

Ballot box or Pandora's box?

South Africans of all persuasions should start preparing for an election. Rapid movement to a transitional government – based on an elected constitution-making body – is increasingly becoming a popular political option.

When Codesa 2 stuttered and then failed, negotiators from the various parties – and in particular the ANC and the government – had reached remarkable agreements on a variety of subjects including mechanisms for transitional government.

The fallout from Codesa and the subsequent despair and anger evoked by Boipatong has led to people questioning whether those in working groups were actually speaking the same language or were just pretending to agree. The mass action campaign in progress at the moment was designed either to remind the government of the urgency of establishing peace and democracy or of removing it from office and replacing it with interim measures which would be more responsive to the needs of the country.

Whatever the outcome of the mass action and of the various third party interventions which it has provoked, leadership – whether through a revived negotiating forum, through an interim authority, or by unilateral decision – will be looking quite soon at least at some of the recommendations of Codesa as they provide formulas about which there is already some common cause.

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Elections may get SA back on track

BY PAUL GRAHAM



‘ This is a day of mourning. This is a day of shame – the events of Boipatong have shocked our nation and the nations of the world so that even the most apathetic, the most anaesthetised among us, recoil in horror and shame and have to say “Enough!”

Enough of this carnage, this brutal slaughter, this degrading inhumanity. Enough of this political opportunism at the expense of defenceless children and woman and the aged; enough of this blood-letting. Our country, each of us, is stained with blood deep into our very souls. We are no longer white or black or coloured – we are all *red* with each other's blood.

Apartheid, which has made pariahs of the people of South Africa in the international community is now in its death throes

Live the dream now!

At a memorial service for the Boipatong victims on June 29, the Anglican Dean of Cape Town, Colin Jones, called on ordinary South Africans to give the lead in building a society based on justice, peace, humanity and compassion. These are extracts from his address.

making of us an abomination in the eyes of the human family...

These are bleak days indeed. We cannot just bury our dead and get on with life in South Africa – because life in South Africa is about death and the constant burying of our dead.

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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

EDITORIAL STAFF: Ronel Scheffer, Sue Valentine, Chantel Edwards, Moira Levy, Shireen Badat

Letters and contributions may be addressed to Democracy in Action, 1 Penzance Road, Mowbray, 7700.

NATIONAL OFFICE: Hill House, 1 Penzance Road, Mowbray, Cape Town, 7700
(Tel 021- 473127; Fax 477458)

WESTERN CAPE: 5th Floor, Nerina Centre 64 Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, 8001
(Tel 021- 4623635; Fax 4614635)

JOHANNESBURG: Kevron House, 39 Honey Street, Berea, Johannesburg, 2195
(Tel 011- 4843694/7; Fax 4842610)

PRETORIA: 299 Duncan Street, Hatfield, Pretoria, 0083
(Tel 012- 3421476/7, 3421478/9; Fax 433387)

DURBAN: 1219 Sangro House, 417 Smith Street, Durban, 4001
(Tel 031- 3048893; Fax 3048891)

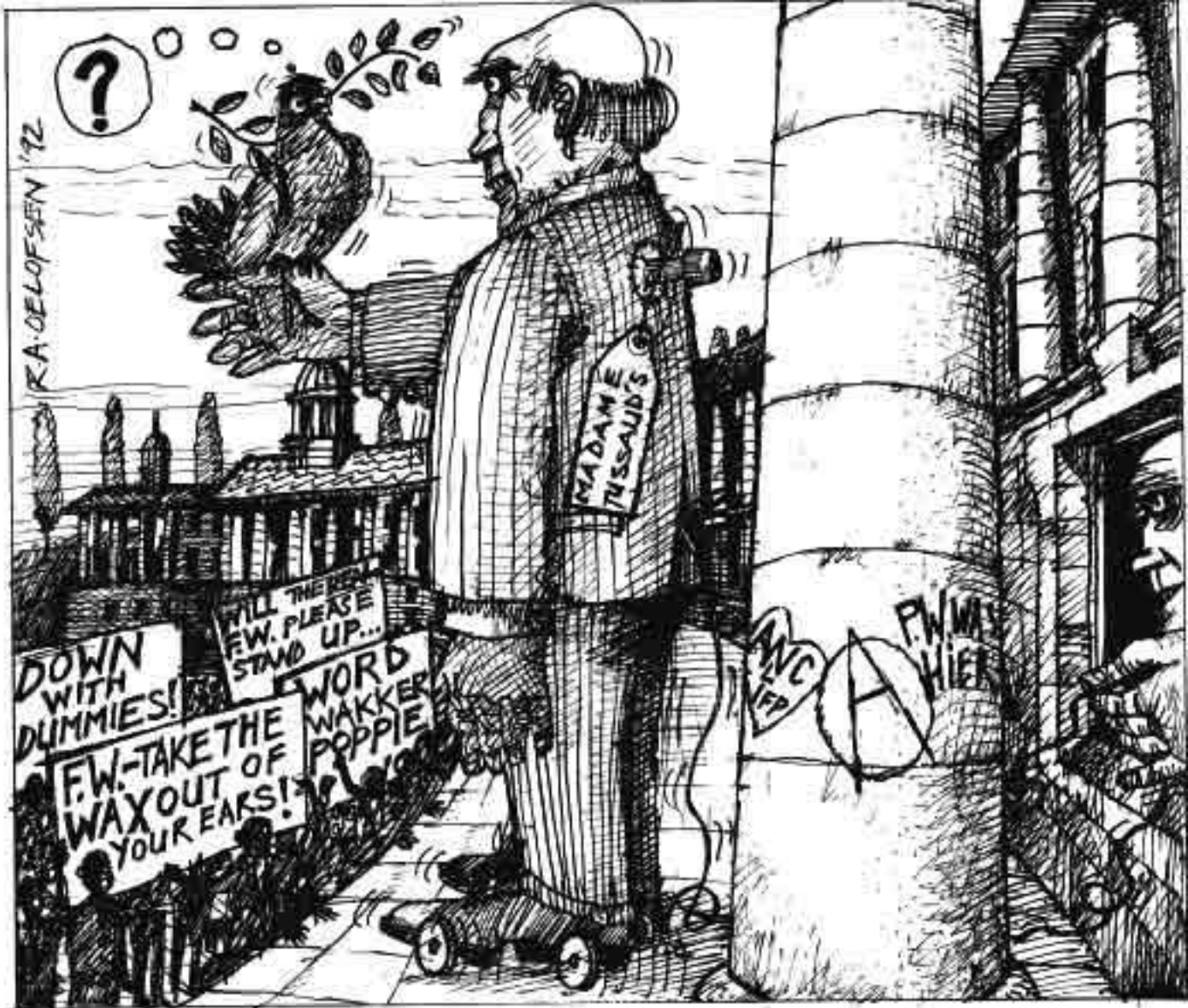
PORT ELIZABETH: Fourth Floor, Standard House, 344 Main Street, Port Elizabeth, 6001 (Tel 041- 553301/3; Fax 522587)

EAST LONDON: Second Floor, Gladstone House, Gladstone Street, East London, 5201
(Tel 0431- 430047; Fax 438682)

BLOEMFONTEIN: PO Box 8098, Bloemfontein, 9300
(Tel 051- 484821/2; Fax 481580)

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Bilingualism

Comment overheard on the bus trip to the neighbouring states by a Free State agriculturalist to an ex-National Party MP now working for the ANC: "Jy is baie goed tweetalig - jy praat ewe goed Afrikaans en k-k."

- So what's the latest ANC language policy - 15 official languages instead of 14?

Basic Instinct

An article in *The Argus* on the World Health Organisation report to mark the 20th anniversary of its research project into human fecundity revealed that the sexual act is performed more than 100 million times a day worldwide. The headline stated that 100 million people would have sex on that day.

- Were the other 100 million just sleeping partners?

Chicken feed

The reply to a request by Idasa for financial assistance from a leading poultry company was that they would be happy to supply us with their poultry products at wholesale prices.

- Another case of fowl play.

Overexposed

Disclosures during the London High Court hearing of Jani Allen's libel suit against media claims that she had an affair with AWB leader Eugene Terreblanche

Ja-Nee

prompted one quick-thinker to redefine what AWB stands for: A White Bum.

- So much for the bare facts.

The long and short of it

At a recent Idasa conference a DP MP was asked if he was also considering leaving the DP and if so, which party he would join. His fervent reply was "whichever party can guarantee no long caucus meetings".

- Say no more.

A classic

A notice at the UCT Graduate School of Business advertised a Classic Golf Tournament in Soweto which was held on June 16 this year.

- It seems some Sowetans too are in a class of their own.

Dis sommer dinges

A female staff member of Idasa was stopped from buying a drink for men on a tour in Zimbabwe recently by a Free State councillor. He wanted to know whether she was also "one of those non-sexist, non-dinges mense like the ANC".

- Right said Fred.

Monitors join forces against violence – and for peace



On July 24, more than 90 delegates, representing over 30 violence monitoring organisations, came together under the auspices of Idasa in Johannesburg. This workshop arose out of the continuing concern relating to the endemic violence which has gripped South Africa.

They met against a sombre background. More than 60 lives had been lost since the indiscriminate and mindless violence which occurred in Boipatong; the statements made by political leaders indicate the lack of trust between the major actors who once had gathered around the negotiation table at Codesa; that very morning, the newspapers covered the story of the breakdown in the Saccola/Cosatu negotiations and it seemed that a general strike was now inevitable.

The delegates had come knowing that despite the best intentions of many, we have failed to quell the violence. A Peace Accord had been signed, peace committees and dispute resolution committees had been set up, Codesa had been well established, there had been some change in the attitude and behaviour of law and order forces, many monitoring groups were actively at work, but the violence continues.

Commitment

The same day, newspapers carried prominent reports of the arrival of the UN mission under the leadership of Mr Cyrus Vance (Idasa has consistently called for international intervention and we are particularly glad that the Secretary-General has nominated Mr Vance as the leader of that mission, not only because of his brilliant and professional record but also because he has been president of the Friends of Idasa in the United States for more than three years and has therefore been in very close touch with the struggle for democracy in South Africa).

In short, delegates from monitoring groups throughout the country realised that they faced an awesome task. But what was encouraging, throughout the meeting, was the recognition that civil society needed to play a significant role in combating violence. Also encouraging was the prevailing mood of realism, concern and deep commitment. After initial papers were delivered by various speakers from different organisations directly involved in violence monitoring, the delegates moved into five mission groups. The objective of the commission was to develop a proposal – based on the experience of the members of the group and models available to them – for the most effective monitoring programme in the present context.

At the end of the day, in the reports which came from the five groups, it was clear that despite many differences there was a clear commitment towards the possibility of setting up a national monitoring organisation which could co-ordinate efforts but also take monitoring beyond current work – in the hope that individuals and groupings would be more effectual, not only in stopping the violence but working creatively for peace.

Teeth

Definitions were sought – is monitoring merely observation? Does it fall into the realm of mediation and conciliation? Can monitoring embrace facilitation or does the one rule out the

other? Where should the primary focus of monitoring groups fall? Should it be on the police and other security forces or should it involve all parties concerned in the violence? In particular, how can monitoring groups take their work beyond merely observing and recommending, and begin to “have teeth” so that recommendations can be implemented?

A further question concerned the relationship between the National Peace Accord and the work of monitoring groups. Obviously there has to be co-ordination, co-operation and communication links but in order to do the job adequately and effectively, it was the general view of the workshop that a national monitoring organisation should be independent of the National Peace Accord. Whilst recognising the important role of the international community, it was also stressed that, in the final analysis, the responsibility for on-going peace was very much that of South Africans themselves. In some instances the international community could gain access which would be normally denied to local groups. Very close liaison was therefore important between those involved inside South Africa and those who come from outside.

Proposal

In the concluding discussion it was recommended that Idasa should take the findings of the workshop one step further. Idasa will draw up a firm proposal based on the discussions and recommendations which will be submitted to each organisation represented. A special task group, with regional, specialist and political relevance, will be set up, and once the final proposal for a national monitoring organisation has been confirmed by the organisations concerned it will be presented to the National Peace Committee, along with recommendations regarding logistics and budget.

Boipatong was a scene of bloody carnage, but the tragedy of what occurred that night has galvanised both South Africa and the international community into new action and new determination to stop the violence. It brought about a meeting at the Security Council of the United Nations. It resulted in a mission being sent from the UN under Mr Vance, who will, after in-depth discussion and observation, make further recommendations to the Security Council, which will almost inevitably lead to an international monitoring group in South Africa. It also brought together more than 30 monitoring groups which have been active in South Africa, but which have felt impotent in their inability to get to grips with the violence.

If the joint efforts of the international and national monitoring forces can save one life, can create a more peaceful climate, then even the tragedy of Boipatong will not be one merely of revulsion and horror but also one of outrage and more determined action to make further Boipatongs impossible.

Alex Boraine
Executive Director

PRETORIA**Options of Afrikaners**

A public forum on the **political options of Afrikaners**, postponed in July, will now be held on **August 13** at the Pretoria Holiday Inn.

Confirmed speakers include Dr Van Zyl Slabbert of Idasa and former CP MP, Mr Koos Botha.

The forum will run between 8am and 4pm. Telephone bookings may be made with Ethel at 012-3421477/8/.

PORT ELIZABETH**Board meets on poverty**

In an attempt to address **poverty** related problems in the Eastern Cape, Idasa has been assisting a group of unemployed people to set up structures for this purpose.

Technical and administrative back-up have been provided for the group and a board of trustees will be elected soon. The first meeting of the board will be held on **17 August**. More information may be obtained from Idasa's Port Elizabeth office.

Population growth in focus

A two-day conference on the effects of population growth

will be held on **19 and 20 August** in Port Elizabeth.

The programme will analyse current population development programmes and look at the development of a people-centred programme.

A paper will also be delivered on the implications of the recent Rio de Janeiro environmental summit, particularly the resolutions on populations, environments and development.

Mbeki in PE, Port Alfred

The sought-after ANC director of international affairs, **Thabo Mbeki**, will visit the Eastern Cape again in August to address the business communities of Port Alfred and Port Elizabeth.

The Port Alfred meeting will be held on **August 20** and Mr Mbeki will speak in Port Elizabeth on **August 21**. More details are available from Idasa's Port Elizabeth office.

BLOEMFONTEIN**OFS focus on education**

A conference on the provision and constraints of **education** in the Free State will be held in Bloemfontein on **19 August**.

Speakers include Mr Peter Badcock-Walters, director of the Education Foundation, and

Mr John Samuel, head of the ANC's education department.

The conference is presented by the OFS Education Forum which was established earlier this year. The forum consists of a group of people who are concerned about proper, equal and accesible education in the region.

Participants include education departments, teacher and professional bodies, community and development organisations, tertiary institutions as well as the business sector.

WESTERN CAPE**Destination Cape Town, KTC and Khayelitsha**

The Western Cape office recently appointed Paula Gumede and Charles Erasmus as part-time tour co-ordinators for its "Democratic City" programme.

The visits to greater Cape Town, which include stop-off points in Langa, KTC and Khayelitsha, aim to address some of the barriers that divide the city and to foster

insight into the challenges Cape Town will face in developing a more democratic future. All visits are discussed with community representatives in advance, and encourage interaction with local inhabitants.

Each trip can accommodate 12 to 15 people; smaller or larger groups are welcome to contact the co-ordinators to discuss alternative arrangements. Although this project run on a strictly non-profit basis, a fee will be charged to cover the costs of each visit.

For more information, contact Charles or Paula at 021-4623635 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays.

Finances in the spotlight

The Western Cape regional office of Idasa will present the fifth in its "City Futures" series of local government seminars in Bellville on **August 19**.

The topic will be the financing of local government. The meeting takes place at the Bellville Holiday Inn.

DURBAN**Zuma and Slabbert to speak on health**

The **future of the health system** in South Africa will be the topic of the Durban office's "Future Forum" on **August 19**.

The speakers are Ms Nkosozana Zuma of the ANC's national health secretariat and Dr C F Slabbert, director general of the Department of National Health and Population Development. Bookings may be made with Louella at 031-3048893.

