



OH, ALL RIGHT THEN. LET'S HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY.

Redistribution of white vote

Press reports of a recent Markinor survey suggest that a tantalising redistribution of political interest is occurring in South Africa.

While the non-racial African National Congress continues to engender heavy support among black respondents – some 68 percent of whom say they would vote for the ANC – it has not made any inroads into the white community. Only two percent of whites say they would vote for it.

The Inkatha Freedom Party, however, recently established from the predominantly Zulu ethnic base of the Inkatha Liberation Movement, shows strong support in the white community with a significant number – some 18 percent – suggesting they might or would vote for it. On the other hand the survey suggests no new support in the urban black community – 62 percent apparently “reject it completely”.

It is not clear from the reports whether white support is at the expense of the traditionally white parties such as the DP or the NP – but it raises intriguing possibilities.

Gallup polls do not translate, necessarily, into electoral support. Nor are elections on the immediate horizon. Nevertheless, the Markinor results suggest that the “uncertain” and floating vote is still in the white community and is being contested by the the IFP, ANC, DP and NP. □

LETTERS

Shackles stay without the right to know

Your recent conference in Johannesburg, “Public Information During Transition”, left me with some observations

The first of these concerns how rapidly we have come to accept the present level of freedom to express opinions on contentious matters, to a point where we are in danger of taking it for granted.

Since February 1990 we have entered an era which could best be described as a “Liberal Spring”, and it is conceivable that we are even now at a high point in the experience of open debate without fear of lurking securocrats.

In his excellent summation of the constraints on freedom of expression, under which he labours, Max du Preez gave some indication of the plethora of laws on the statute books which restrict the public’s “right to know”. We need to guard jealously the gains we have made in this past year, and ensure that “The Right to Know” is firmly entrenched in the public consciousness before we finalise the rules of negotiations.

All parties represented at the conference conveyed an aggrieved air of being misrep-

resented by the media, and while each in turn loudly proclaimed their adherence to the idea of freedom of expression, the non-verbal sub-text accompanying these varied protestations was loaded with conditional “ifs and buts”.

It was quite obvious that each participant saw the media as existing to serve their needs and when they neglected to act as an extension of their respective PR departments, they were in some way being subversive.

However, the corollary to this and a point completely overlooked in the conference was that in the competition for the “hearts and minds” of the “people” every party and political grouping actually has an unrecognised and unacknowledged *vested interest* in freedom of information simply to protect themselves from each other.

Without the right to know all the blood spilt in the struggle for liberation is rendered nugatory and we simply exchange shackles.

Nic Williamson
Johannesburg

Senseless murder

I am writing this letter to express my deep sorrow and anger at the assassination of Mr Pro Jack near his home in Nyanga on June 19.

About two years ago my husband and I

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