

January 2005

Mon 3

Recently convicted, of breaches of South Africa's Foreign Military Assistance Act, Crause Steyl is to give the authorities in Pretoria details Mark Thatcher's association with those recently convicted of attempting to overthrow the regime in Equatorial Guinea.

In his attempt to stave off a long prison sentence, after a long period on remand in a Harare prison, he will be the star witness in the forthcoming trial of the Cape Town resident and son of a recent prime minister of Britain.

They were first introduced by Simon Mann (qv) in 12/03 via a meeting at Lanseria Airport north west of Johannesburg, when Greg Wales (qv) and also an 'investor' – who was in reality Mark Thatcher - where the purchase of a helicopter was discussed. This was to be used as a gunship and ambulance during the coup attempt.

At a second meeting in Constantine, the suburb of Cape Town where the Thatcher family lived, on 22/12 of that year finances were discussed. It was agreed that a budget of \$275, 000 would be needed. This amount, split into two portions, was paid into two accounts of Triple A Trading, a company owned by Steyl. \$20, 000 was deposited on 8.1.04. On 16.1.04 the balance of \$255, 000 was deposited in the second account.

A second, hired, helicopter was obtained in East London. This then was flown to the port city of Walvis Bay in Namibia, where it was supposed to pick up other members of the team who were ultimately detained at Harare airport in Zimbabwe, in 3/ '04. However, for whatever reason, after three weeks the 'air ambulance' was flown back to South Africa.

Meanwhile lawyers for Simon Mann* have launched an attempt, in the Guernsey courts, to prevent disclosures of his off shore accounts that are wanted by the authorities in Equatorial Guinea. The affidavit claims that the former SAS member was tortured into making his confession. It is these bank accounts that the authorities believe will show \$100, 000 being transferred from Triple A Trading's account into one held by now resident of Chikerubi prison in Harare. *authors note see Zimbabwe Diary

Wed 5

Supposedly an Anglophile; he was educated and worked from the ANC 's office in London the South African president Thabo Mbeki has once again attacked the colonialist nature of policy towards Africa over the last two hundred years.

Speaking in Darfur, the troubled region of the Sudan where he was expected to condemn the actions of government backed guerillas, he attacked the actions of Winston Churchill

and other ‘notables’ as racist in their colonialisation of regions of the African continent during the 18th and 19th century.

Thurs 6

With the incident rate, for murder standing at 42. 7%/ 100, 000 population, the authorities in Pretoria have decided to act. As from this date the countries supposed 2. 5m registered gun owners will have to reapply for their weapons permit. This rolling process is expected to take a period of five years.

The new regulations will deny those convicted of a range of crimes, spouse beaters or others inclined to violence or “deviant behavior,” from holding a gun permits. Also applicants will have to pass a police check and an approved training programme before they can obtain a weapon. They will also be limited in the number of weapons they can hold. Under the new rules only one weapon, for self defence, and up to four for hunting can be held. All weapon owners must be 21 or over, rather than 16 years old before they can legally own a gun. To breach these rules will land the perpetrator 15 years in jail or forfeit of the weapon.

Fri 7

The only surviving son of Nelson Mandela, who was hospitalised a few weeks ago, has become another victim of the HIV/Aids virus. Within hours of the death of Makgatho Mandela, 54, the former president, with his second wife by his side, made the announcement to the assembled press at his home in Johannesburg.

Since his admission to hospital there had been widespread media interest as to the cause of his illness. Mr Mandela went public on the cause of death to show so as to show that an illness such as this should not be hidden away and treated as another medical complaint; tuberculosis..

With the latest figures, 2003, showing that the number of new arrivals, settlers, coming into the country rose 62%, there are moves afoot to entice back the estimated 5m South Africans who have ‘taken the gap’ since 1994. An advertising campaign, backed by Homecoming Revolution a not for profit organisation hopes to capitalise on benefits of a more stable country that there is at this time.

The companies website, which offers tips on immigration, schools, banking and tax problems, had, according to M Schaffer its chief manager, 30, 000 inquiries over the last month.

Sat 8

In a statement, to the House of Commons in London, the minister of health praised the work of the 34 independent treatment centers; mainly from overseas set up in 4/02 for the treatment of specific conditions.

One such, foreign owned company, is Netcare (qv), has treated 10, 000 patients needing a cataract repairing. The success of the South African owned company, and other foreign health care companies who have treated 16, 000 patients, have seen the NHS waiting list fall to 844, 000 as of 11/04. The minister put the decrease down to an eight times increase in treatment time because Netcare doctors were not distracted by having to work in other areas of the hospital. They could concentrate on surgery full time.

Sun 9

Aids, some relevant facts; Worldwide 42 million people are infected. Child orphans 15 million. In sub Saharan Africa there are 25m HIV positive people, of these nearly 2m are under the age of 14 years. As an Aids holocaust HIV is killing more South Africans than apartheid; that is 600* lives a week. This equates to nine Sharpeville massacres every seven days.

Every three weeks the death toll is similar in number to those who have died in the recent tsunami* that has hit much of the Asia coast line. * authors note, death toll that struck on 27/12 has reached 150, 000 and is still rising

As to the recent praise showered on Mr Mandela for revealing that the cause of the death of his son Makgatho Mandela (qv 7/1) was due to the HIV virus there was much praise. The decision was seen to be “unwavering and outspoken” by P Piot the director of the UN Aids programme.

The director said there is still feeling that the then president did little to alleviate the scourge of the Aids virus in the early days of his presidency. There was no decisive action, no public education or public awareness campaigns launched during his 5 year in office.

It was only at the end of his term in office that Nelson Mandela and other pressure groups began a concerted effort to change the mindset of the authorities in Pretoria. The chief ‘thorn in the side’ of the present administration was the pressure group Treatment Action and Concern (qv) which has consistently harried the authorities to go the ‘full mile’ to provide those infected with HIV with the drugs needed at an affordable cost.

Thurs 13

Without any previous inclination to do so the alleged ‘financial backer’ of the failed coup in Equatorial Guinea, Mark Thatcher, has said that he will plead guilty to the charge of not advising the authorities of his suspicions concerning the use of a helicopter (qv 3/1) that was understood to be an air ambulance in the west African state’s oil industry. This was a breach of South Africa’s Foreign Military Assistance Act.

The high court in Cape Town, if it accepts this attempted plea bargain, will impose a five year suspended prison sentence. There will also a fine of R3m / £270, 000 and a criminal record. It is thought this hefty fine will be financed through the sale of his home in the wealthy Cape Town suburb of Constantine, which is thought to be worth £2.3m. Selling

his family home, and with his passport returned, a move to the United States is most likely. There he will join his American wife and his children who left South Africa in late 2004.

However there are still questions for Thatcher to answer, from authorities in Equatorial Guinea, and – indirectly - from the courts in the Channel Isles, as the authorities in west Africa continue to unravel the finances of others involved in the failed coup.

Fri 14

En route, for the United States Mark Thatcher arrives in London, leaving Cape Town's high court with lesser penalty than predicted (qv 13/1). Fined only £265, 000 and a suspended sentence of four years.

According to critics his penalty was less severe than should have been handed down. This may have been due to the evidence he gave during the hearing. During this time the former prime ministers son implicated his business partner S Mann. The former soldier could face charges from the Pretoria authorities, once he had served the seven years in a Harare jail he is currently serving.

Cartoon, I Unwittingly Helped to Invade Poland, Claims Thatcher boy, the linking of the coup plot and the gaffe made by Prince Harry in his choice of fancy dress at a nightclub party.

Sat 15

With the 'principals' facing up to their responsibilities, whether by being jailed or fined (qv 13/1), minor figures in the failed plot to unseat the government of the west African state of Equatorial Guinea also seem to be able to escape any censure.

As of this time the London businessman G Wales, a known associate of Mark Thatcher, feels secure that he will not be extradited to face any charges surrounding the attempt to unseat President T Obiang of the newly oil rich state.

It has emerged that Simon Mann, who was originally sentenced to seven years detention in Harare's maximum security facility, has won a reduction in sentence to four years.

Johannesburg, long known as the crime capital of the world, has claimed its latest victim. Walking in the city was this diarist's chief source of information, when he was challenged for his mobile phone, cash cards, keys and spectacles. Challenged to 'Give it' this correspondent chose to pursue his property through the street's until confronted by 'vigilante' justice took over. Forced to drop his acquisitions, except the cash; there is now a heightened sense of danger in walking the city streets from this source.

Cartoon, the need for parental control in the farmyard. - **The Times** - see also Zimbabwe Diary 28 8 2005

Mon 17

Deep in negotiation, for a new visa for entry into the United States, Sir Mark Thatcher could become a possible target from those coup plotters still avoiding contact with the South African authorities.

With his recent court appearance behind him his knowledge of the attempt to over throw the government of Equatorial Guinea, Thatcher is still of interest to the Scorpion police team. The head of the specialist unit, Sipho Ngwema, said they were still in contact with him. With the police's ongoing investigation the more likelihood that his information will incriminate the likes of G Wales (qv), the more the fear that an attempt to prevent such help being given will be taken.

Nelson Mandela has agreed, despite his 'retirement' from overseas travel to travel outside Africa within the next four weeks. After meeting Gordon Brown, the chancellor, he has said that he will speak to the finance ministers of the G7 group prior to a heads of government meeting in London.

Wed 19

In the year 2003 the UK 's overseas development agency, with a budget of \$6, 282m which works out as 0.34% of Britain's Gross National Product, gave South Africa financial assistance to the tune of \$87m.

As a comparison Ghana received \$130m and Uganda benefited by \$94m.

Thurs 20

News item despite 19 members of parliament signing an Early Day Motion calling for the hereditary peerage, inherited by Mark Thatcher, to be taken away from him the government has decided that despite his conviction (qv) does not preclude him the honour. – **Radio 2 15. 00** –

New item, speaking to a British media outlet Crause Steyl gave a first hand account of Mark Thatcher and the 'helicopter choosing visit to a site outside Johannesburg (qv 3/1).

The mercenary pilot also said that the son of the former prime minister of England and his secret role were kept quiet because of who he was – the son of Margaret Thatcher. There was also an indication that the Spanish government were, if not 'in the know' about the attempt to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea, then they had an 'idea' about what was to occur. **Channel 4's 19. 00 news**,

Meanwhile Thatcher, allegedly at his mothers London home, waits for the renewal of his US visa.

Fri 21

“Opinions flared this week in South Africa on questions surrounding two high profile criminal cases: Mark Thatcher’s plea bargain and the presidential pardon granted to anti apartheid cleric Alan Boesak.”

First off, Mark Thatcher - “A miscarriage of justice, he received nothing more than a slap on the wrist”, his treatment suggested that there was “one law for the rich and another for the poor” **The Youth League of the ANC –**

The ability of Thatcher to bargain his way out of a prison sentence even though, with the helicopter purchase, which he admitted paying \$275, 000 for there was no shown way that he could recoup his large investment if the coup had gone ahead, elicited surprise. **M Swart law lecturer; Business Day**

However the deal was defended on the grounds “prosecutors were in no way certain that they would be able to secure a conviction had the case gone to trial.” In this type of trial convictions difficult to guarantee. What has been shown, with this admission of guilt from Thatcher, is the “unambiguous message to others who may be planning similar activities on South African soil.”

The large monetary, to some people, financial penalty is “of little consequence for the state or Thatcher … but its symbolic value is priceless if it convinces potential coup plotters that South Africa is serious about prosecuting those who try to destabilise the continent for money.” - **Editorial; ‘Quid pro quo,’ Business Day –**

Questionable, the decision to presidential pardon Boesak, as he showed no remorse “Until now Mr Boesak has repeatedly claimed that he was not guilty of any offense.” To do so at this time has gone against the recommendation of the former justice minister P Maduna, 16 months ago.” – **J Gordin columnist, Pretoria News –**

Using the cartoon as a means of exposing his inability to apologise and an editorial that focused on prison conditions – “The rather unflattering report by Human Rights watch reads like a throw back to the apartheid era. Our Prisons are overcrowded and breeding ground for hard core criminals; police brutality remains a problem … We have made great strides; but enormous challenges still lie ahead. Complacency has no place, especially when half our population still lives in abject poverty.” – **Sowetan The Editor -**

Mon 24

During a broadcast to be shown on BBC3*, further links between the United States Mark Thatcher and the foiled coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea are to be exposed. * unavailable to this diarist at this moment in time,

The programme; ‘Thatcher and the Coup that failed’ will establish a link between the South African convicted criminal and the state department in Washington. An official in

this department J Sala will say that he was given a budget of \$40, 000 £21, 315 to promote the protection of the emerging American run oilfields in the west African state.

Record show, from Thatcher's mobile phone, that he was in contact with Eli Cali the London based businessman twice. The calls were made from his Cape Town home on 2.2. 04. The calls were made just days after his purchase of the helicopter (qv 3/1).

With the recent case handled by the National Prosecution Authority, more commonly known as the Scorpions, leading to the conviction of Mark Thatcher (qv), the police team have now set their sights on erring members of parliament.

Acting on revelations from the media, in 7/04, the Travelgate inquiry began. As a result 27 current and 13 former members of parliament have been charged with the illegal use their allotted travel vouchers. The vouchers worth, £1.5m, were then used by the MP's and members of their family for overseas luxury travel, rather than travel between Cape Town and their constituencies.

According to the head of the investigation, M Nkosi, the majority of the people's representatives were from the ANC. If convicted, and sentenced to more than just a fine or in excess of 12 months jail time then they will have to forfeit their parliamentary seat.

Of the 135 people questioned there have been two admissions of guilt. Both, members of the opposition Democratic Alliance, member one has repaid £3, 000 and a former member gave back £1, 000 that was used on a £1, 500 cruise for himself and his wife, as well as spending £1, 000 on his sons trip to the Kruger National Park.

The residents of Cape Town's Khayelitsha township, an area awash with redundant shipping containers, have found a way to recycle them to their advantage. With affordable housing and business premises being in such short supply the 20 ft long metal boxes have come into there own.

An example; Ms Mtikole and her sister Zukiswa have an established eight year hair salon partnership. Rather than spending R1, 000, 89 pounds, per month rent on a shop land was purchased for R16, 000 where a rented container; for R150 could stand.

Tues 25

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, charitable body, has donated \$750m to the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunisation [Gavi] that works worldwide to eradicate preventable childhood diseases such as measles.

One example of its work is in Xipimanine, Mozambique, here a clinic has been established – one of many nationwide – that will see 80% of these preventable diseases gone from the country by the end of 2005.

As of this time the clinic, on the outskirts of the capital Maputo, is to inoculate scores of women against Hepatitis B and BCG. As the children are brought in, in groups of four, the only worry is the lack of an efficient method of record keeping of the children seen and the injections given to the 100 children, of 80 women seen each day at the clinic.

For now a card record is given to the mother to be kept safely throughout the course of treatments. As a back up a written record is kept in a ledger at the clinic. There is no great use of computer records in the rural areas of the country.

Greeted by a large crowd outside the court in Phalabora, South Africa, four people; a white farmer, Crossley, and two of his black employees the brothers Mathebula, were ordered to stand trial for the murder of a former farm employee N Chisale aged 43.

The circumstances; it is alleged that the sacked farmhand was thrown to the lions on 31.1.2004 as he returned to the farm to collect a few possessions. The demonstration, led by a delegation from the ANC's youth league called on the court to pass a sentence of three life terms and 100 years for the three.

Mon 31

Trained in the skills of ballet, at the Ballet Rambert in London, P Thloloe has returned to the place of her birth, more especially the township of Alexandria, to train a new generation of performers that are even now entering into the emerging arts scene based round the city of Johannesburg.

The plan, to train the next generation of ballet performers, has already taken off in the townships of Soweto and Ennerdale, with her teaching there. What is new is the Ballet Theatre Afrikan's. Here she has trawled the 11 primary schools in Alexandria and auditioned 8 to 11 year old's. From more than the 1, 000 that attended 32 have gone forward to the four afternoon sessions a week over the 10 year training programme.