EAST LONDON**EPZ workshop**

A workshop on the workings

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of an export processing zone (EPZ) will be conducted for civic associations in East London on August 8.

East London has been earmarked as a possible EPZ and members of the civics are keen to learn more about the concept which, if implemented, could have far-reaching effects on people in the region. Prof Bill Davies of the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Rhodes University will lead the workshop.

● The first of a series of workshops on economic development in the region is scheduled to be held on August 15.

More information may be obtained from the East London office.

Campaign to popularise 'one-city'

The East London office will host a "City Futures" campaign in the first week of September to popularise the "one city" concept.

According to regional director Ndumi Gwayi the emphasis during the week

(3-12 September) will be on people and not on structures, the aim being to bring the people of East London city, Duncan Village and Mdantsane together.

Planned events include a media conference, a workshop on urbanisation, a youth leadership event, bus tours and a cultural festival.

Winter School pilot on citizenship attracts many

By PAUL GRAHAM

Forty participants from around the country attended Idasa's first Winter School on Citizenship and Democracy held recently at a country hotel near Johannesburg.

They included teacher trainers, an inspector, a headmaster and teachers from rural and urban schools. Although all attended in their private capacities, they represented a number of teacher associations and unions.

During the 15-day course, presented by Idasa's Training Centre for Democracy, they were introduced to theories of democracy and the role of citizens in building and maintaining a democratic culture. Other working sessions dealt with their role in promoting democracy and the implications of an emerging democracy for the educational system and the various stakeholders within it.

Amongst their expectations were requests for a universally acceptable theory of democracy, ways to deal with the demands placed on them, particularly by students, to be "democratic" (for example in relation to discipline and examination results), opportunities to handle educational issues within the context of the democracy debate and opportunities to meet with other teachers and share resources.

They were equipped with resources, ideas and skills to handle the demands of teaching in a democratic society and during the present transition to democracy.

The formal sessions were led by Dr Ian Philips of Natal University, Mr Tom Swart, an education consultant, representatives of Lawyers for Human



Rights and the Delta Environmental Centre with Idasa staff from a number of the regional offices. These sessions focused on theories of democracy, human rights, curriculum, codes of conduct, gender sensitivity, coping with transition and promoting democracy. Participants also took part in selfguided study groups on key areas of interest to themselves.

The groups dealt with issues such as the implications of mass action, teacher training, professionalism, non-formal education and curriculum development, and PTAs. These sessions were amongst a number of different activities designed into the programme to ensure that those present lived out an experience of democracy and learnt the skills of interacting, voluntary association, and planning connected with responsible citizenship.

Early on in the programme, a four-hour session during which people took on the roles of the various actors in education - administrators, principals, teachers, parents and students - unearthed a range of educational concerns common to all groups while at the same time exposing the very serious

breakdown in relationships which exists between these groups. The creation of a schooling system which assists in sustaining a democratic culture will have to come to terms with both the concerns and the difficulty of bringing groups together to find solutions.

The Winter School was an experiment in running an extended citizenship programme for a variety of professional and community leaders. It does not take the place of conferences, workshops, and forums at which the various interest groups meet to find solutions to problems. Rather, it is designed to promote a democratic culture in South Africa which will underpin these various initiatives.

Already it is clear that a number of regionally based schools and the creation of a network of past students will need to be established. Participants would also like to receive recognition for attendance at these courses. These are matters which will have to be taken up by training centre staff as they evaluate the Winter School.

Paul Graham is Idasa's programme director and heads the Training Centre for Democracy.

Hi South Africans!

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Ballot box or Pandora's box?

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Whatever the outcome of the mass action and of the various third party interventions which it has provoked, leadership – whether through a revived negotiating forum, through an interim authority, or by unilateral decision – will be looking quite soon at least at some of the recommendations of Codesa as they provide formulas about which there is already some common cause.

An approach by business, labour and churches, a visit by UN special envoy Cyrus Vance, and proposals by the Commonwealth have been among those third party interventions. The UN special session which produced the resolution enabling an envoy to be sent was a clear indication that the international community had linked the questions of violence and the stalled negotiations and wanted South Africa to resolve its transition to democracy as speedily as possible. Growing consensus on the time frames available to parties to negotiate a settlement will help to focus attention on the gains made through the various negotiations including Codesa.

And the central feature – with some details to be worked in or worked out – is an elected constitution-making body which also has the authority to govern during the transitional stage.



What was at issue was the power that this body would have in relation to constitutional frameworks established in Codesa working groups. The 75 percent solution which collapsed the 19-party summit was an attempt to ensure that the Codesa frameworks stood, whatever the composition of that constitution-making and transitional body. The Codesa frameworks included a number of democratic principles such as a Bill of Rights, the separation of powers, representative government at local, regional and national levels, and universal suffrage in a proportional representation system.

There has been controversy about the creation of principles which will bind those drafting the constitution. However, negotiators seemed willing to affirm certain values

and principles in order to re-assure those fearful of an anti-democratic takeover of power.

'This scenario is based on the assumption that there remains sufficient goodwill and common commitment to SA to ensure that it survives and prospers.'

So South Africans are looking at, sooner or later, an election for such a body. Given the breakdown of Codesa, the urgency of ending the violence and creating stability for investment and economic growth, and the continuing exposé of the present National Party's patchy track record as a competent government, rapid movement to a transitional government is on an increasing number of agendas.

Preparing for an election can have a number of consequences for the country. Firstly, it focuses the energies of people and gives them a common goal – the uncertainty of the transition has, in the words of General Bantu Holomisa, taken us from "total onslaught to total exhaustion". The uncertainty is having serious effects, not least of which is the increasingly bloody violence and criminality. The common cause of beginning to prepare for elections may even provide the added pressure needed to complete the negotiation process.

Secondly, it sets a time limit on the present filibustering and electioneering which seem to be characterising some politicians and government officials. It also offers those with skills and cash who are close to packing it all in and leaving a definite period in which to reassess their positions. And it offers to the dispossessed, a moment of hope rather than the interminable and intangible negotiations.

Thirdly, it allows a re-emergence, within a controlled environment, of the grassroots political activity and organisation which had characterised South Africa before and which is so essential to our survival as a democracy and in our transition from anarchy and violence.

There is already an indication that such citizen participation is growing – with attendance at conferences, workshops and public

events increasing, new organisations and networks of organisations emerging, and the challenge of mass action redeveloping organisation skills, bringing people together, and ensuring the development of a broader leadership base.

There are fears that an election under the present conditions will lead to intimidation and further violence. There are also fears that a straight national election will override the many regional interests and differences in the country. More detailed work on an electoral act and the composition of the body or bodies being elected cannot be avoided.

However, preparing for elections requires organisation, political programmes, training, development of organisational records and a range of organisational tasks. In addition, the establishment of electoral commissions, monitoring groups and codes of conduct are required. All of these act against political violence and may even serve to reduce the reactionary violence which seems in part to be fuelling the conflict in order to subvert the movement to democracy.

Of course this scenario is based on the assumption that there remains sufficient goodwill and common commitment to South Africa to ensure that it survives and prospers. It requires an act of will to remember that it is not very long ago that books were being written with titles such as, "Will South Africa Survive?"

South Africans of all political persuasions joined hands to pull us back from the abyss then. It is surely not too much to expect that we can do it again – and do it quickly enough to avoid those options of the mid-1980s: the "Lebanon" option, the civil war, the repressive stalemate and the "wham-bam" (reform/repression) strategy – and their bedfellows: economic stagnation, the "brain drain" and development inertia and misappropriation.

In politics a week is a long time. *Democracy in Action* deadlines mean that this article is written in the midst of the urgent multi-layered and multi-level talks. It may be that this article is more a statement of hope than of what emerges as parties seek to come to terms with the violence and with the genies that are let out the bottle as a result of mass action.

The government's ability to persuade others that it is finally taking the violence seriously and acting trustworthily – and the ANC's ability to re-enter negotiations for a non-racial democracy without losing its presently angry and bitter constituency – are going to be tested. Whatever the outcome, all South African citizens need to continue working for democracy.

Paul Graham is Idasa's programme director and head of the Training Centre for Democracy.

Live the dream now!

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It is not enough to march each time when the funeral processions far outnumber the occasions on which we march, and the death certificates far outnumber the letters of protest to the government – and more is said at funeral services than at Codesa.

These are bleak days indeed. Days in which we think that we can generate pride in ourselves as a nation by winning gold medals on a sports field.

We are so good at blocking out of our national consciousness and from our corporate conscience the daily death and mayhem. We want to see ourselves as heroes; as winners. And so we place the task of winning respect and adulation upon the shoulders of our athletes, our sportspeople. And we sit back in our armchairs with our newspapers or watching our televisions – swollen with pride at our sportsmen and women's achievements.

'We are so good at blocking out of our national consciousness and from our corporate conscience the daily death and mayhem'

Did you read the newspaper posters on your way up Adderley Street today? Each of them this morning was about sport. Today, when the world is watching us, our attention is being drawn away from Boipatong, away from our grief and shame, away from yet another killing field to the sports field...

Today, in Boipatong, we bury our children – as we did in June '76 and March 1960 – children who will never play another township game let alone compete in the Olympics. The sea between Boipatong and Barcelona is a sea of blood.

And while all this happens the political leadership of our country play their own games of one-upmanship and powerplay. The game of killing has become a free-for-all with no captains – but with many coaches



Dean Colin Jones with Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The Argus

egging the game on from the side-lines. Faceless people never brought to justice; the police who are supposed to ensure the safety and protection of the innocent who always happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time; inconclusive findings...

South Africa's leaders – and I am talking across the entire spectrum of leadership – by not giving a strong lead to their followers to end the violence, must bear the responsibility of our national shame...

But in order (to create) a society in which all human life is held holy, in which all people enjoy peace and freedom, a society in which *all* will enjoy not just equal access to the law, but equal protection under the law, a society free from corruption – a *decent, human, proud* South Africa (I have used these words because “non-racial, non-sexist, democratic” have become devoid of meaning for ordinary people) – in order for such a society to born we must, in the words of a woman priest in America, Carole Crumley, “live the dream now”!

She says: “In order to achieve justice, we must start living justly among ourselves. We ought to start *being* and *doing* that which we desire our society to become.

“If we believe in freedom of speech, then we should speak freely. If we believe in truth, then tell it. If we believe in an open

society, then act openly. If we believe in a decent and humane world, then behave decently and humanely. *Hold up the vision*, even when you don't know how to get there, and live the dream now!”

(We) don't know how to get there... Our leaders don't or won't. The events of Boipatong and other less spectacular times have shown us one thing: there is a massive lack of resolve on the part of the state, or at best a massive inability, to make the dream happen now. All that has been produced is a growing nightmare.

Where does that leave us? For we are in one way or another, all victims of Boipatong. It leaves *us* with the task of making society just and peaceful.

Political slogans, ideological rhetoric, political posturing and power positioning, corruption and skulduggery are not the kinds of things that ordinary South Africans want from our leaders.

'We ought to start being and doing that which we desire our society to become'

We want *hope* not euphoria. We want to believe in ourselves, we want to hold our heads up high not bow them in shame like today! We, the ordinary citizens of this our mother city, call upon all the people of our country to shake off the nightmare of violence and to live the dream of peace and justice.

We can do it! We do not have to wait for Codesa to show us how to respect life and liberty. We do not need a democratic constitution in order to live at peace now. We do not need a bill of rights in order to stop killing now...

We have to free ourselves, to take the lead ourselves. This is not anarchy, this is hope.

You may be wondering why I am addressing my comments to you. Surely a just society comes when those who perpetrate injustice are overthrown or when they

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change? The events of the past weeks and indeed months, and in particular the Boipatong massacre have yet again exposed the South African government's lack of will and/or inability to bring about peace and justice for all.

But we ourselves will not be doing any better, we will not be able to live the dream now, if we are haunted by the nightmarish ghost of pessimism and a "victim mentality". For pessimism and self-victimisation are the chains of our *own* forging and only *we* can free ourselves from them.

It is all too easy to see ourselves as victims. And the mood of the victim is inevitably despair, resentment and self-pity. These feelings are totally undermining of true human liberation. We cannot build a new society out of these.

'Political posturing and power positioning, corruption and skulduggery are not what ordinary South Africans want from our leaders. We want hope not euphoria'

It is not enough to resist being slaves of an oppressive and corrupt government while also being slaves of our own making – shackled to destructive patterns of behaviour, trapped by bitterness and resentment, overtaken by the violence of our emotions and actions – not free at all.

I appeal on behalf of all the citizens of our mother city, to all our brothers and sisters in those communities beset by violence, not to allow themselves to be slaves of yet another oppressive and destructive master: violence, but like truly noble and dignified human beings, who love justice and peace above all else, to resist the manipulation of *whoever* – rogue police, agent provocateurs, agents of state, of political groupings – *whoever* it is to whom your lives mean nothing.

Hear what we here and the nations of the world are saying today: your life does count for something; your deaths are grieved. Your children are our children and our land's future. You deserve more of this land than just a grave at Sharpeville. You are with us one nation, one people under God. Without you we are less than ourselves, less than a nation!

Our one hope is to live and act in the face of inhumanity and violence, in the face of despair – to live and act humanely, and peaceably and in hope...

Jihad vs McWorld

The two major political tendencies of our age – tribalism and globalism – clash at every point except one: both threaten democracy, says American political scientist BENJAMIN R BARBER.

Just beyond the horizon of current events lie two possible political futures – both bleak, neither democratic.

The first is retribalisation of large swathes of humankind by war and bloodshed: a threatened Lebanonisation of national states in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe – a Jihad in the name of a hundred narrowly conceived faiths against every kind of interdependence, social co-operation and civic mutuality.

The second is being borne in on us by the onrush of economic and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity, and mesmerise the world with fast music, fast computers and fast food – with MTV, Macintosh and McDonald's pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network: one McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications and commerce.

They have one thing in common: neither offers much hope to citizens looking for practical ways to govern themselves democratically.

Four imperatives make up the dynamic of McWorld: a market imperative, a resource imperative, an information-technology imperative and an ecological imperative.

Market imperative

All national economies are now vulnerable to the inroads of larger, transnational markets within which trade is free, currencies are convertible, access to banking is open and contracts are enforceable under law. Such markets are eroding national sovereignty and giving rise to entities – international banks, transnational lobbies like Opec and Greenpeace, world news services like CNN and the BBC, and multinational corporations – that neither reflect nor respect nationhood as an organising or regulative principle.

The market imperative has also reinforced the quest for international peace and stability, requisites of an efficient international economy.

Common markets demand a common language as well as a common currency, and they produce common behaviours of the kind bred by cosmopolitan city life everywhere. Shopping has a common signature throughout the world.

'Yet in all this hi-tech commercial world there is nothing that looks particularly democratic'

Resource imperative

The Athenians were unable to realise the ideal of autarky: political autonomy resting firmly on economic independence. Today, with the rapid depletion of resources that once seemed inexhaustible, and the maldistribution of arable soil and minerals on the planet, the reality of interdependence is inescapable.

