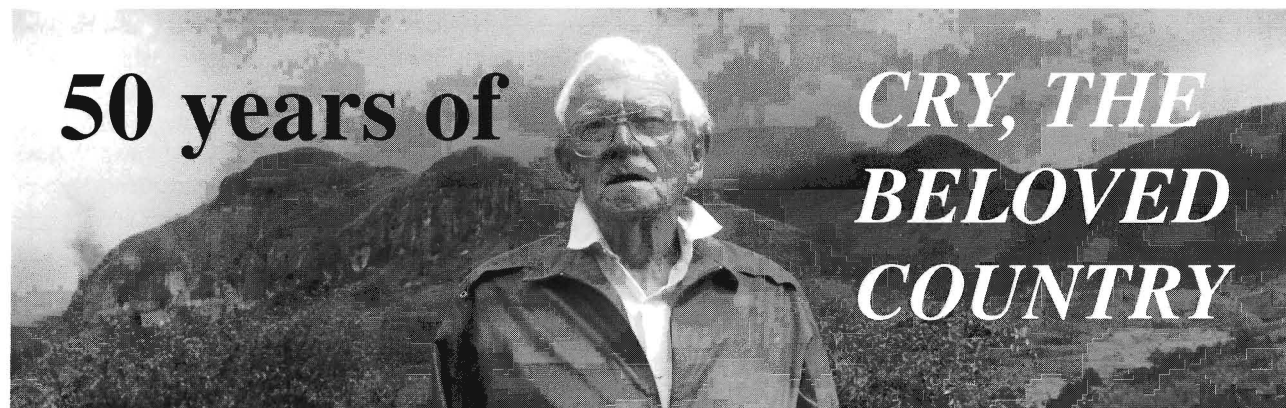
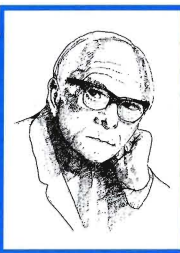


CONCORD

The Newsletter of the Alan Paton Centre for the study of the literature and politics of conflict and conciliation

Volume 1 No. 2

February 1998



Constance Stuart Larrabee

It seems more than 50 years since Paton's most famous work was published. Thinking back to February 1948, one becomes aware of how much has happened in South Africa since then. The National Party came to power only three months later, which means that apartheid as a fully organised scheme had not yet been brought into existence - though the novel shows how deeply entrenched racial discrimination and social injustice were. But it wasn't only people from South Africa who were moved and affected by *Cry*; and one has to add that the whole world has changed greatly since 1948.

It is accepted fairly generally, I think, that Paton's main message - or hope - of reconciliation has proved far more relevant and illuminating in the 1990s than it seemed to many to be in the 1970s and 1980s. Paton himself would have been overjoyed and overawed to witness the processes of negotiation which had in fact begun quietly by the time of his death in April 1988.

Perhaps the time has come to focus or

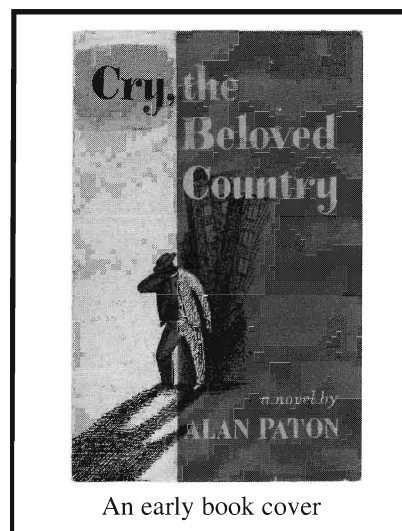
refocus our attention on other aspects of *Cry, the Beloved Country*. It is striking, for example, from an environmentalist point of view: "Stand unshod upon it, for the ground is holy, being even as it came from the Creator. Keep it, guard it, care for it, for it keeps men, guards men, cares for men. Destroy it and man is destroyed." That statement is made within a very specific socio-political context - as most such statements inevitably are - but (except for the fact that we would say "people" nowadays) it has a very contemporary ring. We are very aware that the notion of destroying people and destroying the earth is no mere hyperbole.

