

No easy walk

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Karoo town's poll fears



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Election tests SA's will to change

By PAUL GRAHAM

WITH only weeks to go before South Africa's first non-racial election – the scale and importance of which we have never before experienced – the transitional vehicle we have cobbled together is starting to show signs of a major speed wobble.

The negotiated structural frameworks of the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Independent Media Commission (IMC) were designed at a time when negotiators thought their task would be over in 1993. They would have had a few months to gather their energies before opening up their engines again and driving the last few kilometres with the needle in the red.

To continue the metaphor, even this might have been acceptable had the road ahead been smooth. What is required now is a turbo-charged tank capable of cornering the bends like a well-known brand of German car.

The fact is, we are not going to have a perfect election. It is going to test the mettle of all those committed to change and democracy. This includes not only parties, officials and organised civil society but also voters.

We should not try to pretend that everything is normal and that this election is, as a member of the IEC put it, happening in a democratic



ELECTION DRAMA: Actors bring voter education to a Cape Town community during the problem-wracked run-up to the April election.

'Truth sets a nation free'

If there is to be real healing in South Africa, we have to know the truth about the past. This is the thinking behind a new programme aimed at creating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. RONEL SCHEFFER spoke to Alex Boraine.

THERE is a sense of unreality and unfinished business as South Africa prepares for democratic elections. To many the "official" transition from apartheid to democracy seems to have been too slick for what preceded it. The election will no doubt provide a climax of some sort, but will we ever

experience the catharsis usually associated with new beginnings?

The temptation to evade the difficulties of dealing with the injustices of the past will be great for a government of national unity faced with pressing needs on almost every front, as well as the challenge of day to day governance. But such avoidance will come at a considerable price, says Idasa executive director Alex Boraine.

He urges civil society to pressurise the new government to come up with a policy on past injustice. If South Africans ignore the past, he warns, it will come back to haunt them, as is happening in some neighbouring countries where the truth was sacrificed in reconciliation attempts that were misguided.

DEMOCRACY in ACTION



Idasa's goals are:

To promote the development of a democratic culture in South Africa

To address fear, prejudice, anger and other obstacles in the transition to a non-racial democracy in South Africa

To engage influential groups and individuals who may be outsiders to the transition process

To provide, wherever possible, information on critical issues and to explore ways of addressing these

To facilitate discussion of constitutional and developmental issues relevant to Southern Africa

To assist and encourage others to contribute to the attainment of these goals



Ja-Nee

Ms-spelt?

The first line of a letter received from The Women's Lobby states that if women want to make changes in government, the place to begin is at local level. The letter, however, is addressed to Dear Sir.

- It seems the place for them to begin is with their own terminology.

Rosé by any other name

At a recent Pieter-Dirk Uys show in Kalk Bay, Cape Town, Evita's sister, Bambi Kellerman, pointed out to an almost exclusively white audience a bitter irony - for years they have been drinking a wine called *Swartland Blanc du Blanc*.

- He also toasted the audience with a glass of Allesverloren.

Radio re-active

A radio listener phoned Idasa to complain about their democracy adverts on Radio 702. He asked why Idasa used white people's voices to portray black people and demanded to know why Idasa did not make more of an effort to get black actors. The caller seemed taken aback when told that it was in fact a black actor and that all black people don't necessarily have the same accents.

- Sounding out people's assumptions and prejudices.

A woman's place

Graffiti seen in Observatory, Cape Town - changed from "The Women Shall Govern" to "The Women Shall Use the Oven" to "The Men Shall Use the Oven".

- Traditional rolls?

Say that again!

Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, SABC chairperson, has threatened to take the corporation to the Independent Media Commission after it allegedly misquoted her response to FW de Klerk's claims that SATV was ANC-biased.

- A case of the tail wagging the media (watch)dog?

Nearly grounded

A disabled senior citizen of Cape Town, accompanied by his wife, nearly lost an opportunity for a holiday in Johannesburg when a South African Airways check-in assistant told them SAA did not cater for people in wheelchairs. Fortunately management intervened.

- Duck for flying insults.

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Bleak winter if FA fails to come in from the cold



YET another last-ditch attempt has been made to persuade the Freedom Alliance to participate in the forthcoming election. South Africa must be one of the "ditchiest" countries in the world!

But the stakes are so high that efforts made by the ANC and the government to include as many parties as possible in the election can only be applauded. Should the Freedom Alliance continue its rejection of the Interim Constitution and refuse to register by the extended date of 4 March, the possibilities for a reasonably free and fair election will be seriously diminished – or, some would argue, ruled out altogether.

If right-wing parties and the Inkatha Freedom Party deny their supporters the chance to influence the legislative process at national and regional levels, the long-term implications for their futures as parties could be seriously damaging.

The short-term implications for all South Africans are, however, deadly serious. As far as the right-wing parties are concerned, judging by the threats that have been made and the incidents which have already occurred, there will be attempts to protect white exclusivity at all costs and to frustrate the process of the election as far as possible.

We can expect aggressive defence of public property, particularly in small towns and villages, as if this property was the sole right of white residents. The use of resistance tactics and worse will take place in local areas where blacks are most vulnerable.

It is almost certain that there will be widespread intimidation of potential voters, whether they be white or black. Non-co-operation by farmers, for example, could well be organised and carried out. More seriously, there could be destruction of property and widespread sabotage. Vigilante groups, geared to attack individuals, groups and property, will no doubt be formed. The possibility of assassination attempts must also be taken into account.

If right-wing whites do orchestrate a resistance campaign that goes beyond constitutional and peaceful opposition to the election, it will follow that blacks who are victims of the campaign will not take this lying down. They will react forcibly. The result is that the precarious fabric of our society could be in danger of being torn apart.

The saving grace may be the interdependence of blacks and whites in South Africa, whether or not the right wing or left wing wish to concede this. As a result, one can only hope that common sense will prevail and that the hard-line reaction will be confined to a small, militant group.

The above scenario is not intended to frighten or dismay, but simply to emphasise the importance of attempts that have been made over the last few weeks to include rather than exclude right-wing groups.

The situation in Natal/KwaZulu is even more grave. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, after resisting the process leading towards an election for months, has now played his king card

and it will be extremely difficult for the ANC and the government to ace this.

In modern times, the Zulu monarchy has not played a major role. But it has always been of great significance to all Zulus, particularly in the field of culture, history and tradition. Now the monarchy, which should be a unifying symbol, has become a source of increased conflict, bringing greater hurt rather than healing. As a direct result of the action by the Chief Minister, conflict has been institutionalised. There are no Zulus who wish to sideline the monarchy or denigrate the king, irrespective of the party to which they belong. But what many do object to is his public siding with one particular political party. If this continues and if the king, under Buthelezi's influence, continues to demand secession, the possibilities of something close to civil war in Natal/KwaZulu cannot be ruled out.

Even if at this late stage the ultimate decision is reversed and the IFP participates in the election, enormous damage has been done and it will be difficult to contain the strong feelings between ANC supporters and IFP supporters.

The key to the resolution of conflict lies not with the king but with Buthelezi. He has the power and the influence to remove the potential for bloodshed at a level that we have not yet witnessed, even in the Killing Fields of Natal. Should he persist in encouraging the king to hold out for secession, and should he continue to demand that the IFP not participate in the election, then he will have to accept responsibility for the tragic consequences which will unfold.

PERHAPS because he does hold the key it will take a meeting between Nelson Mandela, F W de Klerk and Buthelezi to try to bridge the current gulf and bring about a measure of reconciliation, thus ensuring IFP participation in the forthcoming election.

One thing is clear: the election will proceed with or without the Freedom Alliance. Should the Alliance not take part, then a critical question will be the issue of whether the government, the ANC and other participating parties can count on the loyalty of the South African Defence Force and the South African Police.

Despite the establishment of a Peacekeeping Force, there can be no doubt at all that the only forces that can keep the peace are the existing security forces. A huge responsibility will therefore lie with the Transitional Executive Council, the Independent Electoral Commission and the government itself. They must ensure that this loyalty is in place and that the leadership of the SADF and SAP does not succumb to any party political pressure. They must see to it that the security forces do the work of maintaining law and order throughout the run-up to the election and on the critical election days and the days that follow.

*Alex Boraine
Executive Director*

Pretoria

Military tour

Idasa Transvaal will be co-ordinating a tour of military personnel to Denmark and Brussels from 12 to 23 March.

Participants will come from the SA Defence Force, Transkei and Venda defence forces, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the ANC's Military Wing and the Freedom Alliance.

The aim of the tour is three-fold: to study civil-military relations in Denmark, to learn of the example set by Nato and to build confidence and trust between the participants.

Bloemfontein

Duties growing

The Bloemfontein office is extending its area of work to the Northern Cape. Contact has been established with organisations in this region and a workshop will be held with them at the beginning of March.

• Idasa will also be involved in extensive training of voter

educators in the Orange Free State and the local SABC radio station, Radio Oranje, has asked the Bloemfontein office to participate in a phone-in on voter education.

Port Elizabeth

Kaunda visit

The Idasa Port Elizabeth office, in conjunction with a local company, Metal Box, will be hosting the former president of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, from 4 March.

Kaunda will be addressing workers and management at Metal Box on the subject of international markets. He will also speak at a lunch for Port Elizabeth business people on business markets in Africa.

In the evening a banquet will be held at the Eastern Cape Training Centre where Kaunda will address guests on the electoral process in Africa and the lessons South Africa could learn.

On Sunday 6 March Kaunda will receive the freedom of Kwa-Magxaki, a township outside Port Elizabeth, at a rally at the

Dan Qeque Stadium. At the rally he will speak on the reintegration of South Africa into the Organisation of African Unity.

Western Cape

Voter education

The Western Cape regional office will be conducting voter education workshops and programmes in the run-up to the 27 April poll. Equipped with their own voter education manuals, staff members are organising and running workshops for schools, employers, churches, etc. If you want to organise or participate in a workshop please contact Michelle or Charles on (021) 47-1280. Depending on availability, staff will be happy to oblige.

Natal

Contact for help

Idasa Natal will also be holding Voter Education Workshops. Phone (031) 304-8893 for assistance.

Idasa remembers key staffer



LOSS: Former Idasa staff member Fana Zungu.

"FANA" Zungu, one of the two regional co-ordinators who assisted in establishing the Natal Office of Idasa, died recently as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident.

Zungu provided a community liaison service to Idasa during a time when the Natal politics required very sensitive handling. Once the basis for the office was established, he began to assist in a programme for teachers and ran a number of successful conferences bringing teachers together to discuss open schools and curricula for a new society.

He left Idasa to become head teacher at the Phambili Community School and then joined the Independent Projects Trust which trains people in conflict resolution.

He leaves his wife and two children.

Where to find us

IDASA'S national office has moved.

We are now located at Albion Spring, 183 Main Road, Rondebosch 7700. Our postal address is P O Box 575, Rondebosch 7700, and you can phone us on (021) 689-8389, fax 689-3261.

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Name change

IDASA is pleased to announce a change of name with immediate effect. The abbreviation, Idasa, will remain the same, but from now on, the initials will stand for the *Institute for Democracy in South Africa*.

This change is in keeping with the progress made over the years in the transition to democracy in South Africa. Since the time of its inception in 1986, Idasa aimed to assist the process of creating a democratic alternative to the existing system.

Now, given the progress towards establishing a democratically elected government in South Africa, the focus of Idasa's work has shifted to making democracy work. This includes the promotion, creation and maintenance of a culture of democracy at all levels of our society.

We continue to have offices in six cities around South Africa.

Millions of rands are being poured into costly voter education programmes, mostly for television. MOIRA LEVY examines the whole initiative and finds it less than adequate.

Band-Aid broadcasts coming unstuck



reflected in the quality or quantity of voter education material being produced: radio remains the stepchild of the media family in South Africa.

Relative neglect of radio in voter education initiatives has prompted SABC board member Ruth Tomaselli, a key figure on the Debi committee, to propose a special voter education unit. She cautions that not nearly enough effort has gone into using radio as a channel for voter education.

"Radio remains very worrying," she says. "Radio is the way to the majority of people, and that includes the poorer, illiterate and disenfranchised, the rural voters, the female voters."

Throughout the developing world it is a fact that those most in need of voter education are least likely to receive it. Radio is punted as the chief means of access to them.

Production for radio in South Africa remains an industry that has failed to develop independently of the SABC – compared to television, which has spawned any number of production companies which are now jockeying to deliver voter education material.

Certainly an audio-visual medium must be significantly more powerful than an aural one; a ballot paper you can see is far easier to understand than a talk show about a ballot paper.

Beatie Hofmeyr of the Voter Education and Elections Training Unit says much of the voter education material being produced for radio is "dry and too process-orientated", with an over-emphasis on talk shows. It requires a special kind of commitment and concentration to listen to it instead of tuning into one's favourite soap opera. "You can't bore people to death," says Hofmeyr. "Programmes need to be joyful and fun," she says.

'Powerful as they are, the electronic media do not reach into the nooks and crannies of rural South Africa'

What this means is that large radio listenership figures do not inevitably translate into large listenerships for voter education programmes. Champions of radio need to bear in mind that each television set may attract any number of viewers; listening to the radio is known to be a private activity while watching TV is a social form of media consumption.

A STICK person, looking like a smouldering cigarette stompie on two legs, cartwheels across your TV screen, spins smilingly to a firm halt and transforms itself into a cross, the kind you are soon to place on your ballot paper. It looks user-friendly and easy to apply.

Another cross fades into a small Band-Aid, like the ones mothers apply to grazed knees. This one is accompanied by the injunction: "Heal our land. Vote on 27 April." Again, it looks easy enough.

Except that this country needs more than a Band-Aid to heal its wounds, and would-be voters need more than a television campaign to learn what this healing would entail.

The Democracy Education Broadcasting Initiative (Debi), so named because its brief stretches beyond voter education, has a mammoth task. The experts, many involved in Debi, agree that the electronic media cannot single-handedly prepare South Africans sufficiently for the April poll.

By 27 April the average South African TV viewer should be convinced of the need to vote and the importance of voting. Even infrequent viewers should know whether or not they are eligible to vote and what documentation to take with them to the polls.

'Last year just under 40 percent of black homes in the country had television sets, while over 83 percent had radios'

Advertising agency J Walter Thompson, acting for Debi and its member organisations, is midway through a carefully projected four-phase media campaign. It takes its viewers through an initial "participation" phase aimed at motivating people to vote. This is followed by identity document information slots and leads on to "tolerance" advertisements aimed at raising awareness of individual differences and how these can co-exist.

The campaign, launched in November, will gain momentum as the poll date

approaches. According to account director Linda Radford, details on procedures, eligibility and documentation will be released as the campaign culminates in the final "reassurance" phase. At the end of the process, even first-time voters should have the information they need to equip them for the polls.

