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Your vote counts! All South Africans can vote – illiterate, disabled, men, women and teenagers over 18 – provided you have an identity document. This poster is one of 10 in a new voter education package produced by Idasa and designed especially for rural voters. (See page 27)

Doing democracy

A challenge before and after the elections

SANDWICHED between the fiasco over the appointment of the SABC board and the announcement of an election date, Idasa's Education for Democracy conference held in Vanderbijlpark recently was nothing if not pertinent to the times.

It was also a great deal more. The three-day event brought together delegates from voter education agencies, human rights and teachers' organisations to exchange information and plans around the process of educating South Africans for democracy.

The presence of several foreign guests also offered opportunities to learn from the experiences of other emerging democracies such as Poland, the Philippines, Kenya, Eritrea and Chile – and a very stable European democracy such as Denmark.

"Creating and sustaining democracy in South

Africa" was the theme of the opening session. In a paper due to have been delivered by the rector of the Peninsula Technikon, Franklin Sonn, the director of the technikon's school of education, Brian O'Connell, emphasised the link between education and the struggle for democracy, adding that "context is everything".

Democracy was an intricate social process, he said, not a mechanical entity. Democracy was not inevitable in South Africa, nor was there any rule that guaranteed that "the people" would not abuse power.

A similar point was made by Idasa's Alex Boraine who spoke earlier in the same session. He said there was no guarantee that a future South African political dispensation would be any more democratic than the

By **SUE VALENTINE**

Time to heal

WHEN three-year-old Mita Mdete's home in Boipatong was attacked last year, she was injured and paralysed.

Later, in October, Canadian regional police chief, Jim Harding, attended an Idasa conference on policing and was taken on a visit to Boipatong.

He pledged to raise money for a wheelchair for her and last month it arrived – a gesture and example of what police-community relations can be. (Full story on page 25)

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

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FW the builder?

Speaking to journalists in Vienna recently, President F W de Klerk declared that concrete steps were needed to cement good relations.

- That should take care of the feet of clay.

Motor-mouth cowboy

A right-winger whose farm was surrounded by police phoned Radio 702 and said that he was armed with a shotgun and refused to be taken alive. He told the radio station he would rather die than be arrested. Three-quarters of an hour later he gave himself up "to prevent a bloodbath".

- Nothing like courage tinged with magnanimity.

White masque?

A senior black journalist who went to collect an air ticket at the SAA office in Cape Town discovered that she did not have enough money on her to cover the levy on her visa. "Don't worry," said the SAA hostess behind the counter, "you can come back later to pay for it." She then proceeded to write a note which she told the journalist to hand "to her boss".

"This is *my* ticket," said the journalist as the hostess's jaw descended to her knees.

- It's not what you see, it's the way that you see it ...

Fate unkind

The Durban City Council hoped fondly that the Africa Athletics Games hosted recently in their city would strengthen the

Ja-Nee

city's chances to be chosen to host the 2004 Olympic Games. Things got off to an inauspicious start, however, as all the key African Olympic medallists failed to pitch up. To add insult to injury, the city's mayoress stayed away from the opening ceremony - possibly because she had been given only one day's notice of the event. Then, just as all the penguins were heaving little sighs of relief that the worst was behind them, the city had a power failure, blacking out the games entirely the following night.

- Let's hear it for Cape Town, then!

Wimbledon woes

Not only did a mid-week match by the touring French rugby team take precedence over live coverage of the women's quarter-finals at Wimbledon, our all-male TV commentators still seem unable to take women players seriously - as athletes and professionals. Introducing the women's semi-finals, Martin Locke speculated whether Jana Novotna would also wear shorts "to even the balance" against Martina Navratilova, in the struggle between "beauty and the beast".

- Time someone disqualified the discriminating, sexist, homophobic sports crew.

A tonic for nation-wide despair



No-one can be neutral about the future of South Africa. Despite an increasing number of people losing hope and making plans to leave, for most of us it is the only home we have.

So there has been some satisfaction in the increasing number of constitutional plans and bills of rights supporting the establishment of an open democracy.

Of course, with an election in the offing, all the parties are canvassing for support for their platforms. This is as it should be. That the majority are forward-looking and democratic suggests that negotiations have carried us quite far across the great divides of the 1980s.

Whether ordinary citizens are ready for a non-racial democracy in a single South Africa is another matter entirely.

There is a widespread fear of politics – and thus of all the activities that go with an election.

There are a rising number of people joining organisations that predict race war and despair.

People continue to band together in order to survive – and an increasing number find that survival in either petty or organised crime.

Disquieting reports of civil servants taking their pensions and running continue to emerge.

All these are actions of defeat – whether political or economic. We cannot build a new democracy on this foundation.

So there is an absolute priority to take the agreements and good relationships out of the negotiating forums and into the streets.

The elections will provide an opportunity to do this. Parties will have to explain themselves as they canvas for support. We want to encourage them to do this. And those who want a free and fair election will want to support them in their campaigns.

But before the elections, there is another task, and this can be done only by those who do not have to win the election. Voter education must be done, and it has to be done by non-partisan educators.

Everyone in South Africa has to hear these four messages:

- Your vote is important
- Your vote is secret
- You can vote
- You can trust and accept the results

The parties, and those who are campaigning on behalf of a party, have an ulterior motive – there is always the strong

temptation to give only that information which benefits their cause. State bodies are perceived to be biased towards particular parties.

So non-partisan voter education is essential to make sure that the elections produce a trusted and credible result. There will be a special burden on groups providing this education to prove their non-partisan nature.

The SABC can help these groups by collaborating with them, rather than attempting to control the flow of voter education across the airwaves. Without the legitimacy provided by civil society bodies with credibility, the majority of listeners will distrust the messages.

The parties can help by not calling their canvassing efforts “voter education”. Rather they should invite an independent group to educate their members – and get on with the urgent job of doing everything legal to win.

No one believes that elections are the answer to all our problems.

We have repeatedly made the point that there is much to be done to educate South Africans for democracy. Our society needs the skills, the attitudes and the values which functioning democracies take for granted, but which apartheid has denied us.

Although elections are not everything, they can provide us with the kick-start we need. Trusted and representative government, the ending of international isolation, the chance for a new start in human rights, policing, civil service, development projects – these are the tonics we

all need to deal with the malady of violence and despair.

Because of this, South Africans need to grasp the opportunity. There have been many editorials telling us that we have reached the point of no return – so we do not want to “cry wolf”. But if we do not get these elections right, we could find ourselves in a terrifying power vacuum with a headless bureaucracy and armed forces with no central accountability. No one should underestimate the dangerous passage we are going through.

Elections take the initiative away from the negotiators and put it into the hands of the people. We owe it to ourselves to be well prepared and to make it work. For democracy's sake. For the people's sake.



Namibia 1989: elections can provide us with a kick-start.

Paul Graham
Programme Director

Highlights of public events organised by Idasa offices

NATIONAL OFFICE

(Cape Town)

Media & tolerance

A symposium on "Political tolerance in South Africa: the role of opinionmakers and the media" will be held in Somerset West from July 30 to August 1.

The conference has been sponsored by the United Nations and is being organised by Idasa and the Institute for Multi-party Democracy.

TRAINING CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY

(Johannesburg)

Training monitors

A national workshop for all political parties to discuss a proposed curriculum for the training of party monitors for the forthcoming election will be held on July 30-31.

Topics such as the Electoral Act, electoral malpractice, conflict resolution, monitoring and training skills will be discussed.

National reach

A workshop to ensure national

distribution of voter education materials – especially to the rural areas – will be held from July 30 to August 1. The workshop has been organised by the IFEE. For details contact Pumla Gqirana at (011) 484-2984.

BLOEMFONTEIN

Electoral education launch

A workshop will be held on July 24-25 where the launch of the Independent Forum for Electoral Education in the OFS will take place. The aim of IFEE is to co-ordinate electoral education in the OFS.

Skills and jobs

A meeting to appoint a board of trustees for a skills training project will be held on July 21.

The aim of the project, developed in conjunction with the Mangaung Development and Education Trust, is to train jobless people in existing organisations in the region.

DURBAN

Twin speaks

"Can the Right Wing Prevent Transformation in a New

South Africa?" is the topic of the Future Forum meeting on July 21 to be held at the Edward Hotel in Durban from 12.15 to 2pm.

Prof Braam Viljoen, the twin brother of General Constand Viljoen and manager of the Northern Transvaal Dispute Resolution Committee, will be the speaker.

The cost will be R25 per person which includes refreshments.

Bookings may be done by telephone on (031) 304-8893 or by fax on (031) 304-8891.

Youth convention

Natal youth leaders from across the political spectrum will meet for the first time to discuss practical means for peace, democracy and tolerance in the region. The convention will be held at the Natal Technikon from July 6 to 8.

Speakers include Prof Willem de Klerk, Silas Zuma and Prof Albie Sachs.

EAST LONDON

Adult education

The East London office together with the Border/Kei Development Forum will hold

a workshop on Adult Basic Education on July 15 to co-ordinate the efforts of various literacy projects in the region.

Public meetings

A workshop on "Gender equality in the transition and beyond" will be held for Sasco students at the Border Technikon from August 6 to 7.

● A breakfast seminar looking at affirmative action and training for local government will be held on August 7 at the East London Holiday Inn.

Speakers include: Enos Igotshane of the Wits Business School, John Badenhorst of the East London Municipality, political analyst Eugene Nyati and Khetsi Lehoko of Sached.

● A seminar aimed at teachers in the region will be held on August 14. The topic under discussion will be unionism and professional development for teachers.

PORT ELIZABETH

Affirmative action

A symposium on affirmative action will be held in Port Elizabeth from August 3 to 4. Speakers will include representatives from business and labour. Phone (041) 55-3301 for details.

WESTERN CAPE

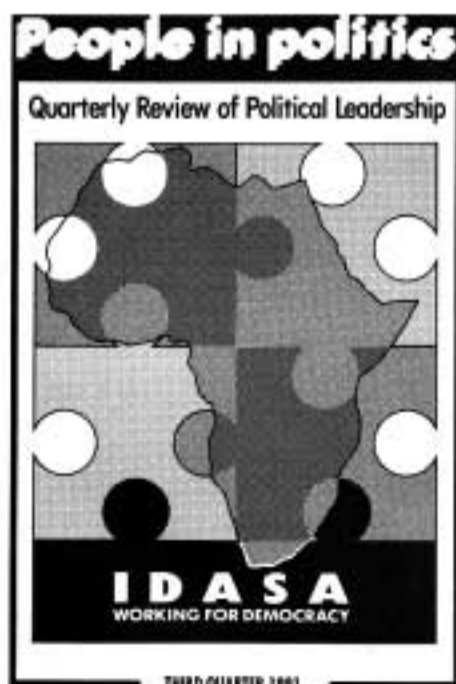
Office moves

The Western Cape office has moved to new premises. The new address is 2 Anson Road, Observatory. The telephone number is (021) 47-1280 and the fax number is (021) 45-7692.

Youth for peace

A youth workshop focussing on peace will be held on July 31 at 1pm at the Mowbray Town Hall.

High schools interested in attending the workshop may contact Erika at the Western Cape office.



A PROVISIONAL ELECTION DATE HAS BEEN SET!

Do you know who the political leadership is in South Africa?

Do you know for whom you will vote?

For biographical information on current leadership and up-to-date lists of office bearers, subscribe to Idasa's "People in Politics".

Subscription rates (4 copies a year):

Individual / NGOs	R155
Corporate	R228

If you wish to subscribe, contact Shelagh Gastrow at telephone (031) 304-8893 or fax (031) 304-8891. Payment can be sent to Idasa, 1219 Sangro House, 417 Smith Street, Durban 4001.

Canvassing for peace

MURAL painting interactive drama ... conflict resolution ... facilitator training ... Robben Island ... "RSA" ... canvassespeace. What do these have in common?

Seven NGOs have linked up in the Western Cape to make peace their business and to demonstrate that peace is complex, necessary and its meaning as diverse as the people involved.

Peace Visions is a creative peace education programme which came about as a result of a dialogue over a four-month period between The Arts Foundation (TAF), the Centre for Intergroup Studies (CIS) at UCT, the African Community Theatre Service (ACTS), Quaker Peace Centre (QPC), the Western Cape chapter of the Peace Secretariat (PS) and Leadership South Programme (LSP).

It was launched on May 25



Peace Visions executive: Back: Graham Phippen (LSP), Amiene van der Merwe (programme manager), Na-iem Dollie (programme director), Shirley Kantor (TAF), Peter Krummeck (ACTS). Front: Shaun Johnson (LSP), Luyanda ka Mzumsa (QPS), Penny Gaines (PS). Absent Val Botha (CIS) and Dave Schmidt (Idasa).

Community Newspapers

aboard a training ship, the "RSA", which serves as the studios and offices of TAF and is berthed at the Cape Town docks.

The project, which started early in July, is spearheaded by TAF, a creative arts organisation which, along with the other organisations, constitute the executive council of Peace Visions and will oversee its implementation.

The 18-month programme – divided into three phases of six months each and conducted on the "RSA" and Robben Island – seeks to explore and record the aspirations, visions and opinions of the youth and to distil and give expression to the range of meanings associated with peace and national identities.

Each phase starts with an intensive 17-day facilitator train-

ing course (for young people aged between 18 and 30 years) in conflict resolution, interactive drama and mural painting. On completion, this group will co-facilitate the subsequent five months in training young people (aged between 15 and 18 years) as peace agents.

Peace Visions is constructed around the assumption that the feelings and attitudes of the youth are not widely known and debated. Its mission is to create consensus among the youth about peace and national identities and to involve them in creative structures to foster understanding about the contradictions of South African society.

At the end of the 18 months, Peace Visions hopes to have developed a comprehensive curriculum for peace studies and done sufficient lobbying and negotiating to justify the use of Robben Island as a base for a Peace Institute.

The patrons of the project are Gcina Mhlope, HW van der Merwe, Njabulo Ndebele and Franklin Sonn.

Bua!

LANGUAGE, POWER, CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY



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Doing democracy

From Page 1

present one. Quoting the American political scientist, Larry Diamond, Boraine said democracy could not survive with leaders only. It had to rest on a mass base which was poised to remove from power any politicians who abused their position.

Looking at the issues currently confronting South Africans, O'Connell said questions needed to be asked about those who had benefitted from apartheid, but who now used arguments of democracy to justify and defend their position.

"We need to ask what is democracy, because many people see it as being used to maintain injustice and certain people's positions," he said.

He added that democracy should not be seen only as an election process, but as a life process. For this reason it would be ill-advised to focus only on elections when talking about education for democracy. However, the next 18 months would be critical. Practical interventions were vital at every level to encourage people to become involved in civil society. In this regard, the public broadcast service had an important role to play.

Much of the conference activity took place in four separate workshops or commissions which focused on education for democracy and how it related to: human rights education; formal education; organised civil society; and the mass media.

The report-back session from the commissions at the conclusion of the conference highlighted a number of short- and long-term issues which needed attention. Distinctions were once again drawn between the more immediate and specific needs of voter education and the long-term process of education for democracy which was needed throughout South African society.

Within formal education there was a need for voter education and education for democracy to be conducted by non-controversial organisations (possibly churches); it was agreed that education authorities should be urged to allow time in schools for these activities.

In the realm of civil society – and within the non-government organisation sector in particular – it was stressed that because people learnt most effectively by *doing* rather than being told what to do, internal democracy within organisations was essential.

This included participation and transparency in decision-making, accountability, gender/race equality, the development of leadership and transferring skills from white to black, men to women, and rural to urban.



Tolerance prevails...Director for Civic Education in the Kenyan Council of Churches, Jephthah Gathaka, holds up a poster produced in the run-up to Kenyan elections encouraging political tolerance. Members of a family each support different political parties, but are still able to eat together.

Education for democracy needed to take place in a variety of areas – adult education and literacy groups, student bodies, churches, civics, sports groups, taxis and industry. Methods should include meetings/seminars, workshops; publications; posters; electronic media (tapes for taxis, public and community radio); drama; music and advertising strategies.

Before embarking on education for democracy it was important that such education could be sustained and measured. The message that was delivered should respond to people's fears and address their needs. It should avoid building unrealistic expectations.

The commission stressed that civil society did not embody democracy, but that without a vibrant civil society promoting and sustaining democratic values, there could be no democracy.

'Democracy cannot triumph on the actions of a few brave leaders, it needs an active, living base built on South African traditions and history.'