FEBRUARY 2005

Tues 1

A white cricket player, Kevin Pietersen, born and playing in a South African provincial side has chosen to leave and play in the England national team which is now touring the land of his birth.

Nothing unusual there that whites left South Africa, in the days of apartheid, to enhance their restricted career prospects, but now according to him the United Cricket Board runs a policy of positive discrimination in favour of black players.

Thus the long association of England's sports taking in those who wish to leave South Africa and find a safe haven in their chosen sport in England. From Allan Lamb, Tony Gregg and Robbin Smith; all cricketers to athlete Zola Budd who have found a safe haven in England.

Wed 2

As Britain prepares to take over the chairmanship of the G7 forum, in 6/05, the government has launched a preemptive strike. Their aim is to woe the American government to commit resources to combat the inequality and poverty that pervades the African continent.

One of the countries that need great help is Mozambique. Facts with a population of 19m, with 35% in cities. Maputo, the capital has 1.4m people. 78% of the population live on less than 100p per day.

Average life expectancy is 41 years. Infant mortality rate was 128 deaths every 1,000 live births in 2002. A comparison; UK 5:1,000.

Total external debt is £470m. Debt repayments total £30m per year. Exports earn £425m a year. Mainly from Aluminum, prawn and cashews.

Overseas aid was £58 per person in 2002. Government spending is £15 per person. Adult literacy is 54%.

Government spending on health is £16 per head. There are 6 doctors for every 100, 000 people. HIV infection rate is 13%.

Wed 3

Awash with weapons, after 17 years of civil war, artists in Mozambique have found a use for the detritus of war. Whether it is discarded AK – 47 rifles or redundant land mines a new use has been found for them.

Exhibited in London's British Museum is The Tree Of Life, a sculpture constructed by a number of artists from the war torn country. Using the above weaponry, as well as abandoned pistols and rocket propelled grenade launchers, – all collected by former child soldiers; for the Transforming Arms into Tools Project, the sculpture is set for a touring exhibition of Britain.

Coming to this country this artistic project, which normally exchanges the redundant military equipment for farming implements hopes that the work will connect with the gun carrying youth here in Britain and act as a ‘symbol of reconciliation’.

The Tree of Life sculpture will be joined here soon by second piece; the Throne of Weapons that will further enhance the nine year old weapons for tools project, that has collected 600 over the past nine years.

Fri 4

Appearing in front of South Africa House in London, the former president of that country Nelson Mandela made a plea on behalf of the worlds poor. Referring to the past support from the millions who forced regime change in the 1990's he now asked them to face up to a new challenge.

Launching the Make Poverty History campaign he called on the masses, before he speaks in front of world leaders, at the G7 summit in 6/05, to set free millions “who are imprisoned, enslaved and in chains. They are trapped in the chains of poverty. It is time to set them free”.

Notwithstanding that the mining company De Beers employs 11, 000 diamond miners that are employed in the Kimberly area of South Africa, private enterprise is alive and thriving.

Many of these individual miners operate 35 miles north west of the city, on the alluvial plane of the River Vaal. In the not too distant past, 1981, a 50 carat stone was grubbed up from the earth at Verlorenshoop's Lost Hope mine by F Lauw aged 63.

Cartoon, setting the scene; Nelson Mandela at the door of No 10 Downing Street as a militaristic Blair chants ‘Africa, Africa’ hours after launching the Make Poverty History campaign.

Sat 5

Continuing the long standing relationship, between the people of Leeds and the port city of Durban (qv), a delegation from the city's education establishments are to join the Lord Mayor in a hand over of the medical back packs, filled with equipment for the home nursing care of HIV patients, donated by the city. Among the visitors will be the cities own 'adoptive son' Lucas Radebebe, who launched the ten thousand pound funding appeal on 1/12.

In a second presentation, with a cash injection of £15, 000 from the Leeds based Corrocoat company will train locally based women; from the company's factory in Durban in the practicalities of organic farming.

The Mayor of Durban, Obed Mlaba, thanked his opposite number C Townsley; "We are proud of our strong links with Leeds, and this co operation from our sister city is a welcome show of solidarity."

The produce from the organic farm will be used as a sustainable source of food and produce for one community in the Sidweni district of the Umalazi township in Durban.

Wed 9

Mozambique's best known investigative journalist Carlos Cardoso who was shot dead in 2000. He was investigating, rather like the British journalist Paul Foot did for the media here, alleged corruption in high places.

At the time of his death on 23/12, he was working for the news sheet Metical, investigating the embezzlement of \$14m from the Banco Commercial. The work had led to threats against his life. He died when he was shot with an AK 47 after being pulled from his vehicle. After trial 6 men were convicted of his killing.

The current state is that the 'trigger man,' Anibal Dos Santos, somehow managed to leave his prison cell and flee to Canada. Now back in Maputo and facing a retrial, as his conviction was secured whilst he was on the run, the nation is acutely aware that evidence could surface that 'notables' may have been the ones who called for the death of the journalist. At the 2000 trial it emerged that the son of the president, J Chissano, was questioned. Nyimpine Chissano denied the allegations.

In 2001 A S S Macuacua the interim chairman of Austral Bank was thrown down the stairwell of the building that housed the bank. He had been investigating a massive and unpaid debt to the bank. No one has been charged with his murder.

As to the current status of journalists working in Mozambique; Reporters Without Borders, an international body concerned with the welfare of the world's journalists notes that J Langa, a worker for Soico TV, was kidnapped on 27/1 and released with the warning that "he talked too much" and that he was going "to die."

Fri 11

Work, by the South African Medical Council, has called into question the figures released by the authorities in Pretoria, into the number of deaths caused by the HIV/Aids virus. The reports findings show that under the Mbeki ‘regime of denial’ the number of deaths attributed to the virus are under stated by a factor of three. The researchers, led by P Groenewald of the MRC and colleagues from the University of Cape Town, say the under reported deaths are due to the stigma attached to such an admission.

In their written submission to the medical journal, Aids 2005, it is indicated that the deaths due to the Aids virus are written up on the death certificate as being due to HIV related infections such as tuberculosis or pneumonia as the cause of death. This would bring death toll estimate for 2004, to 370, 000 which is more in line with the figure calculated by the UNAIDS group.

Peak age for Aids deaths in women 30 to 34 and men 35 to 39. 2000/2001 deaths of adults and children with Aids written of the death certificate as cause - 60, 295. To add on the numbers of those who have an other related disease, as cause of death, - 153, 357.

Sat 12

With an estimated 2m exiled Zimbabweans living in the country, as well as 500, 000 overseas in Britain, a weekly newspaper has been launched by a former editor of the now defunct Harare based Daily News. The Zimbabwean is to be edited by W Mbanga, a one time supporter of Mugabe, who was briefly jailed, before the paper was closed down.

With an initial print run of 20, 000, with plans to increase to 120, 000, the editor indicated that expats were hungry for news. However with the current regime installed in Harare they were starved of news and were cut off from news of their families. To be able to read about life ‘at home’ will strengthen national identity.

Sun 20

Not notwithstanding the inappropriate spending by Swaziland’s monarch, King Maswetzi the Third (qv 14/12), there has now been the purchase of a top of the range BMW vehicle for each of his ten wives.

This excess spending comes at a time when his poverty stricken country suffers a 38% HIV infection rate.

Tues 22

Jailed for life, as was his co accused Nelson Mandela in 1964, the death has occurred of Ray Mhalba from cancer. A long time activist in the anti apartheid movement inside South Africa he was released from prison in 10/89.

Upon taking power in 1994 he was offered the post of premier of the Eastern Cape province, only to resign 3 years later as the cancer took hold.

A statement from the current president praised the work of the veteran 85 year old; “his death robs us of another hero, a member of splendid unforgettable generation,” said Mr Mbeki. There will be a state funeral and flags were ordered to be flown at half mast.

Fellow detainee and the former president Mandela said in his statement said “his passing away removes from us one of the real stalwarts of our movement, a person who in his life and work embodied the highest values our struggle stood for and strove for.”

Wed 23

Farmer S Crossley and two co accused workers (qv 25/1) have been found guilty of the murder of dismissed farm labourer N Chisale aged 41. In evidence the farm owner said that the apparently dead returnee was taken by all three accused in his van to a lion enclosure some way away from the farm Phalaborwa in the north east of the country and ‘dropped over the fence.’

One of Britain’s most troubled retail outlets, Marks and Spencer, is apparently the target of M Paulsmier the South African ‘financier’ who claims to be ready to launch a £10.5bn hostile take over bid for the company.

According to a press release from moves are in place to propose a 410p bid for every M&S share, which closed at 388. 25p – a rise of 7% on the day. On the London Stock Exchange the share price of the ‘bidding company’ at 370p, a rise in value of 2%.

Such moves, from an unknown bidder will see the Takeover Panel launch an investigation to ensure that the South African financier adheres to the rules and regulations. Also the Financial Services Authority will look into this unusual case.

Cartoon, setting the scene, in his time entrepreneur Phillip Green has long sought to acquire Marks and Spence. However he is unhappy with the design of their clothes collection. Fashionable women note the reaction of a potential bidder to this South African bidder.

Fri 25

Escom, the South African’s electrical power provider, along with the relevant authorities in Namibia and other central African countries, are proposing a scheme that will the number of people with mains electricity show a vast increase. The project is to harness the power of the Congo River as it flows over the Inga Rapids in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The estimated cost would be \$50bn / £260bn and provide 40, 000MW of power, which is twice the power provided by the hydro electricity produced by the Three Gorges dam in

China. There has already been an approach made, for financial backing, to the World Bank along with a number of private investors.

The proposed scheme would capitalise on an already existing scheme – Inga 1 and 2 – which will undergo a massive revamp. Inga 3, a new construction, will provide power to Nigeria and other west African states.

Located to a small office in Cape Town, the ‘unknown bidder’ for Marks and Spencer (qv 23/2) whose earlier thought up the proposed management buyout is s of this time not on the agenda as far as the members of his Paulsmiser group.

What his company is established for is to attract people with good business ideas and turn them into reality. In other words venture capitalists. This group, founded 4 years ago with 100 members to one with 50, 000 businessmen as ‘associate members’ willing to pay \$10, 000 joining fee. There are plans to increase the numbers to 250, 0000 people who are willing to ‘speculate to accumulate.’

Obituary, Raymond Mhlaba **12. 2. 20 – 20. 2. 05** born in Mazoka village in the Beaufort district of the Eastern Cape. Early end to education, at Healdtown secondary school, to become a wage earner – to supplement the family finances – in a dry cleaning factory in Port Elizabeth, where he became a trade unionist and eventual leader of the Non – European Laundry Workers Union.

1943 joined the South African Communist Party till it became a proscribed organisation in 1950.

1944 became a member of the African National Congress. During this time he married Joyce Meke, and after the 17 together and 3 children they had together, she died in a car crash in 1960.

1952 first of those arrested in that years non violent campaign against apartheid as he led a crowd of non whites through the ‘forbidden entrance’ of Port Elizabeth’s Brighton police station.

1960 now the ANC was also banned traveled to China for military training

1962 on return to the country assumes role of military commander of the ANC 's military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe.

1963 detained by the police at the farm that gave its name to the trial of the ANC top brass.

1964 at the end of the Rivonia trial sent to Robben Island to serve a life sentence. 1983 married, after being granted special permission, D Heliso.

1980 Released. 1991 elected to ANC 's national executive and SACP 's central committee.

1995 elected national chairman of the SACP. 1994 premier of the Eastern Cape province

1997 resigned the post to take a position of high commissioner in Uganda and then ambassador in Rwanda and Burundi till 2001.

Sat 26

Authors note; the following is a response to a missed article, The Elusive Rainbow by J Freedman, 23/2 GDN page 23, C1, that was written after the author spent a writing break in the vicinity of Cape Town. The article seems to decry, in the writer's opinion, the post apartheid benefits gained by the majority population

Letters [1] **P McAlister, London** an alternative view of a visit to KwaZulu Natal the Cape and the Free State following self imposed exile, from 1980 because of the apartheidic regime.

[2] **P Lawrence, Winchester, Hampshire** since the end of the apartheid regime is only half a generation away the need for basic needs of the deprived black population, food shelter and security "are still a priority."

[3] **T King, School of politics, University of the West of England**, the location for the stay – Cape Town – is not representative of the changes, even though they are not enough, in half a generation of change.

[4] **M Pennock, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk**, enjoyed a township stay in Soweto, via Phaphama (www.Phaphama.org), to hear various aspects of life from people.

[5] **R Wortley, Johannesburg**, the reternees story from 1984; a comparison to the Britain of 2005.

Mon 28

Whilst Soweto, a suburb of Johannesburg and at one time was the 'dormitory town' for the city, today it has an existence of its own. The place to be seen is The Rock nightclub a meeting point between town and suburb.

Much of the time that the male patrons gather round the bar, where they are served ice chilled, guarding their car keys, to the BMW 's or Alfa Romeo's that are the status symbols, of the clubs middle class clients who travel in from the city and the other essential a mobile phones.

The reason of the success of club, in the suburb of Rocksville, is that the middle classes are keeping their Soweto homes, where an extended family will live, as an escape from the city they see as having no soul. All activities are carried out behind the high security walls of their middle class homes.

The ongoing take over battle for Consolidated Gold Fields South Africa (qv) rumbles on. Newly discovered off shore accounts, in the name of B Swanepoel of the Harmony group have been located in the known tax havens of Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man.

Distancing himself these revelations in so far that he has already acknowledged ownership of one account. This is with the full blessing of financial authorities of the country, he has called for an open investigation into the accounts, which are – unlike his declared on – made out with both his ‘given’ names.

Who are the prisoners now? Are they the affluent whites who live in the expanding ‘township’ of Dainfern or the service providers of the black township of Diepsloot who provide the security guards, gardeners and cooks for this growing development.

MARCH 2005

Fri 4

The decision of the appeal court in Harare to release the 62 men who were convicted in 2004 (qv 18/9) of participating in an attempt to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea, as they are to be have been released from prison in Harare. This will be welcomed by their families.

The two remaining detainees, the pilots of the planes that were searched by the Zimbabwe police in 3/03, will remain in detention.

Tues 8

Despite, or as a consequence of the ‘dormitory town’ nature of Soweto (qv 28/2) this suburb of Johannesburg is becoming the up and coming place; a showcase for the economic boom that is affecting this metropolises.

A recent Standard Bank report indicates that house prices have, on average, risen 35% since the year 2000. At the same time the city council have spent R85m / £77min upgrading the once heart of the apartheid struggle’s roads, transport, water systems and street lighting.

Despite the affluence, even crime is lower than many formerly white only suburbs; large parts of Soweto still remain in poverty. “The areas of Zola and Endemi are rough areas,” says estate agent Alex Molomo, however people realise the area’s potential and are purchasing two roomed homes with a view to building on further living quarters.

Not to be outdone the retail sector is ripe for expansion. Shopping malls in Southgate and Dobsonville are doing a brisk trade, with five more being planned. The need for such an expansion is shown by a report that 80% of residents spend R4.2b disposable income outside the township.

Pretoria metropolitan council, which is dominated by the African National Congress, voted to rename the national capital – except the city centre Tshwane – which means “we are the same”, the South African Press reported.

White settlers named the city after Andries Pretorius, a leader of the Afrikaners’ great trek. – AP –

Sat 19

The city of Leeds is to host an event, which will see ‘finest club maestros’ host an event that is linked to the charity Save the Rhino International. With the charities aid efforts to

stem the loss of this endangered species in Namibia – where numbers have fallen 200% since the 1980's. -

APRIL 2005

A well respected ‘country of origin’ for generic HIV treatment medicines is to introduce legislation that will give some recognition to the pharmaceutical company, often from the United States or Europe, some recognition for its work.

