

Media Report for 28 August 2012

In the news today various news agencies including *Cape Argus*, SABC News, *Daily Dispatch*, *The Mercury*, *The Herald*, *Die Burger* and *Sky News* report: “Acclaimed Cape teacher and anti-apartheid Struggle veteran Dr Neville Alexander has died following a battle with cancer. He was an acclaimed linguist, multilingualism activist and academic. In a statement yesterday, UCT paid tribute to Alexander, saying that the university was deeply saddened by his death. ‘Neville Alexander was an opinion maker all his life. As such he contributed richly not only to dialogues at UCT, but also to South Africa in its formative years as a new democracy, said Gerda Kruger, UCT's executive director of communications.’” (Pg.5 and Pg.4 respectively)

<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/SABC3DeathofNevilleAlexande28Augu.avi>
<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/SABC2deathofDrNevilleAlexander27Aug.avi>
<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/TalkRadioFmDeathofProfneville28August.mp3>

Similarly, *Daily Maverick* reports: “Neville Alexander died on Monday after a crippling, albeit brief battle with lung cancer. But even as messages of tribute pour in from around the country, the real contribution of Alexander to the country cannot be quantified simply. Khadija Patel spoke with people who knew him to find out how they thought he would be remembered.” (Online)

Various news agencies including *Cape Argus*, *Cape Times*, *The Mercury* and *Business Report* report: “The window of opportunity to deal with the crisis of poverty and inequality will not last forever, UCT acting Pro-Vice Chancellor Francis Wilson warned yesterday. Addressing the Cape Town Press Club before a major conference on poverty alleviation at UCT next week, Wilson said urgent action was needed to turn ‘the big ship’ of poverty around. UCT Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price, told the press club, that SA could expect ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings if it did not address the crisis. Price said particular attention must be paid to young black males, who comprised ‘a boiling cauldron’ of discontent.” (Pg.2, Pg.4, Pg.2 and Pg.17 respectively)

<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/CapeTalkPovertandInequalityDrMax28Augu.mp3>

Similarly, Cape Talk Radio interviewed Francis Wilson about the conference on poverty and inequality that will be held at UCT next week.

<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/CapeTalkRadioDiscussiononPovert27Aug.mp3>

SABC3's *3Talk with Noleen* held a discussion with about the participation of women in science. UCT Dr Sindiso Mnisi-Weeks is interviewed.

<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/3TalkSindisoMnisiWeeks.28Aug2012.avi>

Cape Talk radio held a discussion about the research project between Stellenbosch University and UCT which analysed the brain activity of tik abusers and those who never abused drugs. Dr Stefan du Plessis, one of the researchers from Stellenbosch University's department of psychiatry, said the study, which investigated the effects of tik on the brain, also found that abusers battled with attention control and were impulsive.

<http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/email/CapeTalkRadioPovertyandinequality27Aug.mp3>

In the news yesterday *Public Eye* reported: “It took the loss of an 11-year-old farm worker's leg for farmers in South Africa's Western Cape Province to belatedly heed legislation outlawing child workers, but the consequences of respecting the law has had adverse and unintended effects on those it seeks to protect. The unpalatable truth is that child labour is a

much needed additional source of income in the deeply impoverished region. 'The money in the family is small now, if children aren't working,' said Monica, a mother of three living in Rawsonville in the Breede River Valley, whose husband works on one of the numerous wine producing farms in Western Cape. Susan Levine, a children's rights lecturer and researcher at UCT is cited. (Pg.2)

ALEXANDER DEATH

UCT pays tribute to activist

Sibusiso Nkomo

STAFF REPORTER

ACCLAIMED Cape teacher and anti-apartheid Struggle veteran Dr Neville Alexander has died following a battle with cancer. He was an acclaimed linguist, multilingualism activist and academic.

In a statement yesterday, UCT paid tribute to Alexander, saying that the university was deeply saddened by his death.

"Neville Alexander was an opinion maker all his life. As such he contributed richly not only to dialogues at UCT, but also to South Africa in its formative years as a new democracy," said Gerda Kruger, UCT's executive director of communications.

"Dr Alexander has a rich and lengthy association with UCT as student, lecturer, professor and friend. The university mourns the loss of this remarkable life, which stands as a role model for all. We extend our sincere condolences to his family."

Alexander, pictured, was best known for his role in the Struggle for a democratic and non-racial SA as well as his scholarly achievements.

