

Finger curled tight – light squeeze.  
 Upon the hell bent terror bearing down on me  
 As I lie in the dirt  
 With my corporal behind me.

It's not until you've had to kill that you understand  
 he says  
 Once you've understood there's no return.

The hell bent terror bears down on you  
 from every wall that clothes you and your square bed and shining  
 floors and screaming corporals.

Who sit with you on Sundays watching rugby.

We love another, work together, sneak through the grass together  
 Save each others lives from the hell bent terror bearing down on  
 you.

And soon the night descends with every cigarette glow drawing  
 death  
 With every careless move  
 With every doubt which shadows your eyes drawing death from  
 the hell bent terror bearing down on you.

And if you ever feel drawn to the sound of kwela on the  
 streetcorner  
 You're supposed to remember the hell bent terror  
 You listen no longer  
 You turn up your memories of the cigarette glow drawing  
 death from the black of the night where the cocking of a rifle  
 travels 500m to the ears of the hell bent terror bearing down  
 on you.

Until you can't remember if you've ever had a friendly conversa-  
 tion with a black man, with a man outside the white nation who  
 protects you from the hell bent terror bearing down on you.

And if you travel through the dry starvation of the homeland  
 homeless  
 You ought to remember the hell bent terror.

But as the terror fades and you re-adjust you may find yourself  
 listening to the kwela on the streetcorner with the nostalgia of a  
 child crying for a mother removed by the lack of a dompas.

And if you walk through the ghetto  
 On a kwela-living evening  
 you may well remember  
 The red glow of a brazier warming the hands of a cold night-  
 watchman.

And you realise  
 That the hell bent terror is bearing down on you.

And you realise  
 That the hell bent terror is bearing down on you.

You may ask yourself  
 Who is the hell bent terror

And you realise  
 That the hell bent terror was a poster on the wall of your  
 bungalow.

And you realise  
 That the hell bent terror was a cardboard cut-out target on the  
 shooting range.

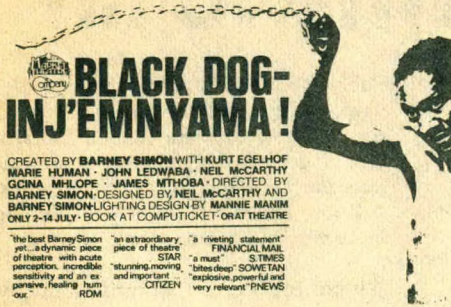
And you begin to wonder  
 If there isn't someone sitting in Pretoria  
 Cutting out hell-bent terrors.

And posting them on the walls  
 To scare the children into believing  
 That if you don't sit tight  
 When you hear the kuda

The hell bent terror is going to leap off the wall and bear down  
 on you.



# \*REVIEWS\*



## BLACK DOG- INJ'EMNYAMA!

CREATED BY BARNEY SIMON WITH KURT EGELHOF  
MARIE HUMAN · JOHN LEDWABA · NEIL MCCARTHY  
GCINA MHLOPE · JAMES MTHOBA · DIRECTED BY  
BARNEY SIMON · DESIGNED BY NEIL MCCARTHY AND  
BARNEY SIMON · LIGHTING DESIGN BY MANNIE MANIM  
ONLY 2-14 JULY · BOOK AT COMPUTICKET · ORAT THEATRE

"the best Barney Simon yet... a dynamic piece of theatre with acute perception, incredible sensibility and an explosive, healing, burn out." RDM

"an extraordinary piece of theatre." STAR

"stunning, moving and important." CITIZEN

"a riveting statement." FINANCIAL MAIL

"a must." S.TIMES

"blistering." SOWETAN

"explosive, powerful and very relevant." PINEYS

The play tackles familiar themes of apartheid society, without resorting to the stereotypes and well-worn assumptions to which this type of theatre is prone. Centered around the events in Soweto in 1976, it deals essentially with the consciousnesses of the characters; a student

leader, his girlfriend, an Afrikaans "plaasmeisie", a "coloured" labourer, a Zulu nightwatchman, and a member of the Parabats.

