

Bridging the credibility gap

Police face up to improving the force - image and act

By SUE VALENTINE

HOW to bridge the chasm of credibility between the police in South Africa and the communities they must serve was one of the many complex questions examined during a conference hosted by Idasa in Vanderbijlpark in October.

After nearly two years of planning and negotiating, the conference finally brought together representatives of the South African Police and the various homeland police forces with political and non-governmental organisations, international policing specialists and private citizens.

It was a memorable gathering, if only for the announcement at the start of proceedings requesting all delegates who were carrying guns to please hand them in to the hotel safe!

Some 73 speakers participated (the only no-show was the PAC) and the substantial SAP and homeland police presence provided the chance

for meaningful interaction between community representatives, monitors and the police.

Opening the conference, Idasa executive director Dr Alex Boraine appealed to delegates not to embark on a "police-bashing" exercise. At the same time, however, he emphasised the almost total lack of credibility of the SAP in the eyes of the majority of South Africans.



Ivor Jenkins of Idasa with police liaison officer Col Frans Malherbe and the Venda Commissioner of Police, Lt-Col Mulder van Eyk.

number of officers killed in recent years - 107 in 1990, 145 in 1991 and 174 up to September 1992.

Key issues which emerged, both from Dr Boraine's welcoming address and during the

To Page 6

Economy sets pace for change

THE only hope for the future in South Africa lies in the recognition that economic restructuring is as necessary - and urgent - as political restructuring. The country cannot afford "chicken-and-egg" debates on political and economic restructuring.

In an article in this journal, Idasa economics consultant Warren Krafchik warns against the political process holding development to ransom.

He says there is a lobby that argues that, although development is needed to create a stable democracy, a political settlement must precede a development settlement. On these grounds, numerous development initiatives have been postponed or aborted. The government is unable to implement development initiatives as these will be rejected as unilateral restructuring; however, without political power, neither can any of the opposition groups negotiate development.

"What this means is that the political process is effectively holding the development process to ransom," writes Krafchik.

Failure to address popular material expectations would threaten the stability of the transition.

"The removal of political distortions will obviously not miraculously restore us to the growth rates of the 1960s."

See article, Page 12

INSIDE

**A confusion of
federal proportions**

- PAGE 14 -

**Cauldron of conflict
in Ciskei**

- PAGE 20 -

What it means to be a leader now



It has been said before – South Africa is a very strange society. Against the background of deep social and racial cleavages, against the spectre of ever-increasing unemployment with its attendant misery and instability, our political leaders continue to play fast and loose with the hopes and aspirations of all South Africans.

Chief Minister Mangosutho Buthelezi and 20 000 of his IFP supporters march through Johannesburg carrying dangerous weapons. This in defiance of the recommendations of the National Peace Accord and the Goldstone Commission. The weapons, according to eye witnesses, included wooden and metal sticks, axes, spears and baseball bats. Mr Felgate, senior spokesperson for the IFP, insists that "Zulus will continue to carry their traditional weapons despite the outlawing of these". Baseball bats!? Is this how far American imperialism has reached!? Perhaps having failed to make any impression on the international soccer scene, South Africa will do a lot better in baseball! If it wasn't so serious, it would be farcical. The carrying of dangerous weapons against the background of continuing violence is at least as reckless and provocative as the ANC's determination to march on Ulundi.

One of the basic reasons why the ANC continues to threaten to march on Ulundi and Mmabatho is the lack of political freedom which exists in many homelands and so-called independent states. The call for Mr Mandela to cancel these marches because of the prevailing climate in no way excuses the bankrupt policies of the government in this regard.

It is the government and the government alone which must accept full responsibility for the balkanisation of South Africa and the consequent lack of political freedom and denial of democracy. It is the government and the government alone which has the capacity to bring pressure to bear upon those leaders who deny basic fundamental rights to all of their people. It is a nonsense for the government to suggest that these homelands enjoy sovereignty. Without the government paying the bill, at the expense of the South African taxpayer, they would not be able to last for 24 hours. It is completely within their power to bring pressure to bear on these states.

The latest charade in the dilution of democracy is the recent short session of parliament. It is clear that the National Party, with the State President in the vanguard, used this session in the first place to placate the party faithful. In the second place, the government attempted to ram through unpopular legislation at all costs.

The question of indemnity is highly controversial and despite many warnings and pleas from a variety of sources, Mr De Klerk went ahead and tried to force through the Further Indemnity Bill. In trying to steamroller parliament and force the bill through the President's Council, the State President has made the concept of democracy meaningless and has dragged the present unrepresentative parliament to a new low and into further disrepute.

At this critical time of its history, South Africa doesn't need a lame duck parliament which is manipulated by the ruling party.

South Africa doesn't need marches, armed or otherwise. We need men and women of vision who, because of the seriousness of our times, will set aside party political ambitions and self-interest, and work together for the common good.

Having said that, what does it really amount to? It is one thing to be critical of the current leadership. But it is another to suggest alternative democratic action. If the key leaders were to take seriously a commitment to building the nation and resolving conflict and setting South Africa on a road to democracy, peace and prosperity, certain gestures have to be made.

To start the process, Mr De Klerk could immediately announce that after due consideration and for the sake of genuine reconciliation, he is delaying the Further Indemnity Bill until it can be considered by an interim government. It will mean that Mr Mandela will state publicly that for the sake of reconciliation the ANC will not march on Ulundi and Mmabatho. It will mean that Chief Buthelezi will no longer defy the law relating to the bearing of dangerous weapons in public and declare that the IFP will respect the judgement of the National Peace Accord and the Goldstone Commission regarding this matter. It would also mean that these three leaders will agree to meet around a table in order to thrash out their differences and to set a timetable for multilateral negotiations leading towards an interim government.

THIS is in no way to minimise the serious differences in policy and attitudes between the three parties they represent. But the place to resolve these differences is not through point-scoring and public acrimony, but at the negotiation table. They must begin to lead by example. If the situation is such, and the differences are vast, then it may make good sense to have a mediator or facilitator who could bring about the meeting and enable the three leaders to discuss sensibly and seriously the issues which have divided them for so long. They should not be allowed to end the discussions until, through compromise and consensus, they find a way forward to further negotiations.

In the United States of America, there are clear signs that ordinary Americans are contemptuous and weary of traditional politics and self-serving politicians. The time is long overdue for ordinary South Africans who are just trying to get on with their lives, getting their children to school, of feeding and clothing their families, of making ends meet, to demand of their leaders the integrity, the vision and the common sense which would replace the petty politics and the furthering of their own political ends. If ordinary South Africans, who are fearful of their future and the future of their children, and are fed up with the on/off negotiations, can be galvanised into putting pressure on all political parties, this would indeed be democracy in action.

