

## PERSPECTIVES

# A Fine Face for Apartheid

by Shelly Pitterman

The first anniversary of the Soweto uprising had just been commemorated by renewed violence in South Africa when some 350 American business officials gathered in Rye, New York on June 20 and 21 for an exclusive and secluded conference hosted by the South African government. The purpose of the meeting, which featured an address by former US Treasury Secretary William Simon, was to spur American investment in South Africa. [See *Southern Africa*, August, 1977]

The Rye conference is a recent example of how South Africa, through its increasingly sophisticated lobbying and public relations campaigns, hopes to foster more support in the US. The propaganda effort concentrates upon South Africa's perspectives on Communism in Africa, US investment opportunities, discrimination and apartheid, the homelands policy, Transkeian 'independence', and international sports competition.

Although active for many years—South African connections were subjects for investigation during the 1963 Congressional hearings on the Foreign Agents Registration Act—the South African campaigns have rapidly expanded since 1974.

That year marked the beginning of South Africa's detente policy with select Black African states and the end of Portugal's colonial presence in Angola and Mozambique. South Africa's growing isolation forced a rise in the 1974 Department of Information budget to almost that of the Department of Foreign Affairs. This, as well as a 33% increase in the number of foreign information representatives, are indicative of the mounting concern with foreign opinion and the determination to influence it.

## Information Service Grows

At the Rye Conference, L.E.S. de Villiers, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Information, hosted a seminar on "Strategies for Enduring Investment." The Department of Information, under the direction of Dr. Eschel Rhoodie since 1974, has coordinated the overseas public relations and lobbying operations. Its American branch, the Information Service of South Africa (ISSA), has an annual budget of about \$700,000. Under its auspices influential Americans have

been sent on subsidized trips to South Africa, though only if the Department of Information is certain that upon returning to America the guest will provide positive publicity for the South African government. In 1976, at least 12 American journalists visited South Africa at government expense. The ISSA also publishes magazines such as the *South African Digest*, which in 1975 had a total circulation, within South Africa and abroad, of 108,000.

In 1974, the Department of Information hired the Washington law firm Collier, Shannon, Rill and Edwards. This firm has intimate connections with the Republican Party and has represented the Tool and Stainless Steel Industry, a most active supporter of the Byrd Amendment, the law which made the US an ongoing violator of UN imposed sanctions against the illegal Rhodesian regime. The firm received \$57,246.34 from South Africa in 1974. By 1976, this figure had increased to approximately \$70,000 judging by the \$35,077 paid for the six months ending September 12, 1976.

## Buying Friends, Influencing People

Donald DeKeiffer, an associate at Collier, *et. al.*, also attended the Rye Conference to act as mediator for Secretary de Villiers' seminar on investment. DeKeiffer is paid \$50 an hour to improve South Africa's stature in Washington and to sway Congressional votes on issues of key interest to South Africa. Behind the scenes, DeKeiffer organized Congressional support for the reversal of limitations on Export-Import Bank operations in South Africa and worked successfully for the sugar industry towards a Congressional ban on cyclamates.

During the six months ending September 12, 1976, DeKeiffer spent at least \$8,877.00 on "entertainment" for "Washington representatives of various American corporations and Congressional staff members," according to his report to the Justice Department. Public relations personnel and lobbyists for foreign governments are required under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 (FARA) to bi-annually report their activities and expenses to the Justice Department, although recent US Justice Department action against another un-official arm of the SA image apparatus—the SA Foundation, makes it clear that such reports frequently mask the truth.

In 1974, DeKeiffer circulated to Members of Congress a pamphlet on the security of the Cape Sea route. More recently he wrote and presented to Representative Philip Crane (R-Ill) and John Dent (D-Pa) a "fact sheet" opposing a House resolution against US recognition of Transkei, the South African homeland which became 'independent' in October 1976. The "fact sheet" was inserted into the Congressional Record without being labelled as having originated from a foreign agent as required by FARA. The resolution, which needed a two-thirds vote for approval, only failed by 23 votes.

Plans for the Rye Conference were initiated by the South African Foreign Trade Organization and the Central Reserve Bank of South Africa. The Conference itself was organized by Sydney D. Baron, Inc., a New York public relations firm with close ties to the Democratic Party. The South African Department of Information hired Baron, Inc. in February 1976 for \$365,000 annually. The revised, 1977 contract provides for \$650,000 annually, an almost 100% increase which reflects South Africa's expanding concern for winning the support, or at least the ambivalence, of American public opinion.

