge, assisted by Joe Slovo. The latter, along with Maharaj

and Hani, agreed fully about the need and feasibility of 'people's war.' By early 1987, Tambo and Slovo had selected Maharaj to go back into the country and head the operation to establish an infrastructure of sophisticated, autonomous communications 'separate from anything else on the ground', and 'on-the-spot military recruitment and training and caching of arms.' Chris Hani was also selected, along with Jacob Zuma, as a third NEC (and SACP) member.

The years 1986 to 1988 were spent in preparations. This work 'fell almost entirely on [Maharaj's] shoulders.' Siphiwe Nyanda, who claimed a strong active-service record, was his deputy, and Vladimir Shubin was brought into the small loop by Tambo and Slovo as 'our key link on the Soviet side'. Maharaj had lived outside South Africa from 1977 to 1988, and his own military experience was scant; his training had been limited to 1962. He therefore took 'a refresher course' in the GDR and Cuba, along with training in Moscow on urban warfare. 'Pressure was mounting on the ANC' from inside and outside the country in 1987 to 1988, 'and we needed to do everything to hasten the struggle at home'. (245–53)

Taking overall charge meant, in fact, that Vula 'infiltrated the MDM' in order to 'seduce MDM leaders', to 'hijack their revolution-in-the-making', and allow the exiled ANC leaders to return with ease and simply appropriate the organizations of the mass democratic movement. In addition to its military and espionage operations, Vula was intentionally 'subversive' of domestic democratization. It wasn't there, in Maharaj's words, to 'support the establishment of people's committees', because 'repression directed at the masses needed to be countered by MK'. Vula's belief was that 'authority needed to be asserted', and this could only be done if leaders from the NEC came in and worked with domestic figures at every level. (247–8) What Allan Boesak understood as the militarization of the UDF, and the stifling of democratization that accompanied it, was well underway. Vula was a secret arms importer, bringing in and storing across the country, 'huge quantities of arms', and simultaneously 'a propaganda and crisis management operation in dealings with the MDM.'

From around late 1988, Maharaj was in close contact with leaders of the MDM, particularly, he says, with Jay Naidoo, Ramaphosa, Valli Moosa, Frank Chikane, Sydney Mufamadi and Murphy Morobe. These were told not to disclose they were working with him and interacting with the ANC. This 'core committee' set the political agenda, he claims, for both COSATU and the UDF, in consultation with Vula and Maharaj. (pp. 262, 265 and 281)<sup>121</sup>

The latter states that in late 1988, Vula's 'primary mission' was still to build the long term capability of MK to 'fight a protracted people's war.' He reports that for Slovo, in June 1990, that is, four months after the unbanning of the liberation parties and Mandela's release, "the real thing" was still people's war. Hani was at least as enthusiastic a proponent of the strategy,

and the three along with Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, were together on the Politburo of the SACP in 1988–1989.

Deepening the clandestine activities further was Operation Bible, whose role supplemented or duplicated Mbokodo's in aiming 'to identify apartheid agents within the upper echelons of the movement'. Bible reported to Zuma both before and after he became deputy director of Mbokodo—Gordin adds that 'it had fallen under Zuma in 1988–89'. 122 Maharaj says that 'a symbiotic relationship evolved between Vula and Bible.' (pp. 268, 271 and 318) Vula's espionage activities, stockpiling arms for example, required financing: in particular, Ellis notes, the skills associated with white-collar crime, and an important role was played here by the Shaik family of Durban, Schabir, and his brothers Mo and Yunus. They arranged financial procedures, and 'reported to Jacob Zuma' in the inter-twined Vula-Bible. This was in fact the start of 'a close and enduring relationship' between the Shaiks, Zuma and Mac Maharaj. 123 The trio 'cultivated police informers and set up front companies and dummy bank accounts.' 124

Above ground, Hani's preparations for people's war went ahead. His exhortation to large scale violence was expressed directly to ordinary people in highly fanciful and adventurist terms. What MK elements that existed in the northern border areas with Zimbabwe and Botswana had difficulty sustaining themselves against strong SADF units. Hani nevertheless called on unarmed, untrained people to organize themselves into small mobile units against the same powerful forces. It was incumbent on all freedom-loving South Africans to realize that revolutionary violence was the answer. 'We know our people are disadvantaged. . . . But we are saying to our people, use every weapon you can lay your hands on. . . . [U]se everything that is available . . . to inflict casualties on the enemy.' Mobile units should use 'sneak and surprise' tactics emanating from within communities, schools, factories and home to 'run, hide, trap and strike at the enemy.' He proposed creating 'grenade squads' and ensured, his biographers claim, that these were armed 'as far as was possible'. Even after the adoption of the Harare Declaration by the Organization of African Unity in August 1989, and the decisive movement towards Namibian independence, and then the rapid shift to formal negotiations, Hani retained his fixation: 'Armed struggle is the mobiliser, the inspirer', he insisted. 125

But the regional and international situation was changing rapidly. Cuba had acted decisively in providing arms and equipment for the defense of Cuito Carnavale in Angola, inflicting a notable defeat on South Africa. <sup>126</sup> Its military force withdrew in March 1988, and the resulting diplomacy saw Cuba leaving Angola and Pretoria leaving Namibia. The ANC played no role in these negotiations, and Ellis says that it was 'humiliated' both by its exclusion and by its consequent expulsion from Angola. <sup>127</sup> United Nations resolution 435 on independence in Namibia, necessitated closure of ANC

camps in Angola, and implementation of the transition began in April 1989. Uganda was the only other country offering MK temporary relocation into what were known to the ANC to be overcrowded holding centers, with little or no pretense of military readiness. <sup>128</sup> The known preference of the soldiers was to go at last to South Africa. Hani was ready nonetheless to persuade them to fall into line with another distant, demoralizing relocation, offering them 'lots of Coca-Cola' and false promises about accommodation and food in East Africa. MK was now, as Ellis says, as far from South Africa's borders as they had been before Portugal's Carnation Revolution in 1974 discussed below. <sup>129</sup> Not until 1992 did the first contingents leave Uganda for South Africa.

But Hani's role and influence descended into the populist-revolutionary absurd after his arrival in Johannesburg in April 1990 on temporary indemnity. He quickly formed 'a tight partnership' with Madikizela-Mandela. In his biographers' hyperbole, 'their iconic pairing—both wearing MK fatigues and boots . . . striding side by side in a choreographed suite—aroused the expectant nation's imagination.' As they themselves allow, 'there was indeed a similarity between the characters of [The Lady] and Chris Hani.' 130

People's war was given its last brief and bloody outing at Bisho in the Ciskei Bantustan on 7 September 1992, under the supposed theory of 'rolling mass action' and 'the Leipzig option'. The government of Brigadier Oupa Gqozo was deeply unpopular and supposedly ready for toppling; for Kasrils, a leading Vula operative, just a 'pint-sized individual with an outsized military hat.' Along with Hani, Steve Tshwete and Ramaphosa, they led around 80,000 unarmed marchers against awaiting Ciskei troops, intending, as Tshwete declared on the spot, to 'drive the pig from the barn.' The leaders, with Kasrils and Ramaphosa at their fore, narrowly escaped injury, but 29 other demonstrators were killed and more than 200 injured, some seriously, in sustained gunfire. 131

The assault plan had been endorsed without dissent by all 68 NEC members, and in a 'collective decision on the ground', Ramaphosa would try to talk his way past the barricaded soldiers while Kasrils, 'would make a flanking charge'. The latter was unapologetic for the large number of deaths and injuries. 'One cannot regret what one does in good faith in the best judgment of the collective leadership. Casualties take place all the time. . . . We can't regret trying to go forward.' 132

De Klerk's inclusion of MK and the SACP among the unbanned organizations in February 1990, and the absence of stiff conditionalities, also 'came as a surprise' to Mac Maharaj. Other events, domestic and foreign, brought further problems. Oliver Tambo's stroke in the previous August, produced 'a leadership vacuum in the ANC' just when decisiveness was preeminent. The eventual acting appointment of Alfred Nzo brought no rejuvenation since he lacked Tambo's decisiveness and strategic vision. Maharaj

'never met with Nzo regarding Vula', and to the end the NEC remained unaware of the existence of the operation. Vula was uncovered by the police in July 1990, to the embarrassment of a disarrayed ANC: it signed the Pretoria Minute, formally suspending its armed struggle, in August. <sup>133</sup> Over scarcely a year to mid-1990, seismic change proceeded, and 'suddenly', in Maharaj's consistently belated perceptions, people's war 'seemed like an archaic conception.' <sup>134</sup>

#### THE DISSOLUTION OF THE UDF

But the other main aspect of Vula's mission, the appropriation of the democratic movement represented prominently by the UDF, went remorselessly ahead. Attacked by internal critics like Aubrey Mokoena, that the Front was led by 'a cabal' of shadowy, largely Indian influences—Madikizela-Mandela maintained this line of attack down until her last appearance in 1997 before the TRC, where she repeatedly referred to Morobe as 'Murphy Patel' without admonition from the chair—Mokoena insisted that there were 'important differences' between the ANC and the UDF, and the latter's very existence 'undermined' the party. For Peter Mokaba, another of Madikizela-Mandela's close collaborators, the Front was simply 'redundant' in the growing environment of negotiations and incipient transition. <sup>135</sup>

Options facing the UDF supposedly narrowed to two between the end of 1990 and March 1991. One was to disband entirely as its existence was detracting from the ANC's rising predominance. The other, says Seekings, was to become a coordinating front for organizations in civil society concerned with development. Such groups were at their height in the early 1990s. 'Molefe and other national leaders', he adds, 'clearly favored the second option.' But many other figures were being pulled into top positions in the ANC; among them then, Lekota, Archie Gumede, Trevor Manuel and Cheryl Carolus. When Molefe addressed the Front's National General Council in March 1991, he acknowledged that its leaders no longer operated on the basis of sufficient mandates, and accountability was low because of the irregularity of meetings. But the probably biggest causal factor is only referred to obliquely by Seekings. The remnants of the UDF's leadership faced a 'burden of resentment and hostility', and the advocates of the transformation option floundered. <sup>136</sup> Elitism plus state power trumped democratization.

Later in 1996, well after the event of the enforced dissolution, the ANC made a belated, realistic and positive assessment of the UDF's origins and role. It was then acknowledged to be 'essentially separate' from the ANC, and its formation in the early 1980s had indeed 'transformed the political landscape.' It represented a 'maturing of ideological orientation' in the country, 'based on local initiatives and conditions.' The success of the Front was

based on its ability in linking together diverse social and community organizations. <sup>137</sup> This statement appears to have had no effect on Mandela's thinking at Mafikeng in December 1997, below.

Maharaj was a featured speaker at the disbandment of the Front in March 1991. He seemed to make it clear that this was in fact more than an appropriation of the leadership and structures of the UDF, and that an erasure of its values and achievements, especially in democratization and non-violence, was intended. He began with the words, "I am a soldier", and extolled the ideas of the armed struggle directed from outside throughout his speech. The 'deliberate fashioning of a revolutionary dream of violence', as Boesak understood things. Nothing that had been happening under the UDF 'had given the ANC pause.' 138 Nor had the prospect of a negotiated settlement, promoted by Mandela since 1985, deterred them from their 40-year pursuit of people's war.

At the core of armed struggle was of course MK, directed against a powerful and unscrupulous enemy. The Soviet military command certainly did not underestimate the enemy: the ANC faced 'a huge well-adjusted [war] machine, able through its strategy, tactics and technical capacities to counter practically the whole African continent.' <sup>139</sup> The ANC, by contrast, was from the outset of armed struggle consistently inclined to underestimate its enemy, and MK's performance was in consequence unimpressive. Between 1976 and 1982, its attacks numbered less than 200. Command structures were external, and there were never more than a few hundred MK soldiers deployed inside the country. For Lodge, this was essentially symbolic warfare (though simultaneously hard reality for the foot soldiers in the Angolan camps) designed to promote the ANC's popular status. Through the 1980s, South African police 'continued to anticipate with precision' the arrival of infiltrators from across the border, especially from Swaziland; the average survival time of a soldier in the bush was at most six months. 140 MK operations were concentrated in the Witwatersrand and the Durban area, the closest to external supply lines, while the Eastern Cape remained 'by far the best organized UDF region.' 141

Barrell provides an assessment for the period until the eve of Vula. Some 4,000 youths had gone into exile within 18 months of June 1976, and 'most' had joined MK. 142 By the end of 1987, MK had trained more than 12,000 soldiers: some 6,000 were rotting psychologically in Angolan camps, while hundreds or more had supposedly been deployed internally. Police figures claimed 694 of these were captured or killed. But in late 1987, 'there was no evidence to suggest' that large numbers of MK cadres were *active* inside the country: 'perhaps as many as 30 percent had, in effect, abandoned their missions', some, for instance, joining the private criminality of Madikizela-Mandela. MK's weaknesses were derivative of 'a lack of strategic agreement and clarity within the ANC.' 143 It became crucial in the mid-1980s when

strategy oscillated between secret elitist talks with Pretoria and an accelerating pursuit of people's war, while Mbokodo's assaults undermined MK. Then the global and regional environments changed fundamentally. The Soviet Union and its East European allies had been the ANC's most reliable backers since the early 1960s, financially, and in military equipment, training and logistics, <sup>144</sup> but the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 represented the final end of all that. <sup>145</sup> President F.W. De Klerk correctly saw it as terminating the ANC's armed struggle, and moved towards negotiations in less than three months. <sup>146</sup> Slovo, Maharaj and Hani took much longer to react. <sup>147</sup>

Marais noted widespread disgruntlement at rank and file level at the Front's demise in March 1991, <sup>148</sup> but Seekings claims that it bequeathed to the ANC a robust culture of debate and self-criticism. Few assertions could be further from the truth as regards the political culture of the ANC. Stern non-accountability prevailed. For Jacob Zuma, rising rapidly in December 1996, nothing in the country, including specifically the constitution, was "more important" than the ANC and its leadership; "once you begin to feel that you are above the ANC you are in trouble." And the ANC had always maintained, he added, that certain big issues could only be resolved in talks involving national leaders. <sup>149</sup> Secrecy, non-accountability, predominance and elitism were the values actually upheld by the party.

Most of those norms were uppermost in the transfer of power in 1994. From the beginning of formal negotiations, says Waldmeir, the ANC and the National Party (NP) ensured that 'the cards were stacked against' the smaller parties and groups. Under the working device of "sufficient consensus", the two largest parties had agreed, in Ramaphosa's terms, "if we and the [NP] agree, everyone else can get stuffed." The preceding talks process had tended to confer recognition on the ANC elite in prison and exile, and to deny it in consequence to the popular internal forces represented by the UDF and COSATU. According to Naidoo, there was 'anxiety' in the latter that the ANC 'would move quickly to sideline the internal movement', and their Central Executive Committee had discussed the possibility of being represented independently in settlement negotiations. Two seats at CODESA were supposedly offered to them by the ANC, but he and others in the Federation felt this was insufficient; this 'was a mistake', he says, which reduced CO-SATU to 'being a bystander in the negotiations.'

Although the Founding Elections saw a turnout of about 85 percent of eligible voters, the outcome was highly elitist and contrived. Around 3–5 May 1994, as the counting process faced collapse, the leaders of the ANC, NP and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) intervened to produce results acceptable to themselves; With the assistance of auditors and accountants, votes were 'awarded'—the word used by Judge Johann Kriegler, chair of the Independent Electoral Commission—among the three party chiefs. The re-

sults were mathematically perfect, and a Government of National Unity within a fairly orthodox liberal electoral system was realized, and a miraculous Great Man model of political change was firmly installed. <sup>152</sup>

Tolerance for corruption within its own ranks was another of the values actually upheld by the ANC, and few were more prominent here than Joe Modise. He was rewarded for his failures in MK by President Mandela, who gave him the defense ministry with Kasrils as his deputy. He spearheaded the start-up of the largest arms procurement program in the country's history, worth between R45 and R100 billion, thinks Feinstein, and in mid-1999 he moved smoothly—within three months—from the cabinet to the board room, taking the chair of two arms companies, Conlog and Labat Africa. This had not happened over night; Modise had long seen the defense portfolio in the first ANC government as a passport to great wealth. <sup>153</sup> From the beginnings of the transition he had quickly developed, notes Ensor, 'a rapprochement with the apartheid military establishment', and his 'vision' of South Africa's military capability offered the generals the modern equipment they desired in a policy that inter-linked foreign investment with economic development.

As early as 1996 he claimed that without a strong defense force, "no right thinking person would invest in South Africa." Job creation through investment would come to naught without a strong military arsenal. <sup>154</sup> His plans for what became the big procurement package, he publicly explained, were built on both his old MK role and his new portfolio. Over three decades in exile he had made contact, he explained, with influential people around the world: "Add to that my experience as minister of defense, when I traveled . . . marketing Armscor products, and you will agree that I have built enormous contacts."

Such ramifying contacts certainly represented sizable benefits to Modise. During 1998, one of the arms bidders, British Aerospace, donated R5 million to the MK Veterans Association, whose Life President was Modise, another allegedly bought him millions of shares in Conlog, and he reportedly also received 'between R10 million and R35 million in cash from a variety of bidders.' This is almost certainly only a small part of the web of corruption surrounding Modise. Judgments on Modise's now known record are scathing. In Feinstein's view he was 'almost universally perceived as incompetent and enveloped in allegations of corruption', while for Bernstein he was 'one of the most corrupt men' to have ever held high office in South Africa. <sup>155</sup> But not within the ANC government. At his death in late 2001, Joe Modise received the Order of the Star of South Africa—the highest civilian award—and he was extolled by President Mbeki: "A mighty tree has fallen", he declared. <sup>156</sup>

### A PREDOMINANT, MILITARIST, ETHNO-NATIONALIST PARTY

The unacceptability of all criticism was comprehensively and vehemently expressed by party president Mandela in his report to the ANC's 50th national conference in Mafikeng in December 1997. To highlight only relevant aspects of his five-hour long address, he referred to sections of the nongovernmental (NGO) sector which claimed that their distinguishing feature was to be 'a critical watchog over our movement, both inside and outside of government.' While pretending to represent an independent and popular view, these NGOs actually worked to "corrode the influence of the [ANCled] movement." Some of the argument for this watchdog role, he said, "was advanced within the ranks of the broad democratic movement at the time when we all arrived at the decision . . . that it was necessary to close down the UDF." The situation then was that certain elements which were assumed to be part of our movement, had "set themselves up as critics of the same movement, precisely at the moment when we would have to confront the challenge of the fundamental transformation of our country . . . and the determined opposition of the forces of reaction."

The dissolution of the UDF also came about because of efforts at the time to "set up an NGO movement separate from and critical of the ANC." But the past three years in government have taught us that there are big differences among NGOs. Similarly, "it has become perfectly clear that the bulk of the mass media in our country has set itself up as a force opposed to the ANC . . . to campaign against both real change and the real agents of change, as represented by our movement, led by the ANC."

The role of the opposition parties was entirely negative and reactionary, "in their effort[s] to challenge and undermine our role as the political force chosen by the people to lead our country". Experience confirmed that the National Party "has not abandoned its strategic objective of the total destruction of our organization and movement." The then Democratic Party (DP) had tried to present itself as the most effective parliamentary opposition, but it remained an "implacable enemy" of the ANC, capable only of "vilification of the ANC." The most recent grouping to join "the miserable platoon of [our] opponents", the United Democratic Movement led by Bantu Holomisa, had the same objective of the NP—the "destruction of the ANC".

Opposition to the ANC was thus weak and pitiful, and simultaneously implacably destructive. Those whom the ANC could not co-opt would be forced into silence. Almost any political party, civic group or institution which opposed or acted independently of the ANC was, by that fact alone, racist, committed to preserving the legacies of apartheid and against social transformation. The leadership gathered at Mafikeng, he said, in whose hands "rests much of the future of our country for many years", must understand that the country remains essentially structured in opposition to transfor-

mation. Accomplishment of our task "requires that we should all be made in the metal of revolutionaries." Experience also showed that transformation demands "the better deployment of especially our most experienced cadres" [sic]. 157

'Cadre deployment' was the method adopted at Mafikeng to deepen and extend the ANC's predominance. Every member of the ruling party was committed to defending and implementing the will of the party leadership, wherever he or she was deployed, even if it meant, as Zuma noted, acting outside the constitution and the law. Transformation necessarily involved extending the power of the national liberation movement over all levers of power: the military, police, bureaucracy, intelligence services, judiciary, parastatals, the media, and agencies like the public broadcaster and the central bank. As Zuma also indicated, the individual party member's thoughts and opinions were irrelevant; they are simply loyal cadres. Within a year of Mafikeng, the ANC adopted a 'cadre policy and deployment strategy', and established national, provincial and local deployment committees to ensure that all cadres remained 'informed by and accountable to' the party leadership. 158 The idea of a free thinking critical cadre under these circumstances is as likely as it was for the cadres of the MK through the 1980s.

COSATU survived the ANC's closing down of the democratic movement, densely embedded in the capitalist economy and possessed of strong and tested organization. After 1990, trade unions, according to Lodge, 'played a very important role in rebuilding the ANC's branch level organization, and in demonstrating disciplined popular support for the positions ANC negotiators adopted' in negotiations with the De Klerk government. They emerged around the mid-1990s as a 'formidably strong organizations', having 'imprint[ed] their own programmatic concerns on the political settlement, strengthening its democratic content.' 159

Such upbeat assessments may be partly true, but they remain only part of the relevant equation. COSATU and the unions had placed trust in the capacities of the people in their workplaces and communities, and they had implanted the principles of accountability and mandates and recognized the reliance of their own leadership on periodic reelection by the rank and file. But, despite their organizational and democratic strengths, they had been no more successful than the UDF in criticizing the increasingly predominant ANC elite. Opportunities had existed in the months preceding Mandela's release when the trade unions might have moderated the ANC's anti-democratic perspectives from a position of strength. The authoritarianism and elitism lurking in Mandela's thinking was becoming evident. <sup>160</sup> But by late 1994, with the Great Man principle emplaced, people overly venerated the returned leaders, as Bantu Holomisa observed, and the unions remained silent.

Their moderation won the unions scant support from the ANC. Mandela's attitude at Mafikeng seemed burdened with resentment and hostility reminiscent of what was directed against the UDF. In various ways over the past three years, COSATU had been "doing more than represent the mere trade union interests of its members." Some among their leadership had asserted a role "separate and apart from and in some instances, in contradiction with the . . . leadership of our broad democratic movement." Analyses showed, he said, that union leaders had sought "sometimes strident conflict and contest" between themselves and the leadership of the democratic movement. Mandela's thinking was rooted in two significant presumptions: the trade unions "are in a relatively privileged position" as the employed and organized workers in our country, while the preponderant ANC, he claimed, "represents [both] the people as a whole, and the African working masses in particular." <sup>161</sup>

Towards the end of the 1990s, with the myth of the armed struggle successfully inter-linked with the ANC's preeminence, the idea was authoritatively asserted that rule by the heroes of the struggle was itself essentially democratic.

### **NOTES**

- 1. It had built six nuclear fission devices and was making a seventh when it relinquished its nuclear capability in early 1993. F.W. de Klerk, *The Last Trek—A New Beginning*, London, Pan Books, 2000, pp. 66 and 273.
- 2. Good, 'Accountable to Themselves: Predominance in Southern Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 35, 4, 1997, pp. 547–48, and Tom Lodge, 'South Africa: Democracy and Development in a Post-Apartheid Society', in Adrian Leftwich (ed.), *Democracy and Development: Theory and Practice*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 196.
- 3. Jonathan Hyslop, 'School Student Movements and State Education Policy: 1972–87', in William Cobbett and Robin Cohen (eds.), *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, Sheffield and London, Africa World Press and James Currey, 1988, pp. 184–85 and 191.
- 4. Jeremy Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa,* 1983–1991, Cape Town and Oxford, David Philip and James Currey, 2000, p. 11.
- 5. Steven Mufson, Fighting Years: Black Resistance and the Struggle for a New South Africa, Boston, Beacon Press, 1990, p. 43.
- 6. Seekings, op. cit., p. 12 and Nkosinathi Gwala, 'State Control, Student Politics and the Crisis in Black Universities', in Cobbett and Cohen, op. cit., p. 175.
- 7. Gwala, op. cit., p. 176 and C.R.D. Halisi, 'Biko and Black Consciousness Philosophy: An Interpretation', in N. Barney Pityana, Mamphela Ramphele, Malusi Mpumlwana and Lindy Wilson, *Bounds of Possibility: The Legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness*, Cape Town and London, David Philip and Zed Books, pp. 101 and 108–9, his emphasis.
  - 8. Ramphele, A Life, Cape Town and Johannesburg, David Philip, 1996, pp. 57, 65 and 72.
  - 9. Seekings, op .cit., p. 12.
- 10. Christopher Hill (ed.), Winstanley: The Law of Freedom and Other Writings, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 40.
- 11. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, for instance, was vice-president of SASO when he recruited her to the ANC with instructions to enlist others in the Movement and influence their debates. Adrian Hadland and Jovial Rantao, *The Life and Times of Thabo Mbeki*, Rivonia, Zebra Press, 1999, p. 39.

- 12. Mark Swilling, 'The United Democratic Front and Township Revolt', in Cobbett and Cohen, op. cit., pp. 90–91, and Allan Boesak, *Running with Horses: Reflections of an Accidental Politician*, Cape Town, Joho Publishers, 2009, pp. 115 and 157.
- 13. Hadland and Rantao, op. cit., p. 49, and Vladimir Shubin, *ANC; A View From Moscow*, Bellville, Mayibuye Books, 1999, p. 250.
- 14. Allister Sparks, *Beyond the Miracle*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball, 2003, p. 178. In another false construction, the UDF was merely 'the ANC's predecessor and, in part, its internal surrogate in the 1980s.' R.W. Johnson, *South Africa's Brave New World: The Beloved Country since the End of Apartheid*, London, Penguin Books, 2009, p. 19.
- 15. Ineke van Kessel, "Beyond Our Wildest Dreams": The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa, Charlottesville and London, University Press of Virginia, 2000, p. 24.
- 16. And which he also exploited. Through the 1990s, Boesak siphoned off funds from Danchurch, Paul Simon, the Swedish Development Agency and other donors, intended for FPJ, to establish a range of private businesses. He was jailed but received a presidential pardon in 2005. R.W. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 19 and 62–63.
  - 17. Boesak, op. cit., pp. 115 and 157-64.
- 18. Swilling, op. cit., p. 96. This balanced assessment should be contrasted with Seekings contrary insistence: 'there were very few UDF leaders with any sustained experience on the shop floor. Workers made it into leadership positions in the trade unions, but not in the UDF,' op. cit., p. 311. In another view, 'although the UDF was largely a movement of the poor, a disproportionate share of the original national leadership came from a radicalised middle-class intelligentsia'. Tom Lodge and Bill Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, London, Hurst and Company, 1992, p. 55. Much depends of course on whether class is defined by family origins or current position, and there is the bias of the observer, which seems present in some of Seekings' judgements.
  - 19. Swilling, op. cit., pp. 101-3 and Boesak, op. cit., Preface.
  - 20. Mufson, op. cit., pp. 121–25 and Lodge and Nasson, op. cit., p. 79.
- 21. Lodge and Nasson, op. cit., p. 75 and Mufson, op. cit., p. 2. He and three other CRADO-RA leaders were abducted, killed and their mutilated bodies left by the roadside.
  - 22. Mufson, op. cit., p. 2.
  - 23. Swilling, op. cit., pp. 106-7.
- 24. The term people power first entered international discourse in the Philippines c. early 1986 in the rising mass opposition to the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. Amado Mendoza Jr, "People Power" in the Phillipines, 1983–86', chapter in Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash (eds.), Civil Resistance and Power Politics, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 179.
- 25. Swilling, op. cit., pp. 104–05 and Seekings, 'The Development of Strategic Thought in South Africa's Civic Movements, 1977–90' in Glenn Adller and Jonny Steinberg, *From Comrades to Citizens*, Basingstoke and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 2000, pp. 71–73, original emphasis.
  - 26. Lodge and Nasson, op. cit., pp. 131-32.
- 27. Murphy Morobe became acting publicity secretary of the UDF after the arrest of Lekota. He was detained in mid-1987 under emergency conditions, but regained freedom in late 1988. His paper, 'Towards a People's Democracy: The UDF View', was delivered on his behalf to the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa in May, and then published in part in the *Review of African Political Economy*, 40, in December 1987.
  - 28. Ibid., pp. 81–83
- 29. Ibid., pp. 84–85. Morobe's organisational democracy represented an implicit rebuttal to the influential strictures of Michels who had famously asserted that while 'organisation was the weapon of the weak in their struggle with the strong', simultaneously 'who says organisation says oligarchy'. Organisation inevitably gave birth to 'the dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandataries over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators.' He exposed his own highly elitist intentions when he also said that an important reason for oligarchical domination was 'the perennial incompetence of the masses'. Robert Michels, *Political Parties*, New York, Dover Publications, 1959, pp. 21–22 and 401, 407.

- 30. Her full statement, recorded on videotape, was, 'We have no guns—we have only stones, boxes of matches and petrol. Together, hand in hand, with our boxes of matches and our necklaces we shall liberate this country.' Emma Gilbey, *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1993, pp. 145–46. In 1996 the ANC declared that necklacing was 'never the policy of the ANC or UDF/MDM', and suggested that it had been initiated by the [apartheid] state for propaganda purposes. They also noted that young MK cadres vigorously defended the practice. ANC, 'Statement to the [TRC]', 19 August 1996, pp. 122–24.
  - 31. Boesak, op. cit., pp. 167-83 and Lodge and Nasson, op. cit., pp. 91 and 142
- 32. Hein Marais, South Africa: Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transition, London and Cape Town, Zed Books and UCT Press, 1998, pp. 58–59 and Lodge and Nasson, op. cit., p. 88.
  - 33. Seekings, The UDF, pp. 305-6.
- 34. Glenn Adler and Eddie Webster, 'Introduction', in Adler and Webster, *Democratisation in South Africa*, 1985–1997, Basingstoke and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 2000, pp. 1–3, Steven Friedman, *Building Tomorrow Today: African Workers in Trade Unions*, 1970–1984, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1987, pp. 120–21, and Friedman and Mark Shaw, *Power in Partnership: Trade Unions, Forums and the Transition*, in Adler and Webster, op. cit., 190–92.
- 35. Quoted in Building Tomorrow Today, p. 499.
- 36. Ian Macun, 'Growth, Structure and Power in the South African Union Movement' in Adler and Webster, op. cit., p. 60.
- 37. He was an experienced unionist, and associated with the UDF, but daunted initially that 'a person of Indian ancestry [should be] leading an almost exclusively African organisation.' But he found 'a total embrace of my commitment' and that 'non-racialism was the social fibre woven into the fibre of the movement.' Jay Naidoo, *Fighting for Justice: A Lifetime of Political and Social Activism*, Johannesburg, Picador Africa, 2010, p. 100.
- 38. Ramaphosa was born in Johannesburg in 1952; his legal studies at the University of the North were cut short by eleven months in solitary confinement. He gained knowledge of project, financial and strategic management through the Urban Foundation, and he built a wide range of contacts in business and politics. At their first meeting, Motlatsi 'could see he was even younger than me—although he spoke very well. He seemed nothing special.' Anthony Butler, *Cyril Ramaphosa*, Johannesburg and Oxford, Jacana and James Currey, 2007, pp. 105–6 and 141.
  - 39. Mufson, op. cit., pp. 139-45 and Butler, op. cit., pp. 143-46.
  - 40. Quoted in Mufson, op. cit, p. 148, comment from Butler, op. cit., 147–48.
  - 41. Mufson, op. cit., pp. 148-49.
- 42. At the centre of the NUM negotiating team, says Butler, was the special double-act between Ramaphosa and Motlatsi, the former controlling the relations with the mining companies and the latter the domestic situation, gauging the likely reactions of the membership to the concessions the former was making or extracting, and agitating or soothing by turn the NUM's representatives. Op. cit., pp. 153–84.
  - 43. Mufson, op. cit., pp. 149–54. Godsell's emphasis.
- 44. Ibid., p. 155. A point made in memorable terms by Friedman, *Building Tomorrow Today*.
  - 45. Membership figures are rounded up. Webster and Adler, op. cit., p. 60,
- 46. Joe Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, with an introduction by Helena Dolny, Randburg and London, Ravan Press and Hodder and Stoughton, p. 148.
- 47. Operation Mayibue a few years earlier had made extremely light of both Pretoria's power and the tasks in front of the guerrilla fighters. Slovo and Govan Mbeki had planned for a guerrilla force of 7,000 men in four operational areas in South Africa, armed in part with 210,000 hand grenades and 48,000 anti-personnel mines. Further elaborations called for the creation of a 40-foot-high furnace, a mid-sized factory, and a workforce of 200 to manufacture the arsenal. Slovo and Mbeki dismissed possible objections to their plans: 'The time for small thinking is over', and 'history leaves us no choice.' Glenn Frankel, *Rivonia's Children*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999, pp. 100–101. and Joe Slovo, op. cit., p. 146. He notes that

the national underground leadership present at Rivonia believed that Mayibue's objectives were 'obtainable'. Ibid.

- 48. Stephen Ellis, 'The Genesis of the ANC's Armed Struggle in South Africa 1948–1961', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37, 4, December 2011, pp. 668–72 and 675.
  - 49. Slovo. op. cit., p. 148.
  - 50. Ibid., p. 153.
- 51. Howard Barrell, MK: The ANC's Armed Struggle, London, Penguin Books, 1990, ch. 1 and pp. 18–22.
- 52. It was later officially claimed that senior ANC leaders 'trained and lived in the camps with the recruits', but no details or evidence were provided in support of this assertion. ANC, 'Statement to the [TRC]', 19 August 1996, p. 87.
- 53. Janet Smith and Beauregard Tromp, *Hani: A Life Too Short*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball, 2009, pp. 93–105 and 110–25 and Barrell, op. cit., pp. 23 and 26.
- 54. The latter was flown in from the Soviet Union to Angola. Irina Filatova, 'The ANC and the Soviets', *Politics Web*, Johannesburg, 10 August 2011.
- 55. Barrell, op. cit., pp. 31–33. The higher estimate is Hyslop, op. cit., p. 187 and the lower Barrell.
- 56. Linda Ensor, 'Controversial Leader Was at Forefront of Liberation Struggle', *Business Day*, 28 November 2011. Enlarged upon below.
- 57. Drew Forrest, 'A Man With an Ambiguous Past', Mail and Guardian, 6 December 2001.
  - 58. TRC Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, p. 325.
- 59. Officially described as 'the most senior leader in charge of all camps in Angola', appointed head of NAT in 1981. ANC, 'Further Submissions and Responses by the ANC to Questions Raised by the [TRC]', 12 May 1997, p. 13.
- 60. Paul Trewhela, *Inside Quatro*, Johannesburg, Jacana Media, 2009, pp. 8–11. The book is largely a compilation of essays first published in 1990.
- 61. Stephen Ellis, *External Mission: The ANC in Exile 1960–1990*. London, Hurst and Company, 2012, pp. 157–58. He provides a map of ANC camps in Angola, showing four, Quatro, camp 13, Viana and Pango, around Luanda, and one, Caculama, outside Lobito in the south, frontispiece.
  - 62. Ibid, pp. 188–89.
  - 63. Trewhela. op. cit., pp. 20-29.
  - 64. Ellis, op. cit., pp. 189–93.
  - 65. Trewhela, op. cit., pp. 20-29.
- 66. Elsewhere the ANC said that it set up a 'fully-fledged Security Department in 1969' tasked with the physical protection of ANC resources and the screening of new recruits. ANC, 'Statement to the [TRC]', 19 August 1996, p. 105.
  - 67. Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, pp. 347-48
- 68. *Final Report*, vol. 2, ch. 4, pp. 349–50. The Chair of the Skweyiya Commission was Advocate Thembile Louis Skweyiya, SC, assisted by Ms B. Mabandla and Advocate G.J. Marcus. Both the Chair and Ms Mabandla were ANC members. 'Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into Complaints by Former [ANC] Prisoners and Detainees', 1992, pp. 1, 3 and 19.
- 69. Proceedings before Skweyiya were not open to the public or press, and they were dependent on the willingness of witnesses to come forward—in their own words, this was 'their greatest shortcoming', since many ex-prisoners remained fearful of their safety. 'Report', p. 2.
  - 70. Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, pp. 351–52.
  - 71. Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, p. 352.
  - 72. Ibid., pp. 354–55.
- 73. According to the ANC, Mahamba was camp commander at Pango where, in 1981, he beat a cadre, Ndunga, to death; the commander had allegedly been an agent of Pretoria since 1976. 'Statement to the [TRC]', 19 August 1996, p. 108.
  - 74. 'Statement' 19 August 1996, pp. 137-64.
  - 75. Ibid., p. 356.
  - 76. Ibid., p. 357.
  - 77. Ibid., p. 360.

- 78. 'Statement', 19 August 1996, pp. 108-11.
- 79. Skweyiya presented three detailed examples of the use of torture to extract confessions, and they noted what they called 'staggering brutality' at Quatro, where 'violence for the sake of violence' prevailed. *Report*, pp. 11 and 14.
  - 80. Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, pp. 361-66.
- 81. The Stuart Commission comprised Hermanus Loos ("James Stuart"), Aziz Pahad, Sizakele Sigxashe and Mtu Jwili, and the latter two became heads of directorates in a restructured NAT. It reported to the NEC in March 1984.
  - 82. Ellis, op. cit., p. 218.
  - 83. ANC, 'Further Submission and Responses', pp. 12-14, 16 and 17, and 19-21.
  - 84. Good, The Liberal Model and Africa, pp. 128-29 and Final Report, vol. 6, ch. 3, p. 643.
- 85. The findings in the three reports, the TRC, Motsuenyane and Skweyiya are cumulative and, particularly in the latter case, the detail is sometimes telling. The denial of food at Quatro was not only systemic but 'unconscionable and pernicious'. While the diet of detainees was chiefly 'diluted tomato puree and rice', the camp had adequate quantities of tropical fruit which grew freely in the vicinity, out of bounds to detainees. Additionally, the camp commanders had a plentiful supply of food, which included specially supplied tinned products; 'Any food left over after the commanders had their fill was fed to the pigs.' *Report*, p. 10.
- 86. Final Report, vol. 6, ch. 3, pp. 658-61. The final report ultimately comprised seven volumes.
  - 87. Final Report, vol. 2, ch. 4, p. 340.
- 88. Allegations of biases and organisational weaknesses in the TRC are strong. There was, for example, a large pro-ANC majority among the 17 Commisioners while there were none who were identified either with Inkatha or the then Democratic Party. The TRC's vital research unit was neither well qualified nor experienced. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 273–75.
  - 89. Report, p. 19.
- 90. Todd Cleveland, 'We Still Want the Truth', paper first presented to the African Studies Association, Washington, DC, December 2002, Trewhela, op. cit., frontispiece.
  - 91. Report, p. 9.
- 92. Gilbey, op. cit., pp. 68, 133–34 and photographs; TRC *Final Report*, vol. 2 ch. 6, p. 555, and Trewhela, op. cit., pp. 46–47. Chris Hani's contribution to the promotion of Madikizela-Mandela's pseudo-revolutionary image in 1990 is noted below under Operation Vula.
- 93. Intimidation reigned inside and outside her residence. According to Gift Ntombeni, a follower, gang members manned her gates at all time, recording complaints, and hunting down and assaulting culprits. Members 'would not even dare' defy Madikizela-Mandela: 'if you did, you were branded an informer.' Her house was known as 'Parliament', people were assaulted in the 'Fish Oil Room', and a shack where abducted boys were kept was called 'Lusaka'. Bodies were often left lying near the jacuzzi, and the bedroom of her daughter, Zinzi Mandela-Hlongwane, was used for pleasure and for stashing guns. Both Zinzi and her mother, he said, were 'capable of anything'. She closely associated with the police, shoot-outs sometimes flagrantly occurred, yet Madikizela-Mandela was never questioned or charged. Good, *The Liberal Model*, p.117.
- 94. Stompie was aged around 13, and two years earlier had been the youngest detainee in the country. He was self-taught, could recite the Freedom Charter in its entirety, and liked to carry a briefcase in emulation of his hero, Allan Boesak. Tom Lodge and Bill Nasson, op. cit., p. 102.
- 95. Good, *The Liberal Model*, pp. 98–99. Morobe's statement was dubbed 'unprecedented public criticism' by the TRC, *Final Report*, vol. 2, ch. 6, p. 556.
- 96. Final Report, vol. 2 ch. 6, pp. 556–70. The Commision repeatedly expected or hoped that Madikizela-Mandela would act responsibly, as they recorded their findings of her near constant lies, evasions and criminality. This tendency reached a crescendo in Bishop Tutu's effusions at the end of the hearings, noted below.
  - 97. Good, The Liberal Model, pp. 121-22 and Final Report, vol. 2 ch. 6, pp. 571-72.
  - 98. Final Report, vol. 2 ch. 6, p. 576.
  - 99. The Liberal Model, pp. 120–21.
- 100. Ibid., pp. 119-20.

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- 101. While the Commission as noted attributed 12 killings to her and the MUFC, Trewhela's estimate is 16 murders, op. cit., p. 49. David Beresford offered another listing of some 14 actual and attempted murders in the *Mail* and *Guardian*, 21 November 1997 (reproduced in *The Liberal Model*, p. 122).
- 102. Tutu's emphasis. According to the TRC's deputy chair, Alex Boraine, Madikizela-Mandela had challenged the integrity of the Commission, and Bishop Tutu went too far in his conciliation of her: 'His hugging of [her] during the hearing, and his declaration of love and admiration, left the Commission wide open to the charge of bias.' Cited in the *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 1 October 2000, and *The Liberal Model*, p. 228.
- 103. Final Report, vol. 2 ch. 6, pp. 580-81.
- 104. Report, p. 19.
- 105. Ronnie Kasrils, *Armed and Dangerous: From Undercover Struggle to Freedom*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2004, p. 125, and Ellis, op. cit., p. 236. Ellis adds that Hani saw Zulu as a possible future chief of staff of MK.
- 106. He had become a member of the NEC in 1977. Jeremy Gordin, *Zuma: A Biography*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2008, pp. 33 and 91.
- 107. David Beresford, *Truth Is a Strange Fruit*, Auckland Park, Jacana, 2010, pp. 266–67, and Padraig O'Malley, *Shades of Difference: Mac Maharaj and the Struggle for South Africa*, Viking, New York, 2007, p. 268; for example, senior members of the SACP suspected that Cyril Ramaphosa worked for the CIA, and Maharaj's wife, Zarina, was suspect because she worked for the British High Commission and the United Nations. Pallo Jordan was a member of the NEC, regarded in the party as an intellectual and a critic of the authoritarianism of Mbokodo. He was detained in 1983. According to Zarina Maharaj, he 'was locked up for six weeks in Lusaka in a corrugated iron hut and nearly died of dehydration.' He has refused to discuss his detention and treatment. O' Malley, op. cit., p. 220, and the Skweyiya Report, p. 18.
- 108. ANC, 'Further Submissions and Responses', pp. 18-19.
- 109. This claim was also made a year earlier, when the ANC said that Zulu was never imprisoned and spent most of his time in party residences separate from the rest of the community. 'Statement', 19 August 1996, p. 114.
- 110. *Final Report*, vol. 2 ch. 4, pp. 358–59. Kasrils' conclusion, however, is clear and firm: 'I do not believe he was a police agent.' Op. cit., p. 261.
- 111. Hani's biographers' approach to Thami Zulu's death is superficial and unbalanced, They refer to the 'writing of disgraced former ANC cadres', without consideration of these writings or the nature and causes of their supposed disgrace. They conclude with reference, again unexamined, to 'anti-ANC former cadres [who] have insisted on casting aspersions on Hani.' But they agree that it was 'Hani, who, together with Joe Modise, saw Zulu in the hours before his death.' Op. cit., p. 199.
- 112. Ellis, op. cit., P. 285.
- 113. Further, 'he still will not talk in detail about the operational events of those days.' They are "the property" of the ANC, he characteristically proclaims. Gordin, op. cit., p. 25.
- 114. The current quasi-legal concept of 'wilful blindness' perhaps supplements that of the presumption of guilt. First used in the Enron trials in the United States, it accepts that if it can be demonstrated that key information was available, and that it was part of an executive's job to know of such information, then that person did in fact know.
- 115. Ellis, op. cit., p. 247.
- 116. Trewhela, op. cit., pp. 103–6 and Beresford, op. cit., 185–87, 266–68, and 295–96.
- 117. Personal communication, Trewhela, 14 May 2013.
- 118. Cited in Trewhela, op. cit., p. 74.
- 119. O'Malley, op. cit., pp. 301-2. Where references in this section are to this book, only page numbers are noted in the text.
- 120. Citations based on Conference documentation by Tom Lodge, 'The Interplay of Non-Violent and Violent Action in the Movement Against Apartheid in South Africa, 1983–94', chapter in Roberts and Ash, op. cit, p. 223.
- 121. Naidoo offers some corroboration that these were indeed Maharaj's aims and methods. He was invited to a surprise meeting with the Vula leader in Overport, Durban, at some unstated time probably in 1988, to learn that Maharaj was on a secret mission 'of consolidating

the underground.' Naidoo found him 'highly secretive and manipulative', and Vula's trademark was 'conspiracy and intrigue.' Maharaj 'truly believed that he was the "kingmaker'' and 'his sense of political self-importance ignored much of the home-grown strategic capability within COSATU.' Naidoo stressed, he says, that while he was prepared to work as before with the ANC, "I would never take orders from him or anyone else" outside the [trade union] constituency he represented." Naidoo, op. cit., pp. 151–52.