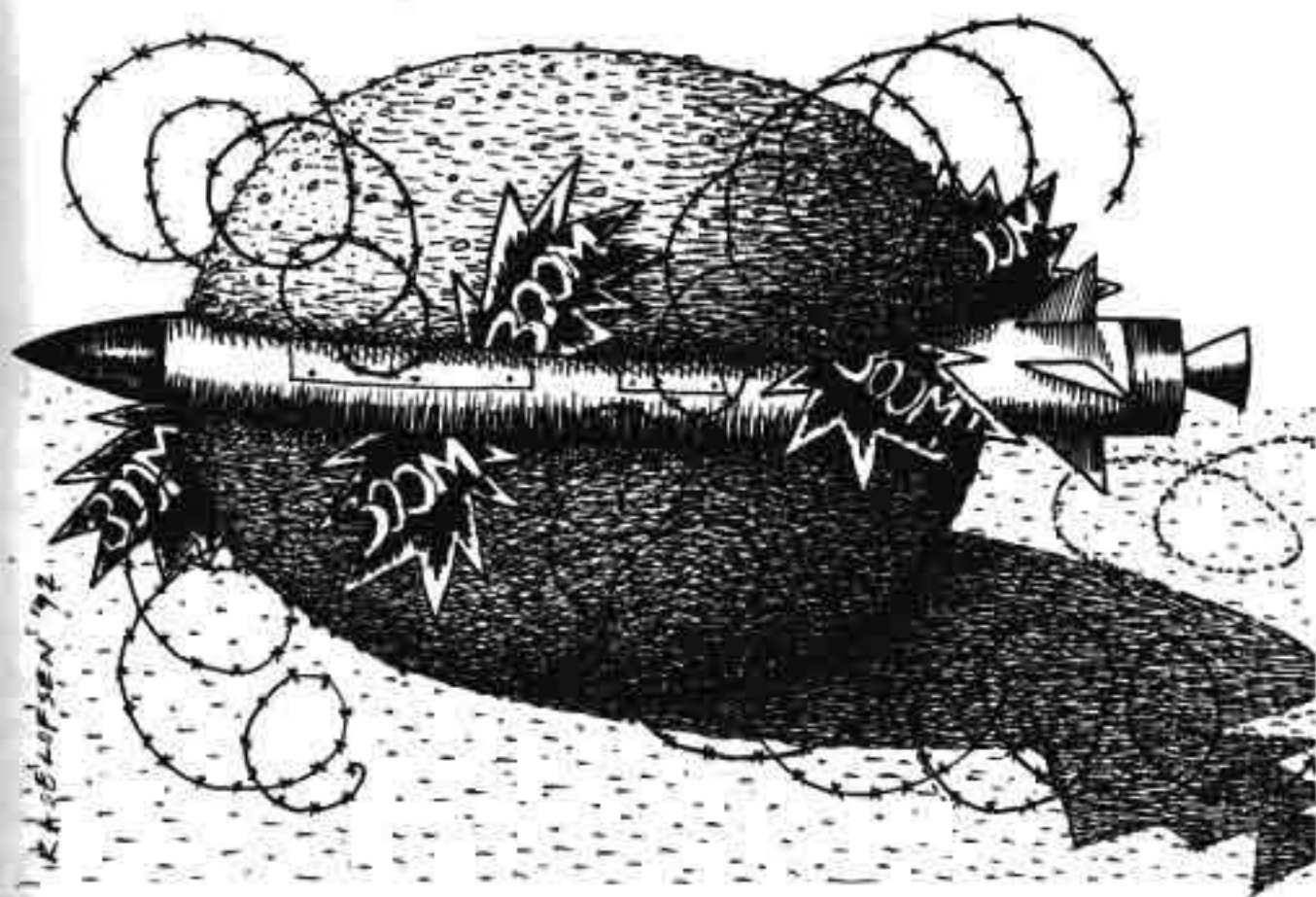
Information-technology imperative

Business, banking and commerce all depend on information flow and are facilitated by new communication technologies. The hardware of these technologies tends to be systemic and integrated – computer, television, cable, satellite, fiber-optic and microchip technologies combining to create a vast interactive network.

Moreover, the pursuit of science and technology asks for, even compels, open societies. Satellite footprints do not respect national borders; telephone wires penetrate the most closed societies.

The new technology's software is perhaps even more globalising than its hardware, because culture has become more potent than armaments. What is the power of the Pentagon compared with Disneyland? Can the Sixth Fleet keep up with CNN? McDonald's in Moscow and Coke in China will do more to create a global culture than military colonisation ever could.

Yet in all this hi-tech commercial world



there is nothing that looks particularly democratic. It lends itself to surveillance as well as liberty, to new forms of manipulation and covert control as well as new kinds of participation, to skewed, unjust market outcomes as well as greater productivity.

The consumer society and the open society are not quite synonymous. Capitalism and democracy have a relationship, but it is something less than a marriage.

Ecological imperative

The impact of globalisation on ecology is a cliché even to the world leaders who ignore it. We know well enough that the German forests can be destroyed by Swiss and Italians driving cars fueled by leaded petrol. We also know that the planet can be asphyxiated by greenhouse gases because Brazilian farmers are burning down tropical rain forests to clear a little land to plough.

Yet this ecological consciousness has meant not only greater awareness but also greater inequality, as modernised nations try to slam the door behind them, saying to developing nations, "The world cannot afford your modernisation; ours has wrung it dry!"

The headlines feature the subnational factions of Jihad regularly: they are cultures, not countries; parts, not wholes; sects, not religions; rebellious factions and dissenting minorities at war not just with globalism but with the traditional nation-state.

They include Kurds, Basques, Puerto Ricans, Quebecois, the Catholics of Northern Ireland, the Zulus of Inkatha, Catalonians, Tamils, and, of course, Palestinians - people without countries, inhabiting nations not their own, seeking smaller worlds within borders that will seal them off from modernity.

There were more than 30 wars in progress last year, most of them ethnic, racial, tribal or religious in character. The aim of many of these small-scale wars is to redraw boundaries, to implode states and rescue parochial identities. The mood is that of Jihad: war not as an instrument of policy but as an emblem of identity, an expression of community, and an end in itself.

'The tortoises among democratisers may ultimately outlive or outpace the hares'

Even where there is no shooting war there is fractiousness, secession and the quest for smaller communities. Disintegration in the former Soviet Union may well continue unabated - not just a Ukraine independent from the Soviet Union but a Bessarabian Ukraine independent from the Ukrainian republic - while Yugoslavia makes even the Soviet experience look integrated.

Among the tribes, religion is also a battlefield. Whatever Enlightenment universalism might once have come to grace such historically related forms of monotheism as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in many of their modern incarnations they are parochial rather than cosmopolitan, angry rather than loving, proselytising rather than ecumenical, zealous rather than rationalist, sectarian rather than deistic, ethnocentric rather than universalising.

How can democracy be secured and spread in a world whose primary tendencies are at best indifferent to it (McWorld) and at worst deeply antithetical to it (Jihad)?

With its concern for accountability, the protection of minorities, and the universal rule of law, a confederalised representative system would serve the political needs of McWorld as well as oligarchic bureaucratism or meritocratic elitism is currently doing. As we are already beginning to see, many nations may survive in the long term only as confederations that afford local regions smaller than "nations" extensive jurisdiction.

Recommended reading for democrats of the 21st century is not the US Constitution or the French Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen but the Articles of Confederation, that suddenly pertinent document which stitched together the 13 American colonies into what then seemed too loose a confederation of independent states, but now appears a new form of political realism, as veterans of the new Europe created at Maastricht will attest.

By the same token, the participatory and direct form of democracy that engages citizens in civic activity and civic judgment and goes well beyond just voting and accountability - the system I have called "strong democracy" - suits the political needs of decentralised communities as well as theocratic and nationalist party dictatorships have done.

Democrats need to seek out indigenous democratic impulses. There is always a desire for self-government, always some expression of participation, accountability, consent and representation, even in traditional hierarchical societies. These need to be identified, tapped, modified and incorporated into new democratic practices with an indigenous flavour.

The tortoises among democratisers may ultimately outlive or outpace the hares, for they will have the time and patience to explore conditions along the way, and to adapt their gait to changing circumstances.

It certainly seems possible that the most attractive democratic ideal in the face of the brutal realities of Jihad and the dull realities of McWorld will be a confederal union of semi-autonomous communities smaller than nation-states, tied together into regional economic associations and markets larger than nation-states - participatory and self-determining in local matters at the bottom, representative and accountable at the top.

The nation-state would play a diminished role, and sovereignty would lose some of its political potency. The Green movement adage "think globally, act locally" would actually come to describe the conduct of politics.

This is an edited version of an article published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 1992.

Where hope eludes...



a vision of development

The people of the Karoo recently gathered in Beaufort West to tackle their future. RONEL SCHEFFER reports.

One feels compelled to silence among the people of the Great Karoo, thoroughly humbled in the midst of those who persevere in this remote and harsh region in the face of so much deprivation. Virtually a human disaster area, they are now saying "enough". Yet one waits in vain for a torrent of rage and bitterness.

That, it seems, is not their style. Mostly, they understate the suffering, with a dignity reminiscent of the vast landscape of scrub they inhabit.

Clearly it is a place they love, and have no intention of leaving. In the debate references frequently are made – with a quaint old-worldly possessiveness – to "hierdie Karoo van ons" en "ons Karoo".

But what to do? About unemployment figures as high as 80 and 90 percent in some towns? The miserably low wages and all-pervasive poverty that has left vast numbers destitute, with some deliberately seeking imprisonment or neglecting their health to qualify for disability allowances? What to do about the rampant social problems of alcoholism, teenage pregnancies, family break-

ups, child neglect and school drop-outs? What remedy is there, in the final analysis, for communities that have become characterised by desperation, fatalism and an all-pervasive sense of defeat?

The motto of the Bastiaanse High School in Beaufort West, where the conference took place, is "Mik Hoog". The 200 delegates, perched on uncomfortable chairs in the freezing school hall, heard that they should reach high to bring the "pie in the sky" of development down to earth in their region. The first step would be to create a vision of development that would sustain the people of the Karoo.

"We don't need shiny sky scrapers and computers to give birth to such a vision," said Prof Wynand Louw of the University of the Western Cape. "It is the product of human creativity." In a sympathetic and supportive socio-political environment it would be possible to create to such a vision.

The conference itself, hosted by the Karoo Council of Churches and Idasa, was a small milestone in creating this vision. The product of a year's intensive consultation and

planning, it succeeded in bringing together some 35 of the 50 communities in the Karoo. Most of the speakers were professional people – teachers, school principals, ministers of religion – but there was good representation too from the civics and community development groups.

Representatives from the Small Business Development Corporation and the Independent Development Trust came, but notable absentees were the white local authorities. The town clerk of the host town, Beaufort West, sent a coldly worded apology – all his officials were otherwise engaged that weekend.

The conference was opened by Dr Beyers Naudé who stressed the importance of community-centered and co-ordinated projects. Group discussions followed after Dr Aubrey Redelinghuis of UWC provided an overview of poverty and underdevelopment in the Karoo.

He ended his presentation with quotes from interviews with Karoo residents, painting a picture of slave labour on farms, arbitrary dismissals, destitute elderly farm workers, starvation, a struggle for basic commodities like firewood, and endemic despair.

Dr Redelinghuis highlighted the need to end the urban/rural split; rural communities will remain important to the national economy, their numbers will increase in future and their development should therefore form part of a broad national development policy and process.

He said poverty in South Africa was concentrated in these areas, de jure "white" but de facto "black" with agriculture as the main economic sector. While the white population was declining, most of the facilities, amenities and infrastructure remained inaccessible to blacks, pointing to substantial wastage of potential resources, including farm land, in the rural areas.

Poverty in the Karoo existed in all sectors: on farms, in towns, in squatter areas and among the "roaming" labour force – mostly



Jeremiah Blekitwe (Murraysburg) and Wynand Louw (UWC).

the result of poor wages and unemployment of a structural nature.

Other problems included housing shortages and poor housing, poor health, false perceptions of work-dodging among employers, racial discrimination, the privatisation of the SA Transport Services causing uncertainty about one of most important employers in the region, and inactivity on the part of local and central government authorities.

Report-backs from a range of discussion groups further illuminated the problems faced in the areas of education, housing and health, also highlighting the important role churches could play in combating poverty and reviving the human dignity of people.

Community groups spoke of the difficulties of fostering development in a region where people, literally, were in survival mode, desperately concerned about the next meal and unable to relate to anything else.

'The road which must be built must be one which leads to new opportunities'

Activists admonished themselves for sometimes failing in their duty towards ordinary people. Said one: "In the struggle we always talked about 'grass roots, grass roots'. It seems that the grass has grown so thick that we cannot see the people in it any more." And another: "Development must try to address the physical conditions of the man on the street, not those of a person like me with a tie on."

They stressed the need to create an awareness of development in the community, to empower people and to tailor projects to the pace of the people of the Karoo. Projects should be broad-based and not revolve around individuals or particular interests. The community should not be made dependent on hand-outs, but hand-outs could become a catalyst for other development projects.

Problems with funders and service organisations were also raised, the former being criticised for not understanding constraints in the territory, the latter for not staying the distance.



Norman van Wyk (Carnarvon) and Katy Wessels (Beaufort West).

The need to engage farmers and to change their perceptions of reality was raised repeatedly. "The farm worker doesn't trust the community because we are not able to address those elements who stand in the way of their needs," said a teacher from Leeu-Gamka.

John Lolwana of the Richmond Civic Association shared his strategy of a diplomatic approach to farmers who are resistant to any "interference" with their workforce. A lay preacher, he pitched his sermons for workers to create awareness of their rights and their plight. Gradually he moved them to understand why "city people lift their fists like babies battling with winds". He engaged farmers, advocating TV-sets for workers to combat high birth rates. They got their TVs, and better housing followed.

Another success story came from Venterstad, situated on the Orange River but battling to secure a good water supply for residents. Ds Richard Joseph told how the community set out in 1985 to challenge conditions. Development started with building a mortuary, then they began to produce coffins, a mini-bus to overcome transport problems followed. Venterstad now has an advice office, a sewing group and a community store.

The agricultural ambitions of some also came to the fore. Jeremiah Blekiwe of Murraysburg, translator for most of the con-

ference, articulated the frustrations of many: "We all grew up on these farms, by the mere fact that you grew up on a farm, you want to be a farmer. But we have no agricultural school in the Karoo. Grootfontein and Middelburg must open up to all."

Development, said Wynand Louw, is like an umbrella with numerous spokes - one cannot keep the rain off if one of the spokes are missing. But it starts with people and its end goal is the development of "complete" people.

The Karoo has what it takes, but... Basic needs of health, housing and education must be provided, land needs to be redistributed in a productive way, human resources need training and existing legal constraints on economic enterprises must be removed.

He suggested that a start could be made with changing the relationship between employee and employer, and that it was imperative to remember that development did not occur in a vacuum - the struggle



Stephanus Jooste (Beaufort West), Louise Boezak (Carnarvon), Vincent Williams (Idasa), Beyers Naudé and Venter van Zyl (Hanover).

against low wages and poor working conditions will, and must, continue.

Above all, the community needs to tackle projects that spiral in size. "The road which must be built must be one which leads to new opportunities," said Louw.

The conference identified the need for an expert investigation of the problems and development potential of the Karoo, and committed itself to place the region on the national agenda as an area with specific problems and deserving of special consideration. A steering committee, representing all communities, was formed to take the process of networking further.

Ronel Scheffer is production editor in Idasa's media department.

Writing on the wall for Afrikaans press?

A new type of journalism is taking root in the Afrikaans press, according to writer and journalist HANS PIENAAR. He spoke to *Democracy in Action* about current trends in the mainstream press.



What do you mean by the new journalism that is emerging in Afrikaans?

Well, obviously in the first place I refer to new publications like *Vrye Weekblad*, *Die Suid-Afrikaan* and local efforts in the Cape Province. But there is also a Boereglasnost in the mainstream Afrikaans press. A paper like *Beeld*, for example, is beginning to acquire a taste for independence. Recently it has twice expressed reservations in editorials about the silencing of Jan van Eck in parliament, and it has also pronounced F W de Klerk's visit to Boipatong a mistake.

But if one looks at *Rapport*, the biggest Afrikaans newspaper, one would be forgiven – to put it mildly – for believing the opposite. *Rapport* nowadays frequently carries racist articles, like the recent interview with the same Van Eck, or approving references to Barend Strydom, or the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging. And there is a deathly silence when it comes to proven crimes by the police.

I would prefer not to comment on the performance of the paper I work for, but I can say that in broader Afrikanerdom there has been a singular failure by its institutions to tackle the sickness left by apartheid. There has been a spate of mass killings by people whose minds have obviously been destroyed by apartheid indoctrination. Yet there is no campaign to root out these illnesses by the church, or schools, or whatever.

The obvious thing for Afrikaans papers to write about, for instance, is the phenomenon of mass killings by whites. What are its causes, its links with the apartheid past, what do psychologists or futurologists say about the damage it does to Afrikaners? Not in order to jump on any human rights bandwagon, but for the sake of themselves.