The mass media were identified as an important tool for the development of democracy rather than the "luxury" consequence of a democratic dispensation. In particular, the potential of community radio was identified as a means of allowing ordinary people the opportunity to express themselves

and to be active members of a community.

Public radio and television were key means for extending the messages of voter education and education for democracy to the broadest possible audience. It was vital that such programming be credible and be presented by impartial agencies. However, equally important was that education for democracy programming should be entertaining and should reach people in their own languages.

The task of summarising conference proceedings was left to the head of the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of the Western Cape, Shirley Walters.

In the words of one delegate, her conclusion was one of "thoughtful passion", as she illuminated the task confronting those committed to education for democracy.

"Democracy cannot triumph on the actions of a few brave leaders, it needs an active, living base built on South African traditions and history," said Walters.

She said who exactly were "the people" and who "the educators" in the process of education for democracy needed to be teased out. It was not enough to identify men and women, white and black, rural and urban. There were any number of other categories such as old, young, rich, poor, literate, illiterate, working class people, peasants, intellectuals, prisoners, disabled and able-bodied etc.

How the process of education took place also needed to be examined. The whole person should be considered – head, heart and feet. Music, laughter, interaction and enter-

From 'struggle' to empowerment

ONE of the visiting speakers who made a strong impact on the conference was the deputy director of the Institute for Popular Democracy in the Philippines, Clarke Soriano.

In an entertaining and engaging presentation, he sketched a brief history of the different periods and methods of struggle against colonial domination and repressive regimes in the Philippines during the past century.

He said the changes that had occurred in Philippino politics had prompted educators and activists seeking to resist oppressive and elitist regimes to examine the context carefully to find the most appropriate means of opposition. In recent years this meant a shift from education for struggle towards education for empowerment and governance.

"Education can be a very romantic notion," he warned, "but it's not so easy to be romantic about the details of voting, community services, garbage removal and so on."

Soriano said that in the early 1900s, education had been linked to popular culture: religious themes, literary tracts and even love songs had formed part of educating citizens.

By contrast, the 1960s had witnessed "days of disquiet and nights of rage" as students had led the protests against the Vietnam war and an elitist government representing only those with "guns, goons or gold".

Education had taken the form of teach-ins and small discussion groups and to many, the way forward for society was to be found in structural change.

The 1970s saw the declaration of martial law by Ferdinand Marcos and a period of repression and resistance. Education for democracy went underground and most calls were for revolutionary action and armed struggle.

However, it was as people began to organise around labour rights and mini-

mum wages that the movement really began to grow and the seeds of democracy began sprouting at the grassroots.

"Education must not look only at structural issues, but at the situations which confront people daily. The question for those of us in education for democracy, was how to find the link," said Soriano.

popular confidence slumped."

Soriano said educators identified the need for a new approach, one which shifted the emphasis from education for struggle to education for governance. Tough questions that addressed the complexities of the day had to be asked: who is the enemy? What do we do about burn-out? What about gen-



'We must educate for governance'... Clarke Soriano of the Philippines.

He said the fall of the Marcos regime in 1986 ushered in euphoria, but also confusion. Although elections were held and a bill of rights and new constitution introduced, violence remained and social inequality worsened. Instead of a dictatorship, there was a regime of the elite, greater instability and a crisis of governance.

'It is essential to locate, link and understand the limitations of politics'

"It was a new situation and educators were hard put to deal with the complexities brought about by the transition. From 1986 to 1993 we had seven coup attempts, corruption again reached high levels and

der issues? What about the advancing age of activists!

The importance of *context* was emphasised. In a process of transition, education for democracy had to consider the context in which people found themselves.

"It is essential to locate, link and understand the limitations of politics. An empowerment process is vital, we need to understand how to transform power relationships now. We must understand who we are and where we are," said Soriano. "How do we link the issues of voting and elections to people's position in society now?"

Approaches included popular participation, two-way communication and an holistic approach in which people's feelings and emotions as well as their material and cerebral concerns were considered.

ainment should be integral to the process.

Walters said the long history of activism and anti-intellectualism which prevailed in South Africa needed to be confronted. What outcome was wanted from the process of education for democracy needed to be considered.

The short-term need was for voter education to meet the proposed polling date of

April 27. However, she suggested that short-term practices should be integrated with long-term principles.

Key elements related to the elections included: a free and fair process; an atmosphere of tolerance; the curbing of violence; maximum turnout - including all women and youths, those in rural areas, those unable to read or write.

"What is our goal," she asked. "A 98 percent turnout at the polls? Are we all committed to all of these things?"

Crucial to the entire process, suggested Walters, was the need "to educate ourselves and to motivate others". Education for democracy must inspire optimism and enthusiasm if it is to hope to have any success.

Sue Valentine is Idasa's media director.

Apathy and blame fester in new democracies

“people start looking for someone to blame”. There was also the danger of misunderstanding – “that in a democracy you can do what

you like and that only the majority can be right.”

Commenting on the difficulties of trying to reconstruct Poland, she said it was always easier to be in opposition and to denounce things than to assume responsibility. “It is much easier to deconstruct what is happening than it is to create a new reality.”

Kuratowska said that education for democracy was necessary at “every level” of her society. People needed to understand what exactly was meant by civil society.

“The general feeling among people is that they have no influence on the decision-making process – even though we now have a democracy. We had a very unpleasant surprise in May 1990 during our first local elections when only 33 to 53 percent of people voted – it was a very apathetic turnout.”

However, she noted that despite her pessimism, there had also been many successes in Poland since 1989. It was ironic that the vote of no-confidence in the Polish parliament that had been passed so recently came after figures showed that for the first time, industrial productivity had increased during the first quarter of 1993. It was also the first time the unemployment rate had not risen.



Zofia Kuratowska, Polish medical professor, activist and politician.

asm and people flocked to the polls on election day.

However, once a government was in power and began to implement economic reforms, differences quickly emerged.

“We must remember, democracy is a difficult system: during the transition the expectations within society are very high. In Poland, people believed there would be prosperity and a better life. When this did not happen immediately it led to frustration, disappointment and apathy. The expectations are always greater than the real possibilities.”

Another danger, said Kuratowska, was that of extremism from the left and right –

process – even though we now have a democracy. We had a very unpleasant surprise in May 1990 during our first local elections when only 33 to 53 percent of people voted – it was a very apathetic turnout.”

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IN A sobering and moving address, at Idasa’s Education for Democracy conference, Polish senator and a member of the once-underground Solidarity movement, Professor Zofia Kuratowska, spoke of the harsh realities confronting a new government after years of repression.

Such was the state of Polish politics that the day before she spoke at the conference she heard that the Polish parliament had been dissolved. “So I am no longer a senator nor a member of any senate foreign or health policy committee,” she said with a smile.

Before proceeding with her talk, she said that while she could not feel responsible for the actions and behaviour of all Poles, she wanted to record how sorry she was that it had been a Polish national who was allegedly responsible for the assassination of Chris Hani.

Kuratowska reminded the conference that Poland had been the first central European country to succeed in changes without bloodshed in 1989, and despite the troubles it was experiencing now, Poland was still the most developed country in central and eastern Europe.

In June 1989 when democratic elections were held, there were practically no political parties, except for the weak Communist Party. A national civic committee and local civic committees were organised to prepare for elections amidst much popular enthusi-

Keeping an eye on the horizon

I THINK there is a central message in doing education for democracy: that is that we need to keep one eye on the horizon and one eye on what is right in front of us. That means living with the tension of what we have now and what we want to have.

It means building our education around the realities of people’s lives – violent lives, insecure lives, intolerant lives – so that we can work towards a non-violent society, a tolerant society, a more secure society.

The starting point of education is where people *are at now*, not where we as educators want them to be.

Right now, elections are uppermost in people’s minds. So if we go into a workshop or training course talking about democracy

Extracts from an address delivered at a Voter Education Fair in Johannesburg recently by ALISON CURRY of Idasa’s Training Centre for Democracy.

as an abstract concept without connecting it to people’s lives and without talking about the role of elections, people will simply switch off.

But, on the other hand, if we just talk about voter education – about how to make a cross – then we run the risk of another Angola, where after the crosses were made, no-one accepted the results and civil war erupted again. We simply cannot afford



another Angola when already there has been so much bloodshed and so many lives lost in the struggle to reach this stage of the transition process.

If we are working to build a democratic country, it is not some mystical magical product “out there” that we will finally attain after elections. If we are building democracy we need to be democratic *while we build*. We need to live democracy, not just talk about it. We need to give people the



The rural vote (Namibia, 1989): Opinion surveys in South Africa seldom poll the rural areas.

JOHN LIEBERBERG, Southlight.

Beware the hot flushes of delusion

South Africa's first democratic election could very well turn out not to be the two-horse race predicted by the larger alliances, sloppy "experts" and headline writers.

By **BARRY STREEK**

their cause and leadership and who are working long hours for victory, frequently cannot see or face reality. They are genuinely convinced they know what will happen on polling day, but they are wrong.

Political parties also lie and make propaganda to promote their campaign. Politicians never admit to telling lies, but they do deliberately disguise facts or withhold the truth or knowingly misrepresent a situation to promote their party's campaign.

For instance, in the 1989 election campaign, the National Party broke copyright to publish an advertisement. Containing a picture of a Democratic Party leader (Wynand Malan) talking to the then SA Communist Party secretary-general, Joe Slovo, the advert was a blatant attempt to reinforce NP claims that the

DP was "soft" on communism.

This was all forgotten when Slovo became involved in discussions with the NP a year later, but at the time it suited the collective wisdom of the NP strategists to promote the lie that the DP was soft on

communism.

Some parties are – and will be – more blatant about this than others, but they all do it. This is then fed into society, particularly to the "experts" and to journalists, in order to influence the eventual result.

It is, in the end, part of the democratic process. The lies cannot be too obvious or too wrong, because that affects credibility, as the NP experienced when the then Minister of Health, Dr Lapa Munnik, claimed towards the end of the 1981 election campaign that pensioners could live on R20 a month for food, then emphatically denied that he had made such a statement but was proved, by tape, to be wrong.

Misrepresentation, half-truths and credibility are part of that process. And South Africa is proving to be no exception.

One of the consequences is the widely-

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THE FIRST symptoms of election fever have emerged in South Africa – resulting in often wild speculation about what will happen when some 22 million do eventually go to the polls in the country's first democratic election.

But it should always be remembered that election fever is a disease that induces hot flushes of serious delusion, particularly by self-proclaimed "experts", party hacks, pollsters and journalists, and its major ailment is that it causes lies, opinions and claims to be expressed as truth or fact.

And its cure, brought about by the vote on election day, is instantaneous: previous statements are immediately forgotten, even though some of the "experts" sometimes do try to explain why they were wrong.

In South Africa, where most people have never voted before and a significant portion of the electorate live in areas which opinion surveys never poll, the potential for delusion and distortion is substantial during the campaign.

The major source of the fever is, in the end, the political parties and it is often not deliberate. Party activists, who believe in

Flushes of delusion

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held perception that the election is going to be a contest between the NP and the ANC, or rather, the NP and ANC alliances.

A dissection of the claims, propaganda and polls certainly suggests that by the first quarter of 1993 – that is before the murder of Chris Hani at Easter – the ANC alliance would garner over half the votes and the NP alliance 20 to 25 percent.

But, even if this was true then, it does not mean that some of the minority parties should be excluded from any analysis. It obviously benefits the larger alliances to pretend it is a two-horse race and it is certainly helpful for sloppy analysis by “experts”. It is also helpful for headline writers.

Clearly, many of the parties at the World Trade Centre negotiations are going to disappear into one or other alliance and it seems unlikely that the white right-wing alliance under the present leadership will be able to get the five percent which will probably be necessary for representation in the Interim Government of National Unity (Ignu).

But three minority parties could well play a role in the post-election government – the PAC, IFP and the DP.

In the past, it has been fashionable in government, ANC and academic circles to dismiss the PAC as an election threat. The PAC also has logistical, financial and organisational limitations, but there are indications that it is winning support from the ANC,

particularly amongst the youth and particularly as the negotiations drag on.

It also has been fashionable, particularly in liberation movement circles, to downplay and minimise the IFP. But whatever else the conflict in Natal and the Reef has shown, it has demonstrated that Inkatha does have a grassroots base that cannot be ignored.

With over three million voters in Natal/KwaZulu, much of it in remote areas, the IFP cannot be ignored, nor can the possibility of it being the majority party in a Natal regional government be dismissed.

It has been particularly fashionable to write off the DP, despite the fact that its once-ridiculed policies on a bill of rights, negotiations or a national convention, proportional representation and regional government are now accepted as almost self-evi-

and, with a clear swing away from the NP among “coloured” people, it may well be justified in its claims.

In any event, the Western Cape looks like being an interesting three-way fight.

The DP leadership says it could win between 15 and 18 percent of the total vote in an election, and three seats in a 20-person Ignu. That claim seems too high, but the DP will be a factor in the election.

If plans to hold national and regional elections on the same day are realised, this could aid the three smaller parties, particularly if they concentrate on specific regions, because the resources of the national alliances will be somewhat stretched.

With the huge number of nearly 7 000 polling stations which the Department of Home Affairs is planning to set up around the country, including all 10 homelands, only truly national movements will be able to maintain an effective presence throughout the country.

If, however, the negotiators agree on the election of 400 MPs, 100 senators and about 1 000 regional MPs (100 each for, say, 10 regions), the five major parties will be able to produce election slates of 1 500 people – perhaps enough to satisfy the ambitions, egos and commitment of their key activists.

It will also exacerbate the worst symptoms of election fever, which will undoubtedly get worse until about April 27. But the cure will stabilise and, for a while at least, put some of the “experts” in their place.

Barry Streek is on the political staff of the Cape Times.

‘It has been particularly fashionable to write off the DP, despite the fact that its once-ridiculed policies are now accepted as almost self-evident truth by most’

dent truth by most, and despite its facilitating role in the negotiations.

But the DP’s growth, particularly in the Western Cape, should be noticed. It had 14 active branches in the Western Cape at the beginning of 1991, but says there are now 65 in the region. The DP claims it will be the largest party in the region after the elections

booklet, an element which confronts and gently challenges people’s stereotypes?

Something which makes people look inward instead of outward, which makes people *hope* and not fear or feel overwhelmed. We need to ask ourselves how can we reach people’s *hearts* and not just their minds, because that is where real and profound change takes place.

Shifting people’s opinions or broadening people’s knowledge remains a cerebral exercise – albeit a valuable one. Getting people to the point where they want to do something about things – well, that is the real challenge. Because building democracy is not just about discussing or accepting or putting up with – it is about doing.

If we want to create a vibrant civil society in this country, we don’t need people just to be tolerant, we need people to do tolerance work. We don’t just need peaceful people,

we need people to do peace work.

This land has been deeply scarred. It needs active healing – not just the ointment of time. How can we share the larger vision for this country so that people will willingly trade in their dented, narrow, fearful vision? And then having done that, how can we empower them to feel driven to share their vision with others?

It is so easy to blame the system, the politicians and the past – but what are we doing to build, rather than to blame?

As educators we have a unique and privileged position – we can learn from one another, we can share with one another what “works”, we can exchange resources and not jealously guard our domain or our areas of expertise.

Our skills, our resources belong to the people, not to us. But what we do with them determines the future for all of us.

Eye on the horizon

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space, the skills and the confidence to practise democracy – to “do democracy”.

So even when we do voter education, we have to keep on looking at the horizon, at what kind of society we need – at tomorrow, at five years’ time, not just at April 29.

So what does this mean for us as educators? It means that every single time we plan a workshop or a training course or when we write material, we need to think very carefully about what we are doing. We need to ask ourselves – is this really “touching” people, are we talking about the things which matter to them?

And then at the same time, with one eye on the horizon, we need to ask ourselves how can we build, into this workshop or that

Working for peace at the polls

Quelling violence during the elections will require twin strategies of strengthening violence reduction mechanisms and preparing voters. This is a summary of recommendations on the subject submitted to the Goldstone Commission by Idasa.

By PAUL GRAHAM

ALTHOUGH elections involve a contest between political parties, they are not primarily the domain of parties but of the citizens who vote. For this reason strategies which place their reliance only on the conduct of parties and of governmental institutions to ensure a peaceful and successful election are mistaken.

In a number of cases of which Lesotho is the most recent example, the conduct of ordinary citizens has been the deciding factor in whether the elections are concluded or not.