As a young man, Alexander was arrested in July 1963 along with a number of National Liberation Front members and convicted in 1964 of conspiracy to commit sabotage. He was jailed on Robben Island from 1964 to 1974, a term that coincided with that of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and a number of the country's most important political activists.

Upon his release, he was banned and placed under house arrest in Lotus River, Cape Town, until 1979. He later shared ideas with the leaders of the Black Consciousness Movement, including Steve Biko, and came to play a formative role in the establishment of activist groups in the Western Cape.

After the reconciliation talks between the ANC and the National Party, Alexander was at the forefront of the establishment of the Workers' Organisation for a Socialist Azania.

In 1992 he established the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in SA (Praesa) at UCT.

Alexander subsequently established the National Language Project (NLP). The SA Committee on Higher Education provided Alexander with the opportunity for exploring the concept of alternative education.

He was also a part-time lecturer in Sociology and Educational Method and Adult Education at UCT between 1979 and 1990.

Alexander was born in Cradock, Eastern Cape on October 22, 1936 to David James Alexander, a carpenter, and Dimbiti Bisho Alexander, a schoolteacher.



sibusiso.nkomo@ml.co.za

SEE PAGE 14

Daily Dispatch

DAILY DISPATCH
28 Aug 2012, p.5

Struggle poet Alexander dies

By MKHULULI NDAMASE

EASTERN Cape-born political activist, educationist and academic, Dr Neville Alexander, 76, died of lung cancer in Cape Town yesterday.

Alexander's friend and comrade, Salim Vallie, said they were still shocked by his passing.

"He was only diagnosed with cancer about a month-and-a-half ago. We are still shocked because he was never a smoker.

"His vision was never theoretical – he lived it. It's an absolute loss, not just for me, his comrades and family but the country as a whole," said Vallie.

Alexander was the first of six children of David and Dimbiti Alexander. He was born in Cradock.

Alexander was a lecturer at various tertiary institutions around the country and spent 11 years in Robben Island.

Allan Zinn, a director at NMMU centre for the advancement of non-racialism and democracy, who worked with Alexander described him as an intellectual.

"We worked together when he came out of Robben Island. He was always a man of the people. He influenced many people around the country and the world," said Zinn.

At the University of Cape Town (UCT) he was a part-time lecturer in Sociology and Educational Method and Adult Education between 1979 and 1990.

He worked as the Western Cape Director of the South African Committee for Higher Education for six years from 1980. He was the chairman of the new government's Language Plan Task Group.

He also wrote a number of books which include: *One Azania, One Nation, Sow the Wind and An Ordinary Country*.

Hammy Peterson, joint secretary of the New Unity Movement said: "He carried the banner for non-racialism. He had a valuable contribution in the struggle."

Vallie said Alexander had no children but "had absolute love" for them. He said there would be a private family funeral on Saturday.

THE HERALD

NEWS INFORMATION KNOWLEDGE

HERALD (Morning Final)
28 Aug 2012, p.5

Activist, academic Neville Alexander dies at 76

Mkhululi Ndamase
ndamase@avusa.co.za

EASTERN Cape-born political activist, educationist, academic and advocate of multilingualism in a post-apartheid South Africa, Dr Neville Alexander, died in Cape Town yesterday.

Alexander, 76, was diagnosed with lung cancer about six weeks ago, his friend and comrade, Salim Vallie, said yesterday.

Vallie called Alexander's death "an absolute loss, not just for me, his comrades and family but the country as a whole".

"His vision was never theoretical – he lived it. He left us a big legacy. I think the country will realise the loss when they read about him and his books."

Alexander, the eldest of David and Dimbiti Alexander's six children, was born in Cradock.

He spent 11 years on Robben Island for conspiracy to commit sabotage.

Alexander lectured at tertiary institutions around the country.

A director at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Centre for the Advancement of Non-racialism and Democracy, Allan Zinn – who worked with

Alexander – described him as an intellectual.

"We worked together when he came out of Robben Island ... He influenced many people around the country and the world ... He was one of the most instrumental people around issues of race," Zinn said.

Communications and marketing executive director at the University of Cape Town Gerda Kruger said Alexander "contributed richly not only to dialogues at UCT, but also to South Africa in its formative years as a new democracy" and his life "stands as a role model for all".

Alexander spent six years in the 1980s as the Western Cape director of the SA Committee for Higher Education and was the chairman of the new government's Language Plan Task Group. He also wrote a number of books, including *One Azania, One Nation; Sow the Wind and An Ordinary Country*.

More recently, Alexander formed part of the panel at the Herald-NMMU Community Dialogue, discussing issues of race, identity and nationhood.