*Alex Boraine
Executive Director*

PORT ELIZABETH**Holomisa, Meyer tackle homeland issue***Mr Roelf Meyer*

The Minister of Constitutional Development, Mr Roelf Meyer, and Major-General Bantu Holomisa of Transkei will debate the issue of interim homeland administration at a public forum hosted by Idasa.

The debate will take place in mid-November and further details may be obtained from the Port Elizabeth office.

Community courts

A one day "think-tank" on community courts will be held on November 24 at the Humewood Hotel.

People doing research on community courts have been invited to participate.

PRETORIA**Police tour of Denmark**

An Idasa-led tour to Denmark is taking place between 8 and 23 November. A group of 10 community leaders and 10 police personnel will hold discussions with their Danish counterparts on police/community relations.

The tour is sponsored by the Danish government and will be led by Ivor Jenkins of the Pretoria office and Idasa programme director Paul Graham.

Religious Freedom Charter

The Pretoria office in conjunction with the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) will host a conference at the Pretoria Holiday

Inn on November 22-24 to finalise the draft charter for Religious Freedom.

This charter is to be presented to a future constitution writing body.

Democracy workshops

Two "Introduction to Democracy" workshops will be held on November 11 and 15. One of the workshops will be geared towards the business community and the other will be specifically for civic organisations. For more information contact the Pretoria office

Development for Midrand

A workshop focusing on development for the Midrand, facilitated by Idasa, will be held on November 14 and 15.

WESTERN CAPE**Democratic symbols for city**

A seminar on "Symbols for a Democratic Cape Town", organised in conjunction with the University of the Western Cape's Mayibuye Centre, has been postponed to November 30.

Phone Sazi at (021) 462 3635/6 for further details.

Workshop for teachers

A three-day workshop for teachers will be held in George from 13 to 15 November.

Among the themes for discussion are schools in transition, culture and ethos and changes in the curriculum.

'Democratic City' Tours

The Western Cape social history bus has become a regular sight around the townships of Cape Town. Further details can be obtained from Charles or Paula at (021) 462 3635.

DEMOCRACY TRAINING CENTRE**Community exposure to training**

The Democracy Training Centre will be conducting a number of "Introduction to Democracy" training courses during November.

Floor workers and supervisors of Revlon will be attending these workshops on three consecutive Saturdays.

● On November 7 a workshop will be held for the staff of the Eldorado Park Violence Prevention programme. The workshop will focus on democratic practices and accountability.

● A one-day workshop exploring the principles and practices of democracy, and the context of school-related violence will take place on December 5. The workshop will be jointly facilitated with the Project for the Study of Violence.

Representatives from all major student organisations in the country as well as the NECC and teacher organisations have been invited to participate. Attention will be given to ways of reducing the level of violence at affected schools in the PWV region before the start of the new school year.

EAST LONDON**Housing crisis**

A breakfast forum on the housing crisis will be held on November 21 as part of Idasa's ongoing urban development seminar series. The meeting will be held at East London's Holiday Inn from 8.30am to 1pm.

Debating regionalism

A workshop on regionalism will be held on December 5. The workshop is aimed at

members of the civic organisations and hopes to begin the debate on regionalism in the area. A conference which would take the issue of regionalism further is planned for early next year.

BLOEMFONTEIN**Education forum**

An education forum will be held on November 20. This workshop forms part of the ongoing activities of the OFS Education Forum which was formed earlier this year.

Democratic training for principals

The Bloemfontein office together with the Democracy Training Centre will be holding a workshop on democracy for school principals in the Free State. The workshop will look at ways of building a democratic environment for education.

NATAL**Women's Codesa in Durban**

An important national gathering of women takes place in Durban in December to focus on structural mechanisms to empower women in a democratic government.

The workshop has been arranged by Idasa's Natal office in close association with women academics and activists, including the Women's Coalition which represents most political and non-governmental organisations dealing with gender issues. It grew from a consultative meeting in August which also set the agenda for the December 5-6 workshop.

A ministry of women's affairs will be among the options that will be considered. Participation in the workshop is by invitation. Contact Shelagh Gastrow at (031) 3048893.

SA learns how it's done from election experts

ELECTIONS can only be legitimate if the entire electoral process is a sound one in which efforts are made to enfranchise and encourage voter turnout. It would be a serious mistake for the government to base its election strategy on a low voter turnout or on gerrymandering.

While it may not appear to be in the immediate interest of a particular party to promote a high and well-informed turnout, the long-term interests of the country are best served by the election of a legitimate and broadly acceptable body, where there can be little doubt of the strength of the mandate given or of the support of the various opposition parties.

These were some of the lessons South Africa was able to learn from an international seminar on election monitoring held recently in a castle in a Vienna wood by the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Academy of Public Administration.

With the growing worldwide commitment to the promotion of democracy and its institutions - among them elections - the United Nations and other international bodies have been playing a more active and impartial role in assisting countries in what appears to be an entirely internal and sovereign activity: an election.

With the focus on the role and consequences of international intervention, the conference examined five models of recent international election assistance, namely Namibia, Cambodia, Haiti, El Salvador and Eritrea. For example, in Namibia the UN was acting on its own behalf in meeting long-standing international agreements with the co-operation of the affected parties. In Cambodia, a brokered peace treaty led to a request from the major parties and a massive UN operation in which there is significant and wide-ranging day to day administrative power in the hands of Untag, especially in the election process and peacekeeping.

There are many lessons for South Africa in these examples. One of the most clearcut - and this comes from Cambodia - is that

By **PAUL GRAHAM**

there must be a formal and clear agreement to govern the electoral process. In Cambodia, with less than six months to go, as it becomes clear that the agreement signed in Paris left areas of ambiguity, there is still no agreement on the definition of who shall be able to vote.

Related to this is the need for a very clear mandate for any international organisation that is requested to go beyond observation to assistance and intervention. The present UN mandate in South Africa is likely to lead to problems both for their staff and local people and organisations unless there is substantial goodwill which allows ongoing clarification of roles.

From the conference proceedings it became clear that just as it is always better to initiate a project before inviting outside con-

sultants, so it is essential that the development of an election monitoring plan must come from inside the country.

Finally, elections are about security. The security of the voter and of the parties as they seek to gather support; the security of the election and of the ballot; and the security of a natural and peaceful transfer of power. The rules for this security and the roles of the parties, the security forces, monitors and the citizens themselves must be defined and communicated.

The acceptance of the results of a free and fair election will come about when the majority of citizens believe they have the security to vote, to campaign and to disagree without fear of reprisal.

Paul Graham is programme director with Idasa.

Training Centre on the road

The British Embassy recently donated a new vehicle to Idasa's Training Centre for Democracy in Johannesburg. The vehicle will be used for transporting students and materials for the various courses offered by the centre.