Consisting mainly of monologues, the play is skillfully constructed to bring out the interrelatedness of the issues represented; sexuality, violence, migrant labour, exile, leadership, cultural isolation, white privilege. Events and ideologies which seem unconnected gel into a powerful and unexpected climax. The dramatic intensity created by the presence of the entire cast onstage for a full two hours ensures the play has maximum impact on the audience.

Neil McCarthy as the Parabat gives a performance of particular insight. His role is chillingly familiar; first-team school prefect undergoes military service, volunteers for crack unit, "sees action",

and has the foundations of his worldview shaken. The continuous betrayal of verbalised experience of the army by body language-fidgeting, tension-are familiar to anybody who knows a national serviceman. This gives his performance depth and immense impact. The Parabat has no analytical framework in which to order his experience. This, together with the equally unanalytical anger of the labourer at white privilege and complacency, makes their final confrontation one which does not hold out easy answers or ready-made solutions.

Although there is a certain amount of unevenness in the performances, Black Dog-Inj'emnyama is a strong contender for The Great South African Play. It is being taken to the Edinburgh Festival shortly. See it before then, and take your mother.

ROBIN LEVETAN'S

## SKYF

Skyf is an engrossing play about some ordinary young white South Africans. In the play the male characters dominate; their experiences expose the suffocation young white males feel in the face of compulsory conscription.

Each character has a different relationship with the military machine, and each portrays effectively situations with which

we are all too familiar. Skyf has thus far remained a student, but has now dropped out of art school and no longer has any official reason to postpone a call-up. Arnie, his housemate, awaits the inevitable camps. Paul, Arnie's brother, has avoided military service by leaving the country and registering at a university in London.

Each of the men faces this all-pervading threat with bitterness and frustration, and calls on his own strategy for coping with the problem. Skyf is cynical, antagonistic, Arnie always slightly panicky, and Paul, from his position of privilege far across the waters, somewhat arrogant.

All these reactions display a personal reaction to a reality which holds white

South African men in its clutches. For each character in the play this problem evokes an individual response, as each seeks his own way of coping. What stands out starkly is the sense of isolation that each man feels, for not one of them is able to draw on support from a broader group, be it political or personal support. Their very personal responses also restrict them in any attempt to confront the issue, for they lack the means to politically contextualise their own problems and so to express opposition and seek alternatives to the militarisation of their environment. What remains, and what causes one to leave the play feeling more frustrated than excited, is a sense of fatalism and a somewhat pessimistic view of the individual's possibilities for intervention in a repressive society.

## The Longest War

author : Timerman  
Published by Picador

One of the most striking aspects of this Israeli account of the early phases of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon is Timerman's intense patriotism, his hope that the Israeli people can regain democratic control of their country in time to avoid the "explosion of madness" their government is plunging them towards.

The author himself has great pride in Jewish identity and has been actively involved with Zionism since the early 1940s. He is concerned to draw a distinction between the rightwing fanaticism of such individuals as Begin and Sharon and the Israeli people. Sharon as early as 1959 was charged with senseless waste of Israeli soldiers' lives; Begin was considered "indiscriminate" in his terrorism in the 1940s by other Zionists. Perhaps Timerman overemphasizes the roles of these individuals in the protracted invasion. His concern is to reach and not alienate his Jewish audience, both of Israel and the Diaspora - hence his moderate, meditative tone throughout the book.

He outlines the development of "Sharon's war", from the lies of the initial "72-hour" operation to a state of almost total mobilization of Israel, showing the propaganda, censorship and deceit which promotes Begin's "paranoid fantasy" of the extent of the Palestinian military threat, when Israel's regional military super-dominance is beyond dispute, especially with its US backing. He shows the invalidity of Begin's repeated use of the Holocaust of Nazi Germany as an emotional prop whenever the war is questioned, from within Israel or outside, and the use of fear to gain obedience, the hysterical accusations against those who voice dissent. The author argues that the effect of the war is to destroy Israel's moral integrity and credibility - it was the first full-scale invasion and destruction of civilian areas Israel had undertaken and the government could no longer claim to be democratic. Anti-war feeling grew as soldiers returned from the front, their reports shocking Israelis at home, causing civilian protest and widespread requests for withdrawal and discharge from service. Sharon's purposeless waste of lives on both sides is emphasised by soldiers. Timerman's own son was killed at the beginning of the invasion, though the author makes minimal emotional use of this sad fact.