## Seeking Black Support

In 1976, ten employees of Sydney S. Baron, Inc. were registered as working on the accounts of the Republic of South Africa, the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Republic of China, and the Electronics Industries of Japan. Of these, Andrew Hatcher, an advisor to President Kennedy and currently Vice President International of Baron, Inc., has assumed the prominent role in South Africa's public relations operations in the US.

Andrew Hatcher is Black. He has thus been of particular importance to South Africa in its efforts to influence Black American perspectives on southern Africa. Hatcher has visited with the influential 100 Black Men business organization and told the *Daily World* (6/23/77) that the Rye Conference emphasized attracting investment from Black American businessmen. Baron, Inc. also distributes public relations materials to libraries, newspapers and interested individuals. *South African Scope*, a two page glossy tabloid with articles sympathetic to South Africa, is

distributed to approximately 4,500 weekly publications located primarily in suburban and rural areas.

In August 1976, Baron also agreed to encourage "the presentation in the American media of a balanced and fair treatment of the Republic of Transkei." The contract with the Transkei government stipulated that Baron, Inc. would receive \$50,000 annually as payment for operating the Transkei Development and Information Bureau. In addition, Transkei hired another Black American, J. A. Parker of the Washington-based J. A. Parker Associates, to act as "exclusive agent in the US for the planning and conduct of all (Transkei's) public relations activities." In return, Parker, as director of Friends of Transkei, monthly receives fees of \$10,000 and expense allowances of \$5,000.

South Africa's public relations and lobbying activities in the US have also been carried out by second-generation employees such as Lester Kinsolving and Bernard Beame. Kinsolving, an Episcopal priest and syndicated columnist, received over \$2,500 in stock and expense money from DeKeiffer in 1975 and 1976. He appeared at stockholders' meeting of 13 companies where church groups were pushing resolutions to sever business ties with South Africa. When asked about his activities, Kinsolving said, "I asked stockholders to repudiate any proposals whatsoever offered by the National Council of Churches because of its massive hypocrisy in social concern for Africa."

#### Mayor's Son

Bernard Beame, son of Mayor Abraham Beame of New York, was hired by the South African Freedom Foundation (SAFF) and the Foreign Affairs Association of South Africa (FAA) in September 1976 to write, produce and direct two films on Transkei and the Soweto uprising. The contract with the SAFF, a business organization founded in June 1976, stipulated that Beame would get \$60,000 for a 30 minute film on the Transkei. The FAA, another active group of South African millionaires, hired Beame for \$60,000-\$90,000 to make a 30 minute or 60 minute film on "the recent disturbances within South Africa."

Organizations such as the SAFF and the FAA have assumed a prominent role in South Africa's influence-gathering campaigns. Werner Ackermann, a South African millionaire and member of the FAA, had by 1975 subsidized the travels of 39 foreign legislators and businessmen to South Africa. Last November, an entourage of eight Congressional aides visited South Africa at the FAA's expense, thus using a convenient alternative to laws forbidding

Congressional travel at a foreign government's expense. Each US visitor costs an estimated \$3,000 for a two week trip. While in South Africa, the Department of Information provides for the American guests, although Representative Robert Bauman (R-Md) was escorted by the FAA itself while he was in South Africa last November.

#### Foreign Affairs Association

The Foreign Affairs Association obtains its estimated \$500,000 annual budget from eight major individual contributors and the General Mining Group, an organization of South Africa's major mining companies. However the *Baltimore Sun* (11/17/76) reported that a US State Department spokesperson asserted that Ackermann and the FAA "have close ties to (South African) government agencies, the Information Department and the Foreign Affairs Department." Furthermore, *Business Week* (4/21/75) reported that Ackermann's trips are "actually paid for by the South African Department of Information."

Only days after President Carter's energy speech of April 18, another defender of the apartheid regime, the Club of Ten, inserted an advertisement in the *New York Times* asking, "Is the US going to allow her oil lifeline, and that of Western Europe, to remain in peril until Russia decides the moment is right to strike?" The Club of Ten, which has a London mailing address, is composed of about 20 businessmen who, according to the *Times* (3/17/77), "move about the world all the time, not in personal mini-jets, but in big personal jets." Millionaire Werner Ackermann is a member of both the Foreign Affairs Association and the Club of Ten. This reflects the general interlocking of membership which is characteristic of South Africa's business organizations functioning abroad.