The vehicle was handed over to executive director Dr Alex Boraine by British Ambassador Mr Anthony Reeve. With Mr Reeve (second left) are the director of the Training Centre, Mr Paul Graham, Dr Boraine and Idasa staff Ms Vino Subramoney, Ms Quinette Watani, Mr David Screen (administrative director) and Mr Lufuno Neohutala.



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A tragic loss

Delegate gunned down days after conference



Prince Mhlambi

THE success of the policing conference was marred by the news of the violent death just two days afterwards of Prince Mhlambi, 23, a delegate who had spoken about police-community relations in Phola Park at the conference. He was assassinated by unknown gunmen in Thokoza.

In his address he described how various efforts by Phola Park residents to improve relations with the police had disintegrated.

Initially a forum consisting of residents of the Phola Park civic committee and the police had reached several agreements:

- that before any police units moved in Phola Park they would sign in at the civic committee's office;
- the person in charge would introduce himself; Casspirs and police vehicles would have registration plates for identification;
- a telephone would be installed in the civic office and police officers would give their emergency phone numbers to the civic.

Mhlambi said these arrangements had worked successfully for some time, but problems occurred, particularly as a result of different police units being used which did not feel bound by the agreements reached with the Phola Park civic. The final breakdown in police-community relations came when a police general in Pretoria ordered the police to cancel the agreements immediately.

With hindsight it might be ironic, or highly significant, that in his address to the conference Mhlambi had commented that such negotiations with the police also put the lives of community leaders in jeopardy due to raised expectations among the residents which were often dashed.

"When something else happened than what the leaders had

promised them, the leaders lost credibility... Later the mistrust was so big that the members of the civic committee were suspected of co-operating with the police as police informers." Mhlambi added that it appeared that in some cases the rumours were initiated

'Later the mistrust was so big that the members of the civic committee were suspected of co-operating with the police'

and supported by the police themselves.

He said this sequence of events had led to the death of two civic leaders - Harris Booie and Johnson Madiga - and to the end of the organised representation of the residents in a civic committee.

Offering recommendations as to a way forward for police-community relations in Phola Park, Mhlambi said it would not be easy to get any of the leadership back to the negotiating table but it was a necessity.

He added that a new monitoring council should be established with representatives from the police, the churches,

To Page 8

Bridging the credibility gap

From Page 1

course of the conference, included questions of greater police accountability to South African society, the demilitarisation of the police force, the democratisation of the force through a "flattened" command structure and improved pay and career prospects for police officers.

The context in which all these changes needed to occur was not an easy one, however, as Idasa policy and planning director Dr Van Zyl Slabbert pointed out when he focused on the process of transition in South Africa.

For negotiations to succeed, a relatively stable socio-political environment was needed, yet the very agents responsible for maintaining law and order, the police, have been part of the confrontation that preceded negotiations. Therefore, in order to play an effective stabilising role the police themselves needed their own transition - a process of depoliticisation so that they might become acceptable enforcers of stability.

The rising levels of criminal violence which co-existed with political and factional violence further complicated the transition. According to Dr Slabbert, if bodies such as the National Peace Accord or the Goldstone Commission were even to be remotely effective, a rapid improvement in police-community relations was urgently needed.

Dr Slabbert said the civil service had been "meticulously created" to pursue certain constitutional goals that had now been abandoned. However, when politicians abandoned such goals it took time for the civil service to turn around.

"There is nothing as unhappy as a civil servant without a sense of purpose," he said. "We compound the difficulty of the transition by not taking the civil service seriously. It needs to function during the transition. I appeal to the politicians: don't leave the civil servants without a sense of purpose. There are no other civil servants waiting



Former Broederstroom trialist and MK member Ian Robertson with police public relations chief Col Dave Bruce.



Steve Collins of Idasa with Venetia Govender of Peace Action and Rupert Lorimer, DP MP and acting chairperson for the Witwatersrand/Vaal dispute resolution committee.

marised in the concept of service, said Dr Wierda. "Service to people, to citizens, to the weak against the strong, to democracy, to the rule of law, to authorities, to colleagues, to the quality of the police."

The controlling devices in society to keep the police in check should include: publicly known standards, openness to media scrutiny, visibility, citizen bodies for performance review, authorities over the police with a real interest in the human wellbeing of police officers, internal democracy within the police and parliamentary monitoring and control of the police.

Later in the conference Dr Wierda resolutely defended the notion that the police were responsible for developing and nurturing good community links.

In response to a statement by Witwatersrand police public relations chief Lt-Colonel Dave Bruce that the police were changing and trying to improve their relations with the community and that the community had a responsibility to assist the police, Dr Wierda argued that the community was under no such obligation.

"The police should be progressive, visionary and capable of responding to linkages between economic, social and political demands"

If the police wanted to enjoy good public relations, he said, it was up to them to initiate and build them.

Following on from discussions on problems within the SAP the conference shifted onto how to reform policing in South Africa.

Canadian police specialist Jim Harding said the need for police reform was not unique to South Africa.

Quoting Aristotle, Harding said if the law was the pledge that citizens of the state would do justice to each other, then the great ideal for the police was to design an environment in which this

out there to take over. We have to take them through the transition."

Throughout the four-day conference – and during two closed sessions involving police and international policing specialists – police accountability to the community emerged as a central theme.

"If the police wants to enjoy good public relations, it is up to them to initiate and build them"

Among the overseas delegation was the chief of police in Utrecht, Holland, Dr Jan Wierda, who delivered the keynote address.

Democracy, he said, meant that nobody was in power alone. Power always had to be shared in a system of checks and balances in such a way that no groups nor individuals had the opportunity to suppress others in their own interest.

"The concept of democracy has to be in the heads and the hearts of all police officers...and then they have to balance their approach between the concept of democracy on the one hand and the use of force on the other."

Dr Wierda said the most

basic mission for the police was to reduce violence.

In day-to-day practice this meant that police officers should, if possible, not use violence; should not provoke violence in behaviour or presentation; should try to prevent violence from happening to others and, if the need arose, apply violence in a highly professional way.

According to Dr Wierda, such "professionalism" was based on three main issues: the rule of law; to know and be known; and the delivery of quality, integrity and service in all their duties.

It was only through the process of knowing the community and in turn being known that police officers could begin to build relationships of trust with individual citizens.

The total approach needed could be sum-



Specialist in police reform, Jim Harding, chief of Halton police in Ontario, Canada.

Bridging the gap

From Page 7

could happen. Citing a long list of changes that were necessary in order to ensure that the police served society, Harding emphasised the need for a new approach to and understanding of discipline.