- 122. Gordin, op. cit., p. 91.
- 123. Ellis, op. cit., p. 254.
- 124. 'The Burden of Exile', *The Witness*, Pietermaritzburg, 15 October 2012.
- 125. Smith and Tromp, op. cit., pp. 165-66 and 213.
- 126. Cuban forces played 'a crucial role' in South Africa's defeat. Seumas Milne, *The Revenge of History*, London, Verso, 2012, p. 202.
- 127. Ellis, op. cit., p. 232.
- 128. Both moves apparently seen by Maharaj as buttressing the commitment to sustained people's war in South Africa. O'Malley, op. cit., pp. 314–15.
- 129. Ellis, op. cit., p. 233.
- 130. Ibid., pp. 201-05 and 214-15.
- 131. Butler, op. cit., p. 296.
- 132. Beresford, op. cit., p. 278 and Kasrils, op. cit., pp. 263–73. Raymond Suttner, another planner and participant, subsequently admitted that 'we miscalculated', and some of our marchers 'may have provoked the shooting.' After Bisho, Ramaphosa said, 'we felt we did not need to take risks that could lead to the loss of life'. Butler, op. cit., p. 297.
- 133. Ellis, op. cit., p. 264.
- 134. O'Malley, op. cit., pp. 323–25 and 333. Swept up in the outdated, rigid thinking which inspired Vula, were some 80 Dutch anti-apartheid supporters who were specialists in key disciplines like computing and communications, and based inside South Africa and Front Line states. They believed they were 'supporting the heroic South African freedom fighters', and were kept uninformed by the ANC leadership that Vula aimed at the subversion of domestic democratisation. Conny Braam, *Operation Vula*, Johannesburg, Jacana, 2004, Postscript.
- 135. Seekings himself says that the 'prominence' of certain Coloured and Indian activists in the Front, 'easily fuelled racist allegations about cabals.' Op. cit., pp. 218–20, 227 and 312.
- 136. He stresses in fact 'widespread hostility', but nowhere explains the actual cause and content of the ANC's hostility. Ibid., pp. 276–83 and 284.
- 137. 'Statement'. 19 August 1996, pp. 10 and 84.
- 138. Boesak, op. cit., pp. 184-86.
- 139. Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot 'Cold War': The USSR in Southern Africa*, London and Scottsville, Pluto and the University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2008, p. 248. He was quoting the redoubtable 'Comrade Ivan'.
- 140. Hani testified to Skweyiya that 'we had sent people into the country and 60 percent were either arrested or killed.' Paranoia and hysteria was generated in MK and, 'people like Thami Zulu were victims of that situation.' Report, p. 16.
- 141. Lodge, 'The Interplay of Violent and Non-Violent Action', op. cit., pp. 215, 224 and 229.
- 142. Gordin, op. cit., p. 31.
- 143. Barrell, op. cit., p. 64. His emphasis on active.
- 144. Ibid., p. 65. Shubin offers a partial audit of the training and equipment provided to the ANC, 1963–90, in *The Hot 'Cold War'*, p. 249.
- 145. The collapse of the GDR was not a sudden event. The fall of the wall was preceded by a march of some 70,000 people around the Leipzig Ring on 9 October, and that was the third major demonstration since 25 September. These large protests in key public places in the cities showed the people that the repressive regime 'possessed neither efficacy nor legitimacy.' Charles S. Maier, 'Civil Resistance and Civil Society: Lessons from the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic in 1989', chapter in Roberts and Ash, op. cit., pp. 261 and 274. The Stasi, which elements in Mbokodo admired, represented a highly developed surveillance state, considered in chapter 5. Stasi's operating principle, not unlike Mbokobo's, was 'dictator-logic': 'once an investigation was started into someone that meant there was suspicion of enemy

- activity': as their operatives said, "We investigate you, therefore you are an enemy." Anna Funder, *Stasiland*, London, Granta Books, 2004, pp. 57 and 199.
- 146. Lodge, 'The Interplay'. p. 230.
- 147. There were many antecedents to change in the communist world, in the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 within the Soviet hierarchy, his commitment soon after to non-intervention in central European states, and the withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Afghanistan in February 1989.
- 148. Marais, op. cit., p. 73.
- 149. Cited in Good, 'Accountable to Themselves: Predominance in Southern Africs', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 35,4, 1997, pp. 563 and 569.
- 150. Patti Waldmeir, Anatomy of a Miracle: The End of Apartheid and the Birth of the New South Africa, Harmondsworth, Viking, 1997, p. 241, and Good, The Liberal Model, pp. 102–03
- 151. Naidoo, op. cit., pp. 214-15.
- 152. The ANC got 62.7 percent of the votes; the NP 20.4 percent and thus six seats in cabinet and a deputy presidency; and the IFP 10.5 percent and three cabinet seats. The Democratic Party, excluded from the award process, contended that some 1.46 million votes were fraudulent.
- 153. Johnson, op. cit., p. 32.
- 154. Ensor, op. cit.; Forrest, op. cit.; and Norman Chandler, 'Defence Revamp "to Protect Foreign Investment", *The Star*, 16 August 1996.
- 155. Good, *The Liberal Model*, p. 143; Andrew Feinstein, *After the Party: A Personal and Political Journey Inside the ANC*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2007, pp. 78, 155 and 208; and Beresford, op. cit., p. 266. See also Ferial Haffajee, 'Cadres Cash In: "MK Inc" Companies Secure R4 bn in Arms Subcontracts Alone', *Financial Mail*, 4 May 2001.
- 156. Cited in Feinstein, op. cit., p. 236. Not surprisingly, given his career—as among other things, car thief, bank robber, drug dealer, and diversified arms trader—and the principle of universal distrust that he helped to instill in the ANC, Modise is accused today of being a double agent of Pretoria; on 'overwhelming' evidence, Johnson states. Op.cit., pp. 30–31 and 50
- 157. Extracts from '50th National Conference: Report by the President of the ANC, Nelson Mandela', pp. 17–35, 51 and 73, and Good, *The Liberal Model*, pp. 114–15.
- 158. Gavin Davis, 'Cadre Deployment Is Never Okay', Politicsweb, co.za, 24 November 2010.
- 159. Lodge, 'The Interplay", pp. 227 and 229
- 160. According to Meredith, it was recognised then that Mandela 'possessed a strong authoritarian streak and a preference for taking action on his own responsibility, for dealing directly with other leaders'. Martin Meredith, *Nelson Mandela: A Biography*, London, Penguin Books, 1997, pp. 413 and 446. He had of course amply demonstrated these tendencies throughout the talks process c. 1985–1990.
- 161. '50th National Conference', pp. 77-78.

### Chapter Four

## **Democracy in the Capitalist Heartlands**

### Alienation and Dysfunctionalities

Weaknesses are broad and extreme in the United States, but they are palpable too in the early 21st century in the land of the Diggers and Chartists, in the marginalization of the working classes, in deepening poverty, in the increasing concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a small plutocratic elite, and the withdrawal of an alienated majority of the people from formal political participation. These processes have escalated over some three decades, and appear to have rendered many millions of ordinary Americans and Britishers voiceless in an orthodox liberal sense. But the extent and consequences of the elites' accumulation along with their political domination, seem too extreme even for their own good, bringing systemic breakdown and social disruption which topple the liberal model from its long-held pedestal as exemplifier of democracy worldwide. It can no longer claim to exist as proven alternative to participatory aspirations in South Africa and elsewhere, and as successful contender with social democracy in western Europe. Liberalism and its elites are now more naked than a quarter-century ago when communism was collapsing all across Europe and liberalism's triumph seemed complete. The celebratory pinnacle was probably achieved in the early 1990s by Francis Fukuyama, for whom liberal democracy represented 'the final form of human government' worldwide. Americans loved his book The End of History, and 'for five minutes', says Hastings, it seemed possible that he could be right. 1

#### **BRITAIN'S DYSFUNCTIONALITY**

Margaret Thatcher came to power as Conservative Prime Minister in early 1979 as an instinctive revolutionary seeking both to restore social and political authority firmly in right-wing hands and to promote strongly a capitalist renaissance.<sup>2</sup> This entailed restructuring the economy in favor of finance and financiers, and against manufacturing and the organized working classes therein. Far reaching social change came quickly. The Housing Bill introduced in the same year sought to remove the state from the provision of housing, reducing the affordability of public accommodation and, in the process, attracting a supposed 'aspirational working class' away from the Labour Party. Aneurin Bevan, a leading figure in Attlee's reformist Labour government, had founded modern council (i.e., state owned) housing on the basis of mixed communities, where people from different social backgrounds might understand and support one another. By the early 1970s, more than two in five people lived that way. Thatcher's bill "la[id] the foundations for one of the most important social revolutions of this century", Michael Heseltine, a prominent minister, proudly declared. Under a 'right-to-buy' principle, council tenants were able to purchase their existing homes at knockdown prices. A tenant of 20 years standing, for instance, could have half the market price taken off, and mortgages of 100 percent were on offer. A new 'property-owning democracy' was to be created imbued with conservative values. Under her rule, the average age of a first-time house buyer fell to 25. Housing, class, and trade union membership in Britain were inter-linked. On the eve of Thatcher's accession, half of all workers in Britain were unionists. She aimed too at making people think of themselves not as members of viable communities but as competitive individuals, concerned with their own interests and ambitions. "There's no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there are families", she famously affirmed, claiming also that "class is a communist concept. It groups people as bundles and sets them against one another." In this and in other ways, in a multi-pronged attack on working-class communities and institutions, identities were intentionally destroyed, split socially between up-and-coming home owners and laggard, hopeless council tenants; by 1995, only some one-third of workers were unionists, and today only about one in ten Britishers live in council houses.3

Big problems soon arose. Before Thatcher the average rent of a council tenant was 6 pounds 20 pence a week, a decade later it was almost four times greater and spending on housing fell under her by 60 percent. The government discouraged councils from spending on public housing, pushing demand and prices higher. According to Jones, housing became 'increasingly unaffordable for huge swathes of the population', and the number of homeless people rose by 38 percent between 1984 and 1989. By 2011 almost

4,000 people were sleeping rough on London streets, and housing conditions in Britain were reportedly among the worst in Western Europe. <sup>5</sup> The proportion of the population who lived in owner-occupied houses was falling towards the levels of the 1980s, and 'the notion of Britain as a property-owning democracy [was] in tatters. <sup>6</sup>

Within three months of winning power, the Thatcher government tackled restructuring. Exchange controls were abolished, allowing financial companies to make big profits through currency speculation, and the City, London's financial hub, to thrive at the expense of sectors like manufacturing. In Jones' judgment, it was 'allowing the value of the pound to soar that did for industry', making its exports far more expensive than its foreign competitors. By 1983, the country had lost a third of its manufacturing capacity, devastating working-class communities. In 1979, over 7 million people had earned a living in manufacturing, but a generation later only 2.8 million did so. <sup>7</sup>

Taxation was also accorded a key role. In her first budget, top bracket taxes of 83 percent on earned income and 98 percent on unearned income, were cut to 60 percent, and company tax fell from 52 to 35 percent. As a main part of Thatcher's quite explicit class war, 8 the tax burden was shifted from the very rich to almost everybody else. In 1988, the top rate of tax was cut to 40 percent. Stephen Frears, a film director, felt that it was as if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had knocked on his door and said, "We'll give you a check for fifty grand." Taxes for the wealthiest decile went from just over half to about a third of their income. For other people, taxation, including sales tax, went from 31.1 percent of their income in 1979 to 37.7 percent in 1996. Their share of national wealth was nearly halved. About 5 million people had been in poverty in 1979, but by 1992 those impoverished totaled close to 14 million. 9

Dispensing with the equivocation that had plagued Edward Heath, her Conservative prime ministerial predecessor, Thatcher launched a direct assault, legal and extralegal, on organized workers. She aimed to crush the unions, especially those in heavy industry. A raft of new laws were promulgated that allowed employers to sack workers, reduced dismissal compensation, forbade workers to strike in support of others, opened union funds to possible seizure and made them liable for huge financial penalties during strikes. In a methodical assault, the government, said Gregor Gall, an academic analyst, 'inflicted a series of defeats on unions in set-piece battles'. The first to face Thatcher's wrath in 1980 were steel workers, who lost a 13week strike and thousands of jobs. Three years later, strikers on picket lines at the Stockport Messenger were charged by 3,000 riot police and, in scenes reminiscent of the nineteenth century, beaten up in neighboring fields. Their union, the National Graphical Association, had its assets seized by the state. As unemployment mounted, the unions were divided on how to meet this attack, and so was the Labour Party. 10

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) had been at the forefront of the Labour movement throughout the twentieth century, and the General Strike had begun in their support. Coal was at the base of Britain's industrialization, and was similarly important when the Attlee government initiated its nationalization program in 1947.

When 958 of the country's largest pits were taken into public ownership then, coal was the primary source for 90 percent of the country's energy, and it employed over 700,000 workers. While the NUM had demonstrated its importance in controlling power supplies on a number of occasions in the 1970s, a growing use of oil had led to a steady contraction of the number of pits over the decades; nonetheless there were still 170 collieries employing 196,000 miners in 1984. 11

Mining communities were known as vibrant social entities built around the pit which bound everyone together, according to Chris Kitchen of the NUM. "The code of honor which existed underground", noted in chapter 3 with respect to South African miners and their union, "was part of the fabric of the community as well." When the Thatcher government announced a pits closure program in March 1984, spontaneous strikes broke out in the Yorkshire coalfields and rapidly spread. But the miners were defeated one year later in March 1985.

The government had stockpiled coal and made other careful preparations. The Tory leadership, says Milne, was determined to avenge its humiliating defeats at the hands of the NUM in the early 1970s, and it actually provoked the strike in March.

The NUM leader, Arthur Scargill, was far less prepared and inclined sometimes to demagoguery. He became a hate figure in the national media and among Thatcher's supporters. Police power was utilized against strikers without restraint—Milne refers to the use of a militarized police force, and quotes Lord Lawson saying that taking on the miners was "just like rearming to face the threat of Hitler". 13 Adrian Gilfoyle, on strike in Nottinghamshire till the bitter end, recalled that the struggle at times felt like class war in the most literal sense. "You used to wake up around five o'clock in the morning, and there were these police from London and they were banging their shields." Some of the worst violence was seen and felt at the Battle of Orgreave in south Yorkshire on 18 June 1984. Some 6,000 miners attempted to blockade a coking plant, and they met thousands of police from 10 counties across the country. Suddenly, Gilfoyle reported, "the police just charged with horses . . . this copper was chasing us on a horse . . . and he hit this other lad straight across the back of head [sic] with a truncheon and split his head open."14 On the assessments of the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign, 20,000 people were injured or hospitalized; 200 served time in prison or custody; two miners. David Jones and Joe Green, were killed on picket lines; and three died 'digging for coal during the winter'. According to the

industrial editor of the *Daily Mirror*, Geoffrey Goodman, the miners' strike was unique in having nothing to do with pay and conditions; instead, the very future of work and of workers was "at the core of it." <sup>15</sup>

The strike was 'Britain's greatest social confrontation since the 1920s.' The full costs of the 'war against the miners', including closures and redundancies and welfare costs were well over 30 billion pounds at current prices. The broad long-term costs were greater and included the enfeeblement of the unions, deepening inequality, social atomization, and a collapse in confidence in the Labour movement in the construction of an alternative to 'Britain's harsh brand of neoliberalism'. <sup>16</sup> Some of those costs were present in the riots of August 2011 considered below.

The government's plans were to diversify and privatize energy sources. and by these means, and the impact of the year-long strike, to destroy the economic and political power of the NUM.<sup>17</sup> Between 1985 and 1990 the number of mines was cut to 73, and a rapid privatization program was initiated and completed a few years later. Workers and their communities experienced hardship, disruption and demoralization, systematically inflicted. The film Brassed Off offered a fictionalized account of the process based on occurrences in the real village of Grimethorpe in the Dearne Valley. Once the pit went, the village saw its population fall by more than a fifth in a decade, ill-health rose to twice the national average, house values dropped to some 80 percent of what they were elsewhere, and the incidence of vandalism, drugtaking and crime sharply increased. Within a 15-mile radius of the town of Barnsley, 70 pits operated in the 1960s, but none survived in 1994. David Douglas, for years an activist in the Yorkshire NUM, reported later that "the shock of [the] transformation, and the manner by which it was imposed, still resonates. Grown men . . . can now be moved to tears while reflecting on the last two decades and its impact on them, their families, and their communities."18

As restructuring took its toll, unemployment rose, and by the end of Thatcher's first year in office stood at 2.1 million up from 1.3 million a year earlier. By December 1981 the government's Gallup poll rating was down to 23 percent, and Margaret Thatcher was, says Marquand, the most unpopular prime minister since polling began. If class played a big role in her government's performance, luck and patriotism then became significant too. In mid-1981 four former Labour Party ministers broke with the party to establish a new Social Democratic Party (SDP), and soon entered an Alliance with the Liberal Party. Their stated aim was to 'break the mold of British politics'. Marquand sees the rise of the SDP as reflecting a growing popular mood of disenchantment with the existing political model based on the dominance of two parties supported by the workings of the First-Past-the-Post electoral system. After the parliamentary labour party elected Michael Foot, age 67, cautious and sometimes inept, as party leader in 1980, the cumulative effect

was to make the Conservatives more firmly based politically. As Marquand observes, however unpopular the Thatcher government might be, there was little doubt that in direct competition with Foot's Labour, they would win. <sup>19</sup>

When Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands on 2 April 1982, the Prime Minister wrapped herself in the Union Jack and acted with aggressive, nationalistic boldness. Her naval chiefs had assured her that it was possible to assemble a task force, but they could not be sure of victory in a war fought 8,000 miles away, in the South Atlantic winter, against an enemy with much shorter supply lines. She is said to have given unhesitating permission to a British submarine to sink an Argentine cruiser when the latter was outside the Exclusion Zone Britain had established. <sup>20</sup> On 15 June 1982 Britain's flag was raised again over Port Stanley. <sup>21</sup> The war had lasted only 74 days.

In the same month her poll rating rose to 48 percent. At general elections in June the following year, the Conservatives won 42 percent of the vote and gained a majority of 144 parliamentary seats. It was their best result since 1935. Labour got only 28 percent of the vote, and the Alliance 23 percent, the highest for a third party since 1923. But the two-party duopoly was hardly dented. <sup>22</sup> Thatcher had won power in 1979 with a smaller share of the vote than any winning party over four decades. While former 'One Nation' Tory leaders regularly gained around 50 percent of the vote, the most Thatcher ever got was less than 44 percent. When account is taken of those who never bothered to vote, Thatcher never won the support of more than a third of eligible voters. <sup>23</sup> Patriotism and the SDP trumped her low personal standing and her harsh social and economic record. When the Falklands elevated her as a victorious patriot and world celebrity, her ability to further her program and wage the class war at home was greatly strengthened. <sup>24</sup>

Cultural war against the unskilled and unemployed was one element. Though the notion of 'Chavs' only gained acceptance in popular culture well after Margaret Thatcher lost office in October 1990, some of her close associates actively contributed to the spread of the epithet, and the former prime minister's beliefs constitute the foundations of the idea. More specifically, those who lost out in her attack on the unions and in her wide-ranging restructuring programs, assumed thereafter, in their joblessness, substandard housing, broken families and poverty, the characteristics that the media then traduced as Chavs. <sup>25</sup> Certain events were exploited and stereotypes manipulated on television and in the press, to highlight these attributes.

There was Shannon Matthews, who had grown up on an impoverished northern estate, with a mother who had seven children with five different men. She did not work, her partner was a fishmonger, and she arranged the kidnapping and detention of her own, supposedly lost, nine-year-old daughter, to get hold of reward money of some 50,000 pounds. In the resulting furore she appeared in court in unfashionable clothes, looking much older than her 32 years. For Melanie Phillips, a prominent moralist, Matthews

"reveal[ed] the existence of an underclass which is a world apart from the lives that most of us lead", of communities where "boys impregnate two, three, four girls with scarcely a second thought." In a debate in March 2008, John Ward, a Conservative councilor in Kent, suggested there was "an increasingly strong case for compulsory sterilization of all those who have had a second child—or third, or whatever—while living off state benefits." David Cameron pledged to "end the something-for-nothing culture. If you don't take a reasonable offer of a job, you will lose benefits. No ifs, no buts." Jones believes that freakish exceptions like Matthews were made use of to damn a whole class and to argue that unemployment benefits should be reduced. The financial reality was, however, that while welfare fraud cost the Treasury around a billion pounds a year, some 70 billion was annually lost through tax evasion, largely a middle-class past-time. The case of Harold Shipman, moreover, general practitioner and mass murderer, created comparatively little media frenzy, in Jones's view.<sup>26</sup>

There was also Jade Goody, a 21-year-old dental nurse from Bermondsey, with a history of deep family hardship. She appeared on reality TV around 2002, reacted poorly to the pressures of the program, and lacked both affectation and a basic knowledge of everyday matters like food and geography. The media despised her as a 'pig' and 'The Elephant Woman', and people stood outside the studio with signs saying 'Burn the Pig.' When she was presented with an Indian Bollywood actress from a wealthy family, to whom Goody took an evident dislike, the *Daily Express* was outraged that 'a porcine, ugly girl from a poor background' was attacking a beautiful rich woman. Jones believes that the hounding of Jade Goody was one of the 'more shameful episodes in the British media's recent history.' But it suggested that hatred of the working class had become an acceptable social attitude. When Goody was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2008, Rod Liddle suggested in the *Spectator* that the malady had been invented by her publicist.<sup>27</sup>

At the 1981 Conservative Party Conference, Norman Tebbit offered advice to the unemployed to "get on your bike", and it was quickly taken up as the essence of Thatcherism. The unemployed must take personal responsibility for the problems that restructuring had foist upon them; it was all their own fault and unemployment benefits should in consequence be reduced. Tebbit himself later admitted that "many of these communities were completely devastated, with people out of work turning to drugs . . . because all the jobs had gone. There is no doubt that this led to a breakdown . . . with families breaking up and youths going out of control. The scale of the closures went too far." But other Conservative leaders were ready to go much further, with the shadow children's minister, Tim Loughton, suggesting his readiness to lock up teenage mothers: "We need a message that actually it is not a good idea to become a single mum at 14." Jones sees the Tories as successfully 'placing the Chav myth at the heart of British politics', en-

trenching the belief that certain communities were infested with feckless, delinquent and violent people. The Policy Exchange is a research group close to the Tory leadership, founded by Michael Gove and Francis Maude, ministers in Prime Minister David Cameron's coalition government. It published a report in 2008 which said that once great northern cities like Liverpool, Sunderland and Bradford were 'beyond revival'. Another prominent minister, Iain Duncan Smith, similarly suggested that where large numbers of council tenants were "trapped in estates where there [was] no work", they should be relocated if necessary hundreds of miles away. <sup>28</sup>

Such suggestions were well founded in Thatcherite thinking. In 1981, as early restructuring pushed unemployment towards the 3 million mark, rioting broke out between largely black youths and police in Liverpool, Manchester, and in parts of London, including Brixton and Southall. Over April to July, 800 police were injured and more than 3,000 people arrested. In the aftermath, the Prime Minister's closest ministerial advisors, including Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe and Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph, told her that Liverpool's decline could not be halted. The "concentration of hopelessness" on Merseyside was great and substantially self-inflicted through its record of industrial strife. Money spent on redevelopment was sure to be wasted. <sup>29</sup>

In the view of Stuart Hall, Cameron's 'front-bench ideologues' today, Chancellor George Osborne, Gove, Maude, Duncan Smith, 'are saturated in neoliberal ideas and determined to give them legislative effect.' They are 'single-minded about the irreversible transformation of society, ruthless about the means and in denial about the fallout.' They have long accepted Schumpeter's adage that there is no alternative to "creative destruction", and are determined to accomplish the task.' 30

Despite all onslaughts, significant numbers of Britishers continued to identify themselves as working class. The lowest estimate was offered by a research company called Britain Thinks, using focus groups in Rotherham and Basildon, and released in June 2011. They reported on the apparent effects of the Chav onslaught, that people felt that being called working class was 'close to an insult', and that most working class people 'feel under siege'. Perhaps not surprisingly, only 24 percent claimed to be working class. In an earlier study in March, the company found that 71 percent of people considered themselves middle class. <sup>31</sup>

One problem in understanding class identities is the fluid nature of the middle classes today. In 2007, half of the country's population belonged to social categories C1 (lower-end white collar) and C2 (skilled manual workers). The bottom two, semi- and unskilled workers, D and E, accounted for 24 percent. The vulnerability of this middle class may have increased along with its size. Unlike in the United States, their incomes had not stagnated in recent decades, but they had grown relatively slowly. Some of their problems were due to a loss of middle-income jobs to technology and cheaper foreign

labor, but the general result was insecurity. In 2006 and 2007, a quarter of them could not afford a week's family holiday away from home, and a study in 2009 found that 38 percent of that same middle quintile was concerned about their job prospects. <sup>32</sup> Johann Hari noted that median income in Britain in 2010 was 23,000 pounds, and suggested here was a pointer to the location of the real middle class. Like Thatcher earlier, Cameron's class war was aimed at redistributing income from the middle and lower classes to the very top. <sup>33</sup>

Other studies presented larger estimates of the working class than Britain Thinks. A poll published in October 2007 found that over half the population described themselves as working class, and noted that this proportion had been steady since the 1960s. 34 Another, by the National Centre for Social Research, noted that a 'remarkable 57 percent of Britons considered themselves to be working class'. 35 This identification remained despite the salient fact that the working class had no obvious support from the leadership of the Labour Party. Prime Minister Tony Blair had unilaterally announced in 1999 that "the class war is over", and his deputy, John Prescott, had simply asserted, "We're all middle-class now." 36

Such abandonment was very much as the Conservative ideologues intended. Thatcherism had ensured that on the eve of New Labour's accession in July 1997, that 'the working class [was] bereft of political champions.' 37 Blair was educated at elite private schools and Oxford, and had a brief association with the Conservatives before joining Labour in 1975. At 43, he was the youngest Prime Minister since 1812; he had won a large parliamentary majority, thanks to the disproportionality (the frequent disjunction between votes cast and seats won) of First-Past-the-Post, on 43 percent of the vote. He had campaigned, Marquand notes, 'on a minimalist platform', and in victory stressed what the party was not; New Labour, he said, professed no ideology, and did not identify with any class or interest group; Alan Milburn, one of Blair's closest allies, had earlier said that Labour would ensure that "more people got the opportunity to join the middle class", and Peter Mandelson, another insider, even declared that the party was "intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich." Marquand believes that Blair's main aim was to construct a new coalition, 'analogous to Thatcher's but with a much wider reach'. At its heart would be 'the new middle class'—the aspirational working class in manual occupations and increasingly insecure white-collar workers. 38 This was populist Thatcherism, where Blair's "big tent" politics would have room, he said, for everyone, and where the marginalization of the working class would not notably change.

Labour's old social basis was weakening from the beginning of New Labour. Parliamentary victory in 2001 had been gained on a record low turnout of 59 percent of eligible voters, and with the support of just 25 percent of the electorate. Party membership was collapsing. On published

figures for 2004, it was 248, 294, a 70-year low. Under Blair, between 1997 and 2005, some 4 million voters, in the words of a disgruntled Labour MP, had 'gone missing.' 39

It took a while for the nature and import of New Labour to register on commentators and general public: this combination of wealthy patrons (considered below), 'sofa government' through a clique of advisors, Cabinet irrelevance and 'managed populism'. The latter features in particular were designed to stifle debate, the supposed stuff of liberal democracy. What New Labour actually represented, says Marquand, was 'plebiscitary personal rule . . . almost as rootless as its leader.' The role accorded to party members was merely to applaud in the right places in carefully choreographed conferences. <sup>40</sup>

The government achieved notable political and constitutional reforms. The introductions of a Welsh Assembly and particularly of a Scottish parliament (the first such since 1707), directly elected mayors, statutory protection of human rights, freedom of information, and a settlement in Northern Ireland. Blair obtained a second crushing electoral victory in 2001, reinforcing his hold on the party and his seeming infallibility. But after the Al Qaeda attack in New York in September, 'symptoms of delusion' and extraordinary hubris appeared. He promised Americans, "We were with you at the first. We will stay with you to the last," and he began to act in foreign affairs in tandem with President George W. Bush;<sup>41</sup> he had moved with speed from friendship with President Bill Clinton to association with the conservative Bush with non-ideological ease.

His differences with the Republican president were marginal, and on Iraq they were together: they both believed that 11 September had changed the world; that Saddam Hussein was the leader of forces bent on destruction; and they assumed that a conflicted and divided Iraq could be transformed by its conquerors into a stable democracy and constitute a model for the region. As Blair committed Britain to war in Iraq, such action had few supporters in Britain. It was a momentous move and one which was based on deception. As Marquand notes, if he had tried to take Britain into a war avowedly fought for regime change he could have 'split his party and court[ed] defeat in parliament'. It was politically essential therefore to present the move to the public as intended to preempt an imminent threat from weapons of mass destruction. The war was widely unpopular at home. As hostilities approached in 2003, between one and two million people took part in the biggest protest march London had ever seen. Robin Cook resigned from government over Iraq, and said that most of the marchers were 'ordinary people in their everyday clothes, from every walk of life and every age group' in the country. 42 They cut no ice with the prime minister.

Blair repeatedly denied subsequently that the Iraq war helped to foster terrorism in Western Europe (despite the multiple explosions on public transport across London in July 2005), there were charges that his government had distorted intelligence reports to justify the invasion (the 'dodgy dossiers'), and no weapons of mass destruction were ever found. In the upshot, Blair's credibility was 'fatally damaged.' By February 2006 his approval rating was down to 28 percent, about the same as Thatcher's before she was ousted by her own party, and in September he announced his retirement, actually effected the following June. <sup>43</sup> Mullin wrote in his diary that Tony Blair was "the most successful leader in Labour history [but paid the price] for having linked us umbilically to the worst American president of my lifetime." But it was also the public deception that underlaid his actions and which lay at the heart of New Labour. <sup>44</sup>

## THE PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TO THATCHERISM AND NEW LABOUR

The Power Inquiry was a detailed and wide-ranging study of liberal democracy in Britain, released in March 2006. <sup>45</sup> It encompassed the 60 years of postwar Britain, and it analyzed peoples' attitudes to power and democracy, with a particular emphasis on New Labour dominant at the time. Contrary to the empty assertions of Blair and Prescott above, it found that social class remained of prime importance in many ways. Despite the fact that post-industrialism had weakened older bonds and identities, 'class is still with us'. Recent studies, it noted, showed that 'it determines life chances of British people more today than at any point since the Second World War.' Social mobility 'ha[d] ground to a halt', and 'a child born into a poor family will almost certainly live and die poor.' Globalization had brought tangible benefits to some, but the inequalities which accompanied it were growing and undermining social cohesion. The middle classes too were changing and no longer enjoying jobs for life. <sup>46</sup>

Parliamentary representation was sharply class based. Only 6.2 percent of MPs were former manual workers, while 74.6 percent were broadly middle class professionals, that is, lawyers, teachers and journalists. Rather similarly, 33 percent of MPs had a private school education, when only some 8 percent of the general public had this advantage. Voting too was influenced by class. In May 2005, 70 percent of people in A and B social categories (higher and lower professionals) voted, while only 54 percent of those in D and E categories, semi- and unskilled manual workers, did so. Poverty had increased from 15 percent of individuals in poor households in 1981 to 22 percent of individuals in 1993–1994. Persistent poverty was higher in Britain than in other Western European countries, and New Labour today, unlike its Labour predecessors, was failing to assist them properly. 47

Things were different at the top of the class hierarchy, where parties, and most notably New Labour, were reliant on rich donors. A close inter-relationship based on class, wealth and honors, existed and was increasing. 'Every Labour donor', the Inquiry reported, 'who ha[d] given more than a million pounds has received a peerage or a knighthood.' The inquiry noted that the very wealthy enjoyed 'undue influence' in government, while the government's reliance upon them 'was reducing [Labour] party engagement with the wider public'.<sup>48</sup> Bankers in particular had used the boom of the mid-1980s to buy political influence. By around 2010, the City provided half of Tory party funds, compared to only some 25 percent four years earlier. <sup>49</sup>

Falling popular engagement was seen in varied ways. The main political parties were being heavily criticized, for instance, for failing in what the Inquiry saw as their basic function of connecting the people with their governors, or worse, constituting a big obstacle to such dialogue. The parties were too similar in their core policies, and they, and especially their leaders, were driven solely by a search for the middle ground in politics and elections. With governmental priorities elsewhere, the big parties were uninterested in mobilizing members and people generally in elections. In the eyes of many people, elections had become 'empty rituals.' Liberal democracy under these circumstances had become a 'quiet authoritarianism', where policy and laws were being made in consultation with a small coterie of supporters, with little or no reference to wider views and interests.<sup>50</sup>

The Inquiry noted that turnout in general elections in Britain had been falling, 1945–2005—the highest point was just above 80 percent in the early 1950s and the steepest falls were under Blair, 1997–2001, when it fell from 77.7 percent to 59.4 percent. In the latter year, Blair and New Labour were victorious through gaining 9.5 million votes, but almost double that number, 17 million registered voters, failed to attend the polls. Falling turnout contributed to a de-legitimizing of both government and formal democracy. Parties were being seen by the people as 'campaigning to win elections' as their first and last goal, utilizing in particular triangulation, a technique perfected by Blair's erstwhile presidential friend Bill Clinton, <sup>51</sup> referred to in the Inquiry as 'democracy by numbers.' It had the effect, they said, of 'hollow[ing] out democracy.' <sup>52</sup>

The reactions of the people to this circumstance was not one of passive disillusionment or so-called apathy, but one which did them great credit. Participation in 'formal democracy', rather than participation itself, provoked 'a unique distaste amongst British citizens.' Furthermore, as they recorded in their Introduction and Executive Summary, the Inquiry 'w[as] struck by just how wide and deep is the contempt felt for formal politics in Britain.'53 Distaste and contempt were not feeble or inappropriate attitudes.

Popular apathy was a myth comparable to the myth of classlessness propounded by New Labour. Positive or rational disengagement from orthodox

liberal democracy was what was actually at work over a range of phenomena. With regard to non-voters in the D/E occupational categories, that is, among the supposedly most apathetic, the Inquiry found that 37 percent of them were quite active in charitable, community and like activities. Some prominent advocacy groups had recorded marked increases in membership. Greenpeace, for instance, had enjoyed a seven-fold rise in members, from about 30,000 in 1981 to 221,000 in 2002, while the environmental group Friends of the Earth had experienced a boost in membership from about 1,000 in 1971 to 119,000 in 2002. Participation in demonstrations, they found, had tripled, with the anti-Iraq-war march in 2003 attracting, on the Inquiry's estimate, 1.5 million people. People signing petitions had doubled in numbers over the 20 years to the 1990s, and consumer boycotts had also risen. 54

Popular detachment from liberal institutions was proceeding apace on a thoughtful, considered basis. During the time of the Wilson and Callaghan Labour governments, some 70 percent had said that it was 'wrong not to vote'; under Thatcher, that number fell to 53 percent, while under Blair it had dropped further to 41 percent. A study in 2001 showed that most non-voters made 'a conscious decision to abstain'. Rational decisions appear to have been made by a sizable proportion of the population: in 2005, Power found that 36 percent of non-voters cited the lack of differences between the main parties as the reason for abstention—as indicated above; Blair stressed New Labour's similarities with Thatcherism. Other reasons for abstention from orthodox systems were 'the low caliber of politicians', a 'decade of sleaze scandals' (around the time of Prime Minister John Major), and a series of misleading ministerial statements especially on intelligence reports justifying the war in Iraq. Motivations varied, but decisions were similar and solidly based. Some people said that the changes in Labour in the 1990s had 'greatly reduced' the gap between them and the Conservatives, and that party policies were chiefly guided by a search for voters from the center. By 2003, independent research cited by the Inquiry showed that 56 percent of voters felt they had 'no say in what the government does'.55

The powerlessness of the people was compounded by the weakness of parliament and MPs relative to the executive. A growing number of MPs had become members of government. The numbers of Parliamentary Private Secretaries, the most junior members of the government, had been 29 in 1979, 40 in 1989, and it was 50 today. Currently, the Inquiry reported, almost one-third (140) of the Parliamentary Labour Party were government members. A 'payroll vote', they noted, delivered to the government an increased and guaranteed proportion of parliament. Prime ministerial power was boosted in consequence. The personality and supposed vision of leaders like Thatcher and Blair had become central in general elections, creating an impression that prime ministers possessed a presidential-type personal mandate and that MPs of the governing party owed their positions to their leader's individual suc-

cess. There was 'a strongly held view among the public' and shared by 'significant numbers of MPs' that 'all power lies in 10 Downing Street'.<sup>56</sup>

But an awareness of their joint weaknesses under existing liberal democracy was the extent of agreement between people and parliamentarians. The Inquiry sought answers to problems, and it rejected old claims that most citizens did not have the intellectual capacity or expertise to make important decisions—detailed information was now easily accessed through the media and digital technologies.<sup>57</sup> The Inquiry was therefore ready to explore new forms of participatory democracy as possible solutions to the manifest weaknesses of liberalism. Parliamentarians and political parties were firmly opposed, however, to popular participation. When issues of political change were raised before a panel of politicians, the Inquiry was disheartened to find 'a resistance, even a tetchiness' to their consideration. The people and the Inquiry were aware of the existing disjunction between the way formal politics was constructed in Britain and the values and interests of the people. 'Many politicians [we]re very defensive about this problem', reflecting their failure to develop a thorough and strategic response. Existing problems could be discussed by the politicians, but radical solutions within new participatory forms and institutions were another matter. 58 Here perhaps was the core of the disjunction and dysfunctionality. The people were on their own, unrepresented in liberal capitalist democracy.

### THE PIG TROUGH AND THE CELEBRATION OF WEALTH

From the late 2000s, MPs in Britain were seen to be engaged in fraud and corrupt practices on a wide and pervasive scale. Some were employing their own family members as supposed research assistants, lavish and fraudulent expenses' claims were made and paid without proper scrutiny let alone independent control, and property speculation subsidized by taxpayers was a repeated occurrence among MPs and cabinet members. There had been so-called 'sleaze' scandals in the late 1980s and early 1990s serious enough to bring down John Major's government, New Labour had come to power promising to clean up the mess, but this was only 'a prelude to the great storm of 2009.' <sup>59</sup>

Misdemeanors were sometimes flagrant. Derek Conway, Tory MP and a former whip in Major's government, employed one of his sons as 'ghost parliamentary assistant' (i.e., he was unable to show that this person did any actual work) on remuneration of some 45,000 pounds. Cameron, the Conservative leader, then admitted that "just over" 70 out of a total of 193 Tory MPs employed family members, while the Labour Party could not say in February 2008 how many of its 352 MPs employed their own relatives. 60

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, MP for Redditch since 1997, lived with her two children and her husband, who was also her constituency assistant, in what Bell says was 'by any commonsense definition her main home, since it appeared to be used in this fashion, and it was where she was registered to vote. But she had told the Commons' authorities that her main home was her sister's house in south London, where she rented a room or two while working at Westminster. This allowed her to claim all the parliamentary allowances due to her. It soon emerged that she had 'switched her designated second home from one property to another'. This was a practice known as 'flipping', or changing the addresses of second homes, allowing MPs to renovate a succession of houses or to indulge in buy-to-let, all at public expense; as many did, notes Bell, 'one, two, three or even four times.' The Home Secretary had also claimed as necessary expenses for her constituency home, a bath plug, barbecue and a patio heater, along with a claim of 10 pounds for two adult movies for her husband. She stood down as Home Secretary, saying later that "I've had a harder time than some [others] for less sin, because I was the first person for which [sic] there were questions about my expenses." Parliamentarians, Bell states, 'were hiring their relatives and subsidizing their families with taxpayers' money. Furnishing their second, sometimes their first, homes with luxuries, even charging their grocery bills. The extremists among them were using their allowances to acquire an entire portfolio of properties.' There were no checks; the House of Commons had always opposed outside regulation. None were needed since they were all Honorable Members. 61

Their expenses gained notoriety when the *Telegraph*, in possession of unexpurgated records, began publishing highlights. In early May 2009, Mullin wrote that 'the entire parliamentary system was sinking in a great swamp of [public] derision and loathing.' The Tories were affected as badly as Labour when papers became full of 'pictures of Home Counties mansions set in acres of manicured lawns . . . allegedly maintained at taxpayers' expense.'62

Procedures had shown signs that they might eventually be tightened when Elizabeth Filkin became Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. She later observed that MPs had had the opportunity to self-regulate and had seriously subverted that possibility. She made parliamentarians uncomfortable about the thoroughness of her investigations and was removed from her job in 2002 in what Alex Salmond, now Scotland's First Minister, called a 'political assassination'. <sup>63</sup>

Parliamentary remuneration had a checkered history, possibly derivative of the old conservative presumption that parliament was the preserve of the well-off and largely a part-time activity. Lloyd George, in a reformist move, decided in 1911 that MPs should be paid a wage, 400 pounds a year, which stayed at that level for 26 years. Around 1970 the only extra allowance was

500 pounds for a secretary, and those unable to afford a hotel reportedly slept in their offices. An allowance for overnight hotel costs then followed, extended to cover rent for a flat, and then in the 1980s to mortgage payments: the second home allowance was born. 64 In the contemporary period, MPs' pay was again purposefully held down for about 20 years out of fear of a popular backlash. Loosely considered expenses claims on housing were intended to compensate members for their low remuneration. The practice began under Thatcher when she tried to mollify some of her backbenchers complaining about low pay. It was a sanctioned arrangement safely outside of public awareness. One of her ministers, John Moore, supposedly said, "Go out boys and spend it." New Labour not only failed to crack down on allowances but actually increased them. 65

Hazel Blears was a case in point. She was a former Labour party chairman and Chief Whip and became Minister of Communities. She was MP for Salford where she considered herself an activist. But according to Bell 'she flipped her second home between three properties and claimed for two television sets in a year. In August 2004 she sold a property in Kennington for 200,000 pounds, making a profit of 45,000 pounds. It was named as her first home and was therefore not liable for capital gains tax.' She resigned from the Gordon Brown government in June 2009, claiming that she was 'returning to the grassroots' in order to 'help the Labour Party reconnect with the British people.'

The Speaker of the House of Commons is an authoritative and influential figure constitutionally and inside parliament. He is responsible, as Bell describes the position, to no board of trustees and only in a general way to MPs. He can silence them by ordering them out or more frequently by not calling on them to speak. MPs know this and seek his favor. His offices are 'the hub of the House', and his staff are pivotal figures. He lives in palatial grace-and-favor accommodation—'a palace within a palace'—and 'no one decline[d] his invitations.'

An indication that something was amiss under Speaker Michael Martin, a former sheet-metal worker from Glasgow, came around 2008, with a notably high rate of turnover among his staff. The Speaker's secretary was the first to go, but others followed including the Serjeant-at-Arms, a former general. His use of parliamentary allowances and his employment of family members were noted, but a complaint made by Bell against him was rejected by the Commissioner for Standards. *The Observer* claimed in April 2009 that the Speaker and his wife were plundering the public purse for an alleged array of perks and foreign junkets, but in the preceding December Martin was accorded a generous, tax-payer-funded pension for life. He was presiding during a time of widespread financial malpractice in parliament but, rather than seeking to address the disorder, he had 'led a tenacious rearguard [action]' against disclosures required under the Freedom of Information Act. By May

2009, Speaker Martin was described by Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat leader, as an obstacle to much-needed parliamentary reform, and he should resign.<sup>67</sup>

He had claimed over 4,000 pounds for taxi rides on shopping trips in central London by his wife, Mary, accompanied by her housekeeper who was also her close friend, over four years. There were also suggestions that the Martins had utilized a special limousine service using S-class Mercedes and Jaguar cars. Speaker Martin was further accused of claiming more than 75,000 pounds over six years for expenses on his constituency home in Glasgow, even though it was not mortgaged, under so-called Additional Cost Allowances. Under mounting pressure, he stepped down later in May, becoming the first Speaker to be forced out since John Trevor, on a charge of corruption, in 1695. 69

Other expenses claims by top figures were revealed after the Information Commissioner ruled that the House was wrong in withholding these figures. In 2003–2004, the year for which data was first available, Chancellor Brown claimed 2,000 pounds for house cleaning, and John Prescott 4,000 for groceries. Michael Howard, then Tory leader, topped the spending list with a claim of 20,347 pounds, which covered mortgages and rent payments, repairs and maintenance. Prescott, who held two grace-and-favor homes (in Admiralty Arch and Dorneywood), came a close second at some 20,000 pounds, a sum which included his 4,000 pound food bill. Blair claimed 15,490 pounds. A separate release concerning nine prominent MPs for 2005–2006, showed that Blair then claimed some 8,400 pounds, Prescott 12,826 pounds, the Environment Secretary, Margaret Beckett, 21,400 pounds, and shadow chancellor, George Osborne, some 21,500 pounds. 70 On detailed assessments made by The Guardian, the total expenses claimed by all members of the House of Commons, 2008–2009, came on rounded figures to 96 million pounds. 71 Six MPs and peers were jailed for fraud and hundreds were judged to have made wrongful claims. 72

Extravagant spending by the political elite existed elsewhere too. The Prime Minister's wife, Cherie, charged the Labour Party 7,500 pounds for having Andre, her hairdresser, attend upon her throughout the 2005 election campaign. A further indicator for Mullin that 'the New Labour elite live on another planet.' <sup>73</sup>

At a deeper level, Toynbee noted 'Blair and Brown's bizarre relationship with extreme wealth. For Blair, infatuation and fascination combined with the odd political idea that Labour must stand for all interests, even for plutocrats.' For Brown, it was the belief that 'wealth creation required uncritical obeisance to whatever the City said it wanted.' The harsh conditions of the global financial crisis were affecting ordinary people badly, and the white working class was reacting by abandoning Labour. Tony Travers of the London School of Economics (LSE) had made a detailed study of the recent

mayoral elections in the capital. Ken Livingstone, the Labour candidate, had won the ethnic minority vote, all the African-Caribbean and Muslim wards, and the liberal middle classes in the north and north-west. But he had lost 'great swathes of white housing estates, from south London's St Helier estate to Barking and Dagenham. Places that had never been anything other than Labour voted for Boris Johnson', the successful Conservative candidate. Travers found that 'many millions of middle- and low-paid people who are young or middle-aged [we]re right to feel that Labour has done nothing for them. . . . They pay too much tax, they start paying tax on very low incomes, the minimum wage is very low, public sector pay is screwed down for five years and then they see Labour celebrating the mega rewards of the rich.' A recent FT/Harris poll showed that 74 percent of people felt that the income gap was too wide. 74 Even before the expenses scandals, the general public was showing 'little trust in MPs'. The chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, Sir Allistair Graham, had reported in 2006 that public trust in government was at what he called a "worryingly low level." But at the same time, people were "very clear" about what they wanted from their elected politicians. "They very strongly want them to tell the truth" and they also want them "to be more in touch with what the people think is important." Restoring trust was "an absolutely critical issue."<sup>75</sup>

But the disjunction remained large between the socio-economic realities and people's attitudes to them. Writing some two years after Toynbee and Travers, Johann Hari reported similarly. Poll after poll, he said, found that 75 percent of people believed that Britain was too unequal, and almost nobody feels that tax cuts should not be targeted at the rich. Public opinion was substantially to the left of Labour across the board, indicating again that New Labour's tragedy has been its 'conservatism and capitulation to the right.' Accompanying this was a coziness with the very rich that Labour closely shared with the Conservative party. According to Chakrabortty, Britain now represents a 'new type of dysfunctional capitalism, where banks neither lend nor pay their way in taxes, yet retain a stranglehold on policy making.' A bankocratic form of plutocracy.

Since leaving office in 2007, Tony Blair's actions have substantiated his earlier beliefs in the attractiveness of wealth. His personal wealth was indicated in May 2008 when, just a year out of office, he agreed to pay 5.75 million pounds for a Buckinghamshire residence, formerly owned by the actor John Gielgud, described as 'a small stately home'. By 2009 his financial affairs were referred to by observers as Byzantine and opaque, involving seemingly a commercial consultancy, advisory positions with a United States bank (JP Morgan) and a Swiss insurer (Zurich Financial Services), a multimillion pound book deal with Random House, the Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative, and a similarly titled Faith Initiative, with much of his income believed to be channeled through a structure called Windrush Ventures. He

was then believed to be receiving up to 14 million pounds, making him one of Britain's wealthiest ex-prime ministers. <sup>78</sup> Another commentator placed his annual income at 12 million pounds, and also noted that only the great size of Blair's income and wealth was truly outstanding. Since 2006, 37 former members of the New Labour government had with permission and encouragement taken private sector jobs within two years of leaving office, working for companies directly bidding for government contracts and privatized services. For Seumas Milne, this was a scandal that dwarfs the Commons expenses saga: 'It beggars belief that the prospect of lavish future consultancies doesn't influence or shape the decisions of ministers when they're dealing with corporate regulation and private contracts.' <sup>79</sup> Tony Blair's ideas had permeated New Labour's policies, and he led the way in the pursuit of personal wealth.