Timerman in no way condones Arafat's PLO, but condemns terrorist methods on both sides, and "it makes no sense to argue that the Palestinian's fighting the Israeli invaders of Lebanon are terrorists" He recognises the rights of Palestinians to a territory of their own, and likens anti-Palestinian discrimination and their exploitation to that of blacks in South Africa; but the solution, he says, must be "political" rather than "military". He expresses the hope that the Israeli people can rebuild their shattered moral integrity through repairing the destruction, physical and psychological, wrought by the army, and can grow out of the persecuted "ghetto" seige - mentality of Begin - what we call "laager" mentality here.

This is by no means the only aspect which strikes the South African reader with horrible familiarity. Timerman himself was imprisoned and tortured in Argentina in 1977, as editor of the main opposition newspaper. When invited last year to speak at the Academic Freedom week at Wits University, he was refused a visa by South African authorities. His analysis of regional destabilisation and the militarisation of Israel, SA's ally in military technology, leaves little confusion as to why this happened.



# Paul Dobson: 2 months to sit



Paul Dobson, who started military training and then objected in September 1983, is sitting out his year's sentence in Durban Central Prison.

Paul is working on an MA thesis on Indian labour, but with just over two months to serve, finds that time is passing very slowly.

He has had his A-Group rights taken away after having a fight with the librarian and warders, and in the eyes of the other prisoners, he has changed from "the professor" to "the coolie-lover", but he writes, "I suppose I can go so far as to say I'm okay, although bored often."

Paul also finds it difficult to write because of censorship restrictions: "I'm not allowed to write about life here - who I get on with alright, what I do to pass the time and so on. So, as all that is my immediate life right now it doesn't leave very much else to say."

Within the routine of prison life, he is very conscious of the passing of the seasons: "It was more or less spring when I went to be locked up at Natal Command; it's now autumn and I have missed the whole of the Durban summer. I'll really look forward to next year's - despite the humidity."

## Letters to Objector



*we invite constructive comment, criticism and contribution; please write to us.*



### The Little Observer

C-classes visit Simonstown Dockyard.

Last Monday we went to the Simonstown harbour the boat was a Navy boat the ride was nice and we went round the lighthouse then we saw some seals and we also saw some Navy men practicing for the war. Then we went to see some ships and saw a big submarine and a small submarine. Then we went back, took off the life-jackets and went to eat our lunch at the beach.

Wendy van Dyk - 2c

LITTLE OBSERVER: Newspaper of Obs. Junior School No. 1 June 1984.

Dear Objector

One of your issues recently reached us at Potch, where we are 'blomming af' with 18 months to go, exe! Good stuff - it's encouraging to know that someone out there feels the same as we do. My mates agree - we should have a right, as free people, to choose conscription. But 6 years' jail is no alternative! What can one do?

Yours  
Bored, Dissillusioned & Frustrated

Dear Objector,

I am an immigrant who can be called up under the new legislation, and am grateful for any information regarding the results of Conscientious Objection.

I would therefore appreciate it if you would continue to supply me with your publication.

An immigrant  
Sasolburg

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE OBJECTOR. IN THE POST, FILL IN THIS FORM AND SEND IT TO US AT THE ADDRESS BELOW. WE WOULD APPRECIATE A MINIMUM DONATION OF R2 FOR 6 MONTHS SUBSCRIPTION AND R4 FOR A YEAR [INSIDE S.A.], R5 AND R10 FOR OVERSEAS.

NAME: .....  
ADDRESS: .....  
I ENCLOSE ..... FOR A 6 MONTHS SUBSCRIPTION.  
I ENCLOSE ..... FOR 1 YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION.



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**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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