Remarking on drills he had observed in SAP colleges (and other police academies round the world), he exhorted the police to distinguish between discipline and regimentation.

"Discipline is discipline of the self: to study, a desire to be professional and to serve. Discipline has a new face, we must throw out the old one!"

The police should be "progressive, visionary and capable of responding to linkages between economic, social and political demands", said Harding. Flexibility and versatility were essential ingredients.

"The police executive tradition of boldly leading the police force into the past has got to die!" Instead, he added, the motto of the modern police officer should be: "my interest is in the future because I'm going to spend the rest of my life there".

Harding was also adamant that there should be no support for secretive policing in a democracy.

"We need to remember that within a democracy - which is a very demanding process - we cannot discharge our duties without the public's consent to do so on their behalf."

He added that police officers at all levels should not turn a blind eye to police wrongdoing and reminded them that they were not above the law.

"We must condemn it, oppose it, challenge it and deal with it... If you do not do so, do not delude yourself that you will secure the public trust."

Tragic loss

From Page 6

trade unions, business people and local government structures. In addition, the local police forces should be ordered to be bound by whatever agreements were reached.

"What has to be achieved is constant contact and a relationship between the police and the residents on a social basis. This means that the same persons must be stationed in this community on a longterm basis, and get into contact with the people, not only in crisis situations, but in everyday life in a positive way."

Change: police urged not to go it alone

It was clear at the conference that the new language of change has become part of official police parlance. However, as Canadian police chief Jim Harding said, it was one thing to "talk the talk", the SAP now needed to "walk the walk".

Time and again during the conference speakers emphasised that irrespective of their merits, any reforms to police-community relations introduced unilaterally by the police would be in vain unless the communities they were designed to serve were consulted.

On the surface it would seem that the rhetoric of change was shared by police and their critics. In his address, Deputy Minister of Law and Order Gert Myburgh spoke of the need for an holistic approach to crime and violence and the multi-dimensional model of community policing which the SAP was adopting.

Community policing, he said, comprised four associated elements: community based crime prevention; proactive servicing as opposed to emergency response; public participation in the planning and supervision of police operations; and the shifting of command responsibility to lower level ranks.

Acknowledging that the police had become "estranged from large segments of society over the years", Mr Myburgh said the SAP had a strategic plan for reform and restructuring which would give "considerable attention" to the poor image of the police.

Calling for a partnership between the police and the community, Mr Myburgh spoke of the need for the police to be "peace officers" and to engage in "interactive policing". He said the SAP was working towards a changed organisational structure in which the para-military model was surrendered for a flatter profile.

Chief of police in KwaZulu, Major-General Jac Buchner, also emphasised the need for police to serve those communities with which they were familiar and, despite a wary look over his shoulder at the deputy



BUCHNER: police must serve in communities they know.

minister, criticised the standard procedure in which police were recruited from one part of the country and then stationed in another area with which they had no affinity and little understanding or knowledge.

However, all the talk of change prompted Janine Rauch of the Project for the Study of Violence at Wits University to ask the deputy minister to acknowledge that this new language had not origi-

nated solely from within the SAP, and that the police needed to work *with* others in the process of change.

Bringing the conference to a close Dr Van Zyl Slabbert again drove home the point that the police could not act alone.

'The police need to realise that political change in South Africa is not an enemy'

"Whatever else you do as we go through the transition, you will not be able to pull yourselves up by your own bootstraps. You cannot effect change on your own," he said.

Just as there were now forums in which housing, electrification and politics were negotiated, so there should be forums in which politicians and the police could engage each other and in which the police and the community could develop joint strategies.

Stressing the need for shared decision-making Slabbert said: "There can be no development without an interim government in South Africa, but I cannot see an interim government going about its business effectively without stability in our society."

Fink Haysom of the ANC's constitutional committee said the police needed to realise that political change in South Africa was not an enemy but offered a future full of more creative opportunities than they had had until now.

Hope springs eternal ...but times are trying

With negotiations apparently on the back burner again, *Democracy In Action* asked around for comment on the mood in the black community... about negotiations, politicians and the state of people's pockets.

CONTRARY to the expectations of the average prophet of doom, there is hope out there that we shall yet arrive in a democratic South Africa.

While not condoning or sympathising with the pathetic political manoeuvring we have seen so much of lately, the general attitude among black people seems to be: "We can wait...but we mustn't relax the pressure."

However, this remarkable generosity in political affairs sits uncomfortably next to increasing despondency and mounting anger about security and financial matters. Here are some of the views:

HUMPHREY KHOZA, general manager of public affairs, Shell, and Western Cape chairperson of the Black Management Forum

"The stalemate in the negotiations process, the continuing violence and the bickering by political leaders, at the expense of innocent lives, is absurd and intolerable.

"Generally black people are tolerant and faithful. There is goodwill in the community, but times are very trying and I wonder how much more misery and poverty we can continue to assimilate. "Political leaders seem to think that they have a God-given right to lead and to govern. They need to awaken to the fact that trust can neither be bought nor demanded, it must be earned.

"If they stretch the people's patience to unacceptable proportions, the outcome will be too ghastly to contemplate.

"The economy continues to worsen, and unemployment, crime and homelessness are eroding the very fabric of our society. Attention must be drawn to the seriousness of this situation before it reaches lawlessness and ungovernability levels. This is not political rhetoric, but is caused by mere lack of basic fundamentals in life such as food, shelter, safety and security.

"Whilst we accept that there is no gain without pain, there is a limit to which any people's patience can be stretched.

"Whatever the outcome of the socio-political and economic reconstruction in South Africa, the material needs of the country's growing population have to be satisfied - and commerce and industry must grow to meet them."



MOODLEY: leaders' compromises don't touch sides

'It is up to the people to see that this society gets transformed into a better one'



WILLIAMS: increasing level of despondency



GINWALA: talks lack pace

MOEGSIEN WILLIAMS, deputy editor of *The Sowetan*, detects an increasing level of despondency in the black community, much of it fuelled by financial hardship and signs of breakdown and lawlessness in the community. He cites a recent example of two teenage girls who were dragged from their home in Evaton, allegedly by young comrades, and shot dead with AK47s in the grounds of a nearby school. Their assailants accused them of being informers for the KwaMadala hostel from where the Boipatong attack was launched.

"This kind of thing contributes to an air of despondency. Ordinary people are getting it from all sides," said Williams.

On the other hand, he feels that although people are concerned about the lack of progress in negotiations and their optimism has diminished, there is still a lot of confidence that "we will pull through". People who have suffered the worst ravages of apartheid have acquired the strength that arises from suffering. "They feel they can deal with this, it might be difficult but they've been through worse."