# RIOTING AGAINST THE BRUTALITY OF POVERTY AND FOR JUSTICE

The 'Toxteth Riots' which began on a July evening in 1981 were an early reaction to Thatcherite restructuring and an expression of Liverpool's long-existing multicultural identity. Few regions in Britain, according to Stephen Kelly, experienced the effects of the cutbacks worse than Merseyside. Between 1974 and 1981, unemployment among whites doubled in Liverpool, and among blacks it trebled. In Toxteth, one in two men were out of work. After repeated confrontations over years, blacks had retreated into Toxteth, and an unofficial segregation prevailed; it was rare to see black people in city center shops or football grounds, though blacks constituted around 8 percent of Liverpool's population with over half of them born there. The Mersey used to be full of ships, and its docks were always busy, but when trading patterns shifted away from the Atlantic and towards Europe, the docks went idle, and nothing replaced them, as a former city council leader recalled.

The spark for the rioting came when Leroy Cooper was subjected to a 'stop and search', a familiar occurrence in the area, but this time a watching crowd on a warm evening intervened and a fracas erupted, that quickly became the first wave of serious rioting. The conventional view styles it as race riots, but some participants, including Darrin Rawlins, insist that "it was not a race riot." The large numbers of white people involved showed that "race didn't come into it." More specifically, it was actually about racism and brutality in the police. Police provocation played a big role. As Rawlins noted, "The Police were lined up in their dozens, banging on their shields and making monkey noises. Our adrenaline was flowing." When the Environment Secretary, Michael Heseltine, visited the area he was reportedly shocked at the intransigence of the Chief Constable and the attitudes of the

police, who treated all suspects in a brutal and arrogant fashion. Unlike the Prime Minister herself—whose immediate reaction to the first pictures of the riots on television was "Oh, those poor shopkeepers"—and leading ministers like Howe and Joseph, Heseltine was horrified, in Kelly's reporting, by Toxteth's 'mass unemployment, poor housing, and, above all, despair.'<sup>80</sup>

Yet passive despair was apparently not what the rioters were feeling. The scale of the action is indicative: 450 police injured, 500 people arrested, 1 man killed, and some 70 buildings demolished. Rawlins reports on what might be called the very positive aspects of the uprising: "We started by bricking the police station and then bricked every police car that came into Liverpool 8. Rioting was emancipating. It's on my list of 10 things you should do before you die."81

Before the May 2005 general elections, Kenneth Clarke, Tory MP and sometimes minister, said he was "astonished" that the British people were "so quiet about the massive gulf that's opened up between the very rich and the ordinarily paid over the past 12 years." Represent of the top one percent of income earners in Britain had doubled, from 7.1 percent in 1970 to 14.3 percent in 2005. Income inequality among working-age people had risen faster in Britain than in any other rich nation, and it was the avariciousness of this one percent of the 'super-rich' that drove the inequalities. On the eve of the global financial crisis, this one percent commanded 5 percent of total pretax income in Britain, a level of wealth hoarding, it was said, not seen since World War II. Res

Clarke had a response six years later in Britain's most serious social unrest in a generation. The start was not dissimilar to Toxteth. On 4 August 2011, police, supposedly intending to arrest a young man, Mark Duggan, father of four, in Tottenham, London, shot him dead instead. Two days later, a demonstration by the Duggan family, seeking to ask the police for 'justice', accompanied by around 300 people from the Broadwater Farm council estate, began peacefully, before rioting ensued; some 26 police were injured, and wide-scale looting occurred across London; as one newspaper described it, 'a sort of lawless shopping spree.' 84 Over five days, 6–10 August violence and looting continued in the capital, and in cities from Liverpool and Manchester in the north to Bristol in the south west. Between 13,000 and 15,000 people were directly involved, five were killed, and 4,000 arrested.

In a novel initiative, the *Guardian* and the LSE interviewed 270 rioters in a project called 'Reading the Riots'. Over four-fifths of those were aged 24 or under. Fifty percent were black, 27 percent white, 18 percent mixed race, and 5 percent Asian (the Ministry of Justice said that, of those brought before the courts, 42 percent were white, 46 percent black or mixed race, and 7 percent were Asian). According to the Reading project, large numbers of blacks made 'stark and impassioned complaints about unfairness and inequality', attributable to the color of their skin. 85 'A pervasive sense of

injustice' was at the heart of the rioters concerns. The one term that kept cropping up in their interviews across the country was "justice". The targets of their deepest concerns were often appropriate: the prime minister, MPs expenses, cuts on benefits and related matters, bankers' bonuses, and increased university fees. One 23-year-old identified "especially this particular Conservative government. . . . I hate them. . . . It's in their eyes. . . . They hate the lower classes." And a 21-year-old from Salford added: "It's not like your voice is heard; they don't care about you because you're poor. What opinion have you got? . . . We're the government, we're the masters." 86

Many of those interviewed emphasized their discontent with the police, and their hated 'stop-and-search' technique. Seventy-three percent reported they had been stopped in the past year, 73 percent of those more than once. The young rioters grievances with the police were very deep-seated. One in Hackney in London, who was also a social worker, condemned what he saw happening all over the area, "police officers jumping out of vans, calling 18-year-olds bitches and niggers." A young black woman said that the rioters and their friends "just want[ed] to be heard. . . . This is the only way some people have to communicate." 87

Outside the Reading project, Camila Batmanghelidjh said that rioting was a natural human response to what she called "the brutality of poverty": "Walk on the estate stairwells with your baby in a buggy maneuvering past the condoms, the needles, into the lift where the best outcome is that you will survive the urine stench and the worst that you will be raped[;] . . . it's a repeated humiliation, being continuously dispossessed in a society rich with possessions. Young, intelligent citizens of the ghetto seek an explanation for why they are at the receiving end of bleak Britain, condemned to a darkness where their humanity is not even valued enough to be helped."88

David Cameron's government was firm and quick in its judgments and totalistic in their condemnations. After the Duggan protests, the Prime Minister told parliament that the rioting was "criminality, pure and simple." 89 Criminal gangs were quickly named by leading Conservatives as instigators of the unrest—a point specifically denied in subsequent findings. 90 Punishment, severe and "exemplary", awaited all those apprehended. By mid-August, Cameron pledged his support for 'zero tolerance' policing where minor offences are prosecuted. He praised heavy sentencing decisions in the courts, which already included two people jailed for four years each for inciting riots on Facebook—which never actually took place—another jailed for six months for stealing water valued at 3 pounds fifty pence, and a teenage girl received eight months for stealing a bottle of lucozade and a bag of sweets. 91 There should be "no phony human rights concerns", the Prime Minister insisted, about publishing CCTV images of suspected rioters. Data available in October indicated that punitive action was certainly being taken in the courts; 42 percent of those tried in magistrates courts were being imprisoned,

compared it was said with only 12 percent normally. Punishment could be both unlimited in scope and time. Not only could rioters face eviction from social housing, but even their families could be evicted, in double and treble jeopardy. As early as mid-August, the Conservative Wandsworth council announced that the first eviction notice had been served, on the mother of a teenage boy accused (but not yet convicted) of violence and attempted theft. Many other authorities, among them Westminster, Greenwich, Nottingham and Salford, were considering similar evictions. 92

Not only whole families, but also young children, were being harshly treated in the government crackdown. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), said in October that official figures showed that 45 percent of all those under 18 who had been charged with rioting and looting had no previous criminal history. This possibly represented a breach of the UN convention of 1989 on the rights of a child. Ministry of Justice figures showed further that 40 percent of the 269 children whose court hearings were not completed by mid-September were remanded in custody. This compared with the average remand rate of 10 percent in 2010. Of those on remand in late 2011, 60 percent had no previous convictions, and almost half had had no contact whatsoever with the judicial system. In the wake of UNICEF's report, a number of child protection agencies stated that Britain already imprisoned more children than any other country in Western Europe, and after the riots the child population in prison jumped by some 8 percent. 93

Riot victims were also interviewed in a second stage of the Reading project. A year later, many of them remained deeply affected by the harrowing experience of living through a riot; the loss of property and possessions compounded by the realization that in some cases their lives had been at risk. Nevertheless, 'a significant number refuse[d] to place the blame solely on the rioters.' Dane Skaife, a manager of a shop in Salford that suffered 80,000 pounds of damage, told interviewers, "It was more of a protest than an act of stealing for most people in Salford. . . . [Here] they were just angry." 94

But an incident of entirely destructive violence, planned and methodical, took place in west London over four hours on 8 August. Some 16 young men, aged between 15 and 25, invaded a restaurant in Notting Hill, shouting at diners to get on the floor. Watches, cash, jewelery and phones were taken by the rioters wielding batons, knives and baseball bats. Most had previous convictions, many of these for violence. The rampage included an attack on a shopkeeper, Mohammed Haroon, who was beaten around the head with a champagne bottle. He testified later that "they were trying to kill me." A sentencing hearing heard then that the rampage involved some 50 people in all, in a 'planned campaign' between gang members, who had chosen a time when the police were overwhelmed. Three of the culprits were jailed for nine years, while others received three- and four-year sentences. Judge Usha Karu

said it was one of the most extreme nights of the urban disorder. The police were still looking for more than 20 key figures. 95

#### RECAPITULATION

Over 11 years, Margaret Thatcher had unleashed a harsh form of neo-liberalism and class war in Britain, to the evident benefit of the rich few and the severe detriment of the poor majority. The beneficiaries of her government's privatization program, for instance, and the 'deliberately low prices at which long-standing public assets were marketed to the private sector' resulted, according to Judt, in a net transfer of 14 billion pounds 'from the taxpaying public to stockholders and other investors.'96 Restructuring and monetarism also saw joblessness escalate and public housing deteriorate, and the Toxtech riots in 1981 displayed the pain and affront experienced by ordinary people. Around the mid-1990s, persistent poverty in Britain was the worst in Western Europe. But via patriotic war and an on-going assault on both the trade unions and working-class identity, Thatcher's policies helped to ensure that when Blair's New Labour gained power it espoused social policies that were but a lighter version of her own. When he won a crushing parliamentary victory on a turnout of just 43 percent of the vote, and the support of merely one-quarter of the electorate, it was evident that the disgruntlement of the people with liberal institutions and party politics was high and rising.

He had won on a platform disavowing Labour's historic association with the working classes, and with leading ministers expressing admiration for the wealthy. New Labour relied on a coalition of rich patrons, a clique of close advisors, and 'plebiscitary personal rule', according no role for either the plummeting party rank-and-file and the detached general public. But no former Labour leader had won Blair's repeated electoral victories, and utilizing deception, he took the country into war in Iraq, ignoring legality and huge domestic opposition.

The Power Inquiry offered a solid analysis of liberal democracy in Britain. They affirmed that class remained the biggest determinant in people's lives and political behavior. Rich donors enjoyed undue influence in both major parties. Tactics like triangulation and a reliance on focus groups had contributed to a hollowing-out of democracy. Participation in elections and formal democracy provoked 'distaste' among people and deep 'contempt'. People were making conscious decisions not to vote in ritualistic elections, while participating broadly in community activities, demonstrations and boycotts. People knew they were powerless to influence government, and that liberal democracy meant authoritarian personal rule of celebrity figures like Thatcher and Blair.

The a-morality and selfishness of the whole political elite was manifest in the feeding frenzy of MPs and ministers in 2008 and 2009, while the political disjunctions between people and leadership was extended by the escalating wealth of the super-rich one percent, a new 'Have Yachts' relative to both the 'Haves and the Have Nots'.

Thousands of Britain's most vulnerable young people expressed their reactions over five days in August 2011. In part 'a lawless shopping spree' by the poor in a rich market economy to which they were denied access, but also rage at the brutality of the poverty engulfing their daily lives. But their reported 'pervasive sense of injustice' was ignored and simply condemned out of hand by Conservative leaders demanding exemplary punishments extending to children and the families of the rioters.

The nominal liberal democracy was then a plutocracy where government was by and for financiers and bankers. Their rise had begun with Thatcher, and continued apace with conservative New Labour. The dysfunctionalities were extensive and the major parties had few or no remedial ideas. The Power Inquiry emphasized that politicians were uninterested in even discussing participatory forms. When a referendum was held on the introduction of a preferential (or Alternative Vote) electoral system in May 2011, a proposal stemming directly from the expenses scandals, it was roundly defeated by a vote of 68 percent to 32 percent, on a turnout of a mere 42 percent, with the NO vote supported by government and strongly financed, and the Yes campaign divided and maligned in the media as a foreign extravaganza. <sup>97</sup>

Proponents of renewal in this inequitable, unjust and elitist system were few, although critical views of the rich were held by up to 80 percent of the population.

#### THE UNITED STATES: DYSFUNCTIONALITIES IN EXTREMIS

Not the least of the manifold problems facing liberal capitalism in the United States was the unawareness of the people—in strong contrast with Britain—that big inequalities of wealth were in and of themselves highly consequential. Americans might be upset by notions of inequality in worth or status, but tend to be unperturbed by unequal wealth, a factor seen as the inevitable outcome of the free market system, in which, even in 2011, most expressed enduring faith. People remained sympathetic to the idea that unequal pay encouraged competition and harder work. With recession continuing, some 18 million people looking for work and with middle class incomes stagnant or falling, many Americans did not seem to mind that the top one percent of income earners were acquiring nearly a quarter of the nation's income and controlling 40 percent of its wealth. 98

Methodically, over some fifty years, the rich and their representatives had carried through a massive redistribution of wealth. Since 1945–1960, the richest Americans, says Wolff, 'dramatically lowered their income tax burden . . . both absolutely and relative to the burdens of the middle income groups and the poor.' Just as the tax rates of the rich started to fall, so their share of total national income began their fifty year rise. Over this time the bottom 20 percent of citizens saw their incomes barely rise at all; the middle fifth of income earners saw their after-tax household income rise by less than 25 percent, while the top one percent had their after-tax household incomes increased by 175 percent. That was the beginning. The richest Americans profitably invested the money they didn't pay in taxes. 99 By 2010, CEO pay packages boomed again. Their pay went up by some 27 percent overall, while 'total realized compensation' for the top 500 corporate chiefs rose by a median of 36.47 percent. "Wages for everybody else", in the clear words of Paul Hodgson, senior researcher in corporate governance, "have either been in decline or [have] stagnated." 'Bosses won in every area, with dramatic increases in pensions, payoffs and perks, as well as salary.'100

The losing bottom 20 percent had to struggle simply to eat. In mid-2011, unemployment benefit was available for a maximum of 99 weeks, due to fall to six months. But almost half of the then 14 million unemployed had been out of work for six months or more. The Supplemental Nutrition Programme (Snaps), or Food Stamps, were thus the main line of defense for the poor against hunger. Utilization of food stamps had soared since the recession began around 2008, and in mid-2011 it involved some 45 million people, one in seven of the population, an 11 percent increase in the numbers of the desperately needy over the previous year. Nevertheless, the Department of Agriculture, administering the scheme, reckoned that only some two-thirds of those eligible had signed up for food stamps. The assistance was meagre and sharply means tested. The average benefit then was \$133 a month and the maximum available for someone without any income was \$200. The recipients were unquestionably deserving. About half were children, another 8 percent were elderly, and 18 percent were bereft of income. The average participating family around 2011 had only \$101 in savings or valuables. With the numbers of participants rising and the costs likewise, from \$35 billion in 2008 to \$65 billion in 2010, the House of Representatives approved a food stamps allocation for 2012 of \$71 billion, \$2 billion lower than President Barack Obama's recommendation.

A woman in New York explained to *The Economist* what it was like existing on food stamps. She compared prices at five different supermarkets, assiduously collected coupons, ate mainly cheap and starchy food, and still ran out of money a week or ten days before the end of the month. But such realities had to contend with the prevailing anti-poor ideology, which had near its center the Reaganite ideological construct of the "welfare queen".

She had, the president claimed, "80 names, 30 addresses, 12 social security cards and is collecting veteran's benefits on four non-existing deceased husbands." He thereby authoritatively framed the public discourse on poverty for subsequent decades.

President Bill Clinton made his big contribution too in signing into law the deceptively entitled Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. It aimed to slash welfare provisions (including significant cuts in food stamps) and to shrink the country's welfare rolls. In the achievement of the latter aim, benefits would be withheld from anyone who failed to seek work, or refused to accept a job offer. The numbers on the rolls duly fell and, since an employer had no obligation to offer good pay, wages and business costs fell too. <sup>101</sup> Both Reagan and Clinton helped to obscure the depth and importance of inequalities in the United States, and how the rapaciousness of the rich and the connivance of politicians were deepening the problems.

These were highly pervasive. Another of Ronald Reagan's key ideas was hostility to big and activist government, and this together with his associated attack on welfare, shifted the whole spectrum of U.S. politics to the right. An escalating decay in public infrastructure eventually resulted. In the first decade of the 21st century, it was occurring almost everywhere; from potholed interstate highways and grimy railways, to congested airports with inadequate air traffic control systems. A study in 2005 revealed that a quarter of the country's bridges were inadequate or obsolete. Substantiation soon came: breaches in non-maintained levees during Hurricane Katrina in 2005 led to the wide-scale flooding of New Orleans, the loss of personal property by ordinary citizens and racist violence perpetrated by security forces against survivors; and when an Interstate 35 bridge in Minneapolis collapsed one rush-hour afternoon in August 2007, it sent 13 people to their deaths in the Mississippi river below. 102 Another case of state and infrastructural failure concerned a rail tunnel in New Jersey, intended to link the Garden State with Manhattan, greatly improving the then clogged access to New York City. The project had 20 years in the planning, digging had started and \$500 million was already spent, when Governor Chris Christie of New Jersey, announced his state was pulling out on the grounds of cost. The tunnel's cost was then estimated at around \$8 billion. But this was a trifle compared with the \$2.2 trillion that needed to be spent, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, to get the country's infrastructure into shape. <sup>103</sup>

These wide ranging anti-statist problems could be compared with the origins and success of the Hoover Dam as a monument to America's past ability to 'think big even in the depths of the Great Depression.' President Roosevelt was intent on making it a symbol of the New Deal and the superiority of collective action, and it became the launching pad for a big range of public undertakings under his presidency.<sup>104</sup> The contrast between these ide-

as and their realization and the contemporary failures in the name of the small state is stark.

By August 2011 the whole economy was in a visible mess. According to the OECD, the U.S. budget deficit had jumped from 2.9 percent of GDP in 2007 to 10.6 percent in 2010. The 'primary deficit' had reached 7 percent of GDP, the biggest in the world, and the ratio of debt to GDP was 93.6 percent. The Eurozone, according to King, was nothing near as bad, with an average deficit of 6 percent of GDP and a primary deficit of 1.1 percent. Difficulties were compounded by the absence of economic growth. When the credit rating agency, Standard and Poor's (S&P), downgraded the United States then, they only confirmed, he said, what we already knew. The problem embraced the whole political economy. S&P said that it had changed its assessment 'because the majority of Republicans in Congress continue to resist any measure that would raise revenues', and because of political weaknesses in government. The agency declared that the dysfunctional American political system had prevented approval of the necessary fiscal reforms. <sup>105</sup>

While President Obama contributed to these failures largely through his inaction and failure to oppose Republican extremism and intransigence, <sup>106</sup> there seemed little doubt that the Republican party held greatest responsibility. *The Economist* is not known for anti-Americanism, but it acknowledged that the ideas of its Congressional leadership and its presidential candidates were irrational, extreme and backward looking. Specifically, to be acceptable to the party's activist base, a Republican candidate had to believe, it said, all of the following: abortion should be illegal in all cases; gay marriage must be universally banned; the approximately 12 million illegal immigrants in the country, some of them resident for decades, should all be expelled; the 46 million people who lacked health insurance have only themselves to blame; global warming is a conspiracy; any form of gun control is unconstitutional; any tax increase must be vetoed, and Israel can do no wrong and the Palestinians no right. Another essential belief was a refusal to accept the scientific validity of evolution. <sup>107</sup>

In 2011, the judicial system was showing signs not greatly dissimilar to the country's infrastructure. An underfunded court weakened the economy as well as people's access to justice. The federal bench was threatened by both stagnant salaries and the frozen politics already noted. Swelling dockets and delayed case-hearings reduced access to the law just when adjudication was being sought by increased numbers of people. The recession left a great mass of foreclosures, bankruptcies, debt collections and credit card disputes. This issue went to the heart of the liberal polity. The American Bar Association noted that 'the underfunding of our judicial system threatens the fundamental nature of our tripartite system of government.' The presiding judge of the San Francisco Supreme Court, Katherine Feinstein, went further, saying that the judiciary must start explaining itself more forcefully to legislators, and if

necessary it may be time to ask voters directly for money. The great jurist, Learned Hand, had said in 1951 that liberal democracy rested on the principle "Thou shall not ration justice." <sup>108</sup>

But the onslaughts continued in terms of voting rights and the extension of policing to children and their schooling. In 2011 rightwing state legislatures were pushing laws to restrict people's access to the polls. New photo identifications laws were being introduced at the state level to put a financial barrier between the poor and elderly and the ballot box. In what was called a coordinated effort, legislatures in 34 states were considering bills intended to reduce the size of the electorate. One estimate suggested that the number of voters affected might be 5 million, and that most of these would be expected to vote with the Democrat party. <sup>109</sup>

At the end of 2011, an increasing number of schools had police patrolling their corridors and intervening directly and forcefully in the behavior of children in their classrooms and during recess. In 'hundreds of schools' in Texas, and 'across large parts of the rest of the U.S.', schools were acquiring armed and uniformed police forces to keep control in classes, in canteens and in playgrounds. 'Each day, hundreds of school children appear[ed] before courts in Texas,' charged with offences such as misbehavior on the school bus, wearing inappropriate clothes and being late for school. In 2010, the police gave almost 300,000 'Class C misdemeanor tickets'—a criminal offence—to children as young as six in Texas. What was once handled by a reprimand from a teacher or a call to parents, was now fetching arrest and a police record that could affect college- and jobs-access years later. The number of school districts with police departments had risen 'more than 20-fold in the state over the past two decades.' Fines ranged up to \$500, which could represent a crippling cost for poorer parents. Children with outstanding fines '[we]re regularly jailed in adult prison for non-payment once they turn 17.'110

Children with disabilities were said to be particularly vulnerable to the consequences of police in schools. Problems such as attention deficit disorder could lead either directly, or indirectly as a result of bullying by class mates, to charges of unruliness and perhaps a criminal record. Legal professionals appeared well aware of the problems. McGreal considered two such cases, one of which concerned a 12-year-old girl who sprayed herself with perfume, after being taunted that she smelt, and was charged with 'disrupting class'. Kady Simpkins, a lawyer who defended this girl, said, "We've taken childhood behavior and made it criminal." Wallace Jefferson, chief justice of the Texas supreme court, warned that "charging kids with criminal offences for low-level behavioral issues" is helping to drive many of them to a life in jail. 111 A decade earlier, Finnegan had lived closely with poor white, Hispanic and black youth across the country. He concluded that American society was developing a fear and loathing for young people, that the kids he had

known sensed that class lines were hardening, and that many of them faced what he termed 'a dark spiral of downward mobility.' 112 These were prescient observations. Judged on the key issue of how a society treated its most vulnerable members, American liberal capitalism was a failure.

Recently Packer has presented a broad analysis of what he sees as the unwinding of American society over the past thirty years. The situation he uncovers supplements the analysis above. Concentrating on key structures, institutions, processes, values and individuals, he shows how social cohesion and democratic values have fallen victims to the greed of economic and political elites. Many flaws and injustices existed in the decades-long 'Roosevelt Republic', but it also had the means to correct or at least ameliorate them, in functional democratic institutions: Congress, courts, schools, news organizations. This republic had the capacity for self-correction: the civil rights movement of the 1960s was a largely peaceful mass movement led by black southerners, which gained important support from the democratic institutions, which either recognized the justice of its claims or upheld the social stability it pointed towards.

From around the late 1970s, structures, processes and institutions, and the people in them, began to change. De-industrialization, the flattening of average wages, the rise of finance capitalism, income inequality, and the rise of the political right, all proceeded apace. The United States became more individualistic and less communitarian, more free but less equal, more tolerant and less fair. Banking and technology became engines of wealth, replacing manufacturing, and 'without creating broad prosperity'. The old democratic institutions, public schools, secure jobs, lively newspapers and functioning legislatures began to unravel.

In Youngstown, Ohio, the steel mills at the heart of the city's economy for a century, closed in rapid succession, taking 50,000 jobs from the region, replacing them with nothing. New computer industries arose in California, and voters across the state launched a tax revolt (Proposition 13) that strangled public funding for what had been a leading school system. In Washington, Newt Gingrich came to Congress with the 'singular ambition to tear it down and build his own and his party's power on the rubble.' At much the same time on Wall Street, Salomon Brothers led the way with a new financial product called 'mortgage-backed securities'. Some changes were approximately consistent with American capitalism's past, such as that 'the six surviving heirs to the Walmart fortune possessed between them the same wealth as the bottom 42 percent of Americans'. Youngstown's steel companies could not meet global competition and local disinvestment, but it was a matter of choice, not inevitability, that left the workers to fend for themselves, while in a capitalist frenzy corporate raiders stripped the mills of their remaining value. There was nothing historically determined either about the poisonous atmosphere which Gingrich and other conservative ideologues

spread through American politics. These tactics, Packer says, 'served their narrow, short-term interests', and 'when the Gingrich revolution brought Republicans to power in Congress, the tactics were affirmed.' Further elitist choices saw President Clinton 'deregulat[ing] Wall Street so thoroughly that nothing stood between the big banks and the destruction of the economy.' 113

Perhaps the best prism for assessing the American system—and by close extension the British—is Athenian participatory democracy. Economic inequalities were large, as noted in chapter one, but taxation and other redistributive measures were large too, and the wealthy were obliged to bear a disproportionate burden of the costs of running the democracy. Above all, there was no autonomous economy. An egalitarian politics ruled, and the poor majority of citizens played a large and active role throughout in law making, administration and the military. 'Bouncebackability', or redevelopment out of crises and failures, was strong, the capacity conspicuously absent in the United States today.

Ringen presents a contemporary socio-political analysis of the United States as 'the model dysfunctional democracy.' Profound distrust has taken root in politics, eroding the foundations of government. Inequalities have reached 'shocking levels' where they are allowed to fester, 'even celebrated.' Social mobility has ground to a halt, excluding 'most people' from the benefits of economic advance. The wealthy and the poor live in different worlds, and 'there is no sense of shared destiny and no shared deliberations about what is and should be common and public.' The dysfunction 'goes all the way to the foundations', and it is its extent which is *new* today (his emphasis): the presidency is the only 'remaining functional institution'.

Not unlike Packer, Ringen sees the core of the old progressive continuity in the building of inclusive political and social institutions. Inclusiveness nourished progress. What Reagan unleashed was ultimately an assault on inclusiveness and national cohesion. A small minority was 'confiscating the nation's wealth and destroying political equality', at great cost to national strength.

While an enumeration of dysfunctions in the American system 'would make up a long list,' the core defects he believes are readily pinpointed. Of the main constitutional institutions, 'only the presidency is in working order. Congress is bereft of capacity, [and] the Supreme Court has taken on powers it should not have.' Congressional disability was on stark display on the recent issues of deficit reduction and the so-called fiscal cliff. But of greater long term importance was Congress's loss of autonomy. The men and women who serve there are not 'straightforwardly delegates of their constituencies but also dependents of financial sponsors.' A democracy 'with both extreme economic inequality and the institutionalization of private money as a political resource' was impossible. Under these conditions, democracy dies. It is not what might happen, it is what is happening' (his emphasis).

The political culture too is distorted and inadequate. There is popular anger with Washington, but it is anger 'without direction'. Congress 'may be despised but it is not under any pressure to reform itself.' And a 'politicized Supreme Court is let off scot free before the tribunal of the people.' Additionally, 'the wilful destruction of political equality, a foundational democratic requirement, 'is accepted to be a right.'

The extent of the dysfunctionalities, Ringen repeats, is new. They constituted a binding knot on American government. In sum, the constitutional institutions, Congress and the Supreme Court, 'are in need of radical reform'; that reform 'can come only from and through those selfsame institutions; but Congress is 'unable' and the Supreme Court is 'disincline[d]' to take such steps'. 114 Packer and Ringen's analyses are similar and their conclusions damning.

#### ANGLO-AMERICAN CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY

On OECD data for 22 nations in the organization, over the period from the mid-1980s to the late 2000s, income inequality between the top and bottom deciles, was 14 to 1 in the United States and 10 to 1 in Britain. Measured on the Gini coefficient, income inequality among member states was the third worst in the United States, and fifth worst in Britain. The rate of increase in inequality in Britain was above the OECD average. They made the general observation that 'without a comprehensive strategy for inclusive growth, inequality will continue to rise.' 115

The socio-economic dysfunctionalities considered in this chapter suggest that the overall situation is worse in the United States than in Britain, as is the capacity of the state to introduce remedial action. Nevertheless, skepticism would seem to be the appropriate response to suggestions in 2012 from within the governing center-right coalition in London favoring introducing new 'moral markets' and a 'responsible capitalism'. While Prime Minister Cameron had mentioned these terms, he had not moved to put them into effect, while he had reportedly joined with George Osborne to block a plan, favored by Liberal Democrats, for workers to be represented on company remuneration committees considering executive pay. <sup>116</sup> Much evidence suggests that rightwing ideologists in the leadership of the Conservatives retain a strong commitment to furthering their neo-liberal program featuring, for example, 'creative social destruction'.

Though the Labour opposition could expect trade union and civil society support, under Ed Miliband it was far from promoting a reformist agenda, and was instead proclaiming in early 2012 that it was every bit as fiscally sound as the Conservatives; they supported the government's spending cuts, and public sector pay would remain frozen under Labour. Trade union re-

sponse was hostile. Len McCluskey, secretary general of Unite, the country's biggest trade union, said that such proposals "w[ould] lead to the destruction of the Labour party as constituted and certain election defeat", while his counterparts in GMB and Unison, respectively Paul Kenny and Dave Prentis, said they would reconsider their affiliation with Labour, and accused Miliband of "breathtaking naivety". 117

Trade unions pointed to the wider social impact of the party leadership's proposals. Acceptance of the government's austerity cuts meant the closure of public libraries and swimming pools in many places, at a time when such facilities had acquired increased public support from the unemployed and underemployed, some in areas known as Labour heartlands. Liverpool city council remained under Labour control, but Whitehall provided four-fifths of the council's money, that sum had been cut by 30 percent, and the council had announced library closures. Inner-city Walton was one of Labour's safest parliamentary seats, and its MP polled 72 percent of the vote in 2010. In failing to say that they would not reverse such closures, Labour created big problems for both its supporters and itself. "It is unfair to the voting public that the parties are all saying the same thing," said Gordon Ross, a retired academic who used the library for research, adding "there has to be an argument about th[is] policy." 118

Inequalities ramified. Another large group of people who were doing badly in Britain around 2012 were large categories of unskilled and semiskilled workers. Outside of the National Health Service, one of the largest employee blocks in the country were those who worked for the big four supermarket chains, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrison, some 900,000 people. Those representing 'the working poor' were now dominant among the impoverished, with nearly two-thirds of children in poverty living not with supposedly feckless 'Chavs', but in working families. A new report, 'Face the Difference', had indicated that the men and women who packed the supermarket shelves, were paid an average wage of six pounds 83 pence an hour. Only one in seven of them received the higher, the Living Wage rate, of eight pounds 30 in London and seven pounds 20 outside the capital. Another alternative rate available was the 'UK Living Wage', a non-binding rate set by the Centre for Social Policy for the very low paid. According to Williams, the big supermarkets 'had been abetted in this [neglect] by the last [Labour] government', and under Cameron's austerities things had not improved. The Prime Minister had referred to the Living Wage as 'an idea whose time had come', but had not acted on this insight.

The four chains were said to be enjoying big expansion and profits, while a large strata of their employees were falling into greater debt, unable to afford new clothing for their children and forced to rely on state benefits for survival. Case studies noted a mother who tried to hold down two part-time jobs, hardly ever saw her children, couldn't afford to use the Underground and thus lost time with her kids in time-consuming bus travel across London. The polarization in pay and conditions in this sector was extreme. Based on what has been precisely termed 'State-Subsidized Corporate Super-Profits', Philip Clarke, CEO of Tesco, received, for example, some 6.9 million pounds a year and Dalton Philips of Morrisons got 4 million pounds. 119

British people not only had a far better understanding of the realities of class and inequalities than their American counterparts, but British workers also had a history and popular culture of resistance and embryonic socialist action. The historian Tristram Hunt, a biographer of Engels, reminded people at much the same time, that Britain had socialism as well as capitalism in its psyche. Cameron might want to believe that the political argument had already been won for neo-liberalism, "but there was another story of Britishness . . . a tradition of redistribution, intervention and socialism." When capitalism was beginning in Britain there had appeared an essentially English critique of unregulated capitalism mounted, as noted in chapter 2, by the Levellers and Diggers, and epitomized in Colonel Rainborough's call (of 29 October 1647) resounding down the centuries that 'the poorest he in England hath a life to live as the greatest he.' During the rise of the blood-stained Industrial Revolution, British people could accept the market, Hunt said, but not an irresponsible capitalism which undermined the common good. The cooperative movement, the trade unions and the Chartists represented, for Hunt, 'British distaste for free-market fundamentalism.' Nick Clegg's proposals on employee ownership and Miliband's scorn for predatory capitalism were 'in tune with the British psyche.' 120

This popular culture constituted potentially strong social support for a genuine reform process in Britain. Maurice Glasman, a Labour peer, wished to build upwards and outwards on the basis of values shared within the labor movement historically; "reciprocity, mutuality and solidarity." Only democratic association built on these practices could resist the power of capitalism and Thatcherite attacks in the name of rampant individualism. Labour must "recall its vocation as the democratic driver of the politics of the common good." This, not hasty subscription to current Conservative policies, was the way forward. <sup>121</sup>

A comparable notion to that of Blue Labour was Red Tory, put forward by Philip Blond in 2009 from within Conservative ranks. Labour had failed to put forward a coherent alternative, but the greater failings were those of the Conservatives who, in devotion to inappropriate laissez faire values, were ignoring both the excesses of those at the top and the increasing poverty of the poor. In late 2011, all that the latter were being offered "was less welfare and lower wages." The condition of those at the bottom of society, moreover, was "rapidly becoming the norm for those in the middle too", where welfare and well-paid work were falling away, and conventional middle class life, especially regarding access to higher education, was unsustainable. Blond

entertained the suggestion that the left had been right, as an American-style winner-take-all philosophy was producing "deep immorality at the top of [British] society", and "an economy that was increasingly run in the interests of those . . . who own everything," but "could no longer command wide-spread support." The outlook, he thought, might well be a stark one; "serf-dom for the many and lordship for the few." 122 Thus complementarity at the top in British politics between Cameron and Miliband and an increasing uniformity of failure within the Anglo-American model.

#### **NOTES**

- 1. Citation and assessment of Max Hastings, 'Is Democracy Dying?', *Daily Mail*, London, 23 June 2013.
- 2. David Marquand, Britain Since 1918: The Strange Career of British Democracy, London, Phoenix, 2009, p. 278.
- 3. Owen Jones, *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class*, London and New York, Verso, 2011, pp. 34, 41, 47 and 60–61.
  - 4 Ihid
  - 5. Andrew Grice, "Slum UK", Independent Online, 8 September 2011.
  - 6. Title of an article by Deborah Orr, Guardian Online, 31 August 2011.
  - 7. Jones, op. cit., pp. 34 and 52.
- 8. Thatcher railed against class as a communitarian illusion and communist notion while founding a great deal of her thinking and actions on this factor. Jones states that her programme 'was the culmination of a class war waged, on and off, by the Conservatives for over two centuries.' He quotes Stanley Baldwin, a future prime minister, admitting that "the Conservatives can't talk of class war [because] they started it", and Arthur Balfour, another grandee, boasting that the failed General Strike of 1926 "taught the working class more in four days than years of talking could have done". Ibid., pp. 40–41. If Oliver Cromwell's views on the Levellers, circa 1649, noted in chapter 2, are taken into account the roll-call of right wing class warfare starts with the origins of capitalism in Britain and is at least some four centuries long.
  - 9. Ibid., pp. 62-63.
  - 10. Jones, op. cit., pp. 50-51.
- 11. Granville Williams (ed.), *Shafted: The Media, the Miners' Strike and the Aftermath*, Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, London, 2009, pp. 14–15.
  - 12. Quoted in Jones, op. cit., p. 55.
- 13. Milne, 'A Generation on, the Miners' Strike can Speak to our Time', *Guardian Online*, 12 March 2009.
  - 14. Jones, op. cit., pp. 56-57.
  - 15. Williams, op. cit., pp. 15-16.
  - 16. Milne, op. cit.
- 17. Williams, op. cit., p. 17, with reference to the views of the Energy Secretary, Cecil Parkinson.
  - 18. Ibid., pp. 17-18.
  - 19. Marquand, op. cit., pp. 286-89.
  - 20. The sinking of the Belgrano cost the lives of 323 sailors.
  - 21. Marquand, op. cit, pp. 290-92.
  - 22. Ibid., pp, 292-93.
  - 23. Jones, op. cit., pp. 69-70.
- 24. The impact of the victory on Thatcher personally, says Jenkins, was 'stunning.' Decisiveness and determination became her watchwords, and 'she felt licensed to push forward with what became known as Thatcherism.' Simon Jenkins, 'Falklands War Thirty Years On . . .', *Guardian Online*, 1 April 2012.

- 25. The word first appeared in the Collins English Dictionary in 2005. There is no agreement on the origins of the term, but various popular myths note the Romany word, *chavi*, for child, and a supposed acronym, of Council Housed and Violent. Chavs are thus lazy, hopeless and dependent, and the objects of scorn, contempt and isolation. Jones, op. cit., Introduction.
  - 26. Ibid., pp, 25 and 31.
- 27. Ibid., pp. 122–26. Her career as a reality star had begun in 2002, and before her death at age 27 in 2009, she said, "Everything I have, my houses, my money, is going to my sons [aged eight and seven]. I always wanted my family to have what I never could, no matter what it might cost." No author named, *Mail Online*, 2 October 2011.
  - 28. Jones, op. cit., pp. 56, 64 and 80.
- 29. Based on the periodic release of National Archives' files in December 2011, Alan Travis, 'Thatcher Government Toyed With Evacuating Liverpool After 1981 Riots', *Guardian Online*, 30 December 2011.
  - 30. Hall, "The March of the Neoliberals", Guardian Online, 12 September 2011.
- 31. Britain Thinks, "What about the Workers?", and John Rentoul, "Threatened, Isolated, Under Siege: the UK's Working Class Today", *Independent Online*, 26 June 2011.
  - 32. 'The Misinterpreted Middle'. The Economist, 27 March 2010.
- 33. He also noted that the media frequently suggested that much higher incomes—figures around 100,000 pounds—constituted middle class earnings. Hari, 'If You're Looking for Class War, Just Read Cameron's Policies,' *Independent Online*, 9 April 2010.
- 34. As noted in Jones, op. cit., p. 33. Another study, author not named, of attitudes in Barrow, once known for its shipyards, revealed that while 66 percent of people there had identified themselves as working class in 1964, a not appreciably different 58 percent still did so in 2005. Caroline Davies, "Barrow, Capital of Blue-Collar Britain", *Observer Online*, 5 October 2008.
- 35. Tim Lott, "Class Is the River That Runs through the English Soul", *Independent Online*, 6 December 2009.
  - 36. Quoted in Rentoul, op. cit., and Davies, op. cit.
  - 37. Jones, op. cit., p. 69.
  - 38. Ibid., pp. 96-98, and Marquand, op. cit., pp. 356 and 363.
- 39. Guardian Weekly, 14 June 2001 and 15 April 2004, and Chris Mullin, Decline and Fall: Diaries 2005–2010, London, Profile Books, 2011, p. 5.
  - 40. Marquand, op.cit., p. 367.
  - 41. Ibid., pp. 389-90.
- 42. Cook was Foreign Secretary 1997–2001, then Leader of the House of Commons until 2003. Marquand is quoting here from his book, *The Point of Departure*, ibid., pp. 389–91.
  - 43. Ibid., p. 394.
- 44. Mullin was MP for Sunderland South, 1987–2010. Returning to London from his electorate on 10 May 2005, he met a constituent who greeted him warmly and told him, "I voted for Labour, but not for Blair. That man is detested." Mullin, op. cit., Introduction and p. 4,
- 45. 'Power to the People: The Report of the Power Inquiry', The Joseph Rowntree Trust, York, 2006.
  - 46. Ibid., p. 31.
- 47. Ibid., p. 195. But over the full 13 years of Blair-Brown government, and despite their repeated pro-wealth and middle class orientation, some figures suggested that the poorest 20 percent of the population may have been 12–13 percent better off, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies in March 2010. Noted in Mullin, op. cit., p. 437.
- 48. Power Inquiry, pp. 150 and 206–7. In detail: the Inquiry noted 'the increasing reliance of political parties on large donations from individuals and organisations has reduced the need to expand membership and seek small donations from a large number of individuals . . . thus reducing party engagement with the wider public . . . membership subscriptions [now] play a very small role in party finances . . . approximately 30 percent of Liberal Democrat finances, 10 percent for the Conservative Party, and only 8 percent for Labour. The rest is predominantly raised through large donations from organisations or individuals.' In 2004, Labour reported an income of some 29 million pounds, the Conservative Party some 20 million and the Liberal Democrats 5 million pounds.

- 49. Aditya Chakrabortty, 'Britain is Ruled by the Banks, for the Banks,' *Guardian Online*, 12 December 2011.
  - 50. Inquiry, pp. 33-35 and 181.
- 51. Well described by Christopher Hitchens, No One Left to Lie To: The Triangulations of William Jefferson Clinton, London and New York, Verso, 1999, ch. 1.
  - 52. Inquiry, pp., 33 and 46. Graphs of turnout and party memberships are on pp. 46 and 47.
  - 53. Ibid., p. 28.
  - 54. Ibid., pp. 42-52.
  - 55. Ibid., pp. 58–62 and 78–79.
  - 56. Ibid., pp. 133-34.
  - 57. Ibid., p. 228.
  - 58. Ibid., pp. 258–59.
- 59. Martin Bell, *A Very British Revolution*, London, Icon Books, 2009, Introduction and pp. 9–11 and Simon Hattenstone, 'MPs Expenses Scandal', *Guardian Online*, 11 May 2012.
- 60. Prime Minister Brown assured the public that "the money [for parliamentary assistance] is actually going to people doing the job." Cameron's figure was imprecise, based he said on 'a ring around' among his MPs. BBC News Online, 1 February 2008.
  - 61. Bell, op. cit., pp. 7–11.
  - 62. Mullin, op. cit., pp. 328-29.
  - 63. Bell, op. cit., pp. 8–9.
- 64. Gaby Hinsliff, Toby Helm and Ross Slater, 'House of Shame', *Guardian Online*, 10 May 2009.
- 65. On the word of Harry Cohen, a Labour MP, who was candid about the use of housing expenses; he had named as his main home a holiday caravan in Mersea, and claimed over the years more than 300,000 pounds on expenses for his constituency home. Bell, op. cit., pp. 33, 34
  - 66. Ibid., pp. 72-73.
  - 67. Ibid., pp. 105-7.
- 68. Jo Revill, 'Pressure on Speaker to Go after Top Aide Quits', *Guardian Online*, 24 February 2008.
  - 69. Bell, op. cit., p. 108
  - 70. Anil Dawar, Guardian Online, 4 April 2008.
  - 71. 'The MP's Expenses: The Full List, Data Blog, Guardian Online, 3 January 2012.
  - 72. Hattenstone, op. cit.
  - 73. Op. cit., p. 93.
- 74. Polly Toynbee, 'It's the Epic Flight of the White Working Class That Labour Should Really Fear', *Guardian Online*, 23 May 2008.
- 75. Based on a survey of 2,000 people conducted for the committee by Ipsos Mori in April. *BBC Online*, 15 September 2006.
- 76. Hari, 'If You're Looking for Class War, Just Read Cameron's Policies', *Independent Online*, 9 April 2010.
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- 78. David Leigh and Ian Griffiths, 'The Mystery of Tony Blair's Finances', *Guardian Online*, 1 December 2009. A later suggestion was that he had built an 'estimated personal fortune of 20 million pounds' since 2007. Jonathan Brown, 'Tony Blair Is Unaccountable over Business Interests', *Independent Online*, 26 September 2011.
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- 80. Stephen Kelly, 'Toxteth's Toxic Legacy', *Independent Online*, 1 July 2011; and Alan Travis, 'National Archives Reveal Historic Parallels between 2011 and 1981 Riots' and 'Thatcher Government Toyed with Evacuating Liverpool'. *Guardian Online*, 30 December 2011.
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- 85. Hugh Muir and Yemisi Adegoke, 'Were the Riots about Race', Guardian Online, 8 December 2011.
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- 91. Polly Curtis and Vikram Dodd, 'Riot Sentence Rift Opens between Liberal Democrats and Conservatives, Guardian Online, 17 August 2011 and Nina Lakhani, 'Draconian Judge Says Riot Sentences Were Fair', *Independent Online*, 16 June 2012.

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- 93. Shiv Malik, 'UNICEF Criticises Britain for Jailing Children', Guardian Online, 9 October 2011.
- 94. Matthew Taylor, et. al., "It Was Everything", Reading the Riots, Guardian Online, 2 July 2012.
- 95. Sandra Laville, Guardian Online, 8 August 2012. She includes a full list of the defendants and their sentences.
  - 96. Tony Judt, Ill Fares the Land, p. 109.
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  - 98. Lexington, 'Fat Cats and Corporate Jets,' The Economist, 9 July 2011.
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- 110. Chris McGreal, 'The US Schools with Their Own Police', Guardian Online, 9 January 2012
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- 114. Stein Ringen, *Nation of Devils: Democratic Leadership and the Problem of Obedience*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2013, pp. 8–9, and 205–13.
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- 118. Patrick Wintour, 'Ed Miliband Leading Labour to Destruction', *Guardian Online*, 16 January 2012.
- 119. Zoe Williams, 'Who Pays the Tesco CEO's Wages of 6.9 million Pounds a Year?', *Guardian Online*, 18 January 2012, and Grice and Cassidy, 'Cameron Reveals His Vision', op. cit.
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### Chapter Five

## Democratization from Portugal to Poland, 1970s-1990s, and in Tunisia and Egypt Since 2010

Opposition to Soviet communist dictatorships in central Europe between the 1970s and the early 1990s, was everywhere the main concern, and democratization was a weaker and limited process. Opposition to fascist domination in Portugal was, however, closely interlinked with democratization over an intense 19 months. To unravel the interrelationships between the national and democratic issues, the immediate and the much longer term political processes, and to highlight their salient features, only a select number of countries will be considered. Portugal was first chronologically, but it was most outstanding for the role played by popular, left-wing military forces in ending a 50-year-old extreme right-wing dictatorship which had enjoyed American support, and for the linkage perceived by the soldiery and people between decolonization in Africa and democratization at home. The mobilization of a large popular movement based on workplaces and neighborhoods began immediately with the bloodless coup of 25 April 1974, and unleashed the energies of ordinary people. This unique revolutionary movement ended 19 months later with the establishment of a constitutionally based centrist government in Lisbon, backed by the then West Germany, with the aim, attractive to many Portuguese, of European integration. Poland was notable for its long opposition to communism, and even more for the large size literally millions of people—and determination of its organized working class in what became a moderate, 'self-limiting' democratization. Suppressed by martial law in 1981, Solidarity redeveloped to total some 10 million members in 1989, and became for a time, in association with a strong intelligentsia, Europe's largest liberal social movement.