Yet you still believe there is a Boereglasnost?

Yes. There are excellent journalists on the

staff of all Afrikaans newspapers, especially among the younger journalists. They are extremely professional people who embrace the ethic of journalism. They have chosen a low-paying career with a low status simply because they believe in journalism. Many of them have undergone "new South Africa" conversions in the recent past, especially after exposure to the dynamism of black politics. Most of them still suffer from an excessive respect for authority, like all Afrikaners, but that is also changing. The expressions of racism in Afrikanerdom certainly does not sit well with many Afrikaans journalists. It sickens many of them.



What underpins the racism of Afrikanerdom, and of the Afrikaans press?

I think one must try to understand how the Afrikaner mind works. They won't say it, but they are scared stiff about the future and that they will lose their Western lifestyles. So they are latching on to the new debates about ethnicity raging everywhere in the world. In the process they have created ethnic traps for themselves in their moral thinking. Racism is seen as harmless, as a mere aberration even when it involves torture or serial murder. Condemnation of that racism is seen as false, as ideological, as anti-ethnicity and therefore as anti-Afrikaner. I think far too many Afrikaners do not understand that ethnicity is still possible without racism or aggression towards other groups. Certainly

sectors of the Afrikaans press do not understand this.

Why is the Afrikaans press so reluctant to write about police crimes?

Well, Afrikaner power has always been dependent on the police; the apartheid state was a police state. One of the most essential and earliest features of apartheid was that the public spotlight was turned away from what happened in black areas, including the actions of the police and officials. This has bred a rule of thumb for Afrikaners: hands off the police, which they apply to this day.

You must also remember that Afrikaners only know the friendly side of the police because they come from within their own ranks. Most Afrikaners find it very hard to reconcile the friendly face of the policeman next door with all the things that come out in court cases. So they simply disbelieve them, and ascribe murder verdicts to conspiracies or the politics of the judge. One can describe it as Boerepsycho, this inability of Afrikaners to accept that policemen have committed crimes, or that their actions constitute crimes in the first place. The same would apply for people in the Afrikaans press, I guess.

Will the Afrikaans press be relevant in the future?

It all depends on how strong the laager is that Afrikaners are drawing at the moment. If Afrikaners choose the laager, or are forced into it, an introspective elite will arise which will only be interested in making money for trips overseas and the Afrikaans press will serve this elite. But if the exponents of Boereglasnost continue and become even more daring, and realise what opportunities await them in an open society that develops all its cultures equally, then papers like *Beeld* have enough skills and democratic commitment in their ranks to become important players in future politics.

What can other organisations do to help Boereglasnost along?

What they must understand, in the first place, is that Afrikaners are extremely sensitive to any paternalism. For instance, holding up the English press as a model will not work, because there is a deep suspicion that

Revival on the airwaves



Suddenly it seems, everyone with any interest in a product to sell or information to communicate is talking about the potential of radio in South Africa. The Cinderella medium – forgotten in the fuss over the glamorous power of TV – has made it to the ball and there are hundreds of suitors wanting to dance with her...

By SUE VALENTINE

Ask any media specialist what is the most effective means of reaching South Africans on a mass scale and chances are you'll get the same answer. Radio is the new buzz word.

It may not always be for the same reasons, but be it for pure commercial gain or in the interests of people's right to information, of all the media in South Africa, radio is the most affordable, most popular and the one which reaches urban and rural, literate and illiterate South Africans alike.

Besides the two independent commercial stations of Radio 702 and Capital Radio (able to broadcast only on medium wave and with their transmitters based in "independent" homelands), all broadcasting in South Africa is controlled by the state. However, there is a groundswell of interest in access to the airwaves from another, non-commercial sector – community radio.

Although no actual stations exist as yet, plans are most advanced in Cape Town where the Bush Radio initiative (so named for its initial association with the campus radio station at the "bush college" of the University of the Western Cape) plans to begin broadcasting in August.

The concept of community radio has also taken root in Grahamstown where a group meet regularly and are ready to go on air as soon as they can raise the money for a transmitter. In Durban (through the Media Trainers' Forum) and in Johannesburg (under the auspices of *Speak* magazine) others are developing their understanding of how community radio works and how to develop it from the realm of ideas into reality.

There is also talk among civic organisations in Natal of the possibility of starting up community radio stations.

The potential of radio in distance education and literacy training has also come under the spotlight through research commissioned by the National Education Policy Investigation network. In a paper, entitled "The Use of Radio for Adult Education", Julie Frederikse explores the capacity of radio for use in adult basic education as well as the plethora of radio proposals which are mushrooming around the country.

These initiatives include plans (and in some cases they are already being implemented in conjunction with the SABC) by Sached, Cosatu, Nactu, the SA Council of Churches, SA Catholic Bishops Conference and the Matla Trust to use radio as a means of mass communication and informal adult education.

Olset (the Open Learning Systems Education Trust) is another potential broadcaster which claims to represent community interests and is geared towards establishing a national educational radio channel in a bid to address the education crisis in the country.

Most recently, prompted by an offer of European Community funding, the formation of a Broadcasting Development Trust has been mooted. In all probability this trust will become the body to which funding proposals for future non-profit, community radio (and television) stations can be directed.

Skills, initiative and training notwithstanding, the stage is set for South Africans around the country (be they geographical communities or interest groupings) to begin meeting and talking to each other in the modern day village square created by community radio.

Sue Valentine is Media Co-ordinator with Idasa.

the English press has always been *skynheilig*, that they have been critical of apartheid while lustily enjoying its fruits. English whites are putting all the blame for apartheid on Afrikaners, who retort that they have not invented apartheid, they merely perfected it. There I agree with them. Apart from that, in many departments, like hard news gathering or cultural columns or sheer creativity, Afrikaans publications more often than not are superior to English ones.

'Holding up the English press as a model will not work'

So outside organisations would do well to avoid being prescriptive and encourage objective reporting simply by praising it, or by singling out good Afrikaans reporters for special treatment. What Afrikaners also appreciate, like all ethnic groups, is admiration for their culture. In Afrikaans literature there is a strong democratic tradition. Appreciating and encouraging that tradition, and not merely lionising the individuals, would be an important boost for the whole emerging democratic culture in Afrikanerdom.

What about breaking up the monopoly in the Afrikaans press?

That would be counter-productive. The South African press in general needs monopoly conditions to survive, so taking steps against this monopoly could destroy the Afrikaans print media. And the print media are indispensable for any real democratic public debate.

The Afrikaans press is going to be highly critical of a future government – that should be taken for granted. But in order to be taken seriously, it will have to promote democratic values. That, in turn, could be an important means of defusing ethnic Afrikaner terrorism, which quite possibly will be with us in the future. I think the nurturing of Boereglasnost and the alternative press is a far better option. As for expressions of racism, laws already exist against that, and the Afrikaans press takes the findings of institutions like the Media Council very seriously. In future, of course, people and organisations will make use of anti-racist laws to a far greater extent than they do now. And even if racism often is difficult to prove, Afrikaans papers will want to avoid the negative publicity.

Hans Pienaar is a sub-editor with Rapport while pursuing his writing career. His book, *Die Derde Oorlog teen Mapech*, published by Idasa, has won the 1992 Rapport prize for non-fiction in Afrikaans.

By MOIRA LEVY

Can the messenger deliver?

Media in crisis of credibility, seminar of journalists told

As South Africa struggles through the process of transition, is the media going to be part of the problem or part of the solution? Or, put less crudely, in the words of Idasa director of policy and planning Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, is the media going to increase the current confusion in the country - or help alleviate it?

That was the nub of the debate at a morning seminar, organised by Idasa's media department, which brought together leading Cape Town journalists. The title of the seminar, and the question they set out to answer - "can the messenger deliver?". The answer, after three hours of discussion and debate - "yes, but..."

For the first time journalists - representing all the city's daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, radio and TV - faced each other across the table. This time, instead of being subjected to the usual daily criticism from the public or the government, the journalists themselves subjected their colleagues and their profession to a rigorous and frank assessment of their role and their responsibility.

Blaming the messenger instead of the message is an oft-cited complaint raised by the media; at the seminar the journalists set out to examine whether they should indeed shoulder some of the blame.

In his opening address Slabbert accused the media of "ideological cherry picking". Referring specifically to media coverage of the findings of the Goldstone Commission, he suggested the public's right to know was being compromised by selective, sometimes subjective and often inaccurate reporting.

He warned that the role the media plays now, in the period of transition, may govern the role it is allocated in the future. "If the press continues to be part of the confusion, it could be posing a threat to its own (future) freedom.

"Freedom of the press is a consequence of democracy, not a precondition for it...It is not simply a right that we are entitled to and that will be conferred upon us, but it will have to be struggled for. What we do now, in that struggle, could be critical for future press freedom."

Slabbert's warning set the tone for the rest of the proceedings. Speaker Jon Qwelane, deputy editor of the Johannesburg *Sunday Star*, continued in a similar vein. In a powerful appeal for a return to the professional journalistic ethics of integrity, impartiality, accuracy and relentless investigation, he said the media today, across the board, is suffering a crisis of credibility.

Speaking from the perspective of the black community, he said the mainstream newspapers are perceived as agents of big capital and as serving white political power interests.

"This perception, right or wrong, has been given credence by the concentration of ownership in too few, but economically powerful, hands, and cemented by the undeniable fact that there is pretty little to choose from by way of diversity between newspapers

owned by Argus and Times Media Limited. When you consider that both groups are firmly in the clutches of the all-embracing Anglo American empire, then you begin to see why this near-monopoly of the English-language press is largely perceived to serve white economic power interests."

He said two other branches of the media also suffer a lack of credibility, but for entirely different reasons. "The so-called alternative media and the SABC are in the same camp as being organs of political partisanship.

'The SABC is NP-objective, The Star is DP-objective, City Press is ANC-objective'

"The open flirtation between the alternative press and the extra-parliamentary outfits does about as much good as the close relationship between the SABC and the government; such collaboration rapidly diminishes the true functions of the press and lessens to a very great degree the fundamental right of society to be informed."

Qwelane went on to say that journalists who serve as ambassadors for political parties and organisations do a serious disservice to their profession and "have lost their right to be seen and labelled as journalists". He warned that journalists are in some way to blame for the harassment they often experience when carrying out their duty by "faceless censors and unruly mobs (who) want us to toyi-toyi to their tune.

"But there is hardly ever smoke without fire; we are being harassed and intimidated in our communities and by elements loyal to political organisations because in many cases we ourselves first planted the idea in their minds that we could be pliable political tools



Deirdre Moyle, Gerald Shaw (both Cape Times) and Chris Freimond (Financial Mail).

are readers and viewers customers, consumers or clients? And are journalists public servants or political actors, do they faithfully reproduce reality or play a role in shaping it?

'Whites in particular are not informed, and whose responsibility is it to keep them informed if not the media's?'

Speaker Deon du Plessis, editor-in-chief of the Pretoria News, in a dig at journalistic convention, argued that in the final analysis news value must be determined by market-driven realities. "Not only is this not understood by many journalists, it is actively rejected by some on the grounds that this kind of approach threatens their freedom... But there is no freedom in poverty. Nobody is as unfree as he who must seek special favours, considerations, hand-outs or stays of execution.

"In this sense profitability is good for the business of press freedom. And profitability will come the way of he or she who best understands the environment or the resulting demands of consumers or clients... you are not going to sell T-shirts on a winter's morning, but you might sell some scarves."

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Jon Qwelane and Gavin Stewart.

sincerely serving a determined purpose.

"Clearly that is about as sensible as hitching a lift on the back of a tiger; you are safe for as long as you remain perched on its back. As soon as you disembark you are pretty certain to end up in the tiger's belly."

He expressed his doubts about the media's commitment to objectivity. "The SABC claims to be objective, but it is National Party-objective. The Star is Democratic Party-objective. City Press is ANC-objective.

Qwelane issued a call for a return to effective investigative journalism. "We must probe, probe and probe some more." He gave examples of stories that have been seized by the media, wildly sensationalised, "beaten semi-conscious and left for dead" with no follow-up investigations. Three months after the sensational disclosures on State Security Council involvement in the Goniwe killings there is a "deafening silence" in the media.

"The current Codesa deadlock is yet another example, with newspaper headlines screaming 'Crisis', 'Deadlock' and 'Showdown' and nothing more. To play our proper role we must inform, and to get information we must probe."

Qwelane raised a dilemma he has faced on the news desk of one of South Africa's largest circulation newspapers; competing for the front page, on the one hand, dramatic pictures and a harrowing story about a train massacre in the townships, on the other a colour piece on cricketer Jonty Rhodes working his wonders on the pitch. Should he select the former for the township edition of the paper and the latter for the white suburbs. "Who the hell am I to deny white readers this truth."

Who decides what makes news - usually a small clique of highly educated, upper mid-

dle class white men. Who reads the news - on most newspapers the majority of readers are black and working class. What gets into the news, what makes the front page lead, how much space a story gets or, in the case of radio or TV, how much time is given - these daily decisions are determined by a newsroom selection process that is often rigidly hierarchal, strictly governed by precedent and custom, and based on assumptions that are often minority opinions masquerading as universal truths.

Is the media's audience an undifferentiated public or a collection of different communities with differing needs and interests;

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Du Plessis said the client – or the reader – deserves paramount attention, and “client-driven journalism” that keeps a close watch on the market is essential for the survival of the press and the only guarantee for future press freedom.

A reporter on Business Day and a reporter on the Sowetan may cover the same press conference and return with entirely different stories, he said. “As long as they were both accurate, balanced and honest, I have no problem with that. Indeed, it is to be applauded. It would be evidence of reporters working their respective markets and giving up forever the notion that any newspaper is the mass communicator to all people anymore.”

A successful media in these terms would be one that is market-driven, that is closely attuned to the needs and demands of its clients and that selects news accordingly.

Chairperson Prof Gavin Stewart of the Rhodes University journalism department referred to another model of the media in citing a popular dictum – the mark of a successful press is its ability to survive changes in government. Such a media, it is implied, would preserve and present the truth, however unpalatable, “unmarketable” or untenable it might be to the reader or client.

A similar distinction was also made by Slabbert when he posed a question to the journalists present – do they seek a press that has a democratic preference or one that is driven by patronage?

Dr Alex Boraine, Idasa’s executive director, summed up the dilemma with an example of the media coverage of Codesa. “Many newspapers imagined Codesa would solve all our problems and in seeking to comfort and bring good news avoided the warning signs. When the collapse came, it was a shock; the public was not prepared for it. It is almost as if to sell news the media must sensationalise the truth and keep the bad news away. Yet this is a white perception, a comfort perception.”

He concluded with a strong call on the South African media to fulfill its obligation to inform the public and to demonstrate its commitment to the principle of the public’s right to know: “By all means give people some good news, and keep their hope alive, but above all tell them what they need to know. The majority of South Africans, whites in particular, are not informed, and whose responsibility is it to keep them informed if not the media’s?”

Maira Levy is media facilitator with Idasa’s media department.

Dakarites look back on event which nudged SA to negotiations

From July 9 to 12, 1987 a group of mainly white, mainly Afrikaans speaking South Africans met members of the ANC in exile in Dakar, Senegal at a conference which provoked widespread angry reaction from the National Party establishment.

According to some, the Dakar meeting was the start of the current negotiations process, even the turning point which led up to De Klerk’s memorable February 2, 1990 address. Others, while not necessarily according it such significance, still regard it as a memorable event, both personally and politically. Here are the views of some of those who attended that meeting five years ago.

By SUE
VALENTINE

Van Zyl Slabbert:

“It is always tempting to seize on an event that your organisation has been responsible for and present it as a major cause of subsequent events. Some people, not even involved with Idasa, have tended to do so when referring to the Dakar meeting.

“I have just been to Dakar, five years later, to help found the Gorée Institute for Democracy, Development and Culture – a direct consequence of the 1987 meeting. This coincided with the preliminary meetings of the OAU and listening to politicians, journalists and academics from different African countries discuss developments over the last five years, Dakar 1987 frequently cropped up.