What is less certain, though, is exactly who these viewers are, and what proportion of the potential voting public they represent. It begs the question: should vast resources, including huge budgets, be allocated to television education campaigns?

Conventional wisdom throughout the developing world, and this must include South Africa, asserts that radio remains the chief means for reaching the mass of people in their lives and homes. For the huge impoverished, marginalised and non-urban sector, radio remains a vital link with the centre and a means to acquire empowering knowledge.

Certainly statistics from the South African Broadcasting Corporation bear this out. Consider that last year just under 40 percent of black homes in the country had television sets, while over 83 percent had radios.

Yet this pre-eminence of radio is not

As the election approaches, concern about voter education is mounting. Are there enough programmes? How effective are they? Are people bothering to consider the issues? **SOBANTU XAYIYA** took to the streets of Cape Town to get some views.

New voters call fo



RASHILENG: Great job.



MAKUBALO: Confident about broadcasts.

VOTER education programmes seem to have succeeded in reaching their audiences – very few people I spoke to had not had any exposure to the efforts of voter educators. Yet Capetonians of all races and walks of life complained about shortcomings in the voter education campaign.

Clearly these programmes have skimmed the surface very successfully, but have left many people ignorant about aspects of the forthcoming elections.

Certainly television, radio, workshops and the print media all seem to be doing something right and reaching an audience.

Of tertiary students interviewed, nearly a third said they had gleaned some voter education from television. A much smaller percentage of mostly African students named radio as their source of election information. About 10 percent of students spoken to either had not had access to voter education or could not follow the programme content.

But even those students who felt they were adequately exposed to voter education cited shortcomings in the television and radio programmes:

- The time slots are too limited to deal satisfactorily with the public's questions.

- The programmes are not detailed enough – for example, many said they were still not sure exactly what constituted a spoilt ballot paper.

- The campaign is too "slow". Some people felt that the education process should be more intense.

Mvuyisi Siwisa, 28, a final-year student at the University of the Western Cape, felt strongly that the government, in conjunction with the Independent Electoral Commission, should play a major role in facilitating voter education.

'Of tertiary students interviewed, nearly a third said they had gleaned some voter education from television'

"Many people will be sceptical of such a move, but the fact of the matter is that the government has the necessary infrastructure and resources to do it. I do feel, however, that the fewer people exposed the better for the government."

Some students also felt that the double ballot system would exacerbate an already complex election situation.

They said voter education should include school pupils as many of them were eligible to vote. Pupils would also be able to pass on information to their parents.

Voter educators received praise from University of Cape Town student Dumisani Rashileng, who said the structures were doing a great job in training trainers.

He suggested that a lack of resources and a weak infrastructure stood in the way of an expanded workshop programme in the townships.

Some students felt that the election would not present too much of a problem to them. Charles Hopkins, 18, and Paul Karbinger, 19, both from Rosebank House College, said

Band-Aid broadcasts coming unstuck

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It is trite to say that the number of paid-up television licenses does not accurately reflect the number of TV sets to be found running off car batteries in squatter camps and semi-rural shacks. Research by the Rhodes University Journalism Department reveals that in and around Grahamstown, one of South Africa's poorest regions, 66 percent of all households have a TV set, including a startling 37 percent of squatter households.

What this suggests is that debate among media theorists about the relative merits or

demerits of radio versus TV for voter education is inevitably inconclusive.

More important, it may deflect attention from a vital point: the smaller and further removed from the metropolis a community is, the less likely it is to have access to either radio or TV, according to research cited by Eurospace, a company producing voter education advertisements for radio.

In the smallest rural settlements, media penetration of all forms declines significantly. In settlements of less than 500 people,

only 15,5 percent of the community ever see any TV and barely half have access to radio.

Eurospace deputy managing director Lyndall Campher says: "All media consumption is low in the rural areas, even the penetration of radio. While radio is essential in reaching the rural market, it does need some form of complementary exposure of message which cannot be provided by the formal media."

The implications of this for voter education programmes are profound. Powerful as they are, the electronic media do not reach into the nooks and crannies of mainly rural South Africa; on its own an advertising campaign has limited effect.

workshops, increased air time



HOPKINS AND KARBINER: Don't need voter education.



SIWISA: State must play a role.

they had not had access to any form of voter education.

Both said they were regular watchers of M-Net's KTV and videos. They thought they could "handle" the forthcoming election without voter education.

Hostel dwellers interviewed confirmed that voter education workshops were being conducted - mostly in Xhosa and English - at their workplaces. While these workshops had helped to address some of their initial reservations about voting, most said they didn't know what the elections were about.

They pointed out that most of these workshops were organised by unions that followed a particular political line and that neutrality could thus not be ensured.

About half of township residents spoken to said they had not attended voter education

workshops. Many said the workshops would be very helpful to new voters and an important supplement to the media campaign.

'Voter education should include school pupils as many of them are eligible to vote. Pupils would also be able to pass on information to their parents'

The view was also expressed that all political parties should volunteer staff for voter education and that they should distinguish between campaigning and voter education.

Residents said voter educators were lax about workshops and had left this task to political parties. Yet because the question of no-go areas had not yet been resolved, some felt certain parties were at a disadvantage in this regard.

Certain categories of employees who work awkward hours, for example restaurant workers, said they felt excluded from the campaign and suggested that their industry and voter educators should meet to address the problem.

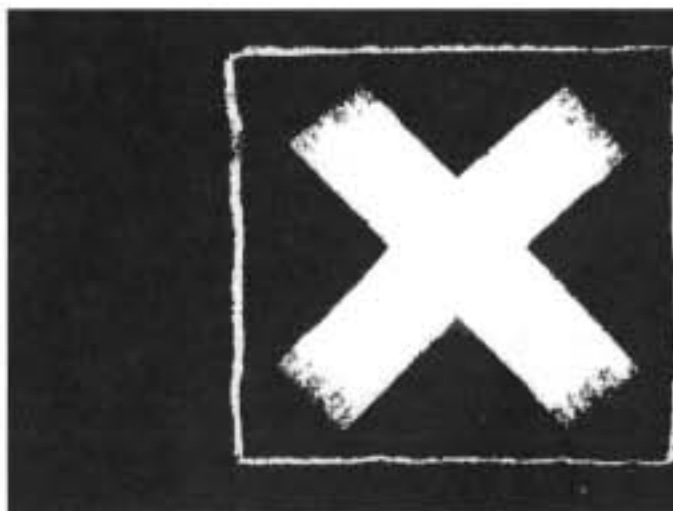
A member of Idasa's voter education radio project team, Mandla Makubalo, said he was confident that Idasa's programmes, which are broadcast mainly on Radio Xhosa, Radio Zulu and Radio Ciskei, were reaching the target. The radio project had received many "encouraging" letters from listeners, he said.

Makubalo gets correspondence from as far afield as the Orange Free State and Eastern Cape. However, he feels that in the Cape his programme misses many "literate" people because they listen mainly to English-language radio stations.

Sobantu Xayiya is a freelance journalist based in Cape Town.

While Debi can go some way towards reaching and enabling potential voters, the real work needs to be done through human contact, on the ground, in people's homes, in bus queues, at taxi ranks, out in the fields. The Black Sash, for example, conducts daily voter education programmes in the queues at its advice offices.

Teams of voter educators from organisations like the Matla Trust and Idasa are taking information about the election into the field. But, considering that over half the South African population is categorised as rural, and that over 70 percent have not voted before, the need to mend the holes in the voter education net is urgent.



VOTE
APRIL
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INDEPENDENT FORUM FOR ELECTORAL EDUCATION

They said it...

South Africans are obsessed with what the future holds. As the country prepares to go to the polls, people are asking if a new government will deliver solutions to SA's pressing problems. *Democracy in Action* asked political parties to embark on some crystal ball gazing and project themselves a year into the future.

These are the responses of four main contenders to a selection of basic questions.

If your party gets into power – by April 1995...

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| <i>Will we have seen a drop in the unemployment rate?</i> | NP – An NP government, with its free-market approach, will have created investor confidence, both locally and overseas, bringing in local and foreign capital. This will have enabled the economy to grow and, as a result, the unemployment rate will have dropped. | ANC – An ANC government will start a national public works programme which will aim to provide employment and training for about 2,5 million people over the next 10 years. The ANC will also develop South Africa's massive tourist industry which will provide jobs but in a way that will preserve our environment. | Inkatha – We are now seeing signs of positive economic growth which, within the constraint of strict monetary and fiscal policy, we hope to develop by stimulating exports, small business growth, peasant agriculture, tourism, human resources (especially skills training) and mass job creation programmes. | DP – The DP's economic policy – based on a free market system coupled with a social conscience – will inspire investor confidence. State funds will be invested in labour-intensive reconstruction schemes to build roads, houses, schools and health care facilities. These will create jobs and provide training. |
| <i>Will you have succeeded in restoring stability to violence-wracked townships?</i> | This will sadly take some time. Township people, tired of instability, would have voted for the NP to indicate to those who had participated in and encouraged violence that this was unacceptable. However, a government victory may not have been accepted by all, and some might still "continue the struggle". | Together with communities, an ANC government will ensure that criminals are dealt with to the full extent of the law. Security forces will be non-partisan, professional and respect human rights and they will be reformed to reflect the national and gender character of our country. A new volunteer army will deal with defence and not internal politics. | Though it will be very difficult, we will manage to do so. A combination of strict, impartial community policing; democratic and therefore respected local government; township upgrading; an improving economy; as well as a focus upon the future rather than the past, will all contribute meaningfully towards peace. | The DP believes that a democratic and inclusive political settlement, coupled with socio-economic upliftment, will create a stable environment in which more effective policing can occur. The benefits of a growing economy will be felt throughout society, but political parties which raise unrealistic expectations could delay progress towards stability. |
| <i>Will squatters have proper housing?</i> | Billions of rand, some of which have been available for a few years but not spent because of the ANC's delaying tactics, will be used to purchase land. Infrastructure to provide services for squatter communities will be in place. Many houses will have been built. | The ANC will eliminate racially based housing institutions and install one national housing department which is non-racial, non-sexist, legitimate and accountable. An ANC government aims to spend five percent of the budget on providing 1,2 million housing units within five years. | To achieve this in one year, or even a few years, is impossible. But what we will have done is to make a significant start in implementing a housing delivery policy that the economy, the fiscus and the end user can all afford. | The DP will begin massive site and service schemes which will enable people to build homes. Squatter and established communities, local and provincial authorities and the state housing authorities, will have to work together with private and non-governmental organisations to solve our housing crisis. |
| <i>Will the crime rate have dropped?</i> | There will have been economic growth, so there will be less unemployment and improved social conditions. The NP plan for community-involved policing will be in place, and as a consequence, the crime rate would have dropped. | When a government of national unity succeeds in stimulating the economy, creating jobs and building a non-partisan police force the crime rate will drop. The new police force must emphasise community policing and police resources must be directed at prevention. | Existing levels of crime are a function of political violence and a culture of anarchy, unemployment and inadequate policing. We would address all of these and certainly reduce the crime rate. Reducing it to an "acceptable" level, however, will take years. | Under a DP government tensions will be defused. As the economy recovers, jobs will be created and the desperate need that has driven people to crime will be alleviated. Tough sentencing will be imposed on criminals and no political amnesties will be allowed. |
| <i>Will we have seen an improvement in the matric pass rate of black students?</i> | A single, just and equitable educational policy will be in place and there will be no point in a call for 'liberation before education' once liberation had been achieved. Hopefully, teachers will have adopted a more responsible attitude. All these factors will help students pay attention to their studies. | The ANC links economic, social and educational development. We plan one education system with compulsory education for all for 10 years, based on a more learner-centered approach. We believe that reducing violence in the townships, and providing books, more science equipment etc, will in the short-term help improve matric results. | Education backlogs are so vast that it will take a decade to lift "black" education to existing "white" levels. In the short term, the pass rate can best be improved by pupils and educators recognising both the constraints and the programme being implemented, and dedicating themselves to working within these guidelines. | A DP government will do all it can to bring pupils and teachers together. Education will be the responsibility of provincial governments. The emphasis will be on involving the community and depoliticising education. Teachers will be properly paid and suitable channels of communication implemented between teachers and education departments. |
| <i>Will South Africans pay more tax than they do at present?</i> | The economy will have been growing. The tax base will have expanded. The income of the state from the expanding tax base will have increased and a lowering of the tax rate could be a possibility. | An ANC government will ensure that South Africans will not lose income through unfair taxes. We will end Vat on basic foods; reduce taxes on people earning below R4 000 a month; end unfair taxation of women; and ensure that every business pays its fair share. | Not if we can help it. If we all accept the need to live within our means, balancing the twin needs of fiscal distribution and sustainable growth, then tax rates will not increase since fiscal distribution on social services will be underpinned by a rising tax base. | Under a DP government the system of taxation will be streamlined, discrimination against married women and middle income earners will be abolished. Nominal company tax rates will be reduced through reducing the myriad of deductions and exemptions. |
| <i>Will people receive proper treatment in state hospitals?</i> | The alleged reasons for strikes by hospital workers' unions will have diminished after successful negotiations between the state and the trade unions. Thus the NP's health plan for sound community-based health care and hospital services will be functioning efficiently. | We will draw up a single national health system which will include public and private services and will be organised at national, district and community levels. All health care workers must be accountable to their communities and our reconstruction strategies will include a charter of patients' rights and a code of conduct for health workers. | State hospitals are but one facet of a health delivery system requiring restructuring. Our initial emphasis will be on expanding primary health care and hospital-based community health wards. Everyone should have access to decent and affordable health care, and the state should aid those who do not have access to private health care. | A DP government will develop a comprehensive network of primary health facilities, including mobile clinics for remote areas. The emphasis will be on preventative health care and education. Doctors and nurses will be expected to perform their jobs professionally as patients should not become the victims of politically inspired industrial action. |

Quizzing the candidates

DO YOU know what you're voting for, and why? Voters are receiving different messages from all sides, and the confusion is likely to increase as the electioneering pace steps up. Before you place that cross you'll want to find out everything you need to know to make that important decision. The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) has compiled a list of questions that voters may find useful. You could use it to challenge political parties, to scrutinise their policy manifestos and to question individual candidates and leaders. The answers should show which party is likely to contribute most to national unity, political and economic progress and social justice.

Political policy

- Will you adopt a free-market system?
- What criteria did you use in selecting your candidates?
- What will you do if your party loses the election?
- Do you want a unitary or federal state? Why?
- How do you intend to restructure the police and security forces so that they will enjoy credibility among all the people?
- How do you intend to counteract violence?
- How will you deal with militant opposition groups?