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Anti-communism and freedom saw one of its most visible but restricted successes in the collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) at the end of 1989, accompanied by the immediate absorption of the GDR into the much larger, richer and conservative Federal Republic, with the crucial backing of Herman Kohl in Bonn and the non-interventionist stance of Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow. This instant transition had rather less to do with democracy than a quest for stability and prosperity and the reintegration of the German people in a functioning liberal polity. Late opposition to Soviet dictatorship in Czechoslovakia, produced a 'velvet', non-radical reformist process, though the country had once possessed the strongest and most effective communist party in Central Europe (the KSC). It had contested free elections in 1946 and obtained 38 percent of the vote and 114 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly. Together with its social democratic allies, it held a narrow majority. But the assertion of Soviet power in 1948 followed by four decades of rigid dictatorship, opened the way for another non-socialist reform process. Demonstrations were not used for mass mobilization, but for levering concessions from the state. Stress was placed on rather abstract ethical values like "living in truth" by leading intellectuals like Vaclev Havel (and Adam Michnik in Poland) as the intended bases for a new civil society and ultimately, they hoped, for an active popular democracy. Freedom and liberal democracy ostensibly triumphed, but it was in fact a simulacrum of Thatcherite Britain where power lay not with an active citizenry but with new nationalist elites who understood freedom as unchecked personal enrichment. Across much of central Europe, according to Michnik, "the worst thing about Communism [wa]s what came after"2, the abandonment of shared communitarian values and the elevation of unrestrained, nihilistic elitism.

#### THE CARNATION REVOLUTION

On 25 April 1974, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) rose in revolt against the dictatorship in Lisbon—the militarist regime of Antonio Salazar 1926 to 1932 and of Marcello Caetano subsequently; the world's most enduring fascist system. The coup caused the collapse of the regime, and it took the United States and major European states like West Germany by 'complete surprise.' In a matter of hours the streets filled with multitudes of people celebrating euphorically the overthrow, and showering the soldiers with red carnations. Having failed to follow the planned decolonization policies of France and Britain that began a quarter-century earlier, small and underresourced Portugal, with a population of less than 10 million, faced a deep impasse attempting to sustain military forces in Africa of over 150,000. By the mid-1970s that war had lasted some 13 years and was consuming up to 50 percent of the national budget. The physical burdens had fallen most

heavily on the soldiers. 'Nearly every young man' was drafted for service in Africa. Many junior officers had served several tours of duty and, according to Hammond, were exhausted.<sup>3</sup> Many of them had concluded too that the war was unjust and unwinnable. Some of those who acted on 25 April had also acquired from their fighting experience a respect for the abilities of men like Amilcar Cabral in Guinea-Bissau, assassinated by the secret police, the PIDE, in 1973.4 Hammond states that 'Guinea became an early center for the MFA'. As officers were rotated home they regularly swelled the ranks of the new movement.<sup>5</sup> For Houser, no other African leader had a clearer understanding of the socio-political dynamics than he: he had founded the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) in 1956, and had begun by organizing in rural areas through the provision of schools and health centers. Armed struggle was not initiated until 1963, and a decade later the PAIGC was poised for victory. For Hodges, it was 'the success of the liberation movements in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau', in particular, that led to the downfall of the Salazarist-Caetano regime, and to independence for the colonies.<sup>6</sup> In taking power the MFA committed itself to the restoration of civil and political liberties, the democratic election of a constituent assembly within a year, to achieving a 'political, not military solution' in the colonies, and to an economic policy 'in the service of the Portuguese people, especially of the heretofore least privileged sectors of the population.' Portugal recognized the independence of Guinea-Bissau in September 1974.8

Democratization and decolonization in Portugal, 1974–1975, was a far more popular, revolutionary and conjoined process than democratization in Central Europe fifteen years later. This came from the aims and experiences of the MFA, and from the pressures and energies emanating directly from a newly-freed people. Students, soldiers, landless workers, and the homeless in the cities forced the pace of change, in a sometimes chaotic movement, ahead for instance of the moderate tactics urged by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) regarding land seizures and wage-restraint by urban workers. It was a movement, says Maxwell, 'born of struggle and conscious choices at critical moments' by men and women 'of all classes', regions and educational levels, and it was the combination of 'people power in the urban neighborhoods and peasant power in the countryside' that constituted much of the country's democratic exceptionality.

But it was also consistent and responsible to the people to a large degree. After the establishment of a 'Council of the Revolution' as the supreme transitional authority of the state, on 11–12 March 1975, 'joined by an assembly of 240 representative of the three armed services', a number of critical measures followed, including the nationalization of the banks and insurance companies, placing a major section of Portuguese industry and the media in public hands. At the same time, the original commitment of the

MFA to the holding of elections for a Constituent Assembly within one year of the April coup was reaffirmed and successfully achieved. In the upshot the country placed itself among 'the most radical of European states.'9

Manifesting the country's distinctiveness in the context of the Cold War was the PCP, in 1974–75 the country's best organized party. Founded in 1921 and led by Alvaro Cunhal since 1943 (he had spent 13 years in prison in Portugal and 14 years in exile in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union), the PCP was an orthodox Leninist, cadre party, aligned with Moscow. But it also possessed diverse trade union support. According to Maxwell, it had a firm base in the grain-producing Alentejo, a region of large landed estates south of the Tagus River, with 'strongly implanted' support among the anti-clerical, landless rural laborers. Since 1970, they were also 'strongly entrenched' in the metallurgical unions, and increasingly influential among lower-middle class white-collar workers, especially the bank workers' unions in Lisbon and Oporto. <sup>10</sup> When the first civilian provisional government was named in May 1974, Cunhal was accorded the labor portfolio, because of the PCP's linkages to the trade union movement and its perceived moderating role therein. <sup>11</sup>

The Socialist Party (PSP) was then a much younger and weaker organization, founded only a year earlier in West Germany, and led by Mario Soares, a Lisbon-based lawyer. But its potentialities were already present in Soares's friendship with Willy Brandt, a notable figure in Germany's Social Democratic Party and governing circles. While it had only 'a minimal organizational base in Portugal', it was affiliated with the Socialist International, providing institutional and other linkages to the then ruling social democratic parties in Germany, Sweden and Britain. <sup>12</sup>

According the PCP a direct role in government, with significant political responsibilities, was a radical move in relation to the major Western powers. It was the first time that communists were represented in a Western European government since the beginning of the Cold War. Portugal had significance beyond its small size. It was a foundation member of NATO, and the country's airbase in the Azores provided an important military resource for the projection of United States' power into Africa and beyond. NATO and the United States reacted with horror. In classic Cold War thinking, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is said to have believed that 'Portugal was as good as lost to a communist power grab', and he 'made his misgivings abundantly clear' to visiting President Costa Gomes and Foreign Minister Soares in Washington in mid-October 1974. But while the United States toyed with the idea of a direct 'Latin American solution', to the supposed problem, Western Europe 'took the more practical approach' of infusing preferred parties with foreign cash, 'thr[owing] clandestine support behind the political parties of the center in Portugal', in a partial return to the assistance offered under Marshall Plan auspices to non-communist parties in Italy and France around 1946. Soares and the PSP were the recipients of 'substantial subsidies from West Germany via the SPD and that party's foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.' The Soviet Union's role, on the other hand, was uncertain and inconsistent with Kissinger's presumption of a power grab. Although it had 'invested heavily' in the PCP, it was divided on assisting the party during "the hot summer" of 1974–1975. Portuguese communists, for their part, were obsessed by the fate of Salvador Allende, the elected and overthrown socialist president in Chile just four years earlier, and the PCP had entered government with some reluctance, 14 on the initiative of the then transitional president, the right-wing General Antonio Spinola. 15

#### THE EXCITEMENT OF REVOLUTION

The popular euphoria which had greeted the coup was maintained at an extremely high level over the subsequent year, as it was extended into workplaces, neighborhoods and rural areas. Workers responded enthusiastically to new political freedoms by demanding pay raises and major changes in their work processes. The authoritarianism of the Fascist state had been reinforced in harsh factory discipline, and workers 'immediately demanded that it be ended' and 'took over the fascist trade unions.' <sup>16</sup> People spontaneously organized in urban neighborhoods, setting up 'commissions' to assess and address housing needs. Not only the poor and the working class, but also 'moderately well off people', suffered over-crowded, unrepaired and absolute shortages of housing in the 1960s and 1970s. Shantytown residents formed their own commissions. The Quinta das Fonsecas, near the University City in northern Lisbon, represented some 250 families. They held an assembly on 11 May 1974 to demand electricity, water and decent housing, and the entire meeting marched on the president's palace some eight kilometers away to deliver their demands. Other shantytown commissions were organized through the following spring and summer. <sup>17</sup> Shack dwellers acted similarly in South Africa later.

According to Hammond, the first year of the Portuguese revolution was a very exciting time for workers and people generally. They were 'constantly discovering new resources within themselves' and new powers over the employers and landlords who had dominated them. Many workers became active, even those who were not elected to commissions. The latter were said to be busy all day, every day, constantly confronting new problems. As one person explained it, "In a short time we lived centuries and centuries full of everything; people's lives changed completely. We would be at the factory, then the workers' commission, then the general assembly of all the workers. At night we would go to the popular assembly of all the workers' and neighborhood commissions of the area. It was a time of tremendous excitement."

Popular mobilization occurred too in schools and barracks, with similar effervescence and openness. 18

Organizing rural areas was difficult. In Alentejo, the farm-workers' tradition of struggle in association with the PCP offered a basis for rapid mobilization, but in northern villages, where the peasantry had no such supports, the response was slow. In the summer of 1975 the Communist Student Union launched a campaign to "bring April 25 to the north". Students conducted brief literacy and health classes in villages, but could claim little success from their intervention. <sup>19</sup>

The close association between the MFA and the popular movement developed over time through their firm support for colonial independence and full, meaningful freedom at home. When General Spinola began to speak publicly of the dangers of domestic chaos and appealed to the country's silent majority to demonstrate in Lisbon on 28 September, left-wing parties and workers' commissions called on their members to mobilize against a threat from the right, the MFA acted and forced Spinola out of office. Though still without formal power, the MFA was 'clearly in charge', and its successful defense against a conservative coup attempt, 'enhanced its popularity'. 20 The organizational strengths of the PCP offered no threat to the MFA and the popular movement. The Party had repeatedly demonstrated its full support for the MFA, while from the other side, 'the entire far left had rejected the PCP's centralist model of society'. 21 The MFA held executive and military power, and the popular movement stood with the MFA against a right-wing coup. The latter were also acquiring from their daily experience a deepening understanding of democratization. This was, in Hammond's words, that they 'would not be content with representative democracy, but demanded instead political institutions based on the active participation of all citizens.'22 This was a realization emerging from the new experiences of thousands of people, but notions of participatory democracy, if they were to be realized, would place Portugal well outside the liberal parameters of not least West Germany.

# THE DECLINE OF THE REVOLUTION AND THE RISE OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

During 1975 external events pressed heavily upon Portugal, stifling its revolutionary aspirations. With the defeat of Spinola and the consolidation of the MFA's power, differences between its radical and moderate factions on socio-economic issues were activated. A moderate faction argued for consolidation of the achievements to date, to preserve the revolution's broad social support, and resist identification with the PCP. There were signs that the Party was losing popular support and might do badly in forthcoming elec-

tions.<sup>23</sup> Economic crises deepened and multiplied. The United States had utilized the Azores airbase during Egypt's 1973 war against Israel, and the consequent Arab oil embargo hit Portugal hard.<sup>24</sup> Decolonization, earlier synonymous with freedom and democracy, soon acquired negative connotations, not only depriving the country of raw materials and markets—the colonies had accounted for 18 percent of exports—but also sending home huge numbers of unemployed people; some 150,000 demobilized troops and large numbers of former settlers.<sup>25</sup> Domestic unemployment rose at the same time from other external causes, as Portuguese emigration to northern Europe, in further consequence of world oil shortages, fell from 120,000 in 1973 to 45,000 in 1975.<sup>26</sup>

Opposition from the United States and its allies to radical democratization, combined with adverse international and domestic events, sharpened these pressures. NATO had expelled Portugal from its nuclear planning group after the PCP was accorded a role in government, while the European Common Market promised economic aid and closer association 'only if the political course changed.' In August the United States acted similarly when it was asked for emergency assistance in airlifting large numbers of refugees out of a deepening crisis in Angola. Western political preferences were clear and sharp. The CIA and West Germany's ruling party, as noted, 'financed the PS', while multinational firms were said to have curtailed their Portuguese operations and Western importers to have boycotted Portuguese products. The country's historic dependence on the major Western powers for imports, export markets, capital and labor markets rendered the country and its democratization highly vulnerable.<sup>27</sup> The import of these events and their domestic ramifications were not lost on the MFA. In late July, President Costa Gomes—the general officer chosen to replace Spinola because of his progressive reputation—called on the MFA's Assembly to recognize the new exigencies. While initially "practically the whole population was with our revolution, today . . . that is not true." He called for a slowing down of the revolution, and reminded delegates that "national independence will not be achieved in the short run by any path that alienates the West". 28 The corollary was of course that Portugal's independent popular democratization was unlikely to be achieved along pathways supported by the United States and Germany.

National elections for the Constituent Assembly, held as promised on 25 April 1975, appeared to confirm that political sympathies had moved to the right. Cunhal's PCP got only 12.5 percent of the vote, the Democrats (PPD) of Francisco Sa Carneiro, (soon renamed the Social Democratic Party PSD), won 26.4 percent, and Mario Soares and the SP came top with 37.9 percent. Turnout was an exceptional 91.7 percent.

The PS had made clear that it had no intention in office of 'pursuing socialist policies.' <sup>29</sup> It, 'and especially Mario Soares', made accession to the

European Community 'the highest priority among [its] foreign policy objectives.' Integration into the European Community came in 1986 and into the Western European Union in 1988. Soares had been on to something in offering Portugal a European future. Polls in the 1980s showed opinion in favor of NATO was as high as 64 percent, as compared with only 17 percent in neighboring Spain. And over the course of that decade, Brussels 'far surpassed Washington as a source of financial aid and assistance.' The European aspiration was encouraged, in Maxwell's euphemistic words, 'by the strong role played by outsiders in the struggle for Portuguese democracy, especially, although not exclusively, by the Germans.' 31

The decline of the revolutionary movement and the fracturing of its alliance with the military escalated through late 1975. As it looked for ways to coordinate its base organizations and increase its political power to meet challenges from rejuvenated centrist parties, the movement faced a weakening of its legitimacy with its grass roots, as it no longer worked exclusively in communities and workplaces. As a movement of mass organizations, it had claimed to be inclusive and representative of the whole community, but the demonstrated electoral appeal of the PS and PD/PSD undermined its old claims.

As demobilization proceeded, indiscipline worsened, to the point of mutiny, especially in the army, the most militant and politically divided of the three services. When a conservative government was formed in Lisbon, the Left, in opposition, mobilized against it. On 7 September masked soldiers appeared at a press conference to announce the formation of Soldiers United Will Win (SUV) to oppose the right turn in the Council of the Revolution and the government. Soon after SUV organized a large scale march of soldiers in Oporto, joined by popular organizations. Joint demonstrations of this kind occurred over weeks in Lisbon and other cities. At much the same time, an army captain announced that he had gone underground with 1,500 G-3 rifles which he would turn over to "the masses", while newspapers carried reports that thousands of weapons shipped back from Africa had disappeared from the docks. 32

Confrontational tactics antagonized the right and increased fears among many others that the country was becoming chaotic. Hammond believes that the popular movement was responsible for very little actual violence, and that more violence came from the right. But large and inherently disruptive demonstrations appeared to be the preferred tactics of the left, in circumstances quite different from those of the previous year.<sup>33</sup> As soldiers routinely disobeyed orders to restrain civilian demonstrators, the popular movement was increasingly isolated and politically weak.

After further rebellious incidents involving paratroops, the military right moved decisively against left-wing units on 25 November. For Hammond, the action was 'fatal to the popular movement, depriving it of the support of the armed forces which had been its main resource.' <sup>34</sup> But this was only part of the complex of relationships between the MFA and the popular left from the beginnings in April 1974.

Then there had been significant agreement that the state should assert significant control over the country's economic resources, and early steps like bank nationalization had been taken on this basis. Differences existed among those Hammond calls moderates and progressives only about the rate of change. But a contentious issue concerned the MFA itself, with moderates wanting minimal and temporary powers for the MFA, a view consistent with the MFA's initial promise for early constitutional elections, while other progressives favored a longer and stronger role for the radical soldiery.

But he also says that it was 'only the power of the popular movement [that] had turned the coup into a potential revolution', and 'the movement's initiatives were responsible for the [subsequent] major steps forward.' This ignores the fact that it was the soldiers' long experience of the fighting in places like Guinea Bissau that enabled them to see the intimate connection between colonial freedom generally and democratization at home. This insight was the soldiers' and it was this that had brought the jubilant crowds on to the streets in Lisbon, launching the Carnation revolution. Hammond was on firmer ground when he said that 'a stronger and more autonomous mass movement would have strengthened the revolution against its enemies', 35 strengthening, that is, both the popular movement and the MFA. But he here ignores the powerful influences which were working against the popular movement, externally the United States, West Germany, NATO and the Common Market, and internally the rising strength and resources of Soares and the PSP, backed by those who favored a return to civil order and good governance and turned out in large numbers in the first constitutional elections.

#### DEMOCRATIZATION IN PORTUGAL IN THE MID-1970S

The process was developed and carried forward by two main elements, the MFA and the Popular Movement, each composed of different groups and organizations. The MFA, under the circumstances of dictatorship, was the initiator, and was chiefly the army in Africa, the officers and conscripts engaged in actual fighting with the PAIGC (and Frelimo in Mozambique). It developed near the height of the decolonization movement in Africa, with independence in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique impacting strongly on Zimbabwe, South Africa and Angola, with wide international consequences and ramifications; it was ideological and real-power politics bound up together, highlighted by the intrusion of multi-state Cold War conflict—South Africa, Cuba, the Soviet Union, the United States, et. al.—directly into An-

gola in the second half of 1975, coincident with Angola's independence in November. Conflict was omnipresent, with Kissinger exaggerating the role of the PCP in Lisbon in the light of his involvement in the overthrow of constitutional government in Chile a few years earlier. Portugal's membership in NATO and possible engagement in the European Union complicated matters further. Democratization was also a struggle against one of the last remnants of Fascist power, which endeavored to maintain its domination until the end. Alvaro Cunhal had spent 27 years in prison and exile, Mario Soares had formed the PSP only in 1973 in West Germany, and the MFA only manifested its potency on the morning of 25 April.

The Popular Movement was the larger and more diverse formation of tens of thousands of people in their neighborhoods, workplaces and 'commissions'. It was multi-class, where urban and rural workers were probably the more organized and needful elements; the MFA based its initial economic program on the needs of 'the heretofore least privileged sectors of the population.'

The fall of fascism's half-century of domination unleashed great popular excitement and energies. People's growing consciousness of the powers latent within themselves and in the assemblies, neighborhood and other groups they organized, was the essence of democratization in revolutionary circumstances—paralleled a decade later in South Africa by the great number of civics and community groups that grew up around the UDF, noted in chapter three. The groups of the left shared a common aversion to the centralized controls favored by the PCP. The MFA and the Popular Movement complemented each other—the former as defender and guardian, and the latter as font of democratic ideas—which may have extended to an interest in participatory forms of decision making. During their operations they faced big pressures from Western institutions for the acceptance of orthodox liberal models. The developmental path supported by West Germany, Soares and the PSP, emphasized European integration, an attractive prospect for many jobless Portuguese. That they operated over 19 demanding months, was an indicator perhaps of their durability, relevance and popularity. Revolutionary moments are often just that. Democratization in Central Europe was sometimes merely a matter of hours and days, over before it had barely begun.

#### CENTRAL EUROPE: "WHEN HOPE REPLACED REPRESSION"

In a knowledgeable and perspicacious article, Neal Ascherson noted that in January 1989 'business was much as usual' in Soviet-ruled central Europe. By the end of the year, however, communist regimes which had ruled for 45 years had been overthrown by extraordinary public uprisings. Polish communism went first for substantive reasons. In October and November in the

GDR, 'the dauntless actions of millions of ordinary people in the streets, day after day', backed by the refusal of armed militias to fire on the demonstrators in Leipzig on 9 October, led to the ousting of Erich Honecker and his hated regime, and on 9 November the Berlin Wall was breached. <sup>36</sup> On 29 December, the dissident playwright Vaclav Havel became president of Czechoslovakia. Preludes to these and other big shifts were important, but Ascherson believes that it was in 1989 that 'ordinary people, on an enormous scale . . . lost their fear', having clearly seen over previous weeks that their rulers were incompetent and bereft of legitimacy. <sup>37</sup>

There is little doubt that these popular uprisings would not have happened so fast and with such apparent success if Mikhail Gorbachev had not become general secretary of the communist party of the Soviet Union in March 1985, and began promoting his new policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, or reform and openness. His message to the "captive nations" of Soviet Europe was widely propagated. In Ascherson's summary, it was remarkable for its openness and moderation: 'You are on your own. We would like you to choose the socialist path. But whatever course your nation decides to follow, the Soviet Union will not invade with tank armies to stop you, as it did in 1956 and 1968. Even if your communists are swept from power, we will not use force to save them.' In June he declared that to oppose freedom of choice was an historical impossibility, and at the United Nations in December he unequivocally stated that "Freedom of choice is a universal principle. There should be no exceptions." When Gorbachev called the ruling communist leadership together to oblige them to understand that they could no longer count on a Soviet rescue, his non-interventionist, freedom to choose message 'reached opposition groups and the people at large.' 38

It may be noted that Gorbachev's highly progressive position won no recognition in Washington. Concentrating on the details of Soviet military withdrawals, U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, 'missed the bigger picture entirely'—the revocation of the old Brezhnev Doctrine, even as the European Soviet edifice crumbled in front of her. As the leading Polish activist, Adam Michnik had it, America was "sleepwalking through history." <sup>39</sup>

Poland was the first to dismantle communism for a number of critical and concrete reasons not fully accommodated within Ascherson's depiction. The earliest and most active was the rise of Solidarity, a classic working-class organization, which in 1980 initiated a strike among workers at the Gdansk Shipyard, and 'created a mighty wave of strikes [that] flooded the whole country.' Supported by opposition groups, the intelligentsia and the Catholic Church, this led to the Gdansk Accords, and the establishment of trade unions independent of the communist regime. <sup>40</sup> Solidarity was outlawed under martial law provisions the following year, <sup>41</sup> but it grew again into a social movement of some 10 millions. Its founder was Lech Walesa, who together

with 'a dozen or so' compatriots, including Michnik, stood out in their audacity and understanding, and made Poland 'the first country to pull the brick out of the monolithic wall of Communism'. <sup>42</sup> Solidarity believed that 'it was the only instrument able to force the Communist authorities to negotiate Poland's way out of dictatorship,' <sup>43</sup> stressing all the while its tactics of negotiations and readiness to compromise. When a new wave of strikes began in 1988, a nerveless and divided government relegalized Solidarity and opened round-table talks with the opposition. Multi-party elections were approved, Solidarity reluctantly accepted that the polls would have to be distorted by reserving a block of seats for 'official' candidates, and in early September the first non-Communist government in Soviet Europe came into being. <sup>44</sup>

In East Germany, protests began suddenly when municipal election results in May 1989 were seen to be 'blatantly, crudely falsified'. About 60,000 East Germans were already in Hungary waiting the opportunity to move to the West, others in large numbers were boarding trains for the frontier. Only then, notes Ascherson, did numerically tiny dissident groups dare to set up a new party, Neues Forum. In early November a demonstration by some halfa-million in Berlin thunderously called for change. As the militia in Leipzig had refused to heed Honecker's call for them to fire on demonstrators, border guards took no action when tens of thousands of East Berliners piled through the Wall and began its dismantlement. But what they wanted was apparently less democratization and much more market choice and ethno-national unity. According to Ascherson, the end of the dictatorship came as follows: 'The communists lingered on for a few months, proclaiming their conversion to social democracy. Neues Forum and others made plans for a new, truly democratic East Germany. All were irrelevant. By late November, the crowds which had been roaring, "We are the People!" had changed a word: "We are one people" . . . on 3 October 1990 a million people gathered in Berlin at the Brandenburg Gate to celebrate the formal reunification of Germany."45 A democratizing East Germany was over before it began.

Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution preceded organization and arose spontaneously among 'hundreds of thousands of ordinary men and women' around 17 November. That was the day on which students traditionally marched through Prague to commemorate the self-immolation of a student, Jan Palach, in 1969, in protest against Soviet occupation. The police were said to have suddenly rushed at the marchers beating them with clubs. A rumor spread that a demonstrator had been killed, and in the confusion, students 'occupied their universities and larger, angrier crowds began to gather in the streets.' It was 'a true mass uprising', as 'the people took over the city.' Some days later, the communist leadership resigned. Vaclav Havel and a few friends from the Charter 77 human rights movement were said to have commandeered a theatre and on the spot 'invented a new movement

called Civic Forum' and started to debate where the revolution should go. Within a few days, as Ascherson relates, 'they found that they were turning into a revolutionary leadership, then a provisional government.' A meeting of a quarter of a million people symbolically informed the regime that its time was up. Crowds were chanting "Havel to the Castle", and after 'first treating the idea as a joke', he accepted. After becoming president on 29 December, he freed political prisoners and abolished the political police. Those participating in these events—among them Tony Judt—had "the intoxicating feeling that history was being made by the hour." 46

Havel, says Meyer, was 'a legend in his own time'; he had been jailed many times, once for four years, and believed that writers in a totalitarian society had a special responsibility to speak out when few others did. He was the intellectual voice of what was until the end of November 1989 an almost nonexistent opposition, and Czechoslovakia's foremost dissident 'almost by default.'

Judt's later thinking cautions against over-inflating the achievements of the Velvet Revolution and the role of Havel therein. Admiration for Charter 77 should not ignore the fact that 'only 243 people signed it in the first place and about a thousand more over the course of the next decade.' A 'retreat from politics', and a privatization of opinion, had gone 'a very long way' in Czechoslovakia since Moscow's crushing of the Prague Spring. Thousands of Czechs and Slovaks had abandoned public life in favor of political conformism and material consumption. Havel himself, says Judt, was obviously 'not a political thinker in the conventional, Western sense.' 48

If 1989 was the annus mirabilis in central Europe, what followed was a transition from communism to Thatcherism, and a slough of division and dissatisfaction for many. Ascherson believed that what most ordinary people wanted in the new decade was 'something like social democracy'—freedom, a regulated market economy and a strong welfare state. But big divisions existed among the emerging political elites, and with the removal of the glue of anti-communism, it became clear that what many of the leading new nationalists wanted, as Michnik noted, was the freedom to make money. Ordinary people were much mistaken in their communitarian concerns, as the countries in transition from Soviet communism 'imported an undiluted version of Thatcherism'. 49 The communism to anti-communism transition was a move from 'repressive egalitarianism to unconstrained greed.' 50 Price controls were abolished, subsidies cancelled, currencies floated. State industries were privatized. Huge gaps appeared between rich and poor, with a new predatory super-rich class, on one side, and near destitute pensioners and the redundant on the other. Social services like the elaborate network of free day nurseries for working mothers in East Germany vanished. 51

Many Central European intellectuals were not in a good position to understand the enormity of Thatcherism, even if they wished to do so. In the view of Judt and Snyder, they had 'given up on economics'. Economics by the late 1980s 'had come to seem like political thinking and therefore corrupt.' Havel was one of those who was inclined to see macroeconomics as 'repressive in and of itself.' This was their position at just the time when Thatcher was radically changing British society and Friedrich Hayek was persuasively asserting that state intervention in the economy was 'always and everywhere the beginnings of totalitarianism.' <sup>52</sup>

The transition soon carried away the revolutionaries themselves. Leaders of Neues Forum, like Baerbel Bohley and Jens Reich, returned to teaching and painting. In Poland, a new group of professional politicians had replaced the Solidarity veterans by 1993. Lech Walesa, the Gdansk electrician who had personified the hopes of millions of people about freedom and justice, <sup>53</sup> now destroyed his own image, says Michnik, by a ruthless pursuit of the presidency, undermining the constructive efforts of colleagues. <sup>54</sup> He proved to be an incompetent and unpredictable president, and became the first to employ 'the rhetoric of boorishness [in public discourse] that found so many followers later on. <sup>55</sup> He was out of office by 1995.

In Czechoslovakia, which split into two in 1993, most of the Charter 77 leadership were by then without office. Vaclav Havel stayed on isolated in the Castle until 2003.<sup>56</sup> An exemplar of the new ruling elite, was Vaclav Klaus, a state economist, who named Milton Friedman as the greatest living American, and claimed that "I am our Milton Friedman." In 1991 he founded the Civic Democratic Party, which became one of the country's largest and most right wing parties. Prime minister 1992–1997, he defeated Havel to become president in 2003, subsequently reelected.<sup>57</sup>

Michnik, in the early 1990s, was using his editorship of the *Gazeta Wy-borcza* to argue for morality and dignity against 'mindless self-defeating vengeance and retaliation', <sup>58</sup> some of the more noxious features of post-communism. He vividly recalled August 1980 when "Poland changed the face of the world. . . . [I]t was a beautiful time with beautiful people. I was thirty four years old and convinced that my generation was writing an important chapter in history." Ascherson reported that 'nobody regret[ted] being part of a great and good revolution. <sup>59</sup>

But those who were without satisfying outlets for their ideals and experience, had little choice but try to enjoy, if they could, the normality of their daily lives. Ascherson recalled a Polish woman from 1989 as an 'intrepid conspirator for freedom'. Later, married with a grown-up daughter, she said, "I have a glass of fresh orange juice, an uncensored newspaper to read, a passport in my desk drawer. It's enough." In post-communist Poland, some of the revolutionaries made do with poetry. A girl in Leipzig said that in 1989, "I felt that I could fly." Ascherson concludes with the words that when the winds of history blow, people, like lovely birds, grow wings. And in that year 'for a few beautiful months, they flew.' Undoubtedly true, but scant

compensation for post-communism's poor majority, whose needs were political and their material needs basic.

Solidarity provided a strength and determination that Central Europe otherwise lacked, and a decade's durability until communism's collapse. That event had a great deal to do with Gorbachev's determination to let the 'captive nations' choose their own developmental paths. The international terrain in the latter half of the 1980s was highly favorable to the central European anti-communist revolutionaries, unlike the Portuguese anti-fascists earlier. Despite these advantages, some of Solidarity's strength was in its anti-communism, and after 1990, Walesa, Michnik and the other old revolutionaries were obliged to maneuver largely as individuals against the rising tide of nationalist, pro-market elites. Reform communism had found no purchase, as Neues Forum and Civic Forum showed. If Ascherson is right to state that ordinary people wanted social democracy, Havel and Michnik have other weaknesses to answer for regarding the practicality, currency and political relevance of their ideas. Vaclay Klaus arose with speed and smoothness on a Thatcherite program that had produced social decay in Britain when its progenitor was being swept from office by her own party. Havel's dismissal of economics was a costly omission for his fellow citizens.

#### NORTH AFRICA SINCE 2010: OUSTING THE DESPOTS

Egypt dwarfs Tunisia in population, territorial size and in GDP (where the ratio was approximately \$217 billion to \$44 billion), but in opposition to autocracy it showed the way forward in just a few swift weeks near the end of 2010. The catalyst was the immolation of a young, impoverished peddler, on 17 December, in the inland town of Sidi Bouzid, who had endured too much everyday brutality at the hands of officialdom. 60 News of the selfsacrifice was suppressed, but soon reached Tunis via social and foreign media. President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali reacted to the unprecedented tumult with military force. On 14 January Ben Ali and his family left the country with much of the loot he had acquired over the past 23 years. The significance of the events could not have been greater. For the first time in the Arab world. Chrisafis wrote, ordinary people in the streets had ousted a brutal dictator. It had been a spontaneous, popular and apparently leaderless and non-ideological action. 61 Their 'most impressive achievement' was to tear down the "wall of fear" carefully constructed around the regime. 62 Acting in Havel- and Michnik-like terms 'as if they were free', Tunisians had moved decisively towards seizing that freedom. According to Fisk, the power of Arab dictators like Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak was based on three interrelated bases, terror (or fear), corruption and propaganda. 63

Widening information about the unfitness of the regime and growing contacts between the people played a big role. A secret dispatch (of 2009) from the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia, Robert Godee, to Washington, released by Wikileaks in early 2011, described how Ben Ali and his clique "tolerate[d] no advice or criticism, whether domestic or international. Increasingly, they relie[d] on the police for control and focus[ed] on preserving power. . . . Corruption in the inner circle [wa]s growing. Even average Tunisians are keenly aware of it." In publishing this informed assessment, the Guardian included comments from a pseudonymous young Tunisian, "Sam", noting, in mid-January, how "a resigned cynicism about the regime under which he had grown up turned to hope. . . . Then a young man immolates himself. And then 20 Tunisians are killed in one day. And for the first time we see the opportunity to rebel..."64 Between 10 December and 11 January, an estimated 219 Tunisians were killed. 65 When thousands of protesters were gathered then in the center of Tunis, the locus of the fear surrounding the regime had seemingly shifted from the people to the despot himself; he claimed on 20 June that he had been deceived into leaving the country by reports (from the head of his presidential security) of a plot to assassinate him. <sup>66</sup>

Ben Ali had constructed an elaborate security system over the decades. Ramifying unpaid debt endlessly renewed was a foundational aspect of the 'Security Pact', which financed government action, supported the banking system and supposedly addressed social problems. A Fund of National Solidarity received obligatory voluntary contributions from companies and enterprises, and worked to eradicate what were officially termed 'zones of shadow', like poverty and inequality. The extensive chain of dependencies disguised accountability, while the Security Pact 'ensured peace and order over a long period.' The system focused, according to Hibou, on the prevention or management of crisis 'by caution, by consensus and by the support of all.' Power was not asserted by radical measures and shocks, but through smallscale interventions and halftones that ultimately enabled most people to compromise. As important as fear in this system was silence, as active ongoing public agency over the decades. Consensus was, as Hibou puts it, 'in dissociable from silence.' The consent of individuals was based on a mutually supporting silence. Until Bouazizi's flagrant, unanticipated sacrifice made this impossible.

Protest began initially among young people in peripheral and marginalized regions where job creation was parlous since 1990 and even bleaker after 2008; every year there were some 140,000 new job seekers, vying for at most 65,000 jobs, mainly located in the greater Tunis area and along the coast. Official data, under the rubric of silence, disguised such information and unemployment was not discussed. The integration of youth in the interior into Ben Ali's security pact became increasingly difficult, as their needs focused directly on basics like jobs and bread. Hibou calls them 'the spear-

head of opposition', which soon expanded to embrace 'all generations, classes and regions'. Daily demonstrations in support of the martyr were brutally suppressed and Tunis was engulfed in revolt. The security system then worked not to protect its creator, the president, but to preserve the regime. According to Hibou, a palace revolt was 'orchestrated by the general staff of the army and a section of the elite in power for over twenty years.' Their aim was to prevent the transformation of the popular uprising into a revolution. <sup>67</sup> Ben Ali moved with his family and much of his wealth into exile in Saudi Arabia, with the compelling assistance of the United States. On Ramadan's telling, close contact existed between the American embassy in Tunis and the commander-in-chief of the Tunisian army, and it was quickly decided to keep the army neutral. On 11 January, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton denounced the excessive use of force in Tunisia, and three days later 'gave the green light for Ben Ali's departure.' <sup>68</sup>

In 2011 Hosni Mubarak had ruled for 30 years, seven more than Ben Ali. But when the Egyptian people began to move decisively such longevity profited him little. This process too had its probable beginnings in a specific incident of egregious state brutality. On the night of 6 June 2010, Khaled Saieed, age 28, of Alexandria, was beaten to death in public by two plainclothes police. The young man reputedly spent much of his time with a computer, a guitar and a cat, and on 6 June he had greeted friends in the Space Net cybercafe not far from his home. Without preliminaries of any kind, the two police spent 20 minutes kicking Saieed and slamming his head into the concrete floor while he pleaded for mercy. This was witnessed by various people, and the assault only stopped when a physician managed to convince the police that they were beating a corpse. After family members were called to identify the body, a relative managed to take a cell phone camera photo: it showed Khaled's face cut and mangled, several teeth missing and blood pooled under his head. Along with a parallel earlier image, which could have been any modern Egyptian youth, the picture exploded on to the country's internet. According to Mahmoud Salem, aka "Sandmonkey", a progenitor of the Egyptian blogosphere, it was the picture of Khaled before he was killed that "galvanized people." The two together "showed the middle classes that their devil's bargain with the Ministry of the Interior meant nothing. Being silent and minding their own business wouldn't protect them."

The government attempted a crude cover-up of the killing, then tried to sweep it under the rug. But existing rights organizations like the April 6 Movement 'immediately rallied around the issue, and entirely new movements were born from it.' Khalil and others see it as the real start of the Egyptian revolution. The owner of the Space Net said that soon after mid-2010, "there wasn't anybody in Egypt who didn't know who Khaled Saieed was". 69

State brutality in Tunisia and Egypt, and peoples' reactions to it, were immediately intertwined. Fisk reported his Egyptian colleagues saying that Tunisians had shown them "how to have pride", while Soueif writes that when, on or around 25 January 2011, 'the Egyptian street started to move for the first time in thirty years' it did so 'under the leadership of the *shabab* (or youth) of Egypt.' <sup>70</sup> The older despot's end came relatively quickly thereafter, in just 18 days, with various delays and prevarications—he dismissed his cabinet on 28 January, vowed a few days later to stand down at the next 'elections' scheduled for September, claiming as he did so that he had "exhausted [his] life in serving Egypt and my people", and insisting, with evident reference to the already absent Ben Ali, that "I will die on the soil of Egypt and be judged by history." <sup>71</sup>

A fourth pillar of Mubarak's power, as more fleetingly of Ben Ali's, was the support of the United States, and this axis had its own big complications. Washington had established contacts with the April 6th Movement, and Ramadan says that President Obama's relations with Mohamed ElBaradei were excellent. While Washington was mindful of its immense strategic interests in Egypt and the Middle East, the Obama administration brought pressure to bear on Mubarak to step down. 72 But well after the crackdown on the protesters was underway, Secretary Clinton referred to Mubarak as a loyal friend and indeed as "family", 73 and not until 1 February, did President Obama state that the transition must be meaningful, peaceful and begin then. Ambassador Godee's cable of 2009 had summarized Egypt's ongoing, vital importance—it supported peace between Israel and Egypt and ensured critical access to the Suez Canal and Egyptian airspace for American military operations sometimes on short notice. Washington's military aid was running at some \$1.3 billion a year, and Egypt's leadership, said Godee, saw this as "untouchable compensation" for making and maintaining peace with Israel. Other factors were also part of this strategic relationship. Egypt played a key role in keeping Hamas bottled up in Gaza and in slowing the flow of Iranian weaponry to them. And Cairo had cooperated enthusiastically with President George Bush's programmer in the "rendering" and interrogation of suspected terrorists.74

Obama's reluctance to act firmly against Mubarak came at the cost of heavy repression. One estimate of 'the number killed, minimum' in clashes with security forces in Egypt, January through February 2011, was 846. Soueif refers to an exhibition of 'the murdered' in the Midan in Cairo (the Midan at-Tahrir or Liberation Square), describing various pictures: 'Sally Zahran, massive blows to the head'; 'Muhammad Abd el-Menem, shot in the head'; 'Ali Muhsin, carries a laughing toddler'; 'Muhammad Bassiouny, shot, lies back with his two kids'; and among others, 'Muhammad Emad holds his arms open wide and wears a 'London' T-shirt'. Pictures of '843

more' existed. She does not specify the time period, but the tenor of her book suggests similarity with *The Economist*. <sup>75</sup>

Tunisia's population was less than 11 million people, but they were ethnically and religiously homogenous and enjoyed relatively good standards of health, education and housing at least in coastal cities. For some two decades before the uprising, the economy had grown, on tourism, manufacturing and offshore services, at an annual average of 5 percent. Perhaps most prominently, the status of women was unusually high. Polygamy and forced unilateral divorce, for instance, were banned, and the minimum age for marriage was 18. More than 80 percent of adult females were literate; women made up half the student population, a third of magistrates and a quarter of the diplomatic corps. <sup>76</sup> These were some of the factors for which Bel Ali had liked to be known to the world. But there were limitations here too. Though women 'had been key players' in the uprising, whether as members of the educated elite of doctors, lawyers and academics, or among the large numbers of unemployed women graduates, they still lacked, in the first months of the 'Arab Spring', what Rached Ghannouchi called political leadership status. As the country's first parliamentary elections approached, 'women made up only 6 percent of the leading candidates at the top of party selection lists, which meant [under the electoral rules] that 'very few had a chance of winning a seat.'77

Trade unions, represented by the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) had an established role in Tunisian life, and a highly active one in the overthrow of the dictatorship. In 1984 it had aligned itself with the people during a popular bread revolt, and in 2008, according to Omri, 'it was the main catalyst of the disobedience movement in the mining basin of Gafsa'. In December 2010, the UGTT, particularly its teachers' unions, 'became the headquarters of the revolt against Ben Ali.'78

#### MAINTAINING THE REGIMES, RESTRICTING DEMOCRATIZATION

Six months after the start of the Tunisian uprising, Chrisafis could report few signs of optimism on the streets of the capital about progress. According to Bassem Bouguerra, a blogger she spoke to, "Tunisia doesn't know where it's going. But it knows where it came from and it doesn't want to go back there." Bouguerra, along with more than a dozen journalists, had been beaten by police in May when they tried to cover a renewed anti-government demonstration. Many of the same police who served Ben Ali still held their posts. The interim government was fragile and expected elections had been delayed. When people went to the polls in October, they voted, she and colleagues reported, 'in the shadow of the old regime.' In the new year,

censorship continued along with 'growing intolerance': a liberal writer told Fisk that more than 90 percent of books then being published in Tunisia were Islamist. <sup>80</sup> Material conditions were also very grim for many. The jobless rate for graduate women was above 40 percent, and double that number in the interior. Of the country's working-age population of 3.5 million, about 800,000 were unemployed. <sup>81</sup>

In Egypt, the dumping of Mubarak quickly proceeded when the arrangements were clarified between the American and Egyptian military. U.S. Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, and other senior Pentagon figures were in regular contact with their Egyptian counterparts all through the last days of January and the beginning of February. In an interview with ABC television, Mullen described existing American aid as a "significant investment" that has "paid off for a long, long time". The two large armies were described as closely interlinked, through joint training and exercises as well as aid. 82

By 11 February, the authorities had no choice. On that morning, in Cook's description of the events, 'millions of Egyptians poured into the streets all over the country to demand Mubarak's ouster.' In Cairo 'a mass of humanity' streamed toward Mubarak's compound while hundreds of thousands kept up their protest in Tahrir Square. If the United States and the military wished to preserve their joint dominance with vast numbers of people in the streets, Mubarak had to go. At 6 p.m. Vice President Omar Suleiman took less than a minute to announce on television that Hosni Mubarak had stepped down and power had been handed over to the military. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) was instructed to manage an orderly transition. SCAF would be headed by Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, commander of Egypt's armed forces. 84

Suleiman's role and proclivities were antithetical to constitutionalism and the rule of law. He was chief of Egypt's General Intelligence Service, 1993–2011, but assumed a more public role in the foreign ministry after 2001. He was also known as 'the CIA's main man in Cairo' and 'Egypt's torturer-in-chief'. Under President Bush's war on terrorism, rendition was directed less at putting suspects on trial and more at obtaining 'actionable intelligence'. For the Bush administration, Egypt was 'a torture destination of choice', and at least one person rendered there, the Egyptian born Australian citizen Mamdouh Habib, was tortured by Suleiman himself. According to U.S. ambassador, Edward Walker—in a document released by Wikileaks—Suleiman was "very bright, very realistic . . . [and] not squeamish, by the way."85

The power of the Egyptian military went well beyond the aid it received from the United States and its broad association with the superpower. It was much more than a military machine, and its tentacles reportedly reached everywhere. It was a business empire that included construction, hotel and petrol sectors, worth perhaps around 20 percent of the country's economy. 86 Retired army officers 'were accustomed to receiving title to public lands', and turning them sometimes into housing and agricultural projects and hotels. It possessed unaccountable and largely independent powers built up over some 60 years, permeating the country's laws, institutions and the six million-strong bureaucracy. Such agencies and operatives constituted a 'shadowy matrix' or 'deep state' 87—in other words, the core of the regime, intended to endure regardless of who or what held the formal powers of the state. With the handover of executive power to SCAF, the military had acquired powers which it had not enjoyed, according to Shatz, since the early 1950s, and might find difficult to sacrifice. 88 A year after Mubarak's demise, the core of the regime (or *nizaam*) 'remain[ed] in place.' 89 What facilitated the United States abandonment of Mubarak also constituted of course a deep problem for the democratization movement. On the assessment of Hossam Bahgat, a prominent human-rights lawyer, the "real, dangerous struggle" was not along a religious-secular divide, but "between civil society and the deep state."90

But civil society in Egypt was not without strengths of its own. This stemmed from the size and diversity of the population, and in particular from its youthfulness, its high educational levels and associated organizational skills. By 2010 there was rapid growth in the 20-24 age group. Of those officially unemployed at the start of the uprising, about half came from the 20–24 cohort. As more than 43 percent of the unemployed had university degrees, the impact of the uprising came from well-educated youth in both a formal and a general sense. According to Salt, the young had the networking skills to draw 'millions of people' affected by low wages and rising prices into the protest. 91 It was a movement, Nogam reports, composed of 'techsavvy students[;] . . . labor activists, intellectuals, lawyers, accountants [and] engineers' which 'had its origins in a three-year-old textile strike in the Nile Delta, and built upon an alliance of new and old opposition groups. One was the April 6 Youth Movement, formed in 2008 in support of the workers' struggle in the industrial town of El-Mahalla El-Kubra. National minimum wages had remained stagnant for 'over two and a half decades'. At issue too was the restructuring of unions that had 'hitherto functioned with government appointed leaders'. April 6 endeavored to rally middle class youth behind the strike. But the military occupied the factories, and demonstrations faced a brutal crackdown. 92

Workers' action had a fairly long history in Egypt, but it had spiked when Mubarak pushed ahead with a neoliberal agenda of privatization, low wages and reduced benefits. In 2006–2008 almost the entire textile industry and the communities supporting it were on strike, and the Mubarak regime was forced to recognize the first independent trade union since 1957. Labour activism thereafter became 'the primary form of resistance to the regime'

over the decade preceding the uprisings. <sup>93</sup> The protest leaders and the workers were closely linked. Tens of thousands of workers in both the public and private sectors, covering petroleum, through banking, transportation and health care, to heavy industry and the Cairo stock exchange, struck on 10 February 2011, the eve of the ousting, and joined the protesters in the streets. In Tunisia too, education unions played a key role in the uprisings. The military, Galvin notes, watched this action 'with trepidation.' <sup>94</sup>

Labour activist Hamdy Hussein, also says that labor protests served as a catalyst for Tahrir, linking popular protest over corruption and poverty with workers' demands for better pay and conditions. Textile workers continued their activity and were prominent in both their large numbers and militancy. In mid-2012, a strike by 23,000 employees at Misr Spinning and Weaving, the country's biggest weaving company, was in its fourth day and had been joined, according to Hussein, by 12,000 workers in other state firms. Egypt had around 300,000 textile workers, including 100,000 in the state sector. They were facing strong competition from foreign and privately owned companies. Labour unrest was also occurring in the ceramics industry, and disputes at Ceramics Cleopatra, Egypt's largest privately owned ceramics firm, had brought clashes between workers and police. Such action was unlikely to decrease, according to Hussein. Workers had sparked the revolution against Mubarak's despotism, only to be "crowded out", along with sympathetic left wing groups, by Islamists and the army. 95

Independent worker organizations were a direct threat to the privileges of the military elite. Soon after the transfer of power to SCAF, 'an unprecedented wave of union activity rolled across the country . . . involving hundreds of thousands of workers.' Earlier it had issued a decree banning strikes that could harm "the wheel of production". The military continued its backing of state-run unions, and the harassment of union organizers. <sup>96</sup>

Groups concerned with workers' and human rights have stood their ground against the regime. Teti and Gervasso have identified among such groups the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre and the Centre for Trade Union Workers' Services. They note too that among new independent trade unions, the Real Estate Tax Collectors union (RETA) was the first established in December 2008, and it was followed since the uprising by 'literally hundreds' of others, including the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (EFITU), formed on 31 January 2011. They see the independent unions and activist NGOs as 'the most important component' of the democracy movement, in both their independence and in the 'efficacy of their action.'97

Hossam el-Hamalawy was a journalist, blogger and activist and, judging by a photograph, he is probably of the mid-20s age group. He believed that independent unions "are the silver bullet for any dictatorship." While attempts were being made by middle-class activists to confine the revolution to the realm of formal political institutions, he believed that the main part of the revolution lay in the socio-economic emancipation of the people, which was just beginning. What we need to do now, he said, "is to take Tahrir to the factories, the universities, the workplaces. In every single institution in this country there is a mini-Mubarak who needs to be overthrown. In every institution there are figures from the old state security regime who need to be overthrown." It must be assumed that everyone who belonged to the old regime or enjoyed privileges under it is going to defend those privileges. There was, he said, huge resentment among the Egyptian working class about the neoliberal policies that have impoverished them over recent decades. He did not doubt that the western powers and Arab monarchs who are already deeply unhappy at what they have seen in Egypt will be even more dismayed at the second revolutionary phase. But 'however much pressure they put on the military junta, the pressure of the street can be stronger." <sup>98</sup>

### DEMOCRACY'S GAINS AND LOSSES

The gains in one year were mainly in long-term aspirational areas and dangerously few in the key formal institutions, parliament, the presidency and the constitution.