The Club spent about \$35,650 on advertisements in 1973. In February 1977, it inserted a shrilly anti-Communist advertisement in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *London Times* and the *Guardian* which alone is estimated to have cost more than \$100,000. Readers were warned about the dangers of a Soviet take-over in countries like Angola—and South Africa, in contrast, was presented as a 'reliable' member of the so-called free world. A *Guardian* investigation in 1974 conducted by Adam Raphael—as well as the revelations made by Gerald Sparrow, who resigned from the Club in late 1976—confirm that the Club has financial connections with the Department of Information.

The South African Foundation (SAF), with offices in Washington, has engaged in both lobbying and public relations activities. Its US budget in 1975 was \$113,000, and because its

trustees are the nation's top 301 businessmen, the SAF is thought to have funds ten times that amount at its disposal if necessary. Since 1960, when the SAF was first founded, it has invited over 100 politicians and 75 journalists and businessmen to visit South Africa. In 1976, guests included Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.); Rep. David Bowan (D-Miss.); Professor Arthur Smithies, an economist and defense consultant to several US government agencies; and Ed Fuelner, of the House Republican Study Committee. The Foundation's president, Dr. Jan Marais, chairman of the South Africa Trust Bank, has also met with high-ranking government officials, journalists and businessmen in Washington. In 1975, Marais met with 10 senators, 6 representatives, the editors of the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek*. Officials from the Defense and State Departments were also present and attended the reception given by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller for Marais.

The SAF inserted a 10 page advertisement in the *New York Times Magazine* of February 22, 1976 extolling the virtues of American investment in South Africa. This theme, which served as the basis for the Rye Conference, has gained acceptance in the Carter Administration. The Foundation publishes and distributes the *South Africa Foundation News*, *South Africa International* (circulation of 9,000) and the *Information Digest*, of which more than 20,000 have been distributed.

While in Vienna for meetings with Vice President Mondale last May, Prime Minister Vorster discussed with South Africa's Ambassador to the US the need for improving their country's image in America. Expressing concern, Vorster said that, "I don't say that Americans are ill-informed, but I often wondered whether the interpretation of their information is correct." According to the *Times* (5/22/77), South African Foreign Minister F. F. Botha "made it plain that US opinion regarding his country was one of his main worries." Thus DeKeiffer, Hatcher and the numerous business organizations operating in the US are playing a critical role in expanding South Africa's efforts to reverse its growing international isolation and preserve its vicious system of apartheid. □

---

Reprinted with permission of *Southern Africa* magazine, 156 Fifth Ave., Rm. 707, New York, NY 10010

---

# American Publisher Peddles South Africa

by Steve Weissman

*In a recent Public Television interview, news commentator Robert MacNeil asked Prime Minister Vorster:*

*"If you don't particularly care what—as you call it—uninformed opinion feels about you, why does your government finance such a large public relations campaign in this country, spending last year, I've seen the figure of two million dollars?"*

*Responded Vorster: "Because we owe it to our country to give the true facts to the world outside for those who care to want the true facts and to listen to the true facts. Same as you owe it to your country and each and every other man owes it to his own country."*

*Was he planning, as reports state, to step up that campaign and spend more money in the US?*

*"If it's necessary to do so," Vorster replied, "we will do so."*

*"Do you feel it is necessary?"*  
*"From time to time it will be necessary, and perhaps now is such a time."*

*Apart from Pretoria's effort to make friends among the upper reaches of US government and business, though, the current propaganda assault is also aimed at the US public. And in this it seems designed to benefit more than just the South African tourist trade; it is aimed at Washington as well. Acceptance of South Africa among Americans would serve to broaden the administration's policy options by reducing the likelihood of widespread outrage in the event open support for apartheid must replace the currently favored covert variety.*

*The sympathetic picture of South Africa presented by conservative US publisher John McGoff, in his string of local newspapers, fits neatly into this strategy. His dailies and weeklies are probably not read by many executives or congressmen; but they do reach hundreds of thousands of American readers, concentrated in the Midwest and the South.*

John McGoff owns more than 50 newspapers in the US, all of which are part of his Panax and Global newspaper chains.

Starting with some small broadcasting stations in central Michigan, McGoff began buying up community newspapers in the early 1960s and has turned his Panax Corporation into one of the nation's largest newspaper chains.

In addition to his position as a powerful publisher of domestic dailies and weeklies, the outspoken McGoff is co-

chairman of the London-based UPI Television News and is that organization's majority stockholder. In addition, he was an unsuccessful bidder for the failing *Washington Star* in 1975.