Unless the electorate – ordinary citizens – are empowered and “own” the electoral process from its inception to its conclusion, we cannot expect a successful outcome.

A clear purpose

There must be a simple, universally understood and acceptable objective for any future election. Parties at the national negotiation forum have not reached consensus on this point. While they may well reach a compromise, any ambiguity about what the election will accomplish could result in tension during the campaign, in voter apathy and in confusion about the meaning of the results.

All of these could affect the levels of violence, intimidation and disruption of the polls. In the very worst scenario, certain parties may boycott the election. Although a democratic right, history in South Africa suggests that such a campaign will make it more difficult to manage the election.

An effort by everybody

Citizens acting on their own may make complaints, draw the attention of the authorities to breaches in codes of conduct, allegations of fraud and maladministration, and



An election boycott: the very worst scenario.

ERIC MILLER

otherwise attempt to ensure that the elections remain free and fair.

However, it is organised civil society which will have the greatest impact. The ability of the Independent Electoral Commission to mobilise the resources of organised civil society will greatly enhance the achievement of peaceful elections.

The National Peace Accord, Network of Independent Monitors and the Independent Forum for Electoral Education are three of the national networks which can assist in this.

An effective programme

Reducing violence during the elections requires a multi-faceted and integrated programme. It should be primarily focused on empowering citizens by providing them with information and education, supportive and responsive structures, and protection. Amongst the facets of such a programme, certain issues should be taken into account.

- A code of conduct for political parties must be established. While some of the clauses of the Peace Accord could be included, there are a number of specifically election related issues which must be addressed. For example, the Namibian election code had a clause dealing with the acceptance of the results of the elections.

- The NPA has established a set of multi-party structures at various levels and, in the

PWV region at least, has also established a routine monitoring and marshalling programme. During the elections it is going to be essential to have good communication between the parties to resolve speedily problems which could arise between them. The existing structures may well provide a place for this.

- A code of conduct which has no “teeth” is frustrating. In fact, without any form of sanction or reward, breaches of the code by one party make it extremely difficult for other parties to maintain it. A steady upward cycle of misconduct is inevitable as parties try to maintain their credibility with constituents and their advantage in the election race.

For this reason, some sanctions and rewards should be built into the electoral system. Amongst the possible sanctions are fines, limiting access to the public by reducing party access to the airwaves for short periods, not allowing public rallies and so on. Consideration should also be given to establishing rewards for periods of compliance with the code. These would have to be negotiated and clearly defined so that there is no arbitrary action which could itself lead to controversy.

- There are few generally acceptable independent bodies in the country. While some have managed to shrug off historical

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Compromise now but struggle will (and must) continue

IN THE space at my disposal, I can do no more than sketch the vectors of development that determine the shape of things as they are in our country today and as they will be tomorrow. There are a few significant facts which, if stated clearly, help to make sense of a picture that often seems puzzling, demoralising and even threatening.

First, the historic compromise between white and black nationalism is unavoidable because it is the main precondition for the regeneration of the capitalist system in this country. The segregationist and apartheid socio-political piston-casing in which the system was able to tick over until the mid-1970s, more or less, has simply run out of steam. Overtly racist policies have become dysfunctional to the generation of profit, by and large. Hence, "non-racial" frameworks have to be established.

The economic consequences of this reformist strategy are said to be dramatic, at least in theory: job creation, the widening of the domestic market for processed and manufactured goods, the opening up of export markets, the availability of direct foreign investments and long-term loans, and so forth. This is what business and many of the trade unions expect to happen as one of the main results of the compromise. Hence, all of them are in one degree or another pushing in the direction of a negotiated settlement. Barring unforeseeable circumstances, nothing will prevent that settlement, even though the road that leads to it will become increasingly rough and bumpy as the goal of a settlement comes closer.

Second, the "settlement" will be an elite cartel. It is an agreement between white and black middle-class and upper-class elites to govern the country along "non-racial, democratic" lines without changing the fundamentals of the economy and the society. All the apartheid laws will be repealed, thus removing skin colour as the measure of real or potential power, status and opportunity. But as money (class) becomes the main measure of "success" and power, the millions of rural and urban poor - essentially the semi-skilled and unskilled black workers and their families - will remain exactly where they are today. Indeed, because of the disastrous economic context in which the transition from "apartheid" to "democracy" is taking place,

**Puzzling, demoralising,
threatening...Neville
Alexander (right) reflects
on the state of the nation**



many of these people will be much worse off than they are today. To use a now well-known metaphor, the scaffolding of the apartheid laws can now be removed because the house of racial inequality, thanks to colonialism, segregation and apartheid, stands on firm foundations. Capitalism in South Africa will continue to reproduce class inequality essentially in the form of racial inequality.

Of course, the negotiators try to counter this charge by saying in unison that they are committed to "redistribution" and "affirmative action"; some even talk about "historical

'It is difficult to suppress the feeling that behind the farce being acted out in the foreground, the elements of an historic tragedy are being prepared'

redress". With due respect, quite apart from the problem of the economic literacy of these ladies and gentlemen, their promises of heaven, if not exactly tomorrow, then perhaps the day-after-tomorrow, are no more than election tales full of sound and fury but signifying nothing. They remind one of recent American presidents who promise to reduce taxes before they are elected and promptly raise them the day after their electoral victory.

Third, we are moving into a period of unprecedented violence. The insubstantiality

of the fairy tales about a "peaceful" settlement, later qualified as a "relatively peaceful" transition, has been confirmed by contemporary history itself. Those of us who predicted the present explosions were often treated as madmen who traded in gloom-and-doom scenarios. Well, we have to be even more brutally frank. The electioneering attempts by both NP and ANC politicians to trivialise the right-wing threat could turn out to be the most treacherous aspect of the present transition. Remember Hitler in the Weimar Republic? People who should have known better ignored his bluster and genocidal ravings until it was too late.

It is the depth of folly to disarm our people by projecting a tough-guy image of the "democratic forces". When Viljoen, Hartzenberg, Terre'Blanche and their ilk warn about civil war, wisdom should tell us not to ignore them. They will almost certainly not be able to overthrow the present, or the next, regime in a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat, but they can (and I believe they will) destabilise the negotiations process and launch post-negotiations terror campaigns that could last for many years.

Under the present circumstances, it is still worth recalling the old Roman adage: "If you want peace, prepare for war."

It is a matter of some amusement to me that liberal theorists who used to misrepresent Marxists as claiming that racial ideology had no causal significance, today trivialise or ignore completely the reality of racist beliefs and practices as a socio-political force which has a certain measure of autonomy. It is not the first time that political expediency has blinded a generation of otherwise enlightened people. It is necessary to restate that the legacy of racism in South Africa is like that of slavery in America, or that of caste in India. It is an historic phenomenon, not some episodic nothing that can be talked away by men in suits and ties around a table in Johannesburg.

Thousands of people have died since February 1990. Tens of thousands more are going to die before even the "limited democ-



ERIC MULLER

Most people have not benefitted from the changes introduced since February 1990.

racy" now being negotiated is attained. Whatever election takes place under these circumstances will certainly be neither free nor fair, but for most South Africans, the crucial factor will be the fact that a one-person-one-vote election is due to take place. Nobody who has any insight into the murk of the negotiations process can doubt that the "constituent assembly" that is being created in the World Trade Centre will be toothless, since all the major issues will have been decided by the group of (unelected) men and women at Kempton Park, however representative they may or may not be of their specific constituencies. Again, the real process that will take place around whatever constituent assembly comes out of the negotiations will not simply be determined by the paper agreement made at Kempton Park. As

salient consideration, the transition will be effected only by a "strong" government, one that can range from the extreme of open military rule to a situation where a group of well-known political figures rule as a kind of directorate leaning on the military apparatus.

Only the wilfully blind do not "see" that this is the only way in which the transition can be made while leaving most of the "main players" untouched, so to speak. It is the only way in which the present ruling group, and the owners of large capital in particular, can effect the changes needed to render the system

as a whole once again profitable,

without opening up space for either a social revolution by black workers and other oppressed strata on the one hand, or for a counter-revolution by "yesterday's men" and other disaffected constituencies, on the other. The implications of this proposition are serious but only too real.

Finally, the media inevitably focus on Kempton Park and on some constitutional details about important matters such as proportional representation, federalism, confederalism or regionalism, sunset clauses, etc, loom large and make some people excited and others depressed. In fact, however, these

the vectors of the new South Africa. It is there, rather than on the prompt-sheets of the World Trade Centre on which the choreography of the next 20 to 30 years is to be found.

While there is no doubt that important

'The hope for a better future is to be found in the continuation of our struggle for social justice and equality of opportunity, not in the tactical manoeuvres of the horse-trading elites'

'In the longer-term historic perspective, it is the profound social changes that are taking place that really matter'

in France in 1789, the grievances of the people are so grave that parliamentary decorum and tidy gentlemen's agreements may not be able to prevent the tide of grassroots agitation from surging into the corridors of power.

Whatever happens, and this is the fourth

changes for the better have come about since February 1990, the overwhelming majority of our people have not been the beneficiaries of these changes. Instead, they have been victims of the partly unintended consequences of those changes. For these reasons, the struggle will continue with greater intensity, the soporific aims of the mainstream media notwithstanding.

The hope for a better future is to be found in the continuation of our struggle for social justice and equality of opportunity, not in the tactical manoeuvres of the horse-trading elites.

Neville Alexander is director of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa which is based at UCT.

Free airwaves: who's tuned to catch them?

Who will benefit when the SABC monopoly is finally dismantled? How many new TV and radio stations might there be in a re-regulated broadcasting environment and what will they be like? SUE VALENTINE reports.

A CONFERENCE on the restructuring of the South African broadcast industry held in Johannesburg recently was not without its tensions and contradictions as the anomalies which have developed under the SABC's monopoly of the airwaves came under scrutiny.

Central to the question of a new broadcasting dispensation is the tension between broadcasting as a competitive, market-driven industry, and the airwaves as a public resource to which all citizens have a right.

The very nature in which the conference was convened highlighted this issue. Organised by a private company which charged delegates some R2 500 to attend the three-day event, it effectively excluded all but the wealthy and powerful from the debate on broadcasting in South Africa.

This situation prompted the National Association of Broadcasters to announce, at the end of the conference, that it would convene and sponsor an event later in the year to allow a far wider spectrum of interest groups to discuss broadcasting issues.

While there was general acceptance of three tiers of broadcasting in South Africa (public service, commercial and community), there was vigorous debate on a number of issues. These included the size of the advertising cake and opportunities for new broadcasters to enter the industry, the role of educational radio and TV, the percentage of local content programming and the likely scenario that would emerge from the unbundling of the mighty South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Not least among the questions which emerged during the three days was that of the need to address the contradictions within the SABC: whereby it was not only a public service but also a commercial broadcaster which was dependent on advertising for 70 percent of its revenue.

Given its legal monopoly on broadcasting for more than half a century, and all the opportunities this had afforded it in building up 22 radio services and three TV channels,



Wynand Harmse: SABC a "colossus" in a "lopsided" industry.

the SABC utterly dominated the industry.

This was acknowledged by group chief executive of the SABC, Wynand Harmse, who described the corporation as a "colossus" in an industry which was decidedly "lopsided" and in need of restructuring.

He said the attention devoted to the appointment of a new SABC board showed that broadcasting was more than just another industry.

He identified a number of issues which, he said, could affect the creation of a new broadcasting milieu in South Africa. These included the introduction of satellite technology (with direct satellite to home broadcasts likely by 1995), the control and regulation of the industry, and political issues such as language and the possibility of regionally autonomous stations.

He said he did not believe in a completely free-market approach, but rather in a regulated broadcasting system. He appealed for a clear plan and policy to be developed to replace the present situation in which the Minister of Home Affairs was responsible for the industry on an "ad hoc" basis.

The role of the SABC as a public service broadcaster needed to be spelt out, said Harmse. Alternative sources of income had to be explored to substitute for the anticipated loss of advertising in a restructured

environment. The SABC would need to mix its public service functions with commercial motivations in order to survive. An holistic approach was the only viable solution.

Looking ahead, Harmse said he envisaged that in a future structure, the SABC would remain the dominant broadcaster in the country, although it would be smaller and more focused on its public service function.

Harmse said the advertising market in South Africa was too small to sustain the SABC in its current format along with new private, commercial stations. He, along with several other SABC speakers, stressed that there would be no space for another national television channel in South Africa given the amount of available "adspend".

This view was echoed by the SABC group general manager (finance) Steve Schubach.

In a blunt and somewhat know-it-all presentation, Schubach painted a decidedly bleak picture of the possible financial and investment opportunities for those eager to undertake successful ventures into a re-regulated broadcasting industry.

However, later in the conference, media director for Ogilvy & Mather advertising agency, John Montgomery, challenged some of these assertions and sketched a very different scenario of the potential adspend likely to go the way of the South African electronic media in the future.

He criticised the conclusions reached by the Viljoen task group inquiry into broadcasting which cited European and north American examples to illustrate that the adspend "cake" was severely limited in South Africa and could not allow for many new broadcasters.

Montgomery said he believed they were the wrong examples because their literacy levels were far higher, their TV choices wider and standard of living far higher than in South Africa. Instead, he argued, the local broadcasting share of adspend had the potential to grow quite dramatically. In 1992, for the first time, more money was spent on advertising in the broadcast media than in print.

He argued that comparisons should rather be drawn with South American countries which were more similar to South African society. He said if such comparisons were made, figures showed that TV and radio accounted for up to 80 percent of the adspend in most South American nations.

"Broadcasting, particularly radio, is cheap and accessible to the masses and at the moment there is limited choice for our less sophisticated market. I believe the market would welcome an expanded regional radio and television system with open arms," he said.

For those would-be broadcasters anxious to get on air as fast as possible, the news from the conference was not promising.

'The role of the SABC as a public service broadcaster needs to be spelt out'

In terms of the draft bill detailing the structure and powers of an Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) which was published a day before the conference, no new licences would be granted until the IBA was established. This could not happen before being passed into law during the September sitting of parliament. It was unlikely therefore that any new broadcasters would be on air before the new year.

Much of these provisions, emerging as they did after consensus was reached at the Negotiating Council, made the subsequent presentation by Home Affairs minister, Danie Schutte, somewhat redundant.

He confirmed that approximately 100 licence applications had already been received and said that the newly drafted bill should be implemented as a matter of urgency. The cost of licences, broadcasting standards and technical specifications needed to be determined as soon as possible. He said, in his estimation, the SABC was likely to reduce its services from 22 to 17 and that up to 34 new radio stations could be accommodated on the airwaves.

Asked in question time how he had arrived at the number of 34, Schutte offered no details.

He said he thought it was likely that new broadcasters might be able to enter the industry "about three months" after the draft bill was enacted. However, he did offer a glimmer of hope for enthusiastic new broadcasters.

He said that in the interim, it was possible for temporary licences to be granted to aspirant broadcasters, although he did not spell out the criteria which would determine a successful licence application.

Sue Valentine is Idasa's media director.



Talking technicalities ... legal experts Michael Markowitz and David Dison.

A framework for fair play

The fortuitous release of the draft bill on the establishment of an Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) a day before the conference, offered at least some concrete sense of the kind of legal framework that would regulate broadcasting in the short-term.

Two of the members of the technical committee responsible for the draft bill - David Dison and Michael Markowitz - explained aspects of the bill as well as some of the critical issues confronting an independent regulatory authority such as the IBA.

Dison said the draft bill provided for the creation of an IBA comprising five members who could hold office for a maximum period of three years. These members would need to be, among other things, people who are "impartial and who are committed to openness and accountability in public life, freedom of expression and a free and unrestricted flow of information".

The IBA would have the power to regulate the radio frequency spectrum in South Africa, licence broadcasting services, monitor and enforce all licencees to comply with the provisions of the Act and to conduct research into broadcasting policy, technology and related matters.

In terms of the draft legislation, no political parties or organisations, nor organisations or parties aiming to influence public opinion to support a particular party, shall be granted a licence to broadcast.

When considering the need to licence a range of new broadcasters, Markowitz made the point that diversity would not just

happen and could not be entrusted to the market. It had to be provided for.

He said one of the factors the IBA would consider before granting a licence for a private TV or radio station would be "whether the applicant contains or proposes to contain a significant percentage of historically disadvantaged persons on the board of directors, in the top management structure and in the total equity of the applicant".