Key parliamentary and presidential elections were opportunities largely missed by the people. Islamic parties dominated in parliament along with remnants of the dictatorship. Two-thirds of voters in the November 2011 parliamentary elections supported the candidates of either the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), or al-Nour. Both were well organized, untainted by past corruption, and typically faced weak and divided secular parties especially in rural areas. The Brotherhood's strength was based on its half-million committed members and its unmatched capacity to mobilize the numbers.<sup>99</sup> It won 36.6 percent of the 9.7 million votes cast. Number two was the unequivocally anti-democratic Al-Nour, which advocated strict curbs on art and personal freedoms, and drew support from hard-line Salafi Muslims, and obtained 25 percent. 100 The two together held a solid majority of the vote. After subsequent elections for the upper house or Shura Council—where turnout fell to some 6.5 percent—*The Economist* believed that 'over 70 percent of seats in parliament were held by the Brotherhood and Al-Nour'. 101

An immediate and vital task of parliament was to choose the composition of a proposed 100-person assembly which would rewrite the country's constitution. Under existing laws power was of course vested in the presidency. Liberals were reportedly seeking representation for civil society in the writing of the new constitution, including professional associations, intellectuals

and trade unions. Voting for the presidency was a related and equally big long-term issue, and on both the Brotherhood's actions offered no secular or democratic assurances. After earlier pledging that it would not contest for the presidency—given its parliamentary dominance—it reversed its position and announced at the end of March that it would contend. Results in the first round of presidential elections saw Freedom and Justice again coming first, with a candidate of the regime a close second. The Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi won 24.3 percent, and Ahmed Shafiq, former air force chief and Mubarak's last prime minister, was a close second with 23.3 percent. Other significant contenders were Hamdeen Sabbahi, an independent Nasserist or 'populist socialist', with 20.4 percent, and Abdel Moneim Abul Fotouh, seen as an independent Islamist, <sup>102</sup> with 17.2 percent. The second and decisive round in June was thus restricted to Morsi and Shafiq; Islam or the military, the entrenched poles of Egyptian society and politics over decades, still unchanged. Turnout in this vital contest was a dismal 46 percent of registered voters. 103

Informed opinion on the likely role of Islamist parties in a democratizing state was divided. Marc Lynch had looked at the recent successes of Islamists in elections in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt and saw no cause for alarm; it was inevitable that groups like the Brotherhood would benefit from the opening-up of politics after the long dictatorships, which sometimes bore heavily on their leadership, and their democratic pretensions should be put to the test. <sup>104</sup> Samir Amin allowed that political Islam in Egypt enjoyed some legitimacy among the general public, but believed that this was a mistaken perception. He saw the Muslim Brotherhood as 'a reactionary party', ready and able if it gained power to collaborate with imperialist powers against democratization. <sup>105</sup>

Despite the reportedly wide-spread pessimism on the streets, Tunisia's parliamentary elections on 23 October 2011 went well, and lent credence to Lynch's view. *Ennahda* (Renaissance), the heavily repressed Islamist party under Ben Ali's domination, had already shown considerable political capacity. It had reassembled its leadership from exile, rebuilt party structures and entered the elections within a few months of Ben Ali's expulsion. It won some 41 percent of seats in the constituent assembly. Led by Rached Ghannouchi, it ran a reportedly exemplary democratic campaign against a number of small secular parties, stressing its long opposition to the old regime, and 'its identification with working class authenticity', in contrast with the orientation of Tunisia's traditional Francophone elite. On an estimated turnout of 60 percent of eligible voters—usually a larger category than those who were registered—Ennahda secured 88 seats in the 217-seat assembly. Its main rivals on the results were the Congress for the Republic (CPR), led by a prominent human rights campaigner, with 14 percent of the seats, and Ettakatol with slightly less. In power, it accepted political pluralism and established a coalition government with the secularist, center-left CPR, and the similarly aligned *Ettakatol*. Moncef Marzouki, founder and leader of the CPR. became President and Hamadi Jebali of *Ennahda* was named prime minister. Tunisia's elections had made a strong case for letting the people choose on contentious issues like the role of political Islam in a democracy. <sup>106</sup>

In contrast with Tunis, Islamism in Cairo continued to obstruct democratization. The Brotherhood's representation predominated in parliament, but deadlock persisted for weeks over the composition of the constitutional assembly, and hence of its first meeting. Here was a large vulnerability which the military could exploit in order to hold on to power. SCAF had already said with some validity, in December 2011, that the upcoming parliament would not be representative of all Egyptian people, and it could therefore not be accorded the final say in the drafting of the new constitution. 107

Progress was being achieved, however, in many informal areas in meaningful long-term ways. One was an attempt to record and document the revolution as it had been occurring on the streets in Cairo and elsewhere. The historian, Khaled Fahmy, said that Egyptians were highly sensitive about official attempts to write history and create state-sponsored narratives about historical events. Inherent tensions existed, he believed, between mass popular participation and official attempts to catalogue and record them. These insights led to the formation of the Committee to Document the 25 January Revolution, staffed by volunteers and drawing on everything from official records and insurrectionary pamphlets to multimedia footage and updates on Twitter. The immediate aim was to gather as much primary data as possible and deposit it in the national archives for the free scrutiny of the people and posterity. Practical political concerns also existed. Over the first five months of 2011, the SCAF had been seeking to 'limit the [accepted] scope of the revolution both rhetorically and legally, applying the term strictly to the 18 days of street demonstrations that led to Mubarak's resignation', and contrasting these supposedly "selfless" protests with the allegedly "disruptive" and "self-interested" strikes and sit-ins held subsequently by workers and other groups demanding political change.

Questions abounded concerning the scope of the revolution. One of the Committee's working groups had decided to change the 'start date' of their enquiries from 14 January when Ben Ali was forced out, back to June 2010 when the Alexandrian youth Khaled Saieed was battered to death by police. The 'finish date' of the project was unresolved. The recognition that revolution and democratization is a long-term process, rarely a single event, was profoundly important. Fahmy's own feeling was that "the revolution is very much incomplete, and this second stage—which requires overcoming the army—may prove even more difficult than the battle to topple Mubarak."

The project was also battling against the denial of public access to official information in Egypt and other Arab countries, by legal measures and by burying depositories in basements and cellars. What was happening in Tunisia and Egypt appeared to validate strongly the belief, found in Marx, Brecht and elsewhere, that people, not generals or leaders, make history. "But if it is the people who make history, then they should be the ones who write it and read it as well," Fahmy concluded: "This was a leaderless revolution . . . which came about through mass participation." The writing of history now "ha[d] to be part of the same process." <sup>108</sup>

The ongoing protest had many specific targets in the military and security forces. The demand that police and other former regime officials be accountable for the violence inflicted on demonstrators had seen armed security men fighting long running battles with civilians in Cairo and Suez at the beginning of July 2011, after police accused of murdering protesters were released on bail. "The demands of the revolution have not changed since day one". declared the 25 January Revolution[ary] Youth Coalition in an online statement. "It was not just about toppling the old regime but about building a state where people can have freedom, dignity, rule of law and social justice." In an apparent attempt at appearement in the face of the protests, the interim interior minister, Mansour el-Essawy, 'promised to purge up to 700 corrupt senior police officers'. But five months after Mubarak's fall, with by then 'almost a thousand dead', only a single officer had been convicted for his crimes. Many newspaper articles, among them one by the noted author Alaa al-Aswany, decried the continuing presence of Mubarak-affiliated ministers, judges, security officials and journalists, among the political elite. The revolution was at a real fork in the road, said al-Aswany; it could accomplish its goals, "but it can also lose, leaving the old regime to return in a slightly different form," he said. 109

In these critical circumstances, activists were proposing new forms of grassroots political participation, including what they called a "civil referendum". This would see questionnaires about Egypt's future distributed among demonstrators and then dropped in manned ballot boxes throughout Tahrir square. 110 At the same time, youth groups were apparently flourishing, the April 6 Movement was said to have grown seven times in size, embracing at the start of 2012, some 20,000 activists across Egypt. 111

# THE MILITARY AND THE ISLAMIST PRESIDENT

But parliament and the people had left it late to strengthen and activate the formal political institutions. From the beginnings of Tahrir, the people had harbored the illusion that the military, unlike the riot police, represented no

physical threat, and were rather benign, even protective of peaceful democratization. 112

Beginning in mid-June, SCAF took a number of steps which cumulatively appeared to indicate that there might be no complete handover of power on 30 June, as repeatedly promised. 113 On 14 June the recently elected parliament was dissolved and sweeping powers, including those over legislation, assumed by the military. Decrees of 4 and 17 June reempowered the military to arrest and try civilians and expanded its role in internal as well as national security affairs. On 14 June, General Mamdouh Shaheen declared on television that "the good of the country require[d] a presence for the armed forces in the street to protect the country since the police are still unable to fully perform." A so-called "Constitutional Declaration" of 17 June indicated the military's wide powers and its presumptions of superiority with regard to both the presidency and the people: "[I]n cases of internal disturbances that require the intervention of the armed forces, the president may ask the SCAF for permission to order the armed forces to share in law enforcement duties and the protection of public institutions."114 In a few weeks SCAF had acquired powers in internal affairs that went far beyond what the military held under Hosni Mubarak. 115

Brutality at the hands of the Egyptian military was of course a harsh and enduring reality. Human Rights Watch had documented 'dozens of cases of torture by the military during arrests and in detention, most recently in Abbasiya in May, and before that . . . brutal beatings of male and female protesters in December 2011. On 9 March 2011, military officers had subjected female protesters in detention to virginity tests.' 116 Certain glaring incidents were recorded and widely publicized. One, in December 2011 in Cairo, showed a woman, seen in photos as 'young, slim and fair', lying on her back 'surrounded by four soldiers, two of whom are dragging her by the arms . . . She's wearing blue jeans and trainers. But her top half is bare.' Soldiers had also taken 'a distinguished older lady [who had] become known for giving food to the protesters and slapped her repeatedly about the face till she had to beg and apologise.' The army's message was said to be clear: 'Everything you rose up against is here [and] is worse. Don't put your hopes in the revolution or parliament. We are the regime and we're back.'117 As noted above, at least 846 people had been killed by security forces in two months at the start of 2011.

As the results of the presidential election were awaited, big demonstrations occurred in Tahrir square, Mohammed Morsi published a statement supposedly spelling out his future plans. If he was elected, he noted, "I alone [would] represent an unequivocal departure from the old regime." People must be free to choose public officials through fair elections. "No party or group or class must ever be allowed to monopolise the political power in the country" [sic]. He intended to transform the office of the president, into "an

institution with clear and delineated roles given to a number of vice-presidents (representing political and social forces other than the Freedom and Justice party)." They will work in a transparent political environment, "subject to oversight by parliament and civil society." "Inclusion", he stressed, would be "at the core of my economic vision," as would "balanced economic growth and social justice." <sup>118</sup>

Morsi was named as president elect on 24 June, with 51.73 percent of the vote against 48.27 percent for Shafiq, a small improvement on the one percent that separated them in the first round. Turnout was only 51.58 percent.

Morsi was sworn in as president at the end of June at the Supreme Constitutional Court. The day before SCAF handed over power to him after a military parade outside Cairo. Field Marshal Tantawi declared that the military "ha[d] fulfilled our promise . . . before God and the people". 119

A 'leaderless uprising' certainly drew the people into Tahrir Square and kept them there until Mubarak's expulsion, but it brought big problems of organization and leadership in its wake. A newly risen people were unable to deal with detailed immediate issues, like ensuring good turnout in key elections, and in meeting constitutional demands such as the convening of the constitutional assembly, where the Brotherhood was allowed to stifle the issue over weeks. The uprising was also at fault in its failure to understand the military and the intentions of its commanders to hold on to power.

Military power was extended in the days before Morsi's inauguration when it was revealed that Tantawi would remain head of SCAF and commander of the armed forces, and be defense minister as well. 120 The notion of remnants was used against figures like Ahmed Shafiq and ex-Vice President Omar Suleiman, 121 but it is possible that not enough recognition was given to the sheer size of the Mubarak regime, 122 and that many within it were much closer to SCAF than to Morsi, as Alaa al-Aswany had warned in mid-2011, the Constitutional Court being not the least of these. "There is no power above people power", Morsi abstractly intoned on the eve of his inauguration, and promised a "civil, nationalist and constitutional state". 123

When Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met President Morsi on 14 July in Cairo, at the start of a two-day visit to Egypt, this was said to be the highest level meeting between a U.S. official and an associate of the Muslim Brotherhood. Washington had previously seen the organization as a supporter of terrorism. Nevertheless the views which Clinton now expressed were firm, clear and pro-democratic. The United States, she said, "supports the full transition to civilian rule with all that entails". There was more work ahead, she stressed. "I think the issues around the parliament, [and] the constitution have to be resolved between and among Egyptians." She looked forward to discussing these issues with Field Marshal Tantawi "and working to support the military's return to a purely national security role." 124

Speaking just hours after his meeting with Clinton, Tantawi upheld the political supremacy and guardianship of the military, portrayed the Brotherhood as a foreign intrusion and accorded no role to democracy. "Egypt will never fall. It belongs to all Egyptians and not to a certain group. The armed forces will not allow it. [They] will not allow anyone, especially those pushed from outside, to distract it from its role as the protector of Egypt. The army will never commit treason and will continue to perform its duties." At the same time the secretary of state reportedly urged President Morsi to "assert the full authority of his office." 126

Protests against the United States and the Brotherhood had seen tomatoes, shoes and plastic bottles thrown at Clinton's motorcade, 'jihadists' and 'theocracy' were denounced, while other demonstrators chanted "Monica" in reference to Monica Lewinsky and President Bill Clinton. 127 Yet on any objective criteria then, the secretary of state was seemingly the best interlocutor available to President Morsi in his relations with the military. This was despite the fact that the United States' prime concern was less with democracy than with regional control and stability, as big changes occurred in the regime and democratization proceeded. 128

Mohammed Morsi was described by Wickham as 'a quintessential organization man who was loyal to the [Brotherhood's] old guard and faithful in carrying out their directives', and as sometimes 'visibly stiff and uncomfortable' in public. 129 But when he purged the upper ranks of SCAF on 12 August he initiated important gains for elected executive power. He retired Tantawi and his next in line the chief of staff, Sami Anan. These moves were strongly welcomed in Tahrir Square. Replacing Tantawi in SCAF and as minister of defense was the head of military intelligence, General Abdel-Fatah al-Sissi. Sissi was described as considerably younger than his predecessor, and to have 'br[ought] with him several younger officers' who might be expected to work more cooperatively with the President. <sup>130</sup> Both Tantawi and Anan received high military honors, prompting speculation that this was part of a 'safe exit scenario' which would allow members of SCAF to leave office without fear of prosecution for crimes against demonstrators. Such prosecutions were of course specific demands of the demonstrators and others. 131 Morsi also cancelled SCAF's constitutional declaration in June curbing presidential powers. Legislative powers thus reverted to the President. He further decreed that fresh parliamentary elections would be held 60 days after the ratification of a new constitution in a popular referendum. Morsi also appointed senior judge Mahmoud Mekki as a vice president. Mekki was prominent in the independent judges movement which agitated for judicial independence under Mubarak. 132

In early August, Morsi acquired a prime minister and cabinet, who inspired no democratic enthusiasm. Led by Hisham Qandil, a pious bureaucrat who had served as irrigation minister, the administration was composed of 'mostly grey figures sympathetic to the Brotherhood.' Morsi's team were seen as figures with 'strong ties to the Guidance Bureau' <sup>133</sup> A coalition government did not materialize.

Some have suggested that broad and fairly systematic cooperation between the Brotherhood and the military came into play with the ousting of Mubarak. With Mubarak's enforced handover of power, SCAF saw the Brotherhood as 'a partner capable of harnessing [the power] of the Egyptian street'. <sup>134</sup> Both were hierarchical institutions based on discipline. Thereafter the Brothers 'took [the military's] advice' on their transitional plans: deferring the drafting of a new constitution until after parliamentary and presidential elections, and running a referendum on this plan in March 2011 as 'a vote for the faith', approved by 77 percent of voters. <sup>135</sup> But by the time of presidential elections in May-June 2012, the Brotherhood's agenda was proving divisive, Morsi obtained just 25 percent of the vote, with a slightly larger proportion going to non-Islamist candidates. Cooperation continued however in the writing of the country's constitution, with preferential powers accorded to the military, in a woefully rushed, unrepresentative, non-deliberative and non-consultative process, considered in detail below.

The Brotherhood's strengths and ultimate failings were in fact integral to itself and its history. It had not led or played an active role in the uprising, but 'ended up as one of its greatest beneficiaries.' It was advantaged by its large size and organization. It was skilled in getting out the vote, based in good part on its 'long experience providing social services in economically disadvantaged areas' not least in rural communities. <sup>136</sup> But according to Wickham, it had 'neither the power nor the technical know-how to govern the country on its own.' It had repeatedly declared that "it would participate but not dominate" and would govern "for all Egyptians", but it had no ability, she notes, to cooperate with other groups on an equal basis and of embracing self-criticism. Its leadership was inclined towards 'incoherence' in policy making. The unity, discipline and obedience that had helped it survive under authoritarianism had also 'stunted its development' as an open, democratic organization. <sup>137</sup>

## DEMOCRATIZATION AND CONSTITUTIONALISM IN TUNISIA

Tunisia's uprising was orderly, at least initially, in good part because 'constitutionalism was strong and alive'. Articles (56 and 57) of the 1957 constitution were activated to effect, firstly, a transfer of power to the then prime minister and, shortly after, to the speaker of parliament. The 'main part of the transition' was run by a scholar of constitutional law, Ben Achour, who chaired the Committee for Political Reform, Democratic Transition and Protection of the Aims of the Revolution. Its membership included national

human rights advocates, academics and intellectuals, and it possessed its own panel of experts who drafted key legislation, notably the Independent Election Commission, and the electoral code on which the elections of 23 October 2011 were successfully run.

The new assembly decided to write the constitution from a blank page, in line with popular revolutionary expectations. But for Omri, this had the effect of 'sacrificing historical memory', ignoring expertise, and by-passing draft projects prepared by Ben Achour's committee and proposals from the UGTT and civil society groups. Nonetheless, the process was deliberative, open and unhurried, and while it was impacted upon by the conflict in society between liberal and secular forces, on the one hand, and by Islamists, on the other, it was, quite unlike Egypt, not dominated by the latter. Eighteen months after work began, a draft constitution was released to the public on 14 December 2012.

The draft, says Omri, was verbose and rhetorical, but with several valuable elements in the fields of media and economic rights. Argument had taken place, especially on *sharia* and the role of Islam. Wording was taken from article one of the 1957 constitution to the effect, in brief: 'Its religion is Islam', where 'its' had 'long been understood to refer to . . . the country or the people, not to the state'. The linguistics involved a crucial point, relating to the civil nature of the state and the relationship between state and religion. Compromise based on consensus was apparently achieved, indicative of 'how far both sides have gone to accommodate each other.'

Overall the draft represented, for Omri, how Ennahda has governed Tunisia 'and responses to it by a strong civil society and vocal opposition.' He predicted further changes to the draft in coming months, and that 'it will pass without being put to a referendum'. But the determining factor would come from the on-going conflict in the country, intensified sharply by the Islamist majority in politics and government. <sup>138</sup>

Weslary approached the issues from a different angle, and recalled how excited she was to be voting on 23 October 2011, how her joy of being a new citizen was shared by all Tunisians, and then how the elected assembly members worked 'feverishly' to realize the people's revolutionary demands for "Work, Freedom and Dignity": even during Ramadan, they would go home barely an hour before breaking the fast and then go back to work until three in the morning. She noted the upsurge in the party system, the rise of a new party called *Nidaa Tounes* (Call for Tunisia), that one half of the assembly continued to support the governing coalition, while the other half now supported *Nidaa Tounes*. And a third grouping was emerging, a coalition of leftist parties known as the Popular Front. Over it all, violent clashes between citizens had become normal across towns and villages, as *Salafists* sewed disorder. Nonetheless, 'a revolutionary spirit, a spirit of defiance', still existed particularly among the younger generation. The country now possessed

an active and exciting civil society, with 'press conferences, assemblies, discussions and different forms of citizen action being organized every day.' Though aspects of the dictatorship, and other problems, still existed, 'the people now ha[d] the required weaponry—the pen and freedom of speech—to bring them down.' 139

The "societal project", as Tunisian politicians termed it, and constitutionalism were closely interlinked. The size of Ennahda's electoral victory in October 2011 'generated both surprise and fear in the secular left-wing', which subsided somewhat as the party demonstrated that it possessed political pragmatism and an understanding of Tunisia's pluralist society. It was recognized too, according to Haugbolle and Cavatore, that Ennahda was itself 'a movement in which many different social forces and groups came together'. 140

President Moncef Marzouki observed that he had 'reached out to [Rached] Ghannouchi' when the latter was living in exile in Britain. They began a series of discussions that culminated in the Islamist movement joining others in the "Call to Tunis" agreement, signed in Aix-en-Provence in 2003. The basis of Ennahda's inclusion, reports Ryan, was three key pledges: on the equality of men and women, that the state would remain based in civil society rather than theology, and that it would be a democracy. Tensions had arisen between President and Prime Minister in 2012 because of Salafist-jihadist activists, but Marzouki felt that now it was 'up to Ennahda to remain cohesive and to resolve its internal problems.' Given Tunisia's five decades of secular authoritarian domination, 'this collaboration between Islamist and secularist parties around common democratic values is to be acknowledged and celebrated.' 141

Ghannouchi stressed that the revolution had "allowed Tunisians to freely articulate their demands for the first time." It had brought about "a political earthquake that has changed the face of the region." Many tasks lay ahead. But it was clear, "only the construction of true democracy . . . with the participation of all key moderate voices, will ensure lasting stability. We are only at the start of a long and difficult process." 142

But this was thrown into uncertainty when Shokri Belaid was shot dead outside his home on 6 February 2013. He was a trade unionist and lawyer, the leader of the Democratic Patriots party and a leading member of the umbrella grouping the Popular Front. He was known as one of the most outspoken opponents of the Ennahda-led coalition. Calls arose for much more to be done to curb the activities of Salafists, and the action of shadowy groups known as the Leagues of the Protection of the Revolution, which reportedly used thugs to create mayhem at opposition rallies and trade union meetings. The reconstitution of the coalition government was demanded by many. As Belaid was buried, the UGTT called a general strike, with "one objective: no more violence." <sup>143</sup>

### ISLAMISM AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN EGYPT AND TUNISIA

The draft constitution which became public at the end of November represented a severe setback for democratization and human rights in Egypt. The rights of women, children and workers were largely ignored, freedom of expression was limited in the name of religion, the military trial of civilians was allowed, and the political preeminence of the military was affirmed, not least by enshrining the principle that a serving officer will be minister of defense. 144 To identify some specific points: article 31 prohibited the insulting of any person, and article 44 the insulting of prophets, provisions interpreted as limiting free expression; article 53 limited the representation of trade unions to one union per profession, which flew in the face of the ongoing upsurge in independent trade unions; children were not protected against early marriage, they are allowed to work while still in primary school, and are not protected against economic exploitation; although over 12,000 civilians were unfairly tried by military courts during the 17-month rule of SCAF, article 198 explicitly allowed for the trial of civilians before army courts if the supposed crime 'harms the Armed Forces'; and a National Defense Council was established to consider the military budget, with the council's composition consisting of seven civilian members and eight from the military. According to Hassiba Hadi Sahraoui, a deputy regional director of Amnesty International, the document was 'an enormous disappointment'. 145

The process of drafting the constitution was deeply flawed from the outset. The constituent assembly was dominated by Freedom and Justice and the *Nour* party. Only seven women were included in the 100-member assembly at the beginning and this number soon plummeted. Young people were unrepresented. More than 22 members withdrew from the assembly, including Christian and Coptic representatives, and 'liberal and left-leaning party figures and others.' 146 According to Zaid Al-Ali 'practically every non-Islamist member . . . withdrew.' President Morsi had chosen to maintain the sixmonth drafting timeframe imposed by SCAF, an impossibly short period for preparing a modern constitution, in a revolutionary context. At times on 28 November, the last day he allowed for the drafting, the assembly did not have a quorum. 147 In a final seventeen-hour session that ended at 06.40 on 29 November, the entire 236 articles were supposedly reviewed, revised and voted on. President Morsi acted like this seemingly out of contempt for judicial and democratic procedures and to preempt a possible decision by the Constitutional Court to annul the assembly as unconstitutional. 148

The approval process was similarly rushed and grossly inadequate. A national literacy rate of about 66 percent, suggested that some 34 percent of people were unable to read the draft constitution. Nonetheless, the time allowed between publishing the draft constitution and the first round of voting

was 'less than 15 days'. <sup>149</sup> A new constitution is normally expected to attract strong majoritarian support, especially one proceeding out of a long period of autocracy and through two years' of democratization. Some 63.8 percent of voters were said to have approved Egypt's draft. But turnout was just 32.9 percent of the population, which meant that 'a mere 21 percent of eligible voters' had approved the constitution. <sup>150</sup> By comparison with the making of South Africa's constitution from 1993 to 1996, with the deliberative and participatory process in Iceland (considered below), and with what was happening at the same time in Tunisia, this amounted to a virtual rejection of the Brotherhood's approach to constitutionalism and democracy.

The Muslim Brotherhood possessed on some accounts about 800,000 active dues-paying members in 2012, but it also evoked, according to Goldberg, 'significant anger, fear and opposition within wide sections of Egyptian society.' There were now opposition leaders with 'proven national constituencies', and Hamdeen Sabahi, ElBaradei and Amr Moussa had shown themselves as 'plausible spokesmen for popular discontent.' With unemployment in the 15–29 age group running at seventy five percent, with foreign currency reserves at less than a quarter of what they were in 2010, with tourism at a standstill, popular dissatisfaction was high. Elected with a slim majority, on the votes of only about a quarter of the electorate, Morsi had made no effort to reach out beyond his supporters, and present himself as the president of all Egyptians. <sup>151</sup> This was in flagrant denial of his earlier promises.

New variations on state brutality appeared. Some 600 demonstrators were incarcerated in the training camps of the Central Security Forces, often without food or water. The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights had documented the deaths of eleven people inside police stations since Morsi assumed the presidency. Further egregious incidents occurred. Hamada Saber, a fifty-year-old Cairene, was beaten, stripped naked and dragged through the streets: the assault was shown live on local television, then rebroadcast internationally on CNN. Mohamed el-Guindy, described as a demonstrator aged 28, was taken by police to a training camp around 27 January, strangled with a cord and beaten until his ribs and jaw cracked, before they abandoned his body at a hospital in central Cairo. The presidency stated: "There has been no return to human rights abuses." 152

Another form of abuse was reserved for women, and sometimes perpetrated by Muslim Brotherhood members or sympathizers. Sexual assault was directed specifically at women demonstrators. This had 'gained new momentum under the current Brotherhood regime', both in its scale and in its pattern. It appeared to be occurring in 'a systematic, pre-planned way and involved coordinated groups of men acting in unison.' 153 Moushira Khattab, a political commentator, referred to the existence of an extreme anti-feminist sentiment within Morsi's governing circle: underage marriage, for instance, was a crippling social issue for women, but draft legislation to lower the legal

age of marriage from 18 to 13 had been prepared and clerics within the Brotherhood had indicated that marriage at the age of nine for girls was acceptable. <sup>154</sup> Planned sexual abuse in public had a devastating impact on democratic, activist women. Mona Hussein Wasef, 26, who worked for Plan Egypt in Cairo, said, "For eighteen days we were in Tahrir Square, side by side, men and women, educated and uneducated, rich and poor. Never have I felt so much solidarity. I was Egypt, we were all Egypt, fighting for freedom." But now, "we are fighting just for the right to walk down the street without being assaulted." <sup>155</sup> A poll of gender experts conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation supported such experiences. It found that Egypt was the 'worst for women' out of 22 Arab countries studied: high rates of sexual harassment, and the growth of conservative Islamist groups, had contributed to this deep and abrasive subordination. <sup>156</sup>

Given few choices, protests against the president and the Brotherhood intensified across many cities in early 2013, and five days of rioting left 52 people dead and more than 1,000 injured. 157 After Morsi declared a state of emergency in three cities and provinces, the all-night curfews accompanying the declaration were widely ignored. Hundreds of thousands of people had taken to the streets across 12 of the country's 21 provinces. The commander of the military and defense minister, General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, warned that unrest on this scale could cause the collapse of the state. ElBaradei, spokesman of the National Salvation Front, dismissed Morsi's call for dialogue as "unserious": unless the president agreed to the establishment of a national unity government, and a commission to amend the constitution, presidential elections should be brought forward. Polls were showing steadily declining support for the Freedom and Justice party. 158

Visiting Germany at the end of January, seeking debt relief and the restarting of a newly suspended development project, President Morsi spoke as if words were louder than deeds and could be divorced from facts. Parliamentary elections would go ahead "within a few months", and a constitutionally valid government would be established "within three or four months." Egypt, he again claimed, was on the path to becoming "a constitutional state—it will be a civil state, it will not be of a military or theocratic nature." German politicians were highly skeptical of this rhetoric. Chancellor Angela Merkel said that she had "made clear" to President Morsi that help from Germany "required Egypt's leadership to prove that it was building a free society". 159 Morsi seemed to have forgotten that, seven months earlier, he had also promised a "civil, nationalist and constitutional state" and said that "no party or group or class must ever be allowed to monopolise political power." But what had come about was a debacle over the constitution, the elevation and impunity accorded to the military, and the wide monopolization of power by Islamists. 160 Two years after the toppling of Mubarak, and a longer period since the killing of Saieed in June 2010, only the popular

movement could claim a commitment to the building of a free and just society. By 2013 millions of people were sustaining an ongoing struggle for democratization and justice with renewed speed and increasing intensity and strength.

The Tamarod (rebellion) Campaign began mobilizing for change and the resignation of President Morsi from early April. With leaders who were 'young and unknown', a petitioning campaign soon turned out to be 'a popular way for people to express opposition to the Morsi government'. It provided millions with 'the possibility of peacefully demanding an end to the current situation', as it quickly became 'the largest and widest set of demonstrations . . . in Egyptian history.' <sup>161</sup> People had once been reluctant to sign their names to any protest. But Tamarod now invited them to provide their national identification numbers as well as their names, publicly registering their solidarity and opposition to the Brotherhood.

By the end of June, some 22 million people were said to have signed Tamarod's petition. They had crafted 'a careful and coordinated media blitz.' Firstly through appearance on private television and then on wider, varied exposure, logging hundreds of hours of television time, winning public familiarity. The campaign showed 'how agile, energetic, imaginative and resilient' Egypt's revolution had become. <sup>162</sup> Cartoons attracted support: a picture declaring "Religion is not just a Beard", and another exhorting supporters to "Stay Calm and Tamarod". The figure of 22 million was unverified but amounted to 40 percent of the electorate. <sup>163</sup>

The Brotherhood's incompetence in government could not be gainsaid, along with their broken promises on political inclusion, pluralism and representation. As some 17 million took to the streets, Tamarod gave the president an ultimatum to resign by 17:00 on 2 July or face a campaign of 'complete civil disobedience.' General al-Sisi offered support for Tamarod by declaring the military's readiness to intervene "if the demands of the people are not met." In the ongoing absence of strong popular organization, 'the revolt would have been aborted', Kandil believes, 'without the support of the military.' <sup>164</sup> Widespread popular support for the army's intervention was reported at the start of July: "Come on Sisi," chanted protesters outside the presidential palace: "My president is not Morsi." <sup>165</sup>

Ten cabinet ministers resigned and the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood was ransacked and burnt in an all-night upsurge. Tahrir Square was in jubilation. The Morsi government collapsed, first, abandoned by the military, then by the police, and then the state media. <sup>166</sup> The army acted on 3 July. A few weeks later, as an interim government was being formed in Cairo, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, reportedly affirmed that the army was "restoring democracy" in Egypt, after it was "asked to intervene by millions and millions of people". <sup>167</sup> ElBaradie gave his support to the ousting of

Morsi: "It is not the army who took over, it is the army who acted on behalf of the people", he told the BBC. 168

Popular illusions about the values and political capacities of the Brotherhood seemed to have been eradicated. 'Millions of Muslims have voted with their feet against Islamist rule', and the country 'that invented Islamism may well be on the way to undoing that spell', said Kandil. Those who saw nothing beyond a military coup in Egypt, he added, 'were blind'. <sup>169</sup> An interim president, Chief Justice Adly Mansour, had announced the appointment of a group of lawyers to amend the constitution, to be followed by a national referendum and parliamentary elections for early next year: Hazem al-Beblawi was made prime minister, with ElBaradei as deputy president during the transition. <sup>170</sup> But ElBaradei resigned when the crackdown on the Brotherhood's leaders and supporters commenced, and became by mid-August 'the most serious incident of mass unlawful killings in modern Egyptian history. <sup>171</sup>

Alaa al-Aswany had written sympathetically and thoughtfully about a young Islamist terrorist in his well-known book *The Yacoubian Building*. He could be counted as one of Egypt's leading liberal voices, but he supported the military's bloody crackdown. The Brotherhood has had "a [militant] infrastructure for 40 years" and they had "used violence from the very beginning." Kingsley believed that Aswany's position was representative of how liberal opinion in Egypt had swung behind the military's actions. While perhaps between a fifth and a third of the population still backed Morsi, 'the vast majority of Egyptians' backed the army and thanked them for saving the country from an autocratic Islamist president. But that was the extent of Aswany's support for the army. He did not want a return to a Nasser-like military president. "We don't want the *Ikhwan* (or Brotherhood), and we don't want the old regime. We want a democratic state." 172

For many Egyptians the way Morsi pushed through an unjust constitution was 'the final straw'. Now with its leaders imprisoned or isolated, its buildings destroyed, its media silenced, and its assets seized, it would take decades to recover. Faction fighting within its own ranks was anticipated. 173 Some younger members were already arguing for the resignation of the remaining leadership. Their 'hubris and misjudgment' had set the Brotherhood on 'a collision course with other [social] groups', and by remaining defiant against growing opposition, they had endangered both the movement and its members. 174

People seemed ready to invest their fate anew in a military president. Despite SCAF's many failures, and activists' warnings that a Sisi presidency would be a return to authoritarianism and the old regime, 'the vast majority of Egyptians' supposedly backed Sisi. By late October, there was reportedly 'a huge wave of popular support for General Sisi', unmatched since the time of General Gamal Abdel Nasser. <sup>175</sup> The army's decades-old popularity had

been boosted by the removal of Morsi, and al-Sisi appeared different from SCAF commanders like Field Marshal Tantawi. <sup>176</sup>

Long term military paramountcy apparently remained a concern for Sisi. A supposedly leaked audio in early November, revealed that the defense minister wanted immunity for the military under the new constitution: "it is not for Abdel Fatah[;] . . . it is for the [military] institution, which is the backbone of the state." The military should have immunity "because it has a role", he appeared to say, "that will be extended for at least 15 years . . . not withstanding who is going to be in power, whether he belongs to the Islamist, liberal or secular trend." While the authenticity of these tapes was uncertain, the views expressed were those of SCAF over many years. Adel Soleiman, head of Cairo's Strategic Dialogue Forum (and a former army general) noted: "Egypt's military is the old regime". 177

Tunisia was unburdened by a grandiloquent and politicized military, it had an active and organized civil society, and a pluralist, pro-democratic ruling Islamist party. But there had been two assassinations of leftist opposition politicians in Tunis, of Chokri Belaid in February, and then Mohammed Brahmi in July 2013, with reports suggesting they had been shot with the same weapon and that the identity of the killer was known. An institutional crisis resulted. The National Constituent Assembly was finalizing a delayed constitution, but more than 70 Assembly members resigned after Brahmi's killing. Tens of thousands took part in a demonstration in early August calling for the resignation of the Ennahda-led government, with participants including the UGTT, with some 600,000 members. They, along with the employers' union UTICA, the Tunisian League for Human Rights, and the National Bar Association, initiated shuttle negotiations between the opposition and the governing coalition. 178 At the same time, some 150,000 rallied in support of the government. Milne in Tunis felt that the political conflict felt rather 'contrived': Ennahda had long been committed to a coalition and to progressive causes like women's rights, in sharp contrast with the Brotherhood; almost half of Ennahda's parliamentarians were women. The government had started to address the explosive issue of unemployment, and spoke about constructing a "social economy", and diversifying trade and investment away from Europe and France. When Tunis hosted the World Social Forum two months earlier, its international activists found a city with 'vibrant networks of social movements, trade unionism and protest campaigns'.179

On 5 October Tunisians again chose compromise over conflict, when Ennahda agreed to step down in favor of a temporary, technocrat-led administration, concentrating on the finalization of the constitution, the revision of the electoral commission, and the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections in early 2014. Ennahda held 90 of the 217 seats in the assembly, but Rached Ghannouchi had recently sought a rapprochement with the leader of

Nida Tounes, and it had signaled that it was 'prepared to give further ground over remaining articles in the constitution.' <sup>180</sup> Civil society could be credited with promoting this democratic convergence, backed by a wide feeling in September of an urgent need to defend the Tunisian revolution. <sup>181</sup> President Francois Hollande, representing the former colonial power, seemed to recognize such necessities when he addressed the National Constituent Assembly in July: "You carry a hope that extends beyond the Tunisian people, well beyond the Arab people", he declared. <sup>182</sup>

### THE MILITARY BARRIER TO DEMOCRATIZATION IN EGYPT

Mullin and colleagues have provided an assessment of the weight of the repression that the Egyptian people have faced, of its continuities under the rule of Mubarak, the SCAF and of Morsi, and of how this was backed throughout by the United States' military and economic aid over three decades. Between 1978 and 2011, the United States provided Egypt with bilateral foreign aid worth \$71.6 billion, including military aid of \$1.3 billion annually from 1987. The strategic function of a 'large part' of the weaponry purchased through American military assistance, they note, was 'to repress internal dissent'. 183 Mubarak created one of the region's 'largest and most repressive state security apparatuses', wherein 'torture and other forms of illtreatment were endemic'. Bilateral relations deepened in the context of America's omnipresent war on terror after 2001, 'when state violence and human rights violations increased.' Violence 'characterized' SCAF's 17months rule, including 'systematic torture' in prisons and detention centers, the referral of some 12,000 civilians for trial in military courts, and virginity tests on women activists. Under SCAF, the military engaged in brutal attacks on demonstrators using small arms, both live and rubber bullets, hand grenades and tear gas: in the Maspero protest by Coptic demonstrators at the state broadcasting center, 28 people were killed. State violence 'continued unabated throughout Morsi's presidency'. Despite extensive evidence of the military's use of excessive force against pro-democracy protesters following Mubarak's fall, the United States continued to provide military and economic aid, limiting the potential, they note, 'for a meaningful democratic transition to succeed.'184 Against such barriers, the achievements of the democratization movement, however erratic and limited, were impressive.

Sisi went into the 2014 presidential elections with the advantages of effective incumbency and the support of an uninformed populace. Since 2012, he had cultivated a 'restrained persona': when he announced Morsi's removal in July 2013, this was the first time that many had heard him speak, and until 26 March 2014, when he finally declared his candidacy, Sisi was 'defined more by what he hadn't yet said than what he had.' This largely

continued. Apart from a handful of pre-recorded interviews, he made no public appearances, leaving what passed for campaigning to his aides. 185

He said little about human rights and democracy and nothing that was positive. Fazah noted in his statement that it would take some 25 years for Egypt to achieve "true democracy", adding that such aspirations were 'hindering national security and slowing down much needed economic recovery'. Actions of the interim government spoke loudly. Leaving aside the suppression of the Brotherhood, an Assembly Law passed in November 2013, restricted the right to protest in public places, and facilitated police crackdowns. 186 The April Sixth Movement had been targeted, and its leader, Ahmad Maher, imprisoned, as were other key activists, including women's rights advocate Mahienour El-Masry, for demonstrating in solidarity with Khaled Saieed, killed in 2010. 187 Al-Sisi had attracted international attention as a member of SCAF when he defended the subjection of female detainees to virginity tests because they protected soldiers from allegations of rape. 188 During the election he displayed, says Abdelhadi, 'a frightening lack of understanding' of how the media worked in an open society, asserting naively that all Egyptians should work together for the greater good, and an inability to understand that democracy is inherently noisy and irreverent. For him there was no doubt that Sisi is 'a conservative, authoritarian nationalist'. 189 His power rests on the military, intelligence and the old regime. According to Robert Springborg, a long-time analyst of the Egyptian military, he has strong allies at the top of the army and each of the key intelligence services, and the deep state "has never been this totally controlled by a single person."190

In stark contrast, Hamdeen Sabahi was underfunded—'too poor even too hire a hoarding'—denied access to the media, but ran a strong campaign, and issued a detailed manifesto. He aimed to "give hope to the youth and to the poor who are demanding social justice, to the middle class that aspires for a civil state". 191

Popular support for the military may have begun to wane: according to a poll conducted in April by the Pew Research Centre, support for the institution had fallen over the past year from 73 percent to 56 percent. <sup>192</sup> Sisi could win easily over Sabahi, but he failed to obtain his desired outcome. He had aimed to win a turnout of 80 percent of the country's 54 million registered voters, but participation remained low at 47.5 percent, while it had been 52 percent when Morsi ran against Shafiq. The election could hardly be seen as free and fair. It took place within a long crackdown on dissent, Islamist and other as already noted. This had 'stifled Egypt's opposition and frightened all but one man from challenging Sisi': <sup>193</sup> that man had already been arrested 17 times. Liberal and secular activists shunned the poll, according to the BBC, in protest at the restriction of civil rights. <sup>194</sup> When numerous observers noted empty polling booths, the government endeavored to boost the turnout, un-

fairly declaring the second day of voting a national holiday, extending the election for a third day, and threatening non-voters, says Kingsley, with a large fine. Sisi dominated the vote with 96 percent, against just 3 percent for Sabahi. According to Eric Bjornlund, of Democracy International, one of the main observer missions present, "Egypt's repressive political environment made a genuinely democratic presidential election impossible". 195

Some analysts told the BBC that the low turnout damaged the president-elect's authority before he took office. <sup>196</sup> An established liberal thinker like al-Aswany had rejected equally the *Ikhwan* and a Nasser-like military president. Popular opinion over four years has shown great change and volatility, towards Mubarak, SCAF and Morsi. The Brotherhood had been removed by millions of people, and they might eventually reject rule by authoritarian militarists too. Sabahi said near the end of his campaign, that the "greatest thing we achieved [over this period] is that the Egyptian people have begun to feel that they are the decision-makers." <sup>197</sup>

# CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRATIZATION IN EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA

Similarities appear to exist between radical democratization in Portugal in the mid-1970s and what has been happening in Tunisia and Egypt since 2010. In their aims and methods, and their popular revolutionary style, their élan. Portuguese, Tunisians and Egyptians spoke of the excitement of their participation with their fellows in decisions directly affecting their fast changing lives. The Armed Forces Movement was sword and shield to the Carnation Revolution, and the popular movement which sprang into being was the platform for the neighborhood groups which sought the transformation of people's lives. This at a time of heightened Cold War, when American intervention had promoted the death of Salvador Allende in Chile, and may have influenced the killing of Aldo Moro in Italy. Constitutionalism, it is suggested, had a living value in Tunisia, upheld by the UGTT and a quickly reestablished Ennahda. In new parties like the CPR, in an elected constitutional assembly, and in social movements, many people were involved in constructing a democratic framework in a highly pluralistic environment. Trade unions and groups like the April Sixth Movement were active in supporting the millions of Egyptians who ousted Mubarak and struggled for the furthering of democratization against the repressive powers of both SCAF and the Morsi presidency backed by the weight of the United States.

What was occurring in the Arab Spring, according to Bottici and Challand, was the reappearance of 'a truly combative civil society', a society 'in revolt'. The aspirant democracy's spontaneity and its grass roots organiza-

tion showed that it was 'a force operating outside the framework of formal political institutions.' This was true for Egypt, and trade unions and a progressive Islamist party like Ennahda also played a big role in Tunisia. In both cases, here was a civil society 'very different from the reformist one depicted by western political theorists.' These uprisings manifested the 'urgency of a renewed sense of citizenship', on a broad and highly activist social basis.