Vallie said a private family funeral would be held on Saturday.



NEVILLE ALEXANDER

Renowned academic mourned

Michelle Jones

NEVILLE Alexander, who has been described as one of SA's greatest intellectuals and political thinkers, has died after a battle with cancer. He was 75.

A linguist, academic and Struggle veteran, Alexander was often described as a proponent of multilingualism in education. Tributes poured in yesterday from former colleagues and admirers of his work.

One of Alexander's major contributions to the education sector was his initiation of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) at UCT, of which he served as director until last year.

Marcus Solomon, who had been a member of the political group Yu Chi Chan and later the National Liberation Front with Alexander, said he had known Alexander for 52 years.

Together they had been arrested and convicted on a charge of conspiracy to commit sabotage.

"We spent 10 years together [between 1964 and 1974] on Robben Island and worked together afterwards. He was an amazing person."



ALEXANDER

Solomon said there would be a private cremation for Alexander's family and intimate friends.

He added: "He never had any children. He was married to the revolution."

South Peninsula High principal Brian Isaacs said: "He was one of the greatest intellectuals South Africa has ever produced."

The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory, commented: "Neville Alexander made an invaluable contribution to our country's cultural and political life."

Mandela had also spent time with Alexander while on

Robben Island.

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga said: "He was above all an exceptionally humble man, whose record as an educator is testimony to the rich resources upon which our country has had to draw for its liberation and post-liberation work in education."

President Jacob Zuma said: "We are saddened by this tragic loss. The country has lost a person of high intellectual and academic standing."

Alexander studied German and history at UCT, graduating with a BA in 1955 and a Master of Arts in 1957.

He completed his PhD in 1961 at the University of Tübingen in Germany with a dissertation on style change in the work of dramatist and novelist Gerhart Hauptmann.

Alexander also completed a BA (Hons) degree in history by correspondence in 1971 during his time on Robben Island.

He worked as the Western Cape director of the South African Committee for Higher Education (Sached) for six years from 1980.

Alexander subsequently established the National Language Project and then PRAESA.

BURGER (Kaap Stedelik)
26 Aug 2012, p.4



Dr. Neville Alexander (75) is gisteroggend aan kanker oorlede. Foto: LEANNE STANDER

SA verloor 'n Afrikaanse vriend

Marelize Potgieter

KAAPSTAD. – Die man wat deur taalkenners as die “vader van veeltaligheid en van moedertaalonderrig in Suid-Afrika” beskryf is, het gister sy stryd teen kanker verloor.

Dr. Neville Alexander (75) – apartheidstryder, digter, skrywer, onderwyskundige en akademikus – is gisteroggend in 'n Kaapse hospitaal oorlede nadat kanker 'n paar maande gelede by hom gediagnoseer is.

“Hy het daarin geslaag om die stigma rondom moedertaalonderrig met passie en oortuiging te verwyder,” het dr. Michael le Cordeur, voorsitter van die Afrikaanse Taalraad, in reaksie op sy dood gesê.

“Ons het 'n baie belangrike persoon vir Afrikaans verloor.” Die Nelson Mandela-stigting het in 'n verklaring gesê oudpres. Nelson Mandela het Alexander as 'n held in die apartheidstryd bestempel.

“Neville Alexander het 'n onskatbare bydrae gelewer tot die land se kultuur en politiek.”

Pres. Jacob Zuma het sy diepe meegevoel teenoor Alexander se familie betuig.

“Ons het 'n mens met uitstaande intellektuele en akade-

Van Robbeneiland tot Maties

Neville Alexander is op 22 Oktober 1936 op Cradock in die Oos-Kaap gebore.

Hy het aan die Holy Cross School op Cradock gematrikuleer, waarna hy Duits en geskiedenis aan die Universiteit van Kaapstad studeer het.

Hy het sy meestersgraad in Duits verwerf en daarna 'n doktorsgraad met 'n verhandeling oor stylverandering in die dramatiese werk van Gerhart Hauptmann aan die Universiteit van Tübingen in Duitsland.

Hy was die stigter van die National Liberation Front (NLF) en in Julie 1963 is hy saam met nog lede van dié beweging in hegtenis geneem.

In 1964 is hy skuldig bevind aan sameswering met die doel om te saboteer en hy is van 1964 tot 1974 op Robbeneiland

miese vermoëns verloor. Ons is baie hartseer oor die tragiese verlies van dié Suid-Afrikaner, wat onselfsgtig bygedra het tot die vryheid van die land.”