The Indian government is to debate the issue of offering patent protection to the company that worked on the drugs development. The new legislation, if passed, will mean that the generics produced, by Cipla, a large exporter of anti retroviral drugs to South Africa, will be made to pay a levy to the developer. However they will not be able to prevent the manufacture of such drugs.

A spokesman for Treatment Action Concern (qv) fears that the next generation of drugs developed by the west will not become available to the third world because of the costs involved. New drug treatments will, it is estimated, cost US\$4, 800 per year. This opposed to a year’s supply of generics costing as little as US\$200 a year.

The only option open to those groups, TAC or Medicines Sans Frontiers, to fight these increased costs is to lobby in the Indian courts for a low surcharge to be imposed.

Not notwithstanding the past successes for the South African film industry, under director L Ngakane, a present day film has attracted the attention of the international community.

The film Yesterday has been nominated; in the foreign film category for an Oscar. The Zulu language film tells the story of the young women, of the title, and her struggle living with HIV. The feature length film pays homage to those who are suffering the Aids pandemic in South Africa.

Heralded as a breakthrough in the care of premature infants; although such care has been ongoing for the past 30 years or so. Mobray’s Maternity Hospital in Cape Town is preventing the death of many infants that would be expected to die in normal circumstances.

Kangaroo Mother Care involves nothing more than the newborn being tightly swaddled in a blanket over the mother’s abdomen. By this method mother and baby can bond together instantly. Also there is food, mothers milk, available on demand.

With this care, staffed up by the Peninsular Maternal Neonatal Service, who also offer an outreach service in the mothers to be homes are able to dispense with the expensive to run, and train the staff to operate, incubators that would be used in similar circumstances in the well funded and privately run hospitals that are not available to the majority of expectant mothers.

Peri natal deaths, in the hospitals catchment area; 19 : 1000 live births for babies weighing 1000 grams plus. The national average is 30 : 1000.

Fri 8

With the death of Pope John Paul the Second there is much speculation that the next head of the Catholic Church may come from Africa; the first black pope ever.

Of those mentioned; Cardinal F Arinze of Nigeria is well regarded. “ He brings a unique element; representing a nation shared between Muslim and Christian at the time when interfaith relations assume growing urgency. If elected he would be the first black pope elected in modern times.” – **Pretoria News** –

The opinion of another west African Cardinal, from the Ivory Coast, dismissed this as a likely hood - “Psychologically and spiritually, the west isn’t ready to welcome a black pope ... It will take time for people to get used to that. An African pope will be quite a revolution a great challenge for the black pope. For the church and the world’s media.” – **The Sowetan** –

A leading chat show host, in her written newspaper column took issue with the assumption of the world’s readiness for a black Pontiff. “If Europe is not ready, when will it ever be? ... is it a curse to be black. In matters of religion .. it is not the colour of the skin that determines that you are a good leader... Surely what we should be looking at is the person’s dedication to god and the Church. “ – **M Sangqu, Citizen**

Following the general election, over its northern border, the future of Mugabe was of concern” You have won; now step down”... [victory] “will not solve the many problems facing the people of that country. Mugabe supporters will soon find out that their party’s victory ... will not translate into jobs and food for the hungry.

The fact is that Mr Mugabe is himself the problem. It is our hope, that having achieved the landslide at the polls which he predicted that Mr Mugabe will feel secure that he will not face prosecution ... step down in favour of another man who will stand a better chance of rehabilitating the country. – **Editorial, Citizen, The Editor** –

Sat 9

Notwithstanding Phytopharm’s deal with the Sans people of Namibia (qv 16/12) the company plans to raise a further £10m to fund its research into the appetite suppressant qualities of the Hoodia plant.

On offer are 8m shares priced at 125p. This amount, £23m, was urgently needed after Unilever’s Japanese partner Yamanouchi Pharmaceutical withdrew £9m of funding to concentrate on the production of drugs to limit dementia.

Unilever is paying the firm Cognane £6.5m this year for the Hoodia extract. Human trials are expected to begin in 2006.

Mon 11

From the National Party through to the New National Party the apartheid era legislators are no more. Now integrated into the African National Congress, even holding cabinet posts, by a vote of 88 : 2 with three abstentions South Africa has become a country “without an effective opposition” said F W de Klerk.

Analysts say the party has lost its roots “the party weakened as its support base shifted from Afrikaner to Coloured and its purpose and it joined the ANC”. According to T Lodge, a professor of politics from Witwatersrand University “I don’t think it was a great asset to democracy, it wasn’t providing any kind of vigour, even in opposition.”

The leader of the Opposition, Tony Leon of the Democratic Alliance said his party would welcome the some 257, 000 voters; 2004 figures who ‘had been betrayed and were without a political home.

Tues 12

As to the notion of the end of the line for the right wing in South Africa, with the closing down of the New National Party (qv 11/4), the Democratic Alliance may unwittingly take on that mantel.

“And so ends the National Party and the NNP – or does it? “ as it is noted that many of its supporters are joining the Democratic Alliance, causing that party to “lurch to the right. ”The NNP may be dead but what it stood for “is very much alive within the DA” – **P Cull Herald, Port Elizabeth –**

“Good riddance ... close up shop in South Africa. “it was the party that heaped misery on those it regarded inferior – anybody whose skin was not white enough.” [it] “will not be mourned.” – **Cape Times, The Editor –**

Sat 16

As one of the 135m followers of the Catholic church, on the African continent, a worker for the South African Catholic Bishops Conference’s justice and peace department, Zukile Tom aged 35, enhances the views, on the possibility of a black Pope, from a wider perspective (qv 8/4).

With a background of the struggle against apartheid as a standard bearer the next pope “who relates to the issues at ground level, understands the issues of African people.” The people of Africa will “want to talk about the issues like the role of lay people in the church, women in the priesthood and sexuality.”

Notwithstanding the appearance of Nelson Mandela at the G8 summit (qv 4/2) there will be other reminders of the ‘Make Poverty History’ campaign. With immediate effect activists from the development agency Action Aid have commissioned a 16 seater tour bus to journey to the summit venue in Scotland in 6/05.

The vehicle will break its journey 11 times in 9 countries, which, according to K Gagarvin, will drive home the seriousness of the situation in Africa. One of the stopping of points will be Maputo. Whilst in Mozambique's capital a visit will be made to Kuyukana Project in Macaqene district and offer support and assistance to those offering help to those suffering the effects of the HIV virus

The city's population; 2 million, has a 12% infection rate of the virus. In real terms the 240, 000 sufferers are too poor to afford the much needed anti retroviral drugs.

Wed 20

Heeding the call by the authorities in Pretoria, for greater acts of Black Empowerment; a greater involvement in business of the black majority, the insurance company Old Mutual is to offer a stake in its business to its workers.

Opening a 12.75% share give away to its employees companies finance director, J Roberts said "we are taking share ownership to a lot of the people." Although the share giveaway is to all employees, the 17, 500 black workers; from a total of 29, 260 employees will be entitled to extra entitlements.

To finance the deal 5.6% of its London listed business. This will mean a 2.2% reduction of its embedded value and a 3.3% drop in earnings per share. With this deal each employee will receive at the minimum 7,500 shares. This relates to a total of at least 2.7bn shares that go into employee ownership. In addition black clients of OM will receive 1.9bn worth of shares. The community will also benefit, with 600m/rand share. This will be for education or individuals that do business with the company.

There will be help for a selected 'black business partnership; Women Investment Portfolio Holding Company. Four women executives that are dedicated to the cause of empowering women set this up 10 years ago. A second choice, Brimstone, a black management company, that has a former Director General from the office of Nelson Mandela on the board. Old Mutual share price – 128p, a rise of 1.75p. – **GDN page 21, C 6 –**

Thurs 21

In a final act of closure a coroners court in Britain has ruled on fatal bus crash that killed eight in 2004 (qv 2/1). The jury in Hatfield set down a verdict of unlawful killing on the eight.

Confirming that the cause of death was due to a suicide Pelepele Miyawho's continued attempts to take his own life, he has spent the previous day playing 'chicken' with the road traffic, the coroner felt. In the view of E Thomas there should have been more questions to the driver of the mini bus and to a very disturbed Miyawho.

In the Spanish capital, Madrid, concern is growing for the whereabouts of the chief beneficiary of the failed coup in Equatorial Guinea. As the exiled opposition leader, in

the now oil rich west African state, Severo Moto, was to have been installed as the new leader, after the work of S Mann (qv) and his fellow conspirators.

Evidence suggests that Moto has not been seen for days after earlier traveling to Zagreb on business at least twice in the last month. Added to this his mobile phone goes unanswered, its message box is full. There are fears that the exiled politician, jailed for 63 years ‘in absentia’ has been assassinated.

Sat 23

In an effort to educate the people of South Africa of the danger of the HIV infection B H Astourian, a lecturer at Salford University has developed a computer game about contraception. It is hoped that the computer format of Contraception, the Computer Game, developed with the assistance of the software company Sherston Sheshani, will bring home the dangers of the Aids virus to the people.

It is claimed, by the charity Action Aid, that much of the £2bn of profit announced by the Tesco supermarket group, was made on the backs of poor wages paid on the producer farms.

Action Aid highlights the “unacceptable conditions” in Tesco accredited farms in the Western Cape. The charity claimed that women workers were paid less than that countries minimum wage, were forced to work without protective clothing as they sprayed harmful chemicals; organic phosphates on the farms growing produce. There was also evidence that the workers lived in shantytowns without electricity.

In its defence, a spokesman for the supermarket group said, “our suppliers comply with minimum wage legislation and provide free housing, medication and schools for our workers.”

South Africa currently supplies most of deciduous fruit, apples, pear plums and peaches to Europe. An export that is worth £86m a year.

Mon 25

Despite the growing provision, by the pharmaceutical conglomerates, of medicines to fight the HIV crisis in sub Saharan Africa, companies are still able to find ways to exploit the system.

It has come to the notice of the British courts, notably between GlaxoSmithKline, and the medical wholesaler Dowelhurst, that middlemen are buying these drugs cheaply and exporting them out of the country. Their next move is to re label the consignment and sell it back to the NHS at a profit.

The outcome, of this case, and others that are pending, will see large amounts of compensation being paid by GSK to the charities that are helping people with Aids. One

other case has already been settled. An example; Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Products Agency v AA Worldwide Trading was fined £50, 000 in 1/05 for trading medicines without a license.

With one successful visit to the Constitutional Court, in 2003 (qv 15/10), the Nama community, whose lands spread over vast areas of the countries Northern Cape, are returning to the court in Cape Town. The aim of this visit is to legitimise the communities right for an amount of compensation ‘as to the value of the land at the time of dispossession’

Since 1927 the state owned diamond company Alexcor have mined the Orange River for its diamonds. This, The Richvelders, as the people now call themselves, feel this is the base line for the compensation claim to be settled on.

As a sign of the slow progress made in returning land to its rightful owners, a promise made by the incoming government in 1994 is going, president Mbeki extended the deadline till the end of 2008. This date will now allow the authorities in Pretoria the extra three years it will need to address the outstanding 22, 000 claims.

Tues 26

Once, known as a major financier of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and forced out almost 20 years ago, Barclay's Bank is making an effort to return to the country. After several months negotiations its efforts to buy a stake in the Amalgamated Bank of South Africa Bank have stalled.

In essence shareholders in the Absa Bank, which have been offered £2.7bn, want more money to be offered by the London based bank. The outline terms of the offer, from Britain's third largest bank, which the Barclay's and Absa negotiators have said was not enough are, for a 60% stake in the South African bank it would offer R32b / £2.7bn. This would equate to a share value of R79. Also on offer was a final dividend of R1.80. On the back of this offer the Banks share price, in London rose 0.5p to 556.5p.

Cartoon setting the scene; the one time scourge of the apartheid protester, who often chained themselves to buildings, makes a plea for inclusion in the NSA, Placard reads ‘Say Yes to 2.7bn’

Thurs 28

With a renewed vigour S Moto, the exiled opposition leader of Equatorial Guinea, feared assassinated (qv 21/4), has given an interview to the Croatian magazine Globus. According to the jailed; in absentia political leader he fled his home in Madrid after being lured to Zagreb. It is implied that if he had stayed in the Spanish capital he would have been killed ‘by those in cahoots with the authorities there’.

With a difficult time ahead, a three day hearing, by the financial authorities into the take over bid by the Harmony group of Gold Fields South Africa (qv), more revelations of off shore bank accounts held by the groups chief executive B Swanepoel or his colleague, F Dippenaar.

All told, as an addition to the details uncovered (qv 28/2), 18 'new' accounts were opened in Swanepoel's full name; they had his full name of Bernard Zacharias on the paperwork, and were housed with banks as far apart as the Cayman Islands, the Bahamas and Hong Kong. There are also two accounts in London, one in Barclay 's in Walthemstow. The second, held with Lloyds, is on Lombard Street in the City. In addition F Dippenaar has accounts in Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man.

Detailed examination of these accounts show that amounts of E5, 000 have been moved on a monthly basis between various accounts belonging the Swanepoel. Giving explanations for these moves the chief executive once again – as he did on the first occasion of concern – blamed 'dirty tricks' by executives of his rivals.

Despite this setback Harmony Gold has extended its offer for Gold Fields from 18/3 to 20/5. Annalists, Citygroup Smith Barney say that any success for the Harmony group tempered by the fact that the mining company will face losses until the year 2007.

Fri 29

Returning to court, in Phalaborwa, white farmer and one of his two co accused (qv 25/1), were found guilty of the murder of a sacked employee who had only returned to the farm to collected his belongings.

During the trial there was disputed evidence as to whether the victim, N Chisale, died from the beating he received, or death occurred when he was thrown into a fenced in area where lions were free to roam.

In the town of Hoedspruit, the town nearest the Crosley farm the mayor, speaking on behalf of all the residents, gave the opinion that the crime was condemned by both black and white residents as a 'racial crime.'

MAY 2005

Mon 2

Long thought to be extinct, due to providing food for Swapo fighters during the Angolan civil war, the giant sable antelope has been spotted in the wild. Even an extensive search in the year 2000 failed to locate any.

A breakthrough in a renewed search, for what is the countries national symbol; featuring on stamps and coins was made by a leading wildlife scientist P vaz Pinto. Using infra red camera a small herd of the animals has been spotted. Among the group of females, 2 of who were pregnant, there were also two calves.

Tues 3

At the culmination of the tenth year as a Leeds United player; also his ‘testimonial year’ Lucas Radebe (qv) will make his final appearance for the team he joined from the Kaiser Chiefs in Soweto on 8/5. The match, against Rotherham United, and before a home crowd. It will be the South African’s 200th appearance for his adopted club.

Fri 6

According to figures from the Prisoners Abroad, a charity set up to help overseas jailed Britons, South Africa has 15 Britons within its prison system. For comparison; the United States hosts 246 and Trinidad Holds 23. The total number of, those held were held for carrying drugs is 1, 141.

Campaigners for the universal supply of anti retroviral drugs, to fight the Aids virus, have condemned the health ministers remarks as she was speaking at a press conference in Cape Town.

Dr T Msimang, who is a known follower of the presidents unconventional belief that Aids is not a medical condition, and can be caused by the healing properties of garlic and such like, attacked the UN’s Global Aids strategy over the provision of anti retroviral 's.

The minister revealed that 42, 000, out of 700, 000 from developing countries, of South Africans were receiving the medicine. As to the targets, 3m people by the 12/05, set by the UNAIDS and the World Health Organisation Dr Msimang said the authorities in Pretoria “would not be pressurised” by targets.

Mon 9

With the approval of the finance minister, Trevor Manuel, and the tacit support of apparently reluctant Amalgamated Bank of South Africa (qv 24/4) Barclay 's Bank will be allowed to pay £3bn for a 60% stake in the country's largest bank.

Tues 10

As a defiant Barclay 's Bank moves back into the post apartheid financial system (qv 9/5), at a cost of R33bn /£2.9bn, London headquarters feel the organisation has nothing to apologise for over its association with the apartheid regime.