Spontaneity is vital to democratization, but Bottici and Challand miss the point when they claim that 'absence of leadership does not . . . mean lack of organization. <sup>198</sup> The continued absence of leadership over time seems much more of a weakness than a strength. Popular protest in Egypt was weakened when it failed to participate in key elections, and then failed to press effectively for the writing of a new constitution. But it decisively reappeared in Tamarod to oust the hated Islamist presidency. The record shows that, from Athens to the UDF in South Africa in the late 1980s, the key issue was how to meld democratization, organization and leadership, that is, how the rank and file could control the elites that arise inevitably in popular organization to ensure that they work in the cause of popular organizational democracy. This is considered further below.

Building democratization has taken centuries in Britain, and as liberal capitalist democracy today, its achievements remain perilously few. Failures and interruptions are normal in the complexities and confusions of democratization, whether in South Africa in the 1990s or in Tunisia and Egypt now. Revolutionary France passed through five republics and the United States a bloody civil war, and their democracies remain at best incomplete. Democratization has taken big strides in just four years in North Africa, in uneven, bloody but determined action, against heavy state repression, where the United States has usually played a negative role. Despite the big setbacks for constitutionalism under Morsi's dictatorial presidency, and against the power and pretensions of the military, much was to be applauded in the region

## **NOTES**

- 1. Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, London, Fontana Press, 1997, p. 101, and Tom Lodge, 'Communists and Social Democracy', *Mail and Guardian*, 20 July 2001.
- 2. Cited by Tony Judt, *Ill Fares the Land.*, pp. 139 and 146. Judt adds that President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic typified the new elites' rush to make money.
- 3. Kenneth Maxwell, 'Portugal: "The Revolution of the Carnations", 1974–75' chapter in Roberts and Ash, op. cit., p.144, and John L. Hammond, *Building Popular Power: Workers' and Neighbourhood Movements in the Portuguese Revolution*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1988, pp. 63 and 65.
- 4. His strategy was based on restraint and careful preparation; he stressed that 'our people are our mountains', that their fight was strictly against the authoritarian state, and that liberation would ultimately be accomplished with the assistance of Portuguese workers and peasants. *Selected Texts by Amilcar Cabral, Revolution in Guinea*, London, Stage 1, 1969, pp. 123–25. He was not the only nationalist leader assassinated, and PIDE's brutality was earlier displayed

during a dock strike in Bissau in the 1950s when 50 workers were killed. Hammond, op. cit., p. 49.

- 5. Ibid., p. 66.
- 6. George Houser, 'In Memory of Amilcar Cabral', *Africa Today*, 20, 1, Winter 1973, p. 3, and Tony Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism*, Oxford, James Currey, 2001, p. 9.
  - 7. Quoted in Maxwell, op. cit., p.15.
  - 8. Hammond, op. cit., p. 92.
  - 9. Maxwell, op. cit., pp, 147, and 151–53.
  - 10. Ibid., p. 149.
  - 11. Hammond, op. cit., p. 77.
  - 12. Maxwell, op. cit., P.149.
  - 13. Maxwell, 'Portugal's Revolution', op. cit., pp. 153-57.
- 14. The direction of events in adjacent Italy might also have given the PCP grounds for concern. The body of Aldo Moro, the president of the Christian Democratic party, was found in May 1978, 55 days after he had been seized by the Red Brigades. Italian premier and fellow Christian Democrat, Giulio Andreotti, rigorously refused any negotiations with the kidnappers. It is said to have been the most shocking of all Italy's post-war political killings. Many details remain unexplained. But Moro was known for his plan to bring stability to Italy by forming a grand coalition with the Italian Communist Party, and Washington, consistent with its Cold War posture, was troubled by this prospect. Michael Day, in *Independent Online*, 17 June 2013.
- 15. It is notable that President Spinola aimed to bring the bring the PCP into the cabinet as Minister for Labour, and name Cunhal as minister without portfolio, to promote restraint. Maxwell, 'Portugal's Revolution', pp. 152–153 and 158.
  - 16. Hammond, op. cit., pp. 77 and 81.
  - 17. Ibid., pp. 84-85.
  - 18. Ibid., pp. 104-5.
- 19. Ibid., pp. 87 and 90. So-called 'dynamising cultural teams' sent out by the military to areas where the Catholic Church was strong, 'irreversibly alienated devout peasants', according to Maxwell, 'Portugal', p. 156.
- 20. Soldiers and civilians had jointly manned barricades the night before the planned demonstration, three junta members were subsequently forced out of office and three right-wing parties which provided covert assistance to Spinola, the Party of Progress, the Liberal Party and the Labour Party, were banned. Ibid., pp. 94–96.
  - 21. Ibid., pp. 75 and 107.
  - 22. Ibid., pp. 95-96.
  - 23. Ibid., pp. 109-11.
- 24. Until 1973–1974 Portugal had encouraged the United States and NATO to utilise the Azores in its engagements in southern Africa, but thereafter the United States had seen the Azores as a platform for its operations in the Middle East and Persian Gulf. Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, p. 178.
- 25. 'Several hundred thousand' refugees poured into Portugal throughout the spring and summer of 1975, creating an atmosphere of African crisis not seen since independence in Congo in 1960 and the Algerian revolution. Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, Cambridge, University Press, 1995, pp. 123 and 127.
  - 26. Ibid., pp. 217-18.
  - 27. Ibid., pp. 219-20.
  - 28. Ibid., pp. 213-14 with quotation from Neves, 1976, 80-81.
  - 29. Ibid., p. 250
  - 30. Maxwell, The Making, p. 177-78.
  - 31. Ibid., p. 177
  - 32. Hammond, Building Popular Power, pp. 233-35.
  - 33. Ibid., p. 234.
  - 34. Ibid., p. 226.
  - 35. Ibid., p. 258.

- 36. It was a highly repressive system of personal rule. The Stasi was 'the mainstay of State power. At its height, it had 97,000 employees, in a country of 17 million people. It also controlled over 173,000 informers, comprising together one Stasi officer or informant for every 63 people; in Nazi Germany, on Funder's estimates, there was one Gestapo agent for every 2,000 citizens, and in the Soviet Union under Stalin there was one KGB officer for 5,830 people. In 1973, Erich Mielke, a long-term communist security official, helped organise the coup which brought Erich Honecker to power in Berlin, and was rewarded with a Politburo position and material benefits. From that time onwards, says Funder, 'the two Erichs ran the country.' On 17 October 1989 Honecker was ousted by his deputy, Egon Krenz, who was younger but 'just as disliked' by the people. Anna Funder, *Stasiland*, London, Granta Books, 2003, pp. 56–59, and 65.
- 37. Ascherson, 'A Time When Hope Replaced Repression', Guardian Online, 2 August 2009.
  - 38. Ibid.
- 39. Rice's later admission is almost verbatim. Michael Meyer, 1989: The Year That Changed the World, London, Pocket Books, 2000, p.63.
- 40. John Darnton, 'Introduction', in Adam Michnik, *In Search of Lost Meaning: The New Eastern Europe*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2011, p. 14. According to Smolar, the 'unusual alliance' between workers, the intelligentsia and the Catholic Church was 'one of the strategic keys to the movement's power.' Alexsander Smolar, ""Self-Limiting Revolution': Poland, 1970–89", chapter in Roberts and Ash, op. cit., p. 135.
- 41. The crackdown was initially brutal, with 'several fatalities' and 'at least 10,000 people imprisoned and interned.' Smolar, op. cit., 137. 'Pushed underground, Solidarity endured seven long years. It survived repression, some of its activists capitulated dramatically, while many went abroad. It owed its survival to the attitude of its leaders, especially Lech Walesa . . . and also thanks to reason.' Michnik, op. cit., p. 29.
  - 42. Darnton, op. cit., xvii.
  - 43. Michnik, op. cit., p.5.
  - 44. Ascherson, op. cit.
- 45. Ibid. Economically, or at least financially, the GDR was already part of West Germany. It had enjoyed heavy financial subventions from Bonn for some time. According to Funder, the former had sold its dissidents—after a period of imprisonment—to the latter for hard currency. By the 1980s, says Meyer, the bankruptcy of East Germany was only being avoided by 'under the table handouts from the Federal Republic worth several billion dollars a year.' Funder, op. cit., p. 61 and Meyer, op. cit., p. 164.
  - 46. Ascherson, op. cit.
  - 47. Op. cit., pp. 135-37.
- 48. Tony Judt, 'with Timothy Snyder', *Thinking the Twentieth Century*, New York, Penguin Press, 2012, pp. 234–35.
  - 49. Ascherson, op. cit.
  - 50. Judt, Ill Fares the Land, p. 146.
  - 51. Ascherson, op. cit.
  - 52. Judt (and Snyder), op. cit., pp. 242-44.
- 53. Poland was in part 'a different story' to most of Central Europe thanks to the linkages built up between its genuine working-class movement and former student radicals and intellectuals. Ibid., p. 234.
- 54. He identifies Tardeusz Mazowiecki, advisor to Solidarity, founder of a Catholic periodical, and prime minister in the first post-communist government. Michnik, op. cit., pp. 6 and 214.
  - 55. Michnik, op. cit., p.6.
  - 56. Ascherson, op. cit.
  - 57. Meyer, op. cit., p. 184 and Ascherson, op. cit.
- 58. Darnton, op. cit., xvii. An example of incoherent vengefulness was possibly the following: 'At the beginning of 2005, Poland was shocked by the publication of a long list of Secret Service functionaries, agents, and people whom the Secret Service had wished to recruit or failed to recruit. The names were listed at random, and it was impossible to discover how they

had been categorised. Thousands of people felt slandered, and this was only the beginning of the show.' Op. cit., p. 34.

- 59. Op. cit.
- 60. Mohammed Bouazizi, age 26, peddled vegetables from a handcart to help feed his mother and younger sister, but constantly faced extortionate bribes and arbitrary harassment.
  - 61. Angelique Chrisafis in Guardian Online, 7 February 2011 and 17 June 2011.
- 62. Azadeh Shahshahani and Corinna Mullin, 'The Legacy of US Intervention and the Tunisian Revolution: Promises and Challenges One Year On', *Interface*, vol 4 (1), May 2012, p. 93.
  - 63. Robert Fisk, in Independent Online, 31 December 2011.
- 64. David Leigh and Luke Harding, 'Tunisians Knew Its Rulers Were Debauched. But Leaks Still Had Impact', *Guardian Online*, 2 February 2011.
  - 65. The Economist, 16 July 2011.
  - 66. Guardian Online, 20 June 2011.
- 67. Beatrice Hibou, *The Force of Obedience: The Political Economy of Repression in Tunisia*, Cambridge, Polity, 2011, Preface, Introduction and pp. 25, 44, 59, 180–85, 193 and 206.
- 68. Ben Ali believed that his destination was France and that he would soon return. Washington arranged on route that he ended up in Saudi Arabia. Tariq Ramadan, *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 25–26 and 157.
- 69. Ashraf Khalil, *Liberation Square*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 2011, chapter four. He sees Khalil as 'the Emergency Law Martyr', with reference to the sweeping powers of detention and trial conferred on the police after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, Mubarak's immediate predecessor in 1981, and which lasted for the next 31 years.
- 70. Fisk, 'Egypt's Day of Reckoning', *Independent Online*, 28 January 2011, and Ahdaf Soueif, *Cairo: My City, Our Revolution*, London, Bloomsbury, 2012, p. 192.
  - 71. Jack Shenker, et. al., in Guardian Online, 2 February 2011.
  - 72. Ramadan, op. cit., pp. 29-30.
- 73. Cited by Tariq Ali, 'Egypt's Joy as Mubarak Quits', *Guardian Online*, 11 February 2011. Not dissimilarly Tony Blair described Mubarak as "immensely courageous and a force for good." Citation by Owen Jones, *Independent Online*, 1 June 2012.
  - 74. The Economist, 5 February 2011.
  - 75. The Economist, 16 July 2011, and Soueif, op. cit., p. 181.
  - 76. Chrisafis, in the Guardian Online, 20 October 2011.
  - 77. Chrisaffis, Guardian Online, 20 October 2011
- 78. Mohamed-Salah Omri, 'The Upcoming General Strike in Tunisia', *Open Democracy*, 12 December 2012.
- 79. Bouguerra had been detained and assaulted a month earlier when he tried to film police beating a cameraman at a demonstration. Chrisafis, *Guardian Online*, 17 June, and Chrisafis, et. al., *Observer Online*, 22 October 2011.
  - 80. Fisk, Independent Online, 21 February 2012.
  - 81. Ibid., and Chrisafis, Guardian Online, 17 June 2011.
  - 82. Ewan MacAskill, Guardian Online, 4 February 2011.
  - 83. Steven A. Cook, The Struggle for Egypt, Oxford, University Press, 2012, p. 294.
  - 84. Cook, op. cit., p. 294; McGreal and Jack Shenker, Guardian Online, 11 February 2011.
- 85. Habib was said to have been seized off a bus in Pakistan in October 2001, and in Egypt, apart from electric shocks and immersion in water, his fingers were broken and he was hung from metal hooks. The beatings were so hard that at one point his blindfold was dislodged, revealing the identity of Suleiman as his torturer. The subsequent vice president was also 'directly implicated' in the death of Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libi in Libya in the early 2000s. Lisa Hajjar, in *Jadalliya*, 30 January 2011, with reference to Jane Meyer's *The Dark Side* and Habib's memoir, *My Story: The Tale of a Terrorist Who Wasn't*.
  - 86. Aljazeera online, 14 August 2012.
- 87. The Economist, 19 May 2012. Shatz notes differences between the military and the investigative agencies and Ministry of the Interior. This ministry controlled the Central Security Force, some 500,000 police, favoured by Mubarak and hated by the demonstrators. This division insulated the army from the daily work of repression, and shielded it from public rage

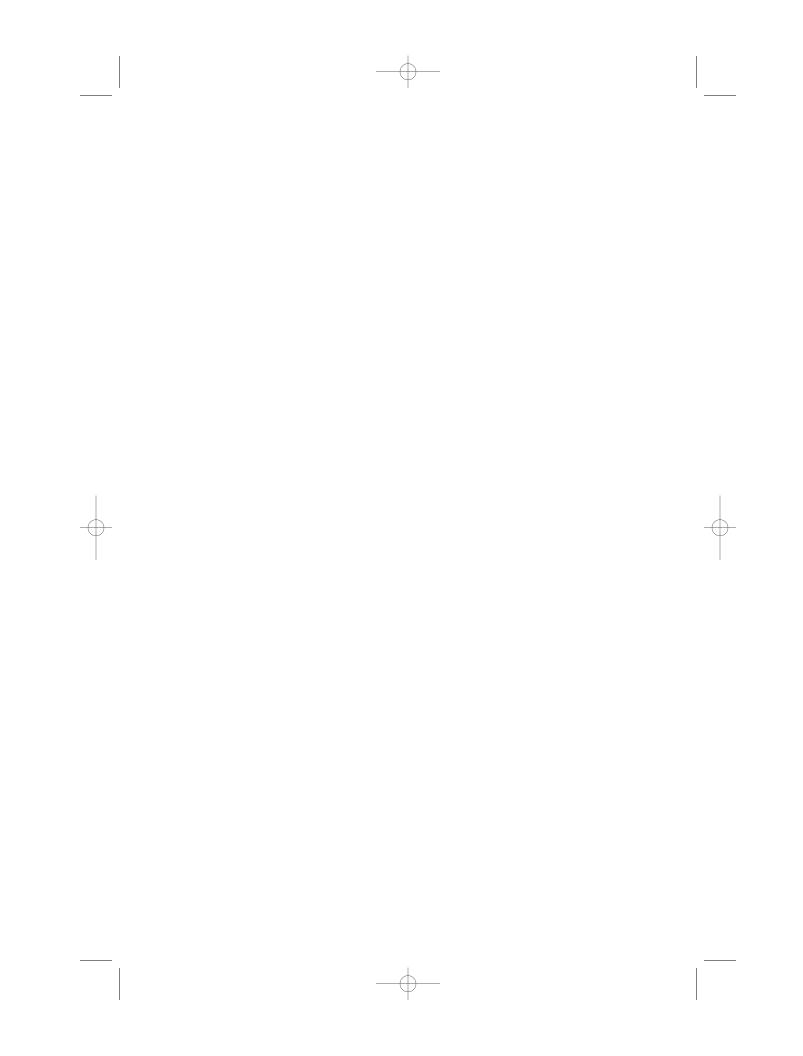
when the uprising began. Adam Shatz, 'Whose Egypt?', London Review of Books, 5 January 2012, pp. 15 and 17, and Ramadan, op. cit., p.18.

- 88. Shatz, op. cit., p. 17.
- 89. Andrea Teti and Gennaro Gervasio, 'After Mubarak, Before Transition: The Challenges for Egypt's Democratic Opposition', *Interface*, May 2012, p. 102.
  - 90. Cited in The Economist, 19 May 2012.
  - 91. Jeremy Salt, 'Containing the "Arab Spring", Interface, May 2012, p. 58.
  - 92. Aditya Nigam, 'The Arab Upsurge', Interface, May 2012, p. 166.
  - 93. James Gelvin, author of The Arab Uprisings, Jadaliyya, 25 July 2012.
  - 94. Ibid.
  - 95. 'Labour Unrest Spreads in Egypt', Aljazeera online, Middle East, 20 July 2012.
- 96. Austin Mackell, 'Weaving Revolution: Harassment by the Egyptian Regime, *Interface*, May 2012, p. 28.
  - 97. Tetti and Gervasio, op. cit., p. 104.
- 98. Hassam el-Hamalawy, 'Now Overthrow the Workplace Mubaraks', Guardian Online, 20 May 2011
  - 99. The Economist, 19 May 2012.
- 100. Alastair Beach, in the *Independent Online*, 5 December 2011. The party's spokesman in Cairo, Yousseri Hamad, said that democracy allowed man's law to override God's: "In the land of Islam, I can't let people decide what is permissible or what is prohibited. It is God who gives the answers as to what is right and what is wrong." Interview with Associated Press, *Guardian Online*, 2 December 2011.
- 101. 10 March 2012.
- 102. He had been a high profile Brotherhood member, but had been forced to resign after leadership disagreements. Ramadan, op. cit., pp. 79 and 92.
- 103. Ian Black and Abdel-Rahman Hussein, *Guardian Online*, 29 May 2012, and *The Economist*, 2 June 2012.
- 104. Review of Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East, The Economist*, 21 April 2012.
- 105. Samir Amin, 'The Arab Revolutions: A Year After', *Interface*, May 2012, pp. 37 and 29
- 106. *The Economist*, 29 October 2011 and Shahshahani and Mullin, op. cit., pp. 67 and 85. Some historical experience also pointed towards inclusion. When the Islamic Salvation Front won general elections in Algeria in 1991, but was prevented from assuming power by the army, a decade of bloody civil war followed. 'Briefing: Islam and Democracy', *The Economist*, 6 August 2011.
- 107. Major General Mokhtar el-Mulla, a leading member of SCAF, in an interview with foreign media, Jack Shenker, *Guardian Online*, 7 December 2011.
- 108. Jack Shenker, 'The Struggle to Document Egypt's Revolution', *Guardian Online*, 15 July 2011.
- 109. Shenker, 'Muslim Brotherhood to Join Tahrir Demonstration', *Guardian Online*, 7 July 2011.
- 110. Ibid.
- 111. Tom Perry in Mail and Guardian Online, 18 January 2012.
- 112. Consider this description of popular behaviour in Cairo on 1 February 2011 soon after SCAF had declared that the armed forces would never fire on the Egyptian people. 'Battalions of people are continuing . . . to surround the tanks, lean on them, climb on to them . . . stick flags and flowers on them.' Eventually a young officer made a speech urging us to maintain our determination. 'He was lifted on to people's shoulders and carried round the Midan. "The People! The Army! One Hand! The People! The Army!". Soueif, op. cit., p. 53. Khalil notes that the military's statement against the use of force (of 31 January) also acknowledged "the legitimacy of the people's demands." Khalil, op. cit., pp, 161 and 211.
- 113. Human Rights Watch, 'Military Power Grab Creates Conditions for Abuse', 21 June 2012.
- 114. Exerpt from article 23. Ibid.
- 115. Assessment of Joe Stork, deputy Middle East Director of Human Rights Watch. Ibid.

- 116. Ibid.
- 117. Soueif, 'Image of Unknown Woman Beaten by Egypt's Military Echoes Around the World', *Guardian Online*, 18 December 2011.
- 118. Mohammed Morsi, 'If I Am Elected Egypt's President, I Will Serve Our Revolution', *Guardian Online*, 14 June 2012.
- 119. Magdi Abdelhadi in BBC Online, 30 June 2012.
- 120. Reuters, 'Egypt's Defence Minister Hangs Defiantly on to Power', *Guardian Online*, 28 June 2012.
- 121. Shafiq was reported to have left Egypt with most of his family for Abu Dhabi on 26 June, hours after investigations were opened into claims he misused public funds as a minister of the former regime. Suleiman had gone the same way earlier that month. AP, *Independent Online*, 27 June 2012.
- 122. Inquiries within parliament's Planning and Budget Committee (which died when the assembly was dismissed by SCAF in mid-June) revealed that there were 5.7 million government employees in 2009, and close to 7 million by 2012. Yasmine El Rashidi, 'Egypt: the Hidden Truth', *The New York Review of Books*, online, 19 July 2012.
- 123. Hussein, op. cit.
- 124. A Reuters report on her visit in Guardian Online, 14 July 2012.
- 125. *Aljazeera* online, Middle East, 16 July 2012. Founded in 1928 in opposition to British occupation, the Brotherhood has influenced Islamist ideas across the region, while professing a relatively moderate version of Islam at home. It was known for its discipline, secretiveness and political awareness. *The Economist*, 4 and 10 December 2011.
- 126. Aljazeera, 16 July 2012.
- 127. Ibid.
- 128. Noam Chomsky, 'US Control Is Diminishing, But It Still Thinks It Owns the World', *Guardian Online*, 4 February 2013.
- 129. He was an engineer with a PhD from the University of Southern California, and a career Brotherhood politician. Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2013, pp. 1 and 256.
- 130. Issandr El Amrani, in Guardian Online, 13 August 2012.
- 131. Amnesty pointed to the deaths of some 840 individuals during the protests in 2011, and to the killing of at least a further 12 people since Morsi took office, and noted that the security forces 'continue[d] to get away with murder.' Amnesty International, *Rampant Impunity*, London, January 2013, and 'News', 24 January 2013.
- 132. Abdel-Rahman Hussein, in Guardian Online, 12 August 2012.
- 133. Hesham Sallam, 'Morsi Past the Point of No Return', Jadaliyya, 8 December 2012.
- 134. The Economist, 2 February 2013.
- 135. Ibid.
- 136. Wickham, op. cit., pp. 18 and 251.
- 137. Ibid., pp. 270 and 276-82.
- 138. Omri, 'Tunisian Constitutionalism and the Draft Constitution of December 2012', *Open Democracy*, 13 January 2013.
- 139. Lilia Weslary, 'Community Is Based on Justice', Jadaliyya, 23 October 2012.
- 140. Rikke Hostrup Haugbolle and Francesco Cavatore, 'Beyond Ghannouchi: Social Changes and Islamism in Tunisia', *Jadaliyya*, 24 October 2012.
- 141. Yasmine Ryan, 'Building a Tunisian Model for Arab Democracy', *Alzazeera Online*, 27 November 2012. The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, named Marzouki and Ghannouchi in November as joint recipients of their annual prize for statecraft.
- 142. Rached Ghannouchi, 'We Are Building a Tunisia For All', *Guardian Online*, 13 January 2013.
- 143. Words of Anouar Ben Kaddour, a senior trade unionist quoted by Angelique Chrisafis, in *Guardian Online*, 8 February 2013.
- 144. By these means alone Morsi 'engineered the backing of the armed forces' for his rushed and unrepresentative draft. Editorial, *The Economist*, 1 December 2012.
- 145. Amnesty Online, 30 November 2012, and Lina Attalah, 'The Draft Constitution: Some Controversial Stipulations', Jadaliyya, 1 December 2012.

- 146. Attalah, op. cit.
- 147. Editorial, The Economist, 1 December 2012.
- 148. Shortly before Morsi had surreptitiously decreed that 'no judicial body can dissolve the Shura Council or the Constitutional Assembly': the country's highest body of judges, the Supreme Judicial Council, called the decree an 'unprecedented assault'. Yasmine El Rashidi, 'Egypt: The Rule of the Brotherhood', *The New York Review*, 7 February 2013.
- 149. Ahmed E. Souaiaia, 'The Failings of the Process of Adopting the Egyptian Constitution', *Open Democracy*, 16 December 2012.
- 150. Zaid Al-Ali, 'The New Egyptian Constitution', *Open Democracy*, 26 December 2012.
- 151. Ellis Goldberg, 'Morsi and His Adversaries', Jadaliyya, 29 November 2012.
- 152. Kingsley, 'Egyptian Protester Dies', *Guardian Online*, 4 February; Abram Online, 'Police Brutality Persists', *Jadaliyya*, 5 February; and Paul Sedra, 'The Dignity of Hamada Saber', *Jadaliyya*, 5 February 2013.
- 153. Mariz Tadros, 'Tearing Egypt Apart', Open Democracy, 31 January 2013.
- 154. Tracey McVeigh, 'How Egypt's Radical Rulers Crush the Lives and Hopes of Women', Guardian Online, 30 March 2013.
- 155. Quoted in ibid.
- 156. BBC Online Middle East, 12 November 2013
- 157. A cause of popular rage in Port Said and then other Canal cities, was the decision of a Cairo court on 26 January sentencing 21 supporters of the *Al Masry altraz* (or ultras) to death for the killing of some 72 supporters of *El Ahly* club in February 2012. Both teams had a record of defending democracy demonstrators against attacks by security forces, and this heavy punishment contrasted sharply with the impunity accorded to the police and military. *Al Masry* led thousands of Port Said people in deliberate defiance of the curfews. Leila Zaki Chakravarti, 'A Tale of Two Cities', *Open Democracy*, 11 February 2013
- 158. Patrick Kingsley and Ian Black in Guardian Online, 28 and 29 January 2012.
- 159. Kate Connolly in Guardian Online, 30 January 2013.
- 160. He had 'inserted Brothers as provincial governors and ministerial under-secretaries while seeking to widen his powers of appointment in the courts, the state-owned banks, and the [non-independent] trade unions.' *The Economist*, 2 February 2013.
- 161. Ellis Goldberg, in *Jadaliyya*, 1 July 2013 and 'Egypt's Tamarod', *BBC News Online Middle East*, 1 July 2013.
- 162. Adel Iskandar, "Tamarod: Egypt's Revolution Hones Its Skills", *Jadaliyya*, 30 June 2013.
- 163. Patrick Kingsley, in Guardian Online, 29 June 2013.
- 164. Hazem Kandil, 'In Cairo', London Review of Books, 18 July 2013.
- 165. 'Egypt's Tamarod', BBC News, and Kingsley, 'Protesters Across Egypt Call For Mohamed Morsi to Go', *Guardian Online*, 30 June 2013.
- 166. Patrick Kingsley and Martin Chulov, Guardian Online, 2 and 4 July 2013.
- 167. Kerry was speaking on a television interview in Pakistan. *BBC Middle East Online*, 1 August 2013.
- 168. Quoted by Josh Layton, Guardian Online, 7 July 2013.
- 169. Kandil, op. cit.
- 170. "It Isn't Over Yet", *The Economist*, 13 July and Amr Shalakany. "Preety Names and Ugly Things: Getting to Know the Law of Egypt's Second Transitional Period". *Jadaliyya*, 31 July 2013
- 171. Human Rights Watch, *Jadaliyya Reports*, 21 August 2013. In seven weeks of fighting, the death toll was approaching 2,000, with the great bulk of victims from among the Brotherhood. *The Economist*, 24 August 2013.
- 172. Patrick Kingsley, 'Alaa al-Aswany', Guardian Online, 29 October 2013.
- 173. Abdullah Al-Arian, 'What Next for the Muslim Brotherhood', *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, 16 September 2013.
- 174. Carrie Wickham, 'Calls for Reform of the Organisation', *Guardian Online*, 24 September 2013.
- 175. Kingsley and Marwa Awad, in the Guardian Online, 20 October 2013.

- 176. Born in 1954, he was the youngest member of SCAF. He had a reputation for sympathy with the Muslim Brotherhood-which was possibly a reason why Morsi had chosen him as defence minister. He had trained at Britain's Joint Command and Staff College, earned a masters degree at the U.S. army's War College in Pennsylvania, and enjoyed close relations with Saudi Arabia, where he served as military attaché. Ian Black, in the Guardian Online, 2 July 2013.
- 177. As reported by *Aljazeera*, 2 November 2013.
- 178. Omar Bethaj Salah, 'Tunisia's Political Impasse', Open Democracy, 7 October 2013.
- 179. Seumas Milne, Guardian Online, 2 April 2013.
- 180. *The Economist*, 12 October 2013. 181. Leyla Dakhli, 'Tunisian National Interest', *Jadaliyya*, 23 September 2013.
- 182. Quoted in ibid.
- 183. Corinna Mullin, Suzanne Adely and Azadeh Shahshahani, 'Rethinking US-Egyptian Bilateral Relations', Jadaliyya, 29 October 2013.
- 184. Ibid.
- 185. Kingsley, Guardian Online, 22 May 2014,
- 186. Rania Fazah, 'Human Rights on Hold in the Name of Economic Development', Open Democracy, 29 May 2014.
- 187. Sarah Hynek and Andrea Teti, 'Al-Sisi's Victory May be Short-Lived', Open Democracy, 26 May 2014.
- 188. Kingsley, op. cit., 22 May 2014.
- 189. Magdi Abdelhadi, 'Egypt's Presidential Favourite', Guardian Online, 26 May 2014.
- 190. Quoted by Kingsley, 22 May 2014.
- 191. Quoted by Kingsley, Observer Online, 24 May 2014.
- 192. Hynek and Teti, 26 May 2014.
- 193. Kingsley, 'Abdel Fatah al-Sisi', Guardian Online, 3 June 2014.
- 194. BBC News Online Middle East, 3 June 2014
- 195. Quoted by Kingsley, ibid.
- 196. BBC News Online Middle East, and Al Jazeera, 29 May 2014.
- 197. Quoted by Kingsley, 'Sisi's Only Rival', 24 May 2014.
- 198. Chiara Bottici and Benoit Challand, 'Civil Society in Revolt', Jadaliyya, 30 October 2012.



# Chapter Six

# **Democratization in South Africa**

A Failing ANC and a Determined Autonomous Movement of the Poor

Democratization is some three decades old in South Africa, a relatively advanced capitalist economy that offers structural and social supports for organizational development and action. The process is longer if the moral and ideological contribution of Black Consciousness is taken into account, ideas and values which notably influenced some community movements that became affiliated with the UDF later, and which perhaps reappear today in Abahlali base Mjondolo's ideas of a 'living politics'. Democratization in South Africa has significant milestones, the formation of the UDF in 1983 and COSATU in 1985, and 'organizational democracy' as path-breaking principles for combating elitism.

Considering the way forward for democratization in South Africa, out of the predominance of an increasingly dysfunctional ANC, certain groups command attention. The new social movements of the poor that have arisen in the last decade, represented here chiefly by Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), and the established workers' movement, COSATU. Each is distinctive for important reasons. But they are also associated through shared interests and aims concerning the country's parlous socio-economic conditions, in particular its poverty, worsening inequalities, and the crime, corruption, factionalism and militarism that are the accompaniments of the ANC's rule. Under the inherited weight of the ruling party's hegemony, these aims are not yet fully articulated.

When Ballard, Habib and Valodia considered new 'voices of protest' in 2006, they did so in terms of 'arenas of free democratic debate and participation' (which they immediately qualified as 'romanticized'), 'access to basic

services' and as 'counter[s to] various forms of social prejudice'.<sup>2</sup> When Plaut and Holden analyzed state power more recently, their brief reference to social movements was as reactions to failures of 'service delivery', though they allowed that 'there are indications that the protests may yet congeal into a new national movement that contests the ANC's hegemony.'3 It is accepted here that 'service delivery' is far too narrow and passive a focus for movements primarily concerned with struggling for justice and the rights of the poor to live and work in the cities; that Ballard et al's. reference to democratic debate and participation was in fact far more realistic than romantic; and that the predominance of the ANC is indeed being challenged by these independent social movements, as it is cogently by elements in COSATU. Gibson's emphasis on self-emancipation, autonomy and hegemony, is broadly relevant, though couched within a rather constraining notion of 'Fanonian practices'. 4 Highly pertinent, however, is della Porta's recognition that elections provide little control over the elected and offer little choice to voters; that the liberal model is challenged by participatory conceptions of democracy which recognize the existence of deep conflict in society, and are 'capable of constructing good citizen[ship] through interaction and empowerment. Social movements, and particularly the labor movement, have long emphasized collective and social rights over individual values, and direct participation by citizens over delegation to elitist politicians.<sup>5</sup>

### ABM: AN AUTONOMOUS MOVEMENT OF THE URBAN POOR

It was widely believed, Pithouse has noted, that the end of apartheid would mean the end of shack or squatter settlements, developmentally, consultatively, not by destruction and coercion.<sup>6</sup> The need was pressing: in 1994 the shortage in urban housing was acute and increasing at the rate of 178,000 households a year. <sup>7</sup> The country's new constitution of 1996 recognized these expectations and needs. Section 26 declared that 'everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing', that 'the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures . . . to achieve the progressive realization of this right', and that 'no one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all relevant circumstance. No legislation may permit arbitrary evictions' (subsections 1-3). Additionally, the Prevention of Illegal Evictions Act of 1998 provided procedural safeguards against evictions to those living in informal settlements. All evictions must be authorized by an order of court and must include 'written and effective notice of the eviction proceedings on the unlawful occupier and the local municipality not less than 14 days before a court hearing of the eviction proceedings.' Nevertheless, several municipalities have engaged in illegal evictions without due process. Mahendra Chetty of the Legal Resource Centre in Durban said in 2007 that Durban city, 'as a matter of regular and consistent practice, acts in flagrant breach of the law' on illegal evictions.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, many evictions are actually carried out with callousness and cruelty. As Pithouse has seen, 'An eviction normally occurs very swiftly. . . . There is no discussion with residents. . . . [They] happen without a court order, without consultation, without adequate notice. . . . It is typical for houses to be knocked down while people's possessions are still inside. Once houses are flattened, machines are brought in to pulverize the building materials and often . . . a fire is then set to burn away the last remaining evidence that there has been a settlement there.' In Johannesburg and Cape Town, he notes, the municipalities did not evict without court orders, but Durban simply disregarded this requirement.<sup>9</sup>

Into the twenty-first century, living conditions in many settlements continued to be appalling. An indication of the realities of settlement life was offered by S'bu Zikode—of whom more shortly—when he invited lawmakers to experience life in the *jondolos* (shacks) for themselves. Explaining that "those in power are blind to our suffering", he said "they must feel the mud... share 6 toilets with 6,000 people... dispose of their own refuse... chase away the rats and keep the children from knocking [over] the candles. They must care for the sick when there are long queues for the tap." In the early 2000s, when Durban's population totaled some 3.5 million people, almost 800,000 lived in substandard, inadequate housing.

In 2001, the newly established eThekwini Municipal Council for Durban launched a Slum Clearance Project, proudly declaring its intention to turn Durban into a 'shack-free' city. This almost invariably involved the relocation of shack dwellers to new sites on the outskirts of the city, far away from job opportunities and basic facilities like schooling and health available in town. A shack dweller might have an average income of perhaps R600 a month, but if relocated, say to Verulam, one of the proposed new sites, some 20 kilometers from the city center, most of a person's income—because of the absence of jobs in this 'greenfield' area—would be expended on transport. 12

Zikode had experienced the cost and other advantages of a settlement located in central Durban. He worked in a petrol station earning about R200 a week while paying rent in Elf Estates of R600 per month, reducible when others shared. But when he moved to the informal settlement of Kennedy Road, which he had frequently passed while studying part time at the University of Durban Westville, his rent fell to R80. He and his partner acquired "our own place and we could even save some money[;] . . . we could live close to work and schools at an affordable cost." But he was fully aware that this was not an acceptable life: "I felt that the community did not do enough to struggle for housing, for toilets, enough water. It was not acceptable for

human beings to live like that. So I committed myself", Zikode states, to change things. <sup>13</sup> A settlement organization nominally existed under Jarphas Ndlovu, but according to Zikode, there were no committee meetings, elections or discussion of political and developmental issues. At the first election in the settlement in 2000, Zikode, age 25, became chairperson of the Kennedy Road Development Committee (KRDC), and set about "restructur[ing] everything in terms of democracy." <sup>14</sup>

According to Bishop Rubin Phillip, Zikode and the KRDC 'mobilized the young people', with youth activities and a strong emphasis on the basic need for elections and democracy. He and his colleagues concentrated too on working with ANC organizations—Zikode had been a branch executive committee member in ward 25 in Clare Estate—and with the City of Durban, to try and address the problems the community faced. But in Phillip's words, 'the repeated lies and failed promises' of the party and the city 'built up', and a commitment eventually followed to 'taking action on the people's own terms.' After 'yet another promise of better housing turned out to be a betrayal', 15 two big events occurred almost simultaneously. The KRDC blockaded a major road nearby, and a new organization was formed by and for shack dwellers, Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM).

On 19 March 2005, as Pithouse describes it, 'hundreds of residents' of Kennedy Road blocked the six-lane Umgeni Road and held this blockade for four hours, generating big media coverage and resulting in fourteen arrests. The blockade lasted despite police tear gas and rubber bullets, said Vartak. "The anger here in Kennedy Road was growing and growing", Zikode noted. "[I]t could have gone in many directions but people decided to block the road." It had become clear to the KRDC that "the only space for the poor in the ANC was as voters." They knew that there was no politics of the poor in the ruling party. The blockade and the break with the ANC was no surprise to them: "[W]hat did become a surprise", Zikode said, was to see "a protest becoming a movement, to see other settlements joining us." 16

In the immediate aftermath of the demonstration, the settlement was occupied by the police, and an attempt to march on the police station had been beaten back. Twelve hundred people eventually marched in order to say to the police, 'release them all or arrest us all', <sup>17</sup> facing 'increased violence, the use of tear gas and dogs.' Ten days of prison and court appearances later, the Kennedy Road 14 were freed. <sup>18</sup>

Zikode says that those in KRDC accepted that they were indeed on their own but only in the specific sense of their relations with the ruling party: people insisted "that they could not be ladders [for ANC politicians] any more". The new politics, he went on, "had to be led by poor people and be for [them too]: that nothing could be decided for us without us. The road blockade was the start. . . . We learnt as we went. It is still like that now. We

discuss things until we have decided on the next step and then we take it. Personally I have learnt a lot."

From his experience in the ANC and on the branch executive committee, Zikode "knew people in the other settlements, and we were all having similar problems so it was actually easy to build up this movement." He was confident because he was "now fighting for what [he] strongly believed was right. And of course we were not alone. When you are thousands you are not intimidated." <sup>19</sup>

### THE FORMATION OF ABM

In the period between the blockade and the appearance of AbM, Pithouse records, a series of marches were organized at which local councilors were symbolically buried, and the political autonomy of the settlements from all top-down ANC party control was affirmed.<sup>20</sup> Vartak adds that 'intense mobilization' followed from the release of the 14, and 'led to the birth of [AbM].'21 From the 2005 blockade, Abahlali came to represent tens of thousands of people in at least 30 settlements, upholding the principles of organizational democracy and of autonomy: the latter being the driving force behind the movement. 22 AbM elected its leadership on an annual basis through a secret ballot. This method also applied to its various committees like women and the youth. "We believe in real democracy", says Lindela Figlan. "Decisions to take a particular action are only made after the membership is given full information . . . and asked for their inputs." Where special knowledge and skills are necessary, AbM calls for expert assistance, but it is the membership which 'make the final decision on the way forward.'23 Pithouse adds that 'people who represent the movement in the media, in negotiations and various forums, must be elected, mandated, accountable and rotated.' Like the UDF's Principles of Our Organizational Democracy in the late 1980s, AbM insists that their project must not be individualized, and that leadership is collective and replaceable.<sup>24</sup>

AbM's decision not to vote in local government elections in 2006, under the slogan, 'No land, no house, no vote', attracted wide attention.<sup>25</sup> We had "no confidence in politicians and we believed we could empower ourselves", said Zikode.<sup>26</sup>

On the basis of such principles, AbM successfully 'democratized the governance of settlements, stopped evictions, won some concessions around services, illegally connected electricity, built homemade toilets, set up crèches, and through a variety of other community-based initiatives and actions, worked to reduce the exclusion of poor people from the life and amenities of the cities.<sup>27</sup> Spontaneity, again like the UDF in Boesak's understanding,<sup>28</sup> was one of its operating principles. Zikode: "We did not start with a

plan—the movement has always been shaped by the daily activities of the people that make it. . . . This togetherness is what has shaped the movement. . . . It is the environment that we breathe [and] that shapes how we carry our politics forward." It amounts, he believes, to "a living politics", which both "arises from our daily lives and the daily challenges we face", and that is "easily understood" by the people for that reason. This living politics (or synonymously a "living communism") is a concrete idea and a practice of "ordinary people. The idea is the full and real equality of everyone without exception." It represents also "a complete community" . . . because no one is excluded and that it is open to all regardless of ethnicity, race and nationality. It means further "a very active and proactive community . . . that thinks and debates and demands." A communitarianism that was lost in Thatcher's Britain and in Central Europe in the 1990s, was being redeveloped by poor people in South Africa.

# VICTORY IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT AND THE ASSAULT ON KENNEDY ROAD

In 2007, the Kwazulu Natal (KZN) legislature introduced new draconian measures against shack dwellers and the homeless poor: The Prevention and Re-emergence of Slums Act of that year. It gave landowners the right to evict persons who were illegally occupying their land, and aimed in general at removing the practice of informality from urban areas and preventing its reemergence in any possible form, according to Vartak. Owners of informally occupied land were mandated to institute evictions, and owners of vacant land were encouraged to prevent informal occupation through such measures as fencing and the use of security guards. The Act intended to ensure that large numbers of the urban poor would remain homeless (until the state caught up with the huge housing backlog)<sup>30</sup>, and also put the burden on those living in overcrowded spaces to accommodate the homeless. What this meant could be seen in the Sitathutuka Settlement, where 50 families made homeless by the implementation of the Slums Act were subsequently living in their neighbors' overcrowded shacks. Demolitions had been carried out against people who had been living in the area for eight years, and without due process or a court order.<sup>31</sup>

When AbM, assisted by the Centre for Applied Legal Studies in Johannesburg, took the Slums Act to the Durban High Court,<sup>32</sup> Judge President Vuka Tshabalala found the Act to be fair. AbM therefore approached the Constitutional Court, which determined in October 2009, in a majority decision, that section 16 of the Slums Act was unconstitutional and struck it down. This strengthened protection for millions of shack dwellers in South Africa against forced evictions. But most significantly, it showed again, sug-

gests Vartak, that an organization formed and led by shack dwellers had the legal and political capacity to hold government to account.<sup>33</sup>

The temerity of the organized poor faced a ferocious counterattack from the state. Beginning on the night of 26 September 2009, a group of men, varying over time between 40 and perhaps 500, armed with guns and bush knives, attacked a meeting of the KRDC. They appeared to be looking for specific people: according to Amnesty International, for certain KRDC members and for the President and Deputy President of Abahlali. Zikode and Lindela Figlan were forced to flee for their lives. Two people were killed, and scores were injured. The attackers tried to create an impression that ethnic divisions were involved, but in reality 'only the shacks of AbM office bearers were targeted.' Activists told Vartak that the attack was instigated by local ANC leadership intent on reversing the AbM's achievement and rising popularity among the country's urban poor. For Zikode, the assault was a result of the AbM's success in exposing the ANC's failures at local, provincial and national levels. AbM had also "been able to protect our Constitution from invasion and this has made the ANC very angry." The ruling party was now "trying to show that there is no local leadership in Kennedy Road and that the settlement is ungovernable."34 Amnesty was concerned that 'public comments made by officials in the immediate aftermath of the violence' could have had the effect of 'criminalizing' the whole of AbM.

The police responded slowly to calls for assistance, and when they arrived they ignored the attackers and arrested members of the KRDC. Eight people were arrested on the morning of 27 September and another five were apprehended over the following two weeks. All 13 were supporters of Abahlali. After the arrest of the eight on 27 September at Kennedy Road, an armed group of some 500 'went on a rampage, throwing petrol bombs,' Amnesty reported.

The assault drove the leaders and families of the two movements out of the settlement, and 'left thousands' homeless. Eight months later, five of those arrested remained in Westville prison. The crimes against property and persons committed in September remained largely unaddressed. When hearings on bail applications by the accused were held in the Durban Magistrate's Court in October and November, demonstrators inside and outside the court, some wearing ANC insignia, 'made specific threats of violence' against Abahlali members and their supporters, should they be released on bail. Amnesty noted 'the sense of license [which surrounded] the demonstrators'. 35

The eventual trial of 'the Kennedy 12' (charges against one person had been withdrawn) proceeded with conspicuous slowness. After five days of the state leading its evidence in late November 2010, it was clear, said AbM, that 'it had no case against any of the 12.' None of the state's witnesses identified any of the 12 as responsible for any murder, and all the witnesses

were shown to be unreliable. All that emerged clearly in a week of hearings was that the accused were being framed by the state. But the delays were highly disadvantageous to AbM. The accused members were unable to continue with their lives, and Abahlali had to divert its energies to the trial. This was not expected to resume until mid-2011, and as long as it lasted 'the charges will be used by our enemies to discredit our movement.' <sup>36</sup>

Local ANC figures, who had appeared soon after the assaults occurred, were in control in Kennedy Road. The Provincial Minister for Safety and Security, Willies Mchunu, and the Provincial Police Commissioner, Hamilton Ngidi, issued a statement that the settlement had been 'liberated.' According to Trewhela, Mchunu, who was also a senior member of the South African Communist Party, had 'organized the ANC take over', announced the disbandment of Abhalali, and 'organized the frame up' of the Kennedy 12.<sup>37</sup> People without ANC party cards were excluded from public life while AbM members were effectively banned from the settlement. The 12 accused were reportedly 'severely assaulted in prison.' <sup>38</sup>

What had been a strong and living community was in 2010 'a place of darkness and fear.' Nevertheless, the community was beginning to reorganize itself. An underground branch of AbM was supposedly running and recruitment taking place. A petition for the return of the KRDC to the settlement was circulating.<sup>39</sup>

In July 2011 all of the charges against the 12 were dismissed. Magistrate Sharon Marks found the state's witnesses to have been "belligerent", "unreliable" and "dishonest", and she noted the atmosphere of "gross ethnic chauvinism" which the attackers had created during their assault. Arising from the magistrate's findings, Bishop Phillip said that suspicions had been raised about 'the role of political parties in condoning—perhaps even actively and covertly engineering—the violent suppression of independent movements of the poor.' The two-year process had been "politically motivated and unjust", but Abahlali throughout had remained united, strong and steadfast. They had the moral strength of "those who know who they are . . . what they stand for . . . and speak the truth." 40

Before the state's assault, AbM had developed linkages with other organizations of the poor as well as expanding itself both nationally and provincially. In July 2008 it had launched a Cape Town branch, and in September it joined with the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign in Cape Town, the Landless People's Movement in Johannesburg, and the new Rural Network in KZN to form the Poor People's Alliance. And by the beginning of 2009 AbM was represented in 53 settlements in the province of its birth just four years earlier.<sup>41</sup>

AbM continued to act and speak politically. It supported the Right to Know campaign in defense of freedom of information in October 2010 in Durban. It issued a press statement on 25 November that year refuting 'lies

being told about us'. This noted, among other things, that AbM president, S'bu Zikode, remained displaced and 'living in an undisclosed township', after his home was destroyed in September 2009. He had 'lost two jobs as a direct result of his commitment to AbM' and he remained unemployed and without an income. When AbM began 'we had no funding at all'. Now we receive 'a little bit of funding', but our total yearly budget for the whole organization is 'less than the salary for one senior NGO worker', and we are careful not to become dependent on any external funder. All funding is listed on our website, and our 'financial records are kept in the office and are available to any of our members at any time'. <sup>42</sup> Zikode presented a paper in Mexico City on 'The Struggle to Affirm the Dignity of the Poor in a Society in Which We Don't Count', on 8 August 2011.