Mac Maharaj, Zuma se woordvoerder en 'n medegevangene in die tyd toe Alexander op Rob-

beneiland aangehou.

Ná demokratisering het hy veral bekendheid verwerf as voorstander van veeltaligheid in Suid-Afrika en het hy die direkteur van die Raad op Hoër Onderwys (RHO) geword.

Hy het versere pionierswerk gedoen op die gebied van taalbeleidontwikkeling en -beplanning deur organisasies soos die Projek vir die Studie van Alternatiewe Onderwys in Suid-Afrika (Praesa).

In 2008 het hy die internasionale Linguapax-toekenning in Barcelona ontvang vir sy bydrae tot meertalige onderrig.

Neville Alexander was tot en met sy dood 'n hoogleraar aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch se departement Afrikaans en Nederlands. – Bron: Michael le Cordeur

beneiland aangehou is, het gesê hy onthou Alexander veral vir sy intellektuele vermoëns.

“Selfs in die tronk kon jy sy passie vir onderrig sien en het hy gevangenes gehelp.”

Prof. Leon de Stadler, direkteur van die taalsentrum van die

Universiteit Stellenbosch, het gesê benewens die feit dat Alexander 'n aktivis vir meertaligheid was, was hy ook 'n belangrike wetenskaplike met betrekking tot taalbeplanning en is die navorsingsartikels wat hy gepubliseer het van onskatbare waarde.

Carole Bloch, huidige direkteur van die Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (Praesa), het gesê Alexander het sy lewe daaraan gewy om Suid-Afrika beter te maak.

“Hy het ongelooflike sterk leierskap in Praesa tot stand gebring en ons sal die werk wat hy begin het, voortset.”

■ In 'n vroeëre onderhoud met *Die Burger* se Murray La Vita, het Alexander Robbeneiland as sy “beste en belangrikste universiteit” beskryf.

“Ek dink een van die belangrikste dinge wat op Robbeneiland gebeur het (veral deur die invloed van mense soos Mandela en Sisulu... hulle het 'n baie groot rol gespeel), was dat ons besef het ons het die mag om die tronk as 'n plek waar mense gestraf word, te verander na 'n plek waar mense kon leer.”

Alexander is nooit getroud nie en het nie kinders gehad nie.

Mandela prison companion Alexander dies

Updated: 10:28, Tuesday August 28, 2012

South African academic and distinguished linguist Neville Alexander, who spent time in jail with Nelson Mandela, has died of cancer aged 75, the University of Cape Town says

Born in the southern town of Cradock in 1936, the mixed race activist would go on to campaign against apartheid in the 1950s and spend a decade on Robben Island.

Alexander obtained his doctorate in German at the University of Tuebingen in then West Germany in 1961.

Three years later he was convicted for conspiracy to commit sabotage in South Africa against the white minority regime, along with other members of the National Liberation Front, which he co-founded. He spent the next 10 years on Robben Island, a political prison off the coast of Cape Town.

One of Alexander's companions was Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years in various jails before he was released and became South Africa's first black president in 1994.

Alexander taught other inmates history, while Mandela taught law and current presidential spokesman Mac Maharaj economics.

Released in 1974, the scholar joined Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement.

Alexander ran in the 1994 elections at the end of white minority rule with the Trotskyist Workers Organisation for Socialist Action, which won 0.02 per cent of votes at the poll.

Having joined the University of Cape Town, Alexander later focused on multilingualism in a nation discovering democracy and confronted with the increasing influence of English.

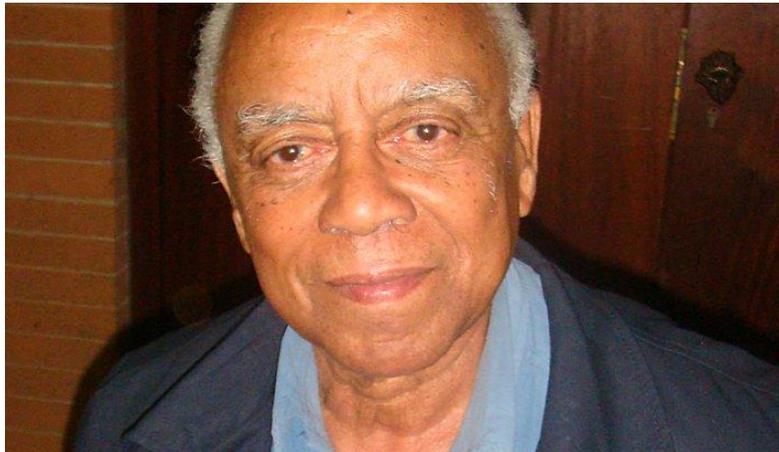
South Africa has 11 official languages, but English is often used as common language.