“ANC executive members have ascribed seminal importance to this event, as well as one or two cabinet ministers of the current government. I am satisfied that Dakar 1987 was an event that, within the combination of historical situations at the time, helped nudge the balance of forces towards negotiation in South Africa.

“It certainly put Idasa on the map and helped us to, so much better, do the kind of work we had hoped to do from the outset.”

Five yea



Together in Dakar in 1987: Lindiwe M

Alex Boraine:

“In 1987, the politics of coercion and co-optation held full sway. Negotiation politics was not an option. The ANC and others were banned and exiled organisations were demonised and marginalised.

“Despite the current impasse, however, in 1992 South Africa has moved into the negotiations mode. It is certain that the meetings between the ANC and the group of whites in Dakar at least made a modest contribution in the direction of negotiation politics. The crunch question, with *whom* do you negotiate, was also more urgently asked as a consequence of the Dakar initiative.

“In Dakar we faced three major areas: the use of violence, a new democratic constitution and the need for an economic policy which addressed both growth and equity.

“Ironically all of these questions remain on the top of the agenda. Idasa’s role in 1987 was to facilitate – a start was made. Clearly there remains much more to do.”

For **TRUDIE DE RIDDER** the meeting at Dakar resulted in the loss of a job (a state employer revoked her appointment as head of department because she was a “political terrorist”) but at the same time it propelled her into further study and work within the black community of Lentegour in Cape

on, Dakar's questions remain



de Ridder, Barbara Masekela and Grethe Fox

Town. Of her memories of Dakar Ms De Ridder says: "Dakar had an enormous influence. It was a turning point in our lives and gave us the courage to continue with things we believed in. Dakar was a high! It was unbelievable, the human relations that were formed there. Looking back, it all seems very idealistic within our present situation and all the violence. But one of the questions that kept on cropping up at Dakar was, what are the people going to do with their anger? The violence is enormously disappointing, but it is a form of expression of this anger."

Dutch Reformed Church dominee **THEUNS ELOFF** also received a hostile reception when he returned from Dakar. Church authorities placed certain ultimatums before him, forcing him to weigh these up against what he wanted to do as a minister of the church. He broke off contact with "progressive" organisations during this period and fought against the allegations of treachery and similar charges from within the church congregation. However, when he approached the church council early in 1989 to discuss renewing his contact with political organisations, their response was that 10 years hence might be an appropriate time!

Eloff resigned and in 1989 joined the Consultative Business Movement.

"During the past three years I have been involved in more interesting things than many people experience in a lifetime and for that I'm thankful. Dakar was not only a political, but also a personal milestone. It pushed me into the field I'm now in.

"Politically, obviously we have come a long way since Dakar. We feel Dakar has not yet been fully appreciated. It was a groundbreaking meeting. The cracks in the National Party outfit were starting to show and although PW (Botha) successfully ostracised all the Afrikaners who went to Dakar, he did not break the spirit of Dakar.

"We have come a long way since then. If Codesa 2 had been successful we could have said that these have been the five good years after Dakar...It was easy to be statesman-like when things went well, now they're not so good, but conditions are more difficult, more testing and we'll have to wait and see."

ANDRÉ DU TOIT, political scientist and deputy chairperson of Idasa's board of trustees, commented as follows:

"...Dakar was extremely important and had a great impact on me. In the overall context it was not the first nor the only venture of its kind, but in terms of putting the issue on the public and international agenda it was one of the most important. It made the

government take note.

"One doesn't know to what extent this happened, the inside stories haven't yet been written, but my guess would be that Dakar would figure prominently in unfolding events."

JACQUES KRIEL, a former medical doctor and now deputy principal at the Sacred Heart College, said:

"To me it seemed as if it was the final straw that broke the P W Botha back - the floodgates opened in terms of communication.

"Looking back I think we mismanaged our return. We were not well enough informed as to the mood at home...We should not have listened to the advice to come in through the back door at the airport. We missed an opportunity to make a statement about what we had done and that it was nothing that required secrecy."

PIERRE CRONJE, former Democratic Party MP and now with the ANC, said:

"Whether people make history or history makes people is an old debate, but a number of people cite the Dakar meeting as a turning point event which paved the way for the De Klerk speech.

"Dakar was the meeting that broke the monotonous circle of repression and revolt, in a sense it was the start of the negotiation process...

"Dakar helped to consolidate thoughts in the ANC and the Afrikaner 'dissident' camp at the time. Links were made then that have lasted."

His former DP colleague, **PETER GASTROW**, said, politically, Dakar was the real beginning of a momentum towards negotiations. "From then on, rhetoric came down from the theoretical to the possible and practical implementations. It was an ice-breaking meeting, negotiations were now no longer a far-fetched notion.

For former Idasa staffer **IAN LIEBENBERG**, who was based at Stellenbosch at the time, Dakar had important symbolic value.

"It was very necessary at that stage to make a change from the whole political environment of the 'total onslaught'. It had great symbolic value because for the first time white South Africans and Afrikaners took the step to identify openly with the negotiations option. We never claimed that we were beginning negotiations, but made it clear that any future option lay in negotiation and not coercion."

Sue Valentine is media co-ordinator with Idasa.

An ally in striving for democracy



Festivities during the launch.

Gorée Institute launched in Senegal

The name Gorée might not ring any bells for most South Africans, since our history (as school subject) only reflected what the colonialists and the Nationalists wanted us to read. But to those who have learnt and read about slavery, the name sends chills down the spine.

Gorée Island is notorious for having been the first outpost of the slave trade. The "prison" where local captives were held, and where, like beasts, their fitness for life was tested, remains on the island as a museum. It remains a very enigmatic symbol of the denial and destruction of a people's

By NDUMI GWAYI

- Promoting the study, acceptance and the practice of democracy in Africa by using strategies in the fields of research, interaction, training and civic education.
- Strengthening the involvement of civic leaders, individuals and organisations based in civil society in particular, in all the programmes of the institute in order to develop a legitimate consensus on what democracy in the African context constitutes.
- Assisting in the effective networking and strengthening of African democrats and

democratic institutions.

- Facilitating the exchange of ideas, experiences, hopes and fears amongst Africans from all sectors and all levels of society, in order to promote South-South dialogue and co-operation as well as to ensure the most effective utilisation of our human

and other resources.

- Contributing towards the generation and rejuvenation of Africa through the promotion and recognition of culture as a critical terrain for innovation, exploration and communication.

André Zaïman, the director of Gorée Institute and a former Idasa regional director in Pretoria, must be commended for the tremendous amount of work he and his team have put in to realise the establishment of the institute. It is also important to note that President Diouf, the Senegalese head of state and only patron of the institute, gave the project his full support, and honour, at the launch.

Giving the keynote address at the launch, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, who is one of the trustees of Gorée Institute, pointed out that the institute, through President Diouf's support, was fully autonomous and paid no allegiance to any government or organisation. He said the institute was "not interested in promoting prestigious events full of pomp and ceremony" and "endless theorising about democracy, development and culture" but rather in focused workshopping where obstacles to democracy could be identified.

The resonance of drums and the harmonic effect of the kora and other indigenous musical instruments seemed to echo the speeches and the determination of Africa to move to democracy. Before President Diouf gave his message of support, a community theatre group improvised a folk tale which conveyed the message that through perseverance even the tortoise reaches the finishing line. This hopeful note also reverberated in the colourful attire of the locals, especially the women. A range of cultural workers or poets, from Africa and Europe, celebrated the launch.

The current board members are Dr Tunji Abayomi (Nigeria), Prof Heribert Adam (Canada), Mr Breyten Breytenbach, Prof Claude Aké (Nigeria), Prof Theo Hanf (Germany), Mr Charles Mwalimu (Zambia) Mr Ousmane Sembene (Senegal) Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, Mr Hassan Sunmonu (Nigeria) and Mr Albert Tevoedjre (Benin).

The first day of the launch ended with a feast of local music and dance. A seminar on transitions to democracy concluded the launch the following day.

On reflection, I saw the institute as performing the important task of being Africa's ally in striving for democracy, development and international recognition.

Ndumi Gwayi is the regional director of Idasa in the Border area.



South Africans on Gorée Island: Jannie Gagiano of Stellenbosch, Shelagh Gastrow and Ndumi Gwayi (both from Idasa).

humanity through the obliteration of democratic principles.

The launch of Gorée Institute at the end of June therefore, as an institute for democracy and development in Africa, is both symbolically significant and timely. The tide against autocratic rule, it is evident, has engulfed not only the sub-continent of southern Africa but the whole world. One only hopes that the effects of the Cold War which further ravaged Africa as a continent and plunged it into stagnation and dependence will soon be replaced by participatory development and democracy. The institute, will hopefully assist and facilitate this, through its objectives which include:

By MOIRA LEVY

Unity in Africa is becoming the catch phrase most frequently heard in all the countries visited by Idasa's Africa Programme, according to the co-ordinator of the project, Shelagh Gastrow.

It is a theme running through the discussions and debates her tour groups have had with politicians, aid workers, writers, journalists and church representatives. All speak of the urgent need for Africa to join forces – and that includes South Africa – in building the economies, infrastructures and civil societies of the continent.

And most agree that South Africa leads the way in growth and development. Ms Gastrow, who is based in Idasa's Natal office, found that wherever she travelled in Africa, she encountered huge expectations about what South Africa could contribute in investments, skills redistribution and aid.

The Africa Programme, aimed at creating working relationships between South Africa and the rest of the continent, has taken her to seven countries across east, west and central Africa.

On her return from her latest venture – a three-week visit to Dakar and Senegal – she told of her impressions of the growing trade and investment links between South Africa and the countries further north. Her travels in Africa, says Gastrow, have reshaped her understanding of South Africa's problems and helped her look with new eyes on the strengths and weaknesses of the continent as a whole.

Her strongest impression, she said, was that South Africa leads the way in the development of civil society. Nowhere in the countries she has visited is there the plethora of institutions of civil society that South Africa enjoys – the women's and youth organisations, the human rights groups, the relatively unrestricted press which includes some vigorous alternative media, the professional bodies, the churches with their tradition of opposition and defence of individual rights.

"We have never encountered anything like Idasa; there are no institutions or organisations promoting the culture of democracy," she said.

"In Angola, for example, there was very little organisation on the ground. Except for a few individuals and the political parties who were seeking political power, there was nothing that could be called civil society.

"Everywhere we went in Africa, people are battling to build a civil society. There are signs of it." Gastrow cited the growth of an

Into Africa, where



OAU hall, Addis Ababa: Shelagh Gastrow with, from left, a Mozambican official, S A Chinouriri of the Zimbabwe embassy, André Zaaiman of the Gorée Institute and Serai Andrew Moche, chief representative of the ANC in Ethiopia.

UNITY is the catch phrase

independent press in Senegal which includes a satirical publication, the *Free Cockroach*. And during a trip to Ethiopia in April she heard of plans for an independent newspaper and publishing venture to be called *Eureka Press*.

In Angola, some individuals appealed to Idasa for assistance in setting up a democracy think-tank; in Eritrea moves are afoot to launch the Regional Centre for Human Rights and Development "to make sure that individual rights receive proper attention in the future".

"There are signs of a pro-democracy movement emerging in Africa," Gastrow said, but she cautions that these fledgling efforts are bound by all sorts of constraints.

State authorities, who perceive them as a threat, apply internal pressure; externally, they face a lack of funding. World powers no longer prioritise Africa; what funding does come in is aimed at efforts like famine relief.

"Africa has become marginalised from the rest of the world," Gastrow said. And countries in sub-Saharan Africa are increasingly looking to South Africa for a massive inflow of capital and technology. She cautions against too much hope: "South African business is setting up some contacts, but South Africa has to attend to its own welfare needs, and what investment does take place will most likely benefit only the elites. It won't change those countries' economies."

That is not to say that links are not proceeding apace. A sign of this is the burgeon-

ing migrancy south which started some years ago with unskilled traders, mainly Zaireans, entering Natal, Transvaal and parts of the Western Cape. This is now developing into a fully-fledged brain drain, with highly skilled and educated people opting for the relatively higher salaries and better living and working conditions offered in the south.

Gastrow says since the 1990 unbannings of the ANC and other organisations the universities, particularly, have experienced a "flood of applicants".

"When they bring skills South Africa doesn't have this could be of enormous benefit to the country, but if they are skilled workers and professionals who are prepared to work for lower salaries, this could lead to intense competition, conflict and tension."

Gastrow paints a picture of a continent that, tensions notwithstanding, is fast coming to the realisation that it holds a shared ideal, symbiotically defined problems and a common future.

"There is a big effort towards solidarity in Africa to counter the marginalisation that is happening from the rest of the world. There is a feeling that African countries have a common experience of hundreds of years of suffering. When Africans talk about South Africa they talk with passion; there is no hostility towards Idasa visitors, only a huge amount of sympathy and solidarity and support for us to get on with the business of becoming part of Africa."

Moira Levy is media facilitator with Idasa.

High hopes, harsh realities

For nearly two weeks in July, 40 Orange Free Staters travelled by bus through Zimbabwe and Zambia meeting politicians, farmers, educators, business people and ordinary citizens. CHANTEL EDWARDS joined them for some of the journey.

**See also My View
on Page 32**

Democracy has been achieved in Zambia and its people are proud of their achievements.

But look a little closer and it is democracy only at the level of politics and even then it is fragile. Corruption still has a firm hold of society and Zambians fear a return to one-party rule.

Playing host to an Idasa study tour at his presidential estate, President Frederik Chiluba speaks with optimism about the future of Zambia. He is convinced that democracy is the only answer for change.

"Democracy can work in Africa, we will make it work in Zambia. No country will be spared, they will be in some way democratised." He adds: "After all, in a military coup Dr Kaunda would not have been spared. The aim of a democracy is to conserve life."

Our delegation leaves State House suitably impressed by President Chiluba, but despite his optimism we are not convinced all is well.

A week of discussions with various high profile people in Lusaka has left our group reeling with information.

Zambia with its high degree of urbanisation and a population of nearly eight million people has no national urbanisation strategy and the stress is showing.

Shanty settlements have mushroomed up all around Lusaka, the capital city, with little or no services being provided. I am informed by a member of the United Nations Economics Commission for Africa that as a means of controlling such areas, a bulldozer is sent in periodically to raze the area, but the people just keep coming back.

Informal markets are difficult to control, but provide a major source of income for a society faced with employment figures that have declined substantially since independence in 1964.

Wandering through them one is overwhelmed by the urgency with which sellers accost visitors begging one to buy something. Small fires in tin drums have become restaurants where you can purchase corn on the cob, fried chicken and hunks of meats accompanied by "nshima", a local variety of South African pap.

A barber plies his trade at a street corner and nearby, a constant clanging reveals a panelbeating business for household pots and other wares.

In direct contrast to the noise and bustle of the city our delegation finds itself ushered into a building that houses the Institute for

Zambian Communication. Previously the broadcasting studios for Zambian television, the studio is now used to provide in-service training for journalists all over Africa.

In these hushed surroundings we listen as speaker after speaker is brought in to inform us about the Zambian situation. Accusations and justifications abound as hints of corruption and fears of a return to a one-party state emerge. Soon after our return to South Africa, the Minister of Youth Sport and Child Development resigns claiming his government is corrupt.

Mr Enoch Kavindele, interim president of the United Democratic Party and former contender for the presidency in opposition to Dr Kaunda, explains the legacy of corruption faced by the MMD government.



President Frederik Chiluba

Land claims: What price

By ANDRIES BOTHA

The land issue in southern Africa must be evaluated in historical context. At first, European settlers lived next to and later among Africans. They used overwhelming educational and technological advantage to subjugate and dominate their African neighbours.

In addition, the whites settled on the land and held it under individual freehold title – a concept totally foreign to the tradition of southern Africa. The continued resistance of most whites to the natural migration of blacks into land held under freehold title over time has resulted in the present emotive situation with interesting variations in Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Zambia, the most sparsely populated of the two, has the poorest infrastructure. Its government is actively seeking out settlers

"Dr Kaunda instituted a leadership code that effectively cancelled any opposition within his own party. Under this code no members of parliament were entitled to own a business with salaries, housing and transport all being supplied by the government. This meant Dr Kaunda could at will remove a member of parliament from his position leaving him destitute. Members of parliament for the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) have seen what has befallen those who worked for Kaunda and they do not want the same to happen to them."