Struggle was an unavoidable necessity for the organized poor. In a letter to Mayor Patricia de Lille of Cape Town in late 2011, Mzonke Poni of AbM of the Western Cape, noted that there were then 450,000 families needing houses in Cape Town, while the city was only building 7,000 houses a year. "We need to be clear", Poni declared, "for as long as the state is failing to provide water, electricity and sanitation, people must be encouraged to appropriate these services for themselves. . . . For as long as Cape Town is dominated by elite interests, the poor need to refuse all instructions to be patient and . . . build our collective strength to challenge [those] interests." 43

AbM responded quickly to the enormity of the Marikana mine massacre north west of Johannesburg—where 34 miners were shot dead by police in August 2012, considered below. Together with the Unemployed People's Movement, it met directly with the striking workers and with the residents of the adjacent Wonderkop shack settlement.

State repression and popular resistance had intensified in Durban. AbM's settlement in Cato Crest had a membership of just over 1,500 in September 2013. Two of their members had been killed by the police and the city's Land Invasion Unit that year, including a 17-year-old school girl, Ngobile Nzuza, shot twice from behind by police early in the morning of 30 September. By 1 October, Thembinkosi Qumbelo, Nkukuleko Gwala and Nzuza were dead, two others were in hospital, and many had been beaten during illegal evictions, consequent protest action, and in police stations. As an AbM press statement of that date noted, it is 'taken as criminal for us to refuse to be intimated', and for us 'to organize ourselves outside of the party'. S'bu Zikode was explicit about the movement's plans and intentions in these daunting circumstances: "We wish to make it clear that we will not be beaten out of this city. . . . We have shown that if they demolish we will rebuild. If they beat us and kill we will keep returning to the streets, to the courts and the debates in the media. . . . We will keep struggling until this City is willing to suspend its violent attacks on us and engage in genuine negotiations."44 Into the Christmas period, the municipality continued evictions, when some

residents were away in rural areas, and it was difficult to get legal, media and political support. AbM reckoned that this was the eighth occasion when the municipality had acted in open contempt of court decisions. <sup>45</sup>

As earlier observed, in its organization, dynamism, autonomy, determination and resilience, AbM was a 'shining example' of the power of poor people when organized. 46

### THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE

Conditions in Kennedy Road were not unique in South Africa. A majority of people were living in poverty around 2011, with 58 percent dependent on an income of some R325 a month. 47 Widespread unemployment accompanied and helped to perpetuate this malaise. According to Vavi, 36 percent of people were unable to find work, and for those below 35 years, unemployment reached 73 percent. Poverty was wide, deep and worsening. The number of people living in severe poverty was believed to have doubled over the first decade of democracy: South Africa's Institute of Race Relations reckoned that the numbers living on less than \$1 day had risen from 1.9 million in 1996 to 4.2 million in 2005.48

A prime cause of the poverty of the majority was deep inequality. On the UNDP's data for the late 2000s, while the poorest 10 percent shared income or expenditure of 1.4 percent of available wealth, those in the richest decile enjoyed 44.7 percent, and the ratio between the two was 33.1.<sup>49</sup> Estimates of the country's Gini coefficient (a figure between 0 and 1 where the closer the number is to 1, the more unequal is the society) vary, but a very high figure and a worsening trend is clearly evident. South Africa's Gini rose from 0.68 in 1991 to 0.77 in 2001 according to the Human Sciences Research Council, while Statistics SA put the later figure at 0.72. Ana Monteiro agreed with the 0.72 figure and added that the income of the top ten percent was 94 times greater than the bottom decile. Using data on household income for 2005/ 2006, Haroon Bhorat of the University of Cape Town calculated the Gini in 2009 at 0.679.<sup>50</sup> There was general agreement on the extremity of this inequality. For *The Economist*, it was 'higher than anywhere else in the world', while for Vavi today it was, at 0.63, 'beaten only marginally' in world inequality stakes by Namibia. The newspaper noted that, with unemployment at more than 25 percent and 'with not a single net job ha[ving] been added since the end of apartheid', this was an unavoidable, structured outcome. 51 In 1999, the highest paid employee in the public service had earned 18 times the wage of the lowest public sector workers, but in 2007 the wage gap in the bureaucracy was a factor of 29.52 Outside the public sector, income differentials rivalled the excesses of American capitalism noted in chapter four. While 58 percent of South Africans depended on incomes worth some R325

a month, the company directors on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, as Vavi angrily noted in July 2011, obtained on average R59 million a year. Bankers were also doing very well. Nedbank's CEO, Tom Boardman, allegedly obtained R43 million in 2009; Standard Bank's chief, Jacko Maree, got R18.2 million, and Absa CEO, Maria Ramos, acquired R13.5 million.<sup>53</sup>

State incapacity and the indifference of the ruling elite, played a big role in perpetuating poverty and inequalities. Take sanitation and water, resources that figure high on the concerns of AbM and shack dwellers generally. Examining the former, the UNDP found that in South Africa 69 percent of the population were 'using improved sanitation' in 1990, but in 2004 the number had actually fallen to 65 percent. On access to 'an improved water source', the numbers over the same period showed a rise from 83 to 88 percent.<sup>54</sup> While the countrywide backlog in 2011 was just over 2.4 million households, parliament's select committee charged with the task, seemed most troubled by the program's cost. A ventilated latrine (aka 'VIP') cost on average R7,500, and installing some 35,000 VIPs since 2010 had cost R267 million. The installation of the latrines was going badly, since the two 'implementing agents' appointed by the state to do the work, 'could neither cope with the scale of the program, nor achieve the targets set.' The building target for 2012 to 2013 was 53,000.55 It looked likely that the backlog would not be reduced for some time.

The successes which the government claims in the delivery of basic services were laid out by the president in September 2012: 'Over two and [a] half million houses have been built for the poor giving shelter to over ten million people. Six million households have gained access to clean water since 1994 and electricity has been connected to nearly five million homes.' 56 The gross numbers may seem impressive, but the rate of construction is another matter. Two and a half million houses built nationally over 18 years, and electricity connections to 5 million sites is a fairly moderate achievement. The 'abject poverty' of seven mining communities around Marikana, including their lack of clean water and sanitation, in 2006, and the deprivation of most residents in Nkandla in KZN, in 2014, is noted below,

Education is a key area of deprivation, state incapacity and enduring inequality. Under the ruling ANC, instead of ending inequality as the party once promised, 'the country's schools [we]re perpetuating it.'<sup>57</sup> For Graeme Block, an expert in the field, the education system was a 'national disaster'. Around 80 percent of schools are dysfunctional: half of all pupils drop out before their final matriculation exams. Only 15 percent qualify for university entrance, and barely half of those gain a degree. A study of first-year students by Higher Education South Africa found only half of the 2009 intake was proficient in 'academic literacy' and barely a quarter in 'quantitative literacy'. Just 1 in 10 black pupils qualifies for university. All state schools are desegregated, but the better endowed former white schools, with traditions of

discipline, excellence and hard work, produced the best results. The 'top 10 percent of former all-black schools [we]re also achieving some excellent results.' 58 Here it appeared not a matter of the quantity of state funding but of the direction and use of that support. According to COSATU, and quoted by *The Economist*, many former all-black schools were 'unsafe, bleak, uninspiring places, where violence and abuse are rife.' The teachers too were seriously inadequate. At the start of 2010, only 18 percent were professionally qualified graduates. Many were said to be 'not up to teaching at all.' Yet their performance was not systematically monitored. With more than 5 percent of GDP spent then on education, the country, and especially the great majority of its people, the newspaper concluded, were getting an abysmal return on this money. 59

Two years later, few improvements could be identified. One in six got to university, a much lower proportion than in other middle-income countries, and a third of these dropped out within a year. Three million South Africans aged 18–24 years, more than half of the total, were outside education, training or employment. Seven in 10 had no qualifications at all. Teachers in black state schools were worse than incompetent: they worked an average of 3.5 hours a day, compared with 6.5 hours in the former white state schools ('Model C'); a fifth of teachers are absent on Fridays, rising to a third at the end of the month. It was officially recognized that 80 percent of schools were 'dysfunctional'.<sup>60</sup> In June 2014, the World Economic Forum ranked South Africa 'the worst in the world' (146th) in maths and science education.<sup>61</sup>

### STATE INCAPACITY

While in Alliance with the ANC, COSATU has given serious and critical attention to the weakness of the state. An 'organizational crisis' existed in 2012, in which the ANC 'is increasingly wracked by factionalism, patronage and corruption.' Struggles in the ANC, moreover, are not over policy and ideas, but are 'increasingly over control over the levers of accumulation', that is, private acquisition. The factionalism and acquisitiveness were so bad that those challenging these abuses 'find their lives increasingly in danger.' The secretariat in 2012 did not exaggerate the depth and deadliness of the factional conflict.<sup>62</sup> Other sources noted that a special team had reportedly been appointed by the ANC in KZN in July 2012 to investigate all politically related killings. The party provincial chairman and KZN premier, Zweli Mkhize, pointed to what he called the "reservoir of contract killers" in the province, and warned that there would be no peace until they were uprooted. On 3 July, the ANC chief whip in Ugu district, Wandile Mkhize, was killed in a drive-by shooting within days of his attending a rowdy party conference in Midrand; at his funeral, the premier suggested that the ANC should look

for the reasons for the killing at 'the confluence of politics, criminality and business'. This was a powerful judgment from someone who was in a position to know. It was a telling indictment of the ANC where linkages between politics, criminality and corruption in KZN had existed since at least operation Vula in 1988. No less than 21 leading members of the National Freedom Party—a breakaway from Inkatha, launched at the end of 2010—had been killed in the province since the beginning of 2011.<sup>63</sup> For COSATU's secretariat there was a systemic crisis with profound and broad implications: for governance from national to local levels, for all state institutions, and for progressive civil society.<sup>64</sup>

The crisis in the state had been brought on by 'years of neglect, fiscal cutbacks, and contracting out of state responsibilities, 65 combined with endemic corruption, and a failure of political and bureaucratic leadership'.66 Elements of the state had been rendered dysfunctional. An indication of the severity of state failure had been offered by the Auditor General. Only 'three out of 36 government departments had received unqualified or clean audits in 2010/11, and only 13 out of 343 local governments' at the same time. In COSATU's view this institutional collapse was directly related to 'the crisis of non-delivery' of services and facilities which confronted many workingclass communities. State management remained abysmal one year later. In the Eastern Cape, not one of the 26 institutions examined received a clean audit, none in the Northern Cape, and just one in North West. Nearly R600 million in tenders were awarded to suppliers linked to employees of the relevant department. The auditor general, Terence Nombembe, noted that department heads failed to set the right tone for clean management, and in some cases failed to act against officials who broke the law. The ministry of the presidency, for instance, never met with the auditor general in the last year, nor made any promises to improve performance either in this or in the previous year. 67

There was crisis too with regard to all the three big socio-economic structures noted above, poverty, inequality and unemployment. These problems had been exacerbated by both inappropriate neo-liberal policies and by the state's promotion of elite empowerment at the expense of equality. If these structural problems were ever to be properly addressed, 'we need to embark on a different growth path', and embrace a radical shift in economic policies. 'A deliberate and systematic program of income redistribution, social protection and wage policies', they accurately recognized, was required. But the secretariat recognized that 'a powerful bloc in the political leadership and the bureaucracy (supported by capital) would continue to resist a change.' 68

The strength of the opposition within the ANC to redistribution had been directly affirmed by the party's national spokesperson, Smuts Ngonyama, in November 2004, when he boldly declared that "I did not join the struggle to be poor". He was involved in a lucrative and rather typical black economic

empowerment (BEE) deal, focused on the sale of a R6.6 billion stake in the state agency Telkom to a consortium led by the former director-general of communications, Andile Ngcaba. Ngonyama himself stood to make up to R100 million. Around this time there was 'a range of BEE deals, each of enormous value,' which were repeatedly awarded 'to companies loaded with the same broad group of ANC.' The party thereby created a wealthy, politically connected elite ready to support the ANC's policies and activities. Observations of the same broad group of the companies with criminality would be a huge and dangerous undertaking.

Organizationally, COSATU had performed strongly, exceptionally so among trade unions internationally. After a decrease in members between 2000 and 2006, membership had risen again from nearly 1.8 million to almost 2.2 million in 2012. Growth of 25 percent over some 9 years made COSATU 'one of the fastest growing trade union federations in the world', in keeping with its earlier performance considered in chapter 3.70

But serious underlying problems existed for COSATU. There was 'a growing social distance between union leaders and the membership. Different lifestyles and material realities [we]re creating a leadership which is not fully in tune with what members are facing.' The ANC and unions' relations with the ruling party were a big problem. The secretariat acknowledged that 'perceptions are setting in', that some union leaders 'are reluctant to take up certain issues for fear of embarrassing the ANC.' Some workers also believed that what they saw as 'growing corruption' existed among sections of the union leadership. The secretariat appeared to accept that such perceptions were both fairly concrete and highly significant. Lack of proper attention to members concerns, it was noted, was 'leading to a proliferation of small independent unions springing up.' Internal participation and democratization were also deficient. A survey of workers in January 2012 indicated that only one-quarter of rank and file members had participated in a union educational program, and just over half had attended a union meeting in the past year. Only 6 percent of the members knew the identity of the general secretary or president of their union. According to the secretariat, this graphically illustrated 'the distance of leaders from the membership.' The danger was real that COSATU could find itself 'outflanked by the new independent unions which are emerging as a result of dissatisfaction from the shopfloor. COSA-TU must rediscover its very purpose of existence if it wants to make a real impact.'71 These were frank and significant observations, Rediscovering why it existed, and making a real socio-economic impact, were big and highly consequential aims.

Yet an apparent conundrum existed, for many of these COSATU members who were uninterested in their union affairs were supposedly active members of the ANC: over a quarter of surveyed members were active in their ANC branch, suggesting to the secretariat that 'around half of ANC

members were also COSATU members.' The ANC's total membership on these figures for early 2012, was 1,270,000 (or some 900,000 smaller than the union federation). Current planning in COSATU was to 'ensure that the working class swells the ranks of the ANC'. This was being done, the secretariat said, 'as part of the contestation for the soul of the movement, and to, as they said, "jealously defend the progressive and working class bias of the ANC'". But the record suggests that the 'soul of the ANC' had died years ago, as an elitist armed struggle trumped domestic democratization, and as the ruling party functioned as a ladder for political preferment. Similarly the party's supposed working class bias was an illusion, explicitly denied by leading ANC figures, and the evidence of the party's pro-capitalist values is overwhelming. A strategy of merging COSATU's membership into the ANC raised the likelihood of weakening the federation with the factionalism, elitism and corruption rife within the ruling party.

On another assessment, COSATU's very success, around 2000 to 2010, had negative consequences, turning the federation itself into a bureaucratic machine out of touch with its rank and file, according to Sakhela Buhlungu. New hierarchical structures had emerged in the 1990s, where every affiliate union acquired a general secretary and other functionaries, superimposed on the union's shop stewards, and communications between the different tiers had declined. Union leaders acquired new habits, styles and possessions. As Gwede Mantashe, then general secretary of the NUM, revealingly observed in 2000, union officials could hardly pitch up for meetings with big business looking like shabby white leftists. Until the early 1990s COSATU's officials all received the same salaries, but by the twenty-first century, moves began to turn the general secretary's remuneration into 'market-related' salary packages. In 2009, Vavi's salary was said to have been doubled to R500,000, and the NUM's Frans Baleni secured an annual package of R1.4 million. Old activist unionists gave way to those pursuing business-like careers. Leaders became responsible for overseeing huge investment funds: the NUM, for instance, collects about R13 million in subscriptions from its approximately 300,000 members, and passed on some R800,000 to COSATU. Shop stewards, or shaft stewards in mining, were changing too. Management sometimes used shaft stewards as labor brokers, to recruit new workers, and the positions became full-time functions. But the shop/shaft stewards constituted the interface between the union leadership and the workers: if this layer became unresponsive to workers, the entire union structure was threatened with failure. 73 Buhlungu concluded that COSATU has been gaining in influence with the ANC while losing in the process social and political power. But he nonetheless allowed that 'the loss of power is not necessarily of terminal proportions to the unions.'74

Given the factionalism and other problems rife in the ANC, it was not surprising that divisions were present within COSATU's leadership in 2012

and 2013. Allies of President Jacob Zuma within the federation were maneuvering to force general secretary Vavi out. He was seen as 'a thorn in the side' of those seeking Zuma's reelection as ANC president at party elections in December 2012. COSATU president, Sdumo Dlamini, was seen as a Zuma ally, while the general secretary of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) was 'touted to replace Vavi.' At the Federation's congress in late September, all the top leadership were reelected unopposed, but the factionalism, and specifically the ANC's attacks on Vavi, were merely postponed.

Few organizations in South Africa take corruption, poverty and inequality, more seriously than the union federation. On 27 October 2010 it launched a major civil society effort to tackle these issues. Vavi was at the forefront of this campaign. In his address to a founding conference, he boldly evoked the landmark formation of the UDF in 1983. But he was at pains to stress that this was "not an anti-ANC and anti-government coalition." He elaborated: "The challenges we face today are different but nonetheless very major, and require a similar mobilization of the democratic forces as we saw in those years." Among groups represented at the conference were the Treatment Action Campaign (the TAC had a proud record of trenchant criticism of the failures of the Mbeki government to deal rationally and responsibly with the AIDS epidemic), the NUM and the Food and Allied Workers Union. Vavi emphasized that they were not there to begin the formation of a political party, and said that "we have only one enemy—the neo-liberalism that has condemned our people to poverty and unemployment." But he criticized government officials involved in business, saying this was the root of the corruption, and as such "a matter of life and death for our democracy." COSATU's patience at governmental inaction was running out: "Yes we are angry. . . . We demand a more egalitarian society." His keynote address to the conference noted that the top 20 paid directors in JSE listed companies earned on average 1,728 times the average income of a South African worker, while state-owned enterprises paid CEOs 194 times an average worker's income. 76

Speaking in Khayelitsha in Cape Town on 18 October, Vavi was more explicit in calling for a broad social movement for justice. Mobilizing poor communities, and reviving the traditions of the UDF, went together. He assured the Social Justice Coalition "that you have a trusted and reliable ally in COSATU. We shall walk shoulder to shoulder with you all the way". This was a landmark commitment.

The ANC was of course totally unsympathetic to the initiative of COSA-TU and civil society in holding the conference of 27 October. In a statement of 2 November, the party's National Working Committee denied their right to speak, and condemned what they said was 'an attempt to put a wedge' [sic] between civil society formations, some unions and the ANC govern-

ment. They claimed that the ANC had been 'prosecuted and found guilty while in absentia' for not doing enough to address what they said were apartheid socio-economic fault lines. In acting independently, the conference had deliberately sought to exclude the ANC and form a new 'opposition block'. 78 In response, COSATU said that the conference organizers 'went out of their way to explain who would be invited, and they had agreed that no political parties would be included as this would undermine the conference's status as an initiative of civil society.' The ANC's allegations were baseless. The federation was fully committed to the Alliance. But COSATU, it clearly affirmed, was 'an independent organization free to meet other trade unions and civil society formations and to pursue its own working class agenda.'79 In December 2012 Vavi became chairman of the National Anti-Corruption Forum, and he was instrumental in the formation of Corruption Watch, a platform where people could report incidents of malfeasance: it was to be "a new people-based campaign" for a "relentless war against corruption irrespective of who is involved."80

The ANC's accusations of 2 November were fully consistent with the views expressed by its political elite over decades. From the punishments meted out to young MK idealists in Angola to Nelson Mandela's diatribe against literally all independent thinking at Mafikeng, and to the assault on AbM and Kennedy Road, the ANC elite has demonstrated its strong intolerance of individuals and agencies which aspired to speak with and for the poor majority in the name of democratization and active support for equality.

COSATU's secretariat appears aware of some of these ANC characteristics, even as it nurtures its belief about the party's supposed working class bias. It acknowledges the existence of a powerful bloc in the political leadership which will continue to oppose socio-economic change, and specifically the strong opposition within the ANC to redistribution. It knows, most significantly, that COSATU itself must 'rediscover its very purpose of existence if it wants to make a real impact.' Such an aim requires the federation to act independently of the ruling party in association with other social formations, Vavi acknowledged. As by far the largest popular organization in the country, with its own autonomous finances, it is hard to envision broad-based, sustained change occurring without the involvement of COSATU.

But the engagement too of the new self-made organizations of the urban poor that have grown up in recent years seems equally vital. They are obviously under resourced and perhaps inchoate, but their ethical values and determination are high. In the case of the AbM, they have developed a range of principles of political and indeed radical importance: on autonomy as the movement's driving force, on organizational democracy, on self-empowerment, and on the importance of creating an active, living community that 'thinks and debates and demands'. They harbor no distracting illusions about the ANC and have demonstrable resilience. COSATU's rediscovery of pur-

pose and the making of real impact might be achievable over time within a broad and popular association with the likes of AbM and LPM and the new anti-corruption forums. For that reason the intense opposition of the ANC must be anticipated from the outset.

By 2013 to 2014 it was clear that AbM had not anticipated the impact of the repression of 2009 on its leadership. A number of people had by then 'been living under constant and acute stress for a long time.' There was pressure on some of them from their families 'to translate their risky and enduring commitment [to AbM] into a livelihood'. 81 AbM was an underresourced poor people's movement, unable to provide safe housing for all its leaders after the destruction at Kennedy Road. By mid-2014 it recognized that they had failed in not ensuring that 'all comrades who have committed to the movement for many years have an income.' The leadership also made a mistake, around 2010, 'by accepting new branches too quickly', but they recognized the error 'and put careful procedures in place'. Divisions arose among the leaders, especially after a young person, who didn't live in a shack, with no record of struggle, and who was not a member of a branch, was elected on a 'block vote' as secretary general. These differences were exploited by the ANC and some non-governmental groups in the Durban area. Considering the way forward in June 2014, the leadership focused on 'keeping people together and feeling safe when there is repression.' Repression can do 'serious damage to individuals and to our collectivity', and 'we need to take this very seriously.' The movement's paid up membership at the beginning of the year was 12,000.82

# CRIMINALIZATION, MILITARIZATION AND THE MASSACRE AT MARIKANA

Marikana is a platinum mine, one of the world's richest, owned by Lonmin, located near Rustenburg north west of Johannesburg. On 16 August 2012, 34 miners were shot dead by police and almost 80 were injured. The details of the events are slowly emerging but the broad outlines seem known. Mining, as already seen, was at the base of South Africa's economic development, but it is now in decline. While it contributed 20 percent of GDP in 1970, this has fallen to less than 5 percent near 2012. The country still contains some of the richest mineral deposits in the world, but output has dropped to its lowest level for 50 years. State incapacity is part of the reasons for this decline. The infrastructure is shoddy, and electricity supplies from Eskom patchy—the parastatal has reportedly encouraged mining companies to limit production to avoid power cuts. Many mines are more than 100 years old, and they are now difficult and expensive to exploit. The situation has been summarized as follows: 'mining skills are scarce, productivity stagnant and costs rapidly

escalating.' Additionally, 'the unions are strong and strikes frequent', often for good reason. Sol Plaatje referred to black miners in 1914 as "subterranean heroes who, by day and by night, for a mere pittance lay down their lives to the familiar 'fall of rock'". One hundred twenty-three miners had been killed in South Africa in 2011.83

Living conditions around Marikana were bad. A report prepared for Lonmin in 2006, and later leaked to the *Mail and Guardian*, detailed the 'abject poverty' of miners and their families in seven communities around Marikana. The poorest were Wonderkop, Modderspruit, Majakaneng, and Segwaelane, while Marikana was seen as one of the better off with (only) 'severe poverty'. Seven and a half percent of people reported that they 'always lack[ed] clean drinking water', while a combined 77.3 percent of them reported that they lived without cash income "always or sometimes". Malnutrition was said to be prevalent, and 'a number of children' suffered from kwashiorkor, due to their protein-deficient diet. The people's key needs were reportedly 'food parcels, access to water and sanitation, and health care'. 84

But the union presence at Marikana was deeply divided and often characterized by violence. The largest was the established NUM, claiming a national membership of 300,000, COSATU's then biggest affiliate, with a strong record, noted in chapter 3, of organizational capacity and action. Smaller but very militant was the Association of Mining and Construction Union (AMCU). It was formed a decade earlier by Joseph Mathunjwa, after he broke from the NUM. He claimed that up to a quarter of miners at Marikana had already gone over to AMCU, and he and other miners there accused the NUM leadership tellingly of abandoning grass-roots concerns in favor of ANC-aligned politics, and having too close a relationship with management. Acrimony between the two saw 10 people killed, including two police slashed to death and another hospitalized, a few days before the police massacre. The situation represented COSATU's worst fears about being outflanked by the rise of splinter unions; the federation upheld the principle of "one industry, one union", and argued that breakaways always divided workers. AMCU had recently strengthened its position after a six-week violent strike at Impala platinum mine. About 17,000 workers were sacked, and as reinstatements occurred, AMCU claimed to have acquired the bulk of the NUM membership.

Claims and counter claims obscured realities, but the situation at Marikana in August was focused on the unofficial strike of some 3,000 rock drillers, demanding pay of R12,500 a month, up from present earnings of some R10,000 monthly. 85 Their work was difficult and dangerous, hefting a shaking 25 kilo drill, kneeling or squatting in a miniscule crevice at the rock face. It was also vital, and their strike, reinforced by intimidation, brought the mine to a stand still. 'Marikana pretty much is Lonmin [as] it accounts for 96

percent of its production.' The value of the company's shares had reportedly halved in the past year, and platinum prices had fallen. 86

The police, characterized by corruption, militarism and a 'shoot-first' policy, were themselves a large part of the problem at Marikana. On 12 June, General Bheki Cele, the police chief, was 'relieved of his duties' for graft and corruption. His predecessor, Jackie Selebi, had been jailed for 15 years. The head of the crime intelligence unit, Lieutenant General Richard Mdludi, was charged with murder and fraud and twice suspended. Rhlanhla Mkhwanazi became acting police chief, and proved independent, active and outspoken. In an interview he said, "I will prove that there are people strategically operating like the Mafia and I will deal with these people." He was described as 'a respected career officer', but soon after his interview he was returned to his old job as head of the police Special Task Force. The country's new police chief was Riah Phiyega, 'a business woman with no experience of policing, intelligence or security'. Res

Police statistics revealed that 566 people were shot dead or otherwise killed by police in 2009 and 2010, and their rate of killing was adjudged 'among the world's highest'. According to the Independent Police Investigative Unit, about 932 people died in police custody in 2011 and 2012: KZN had been the worst affected with 268 deaths. <sup>89</sup> Torture was used in particular against poor and vulnerable young men. A common form favored by the police was 'tubing', used with or without water, to induce suffocation. The country has no specific torture laws, so cases were usually recorded, if at all, as assault. It was reportedly widely seen as 'nothing new'. <sup>90</sup> Corruption is likewise high and indeed 'rampant'. Transparency International reported in 2011 that 68 percent of South Africans saw the police as 'extremely corrupt'. <sup>91</sup>

Since 2009 and 2010 the police have been embarked on a process of remilitarization, turning away from an early period when a police service, not a police force, had existed. The former purported to serve the community, the latter unequivocally the state. Military ranks were reintroduced and 'command and control' emphasized. A number of government ministers exhorted the police to use their guns against suspected law breakers, and the police returned to being, according to McMichael, 'the brute enforcer of state power.'93 What assumed the characteristics of a war on the poor began. The war was totally inequitable, of course, but not entirely one-sided—the poor were now resisting the oppression they experienced. The number of official 'unrest incidents' was higher during 2011 and early 2012 than in any previous period: during the three years to early 2012, unrest incidents averaged 209 a day, an increase of 40 percent over the daily average recorded in 2004–2009. According to Alexander, government attempts to improve service delivery had been insufficient to 'assuage the frustration and anger of poor people.' A

massive rebellion was occurring, he said, partly derivative of the country's huge inequalities and its unemployment. 94

Clark and Dugard took a similar view, noting a 'huge surge' in recent years in popular protest in poor communities. These were influenced by the factors already considered, but they also expressed the desires of people in such communities to participate in and influence the decisions affecting their daily lives, as AbM so often stressed. Jane Duncan at Rhodes University also noted that it was often the violence of the police against an otherwise peaceful demonstration that turned protests violent. <sup>95</sup> Following the assault on Kennedy Road, one of the early, small-scale expressions of this war came with the killing of Andries Tatane in Ficksburg in KZN in 2011. <sup>96</sup>

The enhancement of police enforcement powers was partly based. McMichael states, on the assumed 'tactical interchangeability between fighting a war and domestic policing.' Recent years had seen 'increased integration' between the police and the South African National Defense Force, including joint security operations and the exchange of equipment. New, specialized police units had been formed, along the lines of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) paramilitary units prominent in urban policing in the United States. One of these, the Special Task Force supposedly benefitted from training missions with the United States military. But its intended role was in hostage and terrorist situations, not crowd control. The other main paramilitary unit was the Tactical Response Teams, which were trained for both rural and urban combat, and are assigned to precincts throughout the country. They have gained an early reputation, says McMichael, for 'abusive force'. Video evidence has shown the Gauteng Tactical Response Team at work in a township near Johannesburg, utilizing door-to-door raids and 'torture'.97 Both of these units were present at Lonmin in August.

On the 16th of that month, the police, according to Johnson, were 'armed to the teeth with automatic weapons', backed by a 'fleet of Nyala armored [vehicles]', and they wore 'bulletproof vests and metal helmets'. As noted, two policemen had been killed three days earlier, and the police had announced, says Johnson, that 'whatever happened the protest would be forcibly ended that day. Thousands of striking miners had been squatting on the Wonderkop hill near Marikana. The AMCU leader, Joseph Mathunjwa, had supposedly "pleaded with them" to disperse. I told them "the writing is on the wall, they are going to kill you."98

The photojournalist, Greg Marinovich, was one of the first to provide a description of the massacre. Working with forensic studies of the scene, with the testimony of some survivors, and with academic and other researchers, he believed that 'no more than a dozen' of the 34 killed were seen in news footage shot at the scene of the initial fusillade. The majority were killed beyond the view of cameras, among boulders some 300 meters behind Wonderkop. On his initial reconstructions, 14 were murdered at Small Koppie;

some 12 died at Wonderkop; and a 'further 10, at least, were killed in the veld'. Heavily armed police, at least 400 armed with R5 or LM5 assault rifles, methodically carried out the killings. Some were shot as they lay on the ground (in the mistaken belief that this would save them), some killed from helicopters, others run over by Nyalas. Marinovich believed it clear that here was no sad tragedy, as politicians and others were hurriedly assuring each other, but 'murder of the underclass at the behest of those in power'. An official commission of inquiry had been established. 99 The Legal Resource Centre had obtained 'multiple witness testimonies' that blamed police brutality for the killings: police had shot miners who were either hiding behind rocks or who were endeavoring to surrender. The Centre also had 'forensic evidence that suggests a police cover-up.' 100 Johnson believed that whatever the findings, it would not be able to contain 'the immense shock waves caused by the shootings.' 101

Evidence produced at the Farlam inquiry supported the interpretation made earlier by Marinovich. The submission by the Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution, in late January, noted the continued propagation of the 'maximum force' doctrine by government leaders, and the 'direct bearing' they had on the massacre. They instanced the statement in April 2008 by Susan Shanbangu, minister of safety and security: "You must kill the bastards if they threaten you or the community. . . . I want no warning shots. You have one shot and it must be a kill shot." In a garbled statement, this was apparently endorsed by President Zuma a few days later: "If you have a deputy minister saying the[se] kind of things[;] . . . this is what we need to happen." The Council submitted that maximum force was "a tactic deployed against community protesters" from 2011. They also noted that the units deployed at Marikana "fell under the operational response services division that was specifically created for the purpose of advancing this policy." 102

A little earlier, an advocate acting for the families of killed miners, Dumisa Ntsebeza, stressed that "little attempt" had been made to engage, negotiate or consult with the protesting miners; he noted that autopsies showed that fourteen of those killed "were shot from behind, many in the back or in the back of the head"; and he alleged that police had possibly destroyed video evidence of the shootings on 16 August. <sup>103</sup>

Rehad Desai's documentary film, 'Miners Shot Down', is described by de Waal as 'the most comprehensive and readily digestible account' of the massacre. Desai shows in some detail, according to de Waal, that the killings were pre-determined. It had been decided 'between the mine management and the police' that the existing stand-off had to end, 'and the police insisted on disarming the strikers before anything else could happen'. It was this condition, 'more than any other', that led to the miners being shot when they were leaving the koppie on which they had gathered. The police had been

bent on a show of force 'from the start.' This was encouraged by Cyril Ramaphosa, former NUM co-founder, and then a member of the Lonmin board. He had called for stern action against this "criminal" strike, and on Desai's depiction, he had taken his assessment 'to the highest level—the ministers of police and of mineral resources.' Consistent with other interpretations above, the police 'responded with alacrity'. Desai shows the Nyalas arriving and the barbed wire being laid that would trap the strikers when they began to leave. <sup>104</sup> Meanwhile, footage was being shown at the Commission of police dragging the bodies of injured and dead mine workers while pointing their guns at them. The police were claiming that they acted in self-defense, but some audio evidence expressed what Falanga called a 'celebratory, bragging and even triumphant tone': One constable on a shaky cell-phone video on 16 August 2012, "That motherfucker. I shot him as least 10 times." <sup>105</sup>

Officials of the Farlam commission said in January that their hearings would continue into May, and their report would be finalized by the end of June. Finalization was again extended. Recent research indicated that Marikana also respresented determined community action by poor migrant workers and shack dwellers gathered on "the mountain," 'a moment of resistance rooted in local specificities', with wide national ramifications.

# THE CONFLUENCE IN THE STATE IN THE WAKE OF KENNEDY ROAD, MARIKANA AND OPULENT NKANDLA

Johnson has noted a 'strong popular sense that Zuma's South Africa is effectively leaderless'. The President is most anxious to keep his balance among the party's warring factions, and interested chiefly in his harem of wives and 'accumulating vast wealth for his family.' 106 The prime example of his familial accumulation to-date, and of how he manipulates state resources and personnel to this end, is the Nkandla housing complex in KZN.

Beginning as the extension of his original homestead at Nkandla, it had been expanded by 2013–2014 to include a visitors' Centre, amphitheater, cattle kraal, marquee area, a swimming pool, and new houses for relocated relatives, all included in a supposed security upgrade, at enormous cost to the taxpayer, according to the findings of the Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela. <sup>107</sup> She found that state bodies involved in the construction had "failed dismally" to uphold supply-chain rules; that Zuma and his family benefited improperly; that every high-ranking official either made mistakes or was guilty of maladministration; and that resources were diverted from much needed government projects, like inner-city regeneration, to fund the President's residence. Zuma had placed his architect, Minenhle Makhanya, in effective control, and the Protector found that government officials, and even

a minister, "could have had difficulty countermanding [his decisions]." She referred to elements of the project as "obscenely excessive" and as "unconscionable", and said that "it is difficult not to reach the conclusion that a license-to-loot situation was created".

The Nkandla upgrade was 'acutely' more expensive than expenditure on previous presidents' private houses. <sup>108</sup> Even genuine security measures, such as 20 houses for police personnel, a clinic, and two helipads, were excessive, and could have been located at the nearby town, to the benefit of the broad community. <sup>109</sup> Documents obtained earlier by amaBhungane, showed how expenditures had 'ballooned tenfold', from R27.8 million in 2009, to a 'projected total of about R270 million in October 2012' as officials 'scrambled to please President Jacob Zuma.' <sup>110</sup>

The Zuma residence contrasts sharply with the deprivation of most of the people at Nkandla. Of the 115,000 people who lived in the area around 2014, only 10,000 had electricity, some 7,000 had no access to piped water, 12,000 relied on pit latrines, and 40 percent were unemployed. The mayor of Nkandla, Arthur Thamsanqa, a member of Inkatha, assessed joblessness much higher, and said that "even when there are [water] pipes, sometimes people go a month without water." The president had created, according to Madonsela, an island of opulence in a sea of poverty. Worse, violence was widespread in KZN, as noted above. Sthandiwe Hlongwane, who lived near the estate, said, "I cannot comment on the situation because that could . . . put my life in danger." 111

The massacre at Marikana reinforces the importance of the linkages between militarism, criminality and the ANC. This view, variously expressed, appears to be gaining widening support. The historian, Hermann Giliomee, accurately observed that the ANC had "created its own culture of violence and impunity, and allows all manner of violent behavior within its own ranks." That the ANC has and does promote violence within its ranks is the argument above. The head of Nedbank, Reuel Khoza, said that South Africa today had a breed of leaders "who are completely incapable of managing a modern state". He went much further: under Zuma, he said, 'the criminalization of the state is proceeding apace.' 112

The confluence of militarism and criminality has strong roots in the ANC. To recapitulate: It was boosted during the armed struggle, when Mbokodo was rampaging, and Joe Modise, Mzwai Piliso and other senior figures were active. Modise was engaged over decades in various forms of crime, as was described in chapter 3, and went on to become one of the most corrupt ministers South Africa has seen. Zuma held executive power in Mbokodo, his whole military career was concentrated in intelligence, and he declared later that no cause was greater than what benefited the ANC, not the norms of accountability nor the constitution. <sup>113</sup> Vula drew together Maharaj, the Shaiks and Zuma in a long lasting relationship built on crime, espionage and

corruption, aimed at undermining the democratization movement and subordinating trade unions and community groups to the ANC. Madikizela Mandela combined abuse, torture and murder and repeatedly asserted that she acted for the ANC and the all-exonerating struggle.

The barriers against democratization are huge. It was her actions against defenseless youth that prompted Azhar Cachalia to call for the penalty of lustration. The country would be unable to move forward, to democratize, until such people were removed from public office. The killing of Thami Zulu has not been accounted for. Thabo Mbeki opposed the release of the TRC's Final Report, and Zuma declared that documents on events of the 1980s were the property of the ANC. 114 Key findings of the Skweyiya Commission have been ignored: that ANC personnel detained without trial should receive an unequivocal apology and monetary compensation, and an independent body should document the wide-scale abuses in the camps. Lustration was fully endorsed: no person guilty of atrocities should be allowed to assume a position of power: unless 'the ANC is prepared to take decisive action, the risk of repetition will forever be present.' Instead, the ANC enforces secrecy and non-accountability on what the armed struggle really represented, and repetition occurs. Chris Hani acknowledged in January 1990 that MK "can't be compared to the SADF" as a military force, but never made this assessment available to the public. 115

The intelligence services have remained central to the power structures of the state, shepherded by a president who, as Holden and van Vuuren lightly put it, 'has kept his toe in his original paddling pools'. 116 Soon after he gained the presidency, Zuma drew on his intelligence connections. A number of Vula and Bible stalwarts were appointed to key positions in security and intelligence. A little later, Maharaj became presidential spokesman. 117 The key role of this group was the protection and extension of the power of the president using the most effective and secret means. The gathering and distribution of intelligence material, in the context of intense factional fighting in the elite, was a prime activity. 118 A clear threat to democratic practice from this regime, for Holden and van Vuuren, is the Protection of Information Bill, with its definition of national security so broad as to apply to virtually any state document, and the criminalizing of the citizenly role of holding the government to account through access to information. The implications of all this is the undermining of democratic processes, and the furthering of corruption and cronyism. Criminal prosecutions are pursued when it favors the regime, 119 and not when its members are implicated, as in the assault on Kennedy Road, and perhaps in Marikana: no minister has accepted responsibility in the massacre. 120 The killing of three people at Cato Crest recently testified to the persistence of state repression and the determination of AbM and its members to stand up for their rights and justice, again and again.

But an awareness now exists among the black intelligentsia about the crimes and failures of the ANC and the emptiness of its foundational struggle story. 'The ANC has created an anti-politics machine in which black people . . . feature as nothing more than objects of state policies or, worse, passive recipients of state-led service delivery.'121 Justice Malala asserted directly that 'the ANC did not set me free', and reinterpreted accurately some of the events and processes of the 1980s: 'While the ANC was detaining the likes of Jordan or torturing young women in its camps, it was people like my young friends and relatives under the banner of the [MDM] who were rendering the apartheid state unworkable. . . . It was Trevor Manuel and Popo Molefe and others in the UDF, and Jay Naidoo at COSATU, who led our mothers on marches and stayaways. Meanwhile, the ANC was detaining and then poisoning the young leader Thami Zulu.' 122 Defeat at the ballot box was no immediate prospect for the ruling party, although it has been losing electoral support steadily since 2004. But the loss of its remaining moral and ideological authority appeared irreversible. The extreme incompetence of the Zuma presidency may be having rather similar effects. His cabinet announced in mid-2014 was, for Malala, the worst since 1994: it was 'a collection of cronies, incompetents and yes-men.' Zuma 'prefers to keep things murky and divisive while he rules the roost', but some in the ANC appeared to be waking up to the fact that 'the man is a liability.' 123

The UPM declared that its mission for New Year 2013 was 'to keep working to unite all the struggles—in the shacks, on the mines and on the farms—into a revolutionary mass movement of the working class and the poor that can change this society from below.' 124 These aims were similar to those expressed over time by AbM.

COSATU's association with the ANC was changing. In the run up to the ANC's elective conference in Mangaung, the federation had either canned or postponed the release of a report indicating that most shop stewards did not support the reelection of Zuma as president of the ANC, despite the fact that the federation's central executive committee had earlier endorsed Zuma. It also said that the shop stewards had no confidence in their other Alliance partner, the SACP, and they wanted COSATU to form a labor party. <sup>125</sup> Delaying the release of these views possibly saved Zuma from embarrassment, but it did not blunt COSATU's criticisms of the government. In late January, the federation's national spokesperson, Patrick Craven, described the spending on Nkandla as a 'grotesque' expenditure on 'any one person': it was 'grossly insensitive to workers, the poor and the homeless.' <sup>126</sup>

Although he did not campaign for a leadership change at Mangaung, Vavi was reportedly understood to have backed deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe, <sup>127</sup> and unlike a number of his senior colleagues, he subsequently declined nomination to the ANC's NEC. <sup>128</sup> The party elections were followed by an attack on COSATU by ANC secretary general Gwede Man-

tashe. The federation, he said, was on a "dangerous downward slope" towards irrelevance, amid simmering tensions within union ranks. Motlanthe was a former NUM president, as well as being a SACP central committee member. The NEC was then filled with SACP and COSATU members, and while the SACP had 'ceased to exist as an independent political force', <sup>129</sup> COSATU under Vavi had not.

Vavi was not apparently intimidated. "If what I say and do sits uncomfortably with the powerful people in our society then so be it", he said. "The campaign against corruption and the massive waste of public money is not a Vavi campaign. . . . I am merely articulating the policy stand-points of my movement." He had no doubt, he added, "that my support in the rank and file membership of COSATU is strong." <sup>130</sup>

Despite some suggestions that the attack on Vavi was 'led by [only] a handful of affiliates', the federation decided to appoint auditors to examine administrative issues and alleged financial mismanagement by the secretary general. Vavi supported the decisions to appoint the commissions of inquiry. It was also alleged that he had sexual relations with a female federation employee, and he was suspended as secretary general. A 'senior COSATU leader' said that the allegations were 'a smoke screen. The main cause of divisions in the federation is ANC and SACP politics. The two organizations are trying hard to capture COSATU, but Vavi is the obstacle. He is the only one prepared to defend the interest of workers.' They failed to oust him at COSATU's last conference 'because the rank and file are behind him.' <sup>131</sup> For Adam Habib, Vavi's suspension was an example of what happened to people who were vocal against Zuma. <sup>132</sup>

Both the new social movements like AbM and LPM, and COSATU represented chiefly by Vavi and NUMSA, offered distinct alternatives to a discredited and declining ANC. They drew together large sections of the poor and the urban working classes, and they promised new thought and action on the pressing problems facing the country. NUMSA announced in December that it was ready to be part of a new coalition. It was then the federation's largest affiliate, 133 and it would neither campaign for the ANC in the 2014 elections nor continue to support the party financially. Speaking at the end of a special NUMSA conference, its secretary general, Irvin Jim, said that "the working class cannot any longer see the ANC or the SACP as its class allies in any meaningful sense." He called on President Zuma to resign. NUMSA did not break with COSATU, but instead planned to establish a new "united front" that would coordinate action in workplaces and communities in "a similar way to the [UDF] in the 1980s". This front would 'probably include' AMCU, the National Transport Movement, and Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters. NUMSA aimed to form a labor party by 2015. The UPM declared, in a separate statement there was now a real possibility that workers in NUMSA and AMCU, "and poor people organized in social movements

and community associations," could create together a "truly liberated South Africa." <sup>134</sup>

Following a decision by the High Court of South Gauteng, Zwelinzima Vavi was reinstated as general secretary at the start of April 2014. He remained committed to COSATU. Addressing about 500 shop stewards in Cape Town, he stated, "Without the unity of workers, everything else becomes impossible. Without the members united behind a principled federation, all is lost."135 He accepted that he was bound by the federation's central committee decision to back the ANC's election campaign in May, but his support was not unconditional. Jacob Zuma was saying that the ANC 'had a good story to tell', but Vavi refused to say that unemployment of 34 percent was good, or when 50 percent of workers were earning below R3,000 a month. "It is a terrible story of inequalities. No one must ask us to lie." At a May Day address, he said that while "it is true that most of the poorest South Africans are less poor than before 1994, the richest South Africans are far better off, which has massively widened the wealth gap." Attempts to make the past decade a time for the working class and the poor had "largely failed". He also pointed, perhaps unintentionally, to one of the main reasons why the ANC could nonetheless expect reelection: "people receiving social grants have increased from 3 million to 16 million". He paid tribute to former COSATU president, Phumzile Gomoro, who well understood "the relationship between community struggles and trade union struggles", and had "encouraged COSATU to continue working with progressive civil society formations. Our struggle is inescapably tied to their struggles."136

For Jay Naidoo, COSATU was at a crossroad. "It can grow in relevance as the core of a new, realigned and independent labor movement", or it could fall into irrelevance. He too looked to the UDF of the 1980s when "COSATU became the backbone" of internal resistance and advance. But Marikana was "a seminal moment in our democracy, and COSATU's response was a singular failure." In 2014 "the real issues affecting workers have disappeared in a cloud of denialism." In the federation's glory days of movement-building, vibrant shop steward councils, run by committed men and women" were at the core, "not just as factory floor leaders, but as leaders in their communities." 137

The difficulties and problems abounded, but three decades after the creation of the UDF and COSATU, and a shorter period since the appearance of strong self-organizations of the urban poor, the way forward was becoming clearer.