Williams believes that the protracted negotiation process has had a positive spin-off for the relationship between politicians and their supporters, which bodes well for the future of democracy. He says most of the struggle leaders who were revered and hero-worshipped in the black community have been brought down a peg or two and are now seen as normal mortals.

FRENE GINWALA, national convenor of the Women's Coalition and head of research in the ANC, expressed personal frustration with the slow progress of negotiations.

She says the National Party, on the one hand, still has to come to terms with the demand for a genuine democracy and, the ANC, on the other hand, needs to achieve consensus within the organisation about the objectives of the negotiation process.

Once agreement is reached on the need for a genuine democratic solution, the talks can proceed to finding appropriate mechanisms to realise this.

From Page 9

A further cause of frustration, said Dr Ginwala, concerned the shameful absence of women in the negotiation process. All the parties continue to pay lip service to the importance of having genuine representation from the entire South African population in the process. "When you say everyone must be there, it must mean women too. That's what all the parties are saying, but nothing is happening," she said.

SHADO TWALA, Radio Metro DJ

"People expected a lot from Mandela. They thought that when Mandela was released they would all wake up one morning and everything would be 'hunky-dory'. Black people expect far too much from the politicians.

"People must begin to understand that they have a chance to change things for themselves. This can only be done through education.

"But South Africans are always looking for a scapegoat to blame for all their problems. They love complaining. South Africans need to start changing things for themselves and they need to start first with changes in their own daily lives.

"Economically, we are going to go through bad times and everyone will feel the pinch. We need to try and get rid of the class factor and try to do whatever job we have to the best of our ability.

"We need to learn the value of work, like they do in Japan where even if you are a street sweeper your work is valued.

"On the whole I am confident and optimistic that South Africa has a bright future. We should stop looking back and start looking forward and forgive - but maybe we should not forget, but we have to forgive in order to go forward."

STRINI MOODLEY, publicity secretary of Azapo says in the present political climate black people are becoming more and more cynical as they witness their hopes of political and economic freedom fading.

"Their hopes lay for a time with their leaders in the various political organisations but as the leaders make compromise after compromise they are beginning to understand that their future is in their own hands.

"Their hopes also lie in the desire for all liberation movements - ANC, AZAPO and PAC - to come together in a Patriotic Front so that petty differences can be ironed out and a comprehensive strategy be mapped out for overthrowing the Nationalist regime.

"People do not have any faith in the present process as they see it whittling away their own demands. It is evident that the leadership's compromises do not even touch sides with the feelings on the ground.

"People don't think mass action is harming negotiations. They want mass action to be disciplined and well-co-ordinated. They believe that mass action is a necessary tool to overthrow the regime."



TWALA: people expect far too much from the politicians

'A characteristic feature of our community is that we have not allowed ourselves to become impotent because of despair'



PAHAD: fabric of society endangered



ROBERTS: fears of a violence-dominated society

AZIZ PAHAD, ANC department of international affairs

"There is tremendous anger and frustration in the community. The very fabric of our society is being endangered and yet some parties fail to see the deep crisis confronting us and continue to delay the coming into being of a democracy.

"In a situation of growing unemployment and deteriorating socio-economic conditions it is inevitable that people will despair.

However, a characteristic feature of our community is that we have not allowed ourselves to become impotent because of despair. People are using every opportunity to bring about a new democracy.

"The possibilities of negotiations restarting has encouraged many, and there is hope that within the next few months South Africa will have a government of national unity, and that within a reasonably short period of time we will have democratic elections for a constitution-making body.

"The people will not just sit and wait for a better future. They are organising in all their formations to make their hopes a reality."

SANDILE DIKENI, poet and freelance journalist in Cape Town, said people were still confident about a positive outcome to the negotiations. However, the longer it dragged on the worse the mood on the ground would become.

The current resistance in Ciskei, he said, was indicative of eroding tolerance. "People expected change when Sebe was ousted by Gqozo, they suffered terribly under Sebe."

Dikeni said young activists were "very uncomfortable" with suggestions that they must share responsibility for the level of violence in the country.

"We are being made to feel guilty about the mess in the country, but that is wrong. Apartheid should have stopped in the 1950s but the regime used their army to maintain it.

"When we look at the rest of the world - the Vietnamese and East Europeans - we realise how docile we in fact are in this country."

CHERYL ROBERTS, member of the National Olympic Committee of South Africa, believes that most people still support and put their faith in the negotiation process.

However, she thinks there are growing fears that a settlement may not usher in the non-racial, democratic society of everyone's hopes but that, instead, South Africa will become a violence-dominated society.

"There is a feeling that our future lies in the hands of both the politicians and the people themselves. Whilst the politicians may implement change and redeploy the apartheid network, it is up to the people to see that this society gets transformed into a better one."

THE elections in Angola supervised by a UN mission were judged free and fair by the over 500 international observers who had unlimited access to the country and the electoral process. In some cases they had overseen the campaign, the production of the Electoral Act and voter registration as well as the election days and the count.

Despite this Unita called foul and threatened to return the country to a civil war. That action resulted in high levels of tension and gun battles in the capital. At the time of writing, the outcome is uncertain and the results have been delayed.

The elections in Angola were an example to South Africa of what was possible for a country seeking democracy despite civil war, poverty and human suffering.

After witnessing the elections as an invited international observer, it was clear that the Angolan people were committed to democracy as a way to resolve political conflict, competition and violence, although nervous as to the success of the venture.

While visiting small village polling sta-

Election cannot replace a culture of democracy

Idasa programme director PAUL GRAHAM was one of the large contingent of international observers at the Angolan elections.

tions in the Bengo province outside Luanda, our team met a family walking away from the polls late on the afternoon of the first day. "Have you voted yet?" we asked. "No," came the reply, "but we will be leaving home earlier, at about 3.30 tomorrow morning, to be sure that we do."

Their attitude and the commitment to casting a vote was matched only by the care taken by the many thousands of specially trained electoral officials - who were doing everything for the first time - to ensure that the vote was fair and free.

We visited polling stations in ruined but operating schools, church halls and, in one case, a hut measuring three square metres.

The staff administered, with very rudimentary materials, two complex and beau-

tiful full colour ballots to a predominantly illiterate community. The only lapse in orderliness came when people felt they would not be able to vote.

So what went wrong? Unita, like any party, was at liberty to request an audit of the results and a recount if they suspect fraud. However, a lesson for us in South Africa is that an election cannot

replace a culture of democracy and a spirit of national reconciliation. These must be developed in other ways to ensure that a truly democratic election process is not undermined by resorting to violence, threats and a general unwillingness to accept defeat.

Whatever the final outcome of the election - for despite the tension a result will emerge with international support - the people of Angola will have spoken a clear message to their own leaders and to the leaders of neighbouring states: "However much we have fought, however much we have suffered, however poor or illiterate we may be, our vote is a symbol of the democracy and peace that is possible and which we want. Do not deny this vote."