In an attempt to address the situation MMD has as part of its manifesto the following quotation: "The hour has come for a president who makes himself answerable and accountable for the actions of

with the skills to develop the country's huge agricultural potential. Why, after 27 years of independence, has a democratically elected government adopted this policy?

Zambia has been through nationalisation and redistribution – planned and executed by globally trained economists, sociologists and agriculturalists.

Unlike Zambia, both Zimbabwe and South Africa have very good agricultural infrastructures, but there is high urban unemployment and severe pressure on communally held land. Notwithstanding intermittent media reports to the contrary, communal farms have failed to deliver the goods.

The most basic reason for this failure is that no individual has a demarcated area whereon he or she has the right or security to erect capital structures.

In Zimbabwe, the historical imbalance in



The Idasa tour group on the steps of the State House in Lusaka.

the people in his cabinet."

According to MMD MP Akashambatwa Mbikusita-Lewanika, corruption is still present but it is more open now. "People are still pursuing their own agendas but the protection of corruption no longer exists. Our press is free and open."

Mr Fred M'membe, managing director of the only privately-owned newspaper in Zambia, *The Weekly Post*, enthuses about the current freedom of the press despite attempts by government officials to force him to resign. "*The Weekly Post* which previously was run by the Movement for Multi-party Democracy has now become its strongest critic."

During our stay in Lusaka the newspaper repeatedly calls for the resignation of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Guy Scott. He is strongly criticised for importing contaminated grain into Zambia and it is being alleged that the contract

under which the grain was imported has directly benefited his own interests.

The editor-in-chief of the government-owned *Zambia Daily Mail*, Mr Emmanuel Nyirenda, also accepts the new government's commitment that they will not interfere in the press.

However, Mr Kavindele of the UDP claims that the MMD did not win the elections because it was a credible party, but rather because people were desperate for change.

"The need for change was so great that if President FW de Klerk of South Africa had stood, he would have been voted in."

President Chiluba disputes such claims saying that his party won the election because they campaigned and because their manifesto was accepted. "Democracy is what the culture will permit and not what the constitution says. No constitution will be perfected in one particular period. What we

see as democracy now may not fulfil democratic needs later."

Mr Kebby Musokwane, secretary-general for the official opposition, the United National Independence Party, denies that there has been a true transition to democracy.

"In order for there to be a true democracy the opposition should be able to make a difference. It should constitute a third in parliament in order to provide the necessary checks and balances. If Unip does not come anywhere in the next election, we are afraid that Zambia will return to a one-party state.

"At present there is a lack of progress towards democratic organisations, structures and processes. Democracy is not an event but a process. We are in danger of the current political system in Zambia being reduced to a democratic state without democratic individuals."

Despite the severe criticisms bandied about by the opposition, everyone agrees that some form of African union, if not political then economic, is necessary.

Dr Kenneth Kaunda, ousted president of Zambia, emphatically requests that a conscious effort be made to roll back the frontiers, so religiously protected, which are not economically viable.

The spirit of co-operation abounds and with 60 percent of its population unable to feed itself Zambia is looking to widening its trade links with South Africa.

According to the Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Ronald Penza, Zambia has an open policy regarding trade and investment. "The two need to be combined as a package so as to avoid our local trade and industry being neglected."

Dr Jonathan Chileshe, head of the trade and development finance division of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, is less subtle. "South Africa is a brother. You can choose your friends, but you cannot choose your brother. African countries must learn to live with their neighbours. We must work out a method by which South Africa can best benefit from the whole of Africa and how smaller African countries can benefit from South Africa."

The openness of the Zambian people and their complete honesty and willingness to talk to a group of South Africans from the Orange Free State leaves one encouraged that somehow the problems will be sorted out. Certainly for us and the present political climate in South Africa, President Chiluba's welcoming words were worth remembering: "Our politics is emerging with warmth, I urge you to take that warmth back with you to South Africa."

Chantel Edwards is media assistant with Idasa.

for past wrongs?

landholding was initially addressed at independence when it was agreed that the government would have first option on land for sale at ruling prices.

Since then the government has passed the controversial Land Acquisition Act to enable the expropriation of an additional 6 million hectares.

The Commercial Farmers' Union regards an equitable redistribution of land as essential, but has serious reservations about the provisions of the bill. Chief among these is the arbitrary pricing by the government without recourse to law. The union points out that only 2,8 million of the 3,3 million hectares originally bought have been settled and mostly unsuccessfully. Reasons proffered are: poor selection of candidates, inadequate training and little or no follow-up support.

What can South Africa learn from its

neighbours? Firstly, it must be recognised that the gross racial distortion of land holding must be addressed and the sooner, the better.

South Africa's arable land is generally more arid and prone to frost than either of our two neighbours. While clearly we must have a restructuring of land ownership, the scope for additional people on the land is extremely limited.

The greatest danger to guard against is the false belief that land redistribution can solve a national unemployment problem. Dumping the urban homeless on agriculture will result not only in their becoming even more destitute, but also in further stress on an already battered rural economy.

Andries Botha farms in the Viljoenskroon district. He is also the leader of the Democratic Party in the OFS and northern Cape.

Harmony amid the hardships

By CHANTEL EDWARDS

Travelling through Zimbabwe one is struck by the friendly warmth of the people and the high degree of reconciliation, something short of remarkable considering the situation in which they find themselves.

A crippling drought in Zimbabwe has forced rural people into the cities resulting in over-crowded squatter settlements and soaring unemployment. During a brief stop in Harare I am shocked to read that in certain regions people have begun eating their dogs in order to survive.

In the rural areas women work 18 hours a day collecting water, food and firewood to ensure the survival of their families. In Harare it would seem that food is available – if you have the money.

The markets sell fresh produce, household commodities and clothing. There is an abundance of local crafts and artwork for sale and on every street corner young children approach tourists with carvings of hippos, elephants and rhino.

The tree-lined avenues of Harare are spotlessly clean as is the countryside and we discover that this is as a result of heavy fines and on-the-spot arrests for offenders. A further reason is the sense of ownership and pride that people have in their country.

However, it would seem that since independence little has changed. The poor have remained poor and the rich have remained rich.

Very little development is apparent and this is attributed to the unemployment rate, high taxation, a lack of institutional support and the exodus of qualified people following independence.

The emphasis on rural development has been criticised by some as being for political, rather than economic reasons. Little training and follow-up aid has been made available to people placed on reclaimed farmlands, and the relatively unsophisticated Labour Relations Act has left the average farm labourer working a 10-hour day, six days a week and earning approximately 61 cents an hour or 146 dollars a month.

Education is the one field that has been fully developed – some argue to the detriment of other facets of life. Concentrating on mass-based and non-formal education has empowered people with basic skills, but unemployment is running at 25 percent and they're unable to find meaningful work.

Tradition on trial in rural areas

Traditional leaders, migrant labourers, the access of women to authority structures, redistribution of resources – these are some of the factors that make up the complex rural equation in South Africa.

In an effort to address some of these urgent issues, Idasa's Border office convened a two-day conference entitled "Rural Local Government: Understanding the Challenges" in East London on July 17 and 18.

Discussions got off to a volatile start as delegates debated the degree to which the concept of traditional leaders was compatible with democracy. Some said the very notion of traditional leaders – who assumed their position by birth and were not subject to regular elections – ran contrary to the basis of democracy. Others like, Chief Justice Mabandla from Ciskei and Transkei's Chief G S Notha argued that chiefs served their subjects and were accountable to them.

Lechesa Tsenoh of the SA National Civics Organisation said civics saw themselves as democratic institutions which were inclusive bodies. However, all delegates agreed on the need for further talks between civics and traditional leaders to ensure better relations.

The sustainability of rural local government and its relationship with the urban centre was addressed by Development Action Group researcher Laurine Platzky.

She said that in South Africa, the differences between urban and rural areas was not as great as in other African countries where cities and villages were clearly defined. The reason for this was that rural areas had no

real access to land and due to forced removals to the bantustans, people were living in densely populated areas without the advantages of urban or rural life.

She added, however, that no local government could be completely self-contained and a redistribution of resources should not mean that urban areas were the source and rural areas the recipients. Redistribution should occur on a national scale.

The Border region and nearby homelands had played a significant role in developing the wealth of the Witwatersrand area through migrant labour policies. In turn, the fall in the gold price and consequent retrenchments directly affected rural families in that region.

"National and even international developments have an influence on individuals in rural communities," said Ms Platzky. Therefore, local authorities should participate in national decisions because the impact of various policies would be felt in their constituencies.

On the issue of elections, Ms Platzky said people who were poor were vulnerable. In addition, women made up the vast majority of rural population yet they were often excluded from decision-making and were therefore ignorant of trends and current issues.

"The proportion of women attending courses to upgrade their level of education and understanding should be increased so their majority can be well represented on bodies such as village councils," she said.

Spare the child

By NDUMI GWAYI

Child labour and exploitation came under the spotlight at an Idasa meeting in East London on June 15.

Guest speakers were Prof Chris Hummel from Rhodes University's history department, who spoke on the history of child labour in industrial revolution Britain, and Mrs A C Mbalu from Frere Hospital who addressed the issue of children's rights.

The audience consisted mainly of people from the black township of Duncan Village as well as academics, nurses, social workers and representatives from various service organisations.

Mrs Mbalu said what was at issue was not children's needs, but their rights, and this

presupposed an obligation to deliver what was rightfully theirs. This included an environment conducive to growing up normally and to learning and to a society which accepted its responsibility for the development and protection of its children.

She said the citizens' role was to ensure that inadequacies in society were exposed while the government should provide education, health and decent living conditions for children.

After enthusiastic debate it was decided that further workshops would be convened soon.

Ndumi Gwayi is Idasa's regional director in the Border area.

By RONEL SCHEFFER

Turning heads on the beat

The current system of basic training in the SAP cannot deliver the credible, effective and accountable policing which is essential to the larger process of social change in South Africa, says researcher Janine Rauch (right).



"First you make them talk the talk, then you make them walk the walk." The drawl of a Canadian police chief, but good advice, it seems, for those charged with transforming the South African Police. If members of the SAP begin to talk of "human rights" and "democracy" are they likely to behave in a way that contradicts their language?

No, says Janine Rauch, a Cambridge-trained criminologist and one of two researchers who have been conducting an independent policing research project over the past 18 months, initiated and sponsored by Idasa.

Ms Rauch recently completed a six-month study on basic training in the SAP. She sat in on lectures and talked to instructors at the four police colleges in the country where young trainees' perceptions are shaped by instruction on, for example, how to deal with "terrorists" and "riots".

"This is completely inappropriate language and a long way from our vision of what good policing is," says Rauch, adding that many within the ranks of the SAP share the researchers' understanding of current problems within the force. There is also support for their recommendations to address these problems. "The SAP is not a homogeneous institution that is just bad," says Rauch.

Yet, there is no question about the fact that the values and aims of policing need urgent and thorough-going change. Both the military history of the SAP and the history of the police in enforcing apartheid meant that questionable values and norms were reproduced in training.

"Changing values is a very difficult thing," says Rauch, "and you cannot change a police force simply by changing its training system - the organisation itself must undergo a process of change in order to maximise the benefits of improved training."

Some 1 200 recruits pass through the training colleges annually and such a small number of the force (total 110 000) is not going to change the organisational culture of the SAP.

Rauch's research examined current basic training to see if it had changed in relation to the new political environment, and whether it equips young police officials adequately to deal with the complex social reality. The research was informed by a concern with improving the levels of service provided by the SAP, and with the urgent need to improve police-community relations.

Although the SAP is currently expending a great deal of energy and financial resources on improving their training system, she suggests that that this improvement is impeded by a dominant "anti-training" ethos in the informal police subculture.

Ms Rauch has submitted her recommendations for basic training, some of which could be implemented immediately, to the SAP itself and to the Police Board, a National Peace Accord structure - of which she is a member - comprising police and civilians that advises the Minister of Law and Order on policing. A task force from the board will take her work further.

Her basic argument is that policing is a discretionary activity - there isn't a set of rules for how a good cop behaves. "So what we need to do in training is to give students the skills to exercise their discretion."

'There isn't a set of rules for how a good cop behaves'

When she visited the police colleges her most striking initial impression was that of a military institution, with students marching up and down, spending hours drilling and instructors dressed in camouflage uniform.

"Even in the classroom it is a very regimented, traditional kind of education with the teacher giving the lessons and students repeating it.

"There is no emphasis on questioning or developing an individual critical understanding of the material. The military style, in particular, de-emphasises discretion, it suggests that there is one way of doing everything."

To equip police trainees for their discretionary activity, Rauch recommends a differ-

ent style of education which is skills based and implies a different style of learning - practising skills, role playing to improve understanding, being critical and being self-critical.

By focusing on language a start could be made in the classroom with changing values.

Another of her recommendations entails the importance of engaging outside expertise, and voices not heard before, in formulating training courses and changing the SAP itself.

Rauch points out that the training system followed by the SAP is not necessarily a product of apartheid, in fact it is similar to what was offered until fairly recently to police forces around the world - particularly in

Britain, Canada and Australia. She believes that the SAP can learn much from the latter two, both having been British colonial police forces like itself.

The SAP seems rather keen on "doing it for themselves", says Rauch, who cautions that the same mistakes will be made if the police force does not take seriously her recommendation on broader consultation: "They must listen to voices they have not heard before, not only to Unisa and the HSRC."

Other key recommendations she makes are that the physical components of training should be reduced and made more appropriate to real policework and that a new system of discipline should be developed, with an emphasis on police professionalism.

Rauch is the first independent researcher ever to be granted access to the training institutions of the SAP. She and colleague Etienne Marais, who are both based in the psychology department at Wits University, struggled for most of the first year of their study, to gain direct access to SAP members.

"We went into this research as novices not as academics and what we've tried to do is to work co-operatively with people, from academics to cops, trying to build a friendly relationship with the police force, trying to see how they view the problems and policing in general.

"It has paid off, we have earned their respect because we were prepared to listen to them - being members of the Police Board has also helped."

The two researchers will continue their work, Rauch will focus on "riot" policing and "riot police" training in the next few months while Marais is completing work on the homeland police forces and their reintegration into the SAP.

Ronel Scheffer is production editor in Idasa's media department.

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Published by Idasa and Oxford University Press. Available mid-September from bookstores, Idasa and OUP.

Education breakdown needs local remedies

By NDUMI GWAYI

Regional efforts were needed to counter the breakdown in teaching and learning, Dr Steve Fourie of Rhodes University told a seminar hosted by Idasa in East London recently.

The seminar, which focused on education for empowerment, was aimed at unscrambling the problems of transition in education in the Border/Transkei/Ciskei region, and consolidating efforts to rationalise education and nurture a culture of learning and teaching in the region.

Dr Fourie, who was the keynote speaker, said education not only empowered by providing the skills and knowledge which are needed in the workplace, but also by promoting "creative self-discovery" and broadening understanding of the wider world and society generally through critical thinking, tolerance of other views and problem solving.

Dr Fourie pointed out that education at present was not living up to its full potential because "Christian National Education", as adopted and applied by the Nationalist government, had been authoritarian and ideological and had disempowered the majority of the people of South Africa.

The openness of organisations and authorities to rationalisation was, however, questioned by Dr Fourie. He intimated that all players in the education sector should forsake sloganeering or dictating terms in favour of concrete steps to remedy the situation. Commissions looked at how present structures could work together to overcome obstacles, at legislation affecting education in the region and how interventions can be made, how to optimally utilise available resources and at non-formal and special needs education.

The seminar attracted participation from almost all education service organisations and education department representatives in the region. Gideon Sam, from Independent Teachers Enrichment Centre, wound up the proceedings, noting the willingness of participants to look at issues together. A broader conference, including business, workers, parents and so on, was an urgent priority, he said. A committee was elected to take the recommendations of the various commissions further, to facilitate further co-operation in the region and to organise a more representative conference.

Ndumi Gwayi is Idasa's regional director in the Border area.