'He will always be remembered for his pioneering work on language policy, including his most recent work, focusing on the tension between multilingualism and the hegemony of the English language in the public sphere,' said President Jacob Zuma in a statement.

'At a professional level, Dr Alexander, as an accomplished linguist, contributed immensely to language development in our country,' Zuma added.

Remembering Neville Alexander

By Khadija Patel



Neville Alexander died on Monday after a crippling, albeit brief battle with lung cancer. But even as messages of tribute pour in from around the country, the real contribution of Alexander to the country cannot be quantified simply. KHADIJA PATEL spoke with people who knew him to find out how they thought he would be remembered.

On Monday, Professor Neville Alexander, a public intellectual, a prominent educationist and a hero of the struggle for liberation passed away. He was 75 years old. And even as his friends battle tears to speak of their own pain in letting him go, they are keen as well to remind the country that Alexander was an extraordinary South African, an exemplary human.

In a statement released by the presidency, President Zuma's office said Alexander would be "remembered for his pioneering work on language policy, including his most recent work, focusing on the tension between multilingualism and the hegemony of the English language in the public sphere."

"We are saddened by this tragic loss of a South African who had contributed selflessly to the struggle for liberation and to building a better society and a better South Africa. At a professional level, Dr. Alexander, as an accomplished linguist, contributed immensely to language development in our country. The country has lost a person of high intellectual and academic standing. We extend our deepest condolences to Dr Alexander's family, relatives and friends," Zuma said in the statement.

In its tribute to Alexander, the University of Cape Town said in a statement that Alexander was an "acclaimed linguist, academic and anti-Apartheid struggle veteran." He was all that, yes, but it is a tribute to Alexander that those labels simply do not do him justice. For a man of his stature, these labels, well-meaning and fitting as they certainly are, also fall short of describing what exactly Alexander stood for – and what exactly South Africa has just lost.

There are few heroes of the liberation struggle who still live in the townships, not just in touch with their roots but still living in the places that delivered them to political leadership. But Alexander, through sheer will and stubbornness of principle, remained a resident at the Lotus Village township in Cape Town up until his death.

“He lived what he preached,” noted Salim Valley, a senior researcher at the University of Johannesburg’s Centre for Education Rights and Transformation. For Alexander the struggle was not just words – it was a philosophy that touched every area of his life.

“He contributed to so many different respects of the struggle over many decades,” Valley said.

As well as being a long-time colleague of Alexander, Valley was also one of his close friends. As he spoke to the Daily Maverick over the telephone on Monday, he was audibly distressed. “I first met Neville when I was 21 years old. Since then I’ve spoken to him every week up until these last two weeks (during which he was ill),” Valley said.

“He was very proud. He was dynamic. He started the Robben Island University during his imprisonment.”

“He was an extraordinary thinker; one of the best thinkers of contemporary times,” black consciousness writer Andile Mngxitama said. “In some ways, his intellectual prowess is demonstrated in his influence of (Steve) Biko’s approach to black consciousness.”

“I think that he was an intellectual, an eloquent speaker and thinker, and a leading member of the left in this country,” Omar Badsha, CEO of SA History Online, said of Alexander’s legacy.

And though Valley says Alexander’s contribution to South African society is multi-faceted and not easily listed, he admits that the greatest contribution was to education. “In the 80s we were very involved in education struggles. There was a slogan at the time, something like: ‘liberation first, education after’. Neville disagreed strongly with this. He believed schools should be places of struggle,” Valley said.

“He played an enormous role in education,” Badsha added. “The idea that liberation was not just political change, but also cultural change, and the need for change for the systems underpinning it was crucial to the ideas Neville proposed.

“Language and culture was central to his understanding of how to achieve a more complete liberation.”

And though Alexander may well be remembered by history for his views on multilingualism and his contribution to language planning in South Africa, his views on language, as well as the urgent need for a more multilingual nation is bred in the education system, underscored his thinking about how best to achieve a more just country.

“He was very keen on multilingualism, but it was not his only contribution to education,” Valley said.

And his devotion to education did not wane in the latter years of his life.

“Three weeks ago, he was talking about the state of education in the country,” Valley said.

Alexander was a proponent of a post-racial society. He warned against the consequences of the unquestioned racialisation of society and its pervasiveness in everyday life. Many, however, disagreed with him, arguing that race could simply not be divorced from a society such as post-Apartheid South Africa.