The new bill would limit the number of stations any one person or company could own. No person may control more than one private TV service, or two FM or AM radio stations (which would have to be in different areas).

One aspect of the bill that drew several questions from representatives of the newspaper groups was that of the proposed legislation affecting cross-ownership.

As it stands, the bill prevents control of a private broadcasting station if at the same time, the person or company controls the only newspaper or newspapers in a licence area.

Anyone controlling a newspaper or newspapers whose average, or combined average, circulation is more than 300 000 copies can only have company interests in one broadcasting service and such interests may not exceed 35 percent.

The essence of the bill, said Markowitz, was "to re-regulate the broadcasting market by promoting a diversity of ownership of broadcasting services and a diversity of viewpoints and programming expressed by existing and new broadcasting services".

Regse prentjie nie so duister nie?

Vir buitelanders lyk die regse politiek deesdae veel meer potens en gevaarlik as drie maande gelede. In hierdie artikel argumenteer 'n vooraanstaande regs-gesinde, wat naamloos wou bly, dat genl Constand Viljoen – met heelwat hulp en ook baie geluk – die nuwe vitaliteit op regs konstruktief kan kanaliseer.

OPMERKLIKE groot opkoms by vergaderings van die Afrikaner-Volksfront – veral die toegesprek deur genl Constand Viljoen – het die openbare aandag onverwags skerp gefokus op die regse politiek.

Dat daar 'n nuwe vitaliteit by die regs aanwesig is, is gewis. Die toetreding van 'n afgetrede weermaghoof in die persoon van genl Viljoen het die erge regse gedemoraliseerdheid van net twee, drie maande gelede op verbasende wyse verdryf.

'n Hele reeks gebeure, onder meer die moorde op boere, die aanhoudende hoë misdadervlak, die hardnekkige tam ekonomie en die persepsie by baie blankes dat pres F W de Klerk te veel toegewings doen by die grondwetlike onderhandelings, het die regse politiek voorwaar verbasende nuwe stukrag gegee.

Beteken dit dat Suid-Afrika, ver gevorderd in 'n oorgangsproses na demokratisering, te kampe gaan kry met verharde regse polarisasie wat boonop al sterker steun kry?

So 'n scenario hoef nie noodwendig plaas te vind nie en aanduidings is inderdaad dat dit vermy kan word – veral as die politieke hoofrolspelers in die sentrum van die politieke spektrum genoegsame staatsmanskap beoefen.

Die allerbelangrikste van hierdie aanduidings is dat Suid-Afrika lank nie meer met eenvoudige “regse” politiek te doen het nie. Simplistiese definisies soos “regs” en “ver-regs” is lomp en ontoereikend en bring min begrip oor wat werklik onder baie Afrikaners aan die gang is.

Dit laat na om in berekening te bring dat die demokratiseringsproses wat die kommunistiese bestel in Oos-Europa vernietig het, 'n veel omvattender verskynsel is wat nie net ook die Nasionale Party van sy eertydse beleidsrigtings laat afsien het nie, maar tot diepgaande besinning onder eens regse Afrikaners gelei het. Die oorwinning van die liberale demokrasie het nie net Marxisme vernietig nie, maar ook blanke baasskappers in Suid-Afrika tot in hulle heel laaste loopgraaf gejaag.

Daarom behoort die skeuring in die Konserwatiewe Party in Augustus verlede jaar nie onderskat te word nie. Die groep wat weggebreek het, het al die regse politiek se heilige koeie letterlik in die openbaar geslag, maar is desondanks daarna opgeneem in die Volksfront!

Wat van verdere betekenis is, is dat genl Viljoen juis aanvanklik by daardie geleedere gaan aansluiting soek het (hy was, sover bekend, nooit 'n ondersteuner van die KP nie) en hom uit die staanspoor

An English version of the articles on these pages is available from Idasa's media department



Genl Constand Viljoen ... “oorgenoeg ingebore redelikheid”.

vereenselwig het met eintlik byderwetse liberaal-demokratiese begrippe soos nie-rassigheid, federalisme en 'n handves van mense-regte – maar met die erkenning van een of ander geografiese inhoud aan kultuurregte, in dié geval van Afrikaners wat dit verkies. Van apartheid, blanke baasskap of selfs differensiasie op grond van kleur, is daar hier nie sprake nie, wat beteken dat sommige op die linkerkant van die Volksfront ewe goed in Wes-Europese Christen-Demokratiese Partye sal kan tuis voel.

Dit is egter net die meer positiewe kant van die prentjie. Saam met genl Viljoen en sy geesgenote is in die Volksfront ongelukkig 'n meerderheid konserwatiewes en selfs reaksionêre wat weier om 'n nuwe politieke orde binne te gaan en vir hulleself binne só 'n bestel in ooreenstemming met fatsoenlike beginsels 'n eie plek in die son te beding.

Ekstremes faksies, sommige met pre-moderne en selfs feodale opvattinge, sal enigiets doen om die oorgangsproses te stuit, daarvan is die Hani-moord die blywende getuie.

Genl Viljoen, wesenlik 'n gemagtigde ondanks soms opruiende uitsprake, is die kleefstof wat die erg amorfse Volksfront bymekaar hou en dit is binne dié bedeling wat die toekoms van 'n groot deel van Afrikaners nou uitgespook word.

Terloop, dit help nie om te sê die Volksfront is 'n minderheid van 'n minderheid nie; met waarskynlik 'n volgelingsstal van 'n miljoen tot 'n

BOERE in die Noord-Kaap het 'n ruk gelede 'n voorsmakie gehad van die laakbare aanslag op die World Trade Centre in Junie.

Idasa is vroeg vanjaar deur 'n bestuurslid van die Noord-Kaap Landbou-unie, mnr Pierre Vercueil, gevra of behulpsaam te wees met die reel van 'n inligtingsdag oor grondhervorming vir boereverenigings in die gebied. Mnr Vercueil het gevoel dat dit noodsaaklik is dat boere vanaf die grondvlak op 'n ingeligte wyse begin deelneem aan die debat oor grondhervorming. Op sigself was dit 'n prysenswaardige doelwit, maar uiteindelik het die vergadering om heeltemal 'n ander rede besondere betekenis verkry.

Op die aangewese dag in Mei is die vergaderingslokaal in Vryburg deur ongenooide regsgesindes oorgeneem op 'n wyse wat dit onmoontlik gemaak het om met die verrigtinge voort te gaan. Die rede wat voorgehou is vir die skending van mense se reg om in vrede te luister na die standpunte van die ANC en andere oor die belangrike sake soos grondhervorming, was dat die "boerevolk" in die Noord-Kaap nie sou toelaat dat enigiemand met die ANC onderhandel oor "hulle bloedgrond" nie. Uiteindelik, na heelwat onderhandeling en nadat die hulp van die polisie ingeroep is, kon die vergadering ongestoord voortgaan.

Die betekenis van hierdie gebeurtenis lê in die feit dat almal wat belangstel in 'n onderhandelde oplossing vir die probleme van

Boewe in bakkies

Die wit boewe element aan regterkant sal nie vanself verdwyn nie en sal moet vasgevat word, waarsku HENNING MYBURGH (regs).



Suid-Afrika besig is om diegene wat gekant is teen sulke onderhandelinge te onderskat, en ook terselfdertyd te oorskot. Onderskat in die sin dat mense nie besef tot watter mate hierdie mense bereid is om geweld en intimidasie te gebruik om hulle doelwitte te bereik nie. Oorskot in die sin dat die aard van sommige die moontlikheid van enige onderhandelde ooreenkoms by voorbaat uitsluit.

Die ontstellende aspek van hierdie ervaring is dat mense wat geen duidelike politieke doelwit het behalwe 'n vae ongedefinieerde begeerte om hulle "grond vry te hou van ANC oorheersing" in staat is om deur hulle intimiderende taktiek 'n volwasse gehoor van 120 mense as't ware gyselaars te hou wanneer so 'n gehoor sy reg tot vrye spraak wil uitoefen. Dit is veral betekenisvol dat sulke aksie nodig geag word terwyl hulle politieke verteenwoordigers by die onderhandelingsstafel probeer om op 'n vreedsame wyse die beginsel van 'n volkstaat aanvaarbaar te maak vir die belangrikste onderhandelingsvennote. Die onvermydelike gevolgtrekking is dat daar 'n groot groep regsgesindes is wat die onderhandelingsproses slegs beskou as 'n instrument waarmee persoonlike agendas bereik word soos die voortge-

sette beset van grond wat eintlik al deur die skuldeisers teruggeneem moes gewees het.

Dit sal geen verskil aan hierdie mense maak of daar uiteindelik 'n volkstaat toegestaan word of nie. Namate hulle uitboer gaan ons al meer 'n situasie beleef waar wit boewe in bendes deur die platteland beweeg en mense terroriseer wat wil meewerk aan die ontwikkeling van die nuwe Suid-Afrika. Die slagoffers van hierdie soort skurkery sal ook insluit daardie eerbare maar naïewe regsbesitters wat onder die waan verkeer dat hulle besig is om 'n "volk" na selfbeskikking te lei.

Die vraag is wat gedoen kan word om te verhoed dat die hele onderhandelingsproses op hierdie manier verongeluk word?

In die eerste plek sal daar met meer sensitiviteit en verbeeldingrykheid met die hele kwessie van selfbeskikking omgegaan moet word by die onderhandelingsstafel as wat tot dusver die geval was. Objektief gesproke is dit nie 'n oplossing vir die land se probleme nie, maar dit is sinneloos om nie geleentheid vir kompromie deeglik te ondersoek nie.

Dit sal egter ook nodig wees om te besef dat die wit boewe element aan regterkant nie in die niet sal verdwyn nie en vasgevat sal moet word. Die wyse waarop dit gedoen kan word, is om die huidige konsensus dat onderhandelinge die weg vorentoe is te gebruik as 'n legitimeringsmiddel waarmee mense wat nie 'n vreedsame pad wil loop nie gekriminaliseer kan word. Dit veronderstel natuurlik gesamentlike beheer oor die meganismes van wet en orde. Hoe gouer ons egter hierdie onsmaklike taak agter die rug kry hoe beter.

Henning Myburgh is streekdirekteur van Idasa in die Vrystaat.

miljoen en 'n half het hy die potensiaal om 'n erg ontwrigtende uitwerking op 'n nuwe, demokratiese Suid-Afrika te hê. Terselfdertyd hou hy egter ook die moontlikheid in om weerbarstige Afrikaners vir 'n sinvolle skikking te "lewer". (Gebeur dit en doen die PAC dieselfde, sal Suid-Afrika baie na aan 'n omvattende konstitusionele vergelyk kom).

Teenoor sy reaksionêre volgelinge binne die Volksfront speel genl Viljoen op 'n ongelukkig veld – gelukkig ten gunste van hom. Die regse politieke partye en bewegings, die meeste van hulle die slagoffers van swak leierskap en beleidloosheid, is erg afhanklik van die generaal. Hy het dus 'n aansienlike mate van politieke hefkrag teenoor partye soos die Konserwatiewe Party. In gunstige omstandighede kan dit nie uitgesluit word nie dat genl Viljoen – indien hy op sy beurt genoeg leierskap en durf aan die dag lê – 'n katalisator kan wees om regsbesitters by 'n historiese grondwetlike vergelyk te betrek.

Moet egter nie die hartstog van ekstremiste binne die Volksfront onderskat om genl Viljoen vir hulle saak te wen nie; hulle arbeid waarskynlik onvermoeid om hulle reaksionêre opvattinge aan hom te verkoop en hom te wen vir 'n lang weerstandstryd.

Genl Viljoen en die meer gemagtigdes binne die Volksfront speel egter op 'n nadelige speelveld teen hulle wat betref gebeure en partye buite die tradisionele regse politiek.

Sommige leiers van bewegings soos die PAC asook persone soos mnr Peter Mokaba van die ANC se Jeugliga, kan van genl Viljoen niks anders maak as 'n willose slagoffer van eskalierende polarisasie nie.

Genl Viljoen, grootliks onderhandelingsgesind, is in die laaste instansie onderhewig aan die eis wat volgelinge deurentyd aan hulle leiers by onderhandelinge stel, naamlik hoeveel dividende lewer hy vir hulle.

In die meeste gevalle verwag volgelinge nie om alles te kry waarvoor hulle leiers

beding nie, veral nie in so 'n komplekse proses soos nou in Suid-Afrika aan die gang is nie. Nogtans sal alle groepe, na gelang van hulle grootte en die redelikheid van hulle eise, bepaalde "suksesse" by die onderhandelingsstafel moet behaal vir die proefneming om in geheel te slaag.

Anders as in Bosnië, behoort politieke leiers in die sentrum nie toe te laat dat ekstremiste die gang van sake bepaal nie. Sou dit moontlik wees, kan Constand Viljoen dalk 'n waardevolle bondgenoot wees om te verseker dat regsbesitters deel word van 'n nierassige, demokratiese skikking in Suid-Afrika.

Vir buitelanders lyk die regse politiek deesdae veel meer potent en gevaarliker as drie maande gelede. Die persoon wat daarvoor verantwoordelik is, het ironies genoeg, waarskynlik oorgenoeg ingebore redelikheid om daardie potensie in konstruktiewe kanale te stuur. Maar dan het hy heelwat hulp – en ook baie geluk – nodig.

In defence of the region

There's a price attached to military co-operation in southern Africa, writes PETER VALE

FOR better and for worse southern Africa has a common future which is why only the mischievous or the myopic in the region wish South Africa ill during this painful time.

Why our neighbours wish us well is not surprising. They are born of struggle. Each has had to make the new beginning, like the one which faces South Africa in the days that lie ahead. As established and experienced states, they know that South Africa's progress is their own, and they realise that setbacks point in the other direction.

If – as the pessimists now argue – reversals take hold and South Africa begins a slow but certain disintegration, the sub-continent will begin to resemble the Balkans. Already porous borders will be flattened as people flee warlords and small arms.

These developments, and their consequences, will divert much needed resources from development projects. The militaries of the region will gear themselves to protect – as much as they are able – their countries from the fallout which follows South Africa's violent break-up.

Although military planners are taught to keep their powder dry for the worst possible outcome, most in the region hope South Africa will emerge – in spite of the current turmoil – intact and economically sound. If this happens, South Africa will join – like Namibia did in 1990 – their regional family as a peaceful and prosperous member.

Should this happen, military budgets will shrink as priorities shift: southern Africa's swords will be fashioned into the proverbial (and in the local context much-needed) ploughshares. Education, health, welfare: these will benefit and, with them, the prospects for lasting democracy throughout southern Africa will blossom.

For many in South Africa, military collaboration is a contradiction in terms: after all, viewed from *apartheid* the armies of the neighbourhood were bent on the country's destruction. To collaborate with them, so many were taught, is to collude with the enemy, to help bring South Africa to its knees. To argue this, however, is to believe that southern Africa ends at the Limpopo.

The momentous changes which have taken place internationally have driven states

in the furthest corners of the world – corners like southern Africa – closer together.

Together we can help each other understand and manage new security threats – from AIDS to small arms proliferation, from drought to drug-trafficking, from malaria to migrants, from waste-disposal to the management of dwindling water resources.

In May a conference jointly organised by the Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt, the Foundation for Peace and Development, Bonn, and the Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape, drew – for the first time – senior military men and academics together to consider the potential which might flow from deeper understanding between the region's militaries. But South Africans had additional interest in the meeting: Umkhonto weSizwe and the SADF shared the same table.

Central to the deliberations were how to replace the traditional security dilemma with a system which could understand, manage and resolve conflict – and its potential for destruction – in the region. At the same time, the delegates were determined that this could only be ensured if the countries of the region committed themselves unequivocally to a democratic future.

In the end three institutions were recommended: one inter-governmental, the other two lodged in civil society.

To understand conflict, both near and far, the conference recommended that a Southern African Institute for Security and Development Studies should be established. Although based in a single country, it would be the property of all southern Africa's people. To be fully effective, it will pursue its goals of research and publication free of partisanship and bias.

Then, the conference argued, only inter-government dialogue can manage conflict. This as an Interstate Committee on Peace and Security – which is user-friendly to SADCC (Southern African Development Coordinating Conference) – made sense to the delegates. If successful, the region will have developed a mechanism to discuss security concerns. But it promises more: not only will it act as an early-warning system, it will help institutionalise joint military training and the exchange of senior military personnel.

