

MCH 92-32-1-15

14 Meadow Road
Rosebank
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Cape
9th July 1990

Prof A Sachs
London

Dear Professor Sachs,

It has been a great pleasure and privilege for me to have been asked to edit your papers. I have long been an admirer of yours and greatly respect your work. Editing your papers is proving an extremely enriching and worthwhile experience in human and political terms.

My deadlines have been very tight. Please view this as a first 'draft edit'. I will be going through each chapter a second time, particularly to make sure that all Oxford University Press' editing conventions (which are different from many other editing conventions) are met.

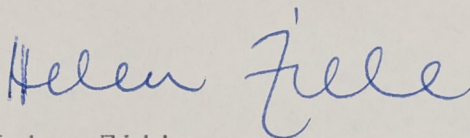
Some of the original print-outs are full of my marks and comments in the margins and on the text. It will be difficult for you to make any sense of them. So I have marked the points that need your attention with an orange koki. You can ignore the rest. Also, ignore the green koki. I used it to remind myself to ask questions of the OUP publishers.

On several occasions I wrote notes to myself in the margin that later became redundant, usually because you answered the question yourself further down in the text, or because I managed to resolve the problem myself. I tried to tippex out redundant notes with rather thick tippex. When there was too much marginal comment to make tippexing feasible, I just left it in. Most of the comments that remain relevant are noted in separate editing notes attached to each chapter. You are obviously free to take up the points, or not, as you see fit.

I hope to be able to meet you personally when you are home again.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



Helen Zille

Editing Comments.

Towards a Charter of Children's Rights:

I did quite an extensive edit on this chapter. Please check the edited version.

1. This chapter raises questions about individual responsibility, even in the face of overwhelming odds. It is obviously particularly difficult to raise these questions in respect of children. They are the most vulnerable members of society, and their lives are shaped by social, political, and economic factors that they can do nothing to influence. The vast majority of South Africa's children have indeed been devastated by apartheid. They are abused by the organised might of the state.

Some have also been brutalised. I think you need to address this point. South Africans have repeatedly seen photographs of children dancing around burning bodies. They have witnessed groups of youth (children up to 18), whose popular mandate is uncertain, enforcing their will on entire communities, whether in the form of forced payment for their ^{organization's} political activities, or 'monitoring' school boycotts etc. This has caused much resentment within communities. Many senior activists have conceded that there is a youth element 'out of control' who feel free to engage any form of action in the name of the struggle.

Is it correct to imply (particularly in the case of 'older' children -- up to 18) that they are entirely victims of the state?; are they capable of choice and moral responsibility? You imply that they are; you mention that children have taken on the responsibility of adults. This seems to suggest that many have transcended their circumstances, and indeed they have. This contradicts a theme throughout that children are merely the victims.

As you point out in the chapter on women, those who have suffered the most oppression in our society, from a variety of sources, are playing heroic roles, transcending their circumstances and sustaining and nurturing families against all odds. Many do this while actively engaging the struggle.

It is very difficult to make this point from a position of white, middle-class privilege; it may even be immoral to do so. But I will try: One of the greatest challenges of the future will be to avoid the (legitimate) temptation to continue blaming everything on apartheid atrocities as a way of ducking moral responsibility for our actions. This applies to teenage children as well as to others. Society does indeed owe the children a great debt and will have to make extensive reparations. You make creative suggestions about how this can be done. But I think it is important to address the other side of the coin.

2. This chapter takes no cognisance of the substantial change in rhetoric that the government has undergone in the past years. In recent times the government has actively propagated the idea that the diversity of cultural sources in our contry can be a foundation for richness etc. and children are actively encouraged in a variety of ways, particularly in the mass media, to respect and care for each other. You may dismiss this as cynical rhetoric. Indeed, much legislative follow-up is needed to turn the rhetoric into reality. Nevertheless many of the attitudes that you ascribe to the government are more reminiscent of 1960s apartheid than the rhetoric of the 'new South Africa'. This leads to overstatement at times. I think you need to address this point



INSERT B

The Right to a Future

Hailed as heroic young lions by ~~some~~ ^{many} and denounced as precocious tyrants by others, the children of our country have undoubtedly borne the brunt of anti-apartheid conflict.

Excessively street-wise and prison-wise and combat-wise, they now have the right to emerge from their traumas and claim the future for which they have struggled so hard.

Once the slogan was liberation now, education later. Today it has to be education now, liberation now. Tens and hundreds of thousands of specialists will have to emerge from the ranks of the oppressed if the country is ever to know true equality.

∴ The present generation of young people



have the right not to be fossilised as premature veterans, not to be converted into eternal victims of a cruel society, not to be ~~permanent~~ ^{everlasting} exhibits ^{to} of the cruelty of apartheid.

They have the most fundamental of rights, the right to have rights, and also the most fundamental of responsibilities, the responsibility to be responsible.

We of their parents' generation have our rights and responsibilities too. We cannot use the notion of living for the future as a pretext for evading our responsibility for the present. We fight for a free and democratic South Africa because that is what we want for ourselves. It is less selfish to acknowledge that fact and live our lives in an open and spirited way, than to appropriate the future in



a pre-designed scheme and then
complain later of our children's
~~for not accepting~~ ^{what we did for them.}
ingratitude! Our sacrifices have been
for ourselves, not for future generations.
^{mejor}
Our contribution is to create conditions
to enable our children to have their
own future. Their right to have rights
implies that they are not victims of
history; their responsibility to have
responsibilities requires them to ~~pass~~
assume their potential as full human
beings, ^{now} sensitive to whom they are
and caring about what they do.

The children of our country ^{should accordingly} ~~are~~ not be
^{seen as} our adjuncts to be mobilised for this or
that action and then told to shut up
and wait for the future we are organising
for them. Nor ~~are~~ ^{should} they ^{be regarded as} free-floating bands
roaming the streets in constant tension
with the community. They have the right



to be free citizens ^(of a just society) and not angry
victims of ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~unjust~~ ^{unjust} one.

Therefore the greatest of legal rights they can
have is to grow up under a new
constitution that recognises the worth,
dignity, capacity and yearnings of all.
If we are the mothers and fathers of
that new constitution, they are its
daughters and sons ^{and} we are all its
~~the~~ authors.



INSERT / A

When children report on ^{fatalities} ~~deaths~~ - 'our side'
versus 'their side' - as if giving a
football score, we all bear the
shock.

INSERT B p.6.

In particular, the adoption by the
United Nations of the International
Convention on the Rights of the Child,
provides a secure foundation for
legislation in all countries.