As to the make up of the Amalgamated Bank of South Africa, formed in 1991 through the amalgamation of the Afrikaner bank Vlokskas and three other banking groups, now is the largest service provider to the emerging black middle class business man. As group facilities include 670 branches and 5, 100 cash machines. These are all decked out in the company's red and blue logo.

Another noted tie, for Absa, is one with the Bath Bonke consortium, which holds 10% of the banks shares. Headed by Tony Sexwela (qv) the former government minister and premier of Gauteng province.

As for the benefits for Barclay 's with this return to the country South Africa's largest banking institute is also well represented throughout the continent. In Mozambique, Tanzania and Angola they hold a controlling interest in leading banks. In Namibia and Zimbabwe they only have a minority shareholding.

In London the Barclay 's share value ended the day at £5. 54.

Cartoon minority ethnic group still a financially dominant force in the country

Thurs 12

At the AGM of the life assurance company Old Mutual (qv) the companies financial director played down the long held prospect off increasing its holdings Britain's financial sector.

The gathering of shareholders was told that 'a change of emphasis' had occurred because business in South Africa had improved. However the company still had ambitions of moving into the British market.

As of this time the British end of the company Old Mutual Asset Management and Selestia had risen and net cash inflow of £296m exceeded the inflow for the whole of 2004.

Sat 14

The ongoing debate, as to whether the HIV virus can be cured, organically rather than medically, is once again creeping to the forefront of debate in South Africa. In recent days an employee of the ngo Treatment Action Concern; who had been HIV positive for 10 years a faced the dilemma of which path to take. Unfortunately the women opted for a diet of garlic and lemon recommended by the health minister (qv 6/5) and ultimately president Mbeki.

This controversial ‘cure’ for the 42, 000 public service workers, acknowledged by Dr Msimang to have Aids, is being promulgated by the German born; American based Dr M Rath through media adverts in the New York Times and the International Herald Tribune. These adverts, which appear as though they are the newspapers editorial content, criticise the over reliance on anti retroviral drugs. Western drug companies, who are only interested in their profit margin, are forcing these he claims on sufferers. The only way forward is to follow his treatments, using vitamins; at a cost of £16 as the only way forward.

Joining in condemnation of this theory is an influential cartel of Harvard University scientists and the members of the South African Medical Association. With so much at stake the premier organisation that has done so much to ensure those suffering from Aids get treatment has gone to court. There has also been attempts by the USA’s Food and Drugs Administration to limit the doctors advertising opportunities, critical analysis of his methods, by a Swiss group of scientists or the pressure from Britain’s premier medical journal; the BMJ has halted the advancement of his theory.

Recently the high court?, in Cape Town, listened to a plea from Treatment Action Concern, asking for an order to prevent such allegations being made. In its defence the Rath Foundation’s international co – coordinator, R Langer, said there purpose was not to make money, even though there are clinics in Cape Town and adjacent Khayelitsha, but inform sufferers that there was an alternative method of treatment that did not poison the bodies cell system

Far from relenting, in its pursuit of a foothold in the financial market in Britain, Old Mutual (qv 12/5) has plans to purchase the Swedish insurance company Skandia. Their offer price, £3. 3bn, resulted in the South African’s share price, quoted in London, fall 5%.

As well as individual shareholder opposition, a possible revolt is an option; the company financial institutes are far from happy. Norwich Union, with a 3% in Old Mutual, through Morley’s its fund management wing and 2% of Juniper Asset Management ’s stock both expressed surprise at this latest move.

Back on home territory, Stockholm, this, one of Sweden’s largest financial bodies, saw its share price rise 20%. This valued the company at £3. 2bn.

Mon 17

Zimbabwe has released 62 South African alleged mercenaries implicated in last years failed coup in Equatorial Guinea, after 14 months in prison for breaking immigration laws. Three others remain in jail in Zimbabwe, including Simon Mann, the British alleged mastermind of the plot.

Tues 18

According to a league table, which ranks women's performance over a number of gender issues, released by the Geneva based World Economic Forum, South Africa came 36th out of a total of 58 countries canvassed.

In comparison, using the same indicators of economic status, political empowerment health and education Britain came 7th and the United States of America was in 17th position. Analysts place Britain in such a high position due to the influence of the former prime minister M Thatcher.

With only three days to go, before the take over bid by Harmony Group for the mining company for Consolidated Gold Fields (qv), a promised investigation (qv 28/4) conducted by the Scorpion team.

They are now looking into 74 overseas accounts allegedly held by Zacharias Berndus Swanepoel; the full 'given' name of the chief executive of Harmony. Mr Swanepoel welcomed the investigations by the Scorpion team; who may look into another alleged 16 accounts. The full value of the cash involved is upward of \$22m spread over the accounts in \$5m amounts.

As to the tonnage of gold produced in South Africa the Harmony group stands in 6th position while Gold Fields occupies the 4th spot.

Sat 21

At the conclusion of the financial affairs of the Harmony Group and its bid for Consolidated Gold Fields (qv 18/5) attempted take over was halted after the 3 day inquiry. The end came just hours before a second bid extension, of 60 days, expired.

According to some the \$50m, £3bn, hostile take over bid was doomed from 12/04 when the second extension was granted. In fact, according to trade unionists, the consequences had come even before the announcement from the court. Company employees, 11,780/45% of Harmony's work force in the Free State will lose their jobs.

The only firm to benefit will be one of Gold Field's largest shareholders. The Russian mining company Norski Nickel, with 20% of Gold Field's share, which backed Harmony in its bid, could push for seats in the boardroom. Once there it may like to help in restarting the stalled merger with the Canadian Iamgold mining company.

Of those blacks whom responded 18% said that they did not think that Mugabe was doing a good job as president of Zimbabwe.

Sun 22

An initiative, between British science and the knowledge of the sagoma's of South Africa, is to be the new front line in the fight for a workable treatment for Aids related illnesses and other serious skin infections.

For many generations 'traditional healers' have offered these treatments for respiratory illnesses as well as skin complaints that are also common in those affected by the HIV virus.

Botanists, from Kew Gardens, in London, will work with the healers and draw on their knowledge of the plant extracts they use. These extracts are mainly drawn from the plants specific to the locality; Ibhucu; burn plant jelly, a native species, succulent and used as an antiseptic], Ulhonyane; wild African wormwood, multi stemmed perennial used as an anti bacterial agent and Ubuvimba; winter cherry, used as a tonic and sedative. One plant, that will be studied and is common to both lands is Icukudwane; pennywort, used to treat wounds, leprosy hypertension and syphilis.

The project, to be run by GardensAfrica with the aid if a £250, 000 grant from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs over a number of years as part of its £10.5m long term project over a whole range of environmental schemes. This money will help to set up a research centre into the benefits of closer links between medical science and botanical science, along with an understanding of the theory of the sagoma.

Wed 25

Work done by the Medical Research Council, University of Cape Town and the Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation on the deaths of women, by the actions of an intimate partner, femicide, are the worst ever recorded anywhere in the world.

Every six hours a women dies; 8.8% per 100, 000 female population over 14 years of age. It is estimated, using figures from 1999, that 1, 349 death occurred in the year that there had been an independent South Africa for 5 years.

Although the figures used are 5 years old, they were gathered from data held by mortuaries and police files, it is felt that they are not out of date. The perpetrators were most likely to be blue collar, farm or security workers.

Fri 27

Not notwithstanding a Department of Health ban on the use of nurses from South Africa, and other countries, a report in the medical journal the Lancet shows that these principals are still being breached.

Compiled by a medic from Tooting hospital in South London, the study shows that the guidelines, introduced in 8/04, are being ignored. As of this time 31% of practicing doctors and 13% of nurses were born outside the UK.

Using the 2003 figures work permits were approved for 5, 880 personnel from South Africa and 2, 825 from Zimbabwe.

The decision by the Pretoria city council (qv 8/3) has been ratified by the National Geographical Names Council. The agreement, to Africanise the name of the countries capital city, was granted after a four hour debate. The culture and art's minister, Pallo Jordan is expected to give his approval in the near future.

On the streets, of the soon to be known Tshwane, there was a mixed reaction. From a 500 strong protest march through the streets, to the spoken word. One who was asked for an opinion indicated that "they can name the city what they like. I guess that is what majority rule is all about."

Sat 28

The much heralded Mail and Guardian, once the scourge of the apartheid regime, has itself fallen foul of the authorities in Pretoria. On 26/5 police surrounded the newspapers offices to prevent publication of an 'Oilgate' investigation, a subject that the courts had ruled needed no further exposure.

In its previous expose the paper had detailed how the state owned oil company; Petro SA had indirectly given R11m /£1m to the ANC in the run up to the 2004 parliamentary elections. Through the papers investigation it had shown that the oil company had paid the money to a close associate of the ANC; Imvumein 12/03.

In the papers most recent edition the courts ruling elicited the headline 'Gagged' in response. Other respondents such as the Media Institute for South Africa expressed "deep concern that this judgment may open the way for others seeking to prevent newspapers from publishing articles about their questionable or irregular conduct."

In a defensive move the ANC 's spokesman, S Ngoyama, said that he was not aware of any concerns about the origin of the Imvumein donation. It was also the case, in South Africa, that donations to political parties did not have to be disclosed.

JUNE 2005

Wed 1

A Pretoria court yesterday ordered Nelson Mandela's ex lawyer, Ismail Ayob and art publisher Ross Calder to stop selling artworks said to bear his signature.

As an idea, to raise charity funds for the Mandela Children 's Fund, the former president took up his painting brushes in 2002 (qv 31/8). The subsequent paintings, became signed prints, by the former political prisoner, were; most notably the view from his cell window in Robben Island.

Over time these 'limited edition' prints sold out. This court action has stopped the two running of extra copies and forging the Mandela signature and then selling them as originals for their own benefit.

Fri 3

With his financial advisory, Schabir Shaik, convicted of fraud the position of the deputy president, Jacob Zuma, as the rightful successor to Mbeki is at risk. There are even calls for South Africa's No 2 to face prosecution himself.

After an eight month trial, following an investigation begun in 2003 (qv 26/7), which initially cleared Zuma, Judge H Squires concluded that the evidence that there was a "corrupt relationship" between the two men.

In essence it was shown that Shaik persuaded a French arms company, Thint Holdings; formerly Thompson CFS to pay the deputy president R50, 000/ £45, 000a year. In return Zuma would lobby for a defence contract, worth R30bn /£2.7bn to be awarded to the company. In addition the convicted financial expert was shown to have paid Zuma R1. 2m //£109, 000 in bribes without the knowledge of company shareholders.

Following the verdict, which could see Shaik, jailed for 15 years, there were calls for the deputy president to resign. In parliament a 'no confidence' motion was tabled by the Democratic Alliance opposition party.

Sat 4

With the ending of the trial of Schabir Shaik (qv 3/5) the is the inherent call for censure of the deputy president J Zuma. There in lies a problem. As the former chief intelligence officer of the African National Congress there is a danger that 'hidden truths' will be told.

As he was “ a charismatic and popular leader what could he do with this information.” .. “he new all his colleagues business dealings.” – **J Dlamina Business Day** –

On the positive side, a sympathetic view, “ Fallout from this judgment aside, he was most probably set to be the next president.” – **Mercury** –

As to his continuation in office it was thought that “ if President Mbeki failed to act “in a decisive manner that demonstrates clearly that no one is above the law, he will have failed this country and its people.” – **Herald** –

Tues 7

News item, the supermarket group Waitrose, who receive much of its citrus fruit from South Africa, has set up a charitable fund. This will ensure, so says a company spokesman that the farm workers will share, in a significant way, just as the company will.

The financial investment of about £270 000 pounds which will be spread among the farm workers and also their families, will ensure that all are healthy, that the children are well educated.

Critics of the scheme like the Fair Trade Organisation, itself working on behalf of employees of third world countries, ask why the British supermarket cannot work within this body. They are after all both working towards the same aims. – **Farming Today, R4 05. 45 – 6 am** * as remembered by the author –

Wed 8

A report, from the Nursery and Midwifery Council, for nursing import figures for 2004/5 show that from South Africa only 993 nursed came to this country. The fall, from the previous years 1, 689, gives an indication that the ability to work in the NHS is not now the first choice for those wishing to gain experience away from home country.

Not only are South African nurse’s shunning working in Britain, the numbers from the Philippines are also on the wane. In the 12 months to 3/05 2, 521 joined NMC ’s register. In the previous year 4, 338 nurses came from the Far East state.

South Africa’s second Aids conference, the venue for Mbeki’s musings, in the year 2000, that the HIV virus was caused by poor sanitation et al, - between the minister of health and a representative of the pressure group Treatment Action Concern.

The clash came as Dr Msimang called into question the need to hold such a meeting. The minister to indicate that the Aids crisis was no different from any other health problem that faced the country. Quoting figures from her own government M Heywood, from the pressure group, of 499, 000 people who had died of Aids related diseases in 2002. The indication was that the whole of South Africa’s health service was in crisis.

In a second report, recently released, the number of people receiving the life saving anti retroviral drugs was 42, 000. This figure was not confirmed, or denied by the minister.

Thurs 9

Schabir Shaik, a former financial adviser to South Africa's deputy president Jacob Zuma, was sentenced to 15 years for fraud and corruption, imperiling Mr Zuma's presidential prospects. – AP –

Not notwithstanding the troubles of the ANC's J Zuma (qv 3/6) the majority government party must deal with an ongoing investigation by the National Prosecution Service attached to the police department (qv 24/1).

As a result of their 'Travelgate Inquiry's 21 members of the party, most of them members of parliament, appeared in a Cape Town court on fraud charges. Collectively they are accused of spending £1. 6m worth in official vouchers for air travel between Pretoria and Cape Town to pay for holidays, meals and car rentals.

During the proceedings those before the court were not required to enter a plea. Their trial will begin in 7/06. At an earlier hearing five other party members, all MP's pleaded guilty to these same charges. They received suspended sentences and fines.

Sat 11

As a consequence of pre summit dealings it looks likely that Mozambique, and 17 other nations will have their debts to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund 'written off.' The total sum involved is believed to be \$15bn over a period of 10 years. The ability to write off these huge debts is due to the sale, in the late 1990's of gold reserves – worth several billion dollars - held by the IMF.

The Queen, Elizabeth the Second, on behalf of her government has awarded a Companion of the British Empire Award to the South Africa Basis D' Oliveria. It will be remembered that this England cricket team member was refused entry into South Africa in 1962? This event sparked the beginning of the international moves to boycott everything South African.

The people of the Falkland Islands, once the scene of conflict between Britain and Argentina, has come up with a way of ridding the developing world,- of which Angola is a prime example, of the ever destructive landmine.

As agreed, with the charity Landmine Action, to defer the removal of an untold number of these deadly ordinances in favour of spending the money in Africa. The reasoning goes that on these islands, in the South Atlantic, the minefields are well defined only a real threat to sheep. However in Angola which relies heavily on its farming population for an income such mines cause devastation.

Existing protocols; the Ottawa Agreement the international community had agreed to remove all landmines by 2009. This new arrangement, between Britain and its Southern Atlantic dependency would see an extension till 2019.

For the year 2003 deaths caused by exploding mines were 225. In the Falkland Island 's there were no deaths reported.

The “greatest post apartheid political crisis” the outcome of which “will determine what kind of country future generations inhabit.” – **Mail and Guardian** –

As to the future of the deputy president Jacob Zuma it was “in the interest of South Africa” that the president remove him from office or legal proceedings be brought against the deputy president. “in order to clarify once and for all the extent, or otherwise, of his involvement in any illegal act.” – **Daily News** –

To the question could Zuma “still be leader of government business in the national assembly ... or be the next South African president? The answer must be no.” – **Cape Argus** –

A presidential dilemma – “While he holds all the cards when it comes to deciding Mr Zuma’s future in government, he can do little against his deputy inside the African National Congress [ANC] ” half of whose members are “adamant supporters of the deputy president. The situation was further complicated because of the split in the ANC across South African society.” – **Vukani Mde, Business Day** –

As if the jailing of S Shaik (qv) was not enough to “swiftly terminate” a political career “there could be a perception that the ANC is not really concerned about corrupt self enrichment.” – **Ferdi Greyling, Beeld** –

Forget the personal or party aspects what has this case said about democracy? “While we have a noble constitution, it will become just another piece of paper if its ideals are not upheld. How the government will respond will be vital sign of our democracy.” – **Cape Times, The Editor** –

Sun 12

As one of the 4, 000 children questioned,- for the Grow Up Free from Poverty report which is to be launched in London on 16/6, nine year old Cesar Mozambican resident would ask the G8 leaders to alter their approach to making life easier for the third world.