Economic policy

- Do you intend to nationalise key economic resources?
- If neither of the above, what form of state intervention in the economy do you plan? What will be the implications of this?
- What is your policy on multi-national corporations operating in South Africa?
- Do you intend to raise loans from the World Bank? How do you intend to use them, and to repay them?
- What is your policy on taxation, for example Vat, PAYE, company tax and tax on wealth and inheritance?
- How do you intend to tackle the problem of unemployment?

Social policy

- What is your policy on land redistribution and how will you finance it?
- What is your position on promoting black workers through affirmative action?
- How do you intend to deal with the backlog in black education resulting from apartheid and how will you finance your reforms?
- How will you deal with the seven million homeless people in the country? How do you intend to finance housing?
- How do you intend to provide primary health services for all?
- How will you help those who were neglected under apartheid, especially the rural poor, the alienated youth and the generally marginalised?

Human rights policy

- What is your policy on a Bill of Human Rights, especially on women's rights and family and cultural values?
- What is your position on the right to life from the moment of conception until death. What, therefore, is your position on abortion, euthanasia and capital punishment?
- Will you allow free activity for non-political organisations and how will you support non-government organisations?

This is a shortened version of the SACBC's list of questions.

| PARTY NAME | ACRONYM | NATIONAL | PROVINCES |
|---|---------|----------|-------------------------|
| African Christian Democratic Party | ACDP | X | All |
| African Democratic Party | ADM | X | All |
| African National Congress | ANC | X | All |
| Democratic Party | DP | X | All |
| Dekwankwetla Party of SA | DPSA | X | OFS, PWV |
| Islamic Party | | | Western Cape |
| Keep It Straight and Simple Party | KISS | X | |
| Merit Party | | | Western Cape |
| Minority Front | | X | Natal |
| National Party | NP | X | All |
| North West Democrats | | X | |
| Pan Africanist Congress of Azania | PAC | X | All |
| Realists' Party | | | PWV |
| South African Women's Party | | | Western Cape |
| United People's Front | UPF | | PWV, Northern Transvaal |
| Women's Rights Peace Party | | X | |
| Workers' International to rebuild the 4th International | | | Western Cape |
| Workers' List Party | | X | |
| Ximoko Progressive Party | XPP | X | PWV, Northern Transvaal |

ON THE LIST: This is a provisional list of the parties that had registered by the 12 February deadline.

Did you know?

DID you know ... it is true that one quarter of one percent of all the votes will be enough for a party to get one seat in the national assembly. But this will not secure a cabinet seat - for that a party must get five percent of the national vote.

Did you know ... to win a seat in a provincial legislature requires fewer votes, but as a percentage the number of votes required will be between one and three percent. It depends on the ratio of voters to seats allocated to that province.

Your vote will count, even if you, by law, have to sit on tenterhooks until at least May 2 to hear the results.

Finding help in confusing times

Manpower Commission's efforts to develop a policy for unemployment, they begin to see that things are happening that will impact at the local grassroots level."

White people, on the other hand, need information on how the April election will differ from previous

exclusive elections.

"A group of white women from the Durbanville farming area requested a workshop," Erasmus explains. "These women were concerned about their farm workers and wanted to know what they could do to help them participate in the elections. It is important for people who have voted previously to realise that with this election there will be no voters' roll and no need to register.

"The major difference, of course, is that this election will be five times bigger than any election this country has ever seen. People also need to understand the difference between the government of national unity and the Westminster system that was previously used."

Because Idasa is seen as a non-partisan organisation, its workshops are attractive to diverse groups. Participants have ranged from directors and company managers to teachers, hospital staff and labourers.

Among the most challenging demands Idasa has faced is a call from the Worcester Town Council, acting in consultation with bodies such as the South African National Civics Organisation, for workshops targeted at the entire town - which has a population of 30 000.

Erasmus says simply: "Our major role is to affirm people and help them in confusing times."

Voter educators are finding they have to be quick on their feet, Idasa trainer Charles Erasmus told SHIREEN BADAT. What do you say when someone asks whether the ballot box is safe from the tokoloshe, for instance?

that groups from different communities experience.

"People from disadvantaged communities expect very concrete and physical things from the elections. They expect to get houses, electricity and water, and very few talk about democracy and representation. It is the task of the workshop to sober people up and point out that the elections cannot bring about those things.

"It is important to get people to realise that the election is not an event but part of a process. One of the ways of doing this is to talk about the release of Mandela in 1990, when people had similar high expectations. After a year or two their expectations became more realistic.

"However, it is also important that people realise that change is not only in the hands of politicians. When people hear about the establishment of the National Housing Commission, which has strategised to provide 300 000 homes a year, and the National

'The fact is, we are not going to have a perfect election. It is going to test the mettle of all those committed to change and democracy. This includes not only parties, officials and organised civil society but also voters'

and the control of weapons is only now being addressed, and clearly many people are going to resist handing in weapons that were issued to them.

• The administrative arrangements for ensuring that voting stations conduct their business fairly and efficiently are still to be concluded. The IEC has an immense organi-

sational task merely to put its own core staff to work. Thousands of voting officials and monitors still have to be found and trained.

• The present trickle of complaints by parties against one another is likely to swell into a flood, and the mechanisms for dealing with these proactively through party liaison committees and remedially through the adjudication structures are still in embryonic form.

• The Electoral Act, supposedly the guide to the procedures and planning of the IEC, is still the subject of negotiation by parties. This adds to the uncertainty of planners, monitors, observers and voter educators.

It is, therefore, essential that ordinary citizens take seriously their own responsibility to guard the election and to make sure it works as well as possible. We cannot afford a failed election.

Paul Graham is national programme director for Idasa.

THE secrecy of the vote is one of the subjects raised often in voter education workshops run by Idasa's Western Cape office - sometimes in unexpected forms. "Will the *tokoloshe* know who you are voting for?" was one of the questions asked recently.

Intimidation, often in subtle forms, is another recurring theme. Residents of Crossroads and Nyanga East, for instance, have complained that a local *sangoma* told them who to vote for, and are convinced that it is impossible for their votes to remain secret from a person with magical powers.

"Voter educators have had to handle these kinds of problems very sensitively," Erasmus says. "They have had to learn to listen to all these problems and then refute them in the most sensitive manner possible."

One of the ways the issue of secrecy is addressed, for example, is to take workshop participants through a process of simulated voting, where all mark ballot papers and place them in a ballot box. At the end of the session one of the ballot papers is removed and participants are asked to guess who placed it there. In this way people experience concretely that votes can be secret.

Another surprise occurred in a workshop for nursing staff from a Cape Town hospital, who had heard a rumour that the Aids virus could be transmitted through the invisible ink that will be used to mark the hands of those who have cast their votes.

"Fortunately the Idasa staff member running the workshop had done post-graduate work on Aids," Erasmus comments.

He adds that it has been interesting to note the different expectations and problems

No easy walk

From Page 1

country in the manner of a run-of-the-mill modern election. It is understandable that there is a conspiracy of optimism, but now is the time to challenge South Africans to stand up for what they have been struggling.

In order to develop more realistic hopes, we need to put on the table some of the things that remain unresolved.

• The security arrangements for protecting voters and canvassers remain ambiguous. The relationship between the National Peacekeeping Force, the SA Defence Force, the SA Police and the various structures to develop legitimacy and community trust are unclear. There are still significant parts of the country where there is ongoing violence or where violence can break out.

• The demobilisation of armed formations

'Stuck in the middle' and scared

As South Africa moves rapidly towards a new dispensation, a Klein Karoo community fears being passed by in the rush. ANYA GERRYTS and ALBERT VAN JAARSVELD spent time in a *dorp* that is struggling to come to terms with the political changes.



VERSATILE: A church on Sundays, a school during the week.

THE election juggernaut, already looming large in urban areas and in the media, casts only a small shadow in the Klein Karoo settlement of Amalienstein. Seemingly forgotten by political parties, the 5 000 residents of this old missionary station are sceptical of governments and ignorant and apathetic about the April election.

As local primary school teacher Adolf Hartman puts it: "How will a new government change our life-style as the old one hardly knows we exist?"

Between Calitzdorp and Ladismith by road, Amalienstein lies in one of the curves of the Swartberg range, made up of three little settlements strung out along the river which runs through the valley - Amalienstein, Droevlei and Zoar. Some call all three Amalienstein and some Zoar, take your pick. But it was as Zoar that it was founded at the beginning of the 19th century by Lutheran missionaries, as the blue Celtic crosses on the walls of the graveyard and the old church testify.

Typically of the Klein Karoo, there are three churches in Amalienstein - the Lutheran church, an NG Sendingkerk, which doubles as a primary school by day, and an Anglican church. Most of the inhabitants are Lutheran and most work as labourers on farms that ring the district.

They have an enviable community spirit and identity, growing vegetables on a communal patch and taking pride in the community capacity - developed in the vacuum of government neglect - for sorting out



problems such as disturbances of the peace or petty crime. There are two institutions for achieving this: community meetings and Maria Kiewiet, the oldest person in Amalienstein, who is referred to and deferred to as "Moedertjie" by everyone.

It is this self-sufficiency that Amalienstein fears losing under a new dispensation. People of the settlement also fear they may lose their houses, dilapidated though they are, under a new government. On the other



NOTEWORTHY: One of the death bells of Amalienstein.

hand, they hope the future will bring a subsidy for the local school.

Most striking about Amalienstein, perhaps, is a widespread ignorance about the election. For example, most people don't know that voters need an ID book or a voter's certificate, and many don't possess such documents.

A related problem that worries Adolf

Stuck in the middle

From Page 11

Hartman, who sometimes seems to be the only sober person in the settlement, is alcoholism. This is aggravated enormously by the *dop* system whereby farm labourers receive part of their wages in the form of a daily ration of alcohol. Many of the people are so dependent on this "ration" that they worry more about losing their alcohol supply than about the possibility of losing their houses.

People in Amalienstein – all of whom are coloured – worry about being "stuck in the middle". "The white government looked after the white people," they say. "Won't a black government do just the same for blacks?"

'Most people don't know that voters need an ID book or a voter's certificate, and many don't possess such documents'

Another difficulty is the behaviour of one of the white farmers in the Ladismith district. He employs about 500 of the Amalienstein community as labourers and is notorious, even among other white farmers, for ill-treatment of his workers.

Now, according to community reports, he is threatening to refuse to give workers the day off on election day unless they vote for his party.

But people in Amalienstein hasten to add that not all employers in the district behave in this way. The farmer in question is disapproved of and other farmers have promised to transport their workers – and other workers – to the polling booth on election day.

Noteworthy along the road linking Amalienstein, Droevlei and Zoar are a series of "death bells" which are tolled vigorously when someone in the settlement dies. It is a haunting sound and one the people fear may sound for their whole community.

They fear loss; they hope for an easier future. They value their independence and for this reason want to know more about regional government. They plead for voter education – not party propaganda, not empty promises, "just some straightforward facts".

Anya Gerryts is an artist.

Albert van Jaarsveld is studying architecture at the University of Cape Town.

'Truth sets a nation free'

From Page 1

"If we want real healing to take place in this nation, we have to know the truth," says Boraine. "It is the truth that sets a nation free – it doesn't bind it."

It is understandable, he says, that many people are desperate to move forward and avoid dwelling on the past, but this may work against the achievement of reconciliation. Even if there has been a change of heart among some of those responsible for the wrongs of the past, this is not enough. Those wrongs remain an issue that needs to be dealt with in a formal process.

Such a process should involve, at the least, establishing and acknowledging the truth.

"Those who say we shouldn't rake up the past should tell that to the victims of apartheid. We have to listen to those who suffered," he observes.

In order to understand why there is so much anger and bitterness in the black community – and to enable those who have suffered to regain a sense of dignity – South Africans need to hear the truth about what took place in the country over the past four decades.

For the victims, in particular, there is a vital difference between amnesty and amnesia, between knowledge and acknowledgement, says Boraine.

He emphasises that revenge is not the objective of calls for a process of addressing the injustices of the past, and challenges anyone who doubts this to talk to the victims of apartheid. "You'll hear it is not revenge they want, but the truth."

He believes that acknowledging the truth is the first step in a process of healing. Seeking justice and effecting restitution would have to follow.

Boraine has recently embarked on a programme aimed at influencing national policy on justice and reconciliation, and will devote himself to it full-time on his retirement from Idasa. Long experience in both the political and theological spheres – he served as a minister for many years, becoming president of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa – gives him a unique set of skills for the task.

Boraine hopes to see the appointment of a



VICTIM: Albie Sachs of the ANC, injured by a car bomb in Maputo.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which he believes should be independent, impartial and judicial. While the ANC is on record as supporting such a body, the preference of the governing National Party still seems to be for drawing a veil over the past.

The programme, which is designed as a participative process, began publicly with a conference in Somerset West at the end of February. Entitled "Justice in Transition: Dealing with the Past", the conference enabled a wide range of South Africans – human rights activists, legal academics, representatives from non-governmental organisations and members of the Cabinet – to hear first-hand from people like Albie Sachs and Nyami Goniwe about the suffering inflicted by the apartheid order.

Delegates listened to prominent figures from Eastern Europe and South America who spoke on how the issues of truth and reconciliation, amnesty, prosecution and restitution were dealt with when new democratic governments were put in place in their countries. Also present were representatives from Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia.

One of the major aims of the conference – which will be reported in more detail in the

Wanted: Election observers

Idasa invites all interested readers to help with the elections. If you wish to volunteer as a non-partisan and independent observer, send Idasa your name, address and telephone number before the end of March. As an observer you will be allowed into voting stations, and will be needed only on the voting days unless you are able to watch the count as well.

Idasa regional offices will provide training closer to voting day. We will ensure that you get drawn into an observer team either under the banner of Idasa or under the emerging National Election Observer Network (Neon) if you are able to sign the observer code of conduct.

'Together we will help to make sure that South Africa will be able to elect a government which can take us on the next mile to democracy'

Whether you volunteer as an observer or not, please let us know if you see anything at the voting stations or anywhere else which strikes you as irregular.

If you have access to a fax machine, send us your written report stating your name and contact number, giving details of the incident and when and where it happened. Otherwise, telephone an Idasa office with the details and our staff will take up the issue with the Independent Electoral Commission.

There is nothing to stop any person from going straight to the IEC Monitoring Directorate at (011) 397-5000, but we intend to help by making sure that all over the country there are people watching the elections to see that they are free and fair.

Contact any office of Idasa if you want to offer your help, and together we will help to make sure that, despite the problems, South Africa will be able to elect a government which can take us on the next mile to democracy.

Ciudadanos chilenos mencionados en las listas de los 119 (22 y 24 de julio de 1975), detenidos desaparecidos al igual que cientos de compatriotas.