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5

Greg Mills & Geoffrey Wood
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PROSPECTS OF THE HOMELAND DEFENCE
FORCES

Dean Fourie
CONTROL OF ARMED FORCES IN SOUTH
AFRICA: CONSTITUTIONAL FORMULAE

Simon Baynham
FROM COLD WAR TO DETENTE: SECURITY
& POLITICO-ECONOMIC SCENARIOS FOR
SOUTHERN AFRICA (Part I)

Roger Southall
THE INTEGRATION OF ARMIES AND CIVIL-
MILITARY RELATIONS IN POST-APARTHEID
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Development held to ransom?

Economics has been placed fairly low on the agenda of political negotiations. Debate on development is often reduced to issues of timing and priorities, with a substantial lobby for the "politics first" approach. Idasa's economics specialist WARREN KRAFCHIK argues that without economic restructuring a political settlement may be jeopardised.

IN THE negotiations over South Africa's future, economic development has often been relegated to a secondary role. Where important development forums or projects have been initiated they have often been scuttled or delayed by dominating political objectives. Yet, very few people across the political spectrum would deny that if we do not go a significant way to materially enriching the popular expectations of the disadvantaged the stability of the transition will be seriously threatened.

On one level South Africa enters the 1990s in a reasonable macro-economic position. It has substantial advantages, some of them earned at considerable cost over the past 10 years. Levels of foreign debt have been lowered considerably by the standards of any developing country. Debt repayments are no longer a drain on economic activity and the country has the potential to become a first-class borrower, if need be. The country has also shown itself able to run and sustain a positive trade balance, despite persistent low gold prices. In addition to this one can add the possibility of a small post-sanctions dividend in the form of increased exports and cheaper imports. This possibility is enhanced by the "locomotive" effect of expected increased growth in the industrial economy over the next 12 months. However, these positive, short-term indicators represent fragile advantages and are easily squandered. It must be stressed that the South African economy is not equipped to take advantage of this potential. The three major problem areas that continue to face the country are poverty, growth and inflation.

POVERTY

Absolute poverty is endemic in South Africa. In 1990, 42% (17 million) of South Africans lived below the minimum living level. This stringent measure of poverty covers only subsistence needs and makes no allowance

for discretionary, savings or health expenditures. In addition, levels of inequality, or relative poverty, exceed those in most middle income countries. Serious disparities are particularly obvious along racial lines and are reinforced by geographical disparities; of those living below the Minimum Living Level, 94% (16 million) are black, while 65% (11 million) reside in rural areas.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

The basic historical indicator of economic growth, the real gross domestic product (GDP), shows the value of output produced after correcting for inflation. Although the GDP has a number of flaws - in particular it omits income distribution - it remains the most widely used indicator of economic progress. What does the GDP show for South Africa?

Essentially the country has been following the worldwide trend to economic slowdown, with rates of growth declining from an average of 6% in the 1960s to 3.5% in the 1970s. During the 1980s the growth rate averaged only 1.5% per annum, while during 1991 and 1992 it has been strongly negative.

In the context of a population growth rate of 2.5% p.a., this poor growth record has ensured an average fall in per capita income of more than 1% per annum over the past twelve years!

The economy's failure to grow has had severe effects on employment. During the 1980s only a meagre 14.6% of new labour market entrants were able to find formal sector employment. Current estimates are that at least 30% of the potential labour force are unemployed, although there are stark regional differences, with some areas of the Eastern Cape, for example, experiencing up to 50% unemployment.

INFLATION

Unexpected and high levels of inflation are socially and economically disruptive.



Although South Africa has till now been spared this problem, domestic inflation rates in the last seven years have diverged increasingly from those of her major trading partners. Thus the current South African rate of price increase is officially 15%, whilst most of Western Europe has rates currently below 5%. This has implications for South Africa's exchange rate and for the competitiveness of export and import substituting sectors.

'Positive, short-term indicators are fragile advantages and easily squandered'

Unfortunately, the current inflation coexists with a substantial economic recession hence the normal tools used in the control of prices increases are unavailable to the authorities.

MACRO-ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

What macro-economic tools can we use to extricate ourselves from this low growth, high poverty, persistent inflation problem? Conventional economists refer to monetary and fiscal policy. In South Africa the dominant monetary tool over the past few years has been the interest rate (and not direct control over the money supply as many would think). A glance at interest rates over the last few years will show the hard line the South African Reserve Bank has taken in attempting to control inflation. High interest rates were set to dampen especially import expenditures in order to generate a trade surplus to repay foreign debt. Such a policy shows that the Reserve Bank views inflation as a



more significant problem than unemployment and poverty. What must be recognised is that even a reorganisation of priorities would not necessarily lead to a lowering of interest rates. Although in theory there is substantial excess capacity in certain sectors of the economy, there are bottlenecks in others caused by ageing capital, skill shortages and lack of management expertise. A policy of cheap credit in such an environment would simply drive prices up.

From the point of view of fiscal policy (ie government management of the economy through tax and government spending), the two basic indicators of South African policy options are tax rates and the deficit before borrowing (the difference between tax and government expenditure in the budget). Unfortunately, neither of these policy instruments currently offers sufficient scope for correcting the economic malaise.

As comparative research by Lieb Loots at the University of the Western Cape shows, South Africans are already highly taxed relative to other middle-income countries. While middle-income countries generate between 20% and 30% of their GDP in tax revenue, in South Africa the ratio is presently at 30%. Loots argues that given the limited tax base, steeper tax burdens are likely to incur costs, both on growth forgone and as allocative costs, by restricting investment. Tax increases are therefore largely limited to increases in the economic growth rate which will expand the tax base.

Spending not financed by taxation has to be financed by borrowing. South African budget deficits in the 1980s have been rela-

tively modest at an average of 3-4% of GDP, however, government overspending this year is expected to push the deficit closer to 7% of GDP. While there are no precise limits to the size of an acceptable deficit, deficits in excess of 7% are likely to exacerbate inflation and lead to unsustainable foreign debt burdens.

CONCLUSIONS

The only hope for the future lies in the recognition that economic restructuring is as necessary as political restructuring. Any growth generated on the current economic base would entrench inequality, exacerbate inflation and, in any case, be stifled by balance of payments limitations and the continued lack of investor confidence. Clearly the South African economy is not faced with an aggregate growth problem that can be solved by the application of additional resources. Nor will the removal of economic and political distortions imposed by apartheid miraculously restore us to growth rates of the 1960s. Stagnation reflects long-term structural problems and only a restructured growth path can ensure sustained rising levels of per-capita incomes and social services.