Finally, conflict resolution and arbitration should fall outside of government domain. The delegates thought that a non-government centre for mediation which builds, for

instance, upon the excellent work done by UCT's Centre for Intergroup Studies, might help settle disputes if (and when) they arose.

But for these plans to come to fruition, South Africa must become a responsible member of the southern African family. Although sympathetic to the pain of this transition, it was clear that without an internationally-recognised settlement, South Africa could not sup at the region's table.

Many felt, however, that South Africa had to do more than simply pass the test of international respectability. Perhaps, it was suggested, South Africa could unilaterally destroy its offensive weapons capability. Such a signal, too, would begin to resolve the regional security dilemma.

And beyond this, the country would have to integrate all armed formations into a single defence force. This means a fundamental restructuring of the country's defence forces; simply absorbing MK into the rump of the existing SADF will not be enough.

Perhaps the sharpest difference of opinion was on the issue of the past – how will we live with it, how will we explain it to our children.

Some, from South Africa, argued that what has gone before belongs before. To build confidence, we will need to look forward: to delve into the past will not build, but break. Additionally, they argued, if we must talk about what happened in the region in the 1970s and 1980s then all the parties who contributed to southern Africa's chronic insecurity should be called to account.

But many from the region saw it differently – we must jointly explore the past so that we can live in the future. If you sweep the horror of the past away, a British academic reminded us, the region might well face the Yugoslav option. The destruction of that country is in no small way ascribed to the belief that the history could simply be swept under the carpet.

Our neighbours wish us well. But they believe that they are owed some explanations as to why the past was so destructive: why was infrastructure destroyed; why were lives lost.

Those at this conference did not want war crimes or financial retribution. But they do want us to understand our common past in the context of a common history. This, they believe, we must do if our children are to enjoy the peace they deserve.

Peter Vale is research professor and director of the Centre for Southern African Studies at UWC.

Could it be that in another few decades from now, we might be amazed and embarrassed that we did not think it "normal" for children to have the vote?

"It is difficult to take this silly business very seriously."

"Such a liberty has never been recognised in any civil society. I consider it a disgrace."

RESPONSES to Nelson Mandela's call in May 1993 for the voting age to be lowered to 14? No. They are, in fact, comments made 150 years ago to the Governor of the Cape in response to the suggestion that the vote be extended to women.

A brief analysis of reactions to Mandela's call as reported in the media – front-page reports, feature articles, editorials, letters from readers – confirms the similarity in type and tone to the reaction over a century ago to the idea of votes for women.

Outrage, derision, mockery, disbelief, disgust greeted Mandela's call, as the *Cape Times*, *The Argus*, *Weekly Mail and South* show: "deeply disturbing"; "such a suggestion would not receive serious consideration in a civilised country"; "a ploy"; a major political embarrassment"; "absurd suggestion"; "Only 14-year-olds will take him seriously"; "ludicrous"; "beyond serious contemplation"; "the idea is nonsense"; "Mandela is crazy"; "horrified"; "irresponsible".

Cartoons and jokes abound – stereotypical cartoons of what look like English schoolboys running wild in classrooms, babies in playpens, comments like "Pimple Power".

Similar hilarity and scorn were a feature of the reactions to proposals for the vote to be extended to women. Speaking in the suffrage debate in the House of Assembly in 1920, J X Merriman opined: "The more you read of the accounts of England, the more you read of the doings of those unsexed women who are rambling about the country, the more you feel anxious about the future of civilisation. Modesty and Purity apparently have fled to another planet."

Two *Cape Times* editorials are particularly interesting in this regard. On 30 April 1921 one pronounced that "because of a difference which no laws and no amount of education or intelligence can ever change, women are not fitted for voting". Some 72 years later, on 25 May 1993, another declared that "a leader of Mr Mandela's stature can only weaken his own position by sponsoring a lost cause. The



Vote: teenagers denied a human right?

sooner the whole episode is forgotten, the better".

This kind of comparative approach shows up the rather smug comfortableness and arrogance that seems to be a feature of most of the reactions to Mandela's call.

Of course the "experts" are wheeled in – important political commentators, psychologists, teachers, children's experts. A psychiatrist consulted by the *Argus* said "a 14-year-old does not have the intellectual maturity to

by ANNE SCHUSTER

make a rational decision about how to vote" and a psychologist agreed: "It is generally accepted that a person of 14 is not mature by any stretch of the imagination and cannot be regarded as informed or sophisticated enough to have the vote."

"Experts" also pronounced women unfit to vote on the basis of their inferior intellect and lack of maturity. Writing in the *London Times* in 1921, Sir Almroth E Wright warned that "no doctor can ever lose sight of the fact that the mind of woman is always threatened with danger from the reverberations of her physiological emergencies ... it is with such thoughts that the doctor lets his eyes rest upon the militant suffragist. He cannot shut them to the fact that there is mixed up with the women's movement much mental disorder".

In his book, "Escape from Childhood: The Needs and Rights of Children", John Holt reminds us that childhood is not a natural state but a rather recent invention. A passionate advocate of children's rights, he laments "all those attitudes and feelings, and also customs and laws, that put a great gulf or barrier between the young and their elders, and the world of their elders; that make it difficult or impossible for young people to make contact with the larger society around them, and, even more, to play any kind of active, responsible, useful part in it; that lock the young into eighteen years or more of subserviency and dependency, and make of them a mixture of expensive nuisance, fragile treasure, slave and super-pet".

Holt says that one of the most important rights that should be available to the young is the right to vote. "It is first of all a matter of justice. To be in any way subject to the laws of a society without having any right or way to say what those laws should be is the most serious injustice."

He adds that "the possibility of voting will stimulate an interest in voting. The possibility of exercising responsibility draws people towards it".

Martin Hoyles points out in "Changing

Tough choices: Wuthering Heights or picketing in the rain?



The country's first teachers' strike – in the Western Cape – had its lighter moments. 'Rank and file' Sadtu member ZARINA ROSSOUW (left) recalls events from the two-week action.

THIS is the first time in almost six years that I have written anything not related to schoolwork (prepping, setting exam papers, etc) and I've just realised how difficult it is. As I've never claimed to be an intellectual, this view of the teachers' strike called by Sadtu on May 24 is as seen through the eyes of a rank and file Sadtu member.

Wednesday, 19 May

Sadtu site meeting, first interval, library: The call to strike has been made. Are we going to strike or not? What do we do about the pupils? Can we go on strike and still be in our classes? No, that's a chalk-down, not a strike, comrade! (we've become "comrades", we're not "miss" or "sir" any longer.)

Comrades, in terms of the question of striking or not, because we are members of a union, we have to adhere to our union's call! But com we need more time to discuss this issue (we've taken to the habit of discussing "issues"). I think time has run out, com, can we reach consensus? If we go on strike, remember "no work, no pay". But what about my subsidy com? Also remember that we can't enter a classroom nor have any contact with the pupils. But can we still talk to them? Not on educational matters of course.

Right, have we reached consensus, com chair? Can we have the POA (programme of action, for the uninitiated in strugglespeak) for Monday? 7.30 am – picketing in front of school gates; 7.55 am – meet in the staffroom (strike HQ).

Saturday, 22 May

I hope our demands are met and the strike is called off. I still have to complete the nature of love in *Wuthering Heights* before the literature exam on Wednesday.

Will there still be an exam?

Sunday, 23 May

A leading Sunday newspaper has reported that the national Sadtu strike has been called off – it seems our demands have been met.

(At least I can sleep for an extra 30 minutes tomorrow morning!)

Monday, 24 May

7.45 am: I'm met by "Teacher on Strike" placards at the school gates. What's happening? I'm not on strike. The newspaper said that the strike was called off!

No, com, that's the problem – DON'T BELIEVE THE MEDIA!

The weekend meeting did not address the problems of the Western Cape particularly (i.e. the questions of rationalisation and retrenchments). Sadtu (Western Cape region) decided to go ahead with a strike in their region.

I don't know, I was prepared to strike, but then I read the newspaper yesterday and now...

It's not a question of being prepared com, follow your conscience. But what about Catherine and Heathcliff?

Your conscience, comrade...

10.00 am: What about the literature exam scheduled for Wednesday?

What can I do? Can't I just spend an hour with my matriculants?

Comrades, this is serious – WE'RE ON STRIKE!

Send a delegation and a letter to the office requesting a postponement of the examination! But what if it's not successful? Can't I just have half an hour with them? Comrade, that will be discussed after the delegation returns.

Childhood" that it was only in the 17th century that the concept of childhood arose which stressed innocence and weakness, and became linked with the idea of subservience or dependence. Noting that historically children have been involved in political issues, he says that of "all oppressed groups in society, children have perhaps the hardest task in asserting their right to equality. Indignation is often expressed that women or blacks are treated like children, but not so often that children are treated the way they are".

In "Down with Childhood", Shulamith Firestone explains how the fiction of childhood parallels the fiction of femininity. Both women and children were considered asexual and thus "purer" than men. Their inferior status was ill-concealed under an elaborate "respect" while both were considered mentally deficient. The pedestal of adoration on which both were set made it hard for them to breathe. Moreover, because the class oppression of women and children is couched in the phraseology of "cute" it is much harder to fight than open oppression.

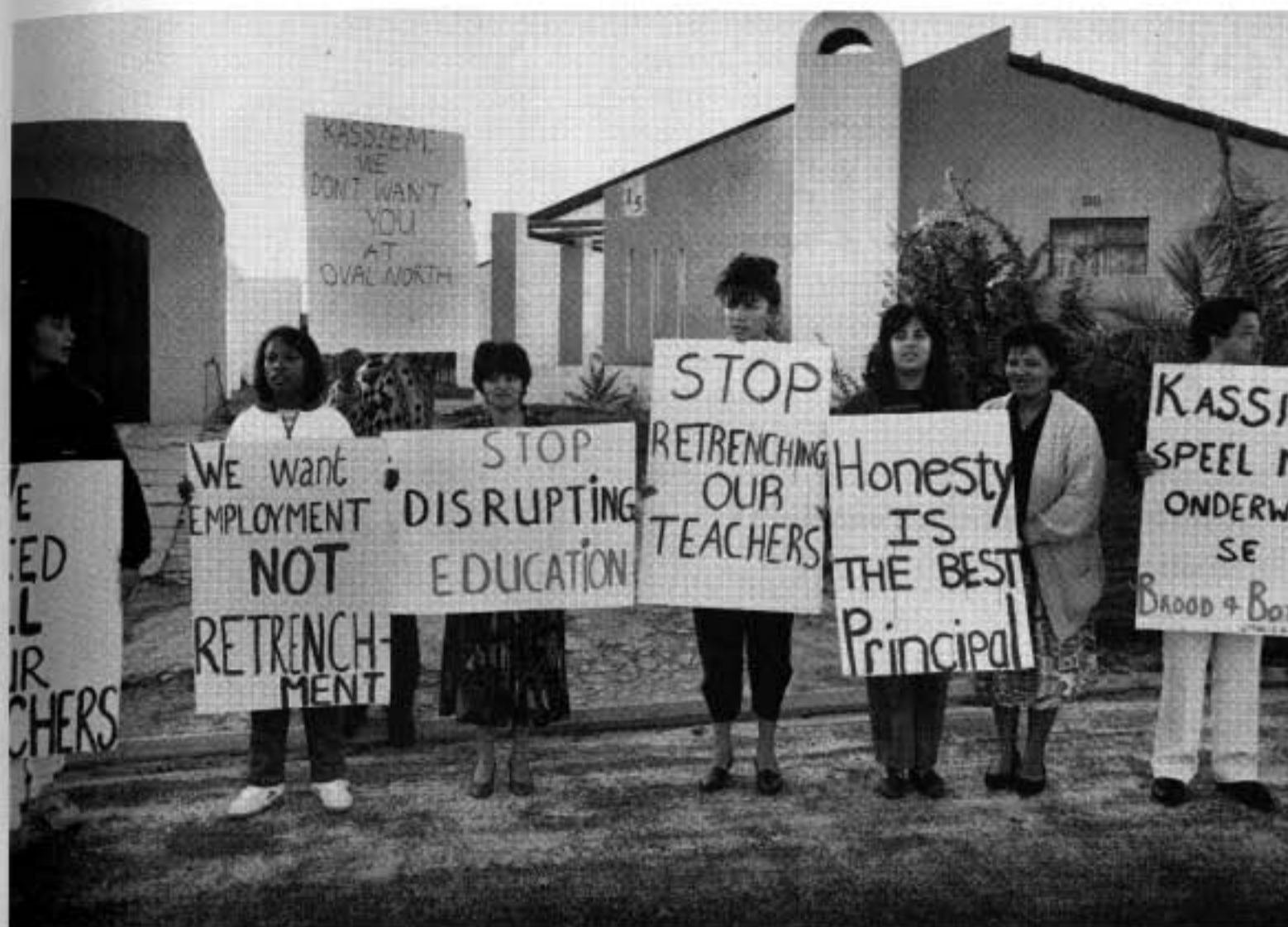
A final similarity to note in reactions could be called the prophecies of doom, the predictions of total chaos that people warn would be the inevitable result of such "absurd notions" being taken seriously. Contemporary readers are warned from the right that "the blacks are calling for the vote for 14-year-olds because they want to make South Africa ungovernable", and from the left (Azapo) that "we must find a way of accommodating the youth while not ending up with a monster that could swallow us all".

The monster threatening to swallow the nation in 1877 was "petticoat government". A few years later in 1891, Samuel Smith, MP, was saying: "If we abandon the caution of the Anglo-Saxon race, and plunge into wild experiments like woman's suffrage, I much fear that dark days will befall this nation, and that the splendid fabric of centuries will totter to its fall".

How would it change things for children to have the vote? How, for example, would it affect the situation and problems and needs of the 100 million streetchildren in the world if those in power depended on them for their vote?

Could it be that we don't want to let children vote for the same reasons men didn't want to let women vote? That we want to keep children as an oppressed, disenfranchised "class"? Could it be that in another 70 years from now, we might be amazed and embarrassed that there could have been a time that people did not consider it "right" and "normal" for children to have the vote?

Anne Schuster is a writer who has done research on children's rights and children in courts.



Maximum visibility ... teachers demonstrate against rationalisation.

SOUTHRIGHT

Volunteers for the delegation? Volunteers for a zonal meeting this afternoon?

Tuesday, 25 May

7.30 am: Placard demonstrating at this hour, in the pouring rain is definitely a sign of that dedication that we are renowned for.

How much longer com!?

8.00 am: Thank you for being so punctual this morning comrades, however, as for some comrades...

Can we have a report-back from the delegation to the office, comrades? No definite answer yet?

What about the exams! I'm only asking for half an hour, comrades! Are the pupils prepared for this exam tomorrow? Yes, just give me half an hour!

11 am: The Sadtu site has been visited by three concerned teachers from a neighbouring school. There are rumours that we aren't on strike (unfortunately, our school has a history of non-involvement). They left very satisfied after being assailed by shouts of "Viva" and "Phantsi" from 32 teachers on strike.

Wednesday, 26 May

7.30 am: Can I borrow your umbrella, com? My placard now says "T..CHER ON ...KE".

8.00 am: I heard that the matrics are about to write the exams! Comrades, we sent a delegation and two letters to the office requesting a postponement of this exam - there's nothing else we can do.

Ask the students if they're prepared!

The students are asked (later, the word "asked" will be replaced by "intimidated" by non-striking teachers) and the exams are

subsequently rescheduled "until conditions are conducive".

9.00 am: Comrades, we've been told that striking teachers should occupy the staffroom, but as there are a few non-striking teachers here (shouldn't they be in their classrooms?!), I think we should move. General agreement from striking teachers and, unbelievably, discussion from non-striking teachers saying, "we have a democratic right to hear what 'you people' are discussing". It's sad to see how the word "democracy" has been prostituted.

We move.

Comrades, our strike has to be made more visible. There are still some comrades who stand in the doorways of their classrooms and claim to be on strike. We need to be disciplined and understand what the term "strike" means, comrades. I feel that we should station two comrades at the front gates to ensure visibility and I would also like to make a proposal that we visit our neighbouring schools to offer support (also to avoid another visit like the day before). We need two volunteers for the zonal meeting at 10.00 am.

10.00 am: Delegates to the zonal meeting are escorted by placard-bearing striking teachers (visibility remember?). One car returns 5 minutes later - we forgot the two comrades at the front gate.

