

# VIVA! VIVA!

by DAVID BASCKIN

## WHAT FOREIGN OBSERVERS CAN ADD TO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS

**L**ORD SOAMES, Grand Architect of the Lancaster Agreement, had some unique perceptions of elections in Africa. In his view, they differed from the Western variety in this curious way. "They (the voters of Africa) think nothing of sticking tent poles up each other's whatnot and doing filthy, beastly things to each other. It's a very wild thing, an election."

I can only say that, despite massive provocation, we of the former Progressive Party never used to do this sort of thing at all. I remember once, in the company of some other Highbury Old Boys, heckling a United Party candidate in such a way that inferences about his whatnot were drawn by every member of the audience. But heavens above, the very thought of tent poles never entered our minds. Apart from anything else, it violated both the letter and the spirit of the Qualified Franchise.

## TEN BUCKS EQUALS ONE RHINO

**W**HAT WITH the buck in your pocket shrinking by the day, the SA Reserve Bank, in response to consumer demand, is soon to issue new, improved bank notes. Not only will they be bigger in a numerical sense, but that jolly Dutch imperialist Jan van Riebeeck is to vanish as decoration. In his place comes a whole game reserve of ideology-free animals with a green ten rand note featuring a rhino; the brown twenty carrying a buffalo, the red fifty a lion, the cool blue century an elephant and the orange two hundred a leopard.

But sadly, all these giant animals are just part of the general inflationary trend. In terms of the reality of purchasing power, different fauna would have been a whole lot more suitable. The two hundred should feature a female baboon

viewed from the rear, the hundred a puff adder, the fifty (soon to be the most common piece of paper in your wallet) a black rat, and the twenty a locust. Rumour has it that the entire printing of the new tens has already been bought out by a major confectioner as wrapping for bubblegum.

## WHAT WINE WAS THAT?

**P**OISONED BY drink from a night of cabernet excesses, I was secluded with my wordprocessor pounding the keys at random hoping that this column might just appear of its own accord. After a few minutes of this I managed to open my eyes. The screen offered no evidence of the power of automatic writing. Successfully hitting the delete button on the third attempt, my wandering eye chanced upon an unopened bottle of something on the desk. Judging from the litter of similar empties on the floor, we had cracked a case of whatever it was the night before. Closer examination revealed that it was not cabernet, but pinotage. A sip from a brimming glassful revealed the classic pinotage acetone nose with an aftertaste not dissimilar to that following an unsuccessful petrol siphoning attempt.

Realizing that something definitely out of the ordinary was in the glass, I carefully examined the label. The total lack of Afrikaans was a dead-giveaway. This was not a genuine Cape wine! Despite the Reserve Superiour appellation, it came from Zimbabwe where it would seem that the local viticulturalists have successfully hybridized the Cape Hermitage grape with maize. The resulting wine is a startling experience well up with the very best that Algerian and Bulgarian wines have to offer. But a small word of advice to the infant Zimbabwean wine industry. Take a leaf out of the Austrian winemakers' book and add a good dose of antifreeze to the mix. Believe me, it can only improve the taste. ●

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