Another significant feature of the novel is that it is greatly concerned with crime and the social causes of crime. Paton was a criminologist and in 1947 and 1948 wrote two important articles on the subject. (They were republished in *Knocking on the Door*, which is now out of print.) In 1998 socio-economic conditions in South Africa are in various ways rather different from what they were fifty

years ago, but there are a sufficient number of continuing similarities to keep this aspect of the novel thought provoking and disturbing.

The novel is also significant as a complex narrative, with almost mythical resonances, and as a religious text. There is indeed a great deal in it that is worth exploring. It seems likely to fascinate and move readers of different kinds, and from different places, for many years to come.

Colin Gardner



An early book cover

CONCORD

Out of the study of conflict and conciliation there comes, hopefully, **concord** - that is agreement, harmony, and a 'being of the same heart or mind', so that justice and peace may take root in the new South Africa.

Donations, in the form of money or documents for deposit, will be welcomed by the Alan Paton Centre. Cheques should be made out to: The Alan Paton Centre.

The Fourth Alan Paton Lecture (28 August)



Indian High Commission, South Africa

Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the former Indian High Commissioner to South Africa

The fourth lecture in this annual series, hosted by the Alan Paton Centre and the Liberal Democratic Association (LDA), was given by Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the then Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, who is also a grandson of the Mahatma. The lecture was preceded by the visit of His Excellency to the Alan Paton Centre. His captivating and thought-provoking lecture entitled **"Simply not done: an inquiry into inner and outer restraint"** to a packed Moot Court on the Pietermaritzburg Campus, was met with standing applause.

In his reference to the slaying of Chris Hani (in 1993) and the application for amnesty by his killer, Janusz Walus, Gandhi said that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the product and the means for humaneness.

"It is intended as a means to heal; to forgive if not to forget; to reconcile if not unite. Let those unimpressed by this follow their lights. But let no one manipulate that forum. For it is made of the stuff conscience is made".

The cassette and transcript of the Lecture are available at the following prices:-

Audio cassette	R20 incl. Postage	(Overseas \$20)
Transcript	R12 incl. Postage	(Overseas \$12)

Book Launch (3 December)

Liberals Against Apartheid: a history of the Liberal Party of South Africa, 1953-68 by Randolph Vigne (Macmillan, 1997)

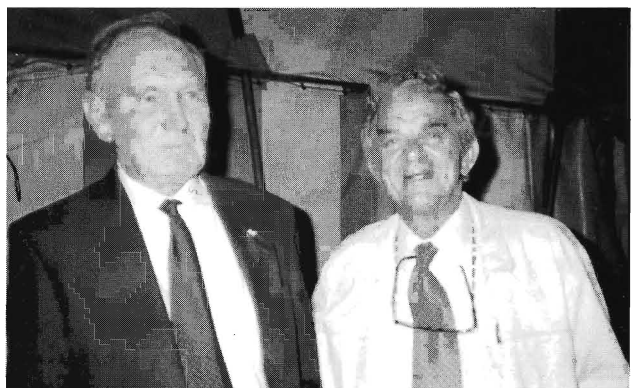
The long awaited launch of Vigne's book, based on research conducted at the Alan Paton Centre where the Party's archives have survived, and on interviews conducted with people who had first hand experience of apartheid repression, took place at the Alan Paton Centre.

Amongst the 120 guests were Party stalwarts Dr. Peter Brown and his wife Phoebe, Eddie Daniels (Western Cape), Mike Ndlovu (Bergville), Jean van Riet (Free State) and many former Liberal Party members. Three women whose husbands had been well known Liberals visited the Paton Centre for the first time. They were Mrs Elliot Mngadi, Mrs Chris Shabalala and elderly Mrs Hlatswayo.

During the evening's several speeches Peter Brown spoke of the banning of many Liberals under the apartheid government, and Eddie Daniels of his Robben Island experience and the recorded appreciation of Nelson Mandela for the Liberals' contribution in the Anti-Apartheid struggle. Mike Ndlovu stressed the contribution of the largely black membership of the Party and Jean van Riet, hale and hearty at 92, regaled guests with his thoughtful humour.

In his brief speech Randolph Vigne quoted an early prophecy of Alan Paton who was President for much of the Party's lifetime that **'South Africa would eventually reject the Liberal Party but accept its policies'**. The implementation of those policies in the new South Africa has proved this to be the case, contended Vigne.