After seeing the delegations safely to their destination, we drive on to three more schools, stand with our placards in the car parks and are met or invited into staffrooms by other comrades-on-strike. At one school,

the striking teachers met us outside and we sang "We shall overcome" - I felt like a missionary!

Thursday, 27 May

11.00 am: Athlone Civic Centre: mass meeting for all Sadtu members.

11.30 am: 9 000 teachers turn up, the meeting is moved to the Athlone soccer stadium. There are comments like, "Waar's die bodies" (a local soccer team) and "Sadtu - 100 points, HoR has yet to score".

Friday, 28 May

7.30 am: Isn't it 8.00 am yet?

8.00 am: We've been practicing the songs we learnt at the mass meeting the previous day. The favourites are "Senzenina" and "Sadtu ..." (the rest of the song is in Xhosa, so we hum - our school has German on its curriculum).

We also enjoy "Phantsi-ing" everything not connected to the

strike - it's become a site swear-word since. (Where's your register Mr X? Reply: "Phantsi register, phantsi)."

11.00 am: We've just heard that the entire zonal meeting is on its way to our school! They still don't believe that we're on strike and they heard rumours that we wrote an exam on Wednesday!

12.00: Over 100 teachers from neighbouring schools are now satisfied that we are definitely on strike.

Monday, 31 May

Teachers stay at home, making the most of the last Republic Day for South Africa.

Tuesday, 1 June

Muslim-striking-teacher-comrades (a neologism) stay at home to celebrate Eid. I was celebrating.

Monday, 2 June

9.00 am: March to Mitchell's Plain Regional offices to force the inspectorate to publicly reject and distance themselves from rationalisation.

11.00 am: Teachers vow to return within two days if our demand is not met.

12 noon: Delegation needed to attend zonal meeting to re-assess the strike.

Thursday, 3 June

7.30 am: Comrades, the strike has been suspended, pending negotiations.

8.00 am: Good morning class. Let's discuss the nature of love in Wuthering Heights.

(PS Anybody need a Girl Friday with six years' teaching experience?)

'God-given' oppression upheld by tradition

Custom, religion and fundamentalism have undermined women's equality around the globe. An international conference on this subject took place in the Western Cape recently.

DURING the past decade, several conferences have been convened to discuss the rights of South African women in a democratic constitution. At nearly every forum, women across South Africa's diverse spectrum of ethnicity, religion and culture have identified custom and religion as key contributors to women's subordination.

They have raised difficult questions as to how custom and religion should be dealt with in a constitution that guarantees human rights for women and men. The rise of a traditionalist and ethnic lobby in the current negotiations process, coupled with a growing international fundamentalist movement which has threatened women's equality everywhere from North Africa to Europe, has accentuated the need to examine these questions.

For this reason the Community Law Centre (CLC) at the University of the Western Cape sponsored an international conference, "Custom and Religion in a Non-racial, Non-sexist South Africa" in May. Women from the international networks Women Living Under Muslim Laws, Women Against Fundamentalism and Women in Law and Development in Africa, exchanged views with local women's, religious and political organisations and traditional leaders from Contralesa on issues of fundamentalism, custom and religion in modern democracies.

International guests reported on a range of countries including Algeria, Bangladesh, Israel, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. They explained that provisions for religious personal laws and African customary law in various constitutions have served to effectively undermine women's equality, particularly in the private spheres of the workplace and the home. They added that the religious and cultural movements are difficult for women to combat, since they base their legit-

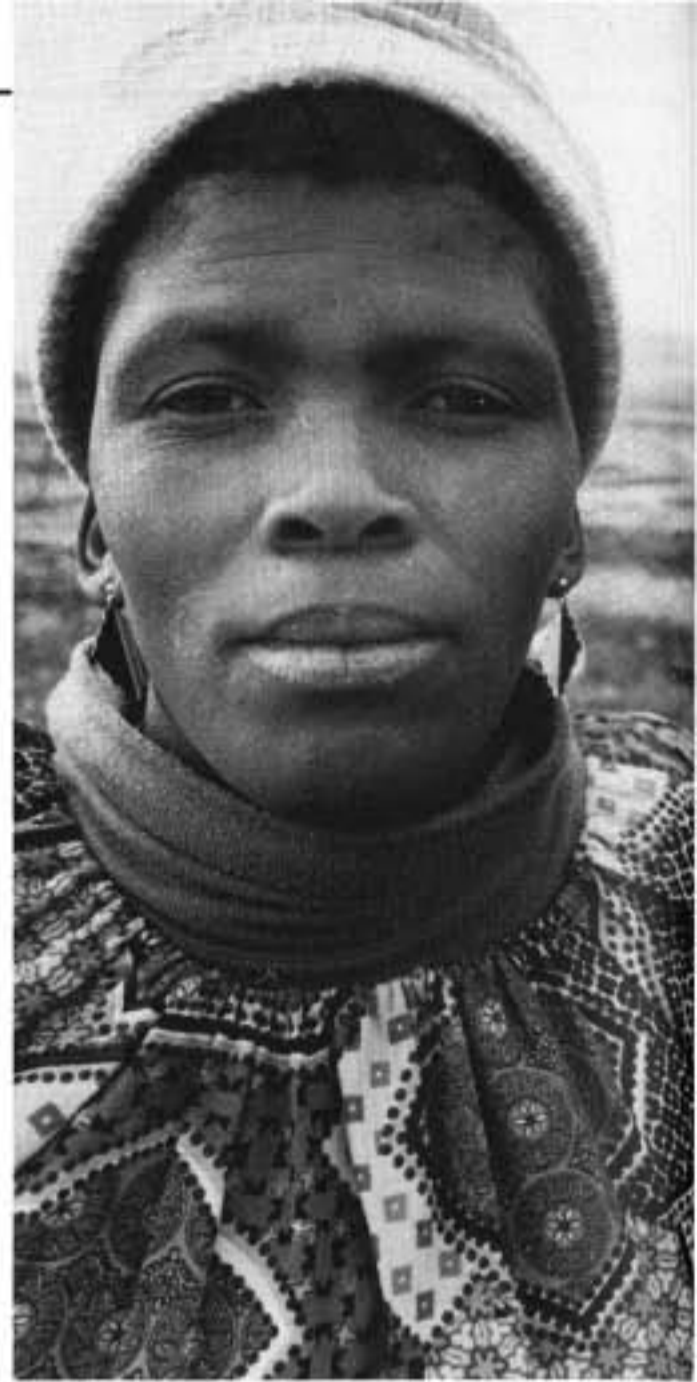
imacy on "god-given", "anti-colonial" or "anti-Western" values.

Israeli Nira Yuval-Davis defined fundamentalism as a "political movement with a religious imperative" which seeks control of modern state and media powers to promote its agenda. She explained that while fundamentalism is often associated with Islam, the first fundamentalists were Christians, and fundamentalism is maintained by Christians, Muslims and a host of other religions. Fundamentalism is often based on the maintenance of "traditional values" or used to mobilise a "return to original sources". She added that fundamentalists appeal to women as mothers and "transmitters of culture" in order to control the basic unit of the social order, the family, where their version of society can be reproduced and maintained.

by BRIGITTE MABANDLA
& AMY BIEHL

Does fundamentalism exist in South Africa? Many women believe it does. One formal manifestation of fundamentalism in South Africa is the Concerned South Africans Group (Cosag), an alliance made up of the Afrikaner Volksunie, Conservative Party, Inkatha Freedom Party and the three homeland governments of Boputhatswana, Ciskei and KwaZulu. Despite their differences in race, class and constituency, Cosag members share a vision of a South Africa composed of autonomous "states" based on cultural, religious or ethnic identities. They also share a conservative Christian and cultural rhetoric to obscure their goals of protecting privatised apartheid and personal power in a crumbling apartheid system.

Cosag parties have successfully mobilised women by playing to the traditional ideas of "motherhood", "family values" and "protection of wives and children". For example, the white right wing has initiated self-defence



Traditional notions of "motherhood" and "family" are those which exploit women the most.

training to protect its women from attacks by African men. Buthelezi has mobilised thousands of women in the IFP Women's Brigade by appealing to them as "mothers of the nation" and "teachers of culture".

Such programmes pose a serious threat to women's substantive equality in a democratic South Africa. As Beauty Mkhize, chairperson of the Rural Women's Movement, explained, the same traditional notions of "motherhood" and "family" are those which exploit women the most. In her view, customary law and apartheid have combined to create a situation where women are abandoned more often than they are protected. "Because of the marital power over the woman under customary law, we have no access to the use of property, even though there is property," she said. "We are enslaved by our husbands and, at the end of the day, we are the ones who suffer."

Algerian Marieme Helie-Lucas emphasised that fundamentalism is not a religious movement. "It is an extreme right political movement," Yuval-Davis added, "(it) is a very modern movement because it is interested in control of the state and control of the modern media".

"We have to look at culture as a resource," said Yuval-Davis. "Political, financial and cultural resources are now being skilfully manipulated by fundamentalist groups."

In addition to Cosag, other parties in the multi-party negotiations have also utilised



ERIC MILLER

cultural and religious resources. Both the NP and the ANC recognise the power and influence enjoyed by traditional and religious leaders. Their respective constitutional proposals, though very different approaches, attempt to attract these leaders by proposing a strong role for cultural and religious groups and the protection of cultural and religious freedom. Due largely to the NP's desire to counter the ANC and its allies in multi-party negotiations, traditional leaders and homeland governments make up approximately half of the negotiating parties at Kempton Park.

While the homeland system has distorted and corrupted traditional society and blurred the distinction between "traditional leader" and "politician", traditional leaders argue that traditional institutions such as tribal authorities, enjoy the support of the people and deserve a prominent role in a new dispensation.

More progressive traditional leaders believe that tradition must be brought in line with the democratic principles of a bill of rights. At the CLC conference, Contralesa's David Malatsi said that 68 per cent of South Africans are illiterate. "When people are illiterate, then the closest thing to

them is their culture and tradition," he said. "Thus, we must come down to the level of the people and cross-consult. There should be equality of all people before the law."

Women have attempted to enter this dialogue. At the negotiations forum they have proposed that custom and religion in a constitution be subject to women's equality provisions. But traditional and cultural rhetoric has obscured women's voices in the important debate about the practical manifestations of custom and religion. Central to this debate are the issues of women's access to land and property; the extent of autonomy given to regions; and the debate over whether a bill of rights and constitution will apply simply to the public sphere (between the state and the individual), or whether these rights will extend to the private sphere of the workplace and the home.

For example, how will a woman's right to own land be protected in an autonomous KwaZulu which proposes to "recognise and protect the application of traditional rules" (in other words, communal land tenure which denies women access)? How will a KwaZulu woman benefit from the homeland government's constitutional proposal for "procreative freedom" (a pro-choice position) when traditional rules effectively prevent her from exercising her own choice? How will a woman married under customary law in rural Ciskei collect inheritance from a husband who re-married under civil law in Cape Town? Will a conservative Afrikaner "volkstaat" be able to opt out of national social programmes designed to

'Customary law and apartheid have combined to create a situation where women are abandoned more often than they are protected'

bring health and education services to rural African communities?

Custom, religion and ethnicity must be considered in the debate over regional powers in a democratic South Africa. Custom and religion are part of the value systems of women as well as men, and strong regional powers could actually bring services closer to the majority of South African women living in rural areas. But Cosag's idea of

'Custom, religion and regional autonomy, as interpreted by fundamentalists, must be vigorously opposed'

regional powers based on separate, ethnically autonomous states is remarkably similar to the fundamentalist interpretation of multi-culturalism, which ignores the gender, class and other divisions within ethnic groups, and inevitably subordinates women.

Custom, religion and regional autonomy, as interpreted by fundamentalists, must be vigorously opposed. International experience has shown that custom and religion have been used both to maintain the status quo and to mobilise against it, and that women as well as men have used fundamentalism for political gain. Yuval-Davis explained that while women have often found legitimacy in the space given to them in fundamentalist movements, the overall effect has been their subordination and oppression. Thus, there are no simple solutions.

Women can oppose fundamentalism in South Africa by calling for a constitution that protects women's rights in both the public and private spheres; by participating in the debate over regional powers so that regionalism benefits women equally; by calling on political parties to clearly state their positions on the relationship between custom and religion and women's equality; and by entering into a dialogue with progressive traditional leaders, such as Contralesa, to help "re-interpret" traditional values and discard those which oppress women. At the CLC conference, there was strong support for a re-interpretation of traditional values in a way which would "re-claim the dignity of women" in traditional systems.

Participants adopted a resolution calling for "women's rights with no exception". CLC pledged to co-ordinate a dialogue between women's organisations and Contralesa. The gender desk of the Western Cape branch of Nadel (National Association of Democratic Lawyers) has begun examining the legal implications of customary law. Women participants committed themselves to raise issues of custom and religion within their own organisations. These are steps in the right direction.

Brigitte Mabandla is a senior researcher at CLC. Amy Biehl is a Fulbright scholar at UWC.

A corporate earning curve

ONCE called "social responsibility", the conscience of business in South Africa is now known as "corporate social involvement" (CSI) and it has joined terms such as "community empowerment" and "transparency of the process" that have become very much a part of the change jargon in South Africa. Sadly, like the other terms, CSI is a meaningless acronym unless it is given real meaning in the communities business targets for its programmes.

In a climate in which the relevance of the present economic system and the role of business engagement programmes are frequently questioned, CSI potentially could perform an important role in empowering communities to meet the challenges of a democratised South Africa.

However, those who implement these programmes face the difficult task of engaging communities that are often disorganised and fraught with conflict. This has meant that unless the programmes are sensitively negotiated with all stakeholders in the communities, even more conflict may be created or else a project, such as a sports field built at huge cost, could lie unused while the community argue.

In broad terms, the transition to democracy implies that the relationship between the communities targeted for CSI and the new government will hopefully be radically altered. "One person, one vote" should mean that an accountable government – answerable to the new electorate and its priorities – will come into existence. This in turn means that business, which until now was seen as a conduit for pressure on the state, will now be subject to state pressure.

It is our belief that business needs to redefine its role in our changing society or face having it changed by a majority of people who have had very little to celebrate about the economy and the inactive role of business.

It is accepted that a very limited number of people are affected by the formal economy. The benefits experienced by the black community include wages paid to the workers, the products themselves and social responsibility programmes.

For unemployed and uneducated youth, restructuring the economy to meet their needs must be a high priority. The demand is

Business must begin to earn its keep with workers and the community at large, writes STEVE COLLINS and CHARLES TALBOT who have been talking with the business sector and communities of Natal around corporate social involvement.

for a better life than the one they have and it will be up to business to take these high expectations seriously. Arguments about the failure of socialism will not be sufficient for angry and disaffected youth. The question that needs to be answered is what tangible benefits have capitalism and a free market brought to the majority so far.

Cosatu and other unions have already begun the process of defining how business engagement should occur. The establishment of the National Economic Forum and several regional forums represents a commitment by unions and business to take joint responsibility for restructuring the economy. This co-operation reflects a realisation that the growth of the economy is not just the concern of business and government, but also of workers involved in the economy.



Business's role: going beyond the workplace.

BRETT ELOFF, Southlight

These tripartite forums are significant arenas for discussion and democracy. However, unless the communities are also engaged in some way, the trade unions may be left with the responsibility for community input. This is why, at company level, unions are arguing for communities to be involved in decision-making processes about CSI programmes. They are also pushing for CSI programmes to form part of the economic growth and development strategies in the areas concerned.

This requires an important shift in the thinking of CSI advocates. No longer is it good enough to talk about the number of schools and creches built. It has been acknowledged that this should have been the government's responsibility in the first place, and that business is simply trying to make up in a small way for corruption in the civil service and some of the worst excesses of apartheid.

Besides meeting an obvious need for educational infrastructure, these projects were motivated very often by the desire of business to show communities that they had made a contribution. In reality though, it would become just another school where disempowering education was enforced – if the community could find the teachers to fill the positions.

Recognising this, several businesses in Natal have tried other approaches of engagement that may have better long-term results. The approach has been to find ways in which a community could be empowered through access to what it regards as a priority.

In one instance, a town planner was employed jointly by a company and a residents' association. The company paid his fee but his services were at the disposal of the residents' association. Members of the asso-

ciation also received some soft skills training (committee skills and how to access IDT funds for development) while a road building project was in progress.

The importance of this approach lies in the fact that ownership rests firmly with the community and not the company. However, it was clearly the company that made it possible for the town planner to play such a role. A similar situation occurred when a company paid for two paralegals to assist a number of communities in dealing with violence and a lack of proper

policing.