“He and I did not agree on the race question,” Mngxitama said. “But you couldn’t fight with Neville.

“He created the opportunity for robust engagement without the possibility of estrangement,” Mngxitama added with a wry chuckle.

Alexander was a simple man. A fierce intellectual, certainly but his gentleness and simplicity were disarming.

“He was humble – despite the breadth of his intellect,” Valley said.

And as the country tries to pick itself up from a torrid few weeks, the enormity of the loss of Alexander is especially significant. South Africa’s challenges are made greater by the loss of intellectuals like him.

“Although we’ve known the diagnosis for weeks, it’s come as a shock,” Valley said.

“It is a great loss. He was an excellent human being,” Mngxitama added.

Badsha agreed, “He will be missed.” **DM**

Cape Argus

CAPE ARGUS (AM Edition)
28 Aug 2012, p.2

‘Soon it will be too late to fight poverty in SA’

Sue Segar
POLITICAL BUREAU

THE WINDOW of opportunity to deal with the crisis of poverty and inequality will not last forever, UCT acting Pro-Vice Chancellor Francis Wilson warned yesterday.

Addressing the Cape Town Press Club before a major conference on poverty alleviation at UCT next week, Wilson, pictured, said urgent action was needed to turn “the big ship” of poverty around.

“Nearly 20 years after democracy, we haven’t done a lot about either

widespread poverty or deep inequality. Income inequality has got worse, not better. The debate in South Africa seems to revolve around who is going to be the next president, and not the pressing issues facing the country,” Wilson said.

“What matters now is action and it is urgent.” UCT Vice Chancellor Dr Max Price, told the press club, that SA could expect “Arab Spring” uprisings if it did not address the crisis.

Price said particular attention must

be paid to young black males, who comprised “a boiling cauldron” of discontent.

Wilson, who was founding director of the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit at UCT, said universities had an important role to play in tackling the challenge of poverty and inequality.

He said the National Planning Commission, under National Planning Minister Trevor Manuel, had asked UCT to “do some serious

thinking about strategies to overcome poverty and inequality”.

“We have been working very hard to bring together academics from 19 universities around the country, who have submitted well over 300 papers. In addition, we have gone out of our way to draw in some of the very good NGOs that are working at the coalface of education, rural development, health and a number of other sectors to share what they are doing.”

Manuel will open the conference, which is entitled “Strategies to Overcome Poverty and Inequality: Towards Carnegie III”.



Poverty pushes SA on the brink of 'violent uprisings'

Sue Segar
Political Bureau

SA MUST expect violent uprisings like those of the "Arab Spring" if it does not start to address the crisis of widespread poverty and deep inequality, UCT vice-chancellor

Max Price warned yesterday. Addressing the Cape Town Press Club, Price said the cauldron was boiling among black men between 20 and 40, who had been excluded from the social grant system.

He pointed out that 60 percent of the country's income

was going to 10 percent of the population.

"The rich have got richer, the poor are just as poor – although they have not got poorer – and the middle income group has got a bit poorer.

"Overall, inequality in

South Africa has increased."

The main reason for inequality and poverty was the lack of access to jobs.

Price said that, according to figures from 2008, 54 percent of South Africans were living below the poverty level of a monthly income of R515.

Slightly fewer people now fell below the poverty line than in the early 1990s and this was largely due to social grants.

Most important intervention should be in education as wages in SA were driven, "more than anything", by skills, Price added.

BUSINESSREPORT

BUSINESS REPORT (Cape Times)
28 Aug 2012, p.17

SA's landscape changed since 1993

Donwald Pressly

IT IS not all bad news emerging in an assessment of poverty and inequality between 1993, the year before democracy, and 2008, with substantial progress being made in reducing the income gap between white people and other groups, and in the empowerment of women, according to UCT vice-chancellor Max Price.

Addressing a Cape Town Press Club discussion yesterday on "what has happened to inequality and poverty in post-apartheid South Africa", Price said that although South Africa was reported to have one of the worst Gini coefficients globally, inter-racial inequality had been reduced.

He acknowledged, however,

that intra-race inequality had worsened among all groups.

"There has been a considerable fall in the share of whites among top earners," said Price, who also noted that there were more women in employment and in the top income bracket. Jobs in the economy had increased by over 3 million, but conversely there was also a 3.6 million increase in unemployment.

The comments came ahead of a week-long conference assessment next week on the National Planning Commission's National Development Plan.