¡¡justicia!!

AGRUPACION DE FAMILIARES DE DETENIDOS-DESAPARECIDOS. CHILE 1988

INJUSTICE!: A Chilean poster published by the Association of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared. A Truth Commission has been held in Chile to bring out in the open the gross human rights transgressions that occurred under General Augusto Pinochet's military regime.

next issue of *Democracy in Action* - was to begin to clarify policy options and priorities in the South African situation. What will follow is a second, more ambitious conference that may take the form of a series of public hearings, where the victims of apartheid, South African specialists and the

'For the victims, in particular, there is a vital difference between amnesty and amnesia, between knowledge and acknowledgement'

general public will engage further around these issues.

Another part of the programme, which will also cover the human rights abuses of the opponents of apartheid, will be an extensive documentation exercise, capturing the experiences of those who suffered under apartheid in a range of ways. Such a public record should add an essential human

dimension to the process of formulating policy recommendations.

The fact that scores of people have been granted amnesty, and that there is a commitment to further amnesty, inevitably has certain implications for future policy. But Boraine hopes the new government will appoint a Truth and Reconciliation Commission before further amnesty is granted.

One of the tough decisions a new government will face is what to do if individuals with records of human rights abuse are elected to public office. Another involves the complex issue of prosecution - who gets prosecuted and how are sentences determined?

"Many will say they only did their duty but the fact is that they went well beyond the call of duty," Boraine says. "Tough laws were in place, but it didn't stop the hit squads, death squads and dirty tricks."

The hope is that a Truth and Justice Commission, painful and costly though its establishment may be, will serve to ensure that "hit squads, death squads, dirty tricks" do not happen again.

It is some months since multi-party negotiators agreed that there would be 11 official languages in the new South Africa. Little has been done since to make this policy a reality. SUE VALENTINE and FIONA STUDDERT explored the issues with Nigel Crawhall and Kathleen Heugh of the National Language Project.



GIFT OF THE GAB: The nature of South Africa is multilingual.

Why 11 languages? How many languages are spoken in South Africa?

CRAWHALL: There's an endless number of languages. What the new policy is saying is there are 11 recognised languages that have received status in the past in South Africa and are spoken by more than one percent of the population. If you're talking about smaller community languages then there are probably another 20, but you can't count exactly how many languages there are.

What do you think is the intended effect of this decision?

HEUGH: I think the first criterion was that all languages needed to be equalised in status. In the past high status and value were accorded to people who spoke English and Afrikaans and low status to people who were speakers of African languages. This is a symbolic gesture aimed at changing the status quo.

Do you think that the new language policy can work?

CRAWHALL: It depends what you mean by "work". No one is expecting the government to have an 11-language policy similar to our previous bilingual policy. So Parliament won't function in 11 languages and you won't be able to get services in 11 languages. What we're hoping for, and what needs to be worked towards, is a basic minimum of language rights, such that in any court situation, for example, you can be served properly in any of the 11 official languages – and also, hopefully, in whatever other language you may need. Also in other environments – filling in tax forms, applying to the government for permits – the government should have the capacity to cope in 11 languages.

Up until very recently the government did a fair amount of disguising of statistics about which languages are widely spoken. Whereas it is true that Afrikaans is very

widely spoken – much more so than English, or rather it has a much larger first language base – the thing that was not mentioned was that Zulu is understood by at least 60 percent of the country. It could be that as many as 75 percent of the population understand Zulu well, and that at least 30 percent of the population understand South Sotho well and can communicate in it.

'... the thing that was not mentioned was that Zulu is understood by at least 60 percent of the country'

One thing that was unfortunate in the whole Kempton Park debate was that the functional idea of language was lost. The politics dominated. Although we're pleased that the 11 languages were recognised and it's a step in the right direction, the actual practicality could have been different. The Freedom Alliance closed the door on an option that might have allowed a status for Afrikaans and Zulu that could have challenged English – not removed it, but provided options.

The decision by Coca-Cola to remove Afrikaans from coldrink cans is an indication of how business is interpreting the policy of 11 languages. They take it to mean that they no longer have to be bilingual, and that

frightens us. If there had been the recognition – not for political reasons, but for functional purposes – that Afrikaans and Zulu between them cover one end of the country to the other, it would have had an impact on the business community's decisions. Our fear now is that the business community will take the policy of 11 official languages to mean English only – and we're seeing this emerging already.

What examples are there of other countries where multiple languages have had official status, and what have been the practical implications?

CRAWHALL: There are very, very few countries in the world that have more than three official languages – or even as many as three. One example is Malaysia, which recognises four languages (English, Malay, Tamil and Chinese). Also, you have to understand that a language policy doesn't emerge out of its own intelligence, but out of a political environment, a political context. I think it says a great deal about where South Africa is, that it feels the need to recognise 11 languages. I think our situation is quite similar to the Malaysian one where they had to recognise four. It was more a question of domestic peace than good sense.

Nigeria and Namibia chose at independence to make English their official language. What do you see as the

'More a question of peace'



them moving towards a more practical policy.

I think the key issue is what the choice of English meant for them: it meant linking into international donors and a place for the leadership in the international environment.

And in Nigeria?

HEUGH: While Nigeria officially adopted English as its language of government, it also designated three languages as national languages: Ibo, Hasa and Yoruba. Those languages function extremely well in the three major areas of Nigeria. They're used for regional levels of government; they're used in the educational sector; and they're used in the economy. It's not necessary for every Nigerian to acquire proficiency in English in order to feel empowered.

Nigeria is a particularly interesting case because it has the highest literacy rate in Africa. It also has the highest percentage of speakers of English in Africa and, on top of that, it's also got a very high percentage of

people who are entirely competent in one of the three national languages, so that they are

able to activate themselves within the economy or the regional political arenas.

This is entirely different from virtually any other country in Africa and it's largely attributed to the multilingual policy of Nigeria that this has come about. By contrast, countries like Zambia, for example, have a largely monolingual language policy.

So you're saying that high literacy rates and other positive effects have resulted from a multi-lingual policy rather than using English as the single official language?

CRAWHALL: I think a key issue, if you link Namibia and Nigeria back together again, is that the Nigerian policy has been an empowering one. You get the really decent education in your first language (or the regional language). This recognises the student, the student's experience, the student's cultural background; and it maximises the student's ability to participate in the education system.

Everything that we know about language learning indicates that if your first language skills are strong, if your academic skills are built up in that language, it's much easier to learn English at an older age. You don't need to learn it so early. And that's what the Nigerian experience is partly showing – a good quality first language education makes your English education better.

The Namibian policy is a much more disempowering one.

How are language and ethnicity linked, and what are the implications for language policy?

CRAWHALL: There are two issues. The NLP has been promoting the idea of multilingualism and now that has become a catchword. We understand multilingualism to mean, in relation to primary education, that you start with what the children have.

In the Western Cape, for example, it is quite normal for children to have exposure to at least three languages. Now, let's take an example of a school in Cape Town: it's a Sotho medium school, but the children actually speak Xhosa as their first language. Only a minority of the children speak Sotho, but they're ethnically designated by the apartheid system as "Basotho" and therefore must go to a Sotho medium school. The school then attempts to teach through the medium of Sotho.

You may say, "But that's good. These people are Sotho, they must be educated in Sotho." But the reality is that these people are more than just Sotho: they're also Xhosa speakers, they're also English speakers, they also speak Afrikaans. What we're looking for is an education system that recognises this reality; that says your identity is more complex than a single ethnic identity.

This is a big country, there are many people here, and by the time they are teenagers many South Africans speak two, three, four, five – six languages sometimes. We'd like that recognised.

The reason we say that it's important is that it doesn't overemphasise, in an unnatural way, the idea of a direct link between your language and your ethnic identity. We're saying there'll be more co-operation, integration and support for people as a result of such a recognition – but without denying ethnic differences, and without saying "You must all speak English", as I think a lot of the elite seem to wish.

We at the NLP are saying: "Do not force people into pigeon holes by saying they must speak this or that language because that is their ethnic identity. We're saying "share, work together". A lot of our work here at the NLP is about looking at multilingual teaching where, regardless of what the language is – maybe it's Spanish or Portuguese or Venda – it is important for other children to learn, even if only to recognise that a child who speaks Spanish/Portuguese/Venda is there in the classroom.

Although that child may not speak the language concerned at school, the point is that he or she represents a bigger culture; has something uniquely worthwhile to offer classmates. That's our kind of approach.

...than good sense'

disadvantages of choosing a single language as the official language?

CRAWHALL: The two cases are very different. In Namibia there are a number of indigenous languages – one is Afrikaans, which became the most widely spoken lingua franca, followed by Oshivambo, which in its various dialects is spoken by more than 60 percent of the country. Either of those languages – or both – would have been the logical choice for the internal language of the country. Neither was chosen, for obvious political reasons.

'Namibians don't speak English. You can't wish that the whole country spoke English overnight'

I think in the Namibian situation this was particularly unfortunate. The decisions were made by people who weren't even living there – the United Nations Council for Namibia, the British Council and British government, the Americans and aid agencies. I think the Namibians, despite their strong drive towards English – and by this I mean the elite rather than the population – have come to recognise that it is not possible. Namibians don't speak English. You can't wish that the whole country spoke English overnight. So in Namibia we're going to see

Universities must 'begin at the end'

The key to implementing change in South African universities is "beginning at the end", ROBERT KLITGAARD argues. The emphasis should be on outcomes rather than on intake criteria or standardised pedagogical processes.

CHANGES in the South African environment present severe challenges to the country's universities – challenges that, in less strenuous forms, have devastated universities in many other countries and caused them to succumb to a spiral of mediocrity.

How can South African universities meet these challenges? What changes will be required? Are there lessons from other countries?

In July 1991 I participated in a week-long workshop in Kuala Lumpur on higher education, under the auspices of the World Bank. I was struck by some similarities among universities from Columbia to Senegal to India to Papua New Guinea.

Over the past two decades, many universities in low- and middle-income countries have been confronted with versions of the same challenges South Africa now must face: declining real resources; greater numbers of academically under-prepared students; the need to produce an elite capable of leading the country in an internationally competitive economy.

What follows is a description of a simplified version of what I call the "standard university response" to these challenges – a response that has not worked.

With regard to declining resources, the standard response is to not face the long-term implications. For political reasons, budgets for student support remain high, while expenditure on libraries, maintenance and faculty stagnates. Eventually, the physical facility and the university's human resources collapse in mediocrity.

With regard to expanding enrolments of disadvantaged students, debates concentrate on two issues: entrance standards and what happens in the classroom. I call these the start and the middle of the educational process – as opposed to the end, which is the outcome actually obtained: what students learn and what professors contribute in research and service.

The debate over admissions tends to focus on the preservation of old entrance tests and minimum scores. One extreme incorrectly decries the tests as culturally biased and completely lacking predictive power. The other extreme incorrectly treats the tests and minimum scores as sacrosanct. The truth tends to be lost.

Around the world, admissions tests tend to show a relatively strong correlation with academic performance at the university, and somewhat less with various measures of success in later life. Careful statistical studies seldom find evidence that the predictive power of the tests is less for members of disadvantaged social classes or racial groups. There are large gaps in test scores and in later performance among those groups, but, contrary to popular opinion, this does not imply "cultural bias" in the predictive sense.

'Around the developing world, universities are in financial collapse, with vast student bodies serviced by poor quality instruction, producing graduates unable to fulfil national needs'

The debate of the middle tends to revolve around the "relevance" and "standards" of the subjects taught and the pedagogical methods employed. One side seems to equate high failure rates with evidence of social irrelevance and bias. The other side seems to believe that high failure rates are necessary to preserve standards.

In most developing countries, the first side of these arguments tends to win. Admissions tests are downplayed and standards are lowered, at first with the argument that "the poor should be given a chance at least". But then, when too many of the new entrants fail at university, the next step is pressure to make

sure they pass. Then "the middle" tends to buckle; courses become more "relevant" and less "academic".

Eventually, the pressure point reaches graduation itself. The university degree is devalued, and, as a consequence, unemployed or unproductively employed graduates are a common phenomenon.

The third challenge is to compete internationally. Given the first two failures, it is not surprising that most universities in developing countries have been unable to do this. Even the best students cannot compete with those trained in the industrialised countries. As a result, a country's economic performance begins to lag, and dependence grows.

The message of the Kuala Lumpur meeting was that around the developing world universities are in financial collapse, with vast student bodies serviced by poor quality instruction, producing graduates unable to fulfil national needs.

The situation is truly alarming, yet I believe that the challenge facing South African universities in the decade ahead will be more severe. The pressure on resources will be greater. The numbers of disadvantaged students and the extent of their disadvantages will be greater. Compared to the past two decades, the pressure of international competition and therefore of international standards of excellence will be greater in the 1990s.

The standard response gives us an idea of what not to do. What might we try instead?

We must experiment with structural change. Experiment is a key word here. We have no blueprint with the answers; even if we did, we need everyone to participate, to own the solution, to develop solutions in the plural. No blueprint, then; but many of the needed experiments will have common themes.

To an economist, structural change means, above all, the reform of incentives. Always problematically, never simply (as in "let the market work"), prices and wages must be linked to their social values. Competition



OUTCOMES: Education is not the transfer to students' brains of boxes of knowledge.

must be enhanced. Excellence must be rewarded. These themes will be the key to the success of reforms in Russia and in many other shattered economies. I believe it is also the key to avoiding the disasters that have struck many universities in other developing countries.

There are two worrying tendencies. First, the "standard university response" noted above – the response that failed in so many universities – is incipient here. Many faculty members and students do not want to face the prospect of declining resources in the long term. The need to produce many students who can compete internationally has not sunk in – in part because of what I believe is our overly inflated view of our current standards. We still tend to think that an education is the transfer to students' brains of boxes of knowledge, instead of the creation of

powerful and creative thinkers who can adapt and learn for themselves.

Second, when faced with the need for change, many of us tend to react in terms of process, organisation and resources, instead of outcome, information and incentives. We tend too often to seek top-down solutions, rather than ways to free up competition and innovation across the university.

"Beginning at the end" is my shorthand description of an approach that escapes these two tendencies. Let me illustrate the principle with a brief and schematic example.

Imagine the following experiment: choose a sub-set of subjects such as physics, computer science, statistics, economics and biology, for which "international standards" fairly clearly exist. Reconceptualise "international standards" not as a binary variable – yes/no, pass/fail, meets them or does not –

but as a continuum. A "standard" now means a measure, through which it makes sense internationally to say something is excellent, something else good, something else fair, something else poor. For conceptual purposes, think of a scale of 0 to 100.