The manner in which CSI happens is therefore more important than the development ideas themselves or actual bricks and mortar projects.

Involving communities in decision-making process is easier said than done, however. It requires firstly that capacity-building must form part of any project with a particular focus on basic organisational skills. The

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Boipatong victim: Three cheers for a police force

By IVOR JENKINS

WHAT happens when police-community relations are constructive and rooted in mutual concern? In this case a community enthusiastically cheered the police force.

On June 2, Ivor Jenkins and Paul Zondo of Idasa's Pretoria office were privileged to hand over to three-year-old Mita Mdetete a wheelchair from a police force. She was paralysed as a result of injuries sustained in the Boipatong massacre. Only, this donation was not an SAP venture, but one organised by Chief Jim Harding, head of Halton regional police force in Ontario, Canada.

In October last year Idasa hosted a conference on policing in the 1990s, bringing out a number of international police officers and academics as speakers. The foreign visitors were taken to Boipatong where they met with members of the community, among them this young victim of the massacre. It also claimed the life of her father and left her mother with permanent injuries.



Members of the Boipatong community share the joy of young Mita Mdetete.

Mita has been confined to the small family shack since the attack and the Mdetete family had lost all hope.

Jim Harding, moved by Mita's story, immediately pledged to raise money for a wheelchair on his return to Canada. Money was raised entirely within his division in Halton, and some six months later the wheelchair arrived at the Idasa office.

However, Harding had more in mind than merely giving Mita the wheelchair. As a major part of the police conference was spent discussing ways to improve police-community relations, his wish was that the SAP should be involved in handing over the chair, thereby displaying genuine concern for building better police-community relations in the area.

He made contact with a number of senior police officers during his visit, and the donation of the wheelchair was discussed with, among others, the Commissioner of Police, General Johan van der Merwe.

The presentation took place in the presence of community leaders at Mita's home in Boipatong. Together with Mrs Mdetete, they were overcome with emotion. Mrs Mdetete said she felt there was reason not to give up.

And there was more to follow. After *The Star* covered the event people phoned in with offers of assistance - a glimpse of what South Africa could be, and may become, when the example of the Halton Police Force becomes a reality in our strife-torn country.

In view of the current political climate, and after discussions with the police and community leaders, it was decided that the police would not attend the presentation. Nevertheless, we have an excellent example of the way to go.

Ivor Jenkins is regional director of Idasa in Pretoria.

Different views on youth peace corps

THE question of a peace corps for South African youth was the subject of debate at Idasa's regular Future Forum in Durban in June.

The topic was approached quite differently by the two candidates, Kolbe Kolver, vice-chairperson of the NP Youth Action in the Transvaal, and Parks Mankahlane, national publicity secretary of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL).

Mankahlane said that although the issue had not been extensively discussed within the organisation, ANCYL envisaged a paramilitary structure of youth trained in policing functions. This, he said, would be done within

organised formations which would operate side-by-side with structures that currently maintain law and order.

The corps would be under community control and would therefore be non-party political. Participants would be drawn from the ranks of the unemployed youth and would be given the opportunity to finish their education and receive further training in practical courses like carpentry, etc. Thus the corps would later provide a reserve from which to draw labour.

Mankahlane saw it as playing a role in ensuring that the present security forces were unbiased, thus helping black

communities to trust a future police force. The ongoing violence was caused in part by the unacceptability of the security forces, he said.

Mankahlane said funding the proposed corps would be the responsibility of big business and the state.

Kolbe Kolver laid more emphasis on social upliftment, education and developing entrepreneurial skills.

He said that the youth had become disillusioned after years of struggle against an unjust system, and while they had played a major role in getting the country to where it is, their role were now negated. A peace corps could function to

uplift the disempowered youth by training and development.

On another level it could work to alleviate mistrust within communities by helping to stop intimidation and secure freedom of association, and assisting at polling stations during the election.

Kolver did believe that the corps should play a role in bringing criminals to justice, and commended the ANC for identifying criminals responsible for causing damage in recent rallies. He was, however, firmly against the idea of a paramilitary structure that was armed and trained.

Shelley Gielink
Natal Office

Cape forum makes good progress

CONSIDERABLE progress has been made with consolidating the structures of the Western Cape Economic Development Forum and launching projects that deliver specific development products and results.

Membership has been consolidated and includes the major trade union federations, organised business, the major local regional authorities and most of the significant political parties and civic federations in the region. A full-time co-ordinator and administrator were appointed in July and a newsletter has been produced.

Six commissions have been established. Among them are the Short-term Job Creation Commission and the Economic Growth and Restructuring Commission which is developing realistic strategies for export promotion, tourism, support for small and medium enterprises, industrial growth and restructuring and foreign capital investment.

The Urban Development Commission focuses on major urban development projects in areas such as housing, land

use, infrastructure and the environment and has already developed interim principles to guide planning and development.

The Commission on Development Strategy, is finalising a draft common vision statement.

The Rural and Agriculture Commission seeks to explore how the relationship between the economies of the metropolitan area and the rural hinterland can best be managed.

The forum seeks to facilitate capacity building in community-based organisations by developing programmes to ensure that they can participate effectively in the development process as a matter of priority.

David Schmidt
Regional Director

Knuckling down to public sector needs

THE shortage of black personnel for a future non-racial public sector and the need to discuss and co-ordinate training courses brought together universities, technikons and civics at a workshop in Port Alfred in mid-June.

Fifteen civic structures from the Eastern Cape, four universities (UPE, Wits, Durban Westville and Vista) and three technikons (Mangosutho, Border and Port Elizabeth) met to discuss the training and development of human resources.

The courses currently in design or on offer include university and technikon courses on public affairs; public admin-

istration and development; mentoring of black understudies in middle management; and introduction to municipal management and administration.

It was agreed that bridging courses for potential students were necessary. One example was provided by Vista University which offered a public affairs programme for those without a matric certificate who could then qualify for further study at technikons.

The question of funding prompted much discussion. It was agreed to fundraise jointly with civics on the one hand, and the Foundation for Public Administration on the other.

The state-funded Training Board for Local Government Associations and the Apprenticeship Board were also identified as important resources to be tapped.

The issue of accreditation was hotly disputed. A number of people felt that certificates issued on completion of short courses in the relevant fields should qualify them for entrance to universities and technikons. The tertiary institutions rejected this view.

Max Mamase
Regional Co-director



Voters queue up to cast their ballots.

Mock elections reveal real fears

A MOCK election held among hostel residents from Soshanguve recently returned a spoilt ballot of more than 20 percent – a good indication of the fact that this was a first experience for many of those voting!

More than 80 delegates – mainly residents of Soshanguve Hostel and members of community organisations – attended the workshop at the hostel.

Given the negative attitudes by the majority of township residents towards the hostels, community participation in the workshop was of great signifi-

cance. It reduced barriers and for the hostel delegates it created a sense of belonging.

Besides the broader discussions on what democracy means, the workshop addressed issues such as the mechanics of voting, legal requirements, who controls the process and who counts the votes.

Commissions on voter education and political tolerance took place and the first commission addressed the questions of whether one's vote really makes a difference; whether an employer could

know which party one had voted for; what to do if an employer threatened to dismiss staff for not voting for a particular party; and whether party officials could know for whom one had voted.

Another commission focused on the banning of political parties and whether one had the right to eliminate one's opponents. Could one, under the banner of democracy, stop any party from organising or recruiting members in a particular area and could anyone be required to join a party on the

basis of his or her ethnic group?

People found it very difficult to exercise tolerance when they themselves have never been recipients of tolerance. Recent incidents, such as the National Party's sudden recruitment drives in black areas, provoked strong reactions and accusations of "co-option".

Delegates resolved that, for the sake of peace and democracy, this issue required much more attention and Idasa will hold follow-up workshops.

Paul Zondo
Regional Co-ordinator

NEW RURAL VOTER MANUAL

Practical steps in voter education from Idasa

IDASA'S Training Centre for Democracy has just released a voter education training kit especially for people in rural areas. The pack includes 10 large colour posters and a detailed guide of how to run a voter education workshop.

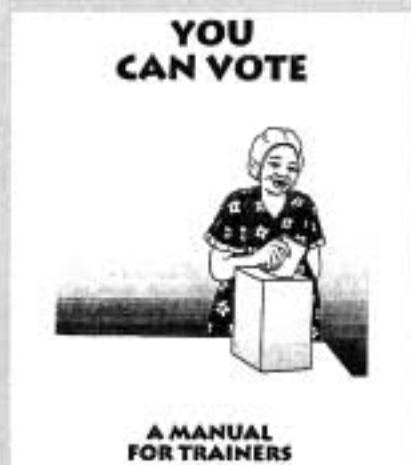
The 10 colour posters (there are two copies of each poster in the pack) depict a variety of aspects of the voting process as well as broader issues about elections. There are step-by-step notes to guide trainers on how to use each poster.

The 10 different poster themes are: Talking about voting; Example of a voting paper; Voters; The election campaign; Outside the voting station; Inside the voting station; Voting; Competition; Commu-

nity; Working for democracy.

There is also an exercise on how to run a mini-election, a practice page for making a cross and an example of a ballot paper.

The kit was developed from a workshop with rural trainers and women living in rural



areas - and a special word of thanks is addressed to "Mam



A poster from Idasa's new voter education manual to stimulate discussion around two key points: all parties have the right to campaign for votes, and, nobody has the right to force you to vote for any party.

Lydia" of Trac, the Transvaal Rural Action Committee, for her contribution.

After the trainers had decided which messages were most important, participants in the workshop suggested which images should be used to carry the messages.

The manual was written by Alison Curry and Marie-Louise Ström, tutors at the Training Centre for Democracy.

"You Can Vote" is available from the Training Centre for Democracy, 39 Honey Street, Berea, Johannesburg. Telephone (011) 484-3694.

Great northern divide narrows

WHAT is happening in the far North - the land of great divides? If recent events are anything to go by, the character of the northern Transvaal is changing.

Over the last two years players across the political spectrum have met under the auspices of Idasa's Pretoria office to debate constitutional issues. This group - the Northern Transvaal Regional Political Discussion Forum (RPDF) - includes representatives from Ximoko Progressive Party (Gazankulu), United People's Front (Lebowa), the Venda Government and the National Party as well as the PAC, ANC and Transvaal Indian Congress.

Noteable absentees to this process are the Conservative Party and Azapo.

Perhaps not surprisingly, people found that they could speak to one another around the table and by May this year

all players were ready to transform talk into action.

On May 28, the political groupings presented their perspectives on demarcation for regions, and various options for the northern areas of the Transvaal. Of significance was the degree of consensus found in the inputs. Unfortunately, the PAC was unable to attend owing to the infamous nationwide raid; but a surprising development was the departure by both the NP and the DP from their official policies to state that they wanted the region to be separate from Pretoria and/or the eastern Transvaal - an important area of agreement.

In addition, the RPDF agreed to commission research into the issue of demarcation for the northern Transvaal region, with the intention to develop a joint regional position on boundaries for submis-

sion to the multi-party negotiating forum.

Principal consultants for the research are Bertus de Villiers from the Centre for Constitutional Analysis and Richard Humphries of the Centre for Policy Studies. This will be undertaken using internationally acceptable criteria of demarcation of boundaries, and also taking into account the negotiation process.

Finally, a workshop looking at the region as an economic entity was held, bringing together some 45 groups, including government, political organisations, labour, business, NGOs, development initiatives and peace structures.

Delegates learnt that the region had the lowest "regional" gross domestic product in the country, and no progressive and overarching structure to co-ordinate development issues.

The RPDF believes that a process should be undertaken to pull together all development initiatives and groupings in the region, in the hope that an umbrella forum will emerge.

The politicians accepted that they should not drive this process, but were well placed to initiate it. In June the forum was initiated and a unanimous decision was taken to continue with this process, and a steering committee, consisting of four persons each from business and labour, and six persons each from statutory and non-statutory bodies, was appointed.

Their brief is to develop policy, objectives, structures and a work programme for the forum which is due to be launched on August 27.

Watch out, South, the North may yet have lessons to teach you!

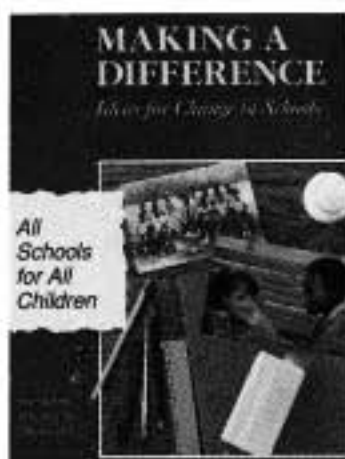
Ivor Jenkins and Kerry Harris, Idasa staff in Pretoria.

RESOURCES FROM IDASA

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: IDEAS FOR CHANGE IN SCHOOLS

R15,00 (incl Vat)

A handy workbook for teachers, parents and others interested in the evolving education system. It provides a series of workshops designed to examine the issues raised in today's mixed-race classrooms — language policy, class size, interracial tolerance, cultural dominance. Compiled by Ruth Versfeld, Penny Behrens and Emilia Potenza. Published by Idasa and Oxford University Press



SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA DIRECTORY

R20,00

Compiled by Moira Levy. 1993 Edition available now. A useful and up to date contact list of newspapers, magazines, news agencies, television and radio stations operating in South Africa. A 36-page resource providing journalist contacts, telephone and fax numbers and addresses.

WOMEN IN A NEW SA

R30,00

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

DEMOCRACY

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

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

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

R10,00

The critical issue of foreign investment in the post-apartheid South Africa was examined in depth by a representative group of political and business leaders at a workshop hosted by Idasa in 1992. This book is an edited account of the discussions and covers themes such as the need for an investment code, potential benefits of foreign investment, incentives for investors and the need to balance the demands of investors with the needs of the people of South Africa.

All material is available from the Media Department, Idasa, 1 Penzance Rd, Mowbray 7700. (Tel 021-473127). Prices include VAT.

Green justice: a step closer to relevancy

HIDDEN FACES. Environment, Development, Justice: South Africa and the Global Context, David Hallows (ed), published by Earthlife Africa, 1993. R25, excl VAT.

ARE people poor because they don't have technology? Or are they poor precisely because alien technology has been imposed upon them, stamping out their indigenous methods of survival? Will industrialisation go hand-in-hand with development? Or, will the environmental consequences of that industrialisation leave people worse off than ever before?

If asked these questions, 50 randomly selected South Africans would respond with 50 radically differing answers. These are new issues for most South Africans, yet their importance cannot be underlined enough at a time when South Africa is pinning its hopes for a stable future on economic growth for the majority of the people.

At a week-long Earthlife conference in Pietermaritzburg last September, critical questions such as these were raised and debated by 300 delegates, comprising South Africans and a fresh contingent of guests from the southern hemisphere.

Entitled "What it means to be Green in South Africa", the conference honed in on the relationship between economic development and protecting the environment.

This publication, edited by conference organiser David Hallows, captures the spirit of the conference in a well-edited compilation of the papers presented.

The contributions span an enormously wide spectrum, from Ben Turok of the Institute for African Alternatives, to Nigerian environmentalist Jimoh Omo-Fadaka to Indian nuclear physicist Vandon Shiva to a Richards Bay Minerals engineer. Trade unionists, representatives from the ANC and PAC and even former Minister of Environment Louis Pienaar also present their arguments.

The most common phrase used by participants was "sustainable development". These two words became idolised, symbolising the idealistic concept of a development process that was racially inclusive, gender-sensitive, politically correct, democratically directed and environmentally preserving.

By capturing the controversial flavour of the conference, the book mixes idealism with

grassroots outrage with the scientific approaches of university researchers. Each contributor outlines a new "more important" problem and comes up with his or her own solution. It seems impossible to find one path where all sectors will work together for environmentally sustainable growth.

But there lies the challenge for the South African Green movement. "Hidden Faces", by neglecting no one and looking these challenges straight in the eye, can only help the movement to succeed.

In a summing up argument, Turok pulls together the good points of the conference and suggests a path forward. He says that service organisations should "get their hands dirty" and understand the problems of the rural areas. He says that policy need not be made only in the universities' ivory towers. And he says that the difficult aim of sustainable development can only be achieved through alliance with all social groups.

In a powerful contribution, Omo-Fadaka writes: "The real implementors of development are the people themselves. Those most likely to be affected by development decisions should have the most active role in reaching those decisions."