According to Francis Wilson, the director of UCT's Southern Africa Labour and

Development Research Unit, top income earners bring-home in the region of R400 000 a year and more.

Broken up into 10 deciles, the top decile of about 5 million people – of a total population of about 50 million – fall into this category. They roughly commanded about 60 percent of South Africa's wealth.

Price said the percentage of women in the top earnings decile increased from 20 percent in 1995 to about 33 percent in 2007, or about 1.6 million people. The average earnings of women increased relative to men over the 15-year period.

White males made up nearly 60 percent of top income earners

in 1995, this had dropped considerably to 30 percent in 2007. The African male percentage had jumped from 15 percent to 26 percent of the top income category, while African females had more than doubled from 6 percent to 13 percent in this time.

Coloured females had increased from 1 percent of this category to 5 percent, while white females earning the top notch incomes rose marginally from 12 to 13 percent in this period.

Explaining that the Gini coefficient was based on the notion that the higher the number between zero and one represented a figure closer to total

inequality, Price noted that all these figures had worsened between 1993 and 2008.

For Africans it rose from 0.54 in 1993 to 0.60 in 2000 to 0.62 in 2008.

In this time, the figures for coloureds rose from 0.44 to 0.53 to 0.54 in this time, while white inequality rose from 0.43 to 0.47 to 0.50. Zero would represent total equality of income while one would represent total income inequality with one person having all the wealth and all the rest having nothing.

Price – who will be hosting a conference on "strategies to overcome poverty and inequality" which is being supported by the National Planning Com-

mission and will be addressed by Planning Minister Trevor Manuel – reported that although these figures did not paint a rosy picture, it also did not take into account asset inequality.

This included such elements as the provision of housing, water and electricity, which would potentially tell "a different story" than increasing levels of income inequality.

Price and Wilson are seeking to find what it entails to "turn the big ship" of poverty and inequality around and what South African universities can contribute to encourage this process.

There was no magic for-

mula, the two men acknowledged, to solving these problems. For example, the National Development Plan had favoured youth wage subsidies, but Wilson acknowledged that one set of economists may favour the plan's backing of this subsidy, but others would not.

Price suggested that "where the cauldron is boiling" was the large-scale exclusion of young black men, between the ages of 20 and 40, from employment and also from the social grant system, which cushioned women and the elderly.

For example the old age pension at R1 080 a month was 175 of the median monthly per capita income – of just over R500 – while the R250 child support and R710 foster care grants favoured women.

WARNING OVER POVERTY

SA could face 'Arab Spring'

Sue Segar

Political Bureau

SA MUST anticipate violent uprisings like those of the "Arab Spring" if it did not quickly start to address the crisis of widespread poverty and deep inequality, UCT vice-chancellor Max Price warned yesterday.

Addressing the Cape Town Press Club, Price said that, in particular, the "cauldron" was boiling among young black males between the ages of 20 and 40 who had been excluded from the social grant system.

"If you are a young woman and you have a child, you get a child-care grant; if you are a child and an orphan, you get foster grants; if you are an old-age person, you get pensions, but the poor group that is excluded from the social grant system is young men out of employment," Price said.

"That is something we need to pay attention to... where the cauldron is boiling and the where the trouble is. It is perhaps an unforeseen consequence of [the government's] having been so effective in the targeting of social grants."

Price, who was joined by UCT acting pro vice-chancellor Francis Wilson, was briefing the media before a national conference on poverty alleviation to take place at the university next week.

Stressing that levels of inequality did not bode well for the future, Price pointed out that at present 60 percent of the country's income was being accrued by 10 percent of the population.

"The proportion of wealth of income earned by the top 10 percent of the population is more today than it was 15 years

ago, and the rest of the population earns less than 15 years ago. It is more unequal. The rich have got richer, the poor are just as poor, and the middle income group has got a bit poorer. But overall, inequality in SA has increased."

Price said inequality had increased within each race group – and had increased most within the African race group.

"There is more inequality within the African citizenry than there was 15 years ago, and that growth is greater than in the other groups."

The main reason for inequality and poverty was the lack of access to jobs.

Safety net

Price said that young men between 20 and 40 had fallen "completely through the safety net" and were among the poorest grouping in the country.

"This is the group we need to worry about as this is also the group that is most disillusioned."

Price continued: "I think we should be very afraid if we can't address this problem, particularly in a society where you have such visible and conspicuous inequality... where people see people driving smart cars and go home to a shack that is under water from floods. Those people are going to be much more angry than in a less unequal society and that, in my view, is the sort of thing that drove the Arab Spring – and that is the kind of unrest and violent uprising we can anticipate here if we cannot address the problems quickly."