The report, the result of research by 21 charities and NGO 's to ditch the ‘sector by sector’ approach to the giving of aid. Rather they should deal in practicalities. As Cesar says “Most of the women here die on the way to hospital. This happens because there are no vehicles and it is not easy to take a pregnant woman to hospital on a bike.” In essence the child pleads for help that will make his life, and that of others, better.

Returned from an overseas trip, to Chile, the future of Jacob Zuma (qv), who still was appointed the Mbeki stand in, the president faces an imminent crisis. Whatever his decision, to sack his deputy, after a refusal to resign, or still maintain that the country is under good governance before the G8 leaders there are problems ahead.

Inside the country, as has been seen (qv 11/6), there are those that support and those that ‘want the scalp’ of the deputy president. Supporting the current situation, and playing a major role in the current administration, are the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

A tougher stance is taken by the media; “Few people would choose to be Deputy President Zuma right now. But fewer still would want to be in the position of President Mbeki.” – **V Mde, Business Day** –

As to the conviction, and therefore the implication of Zuma, criticism of the judge in the case. Judge Hillary White, who was a player in Ian Smith’s ill fated UDI excursion was “an old white apartheid judge” recruited in a “shady scheme” to block Mr Zuma’s ascent to the presidency. – **ANC Youth League** –

A visit from the deputy president, a “courtesy call”, to the veteran Nelson Mandela was viewed as “one of the worst calls of his long political life.” Speculation was that Mr Mandela was seeking to preserve ANC unity above all. – **Business Day** –

Wed 15

Speaking to assembled members of the South African parliament president Mbeki spoke for the first time on the unfolded crisis of the linkage, between his deputy and the convicted fraudster S Shaik and the resulting press coverage (qv 12/6).

“I have come to the conclusion that the circumstances dictate that in the interest of the honourable deputy president, the government, our young democratic system, it would be best to release the honourable Jacob Zuma from his responsibilities as deputy president of the republic and member of the cabinet.”

In response the leader of the opposition, Tony Leons of the Democratic Alliance said: “We have shown the world that South Africa is not among those nations who allow corruption to allow corruption to unravel the fabric of their country’s soul.”

The still strongly supported MP – Nelson Mandela noted that he “was deeply saddened” for Mr Zuma but agreed with Mr Mbeki’s decision; will retain his role as the African National Congress ’s deputy president. Some of his supporters would welcome the opportunity for the ANC veteran to appear in court to answer the allegations made by one who is seen as “an old white apartheid judge (qv 12/6).

As the law will not allow a third term as president for Mbeki – he will go in 2009 – it is thought that the current defence minister, M Lekota will ascend to the number two in the country

Thurs 16

“Watching President Thabo Mbeki deliver the axe to Jacob Zuma’s political neck was agonising. Mr Mbeki didn’t want to fire ...because of the way he had been implicated in the fraud and corruption conviction of his financial adviser”.

In effect the deputy president forced the hand of his president, who was ready to allow Mr Zuma to be seen to have resigned. It was only his insistence that made Mbeki use the words he did.

“So all the weight of the world was on Mr Mbeki’s shoulders as he delivered the fatal blow. It must have been the worst moment, easily, of his political life. For that reason alone South Africans must be grateful for what Mr Mbeki did.

When it can sometimes seem as if South Africa is becoming mired in corruption, its leader acted against the largest possible target, If that didn’t take courage then the word has lost its meaning.” – **Editorial, 15/6, Business Day** –

“.... Our fledgling democracy and the countries international standing has been buttressed by Mr Mbeki’s tough and brave stance in the face of stern opposition within the ruling party and the opposition.” **extract, Editorial, 15/6, Cape Argus** –

“It was the kind of day that will serve as a moral beacon for generations to come; when this young democracy stood up to be counted and did the right thing. The innocence of the struggle is no more[The] “announcement gives strength to the belief that we are an amazing people, that we can do extraordinary things – if we have the fortitude and courage.” – **extract, Editorial, 15/6, Daily Dispatch Eastern Cape, The Editor** -

Sat 18

It has been reported, on the Channel 5 News broadcast at 21. 10, those members of the British wealthy are able to hunt lion. For a fee of £12, 000 in areas of the north west province that are made available for this purpose

Opponents of the hunt point out that the numbers of lions that are living in the wild have fallen dramatically; from 20, 000 to under 2, 000 over a number of years.

Tues 21

Still assured of strong support in the country, a party official had to be escorted to safety during an ANC Youth Day Rally in KwaZulu Natal, the recently sacked Jacob Zuma is to face a charge of corruption.

According to a spokesman for the National Prosecution Authority, the Scorpions, said that they had “decided to bring criminal charges. On the basis of evidence available we think we have a case that can be successfully prosecuted. Mr Zuma must be ready to appear in court some time this week.”

With his ‘day in court’ the sacked minister could; if found not guilty return to the political scene and position himself once again in a position to become the leader of a nation that has shown to the world that it has every intention on exposing and penalising those in public and private office who are corrupt.

Highlighting Angel S Swartbooi in Khayeliysha DOB 2.6. 05 at Mapongwa clinic at 8.45pm to N Swartbooi age 18 years and B Ntsimango aged 25. Birth weight 3kg.

The newborn, whose life will greatly be affected by the decisions made at the Gleneagles meeting of the G8 leaders, comes into a 3 room breeze block home in which 9 people live. Elder sister aged 22, no schooling since Standard 8 as fees for senior school at R200 or £16. 30 were over budget. Junior school, to Standard 8 costs R50.

A second sister to Angel’s mother contributes R200, from her pay at a local chain store, to help with the household finances. Other income – Pensions of R520 and R720/ month from mum and day.

As to the mother herself, still studying at Qkwamfundo Senior Secondary school within the township, she has ambitions to be a travel guide. As to the father, an income of R350/pw working in a steak house on 6 day working week of 10 hours per day.

Fact file: < 5’s mortality rate/ 1000 births 52 Population on under \$2/day 23. 8% Debt per capita \$624. Life expectancy 47.7 years. Children in education M/F 77%/76%.

Thurs 23

The country’s new vice president, and hence odds on to be the next South African president, is to be a far cry from the expected choice (qv 15/6). Not only will the appointment disappoint supporters of the sacked Jacob Zuma, it will be said that there was a conspiracy, all the way back to 2003, to have him removed. The new appointee, Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, is the wife of a former national prosecutor.

First elected to parliament in 1994, the now 49 year old minister for mineral and energy affairs minister started her working life as a school teacher. Then she went to work for Young Women’s Christian Association at its headquarters in Geneva. Returning home, before the fall of apartheid, she worked with a group encouraging economic self reliance among a group squatter women in Cape Town.

As a minister there was praise from her colleagues for the way she turned what was once a mainly ‘whites only’ reserved employer into one where there are equal opportunities for all in the business community.

JULY 2005

Fri 1

A genuine mix up, or a misunderstanding, has led an Angolan national being deported back to the land of his birth. With an appointment with the medics of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture pending J P Cassongo was flown out of Heathrow Airport.

Details; captured in 2000 by Unita rebels, beaten and tortured during his six months detention. Freed, but treated as a rebel himself, after the camp was overrun by government troops he fled to Namibia in 2001. As relatives were able to afford an air ticket he arrived in London in the same year.

Sat 2

Mozambique, a country well used to receiving Western aid, has had \$19. 4bn of aid from 1984 – 2003. In per capita terms this equates to, in 1985 to \$121/ per head, rising to \$254 per head in 2003.

Mon 4

As the world contemplates the coming G8 summit stark statistics from Lesotho, on the prevalence of the HIV virus. As a known fact ‘every 3 seconds a child dies in Africa’; the Make History Poverty campaign slogan, this equates to 100 children in this land locked kingdom every day.

To be more localised; in a village of 1000 residents 11 HIV positive victims have died in the last seven days.

Wed 6

A Business in Africa conference, taking place in London, has been told that the continents leaders feel that they be left to run the African economy as they so desired. They should not be dictated how to do so by leaders in the west.

However, according to the South African finance minister, Trevor Manuel, there is one service that these leaders could perform. That is ending the trade distorting subsidies that are available to the American cotton grower or the French cattle farmer. Another bone of contention is the west 's 'need' to continue a policy of poaching of health workers from the continent.

At the same time in Libya, on the last day of 53 strong African Union conference, leaders there passed a motion with similar sentiments. After first expressing thanks to the G8

leaders for their efforts on aid and debt relief there was sting in the tail with a call for “to establish a fair and equitable trading system and to facilitate Africa’s access to fair markets through the elimination of tariff and non tariff barriers “

All girl rock band Blood Sundae are to travel to South Africa, where with the assistance of one of the countries top music producers, will record both an album and a promotional video for their latest efforts Tears of Blue Grass. Whilst in the country they will also perform at a number of top venues.

The Leeds based five piece ‘melodic Goth’ act were given this opportunity after coming out top in a competition run by the Dark Angel scheme. This gives unsigned bands, that perform in this manor, help start out in this competitive business.

Thurs 7

As the G8 leaders gathered outside Edinburgh, so protestors gathered to listen to rock music in Scotland’s capital. With the likes of The Proclaimers and Annie Lennox on stage, there was a video message from Nelson Mandela.

In his heartfelt message the former president said, “Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. You can be that generation. You have that opportunity. Lets work to make poverty history this year. The we can stand with our heads held high.”

A joint study, from the United Nations, World Health Organisation, UNICEF and the United Nations Family Planning Association, using data from 2000, shows that in South Africa the maternal mortality rate per 1000, 000 live births is 230.

In comparison in other African countries it is thus; DRC 990. Sierra Leone 2, 000. Of the western nations Sweden loses 2 mothers. Their counterparts in France, the UK and USA loose 17, 13 and 17 respectively.

Fri 8

Swaziland’s sugar farmers, who produce 24% of the kingdoms GDP, will have a harder time in the future if a long standing agreement with the European Union is altered. For the past 30 years a fixed quantity was sold on European markets at three times the price of sugar on the world market.

The change in the pricing system here and in another 17 countries, mainly from the Caribbean and Pacific, will be instigated in two years after lobbying of the World Trade Organisation, by Australia, Brazil and Thailand.

The price fall, of 39%, will have a devastating effect on the livelihoods of the subsistence farmers who work their small acreages in the kingdoms northwest around Tambankulu. In this area, over a number of years, cooperatives have emerged that initially financed the farmers need for irrigation loans or other start up costs.

On a national scale the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation, who control two thirds of the nations production, will weather the storm. Those that will suffer are the companies 3, 500 employees who work the company's 20, 000 hectares of sugar cane fields and the people employed in the two RSSC sugar refining mills, along with their 40, 000 dependents.

The company provides two primary schools, four clinics, an orphan feeding scheme along with a 200 strong security force. With such dire poverty, and its accompanying health problems (qv) there is little chance of the authorities being able to bail out those that will suffer most.

Sat 9

Drought stricken Botswana may have to ration water and purify sewage, with the capital's main dam at just 20% of its normal capacity, officials say. – **Reuters** –

Tues 12

As the former South African president launched an initiative at the Johannesburg headquarters of the Nelson Mandela Children 's Foundation, calling on the youth of the country to use a condom when having sex, the department of health issued new figures of the HIV infection rates in the country.

Taking 5/05 as a base line; the infection had affected the lives of between 6.29m and 6.57m people. This was way above the 4.5m that had been officially recognised. These new figures were taken from a 2004 count of women attending antenatal clinics. Blood tests showed that 29.5% were HIV positive. In 2003 27.9% of such attendees were in a similar condition. In KwaZulu Natal the rate was 40%, the highest rate in the country.

Thurs 14

America actor Wesley Snipes was ordered to leave South Africa for using a fraudulent South African passport, the government said. He said the star left the country earlier this month.

HIV/Aids prevalence rate for pregnant women aged 15 to 24 (2002 data), attending antenatal clinics in capital city. [Except UK which is based on all pregnant women in London (2002 data)]. Botswana 32.9%. Lesotho 27.8% Mozambique 14.7%. South Africa 31.6%. Swaziland 39%. United Kingdom 0.45%.

The data used came from the United Nations and the Health Protection Agency.

Fri 15

With Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvina* members of the South African Council of Churches sent an investigation team north to investigate. Council president wrote * authors note see Zimbabwe Diary 25.5. 2005

"This deliberate destruction of the informal economy, which is meant to cater for the economically vulnerable groups, is unparalleled in modern – day Africa." **R Botman Johannesburg Star**

"Congratulations to the 11 South African church leaders who visited Zimbabwe. Once again it has been left to A's civil society groups to show what our government tries to ignore. Our priests have shamed our politicians." – **Editorial The Citizen** –

Not content with the written word, the other of exposing hypocrisy used by the written media – the cartoonist - has had his say. Opposite the above was this; several well known bishops saying" It's Hell in Zim, while a pipe smoking "see no evil" Thabo Mbeki is seen covering his eyes and plugging his ears.

In the following days editor;n Phumzile M Ngkuka (qv 23/6) hands a report, of her visit up north, to her president who has maintained the same position as 24 hours ago.

Previously; TV talk show host, and columnist, writes "I was one of those people who said South Africa's role in Zimbabwe cannot be that of big, ugly brother. I said our president's stance of quiet diplomacy was the way to go."

Now however "Unfortunately I was wrong. The quiet diplomacy has borne no fruit. Instead Robert Mugabe has gone from bad to worse." **Ms Mahlowana – Sangqu, The Citizen** –

Another event, worthy of recall, was Nelson Mandela at 87, as host to a number of lectures from the internationally academic had the former president listen to US speaker denounce Mugabe as "a gangster"

As to South Africa's democracy; "a magnificent experiment" but without eternal vigilance 'we will lose it'. On the black bourgeoisie 'who "strutted around like peacocks" and who thought apartheid was simply enable them to get rich" he was critical. On Nelson Mandela himself; "knows very well that the struggle goes on and on." – **Pretoria News** –

Charities, favoured by Nelson Mandela, will benefit from a court ruling that a coin firm that was allegedly selling gold coins depicting the former president illegally can now do so in a legitimate way. The agreement covers a six month period.

Not wishing to waste an opportunity, in the same edition that the news story appeared, an advertisement for the sellers also was present – **Business Day, The Editor** –

There was little credence given, by the British intelligence services, to the known fact that one of the London suicide bombers had a mother in law was born and still had strong

ties to the country. According to a front page article “Bobbie don’t see SA link” [despite] there being “a strong South African link to the terrorist bombing.” This report quoted London’s Metropolitan police as saying the bombers connection to South Africa was “tenuous at best.” – **Citizen The Editor** –

Sat 15

President Mbeki has offered government support for a South African church led effort to get relief to hundreds of thousands displaced in Zimbabwe. Mr Mbeki made the commitment during a meeting with members of the South African Council of Churches who visited Zimbabwe this week, according to Njogonkula Ndungane Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town.

The president has drawn international criticism for failing to take a tough stance against abuses in Zimbabwe, preferring a policy of “quiet diplomacy.” – **AP** –

Tues 19

With the economy, of its northern neighbour, on the verge of breakdown, the Zanu – PF government in Harare have begun talks with its ANC dominated counterpart in Pretoria for financial assistance. Talks between the two governments, which included financial ministers from both sides.