Now imagine a consortium of educators from these disciplines and from many countries, including South Africa, with participants from organisations like the ANC. Suppose this group, supported by foreign donors, designed tests that measured the continuum of competence in physics, computer science, statistics, economics and biology at the level of first-year courses and after the third year. The tests would measure thinking and problem-solving ability rather than the ability to memorise.

'The need to produce many students who can compete internationally has not sunk in – in part because of what I believe is our overly inflated view of our current standards'

Using such measures of performance would focus discussion on competencies to be gained at the university, rather than on admissions standards or particular reading lists and lecture schedules; it would avoid the pernicious tendency of university students to think almost entirely in terms of pass/fail; and it would offer a continuum of outcomes, credibly and independently certified, with international meaning. Having such scales would enable a variety of experiments, without the risk of unravelling standards that has sunk universities in other countries.

Today's (binary) credential would be usefully supplemented by a much more fine-grained and internationally meaningful measure of learning. This in turn would enable us to experiment with admissions standards, including the enrolment of many more black students.

Academics could be challenged by incentives, without fear of grade inflation or corruption. A recent view of the voluminous research on pay-performance schemes reaches several interesting conclusions. Although the linkage schemes vary and methodological problems, as always, plague empirical estimation, a good rule of thumb is that linking pay and productivity induces a 20 percent increase in productivity. Another rule of thumb: incentive and bonus payments should not exceed 25 to 30 percent of the base pay.

'Begin at the end'

From Page 17

Research also indicated, though less robustly, that pay-for-performance schemes work better when employees participate in defining objectives and performance measures.

To the faculty, the idea might be put this way: we all agree that your salaries are too low. In this political climate and economic situation, the only way we can afford or justify pay raises is if we can show that they are linked to increased productivity and better student outcomes.

Teachers would be encouraged to experiment with different educational techniques, and information about the results would be publicised. Because of new incentives, innovations that worked would spread.

With these reforms, teaching would improve, students would work harder, and the value of the (continuous not binary) credential earned would increase. Therefore, those paying for a quality education would be willing to pay more.

The strategy of beginning at the end would provide a unique focal point for donors. Here is a university saying it is committed to international standards, but also not constrained by the usual debates over entrance criteria and defences of *status quo* teaching techniques.

The role of the university's top management would shift away from the perception of centralised decrees and cut-backs. Instead, a central task for the university's leadership would be the development of systems of information about outcome, and strong linkages between outcome and incentives. This in turn would open up opportunities for different teachers and departments to experiment with pedagogies, to work harder, and to learn from each other. And this in turn would create an environment attractive to the very best faculty members.

Beginning at the end might provide the basis for a simple, dramatic and mobilising example of leadership.

But there are problems.

If beginning at the end were easy and natural, there would be no need to call for it. The proposal is radical, and it faces several important objections. A few are listed here and some solutions proposed.

- Measuring results externally violates each department and indeed each professor's desire to set his or her own standards. This objection could be partially addressed in two ways. The departments could still define where on the scale "pass" would be defined. In honours and masters' courses,

the current system of locally defined standards could remain.

- Incentives violate the academic culture, which is egalitarian and not individualistic, motivated by an academic calling and not by money. The way to meet this problem is to note, first, that reforms in incentives are increasingly seen as the key to institutional reform around the world. Team incentives have been the most successful. For this reason, the greatest share of results-based faculty incentives might be awarded by departments.

- International tests would be difficult if not impossible to develop for fields like the humanities and the law. My suggestion in relation to this difficulty is to begin with a few fields for which international standards would be recognised by most people. In other fields the university's leadership would encourage faculty members to develop their own, measurable standards of excellence, imperfect though these might be. From the vice-chancellor on down, the crucial message would be: we must get away from the binary measurement of success; must stimulate more information about outcome; and must link incentives for both students and faculty to those outcomes.

- "Doesn't 'international standards' imply Oxbridge and the Ivy League? Our university shouldn't try to be a haven of excellence, which is what this idea implies." This objection is a serious but understandable misrepresentation of my suggestion. Remember how we reconceptualised the idea of international standards as a continuum, not a cut-off? The point is to escape a binary classification and think in terms of a continuum.

- "Our university does not have the capacity to change. Even if we 'began at the end', we don't have the managerial or entrepreneurial talent or spirit to meet the challenge." The evidence cited for this view is the lackadaisical, unoriginal behaviour of many faculty members. However, evidence from many other areas shows that what looks like laziness or lack of skill in an organisation is the consequence of a lack of information about outcomes and a lack of incentives linked to those outcomes.

When one does "begin at the end" by creating credible and variegated outcome measures and appropriate incentives, one is often pleasantly surprised by the initiative and excellence that ensue.

Robert Klitgaard was Lester Crown Professor of Economics at Yale and has recently become Professor of Economics at the University of Natal, Durban. This article, which first appeared in SAAD News, is a condensed version of a paper given at the University of Natal towards the end of 1993.

Gagged for decades under apartheid, attacked on the streets and betrayed by the courts, media workers are in sight of deliverance. After 27 April, the Interim Constitution will protect freedom of speech and expression – and the new Constitutional Court is likely to provide occasion for humility to the haughty in the Appeal Court. DENNIS DAVIS reports.



MEDIA freedom has been dealt a number of blows by the Appeal Court, to the shock of those who have grown accustomed to more enlightenment from the institution since Michael Corbett became Chief Justice. Among the damaging rulings was the dismissal of a Lawyers for Human Rights plea to prevent judges from suing those who question their decisions. Another was the decision upholding the appeal of General Lothar Neethling in his defamation action against *Vrye Weekblad* and *The Weekly Mail*.

There can be little doubt that both cases would have gone the other way had they been brought after 27 April, when the Interim Constitution comes into effect and the new Constitutional Court displaces the Appeal Court as the highest court in the land.

Section 15 (1) of the Introduction to Chapter 3 of the Interim Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression, including freedom of the press and other media, freedom of artistic creativity and freedom in scientific research. Furthermore, the Constitution requires regulation of all media financed by or under the control of the state to ensure impartiality and expression of a diversity of opinion.

The guarantee contained in this provision protects both speech and expression. The context of expression is far wider than that of speech. Based on American precedent, it would affect a symbolic act such as the burning of a flag, for example.

The legislature could attempt to censor such activity only on the basis of the limitation clause in the Interim Constitution, if it could show that the limitation was reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on freedom and equality. However, such an attempt would be highly unlikely to pass constitutional muster.

The scope of the freedom of expression clause for promoting free political debate is

Who's afraid of the probing press?

best illustrated, perhaps, by examining its effect on the law of defamation as interpreted by the Appellate Division in the Neethling case.

The case turned on articles published in *Vrye Weekblad* and *The Weekly Mail* regarding claims by former SAP captain Dirk Coetzee that the general had supplied his unit with poison to kill anti-apartheid activists. Neethling denied the allegations and claimed R1,5 million from the newspapers but his suit was dismissed by Justice J Kriegler in the Rand Supreme Court.

In examining the evidence the court was unable to find, on a preponderance of probability, one way or the other; in other words, it was unable to decide whether Coetzee's allegation or Neethling's denial was true. For this reason the case turned on the legal question of the onus of proof: the court had to decide what proof a newspaper must produce when it is sued for defamation and bases its defence on truth and public benefit.

Justice Kriegler's finding, on the strength of a number of earlier judgments, was that such a newspaper bears no more than an evidentiary burden, in the sense that if, at the end of the case, the court is uncertain as to whether the defence has been established, the defamation action should fail.

Given the Appellate Division's inability to establish whether Coetzee or Neethling was telling the truth, the Kriegler approach to the law would have meant the end of Neethling's challenge.

Justice Kriegler also examined and accepted the defence of qualified privilege raised by *The Weekly Mail*. He relied in this on the decision of *Zillie v Johnson* in which Justice Coetzee had held that "one must not lose sight of the special position of the press in our modern society when deciding whether as a matter of policy an action should lie in circumstances like the present".

But the Appellate Division rejected this reasoning, finding that the *Zillie* case accorded the press a "licence" recognised neither by South African law nor by the legal systems of most countries in the English-speaking world. In short, the Appeal Court rejected the view that the media occupy a special position in relation to claims of justification of defamation.

This judgment is obviously devastating to

the concept of media freedom. The media now bear a full onus of proof when pleading truth in the public benefit, which puts the tightest of shackles on the kind of investigative reporting which is vital to ensure government accountability and transparency.

Equally extraordinary is the inability of the highest court in the land, in the last decade of the 20th century, to understand the unique role of the media in the enforcement of democratic government.

There is almost an air of surrealism about the Appellate Division judgment. Justice Hoexter opines, for example: "I am driven to the conclusion that the matter defamatory of the appellant (Neethling) contained in the

disregard for its veracity or lack of it.

This is best illustrated by the famous decision of *New York Times v Sullivan*, an appeal against a libel judgment awarded to the Police Commissioner in Alabama against four clerics who had paid for an advertisement published in *The New York Times*. The advertisement solicited contributions for Martin Luther King's Civil Rights Movement in the South, and claimed that there had been police brutality and harassment during racial disturbances in Alabama in 1960.

The clerics argued that the advert had not named the Commissioner and that its only link with him was through his official position as supervisor of the police whose conduct had been criticised. The Alabama courts had no difficulty in finding for the Police Commissioner. But the Supreme Court found that public officials bringing libel suits must establish that the defamatory statements were directed at them personally, and not simply at state units.

The Supreme Court also ruled that because criticism of the government will invariably involve attack on officials, the defamation actions of aggrieved public officials should be scrutinised in order to prevent what would otherwise be a form of official censorship.

The court said the Constitution required "a federal rule that prohibits a public official from recovering damages for a defamatory falsehood relating to his (sic) official conduct, unless he proves that the statement was made with actual malice - that is, with knowledge that it was false, or with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not".

There can be little doubt, unless the Constitutional Court adopts the most myopic jurisprudence (and certainly there is cause for concern if the Appellate Division's recent record on press freedom is anything to go by), that the Neethling case would have gone the other way under the protection of the freedom of expression clause of the Interim Constitution.

In short, in contrast to the chilling effect of the *Neethling* decision, the freedom of expression clause will nurture investigative journalism. It will promote critical debate and outlaw the old style SABC habit of using state media for propaganda purposes.

Dennis Davis is director of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies, University of the Witwatersrand.



Weekly Mail article was in no sense for the public benefit, and that it was not published in the discharge of any journalistic duty such as would be recognised by the mass of right-thinking people in the community."

NO doubt "right-thinking people in the community" find nothing alarming about the possibility that a senior police officer was poisoning government opponents! But to any concerned citizen, this was a story of enormous public interest. There have been sustained claims about police atrocities and most citizens are rightly suspicious of police action. The almost hysterical attempts by the government and police to get blanket amnesties before the election does nothing to allay this suspicion.

This decision will not stand once the matter is brought before the Constitutional Court. Liability without fault has not been accepted by the American Supreme Court: public officials have not been able to recover damages for defamation unless they have been able to prove malice, in the sense that the offending matter was published despite knowledge of its untruth or with a reckless

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We're 'doing democracy' on the airwaves

AFTER months of planning, endless meetings and countless proposals on voter education by radio, Idasa's Radio Project is pouring a torrent of magazine programmes, dramas, public service announcements and music on to the air.

The project's 15-minute Xhosa magazine programme called "Make Your Vote Count" has received a warm response from listeners, who have phoned to say "keep going, we love what you are doing". A contest run on the programme - seeking replies to the questions "What is the name of the commission which will be responsible on election day?" and "What must you have in order to vote?" - has elicited huge numbers of entries, from areas as far apart as the Transvaal and Eastern Cape.

The formula arrived at for the programme mixes on-the-street interviews with expert opinion, drama, storytelling and music. A different voting issue is dealt with each week. Among the topics addressed so far are why it is important to vote, what individuals can do to promote peace and reasons for hope in South Africa.

Voter education material produced in Xhosa is being broadcast on Radio Xhosa, Radio Transkei and Radio Ciskei, while Radio Zulu is airing the Zulu versions (see box for broadcast dates and times).

The Peace Committee's new national radio station, Peace 2000, offers another outlet for Radio Unit programmes. This station, broadcast on the Radio 2000 frequency, is dedicated to the promotion of peace and democracy. The Idasa Radio Project will fill a half-hour weekly slot with a magazine programme called "Doing Democracy".

The unit has also produced a series of public service or community announcements in English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, South Sotho and Tswana. These will be aired by most of the national and regional SABC stations as well as independent stations such as Radio 702 and Capital Radio. These



MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT: Actress Thobeka Maqhutyala presents Idasa's Xhosa magazine programme.

announcements are short messages, similar to advertisements, about such issues as the secrecy of the vote, the need for tolerance and the importance of individual votes.

Pieter-Dirk Uys has written and performed a special series of announcements, and another batch of announcements will be voiced by local music and entertainment stars.

The latest development is a 15-minute weekly programme for Afrikaans Stereo entitled "Laat Jou Stem Tel". Using competitions, interviews, music and drama, it will deal with a different theme each week.

The power of radio to educate people and provide a means for the airing of the needs and concerns of citizens is at last being recognised in South Africa. The advent of community radio initiatives, the issuing of temporary licences and the promise of a redistribution of airtime, all bodes well for the future of broadcasting. Radio Project staff enjoy the challenge of working on this edge.

● If you have any suggestions or ideas for programmes please write to the Radio Unit, Albion Spring, 183 Main Road, Rondebosch, Cape Town 7700; or telephone (021) 689-8389.

Jackie Davies
Radio Project Producer

| Title | Station | Time |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Make Your Vote Count (Xhosa) | Radio Xhosa Radio Ciskei | Sat 8:00 am Daily 1:30 pm; 5:15 pm |
| Kwaze Kwabaluleka Ukuvota kwakho (Zulu) | Radio Zulu | Thurs 7:45 pm |
| Doing Democracy (English) | Peace 2000 | Mon 1:30 - 2:00 pm |

Manufactured myths are 'hostile to democracy'



WHITEWASH: The betrayal by the British of the Xhosa chief Hintsa, who was seized after he entered the British camp for peace talks, is erased in this contemporary depiction of Hintsa's supposed capture by Colonel Harry Smith.

EDUCATION for nation building has been proposed as a way to create a unified South African people. But it would be incompatible with education for democracy.

Before examining this assertion it is necessary to look first at how realistic the idea of a common nationhood is in a society as divided and diverse as South Africa. While some of the features that make a nation, such as occupation of an historical territory and political autonomy, are either present or imminent, others are simply not applicable.

Although it is probably true that many South Africans share a common loyalty to the political community, our history is only partly one of living together. It is also a history of colonialism and conquest, of conflict, expropriation, oppression and exploitation. As a result, members of the society have very different sets of memories and myths, where some members are depicted as enemies rather than compatriots. It is difficult to locate a common nationhood here.