A popular seller during the evening, *Liberals against Apartheid* exceeded all sales expectations as the book for Xmas.



Alan Paton Centre

Speakers during the book launch:

Above: Peter Brown and Eddie Daniels

Below: Jean van Riet (Excelsior Free State), Mike Ndlovu (Bergville) and Peter Brown



Alan Paton Centre

Oral History Project

Twenty seven interviews were undertaken during 1997 for the Oral History Project '**Recording the Anti-Apartheid struggle in KwaZulu-Natal**'.

Amongst those interviewed, some several times, were Archie Gumede, A.S. Chetty, Lena Mabhida, wife of Moses Mabhida who died in exile in Mozambique in 1986, Kader Hassim of The African Peoples Democratic Union of South Africa, and Muriel Nyembezi.

Paddy Kearney of Diakonia has continued his series of interviews with Archbishop Emeritus Denis E Hurley OMI. Transcripts for the Hurley series (9 to date) and the Peter Brown interviews (8) will be available to researchers shortly.

Interviews for the Project now total 80. It is hoped that transcription of the shorter interviews can be undertaken during 1998, as funding becomes available.

An interesting feature this year has been the growing



Alan Paton Centre

Ruth Lundie (Alan Paton Centre) and Sibongisene Mkize (Natal Museum) during their interview with A.S. Chetty 19 November 1997.

liaison with other institutions or units working in the oral history field for example The School of Theology on the University of Natal Pietermaritzburg Campus, and the Natal Museum. A number of workshops, a seminar and much fruitful co-operation have resulted.

'Archives tell our stories'

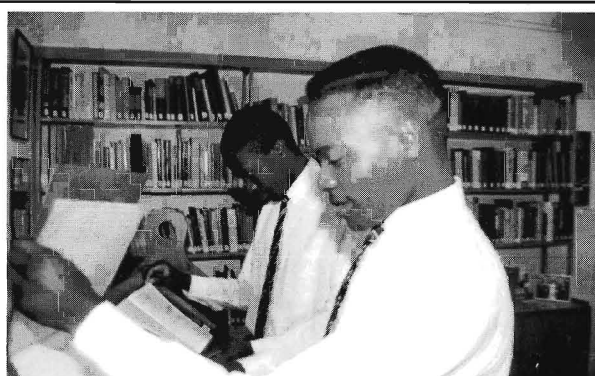
Approximately 670 High School students (Std 9 & 10) from the Greater Pietermaritzburg area visited the Alan Paton Centre during April-June for tours and workshops linked to the above theme.

The School Archives Project seeks to bring archives to the people, to give information about career and study opportunities in the library, museum and particularly the archival disciplines, and to **encourage the practical aspect of creating school and community archives**.

Alan Paton's life and works, and his intense interest in African education and development are also wellsprings of the programme.

A **School Archives Seminar** for school teachers, held on 2 August, workshopped the problems faced by teachers in creating, documenting, preserving and displaying archival and museum material in school archives.

The Alan Paton Centre was able to give bursaries to four African teachers attending the Seminar which was hosted by the South African Society of Archivists (Midlands Branch) and the Alan Paton Centre. Certificates of Attendance signed by the National Archivist were given out at the end of the Seminar.



Alan Paton Centre

The Manuscript Librarian assisting High School Matric students during their visit to the Alan Paton Centre.

'The Role Records Play in Revealing the Past' (24 September)

This was the theme of the Heritage Day Seminar held appropriately in the Colin Webb Hall on the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, last year. (Colin Webb was an historian who placed a particular emphasis on the importance of archival material.)

Speakers included Professor Charles Villa-Vicencio, the national research Director of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) based in Cape Town, Cherryl Walker, the KwaZulu-Natal Land Commissioner for the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights, and Verne Harris a Deputy Director of the National Archives of South Africa in Gauteng,

Villa-Vicencio looked at 'documentation in the quest for "truth" in the TRC', and Walker at the practical and structural difficulties encountered in implementing the work of the Land Commission in KwaZulu-Natal. Harris, in turn, took a critical and inquiring look at Archives in South Africa, and the implementation of the New Archives Act. His theme was 'claiming less and delivering more'.