With ‘cap in hand’ Harare would want \$1bn/ £570m as the economic crisis deepens in the country. Even to feed the nation, with its staple diet of maize would require \$360m; this amount would only ensure enough grain till mid 2006.

As the South African president is mindful of funding, of only \$300m to \$500m, this would not be in the form of a direct loan. Rather it would be in the form of grants to South African companies, who would then supply the grain, petrol and electricity that is so wanted.

However there would be conditions applied before any deal is agreed. There would need to be a dialogue between the political parties to commence. Another; an end to Operation Marumbatsvini, the wholesale destruction of the homes of shanty town dwellers that have grown up around Harare and other major cities.

* authors note; for additional insight into the continuing crisis see Zimbabwe Diary 19. 8. 2005 –

Wed 20

“Nelson Mandela celebrates his 87th birthday with his wife Graca Machel at the beginning annual Mandela lecture in Johannesburg.”

Mon 25

The plea, made by president Mugabe (qv 19/7), is likely to receive a favourable reply from his counterpart in Pretoria. Speaking has confirmed that there will be full payment of Zimbabwe's outstanding debt; \$300m/ £172m to the International Monetary Fund.

Their will also additional funding available because "we don't want Zimbabwe collapsing next door. South Africa would inherit all the consequences of Zimbabwe collapsing."

Tues 26

South Africa is to scrap its 10, 000 strong minibus taxis, ridding the country of the death traps over five years and compensating the owners.

The deregulated taxi industry, a hang over of apartheid era under investment in public transport, has a poor safety record. – **Reuters** –

As the worlds demand for diamonds increase the mining conglomerate De Beers, which has revealed that only five, of its seven mines in the country are profitable, has promised to increase production to meet this demand. The fall in profits is blamed on the growing strength of the Rand against the US dollar.

Giving out its six monthly sales figures, from the London based Diamond Trading Company, showed a 7% rise to \$3.2bn/ £1.8bn. In the same period for 2004 sales were just \$3bn. By the end of this year expects a growth of 6%, based on a Rand valuation.

The prices of the company's diamond rose in 2004, by 14%, and in a two stage rise by 6% so far this year. It is possible there may be another move, in 11/05, but this is by no means certain. Profits, before tax, \$576m [\$585m in '04] a fall of 1.5%. Production rose 23% to 23.7m carats. Hopes of profits for a full year are 7% – 8%. Stockpiles were put at \$400m higher than in 2004.

Thurs 28

With presidential support, the South African Council of Churches (qv 15/7) are to take positive steps to help those affected by Operation Murambatsvini north of the border in Zimbabwe.

'Operation Hope for Zimbabwe,' which will assist church groups distribute medicine and blankets and other essentials to relieve the humanitarian suffering of those affected.

"The United Nations report on Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvini is damning describing the governments forced removals of urban slums as unplanned and over zealous and resulting in "chaos and untold suffering ... a policy that should be ceased immediately." – **Editorial Daily Dispatch The Editor** -

Fri 29

After a considerable amount of work, as the fossil has been known about for twenty five year's, the full glory of 'baby' Massospondylus has been uncovered. The embryo, which was created 25 million years ago has lived undiscovered in the baked clay for all this time.

A report, of the uncovering of the secrets of the dinosaur was detailed in Science magazine. The report, by R Reisz, of the University of Toronto in Mississauga, said the embryo had four legs a short tail, and a huge head. A fully grown Massospondylus would reach five meters nose to tail.

Putting these new revelations in context, the baby is the earliest embryo known as most already discovered specimens come from the Cretaceous period of pre history; sixty five million years ago.

Sat 30

Once again representative of the England football talent has failed to impress. This time, rather than the professional game, failure occurred in the Homeless World Cup. Already light on overseas competitors; squad members from five African nations were refused entry visas as they arrived. The reason given was that they did not have sufficient funds to support themselves during their time here.

As to English squad, in the qualifying rounds, Norway was beaten 0:1. Ukraine 3:0. And South Africa 0:6. However in the qualifying rounds they were defeated by the Ukraine 4:3 and Italy 4:0.

Never downhearted the team will now compete for the Big Issue Scotland Trophy. In this less than prestigious piece of silverware the team needs to overcome four other teams. These include Namibia.

AUGUST 2005

Wed 3

As the possibility of resumed talks between Zimbabwe's political parties comes closer president Mbeki has offered an explanation* for the current economic crisis across his northern border. * authors note see Zimbabwe Diary 8. 2. 05

Recent comments that this overspend was due to excessive spending; in the provision of health care, education and clean water for his people was dismissed by those inside the country. The editor of the Zimbabwe Independent and Standard newspapers, David Wetherell, said "If this is Mbeki 's diagnosis of the problem it doesn't hold out much hope that he is going to be able to help Zimbabweans find the right solution."

Thurs 4

Not notwithstanding the shown indifference shown, by members British intelligence to the possible link between the terrorist outrages in London (qv 15/7), are now more willing to do so. A recent arrest in Zambia, and soon to be extradited H R Aswat, had known links with extremists.

The security services in South Africa have shown that the suspect; who is also wanted in the USA as a member of the al Qaida network inside the country, has been accused of trying to set up training camps inside South Africa.

Mr Aswat's movements, as part of the growing terrorist threat, have been centered in Guateng province, which includes the cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria. There was also concerns about his movements in Cape Town.

Fri 5

Anglo American yesterday reported a 43% jump in first half earnings to \$1. 8bn/ £1bn. These encouraging figures came despite a poor performance from some of the mining groups divisions.

The surge in company profits was, say the experts, because of increase in the Chinese market. But the performance of both its industrial, mineral and paper and packaging divisions disappointed the City.

Wed 10

With the benefit of the 2002 Freedom of Information Act the link between the Daily Mail, the then Conservative government and the South African athlete Zola Budd has come to light.

From the beginning of the newspaper campaign to have the government allow the marathon runner a British passport there was disquiet between government ministers, Geoffrey Howe at the foreign office and Leon Brittan his opposite number in the home office. The then foreign secretary thought it would be "unseemly" to grant British citizenship to an athlete from apartheid South Africa whose only benefit to this country would be, possibly, an Olympic gold medal.

This 'unseemly haste' thought by the foreign secretary mirrored the line taken by our ambassador to South Africa. A note, to London from Pretoria, warned of the implications of granting a passport – the upset in relations between Britain and other countries, while the apartheid regime was still in place – as well as setting the precedent for South Africans with one British grandparent [as Zola had] a passport.

As of this time Zola Pierterse nee Budd returned to the land of her birth in 1988 and stopped competing after the 1996 World Cross Country Championships. Over the years she has had to stifle many rumours to settle in Bloemfontein with husband and her three children. Looking back this 39 year old sees herself as a political pawn of the system.

Thurs 11

As the recent financial statement from De Beers shows (qv 26/7) the financial health of the mining conglomerate is far from what it could be. With new ways of marketing their products, gold jewelery and diamonds, in other than the western markets fortunes can be turned round.

One such growing market is China. According to the company's head of marketing that visited last in 1989 very few women there adorned themselves gold rings or diamond pendants. Today nearly 80% of newly married women will, like their western counterpart, have a gold and diamond ring on their finger.

This attempt to boost sales of its products has seen the sales rise 5% over the last five years. This compares to a 0.2% increase five years before that.

Artificial manipulation of the number of diamonds released onto the world market, one of the ways that the company has controlled prices has been supplemented with a new location for their cutting and polishing. Previously located in Antwerp, where the finished products were close to the European and American markets has now shifted to India, inside an emerging market and close to China.

With this surge in popularity new sources of materials have to be found. De Beers is in the process of opening a new mine in the North West Territories in Canada. Expected to begin production, in 2008, the Snap Lake mine has already cost the South African conglomerate \$500m to develop. Already extracting these precious stones is a company rival. Rio Tinto Zinc has a 60% stake in the Diavk mine, which came on line in 2003. It is producing 8m carats a year and profit margins run at more than 80%.

The current sales for diamonds; 50% to the United States. 4% China.

Old Mutual, the South African insurance company, has given no indication, at its half yearly meeting, as to the progress made it its plans for acquisition of the Swedish insurer Skandia (qv 14/5).

The shareholders meeting was told, by chief executive J Sutcliffe, those talks between the two managements were continuing. The delay was justified because of the amount of detail to be studied and “we’re a cautious bunch of actuaries.” Away from the management team the institutional investors were more cautious as to any take over bid being successful. With only 1bn pounds [English] available it was they who would most likely to finance any forthcoming bid. This would have to be financed by introducing new equity, something that is seen as a risk when this newly acquired asset would need much investment.

As to the financial state of Old Mutual, as of this time, the meeting was told that operational profits had risen 29% to 554m pounds in the 6 months to 6/05. Much of the rise in profits, which were ahead of the markets expectation, was due to the increased success of Ned bank, South Africa’s fourth largest bank. There was also a good return for the society through the business of selling Old Mutual ’s life policies in the USA.

Fri 12

With the conviction of farmer Crossley and one of his employees (qv 29/4) for the murder of N Chisale by throwing him into a lion enclosure in Phalanborwa, the fate of the black employee; R Mathembula is awaited.

Mon 15

Further to the apology offered by the German ambassador to Namibia in 2004 (qv 6/8) the truth behind how colonial Germany, 100 years ago, treated the local population. The programme; see SA Tape 63 unfolds a telling campaign of genocide.

Tues 16

Days before the ownership of the countries mineral rights were appropriated by the state rather than the landowners, a native farmer and his family have come into wealth.

Located in the Karoo district, notably dry and barren area, in the Western Cape the five Ngongo brothers have sold mining rights to a London based company. Uranco have paid the struggling sheep farming family R 20m/ £1.7m to extract Uranium from their land.

The 6, 000 hectare farm, outside the town of Beaufort, first became the target of mineral mining speculators early in 2005. The company offered R3.5m to purchase the farm, which was rejected. Days later a second offer of R6m. The Uranco purchase will be stepped – R14m and then three payments R2m. The settlement also allows the family a 4% annual royalty.

Wed 17

The seeds of the problem were sown in 1884 at a conference in Berlin, where the imperialist powers gathered to each to claim their part of the emerging African continent.

As is known the German was allocated South West Africa which, with many rural poor to cater for German South West Africa was seen by many, one such was F Ratzel, as a new location for these land hungry farmers. However back in their new colony this land was occupied by the Herero people. But with a new Ratzel inspired policy of ‘ethnic cleansing’ the land would be made available.

By 1903, only 3, 000 new settlers had arrived – the majority of émigrés went to New York – colonial governor Tdor Loitvine negotiated with the Herero for land. This was seen, by those back in Germany, as the paying the conquered to live on German land.

12/1903 as this arrangement was not altogether welcome with members of the military and with the governor away in the south of the colony, a military campaign was initiated.

1.04 in the northern town of Otchimbinqua the Herero people staged a rebellion, which was then halted, after 4 weeks, following talks between governor Loitvine and the tribal leaders.

6.04 Berlin authorities dispatch a tough military commander – von Trotter – who had orders, not to talk with the native’s, but destroy them. By this time the Herero people had withdrawn from their close association with the colonialists. They chose a place, the Waterburg Mountains, their final position.

11. 8. 04 According to the written battle plan, of von Trotter, those hiding in the Waterburg Mountains were to be surrounded and shown no mercy. Those that did manage to escape, through the line of German troops at a contrived weak spot, were to be chased and harried into the Kalahari Desert.

1 10. 04 Osambownbendi waterhole was the site of the first written sanction genocide. This mass killing caused political outrage back in Germany. By 9. 12. 04, and following a telegram ordering the killings to stop, 13, 000 Herero people had surrendered

Those captured were little more than slaves and housed in concentration camps. At the Windhoek camp 4, 000 were held. Between 1905 – 1909 Swankemport, GSWA's major port, 3, 000 people were forced to work on loading and unloading ships. Many died from the unaccustomed climate – the cold.

Not only were there government camps private individual company camps were the norm. For the princely sum of 10 marks. Covering this period 14 death registers list name, age and sex of a dead person. All the deaths were written off in a pre printed death certificate.

From the period 1904 – 1909 Herero slaves, brought by the Lensz Company, 2, 600 died. This is a death rate of 69. 4%. Perhaps the most deaths occurred with the Ludentz Railway Company, who opened up the south of the country.

On Shark Island, out in the Atlantic Ocean, was used as an extermination camp, for another tribe of ‘troublesome’ native people; the Nama. As the main occupants of Camp 2 1,7 32 held there 1, 032 died; a 90% fatality rate.

1904 Back in Germany, where racial purity of supreme importance, geneticist O Fischer was allowed to study skulls of 778 Nama. These ‘studies’ provided a basis for the expanded beliefs of ‘white supremacy’ adopted later in the century.

1908 by this time 65, 000 of the Herero People were dead and 50% of the Nama People had died. In Germany, and now Namibia, this episode in history has been wiped from memory of the majority of the people. There are no monuments or reminders in the country.

2004 as of this time Herero land had been owned by 4, 000 Germans companies. The battle for compensation began. * the authors understanding after viewing Genocide of the Second Reich; see SA Tape 63

Thurs 18

Following police investigations, covering several months, a number of doctors have been arrested for performing life saving operations; kidney transplants on those foreigners willing to pay.

The donors of healthy kidneys were usually the poor from Brazil, who were paid a few hundred dollars. Recipients, usually from Israel, were charged \$100, 000/ £555, 375 pounds [English].

All told 14 doctors, from centers in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town face 110 charges of assault, fraud and misuse of the human tissue act.

Fri 19

According to a market research company, Synovate, the country has drivers that are the most prone to road rage; 62% after questioning drivers in 10 other countries. They were followed by Britain and Greece respectively.

SEPTEMBER 2005

Mon 12

As the worlds leading arms manufacturers gather in London details of the military buying from, and selling to, South Africa are revealed that Britain sold £86. 5m worth of military hard wear to the authorities in Pretoria.

Wed 14

During the period 1999 to 2004 the use of the mobile phone, as the chief method of communicating with members of the family, has risen throughout the world by 29%. In Namibia usage has risen from 1.73% to 14. 23%.

In comparison the figures, from The International Telecommunications Union show that penetration in Kenya rose from 0.8% to 7. 85% in the same period. The growth rate in the whole of Africa was 59% and in Europe 25%.

Sponsored events, by members of Leeds City Councils Parks and Countryside department, have raised £45. 577 that will go some way to establish allotments on the outskirts of the city of Durban in South Africa.

The amount was raised came about after events like abseiling, a golf day and a number of football quizzes and will be used to purchase tools and seeds for the project.

Fri 16

Just as the South African Medical Research Council is looking into the medical benefit of natural remedies a British firm is using the knowledge of generations of members of the Zulu nation and begin importing an extract of a plant root to aid people suffering from a common cold.

Once before, 125 years ago, the British businessman Charles Stevens tried something similar. Having traveled to the country, suffering from tuberculosis, he was cured by using the chewed root of Palagoroi; rose geranium plant. With the idea of making his fortune back in Britain importation began. However the London based Medical Research Council forced him into bankruptcy, accusing him of being a charlatan.

This time around the UK company MediHerb will market Palargonium sidoides as a cure not just the cold virus, but also for many other upper respiratory tract infections. In tablet form; £8. 99p for 30, which have been selling well in Germany. Medical properties have to been ‘proved’ by 2011, even though the product has been selling since 2004.

Mon 19

Thieves, on the lookout for a victim have deprived the country of one of its best known boxers. Former world champion; in three divisions M Sikali was attacked and killed on the outskirts of KwaNobuhle township near Port Elizabeth.

Official statistics show that the murder rate has declined from 51/1000, 000 people in 2001 to 42. 7/100, 000 in 2000. In England the ration is 1.6/ 100, 000

Fri 23

Delmas township, near Johannesburg, where an outbreak of typhoid has resulted in four deaths has erupted in violence as police used rubber bullets to quell the disturbance. With an additional 500 residents infected the likely hood of further deaths seems possible.

Campaigners for a clean water and sanitation system throughout the township are concerned that after 11 years of majority rule government such conditions are allowed to continue in Delmas and in other townships throughout the country.