PENNY ENSLIN argues that nation building is not a defensible approach to education after apartheid.

Apartheid abused the concept of culture for cynical racist ends, but it remains true that South Africans cannot be described as culturally homogeneous or sharing distinctive characteristics. There are elements of culture which are shared, but deep divisions make it clear that many do not share a sense of belonging with their compatriots. Loyalties tend to be factional rather than embracing the whole society.

But we should not make too much of the idea that for a society to be a nation it must demonstrate a set of natural or objective features. As Ernest Gellner argues in *Nations and Nationalism*, nations are created by nationalism. Rather than emerging spontaneously, nations are invented as a result of

bureaucratic incorporation or of mobilisation by intellectuals and liberation movements.

A feature of this process of nation building is the manufacture of a national myth. Where there are deep divisions in a society myths of considerable proportions and imagination would have to be manufactured if its members were to see themselves and each other as belonging to one nation.

The question which arises, therefore, is whether education should include the manufacture and teaching of these national myths and inventions as part of a process of nation building.

Christian National Education (CNE) is a painful example of schooling aimed at nation building. Instead of developing rational reflection and critical thinking, CNE set out to promote a myth which declared that God had allotted the land in South Africa to Afrikaners, or whites, and that historical events, including the appropriation of this land, were God's will.

Manufactured myths

From Page 21

For those who embraced the nation-building myths of CNE, reasons or evidence for these beliefs were not relevant and critical scrutiny of them was not encouraged.

However, the development of rationality should be central to education, and students should be encouraged to exercise rational skills. While this does not mean that education is only about learning to engage in rational enquiry – education also legitimately promotes imagination and creativity – it does imply that education should not encourage students to embrace false beliefs.

Indeed education, and particularly education for a democratic way of life, must expose false beliefs, especially the myths that political and cultural entrepreneurs would have students embrace. This could occasionally require that students and citizens publicly renounce the nation's deeds and values.

But loyalty to the nation is expected of its members. While nationhood is often expressed as a demand for autonomy for the nation, this does not usually imply autonomy for its members. Although nationalists typically claim that every nation is unique, individual members of the nation must surrender their individual uniqueness in order to belong to the organic whole, identifying with and celebrating a given heritage.

'Christian National Education is a painful example of schooling aimed at nation building'

Nationalism offers little by way of inspiration to democratic deeds and procedures, and nothing to prompt debate. It serves a purpose in liberation struggles, but offers little thereafter.

Informed by a sense of history which is a combination of forgetting and retrospective mythologising, nationalism does not foster the exercise of reason or the informed, critical imagination and questioning of authority which should be developed by education. Nation building would pre-empt the exercise of democratic reason by discouraging open-ended public debate on alternative political possibilities, and exploration of proper rational grounds for action.

The related ideals of education and democracy are incompatible with that of the "nation". Nation building is not a defensible approach to education after apartheid.

Penny Enslin is head of the Education Department at the University of the Witwatersrand.

SA in grip of 'borderline syndrome'

The debate on nation building has overlooked the analogy between the role of good parenting in creating a healthy individual identity and the role of leadership in creating a coherent national identity.

SHAUNA WESTCOTT spoke to Theo Schkolne.

IF THE South African community were a large extended family and its leaders were concerned parents, the problem that family therapy would have to address would be "borderline syndrome". So says Theo Schkolne, graduate of Duquesne University in the United States and McMaster University in Canada.

In individuals, "borderline personality" is indicated by a shaky and non-coherent identity, dramatic shifts in mood and a great potential for self-destructiveness. In the case of a collective, a diagnosis of "borderline syndrome" would be made on the basis of the volatility of emotion in the collective, the absence of a central, unified community core and collective self-destructiveness.

"I think that in South Africa, in this time of transition," says Schkolne, "the volatility of emotions focuses largely around fear, paranoia, mistrust, entitlement and the unresolved experience of woundedness."

In individuals, the causes of borderline personality lie in grossly inadequate parenting – what Schkolne calls "a profound failure in early nurturance and containment, where a sense of coherent identity is consumed by the needs of the parental figure or through forms of early deprivation".

If the analogy between parents and political leadership holds, it is not difficult to see how the barbarism of the apartheid order, and the wholesale neglect and cruelty emanating from institutions that should have provided care, sowed the seeds of the societal damage that now threatens the future.

According to Schkolne, even after the official death of apartheid, leaders are still failing in the essence of their task.

"Leadership in this country still seems to be grounded in the articulation of special interest needs. Even though this is legitimate in terms of past discrimination, it prevents

them from fully encountering the diversity of cultural and human needs and experience. If we see the various diversities in our society as a family, then the parental figures are not providing real containment for all that diversity of needs.

"Containment, a sense of safety, is what leadership should be offering; providing our diversity of communities with common ground. Instead, they dwell too much on the idea of entitlement. While this is legitimate, it may create a sense of fear in others of being dispossessed or relegated to the role of outsider.

"The real task for leadership is to build the sense of national identity that we have never had because of our history of separation and division. A national identity must be based on the celebration of unity within diversity. The challenge for leadership is how to articulate that – because that is containment."

Schkolne stresses that a sense of collective identity should not be confused with the prejudiced stereotyping that assigns to outsider groups – Afrikaners, Zulus, gays, Jews, scapegoats of any sort – characteristics that encapsulate and separate them from others.

"The characteristics of the national personality, as modelled by leadership, should include respect for difference and diversity, and a search for all those things that are common in people's interests, needs, values and views. This commonality is obscured when people are set up against each other in a competitive way."

Can a society suffering from borderline syndrome hope for recovery? That depends on the leadership, says Schkolne. Leaders need to find and provide "those transcendent values that truly don't relate to majority or ethnic power but rest on the common threads". Such a commitment will foster the development of "a solid national identity



ROLE MODELS: Celebrating unity within diversity?

SOUTHLIGHT: Henner Frankerfeld

that is less volatile, more contained and more respectful of fellow human beings".

Another way of putting it is to say that leaders must find a way to provide the nurturing whose lack has caused such terrible wounds. In a sense, talking about redistribution is saying the same thing: the South African nation as a whole is in need of good parenting.

However, Schkolne cautions, to demand that the bad parent becomes a good parent is no guarantee of any result. Nor can real nurturance come out of a sense of unbridled entitlement.

What will help healing is "the perception that those on the top rung show an appreciation for multi-perspectivity – the diversity of experience on key issues – and that the idea of power and how easily it can be gained is not the overriding ethic".

Unfortunately, this kind of commitment to unity while celebrating diversity is not the stuff of which election campaigns are made, particularly male-dominated ones. Schkolne points out how revealing the terminology can be: "flattening the opponent", "getting on top of" the issues, the State President's recent assertion that politics is "not for sissies", for instance.

Nevertheless, there has been some progress down the path towards healing and unity by means of multi-party negotiations, which bear some resemblance to the therapeutic notion of "the talking cure".

Problematic about the negotiation process, however, has been the fact that so much of it

has taken place and continues to take place behind closed doors. Returning to the family analogy, the problem is that parental figures can collude with each other and abrogate their responsibility to the broader family.

Schkolne suggests that the whole process of negotiation "needs to be viewed, not in a voyeuristic sense but as if through a one-way mirror, so that people can get a sense of how the leadership is doing".

'It is not difficult to see how the barbarism of the apartheid order, and the wholesale neglect and cruelty emanating from institutions that should have provided care, sowed the seeds of the societal damage that now threatens the future'

Televising the process of consensus being reached would be "containing" in itself, for example. Those spoken for would feel affirmed. All would experience that it is acceptable to dissent or, as Bertrand Russell put it, that "democracy is when it's safe to be unpopular".

Another area Schkolne identifies as potentially problematic is the room for non-accountability under the list system of proportional representation (PR). "There's a

paradox which comes up here: with the new PR system there's hope for more diverse representation, but at the same time people can find themselves on semi-anonymous party lists with no accountability to constituents, only to party elites, and that short-circuits feedback to communities."

As between parents and children, so also between leaders and communities: there has to be "a proper feedback loop".

As for the explosion of ethnic allegiances in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, troubling to any enterprise of nation building, Schkolne has comforting words: "I believe that's largely to do with the coercion of a false national character which did not celebrate diversity or acknowledge the needs and perspectives of individual communities. It's the result of totalitarian parenting.

"In the Soviet Union, totalitarian parenting treated everyone the same. In South Africa, the 'parents' favoured certain 'family members' above others. Their self-deceptive and cynical manoeuvres projected the idea that everyone was receiving equal nurturance, when in fact gross deprivation was the order of the day."

But can a population as diverse as ours really have a coherent national identity?

"Yes," says Schkolne, "but only if the basic, fundamental needs of the more disadvantaged are met, so that there's a sense in which the outsiders – who are masses of individuals, ultimately, not just 'the masses' – are brought in, and given an individual voice, not simply a collective one."

Women are demanding action against patriarchal ideology and practice with growing unanimity and confidence. SHIREEN BADAT reports on a pioneering initiative of the Women's National Coalition.



PREGIS GOVENDER: Building a culture of support among women.

'Guilty secret' in SA

THE high incidence of violence against women in South Africa is a national scandal, the country's guilty secret, according to a report submitted to the Transitional Executive Council by the Women's National Coalition (WNC).

It is estimated, for example, that one out of every two South African women has suffered or will suffer the trauma of rape; and that one out of every four South African girls will have been sexually abused – most often by a family member – by the age of 16. Violence occurs across the board, damaging women of every race and class.

This undeclared war against women is one of the areas women from across the country see as most in need of attention from a new government, according to the WNC report.

The report notes that women are no longer prepared to be submissive, silent victims, and demands vigorous action from the government and the police against perpetrators of violence against women. It records the fact that women expect the media to help create greater awareness of the problem, so that social and community pressures can be brought to bear against men who abuse women.

The report rejects the contemptuously light sentences often passed on rapists, pointing out how this underscores the fact that the legal system serves men rather than all people. It also highlights the need for the legal system to discard the patriarchal idea that how a man treats his spouse is beyond the purview of the courts.

Other issues the report identifies as top priorities for attention are the inferior status accorded to women by religion, culture and customary law; sexism in the workplace; the social constraints placed on women; political awareness among women; and the nurturing of female leadership.

The WNC report is a summary of the findings of the WNC charter campaign, the most comprehensive research study of women's concerns yet undertaken in South Africa. The charter campaign was the major task the WNC set itself after 80 organisations, representing about two million women, decided to join forces in April 1992.

The idea was to collect and collate data on the needs and priorities of women, with the long-term aim of developing a Charter for Women, by means of a massive national campaign involving workshops, interviews, questionnaires, seminars and rallies nation-wide.

The process envisaged was that the document formulated from this vast process of consultation would be discussed at regional conferences and finalised at a national conference scheduled for the end of February.

The report submitted to the TEC points out that the status of women has to be raised

if South Africa is to face up to pressing social problems like the population explosion and Aids. If women were treated as equal partners, such issues as contraception could be intelligently discussed, and unwanted births and Aids combated simultaneously.

On the issue of economic status, the report condemns the fact that women are still left out in the cold in terms of access to loans and subsidies. It calls for an urgent review of standard practice by businesses, government and institutions so that this kind of discrimination against women stops.

Another issue arousing increasing mili-

Comings and goings in Idasa

tance among women is how traditions of authoritarianism and male dominance impinge on women's political rights. Often expected to toe the political line established by men, women are starting to say "no".

Women are also uniting around the idea that the only way to advance the cause of women is a massive influx of women into government structures at all levels. Women are increasingly sceptical of political parties which seem reluctant to take practical steps to advance women's rights, irrespective of how enlightened their policies may seem on paper.

'Many women believe that men use culture to protect their positions of privilege'

Among other points made in the report are:

- Some 65 percent of rural women cannot read or write. Development projects such as voter education are complicated by this illiteracy and by the subservience to men forced on rural women.

- Many women believe that men use "culture" to protect their positions of privilege and dominance, and that "culture" – whether African or Western in derivation – is hostile to women.

- Women from all sectors are impatient with injustice in the workplace and demand equal pay for work of equal value. They also demand that appointments and promotions be based on qualifications, experience and aptitude, not gender, and that companies act firmly against sexual harassment in the workplace.

- Paid maternity leave should be a standard item in women's job packages and paternity leave should be considered.

- The provision of creches and health care facilities at the workplace should be considered seriously by companies and institutions.

The future of the WNC, up for discussion at the national conference at the end of February, was uncertain when *Democracy in Action* went to press. Whatever delegates decide, however, it is unlikely that women will easily surrender the co-operative network that has delivered some impressive results.

WNC National Project Manager Pregs Govender points out that the coalition does not exclude other initiatives. "One of the challenges of the process, as this work continues, is how to build a culture where women support one another. The question is how to engage with power in ways that aren't hierarchical and aren't competitive? How do we avoid falling into that pattern yet remain realistic enough to be able to take women's issues forward?"

SIMON Jabulani Ntombela has been appointed regional director of Idasa's Natal office. He replaces Steve Collins who, with regional co-ordinator Charles Talbot, left the organisation in December.

The office had to fill two regional co-ordinator posts; Simon's previous position and one other. The new appointees are



Simon Ntombela, Natal regional director.

George Hlungwane and Tiki Dumisani Phungula. George is currently working for a youth organisation based in Pietermaritzburg and he will join Idasa in March. He is a religious science graduate with an honours degree in theology and he has worked with students in political and religious bodies in various campus structures. He also has a strong interest in the youth.

Tiki has taught in township schools and worked in various cultural and civic organisations. His main interest is civil society and its development. He is also an artist and has had work shown at exhibitions and galleries.

The Democracy Training Centre in Johannesburg sadly bids farewell to tutor Lufuno Nevhuthalu who has joined Information Services Management in Johannesburg. Idasa regrets losing his considerable training expertise.

The Pretoria office reports that it was a sad moment in Idasa Transvaal when Kerry Harris, employed for the last four years, left on Friday 11 February. Kerry's husband was transferred to Durban and the family has left to join him.

We thank Kerry for her special services over the past years. She will be sorely missed, not only in the Transvaal office but in Idasa as a whole.

The Port Elizabeth office will have to make do without Max Mamase for six months as he is on sabbatical until July. Receptionist Vivian Sontsonga is on sick leave following a taxi accident. Doctors have ordered a three-month recuperation period and Vuyiswa Matshaya will be taking over Vivian's responsibilities. Idasa wishes her a speedy recovery.

Cape Town head office welcomes Bryant Tindleni and Mandla Makubalo to the Radio Project. Mandla worked as an assistant producer at the SABC in Sea Point, Cape Town, as well as a credit controller for a local bank.