Relief in PE housing impasse

CONFUSION and anger among residents of the Port Elizabeth township, Motherwell, over the actions of housing developers and banks has involved Idasa's Port Elizabeth office in a series of meetings to try and resolve the impasse.

An initial meeting brought together all three interest groups, but ended in deadlock when residents refused to continue bond repayments, banks refused to accept a moratorium on loans and the developers refused to cease building operations.

The conflict worsened as attempts were made to evict residents and the community resisted. A second meeting organised by Idasa excluded banking representatives and brought together only the developers and residents.

A steering committee was established with the task of drawing up a simple, understandable contract and code of conduct. The construction company made a house available from which the newly formed Housing Consultancy could function.

Principle functions of the body include the distribution of a questionnaire to determine the extent and nature of housing complaints among Motherwell residents and the consequent creation of a database which could be accessed by a team of experts. A framework for the resolution of complaints and potential conflict would also be formulated. Information about contracts, deeds of sale and other related matters would also be available to potential home-buyers at a training centre established by the developers.

At a subsequent meeting, attended by the banks as well, it was agreed that an ombuds committee would be formed to serve as a mediator between the community, the banks and the housing developers. This committee would feed into the structures which ultimately linked up to the regional development forum in Port Elizabeth.

Orange Free State development summit builds trust

A PROSPEROUS, free and equal society where an atmosphere of mutual trust and common loyalty will exist is what was envisioned by delegates at a Free State development summit which was held at Allemanskraaldam in June.

The summit brought together more than 200 people in the province, including representatives from all the major political parties, the business sector, civic organisations, NGOs, the provincial administration and other state departments.

After an introduction on national economic scenarios by Thabo Mbeki of the ANC and André Fourie of the NP, attention was focused on the socio-economic profile of the Free State. It became clear that the region faced a range of development problems involving economic, political, social and educational issues. Among the political con-

straints mentioned were ignorance and intolerance, unrealistic expectations and illegitimate structures. This results in a lack of unity, shared values and common goals.

Having obtained a better understanding of the situation in the region, participants then had the opportunity to build a common vision for the future of the Free State. Although these visions were more Utopian than practical, the exercise created a sense of belonging and commitment to the region and all its people.

As regards future action, a general need was expressed for a representative and legitimate structure to co-ordinate and consolidate development efforts. No finality was reached, however, and it was suggested that Idasa should act as an interim secretariat to facilitate discussion on



Thabo Mbeki

development while the nature of the structures to carry the process forward was being negotiated.

The summit was of great value in generating new insights and understanding concerning local development, as well as in contributing towards building trust and co-operation among people who share the same future.

Kobus van Loggerenberg
Regional Co-ordinator

Call for shut-down of old order

THE TRANSITION to peace and democracy, social well-being, job creation and economic growth would not come free, but required fundamental changes to "everything we have become accustomed to".

This was the view of Cosatu negotiation co-ordinator and member of the National Peace Secretariat, Jayendra Naidoo, speaking at an Idasa lunch in Durban on June 23.

What was also needed was the "complete shutting down" of the "subterranean world of death squads, assassins, police cover-ups, secret and unaccounted for funds, shadowy cabals of generals, politicians, cabinet ministers

and criminals in collusion".

Cosatu and its allies, said Naidoo, believed that as international pressure on South Africa had decreased, the De Klerk government had steadily retreated away from democracy and towards "old options and old goals" - the retention of white domination and National Party rule.

Turning to the Peace Accord, Naidoo said it would go down in history as a "noble but futile effort" unless it was strengthened considerably.

The extensive network of national, regional and local committees needed to acquire the capacity and power to intervene actively

in conflict situations such as Boipatong otherwise they would not earn the support and respect of communities.

Pointing to the "total lack of credibility" of the security forces, Naidoo suggested several measures which should be implemented:

- the security forces should be placed under some form of joint control and management;
- they should be effectively monitored by internal and interational groups, and
- comprehensive authority should be given to the peace structures to intervene in conflict situations, and to set up specialised mechanisms for this purpose.

Mayor: four Cape local authorities enough

AT A RECENT Western Cape seminar Mr Frank van der Velde, the Mayor of Cape Town, proposed that the city should be rationalised into four or five municipal areas with common services being managed by a metropolitan chamber.

Speaking on the role of local government and its administration during the transition, he pointed out that the Western Cape currently has 66 different local government structures, all with cross-cutting authority.

The delegates, who included councillors, municipal official and representatives from the civics and other interest



Mr Job Mokgoro, UWC department of public administration

groups, identified the need for an accountable, accessible, non-racial, practical, economically viable and people-friendly administration that meets the service and development needs

of communities.

Mr John Marshall, the town clerk for Bellville, emphasised the need for a strong and sound administration to be kept in place throughout the transition. "While the political and representational side is in chaos you cannot call a halt to servicing needs," he said. The restructuring of local government was linked to current political processes and a decision must be made as to which came first.

A spokesperson for the ANC called for the adoption of a progressive employment structure which allowed for standard remuneration and

participative management. Furthermore, the current lack of access to information was criticised.

A call for affirmative action was emphasised. Mr Marshall suggested that there would be no need for affirmative action if a policy of only employing the best people for the job, and then training them, was implemented. Mr Clive Keegan, Deputy Mayor of Cape Town, felt that this was a simplistic approach. Affirmative action, he said, should be seen as training a community, enhancing their capacity and consolidating their skills.

"Affirmative action is about a radical restructuring of structures to ensure demographic representation. We are going to have to appoint black people to positions for which white people are equally qualified. It will need money and action. Affirmative action as a vision or a dream is no good."

Mr Job Mokgoro of the UWC department of public administration, who suggested several concrete training proposals emphasised the need to pool resources in order to facilitate the implementation of an affirmative action programme.

A plea by a management committee member for the civics to work with the committee and to use their expertise was rejected by Mr Newton Adams of the South African National Civics Organisation.

"The civics accept the management committee members and the black local authorities but you are in a position that has not been democratically arrived at," he said, adding: "You should resign and return to your communities and when clear regional guidelines are made you can make yourselves available for democratic elections."

Chanté Edwards
Media Department

Pretoria takes the plunge

IDASA STAFF in Pretoria recently conducted their first training course in conflict management skills.

Based on the course material and methodology developed by Ron Kraybill, director of training for the Centre for Intergroup Studies, and used with his permission, regional co-ordinators Kerry Harris and Alice Coetzee led the two-day course for 14 Vista University lecturers in Mamelodi.

The course, intense and participatory, explored attitudes towards conflict, teased out the differences between mediation and arbitration and then focused on managing conflict by taking participants through the four stages of mediation. Interpersonal communication skills training was incorporated at every level.

Out of the course came an awareness that staff needed to be more proactive in dealing with potential conflict on the campus. The staff also felt that more people on campus, both staff and students, would benefit from mediation training. As a follow up, Vista staff have asked for further training, primarily in dealing with group conflict and negotiation skills. Help Ron!

Alice Coetzee
Regional Co-ordinator

Municipal staff give civics the low-down

PORT ELIZABETH municipal officials met representatives of 20 civic area committees at a capacity building workshop organised by Idasa during June.

The aim of the meeting was to expose civics to the processes involved in providing services to communities so that they can enter into negotiations from an informed position. During the workshop municipal officials presented papers on health, water and sewerage, parks and recreation and roads and transport for discussion by the civics.

Following intense debate broad agreement was reached in the following areas:

- Health: the establishment of a forum in which civics could participate in helping formulate a health policy which reflected the most urgent needs of South African society.

A subsequent conference is being planned for August 19 and 20 to focus on issues related to population development, the environment and resources.

- Water and sewerage: the serious water shortage in the shanty towns around Port Elizabeth is in need of immediate attention. The civics would approach the municipality to address the matter and to introduce a water-truck system as a temporary relief measure.

- Parks and recreation: the civic sports desk highlighted the need for existing facilities to be upgraded and for sport to be totally integrated as a means of assisting the transition to a non-racial democracy.

- Roads and transport: taxi forums should be established nation-wide to address issues such as relations between taxi drivers and their passengers. Training drivers in customer relations should become a central feature of taxi associations.

Farmers, ANC commission discuss land tenure issues

"THIS MEETING will mean that in our region the 4th July will come to mean much more than just American Independence Day." With these words Errol Moorcroft, DP MP for Albany, opened a meeting between the ANC Land Commission and the East Cape Agricultural Union in Queenstown on July 4.

Although his words were ambitious the meeting certainly lived up to, and indeed exceeded, the expectations of the delegates. Intended as an ice-breaker between the two organisations, it resulted in a day of serious discussion about regional and national land reform issues.

Both parties were able to air their concerns about land reform and land redistribution policy in the "new" South Africa. The ECAU said that although unrestricted access to land must be guaranteed they

had reservations about land redistribution, and felt that redistribution should take place through the free market.

Mr Hans van der Merwe of the SA Agricultural Union said the union had done a reassessment of agricultural policy and had concluded that maximum growth comes through a market driven economy with minimum state involvement. Privatisation was the cornerstone of this policy, private ownership must be protected and land must be used to its full capacity.

The ANC felt that although land must be used to its full capacity there was an urgent need to deal with the injustices of forced removals. This, they argued, would require a legal procedure to deal with land claims.

Land tenure issues dominated the discussion, with the ANC stating that the govern-

ment would have to be tolerant of a number of different forms of tenure, including communal tenure. The ECAU argued that there were severe problems associated with communal tenure and that it could lead to forced communal ownership.

Both parties agreed that the production of food was a priority which should not be compromised; affirmative action was needed in agriculture and black farmers need to be encouraged and assisted as far as possible; agricultural training facilities and extension services must be extended and made appropriate to local conditions.

Both parties felt that they had gained through the meeting and the possibility of future meetings was not ruled out.

Chandré Gould
Regional Co-ordinator

Conscription under fire in Border

THE PROPOSED amendments to the Defence Act came under fire at a recent public meeting in East London. Hosted by Idasa, it was characterised by an unprecedented participation by political parties and the End Conscription Campaign.

Speakers from the DP, ANC and ECC criticised the government for attempting to amend, rather than scrap the last piece of race-based legislation on the statute books.

Mr Howard Varney of the ECC argued that the demand of conscripts was "for the system of whites-only conscription to be abolished rather than for punitive alternatives to be provided for it".

The CP's Willem Botha attacked the bill for different reasons. His party was opposed to whites having to "protect" other race groups "from themselves", said Mr Botha. The CP supported the concept of compulsory conscription, but would support members who refused to serve while being utilised in the townships.

Dr Chippy Olver of the ANC also pledged his organisations support for conscientious objectors, and challenged conscripts to "give serious thought to serving in the SADF".

Mr Bill Nell of the NP argued that whites-only conscription could only be changed at the negotiation table. Mr Varney contended, however, that the bill was retrogressive as it entrenched "whites-only conscription at a time when the system is breaking down of its own accord".

Over 80 people, most of whom were young white men, attended the meeting.

Glen Bownes
Regional Co-ordinator

Civics seek independent election monitor

IDASA RECENTLY co-ordinated and monitored the election process of the new Border regional executive of the South African National Civics Organisation at the request of the organisation.

The Border Civics Congress believed that an independent body had to play this role to ensure that the process was both fair and democratic. They were also concerned that they did not have the necessary knowledge or skills to run elections.

Idasa then drew up a document which outlined an electoral procedure and this was forwarded to the 17 sub-regions of Bocco that

were to nominate people for each of the positions. Unfortunately due to the size of the region and the poor communication facilities, the forms did not reach all the regions and nominations from only 10 sub-regions were received in time for the election on June 20.

The elections ran smoothly and Idasa will be conducting follow-up workshops for Sanco's Border executive to enable them to run their own elections next year.

Glenn Bownes
Regional Co-ordinator

Kasrils: govt must be pressurised

THE ONLY way to wring concessions out of the government so that it accepts the true form of democracy is to "turn on the pressure from the street, from below - and from right across the spectrum of the South African community", according to ANC executive member Ronnie Kasrils.

Speaking on mass action at an Idasa forum in Durban, Kasrils said this pressure would create a powerful move towards democracy.

"The aim is not insurrection, the seizure of power by force," said Kasrils. Change in South Africa could now come about through a transition - hopefully peaceful - to democracy via negotiations.

"It can be a bumpy road or it can be a smooth road but that depends on the obstructions placed on the road to democracy," he said.

Complexity of democracy in SA made clear for average reader

By PIETER VAN VEUREN

A DEMOCRATIC VISION FOR SOUTH AFRICA edited by Klaus Nürnberger, Encounter Publications, 1991. (624 pages).



fields: well-known experts on political theory, church history and Christian dogma. Careful editing has ensured that the book succeeds in being very informative on a wide range of topics connected with the main theme. Therefore, although it is not intended for an academic audience in the first place, it also has value in this context, for it gives the reader an overview of the complex

on the strength of a mandate given by the people: the mandate of the people can be withdrawn in regular elections by secret ballot, which are held on the basis of one vote per adult person: the vote is direct (as opposed to an electoral college), the voter has free choice among different parties, policies and candidates and the voter has access to full and free information on the parties, policies and candidates.

In short, the bottom line of a democratic system of government is that people who are eligible to vote must be able to get rid of the policies and the people, by which and by whom they are governed by a vote at regular intervals. It is correct, therefore, that Nürnberger emphasises that the main function of a democratic form of government is to control the abuse of power by those people who wield power.

In this connection he states that a liberal democratic form of government also has the following important features: the public accountability of those who wield power: a division of power between legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government: the rule of law, which excludes all arbitrary decision making; and finally a bill of rights which limits the power of the state to essential governmental functions.

The conditions mentioned above for a (liberal) democratic form of government only give an abstract picture of democracy. Nürnberger makes the valid point that such a form of government can only function effectively in a cultural and economic context which has certain features. The most important of these concerns the relation between people: they must believe in the equal dignity of all human beings, and they must have confidence in the general maturity and responsibility of their fellow citizens. Furthermore, people must have sufficient self-respect and self-confidence to take up public responsibility, and they must have a certain minimum standard of living which is not found in poorly developed communities.

With this statement the editor touches on one of the most intractable problems which is discussed in the book, ie the relation between democracy and economic development.

totality of the problem of democracy in South Africa.

It is a structured work consisting of 45 contributions and it is made accessible by an introduction which states the aims of the book and gives a short survey of the contents. The contents are arranged in a further eight parts, each preceded by a survey of its content and a clarification of the discussion. Among the themes are the meaning of the term democracy; the biblical foundation for the values of human dignity and self-determination; the record of the Christian church as regards democratic ideals and the legitimisation of authoritarian rule; the vicissitudes of democracy in post-colonial Africa; perceptions of democracy among political groupings in South Africa, and the prospects for democracy in our country.

'The main function of democratic government is to control the abuse of power by those who wield power'

Klaus Nürnberger draws an abstract picture of democracy in order to clarify the concept. Democracy literally means government of the people, by the people and for the people. In contrast to various forms of authoritarianism, a democratic system of government makes the people themselves responsible for decisions concerning their collective life. According to Nürnberger, Western liberal democracy provides the classical standard for democracy in modern history. According to this model of a democratic system of government the leaders rule only

When *A Democratic Vision for South Africa* is placed in the context of some of the latest writings on the subject of democracy in South Africa, a striking feature of this book becomes apparent: in a field where question marks abound in the titles of books and articles, this book sounds a positive note with the phrase "a democratic vision" and the absence of a question mark in the title.

The word "vision" implies that democracy is something which South Africa does not have, or does not have in an adequate form, but could acquire in the future. The word also sounds a religious note and this impression is confirmed by the sub-title of the book, "Political realism and Christian responsibility". It is the third reader published by the National Initiative for Reconciliation (a non-denominational Christian organisation) and is aimed primarily at an audience which has Christian religious affiliations, but also at the wider audience of all people who have a feeling of responsibility in the situation in which South Africa finds itself at present - ie at the crossroad between a free and just future, or endless strife, social turmoil and oppression.