Sat 24

With the venue settled, in 2003, (qv 7/5) for a bronze representation of Nelson Mandela, the date for the public inquiry looms. The 9ft bronze casting by Ian Walters will face some stiff opposition to his, and the mayor of London's, choice of venue.

Chief opponent, along with members of Westminster Council and English Heritage, is Professor G Williams the head of the school of fine art at the Royal College of Art, who say's "my main objection to the proposed sculpture is the quality of the work on offer. I believe this to be.... mediocre modeling in an attempt to get a mimetic likeness." Objections to the preferred siting, outside the National Portrait Gallery, are the main thrust of the arguments from English Heritage and the London Council.

Of the two renown sculptors; Walters has produced memorials to Huddleston, Pankhurst and Callaghan, while Williams submitted a design for a Harold Wilson statue to Huddersfield Council, which was rejected. The sculptor chosen was Ian Walters.

Concerns, about the number of elephants roaming the Kruger National Park, have led to a call for their numbers to be reduced. As of this time there are 12, 500 of the thick skinned mammals roaming the veld.

With numbers expected to rise by 7% a year park managers are calling for an end to the ban in 1992. Over the previous 25 years 14, 562 elephants lost their lives. Experts indicate that the need now, to reduce these numbers, is due to the fact that the parks other inhabitants is having to struggle to compete for food in competition with the elephant. On the danger list are the rare black rhino and the roan antelope.

In the long drawn out take over battle, by the South Africa based Old Mutual company (qv 11/8) some form of progress has been made. Despite a rejection by, a majority of 11 to 8, of Skandia's company directors the London Listed Pretoria based firm is still convinced a direct approach to the Swedish based companies share holders will benefit the company.

Even with the negative decision by the Stockholm board the financial director of Old Mutual, J Roberts indicates that 60% of Skandia's investors were supportive of the deal, as recalcitrant O M shareholders were won round.

As to the benefits, for Old Mutual, with control of the Swedish company the South African firm would have a bigger stock market capitalisation than Legal and General and make it of similar size to the Prudential, Britain's second largest insurer.

Old Mutual share price – 134. 5p down 3. 25p on the day.

Tues 27

Using the recently introduced Freedom of Information Act journalists working for BBC radio, in preparation for the transmission of The Right to Know, Radio 4 20. 00 have uncovered the extent of security services surveillance of the Anti Apartheid Movement in the 1980's.

Close co operation between MI5 and MI6 ensured infiltration of the main instigator of changes in apartheidic South Africa. Reports were written on those attending central committee meetings and those attending lowly branch meetings. Some of the reports covered bizarre observations – sheds with political banners stored in them and a report of a supermarket worker leafleting his fellow employees.

Some of the security services reports covered the then well known activists. There were many reports on a young Peter Hain along with Richard Caborn, both of who are now respected members of the government.

As the 2003 Reed Dance, in Swaziland (qv 31/8) provided King Mswati with his 11th bride, so this years annual procession of nubile virgin teenagers has led the monarch to take another wife. This years choice was 17 year old Phindile Nkambule.

The move was condemned by women 's groups who said that the monarch's motive, to continue the Swaziland tradition of polygamy did little to benefit the country. Aid workers were also critical on the grounds that, as the kingdom has the highest rates of the HIV virus in the world, he was sending the wrong message to teenage girls.

OCTOBER 2005

Sat 1

With the conviction of farmer Crossley, of the murder of one of his former employees (qv 12/8), Judge G Maluleke sent the man, who along with an accomplice fed N Chisale to the lions, to prison for life. His accomplice S Mathembula will have to serve a 15 year jail term, 3 of which were suspended.

In an attempt to gain a more lenient sentence Crossley 's lawyer told the court that his client was willing to make reparations to the victims family. These would take the form of monthly payments to the family and assistance in building a home.

Tues 4

Speaking in defence of the Mandela statue, subject of a public inquiry (qv 24/9), the sculptor Ian Walters, castigated his main opponent Glyn Williams's remarks. Speaking on behalf of those objecting to the siting of the 9 ft bronze his rival had said the representation was "a mere husk and an empty shell."

Of these remarks Walters said that the comments were made after viewing photographic evidence and a scale model of the finished statue. According to him the comments on his sculpture defames Williams rather than himself.

In a nutshell the reasoning behind any statue of this nature is "to achieve a sculpture that measures up to the stature that Mandela holds in peoples minds. I want to represent the struggle that he has been through, his fortitude, the greatness of the way that he has conducted himself.

Wed 5

A 'liveability' ranking, criteria, stability, healthcare, culture, environment, education and infrastructure, devised by the Economic Intelligence Unit has placed 127 cities from around the world as more or less desirable places to live.

The people of South Africa, or 26% of them, indicated that they were happy with where they lived. In comparison 46% of Australians were the happiest. Just above the South Africans, in 12th position, were the people of London in 10th position.

At the other end of the scale were the people of Port Moresby, in Papua New Guinea, who were least happy.

Sat 8

The need to remove still active land mines from Angola, and other war torn countries, highlighted by the late Diane Princess of Wales, has largely been forgotten by the outside world.

A current update; The Ottawa Agreement, an international protocol to remove these exploding ordinances has been signed by 127 countries. Over 30m anti personnel land mines have been destroyed.

It is estimated that there are still 15, 000 to 20, 000 casualties from land mines and unexploded ordnance each year. This amounts to about 2 casualties per hour. More than 80% of all victims are civilians. Unicef estimates that 30 to 40% are children.

Wed 12

With the conviction of the then deputy president's financial adviser S Shaik (qv 3/6) Jacob Zuma was supposed to go before a judge this day. Attending the court to face corruption charges, along with hundreds of his supporters he was told 'his day in court' had not come yet.

A new trial date, of 12/11, has been set after the state prosecutors asked for more time to complete their investigations. The high profile member of the ANC has been charged with two counts of corruption. There is the possibility that further counts of fraud and perjury may be laid against him.

Sat 15

It would seem that the three government agreement;Mozambican, Zimbabwean and South African to extend the Kruger National Park signed in 2002 (qv 9/12) paid little attention of the consequences for those living on the land that would become the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

As the first border crossing point, between Mozambique and Zimbabwe, the residents of the Mozambican village of Salani voiced their concerns. According to the village elders there is now no protection for their fields as the 'liberated' animals cross from Zimbabwe.

Wed 19

Speaking to a climate change conference, in Johannesburg, Wendy Foden, a researcher at the South African National Biodiversity Institute, noted that the quiver tree which has been essential to the lives of the African bushmen is under threat.

As the name suggests the wood from the tree is used to make the equipment that carries the hunters arrows. Research has shown that as the earth warms up the ‘growing range’ of the tree will fall 76% over the next 100 years.

Tues 25

Research carried out by scientists, from National Institute of Communicable Diseases in Johannesburg, have discovered a way that men, who have been circumcised, are slightly at less risk of being infected by the HIV virus.

This controversial research, stopped at one time, because of ethical concerns, was initiated as it was noted that there was less HIV infection where circumcision was a ‘right of passage’ among certain African cultures.

Details;- Writing in the journal Public Library of Science Medicine A Purren, of the NICD, of the two year research project; carried out with fellow researchers from Paris, writes 3, 274 uncircumcised volunteers were recruited aged 18 to 24 year old South Africans in nationality. Of this ‘considering the step forward group’ half went ahead ‘into manhood’. The two groups; the ‘have and have not’s were then monitored for the next 21 months.

After this time of those that had circumcised 20 tested HIV + while 49 of those who did not have the cut were HIV +. These finding, verified by other scientists, have a 61% beneficial protection rate. This is equivalent to having a high quality vaccine to hand.

As to why removing the skin from around the head of the penis works in preventing this deadly virus – the foreskin is rich in Langerhans cells that the virus strongly attaches to. It is this way, writes P C Jones of human research ethics committee of the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, that the virus enters the body.

The use of microbides, see 22. 3. '04, as an effective treatment has moved a step further. British scientists from the MRC Clinical Trials Unit and Imperial College in London are to test Pro 2000; a gel applied to the vagina. There will be two test areas Uganda and South Africa.

Whatever the difficulties Barclay 's Bank, the scourge of the era of apartheid (qv 24/6), has won its battle with the shareholders, at a cost of £2.9bn, of the Amalgamated Bank of South Africa to return to the country 20 years after withdrawing under the pressure of the demonstrators. There was also fact that the London based bank was showing only a £6bn profit for its troubles.

As of now Absa 's latest trading statement earnings per share rose above 20 per cent; more than the South African share market expected. Barclay 's Bank shares rose 4% in the first half of the year. It is now expected that other international institutions, which fled when the anti apartheid demonstrations were at their height; Standard Chartered Bank, HSBC and Citigroup will attempt a return to the country.

Now firmly established they are trying to encourage more township dwellers not to hide their savings around the home, rather they will be encouraged to open a bank account. To this end the number of Absa bank branches are set to rise 53 branches and 400 cash machines in the coming year.

As with all good employers concerns about the health of those that work for the bank is of concern. The greatest fear is the number of employees with the Aids virus. To this end the firm agrees to pay the costs for up to three members of an employee's family to receive drugs to combat the virus. There is also available advice on other aspects of medical care that could effect the workers well being. The financial cost to the bank is £37m a year. In addition the Bank provides financial support for an after school centre for the Aids orphans of Katlehong township, of 770, 000 residents, outside Johannesburg.

Thurs 27

The tourist venture known as trophy hunting is damaging to the welfare of one of the country greatest natural attractions, the wild life, so says the environmental group Traffic.

The hunters, from the wealthy spectrum of the tourist trade, are shooting at animals that appear to roam free on the veldt. In reality they are bred in captivity and their living space is a fenced in enclosure.

According to the environmental and conservation group in 2004, this 'canned killing' involved 6, 700 hunters who killed 54, 000 animals. Their trophies included 200 lions, 5, 500 kudos and 45 leopards. In addition smaller animals were killed such as porcupines and warthogs were the target. For this killing the wealthy paid from US\$25/ £14 for a pigeon to US\$25, 000 for a white rhino.

Speaking in parliament the environment minister, M van Schalkwyk, said that the soon to be introduced legislation would go some way towards preserving South Africa as an international centre for wildlife.

The documents from the group Traffic indicate that not only is there any number of small game parks involved in this type of hunting but the owners of these fenced areas are manipulating the breeding of these captive animals to create new breeds for the hunter to kill. Highlighted were the creation of an albino lion and the 'zonkey' a cross between a zebra and a donkey.

In a restructuring plan, which will benefit shareholders to the tune of US\$1bn /£560m, the South African conglomerate Anglo American is to put in place a wholesale restructuring of its operations.

Not one aspect of its business interests will be left untouched. First to go is reducing its hold, now at 51%, in AngloGold Ashanti. Then the company will divest its 79% share of the steel company Highveld Steel. Other measures will look at the company's investments in the sugar and packaging industries. On the stock markets the An Am share

price rose 6% to £16. 58p. Untouched are the company's interests in the diamond and platinum mining sectors. This is due to the increased sales, now and in the future, in the Far East and China.

Sat 29

Nelson Mandela launched the first edition yesterday of a series of comic books about his life aimed at encouraging young South Africans to read. "You know you are really famous when becoming a comic character," the 87 year old joked at his Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg.

The nine books are part of a series of initiatives aimed at preserving Mr Mandela's legacy. A million copies will be distributed free at schools and in newspapers. - AP [abb]-

NOVEMBER 2005

Wed 3

Phytopharm, the pharmaceutical company that has the license to bring to the wider world the medical properties of the Hoddia cactus in 2003 (qv 1/1), long known to the Sans people of Namibia, have announced financial results for the year ending 31/8.

Sales have grown to £7.4m; from £1.1m 31.8.04 Losses before tax £3bn ; £6.8bn to 31.8.05. Speaking of the joint venture, with Unilever, company chairman R Dixey, said that the upturn in the company's success was due to the development of the known slimming benefits of this plant.

Sat 5

The former deputy president Jacob Zuma has been formally charged with corruption on two charges. The charges relate to his, alleged, acceptance of bribes from a French armaments firm that was hoping for lucrative defence contracts from the authorities in Pretoria.

The second charge relates to corrupt practices, between the number two in the South African government, and his financial adviser. The trial will come to court in 2006.

Tues 8

The mining conglomerate De Beers, now trading as De Beers Consolidated Mines, is following in the footsteps of the insurance company Old Mutual and its mining rival Anglo American and moving towards giving its black employees more than a 15% stake in the company.

This move is following the guidelines Pretoria that want to see 15% of a companies assets in the hands of its black employees by 2009. That figure should rise to 26% by 2014.

As a company it mines 13.7m carats per year. This is 90% of South Africa's total diamond production, from its seven mines in the country. This volume of production puts it at number 4 in the world – behind Botswana Russia and Canada.

Once extracted these stones would more than likely travel to London to be polished and then to India for cutting. However, with a new polishing plant in Angola, opened 4/11. This routing may, as Pretoria would like the company to 'in house' as much of the processing as possible in Africa; this may change. The Luanda plant, which is owned by the Israeli based Uzbekistan born L Levy who has plans to open a similar plant in Botswana. The polished stones are then sent to India for finishing.

Wed 9

Much as stated De Beers Consolidated Mines (qv 8/11) management of the company has been handed over, well 26% has, to black employees and other groups of the ethnic and disadvantaged groups.

The deal, which has cost R 3.5bn/ £333m has made some ‘notables’ even more prominent in the new South African power block. Among these is C Carolus, a former ambassador to London. This level of black empowerment is well ahead of the deadline for 2014 set by the government.

There are critics of the deal who say that the moves will just enhance the position of the already black elite, with good business connections, at the expense of the masses further away from the seat of power. Answering this argument Ms Carlous by saying that not to use the experiences of people like herself –high profile politicos – and those with good business skills would be “foolhardy.”

In its bid for ever expanding a growing export base China has oil, energy and interests in the infrastructure of Angola.

Tues 15

Continuing battles emerge as the management at the Old Mutual continues the pursuit of the Swedish company Skandia. The latest move is a charm offensive by the chief executive of the South African insurance company.

In describing his chances, of convincing Skandia’s reluctant shareholders to agree, as “fair” J Sutcliffe will have some work to do as of this time 18% of them oppose the take over. On the other hand 60 – 70% of the shareholders are said to welcome the bid.

Old Mutual released a trading statement, which reported an 18%, rise in life insurance sales in 1 – 9/05. The latest share price is 140. 5p a rise of 2p on the day.

Fri 18

South Africa signed a pact with Zimbabwe yesterday to strengthen ties on defence and intelligence, spurning western efforts to isolate Robert Mugabe’s government. The agreement will see the two countries share security information, while Zimbabwean pilots will travel to South Africa for training.

The deal comes as Europe and the US are increasing pressure on Mr Mugabe’s government, which is widely accused of vote rigging and human rights abuses. Zimbabwe is in an economic and political crisis, problems it blames on western sanctions rather than its controversial land reforms. – *Reuters* –

Sat 19

Still of concern to the British taxpayer is the amount of ‘bribes’ paid to agents of British manufacturing companies bidding for foreign contracts.

Just as the British Areospace contract to supply Hawk jets to the South African military in 2003 (qv 30/6) had a written answer given in parliament from the Department of Trade and Industry that promised new rules on the subject, the current state of affairs is still causing concern.

Under the new proposals, announced by the DTI, the payment of these inducements to local agents will still be allowed by the bidding company. However if, in the future, there were proof of a financial loss; to the British taxpayer as a result of proven corruption, the DTI would seek to claim the money back.

Answering criticism, from the pressure group The Cornerhouse, the anti corruption campaigners, who successfully challenged the payment of the Export Credit Guarantee monies to BAE and the subsequent judicial inquiry, the minister said that these rules offered the ‘most practical way’ to monitor the situation.