He stresses that economic growth, peace, environment and sustainable development are all connected. The way to deal with the dual challenge of environment and sustainable development lies not in some blind faith in technology and its continued expansion, but rather in bringing the human community back to the centre of the development process.

"Hidden Faces" represents another step closer to relevancy by the Earthlife-led environmental justice movement. It is a step away from the traditionally white-oriented wildlife preservation clubs and state-sponsored programmes aimed at stemming the population growth. A national environmental justice network, headed by Pietermaritzburg's Chris Albertyn, has sprouted from the conference resolutions and is preparing to launch as a formal international and national networking organisation by the end of the year.

This book enables the sparks of the September conference to shine on into the present and future.

Lena Slachmuis is a journalist based in Durban. ("Hidden Faces" is available from Russel Friedman Books, P O Box 73, Halfway House 1685)

Workplaces challenged to change

By **LINDA LOXTON**

REVERSING DISCRIMINATION: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN THE WORKPLACE, edited by Duncan Innes, Matthew Kentridge and Helene Perold, Oxford University Press.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA, edited by Charl Adams, Juta.

Affirmative action has become the buzz-word in corporate South Africa in the 1990s, but remains very much misunderstood and even feared.

Given our long and sorry history of racism and sexism, coupled with the profound lack of democracy and open debate about these issues, it is not surprising that there is confusion and fear about change in general, and in the workplace in particular.

Coming to terms with these, and the need to change attitudes, will be a very long and difficult process for all concerned and these two books provide useful pointers to potential pitfalls, challenges and opportunities.

Given the complexity of the issue, each in its own way provides a detailed definition of the problem of discrimination, be it conscious or unconscious, and what could or should be done by both management and workers to deal with them. And, in many ways, it will have to be a team effort – management cannot impose from above, workers cannot agitate from below in the face of a hostile management team, and hope to succeed in changing anything.

"Reversing Discrimination" is the second in a series of books prepared by the Innes Labour Brief aimed at exploring important issues affecting business in the transition to a more democratic South Africa. The first was "Power and Profit", which explored the

impact of political change on the complex relationship between business and labour.

"Reversing Discrimination" contains 17 papers by a range of academics, unionists, researchers and business people.

"Affirmative Action in a Democratic South Africa" is based on papers delivered at a symposium organised in August last year by the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce.

Both provide a fairly in-depth analysis of why affirmative action is needed. For those who take it for granted that there should be affirmative action these lengthy justifications might be surprising, but the care taken over exploring the pros and cons of affirmative action makes one realise that there are layers and layers of indoctrination and prejudice to be overcome in our society.

Many people just do not recognise their racism or sexism. In "Reversing Discrimination", researcher Brigid Strachan warns that the "wrong way to redress colour and gender imbalances in skilled labour markets is to sweep history under the carpet, pretending that everything is fine and that discrimination no longer occurs".

The government is already trying to do this by removing race from official statistics, even though Strachan estimates that the new South Africa will have to closely monitor how race and gender imbalances are being redressed for at least 10 years.

Many people refuse to talk about race or gender because the issues are "too painful". Yet others claim that affirmative action is "reverse discrimination" and will lead to a "lowering of standards". All these miss the point. Affirmative action is here to stay. Under the new constitution, all South Africans will be equal in terms of the law. But

their treatment to date has been anything but equal and, to use that well-worn but apt phrase, we must level the playing fields.

This means not only training and promoting more black people and women to middle and senior management posts, but also, say the unions, providing shopfloor staff with literacy and other skills training so that they can upgrade themselves.

To free market purists, this is heresy. They claim that the free enterprise system will deliver the "goodies" if allowed to operate unfettered. Black businessman Sam Montsi warned the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce symposium that this approach was liable to be misinterpreted by blacks who equated free enterprise with apartheid – and have benefitted from neither.

"Therefore suggesting that there is no need for affirmative action may result in not only the deepening frustration and resentment among blacks but could lead to even the most reasonable of them becoming desperate and supportive of policies and moves they would otherwise not support," he said.

"These statements may also be used by whites to justify inaction or failure of their half-hearted efforts in affirmative action."

Structured and well-thought-out affirmative action programmes are therefore essential. Both books provide valuable details of programmes that have succeeded or failed both here and elsewhere around the world. The most pernicious, perhaps, have been programmes (as in the US) which have developed a culture of entitlement among blacks; and those (as in Zimbabwe) that have merely involved window-dressing and have promoted blacks or women without giving them any real power.

Linda Loxton is a freelance journalist based in Cape Town.

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The video comes with a handbook written by educationists Ruth Versveld and Nigel Crawhill. It is available from NLP at PO Box 378, Salt River, 7924. Cost: R100 for institutions and R50 for individuals/community organisations.

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Security: a hot debate in mid-winter

By BEA ROBERTS

GIVEN the popularity of "Agenda" and similar TV programmes by which people can hear politicians in the comfort of their lounge, old style public meetings have all but disappeared. However, at a recent Idasa seminar in Pretoria, it was proved that despite the cold winter evening and TV options, the general public is still keen to engage face-to-face with politicians and experts around a "hot" topic.

The issue was the role of the security forces during the transition, in particular, control over the security forces in this time. Not bound by limitations of time, and not inhibited by the sterility of a TV studio, the debate was lively and the audience charged.

It was at this meeting that the ANC's Mathew Phosa first stated in public that the NEC had made a policy decision to distance themselves from the slogan "Kill the boer, kill the farmer" – and the applause which followed clearly showed the concern around the issue.

The line-up of speakers was impressive – Jakkie Cilliers from the Institute for Defence Policy, the DP's spokesperson on Law and Order, Peter Gastrow, Mathew Phosa of the ANC's legal committee and one of their key negotiators, and General Tienie Groenewald from the recently formed Afrikaner Volksfront.

Cilliers, Gastrow and Phosa all accepted that multi-party negotiations would proceed and a Transitional Executive Council be appointed.

Cilliers focused on the importance of a peacekeeping force and predicted unprecedented levels of instability and violence in the run-up to elections. He said that if the establishment of a peacekeeping force was seen as an interim measure only, there was the risk of repeating the experience of inadequately trained, unaccountable "kitskonstabels".

Peter Gastrow said that multiparty control over the police during the elections was critical, as joint control implied joint responsibility.

The widely held perception of the police as the extension of the National Party, made it easy for other political parties to use this for their own political mobilisation and to exploit the slightest form of police misconduct. This could potentially lead to the

undermining of the entire policing effort.

Phosa believed that the SAP should be restructured. This did not necessarily entail current members losing their jobs, providing they were efficient, accountable, non-partisan, and operated on the principle of non-racialism.

Phosa said that MK soldiers, as well as those from other formations, should be enabled to come home. They should be accommodated in camps, based and confined.

General Groenewald asked how one could talk about a transitional executive and an election date given the level of violence in the country.

In order to achieve peace, he said, private armies should be banned. Intimidation would prevent the possibility of free and fair elections. Once an election date was set, there would be no reason for parties to carry on with negotiations and all efforts would be channelled into winning the election.

Groenewald said integrating MK and the



Laurie Nathan (Centre for Intergroup Studies), Peter Gastrow, Mathew Phosa and Ethel Ranamane (Idasa).

SADF would serve only to break the morale of both armies. Joint control would never work, "for when everyone is accountable, no-one is accountable".

At the end of the meeting one was left with a sense that it was near impossible to reconcile the different positions.

However, the negotiations are continuing, albeit shakily and the issue of the security forces is being regarded with the utmost seriousness by all parties.

Bea Roberts is a regional co-ordinator in Idasa's Pretoria office.

Peace at the polls

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associations through their track record of independence, deep suspicions are likely to re-emerge during an election period so that well-meaning independent programmes are compromised and marginalised.

It is essential that attempts be made to create a trustworthy independent civil society. Allegiance to a code of impartiality and independence is the first step towards this as demonstrated by the Network of Independent Monitors.

A pre-election conference for all parties and major non-partisan actors may be another step. This should be done as soon as possible so that it does not become a part of any party's election strategy.

Limiting violence

There is little chance that the election will be conducted without violence. What South Africa should be aiming for is a reduction of violence, measures which reduce the potential for violence, and a certainty that violence will not stop the election or discredit the result.

The Peace Accord identified violence from a number of sources: the behaviour of the parties towards one another and the general public; the behaviour of the security forces in carrying out their designated tasks and in acting outside their terms of reference; violence arising out of socio-economic deprivation.

So a number of strategies must be put in place.

Firstly, there must be, in advance of any crisis, adequate communication channels between all sectors of the society and the authorities to deal with rumours, complaints and civil disturbance or crime.

Secondly, incidents will always lead to escalations unless there are mechanisms for limiting damage. Local peace committees, telephone links between key leaders, liaison groups, local monitors and observers, and community conciliators or mediators are needed. It is not appropriate for the police to play this role because they are often one of the parties.

Thirdly, despite provocation, the police have to develop an approach to protest action, marches and demonstrations which reduces temperatures. Too often their behaviour, not necessarily malicious, contributes to an escalation of the conflict. The police cannot expect the same levels of discipline and professionalism from crowds – of whatever political persuasion – that the society demands from its police force and must therefore develop new ways of preventing

and limiting violence.

Fourthly, the society in which we live has become extremely well armed. The present strategy of substantial penalties for the possession of "illegal" weapons will not work. Police bias in the distribution of licences will ensure that it becomes a political football with the only consequences a better concealment of unlicensed weapons and a worse reputation of political bias for the police. Nor will rewards work under the present situation where possessing a weapon has substantial utility value, either for personal protection or for criminal intent.

At some point in the political process there will have to be a multi-party effort to reduce the number of weapons both licensed and unlicensed. Symbolic laying down of arms, confidence in the ability of police to provide protection, leadership public statements and actions, stronger regulatory mechanisms over import and production of certain categories of weapons, and rewards appropriate to our context will all be required. In Mozambique the strategy was "food for weapons", here it might be "jobs for weapons".

Finally, a corps of neutral peace brokers with recognised bona fides and the ability to communicate regularly with all parties, organisations and institutions is required. In some situations, ordinary people may have achieved this status within the community. But in many places in South Africa we do not have such resources.

A model worth considering is the Community Relations Service set up in the USA during the period of the civil rights



Elections under civilian control, but police must protect voters.

movement and still operative today. Here a relatively small group of officials is available to fly in to a situation of violence or potential violence. They have the status of the government of the day and skills in conciliation and mediation. They are already accepted by the various parties and have the "clout" necessary to gain access to party officials and state officials. It does not seem to be beyond the realms of possibility for a Transitional Executive Council to establish such a specialist group here. Unlike the investigative wing of the Goldstone Commission, its officers would not be engaged in investigation and adjudication. Their job would be communi-

boxes and certified and counted ballots. This role should only be carried out by a regular uniformed police force. Other units with specialised functions and uniforms should not be used in order to maintain the image of an election under civilian control.

The SAP members who are to be deployed on election day should receive training regarding their role and the Electoral Act, and go through various simulations in order to ensure that they understand what is required of them over and above normal policing activities.

Any decision to deploy either the SADF or special units of the SAP such as the Internal Stability Unit should be made by the TEC in conjunction with monitoring groups.

Both international and local monitoring programmes will have to be organised and will operate independently of, but in communication with the police and electoral authorities.

Electoral education

Finally the citizens of South Africa must be educated. An educated electorate will resort less to irrational behaviour, will be more likely to resist misconduct by the parties, will be more apt to draw these misconducts to public notice, and will have more commitment to participating in and accepting the outcome of the election.

Paul Graham is the national programme director of Idasa.

Earning curve for business

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importance of these skills should not be under-estimated. It is with the knowledge of how to organise, run a meeting and deal with state funders that a community will access much more than any business CSI project could provide.

The communities referred to earlier saw that business did indeed have an important role to play in building democracy. This was because it made available services that empowered the community. In the past, business was criticised on the basis that it neither engaged the state itself nor did it help communities to do so.

In the future, business cannot afford to

stand by and let the state do as it pleases. If it wants support for its cause, business will have to assist communities in making their voices heard. Business people will also have to do some shouting themselves, not in favour of one or the other political party, but rather for the cause of economic growth and development.

In the economic forums space now exists for them to define what is best – alongside the communities who are always the first to feel the effects of a worsening economy.

Steve Collins is regional director of Idasa in Natal; Charles Talbot is a regional co-ordinator in Natal.

A public leash for media watchdogs

HAVE the media, particularly in the period immediately following February 2, 1990, reported adequately on the major issues facing all South Africans – in this case political and social change?

Or have the media been guilty of one-sidedness in presenting the case before all South Africa?

This is one-sidedness as distinct from bias in the “normal” and “accepted” South African sense, though it could be bias to mean reporting in favour of the groups at the negotiating forum (however disparate their thinking and their reasons for being at the talks), to the exclusion of those who have refused to join.

It seems to me that the media have, indeed, been one-sided in their reporting of current issues; such reporting, one hastens to add, has not necessarily been motivated by malice though it would not be totally incorrect to say self-interest on the part of the media may be part of the explanation.

For one thing, it is a fact that most media in the mainstream are looking at a “new” South Africa with a view to being still here when a new government takes over.

The media have been less than fair to, say, the Cosag group. It is one thing to believe – as indeed I personally do – that members of Cosag are all entities with dismal prospects at truly free and fair elections, and that their tactics are time-delaying devices designed to lengthen as much as possible the status quo while delaying the future with its unknowns. It is quite another to report only on what shed negative light on the leadership of Cosag and their intentions. Whether Cosag are not everyone’s cup of tea is not the point, the fact of the matter is that they are negotiating partners with the rest of the ensemble at Kempton Park, and must be treated no less.

More glaring on the part of the major media, though, is the tendency to sensationalise issues involving leaders of the African National Congress on the one hand, and those of the National Party on the other.

The leaking of “news” of Mandela making a telephone call to De Klerk leads to all sorts of speculation and screaming sensational headlines, inconsequential nods between Cyril Ramaphosa and Roelf Meyer are reported with the aplomb and magnitude of, say, John Vorster meeting Kenneth Kaunda for the first time.

For leaders of other, presumably “lesser”, parties to grab the same sort of headlines they would have to be linked to either the ANC or the NP. Thus Mandela meeting Buthelezi commands acres of space and time in print and on the air every day for seven days a week.

This is not to say the event itself is not newsworthy, but to question whether it does merit the almost manic attention it receives. No one in the media, in the meantime, bothers to question soberly whether the one-day meeting will produce

any results, given the already horrible situation of violence into which the country has slid.

Yes, yes, anything remotely capable of restoring peace – such as a meeting between the two men – must be welcomed, etc. But why do the media not bluntly tell the two men that their gesture may very well be a case of too little too late?

Perhaps it is impossible for the media to put things in perspective; the SABC, for example, is not only still carrying the heavy albatross of being the government’s lapdog for so long but now has to contend with a very controversial case of government interference with the appointment of an independent board by an independent panel of jurists.

But having a new SABC board, however impeccable its credentials, will not dispel lingering doubts about the corporation’s ability and willingness to report fairly and objectively – until the top and middle management of the SABC, having been used to years of repeating their master’s voice, are all dismissed.

On the print media front, the same baggage is in place, with the crucial difference that here we are dealing with private enterprises. Legislation creating anti-monopoly trusts may be necessary if media boardrooms are to reflect the true demographics of South African society and therefore, hopefully, to reflect that situation in the dissemination of news.

The public has a crucial role to play in all this. Just as politicians often claim to be speaking on behalf of “the people”, so do media overlords invoke the right of free speech and expression to claim that, in the end, it is in the public’s interests to have such untampered right as it grants not only the press but “the people” the platform to exercise their civil liberties.

The South African public has been used, abused, and even misused by politicians for many decades – and the media, sad to say, have played some part in this.

South Africans must themselves take the initiative by questioning the true role of the media – is it first and foremost to make money and, second, to inform? Or should it be the other way round?

Is it possible to separate news on a racial basis, as seen in the prevalence of so-called “Extra” and “Township” editions designed solely for “non-white” consumption? Indeed, are glib arguments that such editions are designed more on a regional and not racial basis convincing and sufficient?

It is all very well having a new SABC board and a few black faces on one or two major boards of the media, but what it really amounts to – with no reflection on the black members per se – is that it is all oh so token.

Deregulation, we must remember, does not involve only the government. Private enterprise, especially the media with its heavy concentration of power and influence in too few hands, must also deregulate.



by JON QWELANE

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