You might recognise Bryant from a popular television sitcom, and he still works as a freelance actor and director when he has the time.

We wish the media department's production editor, Ronel Sheffer, well as she leaves for a six-month sabbatical. Until her return in August, Moira Levy will be taking over her responsibilities co-ordinating the media department.



Kerry Harris left Transvaal office.

The Bloemfontein office has also seen a few changes. Regional director Henning Myburgh left at the end of the year to go into farming full-time. Kobus van Loggerenberg, who was the office project manager, has also left Idasa. He has joined a community newspaper in Bloemfontein.

Police-community healing starts in Kathorus

VIOLENCE and killings have been continuing unabated in the East Rand, particularly Thokoza and Kathlehong, despite the fact that the TEC and its subcouncils are in place and national negotiations are still hobbling along. It is clear that without urgent positive intervention this area could disrupt the process of transition.

In the light of this threat, the Wits-Vaal Peace Secretariat approached Idasa in February to organise a police-community relations workshop for the Kathorus (Kathlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus) area.

A peace plan was drawn up by the TEC and a task force appointed to oversee the implementation of the proposals. The plan involved the withdrawal of the controversial Internal Stability Division (ISD) from the area, the socio-economic upgrading of the area and the return of people to their abandoned homes.

The peace plan also made provision for increased SAP involvement in the East Rand within a framework of community-oriented policing. In other areas, workshops for police and the communities they served had created an impetus to the process of improving police-community relations, and the TEC hoped the same could happen in the East Rand.

However, a TEC-organised workshop would for obvious reasons be problematic, as not all parties in the Kathorus area were part of the TEC structure. At the same time, organisations outside the peace structures could feel alienated if the workshop were to take place under the auspices of these structures.

Idasa was therefore an ideal facilitator for such a workshop.

The commitment of the residents of the Kathorus areas to achieving peace and stability

was evident in the overwhelming and speedy response to the workshop, which was organised in a matter of weeks. Approximately 160 people attended, with virtually all the major interest groups in the three areas well represented – including the SA Police. Political organisations ranged from the Azanian People's Organisation and the PAC to the Inkatha Freedom Party, the ANC alliance and Intando Ye Sizwe. Also present were civic structures, most noticeably the Hostel Residents' Association, and the local peace structures.

The first day of the workshop was spent raising problems and needs. For many delegates the ISD withdrawal from the area only days before made discussion much easier as many of their complaints were directed against this unit. However, the IFP and hostel residents felt that this meant their safety was being jeopardised by a decision taken, in their view, by the two major parties alone.

Another sensitive topic was the ANC-aligned self-defence units (SDUs). Delegates ranging from the PAC to the SAP complained about the lack of control over these SDUs and their actions in the name of self-defence. However, the response was that because communities felt insecure,



FACILITATOR: Eric Appelgren of the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy leads a discussion.

SDUs would not disband until there was effective and efficient policing of the areas concerned.

By the end of the first day participants had gone through a thorough process of clearing the air. Issues were then loosely grouped into categories for problem-solving, and the next day was spent discussing ways to address these problems.

Clearly many problems were structural and could only be addressed in the longer term, but other pressing issues could receive immediate attention.

Topping the list was the lack of trust, communication and co-operation between the police and the community. Much of this was ascribed to the historical negative percep-

tion of the police as the "enemy" which manifested itself in an unwillingness to co-operate in police investigations for fear of being branded a sellout, as well as the intimidation of township police and their families.

A second group of problems were those concerning police inefficiency, in particular their poor record in solving crime and providing security. However, it soon became evident that the police themselves were the victims of a system which offered them minimum support in their policing duties. Badly under-resourced in terms of staff, vehicles, telephones and even police and satellite stations, the police in these areas often simply did not have the means to follow up reported incidents.

Police officers also pointed out that the barricades and trenches in "no-go" areas created by certain sectors of the communities made it difficult for them to operate quickly.

The participants felt that if local station commanders had more autonomy and were accountable to the communities they served, police efficiency



TALKING: Workshop participants at work.

would be improved. They also felt that local officers should be based in the community and be known to members of the community. Police officers should be friendlier and police stations should be more accessible and have better resources.

However, the complaints went beyond inefficient service. Often community residents perceive the police as deliberately unhelpful and racist. White police in particular were seen as aggravating community relations; several incidents were reported where young white policemen failed to treat older black people with due respect. A number of people related their experiences of detention and torture at the hands of the police.

Although it was clear that these problems would take a long time to resolve, workshop participants were eager for the slow process of healing and building trust to begin.

Police-community relations could also be dramatically improved if community members were more aware of correct police procedure, the criminal justice system and their rights under the law, the Kathorus community asserted. Their ignorance had often led to an abuse of police power in the past. The police, on the other hand, pointed out that their own tasks would be easier if complainants and witnesses were aware of the channels open to them.

Seminars and workshops educating the community about their legal rights could be organised immediately, and participants suggested that eventually this information become part of the school syllabus.

The question of the self-defence units was not entirely resolved by the end of the workshop. However, there was general agreement (and that included members of these units) that the ideal in the long term would be to dissolve the

units and replace them with a legitimate and acceptable structure such as a neighbourhood watch.

Until then the SDUs should co-operate with the police and develop a greater degree of transparency. Members of all self-protection structures should receive training to equip them for their tasks.

This workshop very successfully opened discussion, cleared the air and allowed participants to think creatively about issues raised, but it was unable to provide instant fixes. All the groups were eager for some sort of permanent structure to address issues on an ongoing basis.

Three workshops were scheduled, one in each area, to discuss in greater detail the proposal of a police-community forum. The steering committee to oversee the organisation of these three workshops comprises seven representatives from the three communities. They will begin setting up a permanent structure for the Kathorus area and will appoint permanent workers to staff it.

The commitment to peace and the enthusiasm of the approach to follow-up activities was nothing short of remarkable for a community known as one of the most conflict-ridden in South Africa.

Of course the violence will not end merely upon implementation of a police-community forum. Far-reaching socio-economic upgrading, community education and a national political solution are necessary to create a society where people live happy, healthy, safe lives. But the police have an important role to play – and they can only make a meaningful contribution with the assistance and co-operation of the community they serve. This workshop was a step in the right direction.

Ivor Jenkins
Regional Director

Race is on to reach voters

AS APRIL 27 rapidly approaches, voter educators in the Transvaal are working against the clock in an effort to reach the millions of potential voters in the region.

Idasa's Transvaal office has two voter-education teams, and has been involved in the setting up of a third team appointed by the Pretoria and Regions Independent Forum for Electoral Education (Prifee).

The "Come and Vote" team of three trainers and a trainer/co-ordinator has been operating in the townships and suburbs around Pretoria since October last year. The combi is on the road every day, going from school to school in Atteridgeville and Mamelodi, visiting clinics, running sessions for staff from educational institutions, meeting with small groups of domestic workers and speaking on local radio stations.

The voter-education programme also focuses on the church and other public access areas such as queues and street-corners. Such is the demand in the Pretoria region that "Come and Vote" is now expanding into KwaNdebele and other needy rural areas.

Although the teams estimate that they reach hundreds of people every day, the job is not without its frustrations. Work-

shops have fallen through, materials have run out and the issue of two ballot papers has caused confusion.

There are many areas where voter educators cannot always give clear-cut answers. They have found that the new electorate thinks very deeply about the election and its implications. Every session has the team scrambling through the Electoral Act for answers to questions.

The Eastern Transvaal voter-literacy programme, a joint initiative consisting of two Human Sciences Research Council trainers and two Idasa-appointed trainers and a co-ordinator, began in mid-January.

The new voter education programme was made possible by Idasa's role in the Prifee steering committee and training commission. Idasa assisted with raising funds and with the appointment of a regional co-ordinator. Six voter educators will initiate and co-ordinate the programmes in the rural areas of Odi-Moretele, Moutse and KwaNdebele.

The Eastern Transvaal, with its high concentration of people in the rural areas, has been one of the most underserved areas. Because there are few telephones, consultations have to be done face-to-face. This means sometimes travelling hundreds of kilometres to organise a series of workshops.

With 1,4 million potential voters in the area, the teams have estimated that they need to train at least 2 600 voter educators who will then have to conduct between three to six mass voter-education sessions. The success of the programme depends largely on the commitment of the voter educators within the communities and the support which can be made available to them.

Alice Coetzee
Project co-ordinator

Tragedy strikes

TRAGEDY struck the eastern Transvaal team in February. Team member Ralph Radebe was seriously injured in an accident on the way home from a workshop and a passenger and close friend of his, Thulani Maseko, was killed. Ralph was in Kalafong Hospital in Pretoria with a badly broken leg. Our condolences go to Thulani's family and friends in Witbank.

Human relations for the new SA

THE "prejudice reduction" workshop run by Idasa in Port Elizabeth in January is part of Idasa's ongoing commitment to bringing opposing groups together and bridging gaps.

The task of the workshop was to enable people in leadership, supervisory and co-ordinating positions within business, non-governmental organisations and educational institutions to improve their understanding and awareness of racism at both personal and structural levels.

Julian Sonn, a Cape Town-based human relations consultant, guided 15 participants - black and white, male and female - through an experiential learning process to address the problems of racism and to facilitate working together in integrated environments. Participants had to analyse their attitudes in hypothetical situa-

tions and attempt to understand the origins of their particular prejudices and behaviour patterns.

The experience of a newly-promoted or appointed black human resources manager in a large organisation was given as an example. White management do not accept him as one of them, and his former black colleagues reject him for collaborating with white management. White staff implement his programmes out of fear of repercussions and his former black colleagues view them with suspicion. The new manager does not fit in or belong to any group in the organisation any longer, and his performance is measured by the colour of his skin. "He is quite a good manager, for a black man," becomes a familiar phrase in the workplace.

Participants were encouraged

to promote non-racialism as a fundamental value in the workplace, thereby influencing the attitudes of their staff and peers.

At the beginning of the three-day workshop participants were clearly apprehensive, but became relaxed and comfortable with one another as they began to overcome their preconceptions.

Idasa has been approached to host many more such workshops and the next workshop is already fully booked.

Now that South Africa has laid down most of the guidelines and laws for working in mixed environments, the next challenge is the practicality of working together. Sound inter-groups relations are essential, yet the majority of South Africans know little about other cultures, lifestyles and ways of doing things. Organisations can be severely affected

by this isolation and ignorance, and communication can break down.

South Africa may have a legitimate government after the April election, but without new norms, values and patterns of interaction, prejudices will impede growth and stability.

Sandy Wren
Regional Co-ordinator



CONSULTANT: Julian Sonn.

Hostels in voter education blitz

SIXTY residents of the Natal/KwaZulu hostels have been trained as voter educators in an initiative planned and co-ordinated by Idasa and the South African Hostel Dwellers' Association.

The training, which took place in Durban from 21 to 23 February, was a breakthrough for several reasons. It has given hostel dwellers access to much-needed voter education. It is also an empowering process for voter education to be taught by people in a community of which they form part and thus understand its language, culture, politics and values.

Idasa Natal, with the Natal Forum on Education for Democracy, has also been involved in training "generic" voter educators who can work in any community, as opposed to a specific area such as hostels.

A training session took place on 5 and 6 February with a good response from a range of



MOCK ELECTION: An "old lady" casts her vote during an Idasa voter education session.

aspirant voter educators. They were selected by means of a questionnaire designed to pick out the most suitable people.

● At a Natal Midlands Youth Convention held in December, young people committed themselves to work for restoration of "ubuntu", or humanity.

Participants included members of the IFP Youth, the ANC Youth League, the Democratic Party Youth, the Azanian Youth Unity, Azapo, student movements as well as religious, cultural and social groupings.

The convention, held at the University of Natal, was hosted by Idasa, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy and the Sawubona Youth Programme of the Rehab Trust.

One delegate to the convention said: "We must have more workshops like this. I've got to understand the policies of the different parties."

Langa Dhlomo
Regional Training Co-ordinator

Idasa's *Tshintsha* scores a first

TSHINTSHA: Long Live Tolerance!, a booklet published by Idasa aimed at informing South African teenagers about tolerance and democracy, has been prescribed in the Standard Six curriculum of a model C Durban school as part of a course on human rights.

The booklet grew out of a series of workshops conducted at Cape Town schools with the help of the University of Cape Town's Department of Educational Guidance. Using short stories, true-to-life scenarios, games and a quiz, it offers a cheerful and easily accessible way to explain the concept of transition to pupils.

Copies of the booklet are available at R20 (including Vat) from the Idasa Media Department, P O Box 575, Rondebosch 7700.

New publications and exhibitions

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS: TRENDS IN CAPE TOWN FROM 1989 TO 1991 by Shirley Walters. Cace, University of the Western Cape, 1993. R25,00.

THIS publication focuses on challenges confronting community organisations and also serves as a useful directory of organisations in the Western Cape.

Four key issues are discussed: definitions and purposes of community organisations; relations between organisations and the state; funding and funders and organisational strategies, including capacity building, networking and coalition building.

ERFENIS VAN DIE NOODLOT by Abraham Phillips. Queillerie Publishers, 1993. R33,95.

THIS IS the second novel by Phillips whose first book, *Die Verdwaalde Land*, was described by critics as one of the most important socio-political documents of the decade when it appeared last year.

Phillips writes about and for "ordinary" readers. The short, humorous novel is about the people of Biesiesvlei as seen through the eyes of a teenage girl. It relates what it means to be coloured and poor in our country.

LISTENING FOR A CHANGE: Oral Testimony and Development by Hugo Slim and Paul Thompson. Panos, 1993.

THIS IS a guide to collecting, interpreting and using the oral testimony of the people on whose actions and commitment development ultimately depends.

The aim is to help development workers improve their listening and learning skills, and value the knowledge, experience, culture and priorities of local people.

It challenges the aid world to listen to the awkwardly individual voices of the people at the heart of development.

For learners

THE second Design For Learning exhibition takes place on 9-10 March in Cape Town.

Billed as "a non-profit learning event" for business, education, training and development, the list of activities lined up for March is long and ranges from live theatre to controversial panel discussions, technology and entrepreneurial training.

Some 30 organisations were involved in last year's exhibition. Proceeds will go towards the DFL Community Development Trust Fund.

More information available from (021) 64-4120.

Book Promotions

Idasa is pleased to announce that marketing and distribution of Idasa publications will be handled in future by Book Promotions, 220 Werdmuller Centre, Newry Street, Claremont 7700, or PO Box 23320, Claremont 7735 (phone: 619100). These publications will still be available from Idasa offices country-wide.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

■ Political Tolerance in SA:

Role of the Media and Opinion-Makers

A symposium report comprising papers on this subject by media practitioners and political analysts including Oscar Dhomo, Lawrence Schlemmer, Z B Molefe and Willem de Klerk. The symposium was presented in Cape Town in July by the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid in conjunction with Idasa and the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy.

