

Double: \$38.20; Four: \$47.

This is a small hotel located beyond DuPont Circle. It is three blocks to the subway, then three stops to McPherson Square, the stop nearest the Capital Hilton Hotel.

Virginia hotels:

Claringdon Hotel Court

3824 Wilson Blvd.

Arlington, VA 22203

(703) 525-7200

Single: \$34.88; Double: \$37.06; Weekend special (Sat & Sun): \$29.43.

Located near Virginia Square Metro Station of Subway.

Highlander Motor Inn

3336 Wilson Blvd.

Arlington, VA 22201

(703) 524-4300

Single: \$32.00; Double: \$37.00.

Located near Virginia Square Metro Station.

Quality Inn— Iwo Jima

1501 Arlington Blvd.

Arlington, VA 22209

(703) 524-5000

Single: \$34.00; Double: \$47.00.

Located near the Iwo Jima Marine Statue and the Rosslin Metro Station.

Travel notes: The Subway Station nearest the Capital Hilton Hotel is the McPherson Square Station. From National Terminal take the Capital Hilton shuttle service which runs every half hour or so during the day, or the Subway. From Dulles Airport, the best arrangement is probably to take the bus which stops at the Capital Hilton, and costs between \$7 and \$10.

Other hotel and accomodation information will be available at the Annual Meeting, or contact Robert Edgar, (202) 636-7655.

Group reservations should be made at least one month in advance.

OBITUARY—RUTH FIRST

Ruth First, the exiled South African journalist, internationally known and respected for her work in the cause of African liberation, was killed on August 17th by a letter bomb which exploded in her office at Mozambique's Eduardo Mondlane University.

First, who was Research Director of the Centre of African Studies, was killed instantly. The bomb, which is widely believed to have originated from South African security sources, also injured several of her colleagues, including Aquino de Braganca, Director of the Centre, and close confidant of President Samora Machel.

First was 57 years old when she was killed. She had spent most of her life actively fighting the racism and exploitation of apartheid South Africa. Her total commitment to the struggle for national and social emancipation earned her many arrests, a long period of detention in solitary confinement, eventual exile and death. But her life was lived with passion and tremendous energy. Caution, or fear of unpleasant consequences, were always overridden by her involvement in life, which, for her meant involvement with profound social change.

She joined the South African Communist Party as a teenager, regarding it as the only non-racial political party operating in South Africa, and continued her work after the Party was driven underground by the Nationalist government in 1950. She worked closely with and became a member of the African National Congress. Her name has been inextricably linked with the South African freedom struggle for over thirty years.

She was born and educated in Johannesburg, and worked as a journalist on a series of newspapers which were banned by the government for their determined pro-liberation stand, and exposure of horrors such as the slave labor conditions under which pass-law offenders were forced to work for Afrikaner potato farmers in the Eastern Transvaal.

In 1956, along with Joe Slovo, her attorney husband, and political leaders like Nelson Mandela, she was charged with High Treason. The trial, involving 156 defendants, dragged on until 1961, when the charges were dismissed for lack of proper evidence. But First continued to be the victim of constant police harassment. In 1963, she was detained in solitary confinement for several months, an experience about which she wrote a harrowing account in the book *117 Days*. Eventually driven into exile by the constraints placed on her political functioning, First joined her husband and three children in London, where she published a number of important books including one on the Namibian struggle for independence, an analysis of military coups in five African countries, an examination of the Libyan revolution and a close study of Western economic interests in South Africa called *The South African Connection*.

She and her husband returned to southern Africa soon after Mozambican independence in 1975. At the University in Maputo, Ruth continued her work on the politics and economics of apartheid. Appointed as Director of Research, she set the Center for African Studies to undertaking a series of vital research studies such as the impact on the Mozambican economy of traditional out-migration of labor to South Africa's mines. Maputo became a centre for carrying on the lively debate engaging young South African historians, economists and social scientists, as they sought to re-examine and challenge conventional theories about South Africa in the light of a developing Marxist perspective.

South Africa was always central to Ruth's activities, but she had a breadth of concern about humanity's struggle for greater social justice that transcended national boundaries, and a personal integrity that informed her stand on a broad range of issues. Along with leading African historian Basil Davidson, she wrote in support of the Eritrean struggle for self-determination, and, displaying yet another side of her complex interests, joined feminist Ann Scott in writing a biography about Olive Schreiner, herself a striking early South African feminist and novelist.

Ruth was killed for her ideas and her associations. No one, not even the Chief of South African Security police, who recently announced "the uncompromising pursuit and destruction" of South African guerrillas "whoever they may", accused her of dealing with the military aspects of the liberation struggle. But she fostered powerful ideas.

3000 Mozambicans came to mourn Ruth First when she was buried in Maputo. In South Africa, her murder will sadden many thousands more, but it is certain also to

generate anger that will strengthen the struggle for freedom to which this tough, courageous woman gave her extraordinary energy and her life.

Jennifer Davis, Director
American Committee on Africa

LETTERS

PLEA TO AID AEQUATORIA CENTER (We received a copy of the following letter addressed to Ambassador Easum at the AAI)

July 1, 1982

About a year ago we founded at Bamanya-Mbandaka the "Aequatoria Center". At the Catholic Mission there lives Father Gustaaf HULSTAERT, the well-known linguist specialized in matters of Mongo-culture. His very rich library and archives are open now for students and other researchers.

The library has about 3,000 specialized books, the important collections of ARSOM, IFAN, etc. and also many scientific reviews in matters of anthropology, linguists and history. Most of these come from the colonial period.

The two sections of the archives cover historical and linguistic materials. There are also more than 300 geographical maps of the area. The linguistic section comprises the numerous notes and surveys taken by Father Hulstaert during more than 55 years.

We should like to transfer this library and archives to Mbandaka, the capital of the region, in order to assure an easier consultation, a better conservation and a greater impact on the "intelligentia". With this center we would like to encourage scientific research on the cultures and languages of the people of Zaire, especially of the Mongo people living in the central basin of the country.

For this purpose it relaunched the periodical "Aequatoria" (1937-1962) under the new name "Annales Aequatoria". It is addressed to students and researchers: firstly as a source of information, and as a place of scientific dialogue between different cultures.

The Center also likes to assure follow up to teachers in cultural matters. In this way it will stimulate cultural life in a region where cultural activities on a scientific level ceased in the sixties. It is our conviction that conditions are now appropriate to promote cultural research.

To realize the transfer of the library and archives we are looking for financial aid. An older house could be transformed with an adequate infrastructure. We need some 40,000 dollars. The cultural attache of your embassy asked us to beseech you for help to realize this important project of cultural work in the region. I pray you to receive the expression of our gratitude.

H. Vinck
B. P. 276
Mbandaka, Zaire

MORE LIGHT ON BRUTUS

Dear Mr. Sklar:

I am replying to your message to Assistant Secretary Abrams concerning the asylum request of Dennis Brutus, a citizen of South Africa.