Lively questions from the floor made this Seminar, hosted by the Alan Paton Centre and the South African Society of Archivists (Midlands Branch), an interesting and informative event.

Documents of interest received include:-

Vigne, Randolph, 1997 *Liberals against Apartheid*.

Diskette

160 000 words, being the unedited version of the book published by Macmillan, London October 1997 (length 100 000 words).

Hardcopy text also available, PC86

Seekings Collection

History of the United Democratic Front (UDF): KwaZulu-Natal

Interviews with 19 activists undertaken by Dr. Jeremy Seekings in 1992, including Archie Gumede, Pravin Gordhan, Curnick Ndlovu, Yunus Mohamed, Ian Mkize, Reggie Radebe, Khetso Gordhan, Billy Nair, Paul David, Lechesa Tsenoli, Yunus Carrim, Virgil Bonhomme, Sbu Ndebele, Nosizwe Madlala, Mdou Ndlovu, Mewa Ramgobin, Sandy Africa and Baba Dlamini.

19 Audiotapes, 7 Transcripts. 98APB

Cohn Papers 1960

'The beginning of the police state in South Africa: a personal experience'.

Typescript, 11 pages. This script details the prison experiences of Gertrude Cohn during the 1960 Emergency.

Gertrude Cohn, wife of Gerhard Cohn, a member of the SACP, was arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act 1960. A social worker, she was banned on her release from prison, and went into exile in the United Kingdom in 1964. PC109.

Our World Link

Half way through 1997 the Alan Paton Centre joined the ranks of the WWW with its own homepage. This greatly improved means of publicity for the Alan Paton Centre, led to the generating of a number of interesting information requests, which in turn may soon result in the commencement of a list of FAQ's (frequently asked questions). The homepage will be updated on a regular basis from this year to accommodate current events and additional information.

Visitors to the homepage can familiarise themselves with information, accompanied with illustrations, ranging from the Alan Paton Centre itself and the work it does, a chronology of Alan Paton and his works, the archival collections, research and publications linked to the Alan Paton Centre, and the many functions the Centre has been involved with in the past year.

The homepage will be utilised widely during the course of 1998 to publicise our activities planned for the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Cry, the beloved country*.

To be informed on the Alan Paton Centre and its work, visit our homepage at:- <http://www.unp.ac.za/UNPDepartments/Library/ahome.htm>

Donation to Concord



Hassim Akoob, Joint Regional General Manager of NBS, hands over a cheque of R5 000 to University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brenda Gourley, for the publication of the Alan Paton Centre's newsletter *Concord*.

Patricia Merrett

The loss of Patricia Merrett, who passed away in January 1997, was keenly felt by the Oral History Project team.

Patricia, an interviewer on the Project, had a particular interest in the life experiences of women involved in the anti-apartheid struggle, and in gender issues. Her historical studies background and training will be missed.

Those interviewed by her included:- Marie Dyer, 'Bunty' Biggs, Else Schreiner, and Doreen Hindle.

Publications linked to research at the Alan Paton Centre

Vigne, Randolph

Liberals Against Apartheid: a history of the Liberal Party 1953-68.

Macmillan: October 1997. 288pp. Illustrated, map.
ISBN 0-333-71355-9 Hardcover: R96

The Liberal Party of South Africa was founded in 1953 to promote non-racial democratic liberalism in opposition to apartheid, by then firmly entrenched under white supremacist rule. From upholding the old ideals of 'Cape liberalism' within the established order, it quickly moved into the extra-parliamentary field and won considerable black support against Communist and nascent African nationalist competition.

Liberals against Apartheid narrates the Liberal Party's struggle during the heyday of apartheid, when its growth of influence in the post-Sharpeville Emergency, in organising opposition to apartheid laws, forced removals of Africans from so-called 'Black Spots' and the imposition of surrogate apartheid regimes in the Transkei and elsewhere, brought heavy government attack and the 'banning' of nearly fifty of its leaders, both black and white.

1968 saw both legislation passed which outlawed racially-mixed political action and the Party's inevitable dissolution.

Concord is produced by Joi Leslie-Smith and Debora Matthews, Alan Paton Centre, and layout is by Alistair Nixon, Audio Visual Centre, University of Natal, Private Bag X01, 3209, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.
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