The book is aimed at the average reader and it is not a collection of academic research essays on the subject of democracy in South Africa, but rather a compendium of short essays which aims to stimulate and facilitate fruitful and informed dialogue on the topic. In doing this, the editor hopes that the book will "empower people to make their contribution towards the attainment of a new democratic South Africa based on equal dignity, justice and co-operation in all spheres of life".

Some of the contributions originated as research papers, but most of these have been shortened and stylistically adapted for the book. The essays were written by people who are knowledgeable in their respective

From Page 29

Essays by Nürnberger and Chipasula contain a devastating critique of the thesis that the one-party system constitutes an adequate framework for social and economic development in Africa. Both Chipasula and Nürnberger come to the conclusion that it has failed miserably because it has no checks on the abuse of power, it encourages blundering and inefficiency, exploitation of power and personality cult.

It is against this background that the call for the democratisation of government and a market-regulated economy in various African countries should be seen. This drive for democratisation in Africa has parallels in the political dynamics of some South American countries and in countries in eastern Europe. One common feature of the trend towards full democracy in these countries, and also in South Africa, is the expectation that a fully democratic form of government coupled with a market economy will enhance economic growth and social development. However, the South African situation is such that the underdevelopment of large portions of the population presents an obstacle to democracy and raises questions about the efficacy of a redistribution of wealth and opportunities by market forces alone.

Although the editor emphasises the close connection between economic growth and the prospects for democracy in South Africa, the book does not reflect adequately the importance of this issue which has a direct bearing on the future prospects of democracy in South Africa.

What if anything could sway the balance in favour of democracy in South Africa? Nürnberger does not subscribe to pessimism or cynicism as to the future of democracy in South Africa. He founds his "realism" (if not optimism) on an already existing reservoir of common assumptions and beliefs on which collective decisions can be based. According to Nürnberger, South Africa has a "dominant Christian tradition". The Christian church with its large membership, the educational and academic institutions and voluntary organisations (and one could add the trade unions) constitute a framework in which the praxis of democracy can be learnt and which can be mobilised to enhance the emergence of a democratic spirit in the broad population.

Dr Van Veuren lectures in the philosophy department at the Rand Afrikaans University.

(This is an edited version of a review which appeared in a journal of the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Development Southern Africa, Vol 9, No 2, May 1992.)

Cold War warrior in a warmer world

By DAVID SCHMIDT

NO MORE MARTYRS NOW by Don Caldwell. Conrad Business Books 1992, 272 pages

Don Caldwell's "No More Martyrs Now" is the latest in a line of local libertarian literature stretching back to Louw and Kendall's "The Solution" that sells well in suburban bookstores from Sandton to Simonstown and will no doubt parade on the bestseller lists for some time. Sometimes witty, often provocative, never dry it is a clever and entertaining book. Probably the best of the genre.

Do not expect a book characterised by any depth of thought. Nor one that seeks to be balanced and fair. Caldwell goes for the jugular with copy that is polemical, direct and unambiguous, that is never above pandering to the prejudice of his public nor of doing a hatchet job on the wares of his competitors.

Caldwell, in short, is in the business of selling. He has, in his ideas, a product in which he fervently believes. He has a market. He has the gift of the hard sell.

The arguments are marshalled with great skill. A masala of unimpeachable logic built on well disguised, albeit sometimes shaky, assumptions liberally spiced with the quotable quote, the selective statistic and the absurd logical consequences of some statist policy that appears to prove the rule.

The task is further approached from many innovative and disparate angles. The 11 chapters stretch from the know-your-enemy type on "The ANC's authoritarian roots" or "Apartheid was socialism" to the perfect-answer variety of the sections entitled "The Recall (Election): Keeping government accountable" and "Maximum Democracy" that puts the case for the referendum as a solution to the flaws of regular representative democracy.

But through the twists and turns of the negative and positive ad bites, the same message repeated again and again is identifiable - the incompatibility of freedom and government, the virtues of the market uninhibited, the power of private property and an absolute antipathy to affirmative action and all ideas smacking of regulation, government intervention and the Left. We have thus at the heart of it the standard themes of the libertarian right or Caldwell, the true believer masquerading as the sceptical modern adman.

All that is bad from apartheid to state interventionism to communism to environmental degradation is lumped under the big bad generic term of socialism. Freedom, choice, democracy and the all the good words are conflated with capitalism. This is the old bi-polar world revisited. In the soul of Don Caldwell, the Cold War warrior lives on.

It is right to be sceptical of politicians and of government. But there is a need also to be sceptical of the market. It has its limitations too. Strong democratic government and a strong market economy are not incompatible. With a strong civil society, they are rather the three legs of a tripod which must all be solid if it is to stand. This is one of the tentative truths our times have taught us.

Governments do have a positive role to play in the economic and social life of society. The choice is not only between bad government and very limited government as the libertarians claim. There is also the choice of good government intimately involved in shaping economic policy and stimulating desirable industrial activity, creating the climate and legal framework for proper competition, seeing to the education and training needs of society and providing the social services that a caring democracy requires.

We live in a thankfully less ideological world now in which there are no easy solutions and where the answers are not to be found at the extremes of either the all-powerful centralised state or the minimal state of the radical free marketeers. The successful societies of our era all accord the state a significant role.

Caldwell, in fighting the old ideological battle, is blind to the nuances of the complex. It renders much of his argument superficial.

Take affirmative action. Caldwell savages it as being nothing but a new form of racial discrimination that tends to entrench the status of blacks as second class citizens and demeans the achievements of those black people who are successful.

It is true that the record of affirmative action programmes is a patchy one and that some programmes have had the negative consequences he asserts. But Caldwell is too glib in his attack and passes over too easily the vexing issue that gives rise to such programmes.

Where a systematic discrimination against

an ethnic or other community has taken place that has significantly disadvantaged this community in the economic, social and political life, what measures must society take to redress the injustice? Even in terms of the ultra free market approach adopted by Caldwell there is, at least theoretically, compensation to be paid.

We cannot wish history away. We cannot always simply leave it to the market to right the wrongs of the past in the course of time. There is a tremendous justifiable anger that demands justice and recompense.

Any affirmative action programme needs to avoid or minimise the pitfalls pointed out. It is possible, with an emphasis on training and on the creation of additional opportunities, within a prescribed framework, to retain merit as a fundamental criterion for promotion and appointment.

There are many useful and thought-provoking insights in "No More Martyrs Now". The manner in which the concepts of market and private property can be more environmentally friendly than state regulation. Methods for making government more accountable and democratic such as the recall election, the devolution of power and restrictions of the power of officials to tax without the approval of the citizenry. The importance of a diverse and vibrant civil society. All of these are argued in a fresh, compelling manner. There are many useful arguments for the democrat to buy into.

In the end however, Don Caldwell like all ideologues from left to right, defines a universe in simple terms of black and white, good and bad, right and wrong. You are with us or against us. Like the washing powder advertiser, he does not like grey. He does not admit dilemmas.

In the real world, it is in exploring the grey areas of trade-off and compromise, of no easy solutions, of balancing the private and public, of giving civil society, free market and state their proper weight that democracy and enduring human peace are to be found. It is the black and white worlds of the fanatics and ideologues that create martyrs.

Yet "No More Martyrs Now" makes a contribution to the debate. It is the voice on the periphery reminding us of the importance of the individual, cautioning us about the dangers of the state in stark passionate terms.

We need more intelligent polemic of this nature from all perspectives that outline the alternatives in strong and clear colours as beacons to help us navigate our way through the dull grey mist of the brave new world.

David Schmidt is Idasa's regional director in Cape Town.

Compassion and time

I am a boerseun gone east (New Zealand) many years ago and I am writing to you from Russia which I regularly visit on business.

The parallels between the change required from the Afrikaner and Soviet people are uncannily similar: the process is the same as well as the amount of will and energy - and the ideological shifts - needed to make it work.

Both societies must be dragged into the 20th century, the scars are and will be deep, some won't go away or be healed easily. Only time and compassion for each other will help the process.

Things in Russia have not changed for the better. The people, although still smiling and now savouring the precious moments of happiness of a summer season, are expected to shoulder the larger share of the difficulties this society faces in its pursuit of a market driven economy.

At the moment I am on the banks of the Amur River, it is quite a lovely sight with the people out in full force - no one can inhibit these Russians enjoying their brief summer. Winter is not far away and with it comes shortages of all descriptions which must be endured.

The political changes have left a chasm so deep one wonders how they will ever escape the ravages of forthcoming legislation heralding the start of a market economy. No one in the highest echelons of government and industry has come to grips with the new Western financial jargon. The most simple of terms is not understood and with the appointment by Yeltsin of more technocrats to senior level in provincial and central government (straight from the lecture theatre) to run the economy, the immediate future looks bleak. What they need is about 700 000 managers to implant Western economic principles and managerial techniques to convert their vast economic wealth into profit yielding revenue to underwrite the capital required now to modernise a very antiquated industrial colossus for the future benefit of all.

Inflation, now running at 150 percent, has left its mark. Most basic commodities have risen in price by about 10 000 percent in the last three years.

A sad fact too is the graft and open fraud. Some believe it to be their right to the spoils of industry. They moan and complain but generally they do not care to

help the process of reconstruction. They believe someone else will fix the problem in time. Well I suppose that if I was living here with absolutely no hope of affecting or influencing any change, even though I now have the vote, I would also go fishing.

Michael Scholtz
Auckland, New Zealand

Geskiedenis wys pad vorentoe

Soos gewoonlik was ook die jongste uitgawe van *Democracy in Action* baie leerzaam en thought-provoking, en ek wens graag die redaksie te bedank vir die werk wat gedoen word om op 'n stylvolle en professionele wyse nuusberigte asook indiepte artikels oor ons land en sy toekoms onder 'n breër gehoor se aandag te bring.

Vanuit 'n historiese oogpunt gesien was veral prof Wilmot James se artikel "Rattle dem bones!" baie insiggewend, en ek hoop van harte dat 'n wye verskeidenheid persone en belangegroepes daarvan kennis geneem het. Die beter toekoms sal ons bly ontwyk indien ons 'n streep deur die verlede probeer trek - so asof die letsels wat gelaat is deur die ideologiese vergrype van die verlede deur die swaai van 'n (ander ideologiese?) "towerstaf" sal verdwyn.

Die sinikus sal sê dat wat mense uit die geskiedenis leer is dat mense nie uit die geskiedenis leer nie. Ek deel nie noodwendig dié sienswyse nie, maar indien dit ongelukkig waar is dat mense baie keer inderdaad nie uit die foute van die verlede leer nie, dan is dit dalk omdat hulle nie die verlede behoorlik bestudeer nie, dalk te veel deur 'n bevooroordeelde en ideologies-gekleurde bril na die verlede kyk.

Die veelbewoë geskiedenis van hierdie land sal inderdaad deurlopend bestudeer moet word indien ons - en toekomstige geslagte - werklik wil begryp waarom ons land en sy mense op hierdie bepaalde wyse ontwikkel het. En in dié proses sal by méér mense hopelik beter begrip ontwikkel vir ons situasie, en sal ons beter kan beplan vir 'n rooskleuriger toekoms. Meer sal dan dalk ook besef hoeveel mense in hierdie land inderdaad in gemeen het, en die kompleksiteit van ons geskiedenis sal ons daarvan weerhou om vingers te wys.

André Wessels
UOVS, Bloemfontein

(brief verkort)

United by need – on a mini Codesa-on-wheels

“People are dying here!” Not in the struggle, but in our bus, from sheer pressure for a toilet stop. This irresistible plea to our busdriver (a DRC minister), comes from a young civic member, egged on by a white township administrator. Our Idasa bus, a mini Codesa-on-wheels, has quickly developed interdependence skills – we are united indeed, by need.

Also by region. The fact that we are all Free Staters, is suddenly a source of pride. Also by consumption of liquor. In the play-off between the ANC and the farming fraternity I must presume that the result was a draw. After 5 500 kilometres of practise they were very evenly matched.

I journey through the minefield of my own prejudices and liberal preconceptions with rapidly diminishing certainty, while the rhythmic refrains of freedom songs and our passionate debates on mass action and intimidation, police brutality and violence, intermingle effortlessly with the rumblings of the bus, as it takes us through Zimbabwe and Zambia.

At one point it takes four hours to get through customs, unbearably bleak and dirty. Yet minutes later, vegetable patches dot the countryside and a spotless motel with glossy garden, confounds my simplistic judgement. Throughout our stay, we are addressed and met by cabinet ministers, newspaper editors, guides, erudite and cultivated ambassadors and businessmen, ANC officials, ex-President and present President, people of patent goodwill and common sense. Even the UN representative courts us – us, the polecats of the world! But the ANC grieves for lost comrades and lost support and the lost innocence of the liberation struggle.

“Zambia has buried socialism forever,” says the President with chilling finality. Yet the blight of corruption survives all change, pervasive as the drought and cunningly comfortable in any economic guise and country.

It is the problems of poverty and not of race, which we encounter. Much is discussed about development strategies: education for the masses is a first priority. Yet the heavy cost of social services has meant minimal expenditure on infrastructure. This is the balance we must negotiate.

We drive along pot-holed roads, half-completed buildings (including a gigantic United National Independence Party head office now in the process of being sold to a hotel group) and past people digging up the rocky foundations of the outskirts of Lusaka, crushing rock with hand tools, selling them per bagful to builders – unlicensed, but unstoppable. The message from city officials in Harare is clear: hawkers and squatters are not welcome. Shacks are demolished to improve the look of the city in foreign visitors’ eyes. Littering is noticeably curbed by on-the-spot fines. This impresses all of us. So does the famed friendliness of the locals.

The Land Expropriation Bill in Zimbabwe elicits great interest, neatly dividing the haves from the have-nots. I think back on the ending of slavery in 1830s. At stake was not the issue of

slavery but of just compensation for lost property. The same situation is replayed nearly 200 years later. If there is no fair market price for land, I see a new Great Trek stirring in the farmers’ veins. A new frontier has opened, a frost free, mild climated, sparsely populated land where the playing fields have not been levelled but annihilated. They’ll begin again.

In the rural Third World, women work up to 18 hours per day, sleep four, eat last and the least, and produce 60 to 70 percent of the food consumed. But where women’s work is not measured in economic terms, her value as a person is seriously underrated and her demand for equal status negated.

“Battering is love. That is our culture”.

“As long as women dislike polygamy there will be rape.” Quotes from Zimbabwean MPs in parliament. Although individuals rise to the top of their professions, and Zimbabwe,

Zambia and Botswana have more women in their cabinets than we here in South Africa, their potential role in local government and civics (an indigenous invention not present in the countries we visited) has hardly been recognised. Their empowerment is probably a critical factor to be considered in all regional development projects but as yet scarcely touched upon. At the same time, the IMF economic structural adjustment plans (ESAP) are negotiated with the male power hierarchy while the cost is borne by the women. No wonder they have substituted the acronym in the Mbare market: “The Extended Suffering of African People.”

Though economies have faltered and rumours of civil rights violations are given as the reason for new human rights movements forming (in Zimbabwe and Zambia) it is the miracle of reconciliation which impresses us. How poverty-stricken the white soul here in the south that it cannot confess and ask forgiveness when forgiveness is so readily at hand? When a solitary Zimbabwean academic talks with disdain of non-racialism, it is our comrade, seven years on Robben Island, who firmly chastises him. We listen with astonishment to an ex-chief justice, whose eloquent devotion to the defence of a independent judiciary throws a harsh light on our own unconcern for the rule of law.

We talk endlessly about democratisation and normalisation. I want maximum personal freedom and minimum government, but alongside my burgeoning hope that this is what everyone wants, looms the fatal attraction of unbridled power. “Politicians and governments are not in the business of advancing liberty.” “Democratic society does not eliminate conflict.” “Better to write a constitution for villains than for heroes.” Says the Barotse princess, now cabinet minister: “I have seen the whole of Africa come tumbling down.” Is there a way in which we can ensure that the jubilant triumph of our own liberation is converted into pragmatic government? I hope so.

Sandra Botha is an executive member of the National Women’s Alliance and serves on the gender advisory committee of Codesa.

By Sandra Botha, one of a group of Free Staters who recently visited neighbouring states on an Idasa study tour.