Sun 20

The Kruger National Park elephant cull (qv 24/9), although not due to begin till 2010, has already aroused the anger of the international animal welfare organisations. They warn of the consequences if government plans to kill 5,000 go ahead.

The American Humane Society has warned that if this ‘genocide’ goes ahead it will recommend to its 8,000 members that they should boycott South Africa as a tourist destination.

There is even growing opposition from within the country. The Royal Society of South Africa says that there is no published scientific research that backs the claims that a cull will be effective in, as the cull supporters insist, there is evidence that the number of elephants endanger the existence of other animals in the Park.

As to artificial methods of preventing a rising population, unchecked 20,000 by 2012, contraception has all but been dismissed as a possibility. A successful procedure requires 2 injections within a 14 day period. How, those opposed to a reduction in numbers say, are the females to be located within this time?

Mon 21

Between 1999 and 2004 the people of Britain increased their volume of alcohol imported from South Africa rose from 5.5% to 8.5% per head of population.

In comparison in the same period the amount of French wine drunk, per head of population, fell from 30% to 22.6%.

Tues 22

To add to the woes of the former deputy president Jacob Zuma (qv), still to face the courts; in 7/'06 in connection with corruption charges, a new date with the judicial system is pending.

According to the media a female guest at his Johannesburg home, on 13/11, has alleged that the doyen of the left wing of the ruling ANC raped her. The countries political writers see this charge, which is undergoing police investigation, – as a final nail in the coffin that would have seen him ascend to the presidency in 2007.

These details emerged at a three day sitting of the ANC 's national executive council. So serious were the discussions at the gathering that president Mbeki canceled all appointments on 20/11, even to the extent of not receiving Nepal's monarch.

As to the contenders for the position of president after 2007, the sitting tenant cannot serve a third term, the front runners are; the recently appointed deputy president P Mlambo Ngkuka, union leader turned businessman Cyril Ramaphosa, central bank governor T Mboweni and the general secretary of the ANC K Motlanthe.

Wed 23

De Beers, the world's biggest diamond producers, have concluded the closure process of its underground operations at its Kimberly mine in South Africa. Most production halted earlier this year at the loss making mine, but negotiations continued until an agreement was signed with the National Union of Mineworkers.

De Beers has agreed to retrain 693 employees who will lose their jobs. Production at Kimberly will continue above ground with the processing of old waste dumps with new technology to find missing gems, which should contribute another 2m carats a year.

Thurs 24

Envisaged, by the National Health Service as a money saver, the South African medical provisions company Netcare (qv) has been anything but. According to Primary Health Care Trusts in South Oxfordshire there has been little savings on the number of operations performed by the overseas company.

Figures released show that for of the 249 cataract operations paid for only 43 were carried out between April and October. The Johannesburg based company was paid £255, 000. The cost under the NHS would have been only £40, 000 pounds.

Sat 26

*Believing that earlier notations in this dialogue have referred to the following project in the Eastern Cape and the work of photographer G Mendel the photographers can continues. * authors note

Through this pictorial evidence children, and young adults, from Lusikisiki's; a rural community where one third of pregnant women test positive for the virus that causes Aids, a figure that suggests that nearly 10% of the population are infected; a minimum of 15, 000 people.

The project; "We are Living Here" or in Xhosa 'Siyaphila La' is run jointly between MSF and the Nelson Mandela Foundation to supply anti retroviral drugs to those that are HIV positive.

Zamokuhle 'Zamo' Mdingwe aged 7 years is being brought up by his grandmother after his own died, of the HIV virus, is doing well despite the residue of a slight cough.

Nomfumaneko Yako aged 15 beginning treatment, in 5/04, treatment was going well until recently. Hospitalised by 30/8 because of her recurring diarrhoea Ms Yako died.

Nomphilo Mazuza aged 25 treatment began 23/9/04 and to date felling fine apart from TB. Her CD4 count has risen from 7 to 150. In addition previous, to starting ARV treatment the village Sangoma was consulted, for a 'traditional' cure for the virus was sought. The cost to Ms Mazuza, whose only financial support is a disability grant of R670./£58, was R2, 000/ £173 which was an additional worry.

Sun 27

Tribal leaders condemned government plans to outlaw traditional virginity tests on young girls, saying the ancient custom could help the fight against Aids. The tests are conducted by an elder tribe's women who inspects girls' hymens to see if they are still in tact.

Human rights groups say the tests are unhygienic and sexist. Justice officials have put forward a bill to outlaw it. But Patekile Holomasia, of the Congress of Traditional leaders of South Africa said: "It helps children to continue to lead clean lives, It discourages promiscuity."

Wed 30

The pressure group Treatment Action Concern, along with the backing of the South African Medical association, has gone to court in Cape Town to force the government to take action against a medical practitioner M Rath. The aim of the legal proceedings is to force the health minister, Dr Manto Tshabala Msingang to urge the Medicines Control Council to act. The joint court action will force M Rath to prescribe anti retroviral drugs to his patients, rather than the multivitamins he uses at this time.

According to the authorities in Mozambique there is a 12.2% HIV prevalence rate in the country. A gender breakdown shows that 670, 000 women and 431, 000 along with 99, 000 children suffering from the Aids virus. There are 110, 000 deaths among adults and children. The number of orphans this leaves due to the virus is 470, 000. .

DECEMBER 2005

Thurs 1

On behalf of the former president Nelson Mandela a member of the London embassy of South Africa has accepted the Freedom of the City award from the town of Salford. Although he is unlikely to avail himself of the civic right of parading sheep through the center of the town, he could do so if he wanted to.

At the same ceremony, which took place in the Lowery Center in Manchester, a new portrait of Mr Mandela was unveiled. The painting, by the artist Harold Rilry, was the first time it had been exhibited in Europe.

In what appears to have been a tragic domestic dispute the world of opera in South Africa has lost one of its most famous performers. The bodies of C van der Walt 78 and his son Deon were found in the homestead of the wine estate near the town of Paal in the Western Cape. From initial police inquiries it would appear that father shot his son in the chest. Then moved to another bedroom and put a bullet through his temple.

Fri 2

On this day, of all days; World Aids Day the monarch of the land locked kingdom of Lesotho has decreed that all suspected HIV infected persons will receive the free diagnostic test that will determine as to their state of health.

Lesotho, and other sub – Saharan African countries have been worst hit by the pandemic, with 70% of all new infections occurring in the region. Yet most people who live here are not able to afford the drugs that could save their lives.

Sat 3

Ongoing research, by the pharmaceutical company Phytopharam (qv 3/11) and Unilever, have determined that the molecular element of the Hoodia plant – well known as an appetite suppressant to the Sans people of Namibia – named as P57 enables those classed as obese to eat 1000 calories a day less compared to their usual diets.

With the beginning of clinical trials; supervised by Unilever which begin in 2006, warnings have been given that the range of appetite suppressants available over the Internet do not contain any of these active ingredients which are necessary to curb the appetite.

Wed 7

After a police investigation of an alleged rape, said to have been carried out by Jacob Zuma the former vice president will have to answer the charge in court, the prosecution department has decided. Until then, with bail set at £1, 800. Mr Zuma indicated that he would suspend some of his activities in the ANC. However he is determined to continue as the party's deputy president.

Thurs 8

At an emergency meeting of the ANC's national executive the decision was made to suspend, but not sack, Jacob Zuma as its deputy leader pending the outcome of his trial in 2006 on the charge of rape of a 31 year old woman at his Johannesburg.

In the wider political world the suspension of Mr Zuma was criticised as sending out the wrong message about the commitment of the South African government towards the rights of women.

Fri 9

As De Beers ends its diamond production at a number of mines (qv 22/11) its gold mining operations will benefit from the rise in the price of gold, to \$515. 70 per ounce. The metal's highest price in 25 years.

As a point of reference the price of gold at the end of the day's trading on 22. 3. 89 was \$360/oz.

Sat 10

Notwithstanding the problem of HIV infection in Mozambique the government is reluctant to go beyond advising mothers to take anti retroviral drug Nevirapine at 28 weeks and soon after a child is born. In one clinic, in Maputo, the 2 tablet procedure has seen an 80% decrease in infants diagnosed with the Aids virus.

Another clinical recommendation is a quick breast feeding programme of as little as two months, before turning to formula milk products. With a cost of nine pounds per month this is proving expensive for new mothers. Never mind that the water used to reconstitute this milk powder comes from – in many cases – still water, which carries many of the bacteria that ultimately kill off many HIV positive victims.

At this moment in time 35, 000 babies are diagnosed with HIV every year in Mozambique; perhaps a third of those are infected after they are born.

With the opening of the Robben Island prison archives of the General Recreation Committee* which documents the day to day lives of those prisoners that live in communal cells but also those prisoners; see Nelson Mandela's Long March to Freedom

that turned the system to their own advantage. * **Prisoner in the Garden: Opening Nelson Mandela's Prison Archive published by Penguin**

Mon 12

As in Britain the subject of gay and lesbian relationships is high on the political agenda. Whereas in Britain civil partnerships was only as far as the legislative was prepared to proceed the Constitutional Court has ruled that the current interpretation of 'a marriage being only between a man and women' is unconstitutional.'

Comments from Judge Albie Sachs; "The exclusion of gays and lesbians represents a harsh, if oblique statement by the law that same sex couples are outsiders, and their need for affirmation and protection of their intimate relationships as human beings is somehow less than that of heterosexual couples."

The government now has 12 months to make the necessary changes in the law to enable same sex couples to enjoy the same rights in law that those others enjoy.

Returning, after a number of years in exile in London, a number of changes are noted. It is apparent that the country now has to live in the real world. To the credit of the country the economy is on the up, by 5% in one year. a free press, a meaningful bill of rights and very little evidence of racial bitterness

Those that want to denigrate the country highlight the violent crime. Evidence of financial corruption at all levels, a widening gap between rich and poor and a president who tolerates the antics of Mugabe.

Wed 14

As is well known the treatment for those with the HIV virus is with anti retroviral's that are now becoming freely available to those infected. Speaking at a conference, for the medical and pharmaceutical notables it has been pointed out that the current cost of the basic first line treatment is \$194/ £110 a year.

However the next generation of treatment drugs will cost at least eight times as much. Such a sum \$1, 661 per year will be well out of reach of the sub Saharan African. The conference heard a plea for a government minister to the multinational drug companies to have a duel pricing system; for the developed and developing world.

COUNTRY	RANKING	EXPORTS [\$]	POPULATION	WORLD %
Angola	61	13. 850	5. 65m	0.09
Botswana	94	3,467	1. 68m	0.02
Britain	8	346, 863	58.79m	0.91
Lesotho	138	726,000	1. 96m	0.03
Mozambique	121	1,504m	16.10m	0.25

Namibia	121	1,833m	1. 83m	0.02
S Africa	37	46. 029m	44. 82m	0.7

Thurs 15

Much has been written, by the author of this diary, of the use Britain's National Health Service makes of the medical staff from South Africa et al. The boot is now on the other foot as it becomes known that medical staff from the armed services is gaining experience in at least one hospital in the country. As of this time there are one member of the Royal Navy and two army personnel working at the Chris Hani Hospital in Soweto. They are there to gain experience in treating patients with gunshot wounds; a type of injury they are encountering during service in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Their presence, to gain experience to treat wounds from a war that Pretoria disagrees with has caused the minister of health to call for their removal from the public hospitals of the country. At the same time there are medics from Germany doing similar work in the same hospital. They have not been requested to change hospitals.

Fri 16

In a similar vein as the black employees of the insurance company Old Mutual or De Beers (qv) have been 'empowered' by the giving of shares in the business so now have the people Bafokeng nation.

Since the end of the apartheid era owners of the Impala platinum mine have had to pay for the privilege of taking the ore out of the ground of the kingdom that is situated in the North West Province of the country, where the monarch Chief K L Molotlegi, guards the interests of his 300, 000 subjects as has his 35 preceding monarchs over 800 years.

A 9% share will be settled on the nations people, with a 30% discount offered, which are estimated to be worth R5bn /£44m. The company says that the move will bring the company into the compliance of the government of a 26% share holding for black employees within 10 years.

Sun 18

Ten years on from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, its author Desmond Tutu argues those there few, if any, prosecutions for the alleged human rights abuses detailed in the report.

Speaking at the same ceremony in Pretoria president Mbeki called for more effort in breaking down the racial walls which still divide the ordinary people.

Tues 20

Despite the wishes of the British government, and most assuredly the health services of countries of sub Saharan Africa, nursing and midwifery staff from the continent are still finding employment in the NHS. They are still able to work in Britain's hospitals as first of all they are recruited by private medical agencies. These private employment agencies are breaking the spirit of an agreement signed, by London not to poach staff from Africa, which was signed in 2004 (qv 9/12).

According to figures, obtained by the Liberal Democrat MP Andrew George, in just one African country; Swaziland, in the last two years 200 nurses have been trained, and 150 had moved to the UK. To add to those losses, in 2003/4 300 nurses had died of the Aids virus in the kingdom which has the highest HIV prevalence rate in Africa.

Other figures; of nurses and midwives trained in countries of this diarists concern from which recruitment to the NHS is banned who joined the UK register in 2004/5, show that from South Africa 933, Botswana 91, and Lesotho 93 national found work in UK hospitals.

Wed 21

Old Mutual (qv 15//11) and its long battle to gain control of the Swedish insurer Skadia seems a little closer. The London listed South African insurer has now gained 62% support from the shareholders of the Stockholm based company.

At the end of the days trading on the London Stock Exchange the company's were valued at 158p – a rise on the day of 1.75p.

An argument that the purchase of diamonds does not fuel bloodshed in Angola or any other mid African country that, in recent years has been prone to civil war. Admittedly, in earlier times; the mid 80's this may have been so. However with the introduction of the Kimberly Agreement the selling of 'conflict diamonds' has been stopped.

Diamonds purchased today come from democratically stable environments such as Botswana or Namibia as well as Angola. Reinvested in the place of production then benefits the country' infrastructure, education and an improvement of peoples living standard.

Thurs 22

A plan to erect a statue of Nelson Mandela on the north side of Trafalgar Square (qv 24/8) will not go ahead, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott ruled.

He rejected an appeal made against Westminster Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the 9ft high bronze statue.

Sat 24

Inherent in the treatment of Aids is the ability to overcome the stigma of the HIV virus. In Khayelitsha; home to 500, 000 people near Cape Town the medical charity MSF is doing sterling work. With 42% of residents proving HIV positive the anti retroviral drugs; provided free by the charity are a life saver.

To highlight one case, M Hamanca, aged 38, had to quit his security guard job in 7/05 as his weight fell to 45kg. By 9/05, after 8 weeks prescription of anti retroviral drugs his weight had risen by 10kg. All told the HIV adult infection rate in the township is 21%.

Throughout South Africa, as of this time, 2, 900, 000 women, 230, 000 children, 1,970, 000 men are infected with the Aids virus. There has been 370, 000 Aids deaths among adults and children. These deaths have left 1, 100, 000 orphans.

Tues 27

As a haven for those whites with an artistic leaning the village of Nieu Bethesda near Port Elizabeth, on the edge of the Karoo seemed ideal. With the associated black township, PienaarSIG with a population of 1000 across the valley, life was ideal.

Recently some of the 70 residents have become concerned that the township residents have been moving their homes nearer their homes. Observers see the resulting row, between white and black, as a microcosm of a problem that all local councils in the country will have to address in the near future. Indeed there has been recent reports of riots because of township overcrowding in other areas of South Africa.

The whites in Nieu Bethesda have used many arguments to try and stop the PienaarSIG residents moving closer to their homes. These have included claiming the area should be designated an area of special scientific interest or a nature reserve.

Wed 28

In a spirit of cooperation the 49 sub Saharan Africa states set the goal, after signing up to the 2002 conference of sustainable development, to phase out leaded fuel, for use in motor vehicles by the end of 2005.

With days to go only, the situation in South Africa is that despite fuel shortages at the pump, by the beginning of 2006 the country will be pollution free; as far as vehicle traffic is concerned.