Price said the most important intervention should be in education as wages in SA were driven, "more than anything", by skills.

Public Eye

PUBLIC EYE (Free State), Jobs & Tenders
24 Aug 2012, p.2

SA: Child labour ban increases poverty, but raises hope

"Many of the kids I worked with would talk about how [the harvest] was one of their favourite times of year because they got some money, and they felt valued by their parents, so there was a lot of pride and a feeling of community and belonging.

RAWSONVILLE - It took the loss of an 11-year-old farm worker's leg for farmers in South Africa's Western Cape Province to belatedly heed legislation outlawing child workers, but the consequences of respecting the law has had adverse and unintended effects on those it seeks to protect.

Child labour on farms was outlawed in 1996, two years after the demise of apartheid, but it was only in 2002 that farmers appreciated the cost of flouting the law, after Waronice van Wyk severed her leg and subsequent legal action forced a farmer in the Ceres district to pay R25,000 (US\$2,500) in compensation, sending a message to other farmers that employing workers younger than 16 carried a heavy price.

However, the unpalatable truth is that child labour was a much needed additional source of income in the deeply impover-

ished region.

"The money in the family is small now, if children aren't working," said Monica, a mother of three living in Rawsonville in the Breede River Valley, whose husband works on one of the numerous wine producing farms in Western Cape.

Susan Levine, a children's rights lecturer and researcher at the University of Cape Town, told IRIN: "Children will go to farmers and say, 'Please can I work the season, I really need the money,' and they [farmers] will say, 'No'."

Rigorous implementation of the legislation had decreased child farm workers significantly, but "Taking children out of the productive sphere has deepened childhood poverty and overall household insecurity in many instances," she commented.

"[It] surely should have been predictable that without a radi-

cal restructuring of the political economy of farm life, including land dispensation for subsistence agriculture and a living wage, survival has become untenable," Levine said.

"Many of the kids I worked with would talk about how [the harvest] was one of their favourite times of year because they got some money, and they felt valued by their parents, so there was a lot of pride and a feeling of community and belonging.

For a lot of children, being taken out of that yearly family seasonal labour has been quite devastating - they felt a real lack of contribution, and quite wayward and lost during school holidays."

Yet Levine said children also complained about the work environment and abuse by farmers. "You have a contradictory discourse from children weighing up the benefits and hazards."

After consulting children, police, clinicians, nurses, and social workers in the area, "the general direction is that children are looking for other ways to support themselves now that formal wage labour has been made illegal," she said.

Turning to sex and alcohol

"So they are working in the sex industry, selling liquor, selling drugs, and maybe stealing food

from people's homes ... children are looking for other ways to supplement what they see as the disempowering effect of the laws."

In 2008, Levine's research found children in Rawsonville were allegedly "having sex ... for money with truck drivers", although Constable Hurling Jordaan, a former social worker, now a police officer based in Rawsonville, denied any incidents of child prostitution, but conceded that older men "get involved" with underage girls.

The vacuum left by greater adherence to the law is not necessarily being filled by education or extramural activities. "Most of the kids here drink and do drugs because of problems in their homes. Some are still in school, but many end up on the streets," Jennifer, a 15-year-old high achiever at school in the nearby town of Worcester, who would like to be a lawyer, told IRIN.

"The problem is the government should pay the child grants until matric," said Aletta, an unemployed resident in the Rawsonville township of De Nova, and explained children leave school because of the lack of money. Government pays child grants until the age of 15.

Ending child labour has slowly begun to have an effect, despite the poverty and hardship endured

by most people in the area. "I've lived here for 22 years, and I've seen how people have changed," said Rovellen Elbrink, who was raised on the farm his parents worked on as labourers.

"People want to achieve new goals, like having their own business, and many farmers don't want children to work on farms but to find something else, to think bigger."

Lynette Haai, a social worker employed by the Graham Beck wine estate, told IRIN that "In the old days [during apartheid], there were only three posts for coloured [mixed race] people: teaching, nursing, or police/social work.

Now, with South Africa moving in a new direction, the opportunities are opening."

Amid the contradictions and problems, it is clear that by diminishing the demand for their labour, the laws have helped children with the will and support to stay in school to do so.

Jonathan, 14, from Rawsonville, told IRIN. "I feel positive about my future. My grandparents and parents worked on the farms, but I won't because I want to make something of my life. I want to go to university and be a doctor to help children and give them good medicine."