

# Editorial comment

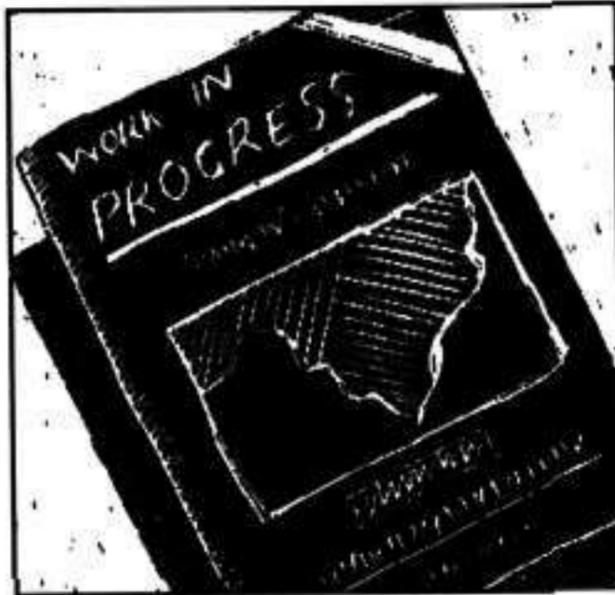
## Let's get the agenda sorted out

As multi-party negotiations start to bear fruit and we move closer towards an election, some important issues are in danger of slipping off the agenda.

In this edition of *Work In Progress*, we try to focus attention on a couple of those issues:

● **INTEGRITY:** Much has been said about the recent 'peace agreement' brokered between the PLO's Yasir Arafat and Israeli prime minister Yitzak Rabin. But the PLO seems to have made some serious mistakes — opting for a solution which could, in the long run, undermine decades of struggle. There are a few lessons which South Africans cannot ignore, and in this edition veteran Palestinian activist Edward Said tries to guide us through the compromises.

● **SOLIDARITY:** *WIP* recently brought veteran Chilean politician Manuel Cabieses Donoso to South Africa, and the activists he met benefitted greatly from his explanation of conditions in Chile 20 years after the coup. Cabieses' country is held up by the west as an economic success story — and for the three people who together own more than 70% of the country's wealth, it probably is. But not for the massive numbers of people who live under the breadline (approximately 46% of the population, compared to 20% prior to the 1973 coup). The neoliberal economic model and its accompanying misery are making it easier for the Left to organise in Chile, but



it is still an uphill battle — and one which we should watch with interest.

● **IDENTITY:** Race has always played a dominant role in the South African struggle. Despite this, the struggle to develop a truly non-racial ethic has not been too successful — probably, as our writers argue in this edition, because opposition to racism is not the same thing as building non-racialism. If we're going to build a truly democratic South Africa, we're going to have to deal with race and racism — and that means building true non-racialism, rather than multi-racialism. It's an issue that affects all of us, and one which needs urgent attention.

● Finally, **RADICAL CHANGE:** South Africa's first Conference of the Left is definitely on (see page 2). Cosatu and the SACP have been charged with the task of convening the conference, and the gathering is likely to have a profound effect on the nature of post-apartheid South Africa. The conference will have to put aside petty differences and grapple with very real problems ... poverty, social injustice, unemployment, marginalisation. It will have to debate new forms of organisation, the many challenges facing the Left internationally and at home, and ways of harnessing the collective energy of those committed to radical change. It will, above all, have to ensure the rapid implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme — at a time when the winds of change may be blowing very, very lightly.

— Chris Vick

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