At the time of his bid for the large Washington daily, McGoff told reporters that one reason he wanted the paper was to help sell the South African cause. His two chains, which operate in Michigan, Illinois, Florida, California and in the Washington, D.C. area, as well as his TV news business, are already performing that function.

## Telling South Africa's Story

"South Africa needs to tell its story, and through something like UPITN we can do it," McGoff told the South African newsweekly *To The Point* last year, when South Africa opened its first television network. "We at UPITN can provide you with instant news from all parts of the world. And you, in turn, can provide us with news of your country, which we can send to our customers in 66 countries."

Indeed, through his news media, McGoff seems to function as a kind of informal ambassador and advocate for the beleaguered Afrikaner regime. One of his regular newspaper contributors, the Rev. Lester Kinsolving, wrote several articles defending continued corporate investment in South Africa. Under attack, Kinsolving admitted that registered agents for the South African government—the law firm of Colier, Shannon, Rill and Edwards—paid him \$2,500 in stock and expenses while he was doing his reporting. Kinsolving took the money from the South Africans to attend 13 corporation meetings in 1975 and 1976, where he opposed church-backed resolutions calling for withdrawal from South Africa. He has since lost his press accreditation at both the State Department and Congress.

Another of McGoff's writers, Panax Washington bureau chief Tom Ochiltree, made several trips to South Africa and returned to write glowing articles about the country. He also filed several pro-South Africa stories from Washington, and in August he teamed up with Ron Cordray to do a four-part series for local papers entitled "Southern Africa In Crisis."

"The private enterprise system in southern Africa could be replaced by chaotic Marxism, as already has happened in much of black Africa," the two Panax writers warned. "And most

serious of all, Soviet control of the strategic seaways around the Cape of Good Hope would give the Kremlin, in times of international stress, an opportunity to attempt cutting off vital Middle East oil supplies to the United States and Western Europe."

Such familiar arguments as these are the standard introductions to a view that essentially supports close economic and military cooperation with southern Africa's remaining minority regimes. They occurred regularly in the early 1970s, when then-National Security Adviser Henry A. Kissinger produced NSSM 39 for the Nixon Administration. Similar reasoning is still popular among conservatives today through such writers as Robert Moss of *The Economist*—and through McGoff's stable of writers.

"In Pretoria's view," McGoff staffers Ochiltree and Cordray explained in their series, "the Carter Administration has nullified the cautious Ford-Kissinger policy toward South Africa and Rhodesia and replaced it with a sort of revivalist, 'born again' call for rapid and sweeping black control of the two countries."

Ochiltree and Cordray cast a favorable light on South Africa's black "homelands," such as Transkei, and warned against the campaign by "self-described 'liberal elements' among American clergymen, in the universities and at the leftward end of the Democratic Party . . . to shut off any further American private investment in South Africa and get existing American firms removed."

## Defending Newspaper Shutdown

When the South Africans cracked down on the press and opposition groups in October, McGoff's papers responded with a guest editorial by J. van Zyl Alberts, editor of *To The Point*. The editorial quoted heavily from anti-government comments that had appeared in South African papers, which Alberts—and Panax—took "to show that a free press still exists in that nation."

"As for the banning of 18 organizations," Alberts added, "it is not a question of free speech, but whether the government considers that they threaten law and order by their activities."

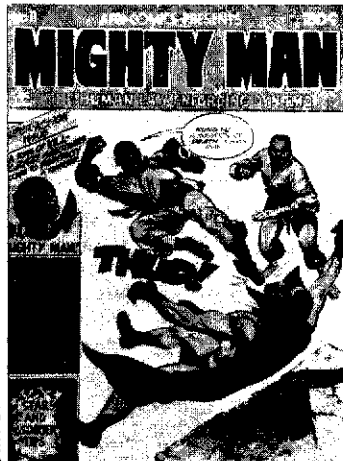
McGoff's emphasis on Africa seems especially excessive for some of the smaller, rather provincial papers that Panax and Global have taken over. Robert N. Skuggen, the former editor of McGoff's *Marquette Mining Journal* in Michigan put it this way: "I was a little bit upset because we were constantly getting things on South Africa, and none of my readers were really interested." According to Skuggen, McGoff insisted that "it was important to get out the truth, and the truth was that the white minority government was right."

## Dealing With Propaganda — Soweto Style

Mighty Man is dead, zapped in Soweto by the very people he claimed to defend.