#### **NOTES**

1. COSATU is organisationally strong, but it is divided today due to the over dependence of some of its leadership and some unions on the Zuma-led ANC.

- Richard Ballard, Adam Habib and Imraan Valodia, Voices of Protest: Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa, Scottsville, University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2006, Conclusion, p. 399.
- 3. Martin Plaut and Paul Holden, *Who Rules South Africa?*, London, Biteback Publishing, 2012, p. 345.
- 4. Nigel C. Gibson, Fanonian Practices in South Africa: From Steve Biko to Abahlali baseMjondolo, Scottsville, UKZN Press, 2011.
- Donatella della Porta, Can Democracy be Saved? Cambridge, Polity Press, 2013, pp.6–9 and 37.
- 6. Richard Pithouse, 'A Politics of the Poor: Shack Dwellers' Struggles in Durban'. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 43, 63, 2008, p. 69.
- 7. Malavika Vartak, Research Report, Development Planning Unit, University College, London, distributed online through H-SAFRICA@H-NET. MSU.EDU.
  - 8. Vartak's citations, ibid.
  - 9. Pithouse, op. cit., p. 74.
- 10. Cited by Bishop Rubin Phillip, 'Anglican Church Honours Abahlali Leader', *Politics Web*, December 2009.
  - 11. Vartak quoting Zikode, op. cit.
  - 12. Estimates of Lindela Figlan, an associate of Zikode, reported in Vartak, op. cit.
- 13. 'Resist All Degradations and Divisions: S'bu Zikode in Interview with Richard Pithouse', *Interface*, 1, 2, 2009, p. 30. The Kennedy Road Settlement was believed to have begun in the early 1980s on land given to 43 families by a member of the Durban Municipal Corporation. The residents had no security of tenure, and the community faced many threats of eviction in the wake of the Slum Clearance Project. Vartak found that less than half of them had access to electricity, which increased the risk of fires especially in winter. He reported that shack fires and the destruction of homes 'ha[ve] been used by the municipality to effect evictions'. But schools, clinics and a railway station were all just 'a short walk from the Settlement', and varied forms of employment, in the Springfield Industrial Area and in the middle class homes in Clare Estate, were adjacent. Vartak, op. cit.
- 14. Zikode was born in the village of Loskop near Estcourt in the Natal Midlands. His mother was a domestic worker separated from his father. He grew up with a number of caring foster families, and learnt about leadership and adulthood in the Boy Scouts and in the Zulubased Inkatha Freedom Party. He began his matriculation in 1996, the year when he came to Durban. Pithouse's interview with Zikode, op. cit., pp. 22 to 24 and 31.
  - 15. Phillip, op. cit.
- 16. "Anger is the source of an incredible energy", Zikode believed. Interview, op. cit., pp. 35-36,
  - 17. Zikode kept notes of their meetings with the police. Ibid., p. 34.
  - 18. Vartak, op. cit.
  - 19. Ibid.
  - 20. Pithouse interview, op. cit., p. 36.
  - 21. Vartak, op. cit.
  - 22. Pithouse, 'A Politics of the Poor', p. 86.
  - 23. Vartak, op. cit.
  - 24. Pithouse, 'A Politics of the Poor', op. cit., p. 82.
- 25. The Landless People's Movement (LPM) had apparently blazed the trail with its slogan 'no land no vote' campaign in 2003, highlighting the fact that voter registration required provision of a residential address, which landless people facing eviction could not meet. Ballard, et. al., op. cit., p. 406.
  - 26. Pithouse interview, op. cit., p. 44.
  - 27. Pithouse, 'A Politics of the Poor', p. 85.
- 28. Boesak's emphasis on the spontaneity of the UDF, and the organisational democracy enunciated by Murphy Morobe, were discussed in chapter 3.
- 29. This highly participatory democracy recognises the occasional need for expertise, but only when such experts "freely understand that their role is to become part of our living politics". They might bring a skill, but how we use that skill "comes out of a meeting of the

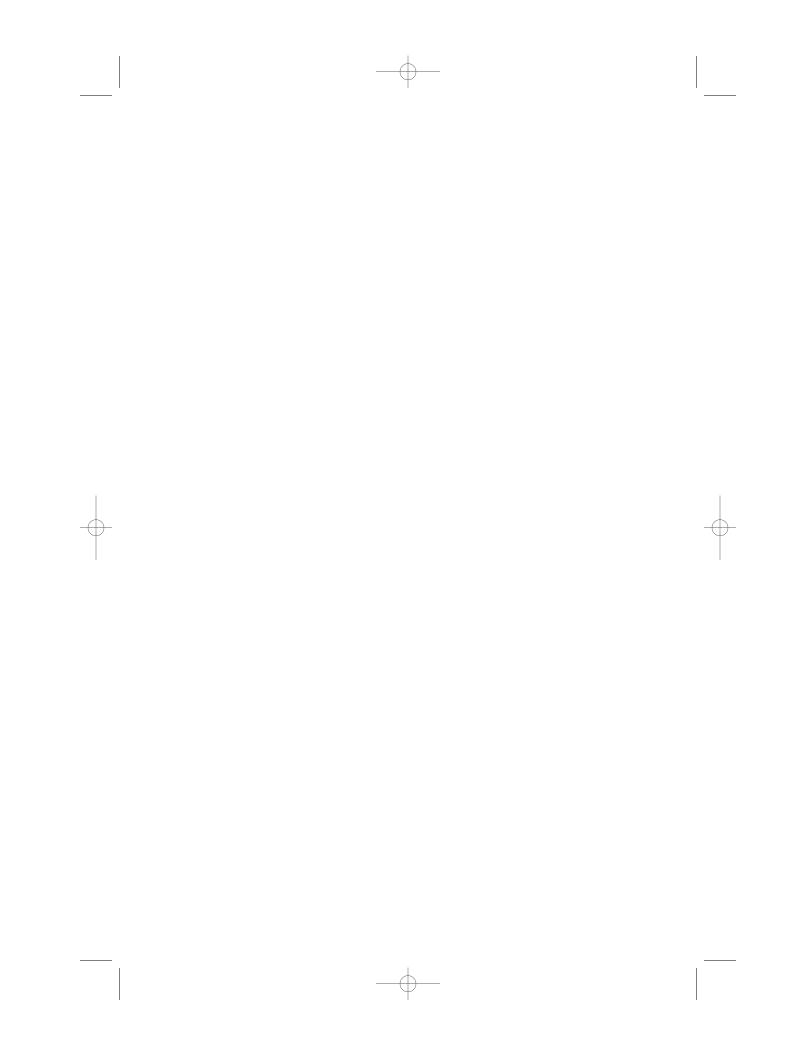
movement. By insisting on this we have found the right people to work with." Pithouse interview, pp. 39–40.

- 30. Around then, an estimated 10 percent of households in South Africa were living in informal settlements. Statement by Amnesty International, reported by Paul Trewhela in *Politics Web* 18 December 2009. Around 2011, according to Zikode, about 12 million people were 'still in need of decent shelter.' The number of shack settlements in the country in 1994 was 300, but in 2011 there were 2,600. S'bu Zikode, talk in New Zealand on behalf of AbM, 14 September 2011.
- 31. Zikode, op. cit. with reference to a report of 2008 by the Centre on Housing and Evictions (COHRE) in Geneva.
- 32. On the day after AbM announced its decision to challenge the Act in court, Kennedy Road was hit by a mass disconnection of electricity by the municipality. Armed police backed by dogs, without warning or explanation, methodically disconnected power supplies in the Settlement—some 300 connections being removed in a single day. Vartak, op. cit.
  - 33. Ibid.
  - 34. Ibid. Zikode's statement is undated.
- 35. Amnesty International, *Public Document*, 'South Africa: Failure to Conduct Impartial Investigation into Kennedy Road Violence Is Leading to Further Human Rights Abuses', 16 December 2009, pp. 1–5.
  - 36. AbM Press Statement, 3 December 2010.
  - 37. Paul Trewhela, 'Willies Mchunu', Politics Web, 29 August 2011.
- 38. Pithouse, 'No Easy Path through the Embers', Letter to Living Communism, 30 July 2011.
  - 39. AbM and KRDC, Press Statement, 10 June 2010.
- 40. Press statement of Bishop Rubin Phillip, 'Victory for [AbM]—Defeat for Our Detractors', 18 July 2011. Phillip is believed to have BC roots.
- 41. Pithouse, '[AbM] and the Struggle for the City in Durban, South Africa', Cidades, 6, 9, 2009
  - 42. The statement was in the name of AbM and the Poor People's Alliance.
  - 43. Open letter of 9 September 2011.
- 44. Statement by Zikode and Mdlalose of 26 September, noted in Good, 'Repression and Resistance in Durban and China', *Politics Web*, 7 October 2013.
  - 45. AbM press statement, 23 December 2013.
  - 46. Vartak, op. cit.
- 47. Figures of Zwelinzima Vavi, general secretary of COSATU. Mail and Guardian. 12 July 2011.
  - 48. Quoted by Orla Guerin, BBC World Online, 14 December 2007.
  - 49. UNDP, Human Development Report 2007/2008, Table 15.
  - 50. Fin24 Online, 4 May 2008 and Business Report Online, 8 May 2010.
- 51. Schumpeter, 'Long Walk to Innovation', *The Economist*, 10 September 2011; Chris Rodrigues in *Guardian Online*, 6 May 2010, and Vavi, 'The ANC Must Change Course Now', *Politics Web*, 18 December 2013.
  - 52. Vavi's figures, Business Day, 26 May 2007.
  - 53. Vavi, 'Bank CEO's Pay Packages Obscene', Politicsweb, 13 May 2010.
  - 54. UNDP, op. cit., table 7.
- 55. According to the chief sanitation director Phillip Chauke, *Mail and Guardian*, 4 September 2012.
- 56. Jacob Zuma, 'We Have Achieved a Lot Already in 18 Years', text of an address in Midrand, *Politics Web*, 11 September 2012.
  - 57. 'No One Gets Prizes'. The Economist, 16 January 2010.
  - 58. 'No One Gets Prizes'.
  - 59. Ibid.
  - 60. 'Still Dysfunctional', The Economist, 21 January 2012.
  - 61. BBC News Africa Online, 3 June 2014.
  - 62. The Secretariat, Outline Report to the [COSATU] Congress, 2012, p. 20.

- 63. Report by Edward West, *Business Day*, 23 July 2012 and Paul Trewhela, 'The Return of Political Assassination in South Africa', online circularised document, 17 July 2012, and Chris Makhaye and Thokozani Mtshali, 'Magwaza-Msibi Launches National Freedom Party, *New Age*, 26 January 2011.
  - 64. Secretariat, Outline Report, p. 20.
- 65. The secretariat referred to *tenderisation*, or the excessive reliance on tenders to the private sector to perform functions which the state could carry out more efficiently and cost-effectively, and to the unnecessary creation of independent agencies to perform governmental functions, leading to a loss of effective control and accountability.
  - 66. Ibid., p. 20.
- 67. Phillip De Wet, 'AG Paints a Bleak Picture', Mail and Guardian Online, 13 March 2013.
  - 68. Secretariat, Outline Report, pp. 20-21.
- 69. Gareth van Onselen, 'The ANC: The Ten Most Disturbing Quotes', *Politics Web*, 23 April 2012.
  - 70. Secretariat, Outline Report, p. 6,
  - 71. Ibid., pp. 8-11.
  - 72. No source was offered for this quote. Ibid., p.15.
- 73. Yunus Momoniat, 'Cosatu: A Labouring Behemoth Finally Reaches the Crossroads', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 21 December 2012.
- 74. Sakhela Buhlungu, A Paradox of Victory: COSATU and the Democratic Transformation in South Africa, Scottsville, UKZN Press, 2010, ch. 8 and p. 166.
- 75. Matuma Letsoalo and Michelle Pietersen, 'Gunning for Vavi', *Mail and Guardian*, 10 August 2012.
- 76. Bekezela Phakathi, in *Business Day*, 28 October 2010 and full text of Vavi's address, 'A Very Sick Society', *Politics Web*, 27 October 2010.
  - 77. Zwelinzima Vavi, text of the Irene Grootboom memorial lecture, 18 October 2010.
- 78. Cited in COSATU, 'ANC Statement Shocking', *Politics Web*, 2 November 2010.
- 79. 'ANC Statement Shocking'
- 80. Setumo Stone, in BDlive, 10 December 2012.
- 81. Personal communication, Richard Pithouse, 13 June 2014.
- 82. 'Abahlali Respond to Allegations', email 6 June 2014, and Pithouse, 13 June.
- 83. 'In the Pits', *The Economist*, 25 August 2012, and David Smith, 'Goldmines Beset by Simmering Resentment', *Guardian Online*, 26 September 2012.
- 84. Faranaaz Parker, 'A Powder Keg of Inequality', Mail and Guardian Online, 27 August 2012.
- 85. Although their present earnings were widely reported in the press as R4,500 monthly, the deputy general secretary of the Solidarity union, Gideon du Plessis, estimated their pay at approximately R10,500 without bonuses, and a Lonmin executive, Mark Munroe, confirmed basic wages of R10,000. Ratcatcher, 'How Much do Rock Drillers at Lonmin Really Earn?', *Politics Web*, 20 August 2012. But the R4,500 figure continued to be reported.
- 86. Alistair Osborne, 'Lonmin Needs to Pay Up', *Daily Telegraph Online*, 21 August 2012. On 18 September a resolution was reached which saw the rock drillers getting a large part of their demands. The strikers accepted a 22 percent overall increase which would lift their earnings to just over R11,000. Production appeared to resume at Lonmin. Smith sees the platinum and gold mines as 'the frontline in an increasingly ferocious battle' over corporate greed, inequalities, and workers' deep resentments over their unchanged working and living conditions. David Smith, op. cit.
- 87. General Mdludi was described as 'the pivotal figure' in the on-going 'spy wars between political rivals'. This work involved telephone tapping for agents on 'deep cover operations within organised crime syndicates'. The police crime intelligence division had become 'so politicised with factional infighting that it had become virtually paralysed'. *Daily Maverick*, 12 December 2012.
  - 88. 'Something Very Rotten', The Economist, 23 June 2012.
  - 89. Mail and Guardian Online, 4 March 2013.

- 90. Faranaaz Parker, *Mail and Guardian Online*, 28 February 2013, and Thalia Holmes, ibid., 1 February 2013.
  - 91. The Economist, 23 June 2012.
- 92. Ronnie Kasrils, 'Mr President, Arrest This Descent into Police State Depravity', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 6 March 2013. Aspects of Kasrils career have been noted, and he was intelligence minister 2004 to 2008.
- 93. Christopher McMichael, 'The Public Order War', *Think Africa Press*, 13 September 2012.
- 94. Peter Alexander, 'A Massive Rebellion of the Poor', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 13 April 2012.
- 95. Michael Clark and Jackie Dugard, 'State Suppression of Popular Dissent Should Concern Us All', *Bdlive*, 6 March 2013.
- 96. The residents of Meqheleng township were marching to Ficksburg to protest against the non-delivery of services, when Tatane was allegedly attacked by at least six police from the public order unit in Bloemfontein. They allegedly fired rubber bullets into his chest and beat him with batons, and he died before an ambulance arrived. *Mail and Guardian*, 18 April 2011.
  - 97. McMichael, op. cit.
  - 98. Cited by R.W. Johnson, 'Massacre at Marikana', Politics Web, 19 August 2012.
- 99. Marinovich, 'The Miners Were Hunted Like Beasts', *Mail and Guardian*, 31 August and 'Marikana Murders', *Daily Maverick*, 10 September 2012. The official Farlam Commission of inquiry had initially four months to present its final report to the president, but it was not specifically required under its terms of reference to investigate the 'shoot to kill' policies or the remilitarisation of the police. Faranaaz Parker, 'All Systems Go on Farlam Commission', *Mail and Guardian*, 21 September 2012, and President Jacob Zuma, 'Terms of Reference for the Farlam Inquiry', *Politics Web*, 21 September 2012.
- 100. 'Killed While Trying to Surrender', Aljazeera Africa, 9 September 2012.
- 101. Johnson, op. cit.
- 102. Kwanele Sosibo, 'Marikana', Mail and Guardian Online, 1 February 2013.
- 103. Reports by Sosibo and by Niren Tolsi, ibid., 22 October 2012 and and 21 January 2013; and opening statement by Ntsebeza to the Commision, 16 August 2012, *Politics Web*, 22 October 2012
- 104. Shaun de Waal, 'Method to the Marikana Massacre', Mail and Guardian Online, 6 June 2014.
- 105. Gabi Falanga, 'Inconsistencies and Contradictions Taint the SAP's Version', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 6 June 2014.
- 106. Johnson, op. cit.
- 107. Public Protector, Secure in Comfort: Public Protector's Report on Nkandla, 19 March 2014. And Phillip De Wet and Sarah Evans, 'Madonsela Exposes the Rot at the Heart of Nkandla', Mail and Guardian Online, 20 March 2014.
- 108. On the Protector's figures, expenditure on P.W. Botha's private residence was R173,000 in today's currency; F.W. De Klerk cost R236,000; Nelson Mandela, with two private homes, cost R32 million; and Thabo Mbeki spent R8 million.
- 109. amaBhungane, 'Nkandla Report', Mail and Guardian Online, 29 November 2013.
- 110. amaBhungane, 'Nkandla: An Orgy of Kowtowing', Mail and Guardian Online, 5 July 2013.
- 111. William Saunderson-Meyer, 'Zuma's Gilded Battlements', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 22 March 2014, and David Smith, 'Jacob Zuma's Palatial Folly', *The Observer Online*, 3 May 2014.
- 112. Cited in Johnson, op. cit.
- 113. Good, 'Accountable to Themselves: Predominance in Southern Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 33, 4, 1997, p. 563.
- 114. Ibid.
- 115. Ellis, op. cit., p. 285. President Zuma continues to extol MK, as "the greatest military force of our kind as South Africans" [sic]. Text of President's speech, 2 August 2012.
- 116. Paul Holden and Hennie van Vuuren, 'The Rise of the Shadow State', *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 16 October 2011.

- 117. He had already acted as Zuma's international envoy since 2009, and as spokesman he saw his role as 'enhanc[ing] understanding of Zuma's messages and thinking.' Rapule Tabane, 'Loyal to the Cause', *Mail and Guardian*, 15 July 2011.
- 118. An early example of their methods was when Maharaj and Mo Shaik went public with allegations that the head of prosecutions, Bulelani Ngcuka, was investigated in exile as a possible apartheid spy. The anti-corruption organisation, the Scorpions, which fell under Ngcuka, had confirmed that Maharaj was being investigated for receiving payment from Zuma's known 'financial adviser', Schabir Shaik, an investigation never finalised. Tabane, op. cit. (Among seemingly relevant material, a 2011 forensic report that apparently linked Maharaj to Chippy Shaik and an offset deal concerning the R 8 billion German submarine purchase; there was the conviction in 2005 of Shabir Shaik for setting up an alleged ANC front company called Nkobi Holdings; and the questionable arms deal payments worth R 150 million that went to Fana Hlongwane, adviser to defence minister Modise. Stephan Hofstatter and Mzilikazi Wa Afrika, 'ANC Gets Free Pass in Arms Probe', *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, 10 March 2013.)
- 119. Tabane, op. cit.
- 120. When President Zuma was challenged by an interviewer that 'in most democracies would not the police minister, at least, have fallen on his sword', he combined incoherence with obscurantism: "Well I don't know about other countries. It's a question about how people look into this. What is it that caused Marikana, really?" David Smith's interview, *Guardian Online*, 13 December 2012.
- 121. Jacob Dlamini, Native Nostalgia, Auckland Park, Jacana Media. 2009, p. 20.
- 122. Justice Malala, 'The ANC Did Not Set Us Free', *Timesalive*, 3 October 2010. He was of course immediately attacked by the ANC and by Pallo Jordan himself.
- 123. Malala, Editorial, Timesalive, 24 June 2014.
- 124. UPM Press statement, 'From Marikana to Maritzburg', 3 January 2013. The latter name referred to the locale of a so-called fitness test to which some 34,000 young job-seekers were submitted in the hot conditions of late December: a run of four kilometres for which none were prepared, and which left hundreds hospitalised. The UPM called for the resignation of Willies Mchunu, MEC for transport, implicated in the assault on Kennedy Road.
- 125. The findings were based on a national survey of 2,000 shop stewards carried out by the Forum for Public Debate, chaired by Moeletsi Mbeki, and commissioned by COSATU. Vavi said the report was incomplete and would be released in March. Natasha Marrian, 'COSATU Cans Report', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 11 December 2012.
- 126. Statement issued 29 January 2013.
- 127. Nickolaus Bauer, in Mail and Guardian Online, 4 March 2013.
- 128. Among them COSATU president Sdumo Dlamini, and the general secretaries of the NUM, the South African Democratic Teachers Union, and the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union.
- 129. Editorial, BDlive, 14 March 2013.
- 130. Bauer, 'Vavi: I Know Who Is Out to Get Me', Mail and Guardian Online, 4 March 2013.
- 131. Charles Molele, in Mail and Guardian Online, 15 March 2013.
- 132. He was presenting a lecture to the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation in which he also said that people had become resigned to President Zuma's 'predisposition to immerse himself in scandal after scandal.' Reported in *Mail and Guardian Online*, 12 October 2013.
- 133. In Vavi's terms, NUMSA was then "the biggest ever union in South Africa, and certainly the biggest paid up union in the African continent." Vavi, 'The ANC Must Change Course, Now', *Politics Web*, 18 December 2013.
- 134. 'Gatvol NUMSA Cuts Ties With ANC', Mail and Guardian Online, 20 December 2013.
- 135. The Court found that his suspension was unconstitutional and unlawful. Statement by nine COSATU affiliates who supported Vavi. *Politics Web*, 4 April 2014
- 136. Mail and Guardian Online, 27 April 2014, and Vavi, 'We Are Producing Too Many Greedy Billionaires', Politics Web, 1 May 2014.
- 137. Jay Naidoo, 'COSATU's Faces a Test of Relevance', *Mail and Guardian Online*, 2 May 2014.



### Conclusion

Participatory democratization has been characterized over the centuries by the aspiration for wide equality of power holding, of direct popular participation in decision making. Collective action began at the start of the Athenian revolution. Insurrection by the *demos* against Spartan occupation 'made the overt rule of the people possible', and the 'energy released by the revolution was a key factor in Athens' subsequent political evolution', for Ober: in the short term in the innovations involving citizenship, local authority, the regulatory Council of 500, and in control over elites, and through the course of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, in the development of a panoply of interlocking democratic institutions. The power of the people lay in their collective capacity to make things happen. Popular, leaderless uprisings are rare, but their rarity only increases their importance, positively and negatively: Ober notes that the *demos's* path breaking actions 'simply disappears' in some conservative scholarly accounts of Athens.<sup>1</sup>

The empowerment of the poor majority in Athens was achieved, as shown in chapter 1, through rotating memberships with limited tenure in the main political institutions. Two thirds of all citizens served at least once on the Council, while about one quarter became President-for-the-Day. The work of the People's Courts was based on the random selection of 6,000 citizens to serve as a panel of jurors and judges, and they like the Council met every day. Some 700 magistrates were annually chosen to staff government offices. About 6,000 attended meetings of the sovereign Assembly, where the diverse experience of citizens could be drawn on to resolve complex, detailed policy issues such as the dispatch of a naval base. Leaving aside the huge role of the poor citizens as the crews of the vital triremes, here was no 'idle mob', as right wing ideologues proclaimed, but a highly engaged and informed citizenry.

The empowerment of the poor majority went hand in hand with the curtailment of elite powers, through wide ranging principles and programs. Random selection prevented elites from using their wealth, status and education to influence electoral outcomes. The city state utilized the skills and experience of their elites—notably in military command—while controlling their political powers and tendencies. The threat of ostracism was a visible control device. Heavy taxation, very large fines in the courts, and liturgies bearing heavily on the rich, represented both sharp financial controls and the redistribution of income towards the majority. Economic inequalities were large, but were prevented from intruding into politics. Above all, democratic ideology deemed all citizens equally capable of holding office, and also exercised overarching control: the demand, as Ober and Dunn expressed it, that all citizens conformed to a stern code of duty to self and community. It enforced an 'intensely personal accountability' based on 'fierce directness', as the trial and execution of Socrates demonstrated. In highly turbulent times, when aristocrats in many places were willing to betray their cities for personal gain, there were only two brief but bloody interruptions, in 411 and 404–03, to the democratic dominance of the common man. There is scholarly agreement that after 403 it was accepted by almost all citizens that there was no practical alternative to democracy in Athens: for almost two generations the upper classes abandoned hopes for seizing power and concentrated their interests elsewhere.

No subsequent democracy has achieved anything like Athens' institutional comprehensiveness and sustained success. But the long democratic record shows that specific participatory values and institutions have been repeatedly aspired to elsewhere. Collective decision making by the soldiers of the New Model Army was a high point of the English Revolution, and when it was institutionalized in the General Council of the Army, it represented a brief peak in popular democratic power and representation. Simultaneously the Levellers upheld the principle of popular sovereignty for the first time in Britain. This idea carried great resonance. Two centuries later, Chartism attracted hundreds of thousands of ordinary people in day-to-day political activity 'the likes of which they had never previously contemplated', uniting the working classes of Britain's towns and cities. Old prejudices were forgotten as Irish and British workers pursued common aims and Irishmen assumed leadership roles in the movement. That nearly 300 Chartist leaders were imprisoned or transported represented the oligarchy's recognition of the significance of these achievements.<sup>2</sup> Even as Chartism was ruthlessly crushed, the rise of working-class self-help organizations went on, realizing the potentialities for popular socio-economic development within industrializing capitalism.

Portugal's anti-Fascist Carnation Revolution in the 1970s also unleashed popular energies, as ordinary people made decisions, probably for the first

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time in their lives, on matters like housing and employment, in their neighborhoods, work places and their self-created assemblies. This is part of the international and historical context for assessing, for example, the role and value of the UDF in South Africa in the 1980s. It began in 1983 with some 15,000 people, 'young and old, black and white, Christians and Jews, Muslims and Hindus' coming together. There were representatives of almost 500 organizations 'reflecting all the sectors of society'. Within a few years, the number of its affiliates was almost 1,000. This was probably the largest array of social movements under one umbrella in the country's history, still unsurpassed. What attracted such a wide range of community organizations, according to Boesak, was the Front's spontaneity, its ability to inspire, and the absence of top-down central control<sup>3</sup>: the hallmarks, by contrast, of the elitist, secretive, militaristic ANC.

Around late 1987, the UDF had concluded that parliamentary representation constituted 'a very limited and narrow idea of democracy'. It saw democracy instead as involving participatory forms and practices, and believed that it was being built then in the dynamic day-to-day practices of its mass-based organizations. In Morobe's words, 'the rudimentary organs of people's power [have] begun to emerge in South Africa [in] street committees, defense committees, shop-steward structures, student representative councils . . . represent[ed] in many ways the kind of democracy that we are striving for', as noted in chapter 3.

The Front interlinked furthermore the empowerment of the people with efforts to control elites. They invested faith in the capacities of ordinary men and women to govern themselves, but also adopted a highly critical approach to the power and actions of their own political elites. The 'basic principles of our organizational democracy' constituted uniquely creative and effective measures for combating elitism. They bear repetition. As Morobe expressed them, Elected leadership at all levels periodically reelected and recallable; Collective leadership; Mandates and accountability; Reporting and reporting back by leaders to the rank and file; Criticism and self-criticism of and by elites. For Morobe, these principles were "fundamental weapon[s] of our struggle."

Under worsening violence near the end of the 1980s, UDF leaders endeavored to put these ideas into practice. Most notably when he and Cachalia publicly denounced, in February 1989, the murderous actions of Madikizela-Mandela in Soweto. But the wife of Nelson Mandela presumed her right to non-accountability and her immunity within the armed struggle, and other ANC notables readily agreed. The unresolved issue is alive still. Morobe informed the TRC in November 1997 that "this was an issue of principle that my organization had to confront", and Cachalia said that "we cannot go forward until there's some accountability." He recommended that anyone found guilty by the TRC of gross human rights violations should be debarred

from holding public office thereafter. The UDF then no longer existed, as the ANC had contended that the mere existence of the Front undermined its supremacy as state power came into its hands. But the value of its ideas on empowerment and the control of elites live on.

The autocrats can survive and enjoy power when they construct a 'wall of fear' around themselves, as Ben Ali vividly did in contemporary Tunisia. People were rendered passive by a consensus of silence. Egregious brutality against a vulnerable and ordinary young man broke through the wall, and a similar sequence occurred soon after in Egypt. According to Vaclav Havel in the then Czechoslovakia, countervailing power can come into being when people 'act as if they were free.' Tunisia and Egypt suggest recently that there is some validity in this inspiring but unstructured idea, but Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe does not, and actual Central European experience is at best mixed.

It is fairly clear that democratization today need no longer look to Western liberal capitalist models for inspiration. Positively, the upsurge of popular power in North Africa since 2010, suggests that direct revolutionary action at home is the way forward. Hosni Mubarak fell when some two million people filled the streets in Cairo, ending Washington's ability to continue supporting the despot. Today radical voices in North Africa and in many European and American cities agree that Western liberal capitalism is no longer the beacon to the world. Negatively too, the palpable dysfunctionalities of the Anglo American systems points the same way. Evidence was presented in chapter 4 that large numbers of British people hold conventional representative politics in deep contempt, while those representatives themselves show no interest in reforming themselves and rather sink further into the mire.

The exemplar of Western reformation today is small and peripheral Iceland. Those responsible for a devastating financial crisis represented a ruling elite of some 30 individuals, but they dominated in the fishing-based economy, in parliament and in the supreme court. Many of the other 300,000 or so people succeeded in forcing out the government through a popular upsurge. Icelanders had assembled in mass every Saturday, with 'ever more disregard for elites, ever-intensifying anger, and ever-solidifying determination to force those responsible for the [crisis] out of command for their collective future.' Greece, Italy and Ireland saw governments fall for financial failures, but Iceland alone did so directly through popular revolt. 4 They proceeded to write a new constitution for the country through participatory methods reminiscent of Athens: by random selection of the members of a National Assembly of 950 citizens, and the election of a 25-member Constitutional Council tasked with converting the resolutions of the National Assembly into a coherent bill. This process was assisted by popular participation via 'more than 300 unsolicited reports from the public plus thousands of communications on the Council's interactive website'. After four months of work, 'in full view

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of the public', the Council approved the bill by 25 votes to zero. In early 2012, parliament directed some issues to the Council, convening it for a four-day follow-up meeting. The Council, again unanimously proposed some alternative wording on non-substantive matters.

Four months later, parliament decided to hold a consultative national referendum on the bill. This was strongly fought by the opposition in parliament. The referendum was delayed until October. Turnout was 49 percent, which was above the Swiss average in more than a hundred referendums held there since 2000. On a list of six wide-ranging questions, for example, on the work of the Constitutional Council, on whether natural resources should be in private or public hands, on fostering 'personal election' to parliament, and on a National Church in Iceland, voters answered Yes to all of them by proportions ranging between 57 percent (for a National Church) and 83 percent for the public ownership of resources. No less than 67 percent of the electorate declared their support for the bill as well as its key provisions. As Gylfason said, 'the people had spoken.' But through a variety of stratagems and outcomes, including the election of a center right parliamentary coalition in April 2013, parliament delayed ratification of the new constitution.<sup>5</sup> Democracy, he said, had been placed 'on ice' pending new national elections. But Iceland's process of deliberative, consultative and participatory constitution making remained an outstanding, incomplete achievement.<sup>6</sup>

A similarly consultative and collective process was pursued in Tunisia through sometimes tumultuous conditions. The people elected the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) in October 2011, which chose to seek the advice of legal experts, invited voters to voice their opinions, and encouraged civil society to amend successive draft texts. The 'national dialogue program' allowed more than 5,000 Tunisians to take part in a total of 26 meetings held in the country, and 18 abroad. This process, says Jaidi, allowed the people to "write their own constitution, through their elected representatives, without tutelage of any kind". The assassination of NCA member, Mohamed Brahmi, in July 2013, led to a number of members boycotting the NCA's work, but civil society intervened and effectively defused the crisis, as noted in chapter 5. After two years work, the 149 articles of the new constitution were ratified during the Assembly's January 2014 session.<sup>7</sup>

Together with Tunisia and Egypt, South Africa remains an exemplifier of democratization, albeit limited and interrupted, on the continent. Among many uncertainties, some problems stand out. Perhaps the most important is the ANC's failure to account and atone for the gross human rights violations that it inflicted on thousands of its own rank and file soldiers through the 1970s and 1980s; the leaders responsible for these crimes against humanity and democracy are known, they have largely gone scot-free, and some enjoy very high office today; the same leadership is responsible for the termination of the UDF, and for the dominance of the struggle ideology which stifles

debate and criticism and an understanding of the role of internal democratization in the country's recent past. Openings exist, given the steady decline in the ANC's predominance, the worsening divisions in the ruling party, and the corruption and mismanagement that pervades both the party and the state. Strong proponents of democratization exist. Elements in COSATU, and particularly those groups around Secretary General Vavi: no organization of comparable size and strength has a similar concern for the fundamental issues of poverty and inequalities, and takes a consistently critical attitude to corruption and criminality. AbM, the activist shack dwellers movement, was seriously damaged when ANC members attacked its Kennedy Road settlement in September 2009, but it and other autonomous social movements of the urban poor are vital participants in future grass roots democratization.

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Among the big historic failures of participatory democratization, few are more outstanding and illustrative than the Paris Commune of 1871, in its aspirations, the extreme difficulties of the national and international conditions in which it had to operate, the brief ten weeks of its existence, and the naked repression inflicted on the Communards by the French ruling class. With a victorious Prussian army around the city, with the French government withdrawn and waiting in Versailles, without effective leadership of its own, the Commune's elected representatives introduced a program of legislation emphasizing education, the rights of workers and women, and new technical schools and nursery provisions. The salaries of government officials were limited to the equivalent of a workman's wage, the Catholic church was disestablished and the wives and children of men who died defending Paris were assisted financially.

But against the military power of both Prussia and Versailles, the Commune's weak and ad hoc defenses crumbled, and in a "Week of Blood" from 20 May, 20,000 Communards were butchered, some mown down in liquidation centers around the city, the bodies left in mass graves. In Ross's account people were shot 'wherever they could find a wall to push victims up against. . . . Underneath the Pont Neuf they were executing people for eight days straight'. He believes that the hatred exhibited here tells us much about both the bourgeois republican government, and the expansive, participatory democracy aspired to by the Commune. The contrasts between the differing systems were starkly revealed.<sup>9</sup> The crushing of the Spanish republic in the late 1930s was a further expression of capitalism's anti-democratic excesses. Another was the termination of Salvador Allende's social democratic experiment in Chile in September 1973. The action was carefully prepared, with Edward Korry, the U.S. ambassador in Santiago, reporting to Kissinger that "[O]nce Allende comes to power we shall do all within our power to condemn Chile and the Chileans to utmost deprivation and poverty", and the dictatorship of General Pinochet which they fostered lasted 17 years. <sup>10</sup>

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There is no conclusion to an unending process. But the heritage of the centuries of democratization, in its successes, interruptions and its failures, offers encouragement to today. In the long institutionalized successes of Athens, the aspirations of the Levellers, Chartists and the UDF, in the failures in Paris, Barcelona and Santiago, and in the destruction wrought in Kennedy Road, reasons are offered to try again and at least fail better. Underneath the kaleidoscope, the distinctions between the liberal capitalist and the participatory models have been clarified and the capacity of the latter to inspire great numbers of people repeatedly shown. Yet more than inspiration is necessary if the determination of the people is to go forward. As the UDF's principles formally indicated in 1989, popular organization is vital. The Occupy movement asserted evocative rallying points like 'we are the 99 percent', but eschewed political reforms and the methods accompanying them. Slavo Zizek warned them in October 2011, "Don't fall in love with yourselves[;] . . . carnivals come cheap. What matters is the day after, when we will have to return to normal lives." Eric Hobsbawm too was sympathetic to their efforts, but stressed succinctly: "If there is no party, then there's no future."11

The appearance of Podemos ('We Can') in March 2014 builds upon such insights. It arose out of recent social movements in Spain, the *indignados* and '15mayista', and the realization among its founders that, in the words of Fominaya, that 15-M 'was great but it's over', and it was necessary to channel some of the energy it contained 'into party politics and institutions to make lasting change, rather than see it dissipate.' Many people who participated in 15-M also felt that the movement needed to articulate an effective institutional alternative to the existing political parties. Podemos' 'frontman', Pablo Iglesias, age 35, and many of those around him, were experienced activists. They prepared their program for the 2014 European elections using web tools and open, participatory methods in which any citizen could take part, and with the campaign slogan "when was the last time you voted with excitement?"12 Their program was anti-austerity, anti-corruption and democratic. "The goal of Podemos", according to Iglesias, was to turn the social majority into the political majority, by having ordinary citizens do politics: "If people don't do politics, others will do it for you. And when others do it for you, they can steal your rights, your democracy and your wallet." Solutions, he stressed, did not come necessarily from either leftwing or rightwing ideologies, but through 'a movement against a privileged elite whose priorities are out of synch with what is best for most Spaniards.' Its aims and methods seemed substantiated in the immediate outcome, as it won 1.25 million votes and five seats in the European parliament, while support for the two dominant parties dropped to less than half of the vote, from the 81 percent they got in 2009. Podemos was now on a quest to find a balance between being a grassroots movement and a functioning political party. Iglesias expected that solutions based on direct participatory democracy would be found at a general assembly of the party in the autumn. Polls suggested it could win between 30 and 58 seats in the Spanish parliament and 15 percent of the vote. <sup>13</sup>

Existing international circumstances offer scope to participatory practices. A political vacuum is waiting to be filled. Outside of the present experimentation in Iceland blending participation with electoral representation, conventional liberal democracy represents little hope and much failure. Stein Ringen is almost despairing of American democracy: 'Nothing short of a total overhaul of the constitution will repair the years of accumulated damage and dysfunction.' This is close to saying that reconstitution is impossible. <sup>14</sup>

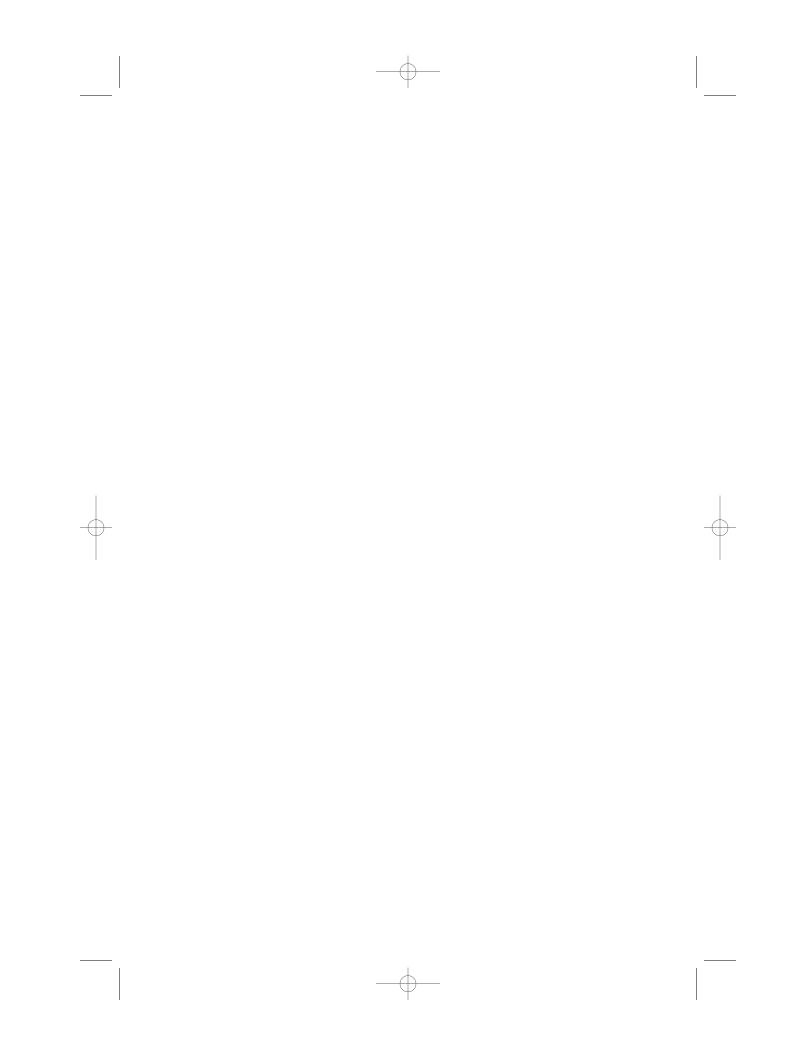
Popular participatory aspirations in South Africa, and the advances however limited made in a few years in Tunisia, Egypt and Iceland, and the eruption of Podemos, represent hope and trust in the capacities of ordinary people to build equitable democracies: if and when they construct strong popular organizations and exert control over privileged elites.

#### **NOTES**

- 1. Josiah Ober, "I Besieged That Man": Democracy's Revolutionary Start', chapter 4 in Kurt A. Raaflaub, et. al., *Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 2007, 87–91, 94–95 and 103.
  - 2. Paul Foot, How the Vote Was Won, pp. 113 and 115.
  - 3. Allan Boesak, Running With Horses, pp. 115 and 157.
- Richard Bater, 'Hope From Below: Composing the Commons in Iceland', Open Democracy, 1 December 2011.
- 5. The proponents of change had been too optimistic and their parliamentary opponents, chiefly the Progressives and Independents, had offered the voters instant debt relief.
- 6. Thorvaldur Gylfason, 'Iceland: Direct Democracy in Action', and 'Democracy on Ice', *Open Democracy*, 12 November 2012 and 19 June 2013, and Kristinn Mar Arsaelsson, 'Real Democracy Still Missing', *Open Democracy*, 17 May 2013.
- 7. Mohamed Afif Jaidi, 'Tunisia: the Collective Making of a Constitution', *Jadaliyya*, 10 June 2014.
- 8. Through 2011 some observers began to speak optimistically about the prospects for liberal multi-party democracy on the continent, typified by the issue of *The Economist* for 3 December that year under the theme 'Africa rising', others noted that though there were more elections than before, some of the fastest growing economies were still run 'by some of its most inimical regimes'. David Smith, in *Guardian Online*, 18 December 2011. The Economist Intelligence Unit ranked only one country, Mauritius, as a 'full' liberal democracy, assessing Botswana and South Africa as 'flawed democracies' of the liberal kind. *The Economist*, 31 March 2012. And it began to be understood that the deaths of some 1,300 people in elections in Kenya in 2007 was not spontaneous tribalism, but rather the 'premeditated' action orchestrated by rival political barons, prominent among whom was Uhuru Kenyatta, reputedly Kenya's richest man (and subsequent president). Daniel Howden, *Independent Online*, 2 March 2013.
- 9. Kristin Ross, 'Democracy For Sale', chapter in Giorgio Agamben, et. al., *Democracy in What State?*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2011, pp. 93–94; Alistair Horne, *The Terrible Year: The Paris Commune 1871*, London, Phoenix, 2004, pp. 105 and 133–35; and Allex Butterworth, 'The Long March to Freedom, *The Independent Online*, 26 April 2011.
- 10. Hugh O'Shaughnessy, *Pinochet, The Politics of Torture*, New York, Latin America Bureau and New York University Press, 2013, p. 30.

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- 11. As cited by Paul Mason, *Why Its Still Breaking Out All Over*, 2nd edition, London and New York, Verso, 2013, p. 275, and by Peter Beaumont, *The Observer/Guardian*, 22 June 2013.
- 12. Cristina Flesher Fominaya, '''Spain is Different'': Podemos and 15–M',  $Open\ Democracy$ , 29 May 2014.
  - 13. Ashifa Kassam, 'Yes he Can', Guardian Online, 5 July 2014.
- 14. A review of the *Nation of Devils*, *The Economist*, 5 October 2013. His work was noted in chapter 4.



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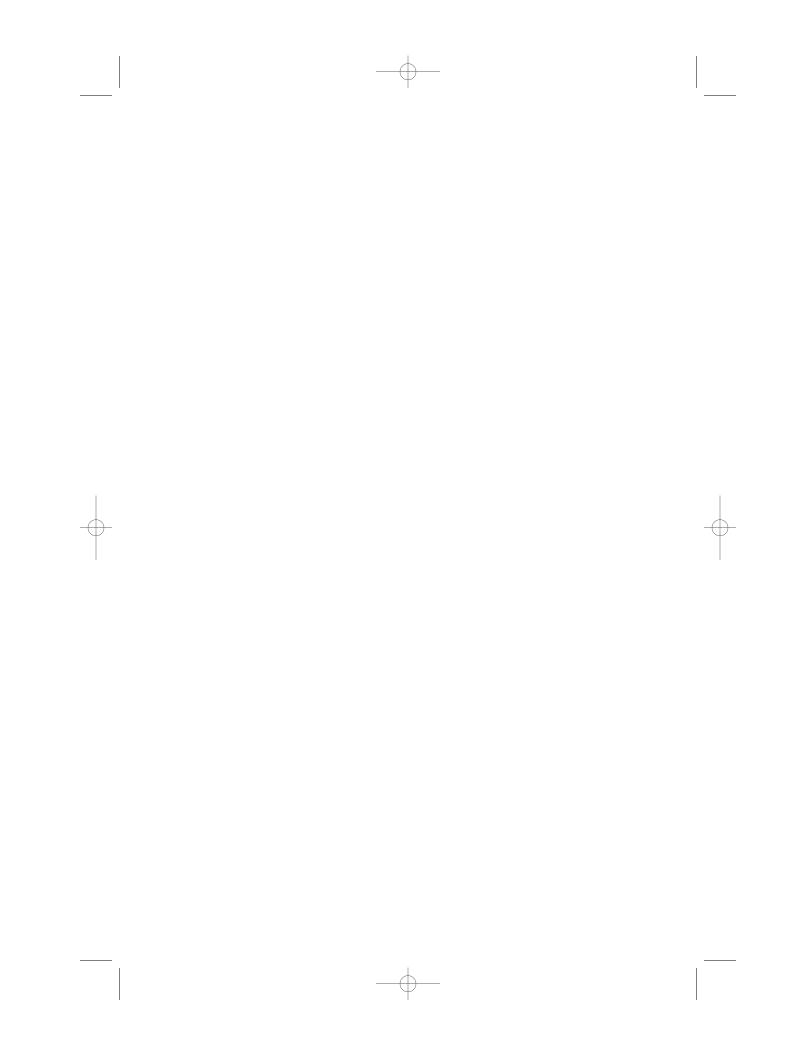
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