Available free of charge

■ TSHINTSHA

Long live tolerance!

R20 incl. VAT

What do tolerance and democracy mean for teenagers in South Africa today? This booklet offers guidelines for discussion through a series of different scenarios dealing with parents and parties, boyfriends, girlfriends, fashions, political and cultural differences. The short stories can be read alone or used in classroom discussions or youth groups.

Compiled by Sue Valentine.

Order from: Media Department, Idasa, Albion Spring, 183 Main Road, Rondebosch 7700. Tel (021) 689-8389.



HOT OFF THE PRESS
published by HSRC
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Street, Pretoria 0001.

THE HIDDEN HAND

Covert Operations in South Africa

Editors: Anthony Minnaar, Ian Liebenberg, Charl Schutte

A rare collection of conference papers on this horrific dimension of political oppression in South Africa. It covers the "Third Force" debate, gives case studies of prominent victims and asks whether covert operations have a place in a new South Africa.

* * *

Contributors include specialist researchers, lawyers, military specialists and investigative journalists.

* * *

Held in Pretoria in November 1993, the conference attempted to search for a methodology to research and evaluate covert operations; to formulate policy guidelines on covert operations; and to start a process whereby information on covert operations, both past and present, can be gathered systematically.

The conference organisers were drawn from Idasa, Lawyers for Human Rights, the Centre for Human Rights (based at the University of Pretoria), the Military Research Group and the HSRC.

RESOURCES FROM IDASA

DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT & PEACE

Available free of charge

This booklet provides a clear and simple guide to the major initiatives for democracy, development and peace, both nationally and in the Western Cape. It also makes suggestions about how individuals or community organisations can contribute to a prosperous and democratic future for our country. (32 pages with diagrams, maps and contact lists.)



CAPACITY BUILDING

Available free of charge

This booklet, subtitled *Empowering individuals and organisations in a changing South Africa*, begins to unpack and develop the concept of capacity building. What is it, why and by whom is it needed and what are the power relations involved? The content is based on a 1993 seminar which was held in Cape Town and supported by a wide variety of organisations and groups.

SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA DIRECTORY

R20,00

Compiled by Moira Levy. A useful and up to date contact list of newspapers, magazines, news agencies, television and radio stations operating in South Africa. It provides journalist contacts, telephone and fax numbers and addresses.

WOMEN IN A NEW SA

R34,95

A package of six workshops for women who want to turn all the talk about women's rights into action. Designed by activists and tried and tested, it comes with posters and other illustrations.

DEMOCRACY

R120,00 (R60,00 for non-profitmaking concerns)

A 40-minute award-winning video on the challenges presented by democracy, featuring South Africans young and mature, ordinary and prominent.

All material is available from the Media Department, Idasa, Albion Spring, 183 Main Road, Rondebosch 7700. (Tel 021-689-8389; Fax 689-3261)

A wave of South African memoirs is deluging local book markets and being lapped up by eager readers.

JANET LEVY reports on the new passion for the past.

DISCLOSURES about the lives of South Africans of political stature have lately been flowing as thick and fast as election promises. The country is in the middle of a narrative torrent of biographies and autobiographies which started flowing in 1990, according to Glenn Moss of Ravan Press.

Publishers have identified the fact that after years of silence, South Africans are hungry for stories about the South African past and for ways in which to understand this experience. Andre Odendaal, director of the Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), says: "Visitors to the Mayibuye Centre and a Robben Island exhibition are saying 'We never knew'; they feel angry that they were deprived of the knowledge of their own history."

The large number of memoirs already on the shelves conceals the fact that many other manuscripts have been rejected by publishers, while others – including a biography of writer Bessie Head and educationist Neville Alexander's *Robben Island Prison Dossier* – are due to be published in coming months. In addition, many academic historians are currently working on biographies, with the ANC's Govan Mbeki and Oliver Tambo among the subjects.

This creative surge has been greeted by sounds of satisfaction from booksellers and publishers faced with a public wanting more. Inquiries to Exclusive Books in Hyde Park revealed "brilliant sales" for Harvey Tyson's *Editors Under Fire* and Helen Suzman's *In No Uncertain Terms*; "very excellent sales" for *Om Te Veg Vir Hoop* by Carl Niehaus of the ANC; and, as a happy reflection of the general state of affairs, that "the local publishing programme in late 1993 was exceptional".

Some of the reasons for the outpouring of personal histories relate to the freer political climate. According to Moss: "An enormous number of manuscripts are coming from people historically from one of the resistance movements. In the past they didn't want to write because they would be breaking ranks by revealing sensitive material.

"A second reason is that many people were listed and felt constrained by the knowledge that their writings would not be published in South Africa."

There is also the "aging generation" the-

Torrent of

'An interesting reply to history is Pauline Podbrey's book White Girl in Search of the Party. Her late husband, leading Durban communist H A Naidoo, was airbrushed out of Communist Party history for being critical. The book is her attempt to paint him back in again'

ory – with regard to members of both the resistance and parliamentary politics.

"We are seeing a generation of people who were active in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, an aging generation, who feel they want to put their stamp on history," Moss says. Or, in the words of publisher David Philip: "As an era draws to a close, so those who played prominent roles in that period feel the need to explain, justify or assess what they contributed."

South African parliamentarians who have recently written their memoirs include Suzman and Sir De Villiers Graaff, who in *Div Looks Back* recounts his 21 years as leader of the old United Party and of the opposition, his experiences as a prisoner of war, and memories of a childhood sea voyage – with a cow to provide fresh milk.

Among black South African writers there is a long tradition of writing in the autobiographical and biographical mode. In the early part of the century the work of mission-educated blacks was published in Xhosa by the Lovedale Press. In the 1950s and 1960s, writers such as Es'kia Mphahlele (*Down Second Avenue*) followed suit, in English.

According to Nick Visser, Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Cape Town, these authors were individualistic in their writing whereas the current spate of autobiography is "more along the lines of memoir – factual narrative focused on the time in which one lives".

memoirs floods SA



He also notes that black South African writing appears to show a pattern of creative surges followed by periods of repression, with 1976 marking one of the crackdowns in which many voices were silenced. However, "one must remember that there were people writing in exile, like Alex la Guma in Cuba", during times of apparent silence. Visser also points to labour autobiographies such as Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* that preceded the current high tide of memoir writing.

It is interesting that the upsurge in a self-analytical genre of writing is paralleled on a political level by the notion of self-interrogation – as evidenced by the ANC inquiries into events at its camps and by widespread calls for the public airing of the truth about past atrocities committed by all parties. This self-analysis is clear in Breyten Breytenbach's new and acclaimed *Return to Paradise*, in which he grapples with his tortured relationship with the country of his birth and with the ANC.

But any initial euphoria about the number of memoirs buckling our shelves should be tempered by the questions: of what literary merit are these books, and are they giving us a more complete history? Several English academics expressed reservations about the current spate of autobiographies written by people who are not writers. By contrast, many of the works of the 1960s were by highly skilled writers, according to Visser.

Also relative is the question of historical completeness and accuracy. Colin Bundy, director of the Institute for Historical Research at UWC, draws a clear distinction between the rigour required of historians and the freedom autobiographers enjoy by comparison. "People writing autobiography are not writing history. What autobiographers produce is another kind of evidence for historians to evaluate, as they do all material."

Odendaal comments: "History is about debate and for that reason one will never get a 'real' history, only different versions." This is evident, for instance, from *Weekly Mail & Guardian* co-editor Anton Harber's response to Tyson's memoirs of his editorship of *The Star* during the PW Botha era. Reviewing the book for his newspaper, Harber praises Tyson for his "rich detail and fascinating anecdote", but berates him for several omissions, including "how his advertising department made a massive attempt to undermine" the short-lived *Daily Mail*.

An interesting reply to history is Pauline Podbrey's book *White Girl in Search of the Party*. Her late husband, leading Durban communist H A Naidoo, was airbrushed out of Communist Party history for being critical. The book is her attempt to paint him back in again.

Political scientist Tom Lodge warns that politicians should not be trusted to produce good history. "Just as old myths are being questioned, so new myths and falsehoods are being created," he says.

Suzman's autobiography, according to Lodge, is "full of *bons mots* and anecdotes yet silent about many things". On the other hand, Ronnie Kasrils', *Armed and Dangerous*, an insider's view of the ANC, is "a good story ... I'm not saying it's good history, but he's honest and engaging".

The point is that those who dip into the current autobiographical torrent should not expect an encounter with accurate descriptions of the past engraved in stone; rather they will find valuable – if partisan – insights into how South Africans have experienced their recent history.

Nevertheless, much encouragement can be drawn from the fact that a multitude of voices is now clamouring to recount new versions of the past. And as Brian Bunting notes in his introduction to the recent reissue of *S P Bunting: A Political Biography*, we would do well to remember Cicero's warning: "Not to know what happened before one was born is always to be a child."

New media for new SA

THE media has the power to make or break prominent persons, councillors, politicians, political parties and governments. They can gild the devil or blacken the saint.

They can even withhold criticism of themselves. This is why they have sanctified "freedom of the press" – to protect their own power. But such power without proper safeguards is more dangerous and has more potential for harm than a nuclear device. No man is a saint and corruption spares no organisation these days. No man and no group should be forced to appease the media out of fear.

The purpose of the media is to dispense truth. To pass on as truth what it cannot vouch for is reprehensible and to pass on lies and twisted information is downright criminal.

Ideally, no owner or employee of a public news medium should be a member of a political organisation. Nothing should be quoted without naming the source. The use of "special correspondent", "reliable source" and such generalities are covert ways of hiding the source and should not be tolerated. A writer should have the courage of his convictions and sign his name – the public has a right to know who he is.

An independent ombudsman should have the authority to investigate any aspect of the media. The media should be neutral, impartial and non-discriminatory in all its reporting, especially with regard to politics. There should be no monopolies. Surely no honest person can complain about these requirements.

However, the press is, by and large, anything but impartial. With few exceptions it also tends to be high-handed and autocratic.

No country can thrive in the face of partiality, false information, disinformation and selective discrimination in its news media.

There can be no justice when a thoroughly biased press gives prominence to one sector of public opinion while suppressing or holding up to ridicule another.

If we are to have a new South Africa, there has to be a new news media too. It cannot stand aloof from reform. This is a plea to have honesty, truth and integrity restored to South Africa's media. This is the time to establish the whys and the wherefores, a full and proper code of ethics and a completely independent ombudsman.

Ralph Pentecost
Oranjezicht, Cape Town

From Bothacracy to democracy, long live satire!

SOMEONE clever once said satire was tragedy plus time. That was possible when one had the time to allow tragedy to mellow into legend. One could make a satire about the tragedy of the Vietnam War after 20 years had lapsed. We had no time in South Africa. What happened today had to become the target for tonight.

Apartheid's culture of death didn't allow us the luxury of satire. We just had to show it as it was, the blood still fresh and slippery on our hands.

It was easy in those old days of Bothacracy. Then the good guys were in jail and the bad guys in Parliament. The issue was black and white. Most voices were stilled by laws and imprisonment and so the relative freedom of speech still allowed in the confines of satire had to be rationed. The voiceless ones needed to be given a whisper. Bad laws were there to be broken. Quote the banned leaders, wave the forbidden flags, sing the unmentionable anthem.

Satire was then more closely related to shock tactics than to social comment. For so many years I was blessed with a government that had absolutely no sense of humour. It became my ambition to make them all so the *moer* in that they would have strokes and retire to the Wilderness. I have had some success.

It also didn't take much to make them madder; all one had to do was repeat what they said. The South African government wrote my scripts and that is why I have never resented paying taxes; I call it royalties.

Then suddenly I lost my bread and Botha when the old regime hiccuped and fell into the toilet of bad politics. The new era of Pretoriastroika turned chalk to cheese and suddenly prison doors opened and restrictions were shredded. Freedom of speech became the habit of the day with maybe too much freedom and too little speech.

The wild excitement of the honeymoon after the shotgun marriage of left and right nearly overshadowed the fine writing on the wall: what after democracy? In the past, satire was based on the terrible facts of a white Christian society killing children and destroying a gagged majority with cruelty and greed; an alphabet of humour always anchored in the negative. It was what was wrong with us that mattered. It was important to be anti-apartheid.

It is now vital to be pro-South African. When Nelson Mandela walked to freedom I was prepared to hang up my high heels and my poison pen and find new employ. Surely that noble battle was over, I thought. The dinosaur of apartheid was banished to the Boerassic Park of AWB-land and there would be no need in the future to hold up the cracked mirror of satire to a cracked society.

How wrong could one have been! There is now a full

alphabet to work with. In the past it was the restriction of protest politics that kept one concentrated on the obvious: Free Mandela! Down with apartheid! Because there were no instant solutions, one had to shout out the answers. We knew the answers. We'd forgotten the question. Like: what do we do with this new toy called democracy?

We must rediscover questions and find answers from our experiences. Now is the time to move away from the negative and reflect positive hopes for a desperate future.

A sense of humour is the last truly democratic weapon in the hands of each person. No one's sense of humour is the same. Like fingerprints, a laugh is as individual as its enjoyer. The weapon of humour is as mighty as the gun. The violence of humour is as shocking as the grenade, but no one has ever died laughing.

To laugh at one's fear makes that fear less fearful. In the past people found themselves confronted with familiar prejudice in a comic situation and laughed. Hopefully that same prejudice was weakened by that laughter, so that a future confrontation on racist lines would be undermined by memories of mirth. How can you take seriously a person who won't sit next to another person because of their race, creed or colour. Racism is absurd. Absurdity can kill when it loses its label and becomes a way of life. Laughter controls the madness of humans and makes them human again.

The future of satire is always a past, meaning that what worked today cannot work tomorrow. It is a reflection of the happenings around one. Satire has to adapt or else it will

die. There is nothing more deadly in satire than old news.

And now there are so many people who for the first time have been allowed their right to choose, and given back their right to be proud of their roots. The terrible wounds of the past can so easily be reopened by careless jokes and vicious laughter. There is a very thin line between what is satirical and what is racist. Political correct-ness could become the concrete condom on the weapon of satire.

Nothing is beyond satire, because everything created by people to control other people is deserving of a strong comment. But there are clever ways to do it. Don't stick your finger in my eye if all you need do is tickle me in my neck so that when I turn round my eye finds your finger.

In this transitional period, we stand with one foot on the bank of the future and one heel on the shore of the past. You can take it all very seriously, until you look down and see where your middleparts are dangling. And this River Rubicon is still full of crocodiles whose teeth could do a job Mrs Bobbett would envy.

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By PIETER-DIRK UYS