The masked hero had been sent to the black township (by a group of Americans including McGoff), to wage a relentless war on the vicious perpetrators of evil—the muggers, purse-snatchers, *dagga* merchants, communists, and other enemy agents. But even as the law enforcing dynamo was engaging in his mind-bending adventures, the outside agitators stirred up the simple folk of Soweto to riot—WHAM! CRASH! THUD!

"They burned down the newsstands," complains the strip's US



creator, Richard Manville. "They threw the things on the ground, and we had to stop publishing them."

A New York marketing consultant with clients in South Africa, Manville thought of the comic strip back in 1975. "It was a deliberate copy of a highly successful format—namely Superman—which had been working for some 25 years." Only Mighty Man—with blue tights and scarlet cape—was a South African black, and Manville and his team of freelance cartoonists and balloon writers set the stories in a black township very like the now-famous Soweto.

Manville sold the idea to leading SA media man J. van Zyl

Alberts, who also runs the pro-government newsweekly *To The Point*. Manville ran the creative end from New York. Alberts published the strips through a South African firm, Afri-Comics (Pty) Ltd. And John McGoff, head of the American Panax newspaper chain, printed the comics through his South African subsidiary XANAP, with a printing press in the Tswana bantustan near Pretoria.

The comics got off to a flying start, with full-color covers and press runs of 75,000. Predicted one of the Afri-Comics execs in an interview with a South African paper: "The blacks are going to lap this up."

Not everybody did. Some people looked past the brightly colored figures and found an ugly message. The new black comic strips preached something less than black power.

"There were certain guidelines," explains lead cartoonist Joe Orlando. "Like not screwing around with the government."

Better known for his drawings of the real Superman, Orlando wanted to create one-page heroes for the blacks to identify with. He suggested the slain leader of the anti-Portuguese liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau, Amilcar Cabral. The South Africans said no. They also vetoed a mention of slavery, even in a historical vein.

"Basically we were on the side of law and order, and kids should stay in school, and they should obey the law, and all the rest of that stuff, which is exactly the format Superman follows," said Manville. "I'd rather be for law and order than for anarchy and communism."

"Wasn't that pro-government?" we asked.

"Hell, no!" he replied. "Law and order is one thing, and being for the government something else."

A fine distinction, no doubt. But not one that the Soweto rebels recognized when they burned down the newsstands and forced Mighty Man to his grave. □

—S.W.

## Friend and Visitor

The Pretoria government first invited McGoff as an official guest in the early 1960s, and he has been a friend and regular visitor ever since. He is reportedly on a first-name basis with Prime Minister John Vorster, and is a personal friend of the man who heads South Africa's official propaganda effort, Minister of Information Connie Mulder. McGoff also is a partner with Mulder in a holiday game ranch in the Transvaal.

In 1974, McGoff arranged for Mulder to meet the then-Vice President Gerald Ford, an old friend from Michigan. He also claims to have helped convince then-Secretary of State Kissinger to permit the controversial visit of South African Defense Chief, Admiral Hugo Biermann, shortly after the Lisbon coup of 1974.

As a publisher, McGoff joined with the Afrikaner fertilizer magnate Louis Luyt and right-wing German publisher Axel Springer late in 1975 in an unsuccessful effort to take over the English-language South African Associated Newspaper chain, which includes the usually anti-nationalist *Rand Daily Mail*. McGoff said at the time that he was making the takeover bid for "both business and political reasons."

Mr. Luyt has since put his money into a pro-government English-language daily, *The Citizen*, and is a reported member of the mysterious Club of Ten, which has published full-page pro-South African ads in British and American newspapers, among its other activities. Various British newspapers have also associated McGoff and UPITN President Clarence "Dusty" Rhodes with the Club of Ten. Both men deny any connection whatsoever.

McGoff's Panax has a small investment in South Africa—a printing firm called Xanap—which has printed the pro-government newsweekly *To The Point* and the controversial Afri-Comics, which were owned by *To The Point* publisher J. Van Zyl Alberts (see side bar).

An arch-conservative himself, McGoff obviously feels at home with the South African world view. He exercises autocratic control over his own newspaper chain—editors must publish what he tells them to or work somewhere else.

When there was a minor rebellion in the ranks, Panax issued an official policy statement published in the June 29 *Escaanaba Daily Press*:

"John P. McGoff not only has the privilege, but is accorded the right as principal stockholder, president, and chief executive officer of Panax Corporation to distribute whatever news copy he deems appropriate and to demand, if necessary, that such copy be printed." □