'Only a restructured growth path can ensure sustained rising levels of per-capita incomes and social services'

The challenge to future economic policy is to devise such a growth path which tackles both the issues of economic growth and redistribution without exacerbating inflation. The difficulty is that given constrained resources tough choices must be made and tradeoffs faced between these often contradictory goals. The debate between political parties over economic policy is therefore often reduced to the priority and timing each attaches to growth and redistribution objectives within its economic proposals.

Parallel to the debate over the nature of economic restructuring, however, a separate debate is emerging over the timing of this economic process relative to political democratisation. This debate places South Africa at the cutting edge of development theory and practice, where there are no appropriate guiding examples. There are no successful cases of countries which were compelled to tackle political and economic democratisation simultaneously. This is the challenge that South Africa has in common with Eastern Europe, and the verdict on the transition in Eastern Europe is still pending.

One tendency in South Africa stresses that

even though development is needed to create a stable democracy, a political settlement must precede a development settlement. On these grounds numerous development initiatives have been postponed or aborted. The argument is that at present we do not have a legitimate government nor any other sufficiently inclusive, participatory organisation that is able to plan and implement economic development. This places South African development in a Catch-22 situation. The government is unable to implement development initiatives as these will be rejected as unilateral restructuring; however, without political power, neither can any of the opposition groups negotiate development. In effect the political process is holding the development process to ransom.

While this tendency undoubtedly voices the real constraints many practitioners have encountered in development practice, it underplays a number of more important factors:

- The obvious point is that the stability of the transition depends on halting the violence which, in turn, depends on the amount of unemployment, poverty and inequality in the system. There cannot be a political solution to an economic problem and economics has been a central catalyst in the post-1980s violence. In addition, for the disadvantaged, the success of democracy will first be measured by material increases in the quality of life. To postpone delivery is to seriously risk undermining the best case political settlement.

- If South Africa is to overcome present economic stagnation, it must undertake an economic transformation process that is at least as fundamental and deep as political restructuring. What proponents of the "politics first" viewpoint underestimate is the long gestation period, between implementation and visible benefits.

- In the context of our already stretched resources, it is important to stress the preconditions for a resumption of investment. Economists traditionally distinguish between risk and uncertainty by saying that uncertainty has no probability attached, whilst with risk one knows the odds. The essence of commerce has always been decision-making in the face of risk. In the face of uncertainty, however, no businessperson can make a rational decision and is likely to do nothing. The South African political and economic policy situation at the moment is engendering precisely this sort of uncertainty. Unless the political affairs of the country are resolved speedily and clear guidelines for economic activity are established, there will not be an economy to support

Development

From Page 13

whatever administration eventually emerges.

• Finally, there is a danger that an interim government will not constitute a sufficiently legitimate structure to negotiate development policy. For practical reasons, it is possible that during this period most economic functions will continue to rest with the current government. Thus, the condition of legitimacy may only be met once a new democratic government takes power. To suspend development initiatives (or even to reduce the proportion of resources devoted towards such initiatives) until such a state of affairs exists is courting sure disaster.

For these reasons we must create sufficiently credible structures to, at least, map development options and initiate pilot development projects during an interim government period. One possibility is to use the various national, regional and issue-specific development forums that are currently mushrooming throughout the country. Although not perfect, these institutions represent the most inclusive, participative institutions currently available. To enable these bodies to perform this function, however, two conditions will have to be met: first, the investment of substantial resources to overcome present capacity and skill constraints and ineffective national co-ordination; second, all stakeholders must unconditionally commit themselves to the forums and the state must find mechanisms to give these forums direct access to and influence over legislative decisions.

Of course development forums cannot plan, guide and implement an entire economic restructuring process; they may however, serve to establish a solid base for future development in a number of ways. They may help to generate a culture of participative development which will stand us in good stead in the future. Pilot projects will provide important guidelines and positive examples for future initiatives. Active engagement in development will help expose future practitioners to the practicalities, management and institutional requirements of project management. Clear guidelines as to future economic policy will begin to coax investment to return. At the very least negotiations in development forums may instill a sense of urgency which will help the economic settlement keep pace with and support a political settlement.

(An expanded version of this paper is available from Idasa, 1 Penzance Rd, Mowbray 7700.)

Confusion of options

The federalism/regionalism debate has become something of a political football. RICHARD HUMPHRIES argues that the discussion is too simplistic and calls for a closer look at the implications of these options.

THE average South African might be forgiven for being confused about the meaning and interpretation of regionalism and federalism, especially since these concepts seem to have surfaced from nowhere in the last year or so to dominate political debate.

This confusion must be all the greater since the deadlocked Codesa 2 convention. Before the convention it was widely, if uncritically, argued that the National Party and the ANC were moving closer to one another on regionalism, even if they disagreed on federalism.

Now in the wake of Codesa 2 the media bombard their audiences with analyses pointing out the major differences between regionalism and federalism and how the major political parties and movements stand on these issues.

In its most simple form their positions could be captured in the following way. The Democratic Party is probably the only unqualified, and long-standing advocate of federalism; the National Party is a little more coy, arguing for "regionalism based on sound federal principles"; The IFP seems to be approaching the stage where it will die defending federalism (perhaps even confederalism) for KwaZulu while the ANC accepts the existence of regions but it is still not certain how much political power should be vested in regional authorities.

The differences between regionalism and federalism are important in their own right. Yet the debate takes on an added significance at this stage of the negotiations process since fundamental constitutional questions about the distribution of political power between contending tiers of government are involved. Thus a choice, either way, between regionalism or federalism will have long term consequences for the way South Africa is to be governed.

Put another way, the differences between the ANC and the NP cannot be equated, at this stage, with the policy differences between, say the Tories and Labour in the United Kingdom. There, both parties accept the constitutional parameters within which politics takes place; what is at issue is policy differences and emphasis within an accepted overarching constitutional order.

Here we have still to decide on the shape of our constitution. This explains why President De Klerk, at the opening of the recent short session of parliament reiterated the NP's determination to bind a future constitutional drafting body to principles which would guarantee regional authorities substantial political power.

The ANC rejects this because it, in effect, gives the present minority-based government and the interests it represents undue power over a constitution-drafting body elected by all South Africans.

IN a sense the NP refuses to countenance suggestions that one way out of the regionalism/federalism deadlock would be to let the issue play itself out through process politics over a defined period. If a majority of voters came to accept that regional powers were important to their daily existence then this ought to be sufficient to ensure that authorities would be instituted.

For the NP the problem or dilemma is that the regional fissures or pressures which it thinks exist might be contained by other dynamics during such a period. The ANC might also be uncomfortable about such a suggestion given its historic opposition to homeland balkanisation.

It might be argued that both regionalism and federalism share a common point of departure - that power should be vested in the regions - which makes the differences between them rather irrelevant. This is not



For example, some opponents of federalism insist on arguing that federalism is an attempt by the NP (and it follows the DP) to entrench white privilege. How this is to happen given racial and demographic profiles in virtually all the regions that have been proposed is not stated.

Another common argument against federalism is that it will allow the NP to establish an anti-ANC alliance by using essentially homeland based political groupings. What is politically or morally wrong with this is never actually explained except the suggestion that these parties might survive in such a system, when they ought not to.

The numerous constraints that face this option from getting off the ground are also not analysed with any rigour. For example, will the NP be able to maintain its coherence as a national force if its regional parties have to strike alliances with differing political forces?

For their part federalists often accuse parties in favour of a unitary state of being intent on ensuring excessive centralisation and uniformity. This critique ignores the extent to which many of these actors favour mechanisms to increase voter participation in structures of government. It also overestimates, it seems to me, the ability of such a future government to control regional dynamics through over-centralised policies.

It would be foolish to ignore the extent to which regional interests do exist in South Africa, even if these interests are defined purely on the basis of geographic distance from Pretoria, or wherever a future capital might be based. If one adds ethnic and socio-economic interests (poor versus rich regions) to that of distance, then a potentially troubling problem could face such a centralised government.

South Africa will clearly get a political system which embodies regional powers, since all political actors, including the ANC, are in favour of some sort of regional powers. The question then becomes one of whether these regional powers will increase or decrease in importance over time. If a government of national unity was to rule South Africa for any length of time it seems likely that regional powers will be seen as less important. Conventional competitive politics will almost certainly lead to the regional question increasing in importance.

Richard Humphries is a researcher based at the Centre for Policy Studies in Johannesburg. His paper, *A Delicate Balance: Restructuring Regionalism in South Africa*, co-authored with Khehla Shubane, is available from CPS at 011-4024308.

so. At its weakest regionalism refers only to the granting of either executive or political capacity to the regions, as an intermediate tier of government between central and local government. Regionalism could be categorised as a decentralised unitary state. It does not necessarily imply that these powers and functions will create powerful regional authorities which undercut the capacity of the central government.

Federalism, at its most basic, however, ensures that the regions (normally called states) have substantial political capacity. This power cannot be taken away by the federal (central) government without recourse to procedures laid down in the constitution which are designed to protect the powers of the regions. The central government has to respect the state governments as almost being its equal in those matters which are the jurisdiction of the component states.

Besides political powers, federalism often grants fiscal capacity to the states to raise their own revenue, independent of any revenue-sharing programmes between the central government and the states.

In a nutshell the difference between regionalism and federalism amounts to the extent to which the powers of the central state are mitigated by powers granted to the states or regions on specific issues.

Part of the problem of adjudicating between the competing claims of regional-

ism or federalism is that they both potentially hold a number of advantages, often the flip-side of each other: regionalism's positive virtues are the negative side to federalism's and vice versa. The chief advantage of regionalism or a decentralised state is that it would allow a new government to undertake the type of macro planning in social, physical or economic fields which are sorely needed to overcome the legacy of the past. The possible downside of this is that such planning would take place without an awareness of regional or local needs and differences and that it would create a centralised bureaucratic leviathan equal to the excesses of the apartheid machine.

Federalism's chief advantage must be its dispersal of power away from the central state to smaller units. In the South African context this could translate into allowing regional minorities the ability to decide on important matters without what might be seen as the dominance granted to a majority in a unitary state. Against this might be argued that stressing regional peculiarities of any sort undermines a sense of unity and nationhood after the divisions of apartheid.

Related to the above point is that far too much of the comment and analysis either for or against federalism consists of overstating the opposition's motives for favouring or opposing federalism. Little detailed analysis has taken place.

MEDIA ALLIANCES URGED

TRANSFORMING and democratising communication are fundamental principles of community radio. But, radio enthusiasts at AMARC 5 were cautioned against seeing radio in isolation.

Delivering the keynote address, Peruvian Rafael Roncagliolo said the democratisation of communication was the overarching objective and alliances between the various media should be developed in order to achieve this.

The challenge was to build new coalitions and constituencies that could help regain a significant measure of people's participation in cultural policy-making – nationally and internationally.

Even to an non-Spanish speaker, the address of the director of the Institute for Latin American Studies in Peru was music to the ears. In poetic language (which had the translators grasping for equivalently evocative English words) Roncagliolo's examination of "Alternative communication on the threshold of the third millenium" included a history of communication over the past 500 years from the perspective of the peoples of the South.

He said the world was no longer a simple dichotomy between private and public. A non-governmental, non-commerical third sector had emerged both at a national and international level. The large social movements of transition of the 20th century and this millenium belonged to this third sector and included movements for human rights, racial equality, the rights of women, ecology and liberty of sexual preference.

The "alternative" communication media corresponded to this third sector, however, their aim was not simply to be alternative, but to be "alterative" – to change and transform relationships of power within the domain of cultures.

"Without historical memory, utopias cannot be turned into projects," said Roncagliolo.

On the eve of the 21st century, four periods were drawing to a close: a millenium, a quinentennial, a "fast" century of technological development and 50 years of Cold War.

Referring to the quinentennial, Roncagliolo quoted Tomas Borge, saying, "Europe invented the Americas, but has not yet discovered them".

He said the conquest of the Americas was important because it heralded the beginning

AT ANY conference of 350 international delegates there are bound to be interesting exchanges. However, when the gathering involves community radio broadcasters from tiny villages in deep south Argentina or the vastness of the Australian outback, or from behind guerrilla lines

in El Salvador or the urban jungles of Los Angeles and New York, the interaction promises a wealth of diverse, mind-stretching encounters.

This was indeed the case at AMARC 5, the fifth World Assembly of Community Radio Broadcasters, held in Oaxtepec, Mexico in late August, but, disappointingly, a lack of efficient organisation meant the opportunities for structured exchanges of information did not live up to expectations.

Nevertheless, the long journey to the tropical greenery and incredible beauty of central Mexico, was not in vain. Late into the night – and during daylight hours – the conference was abuzz with delegates exchanging stories of their efforts to develop or maintain participative radio broadcasting.

"All the Voices" was the theme: community radio being seen as "a means of resistance, reinforcement and development of people's cultural identity".

A strong sub-text running through the six-day gathering was the 500 years of resistance by the indigenous people of south and central America to preserve their culture in the face of invasions and conquests that began with the arrival of Columbus in 1492.

Community radio broadcasters in this context saw themselves as serving a dual role: as a voice for the indigenous peoples and as a communicator of their ancient wisdom and traditions to a materialist

Radio resistance blossoms south

BIENVENIDOS WELCOME BIENVENUE
AMARC 5 TODAS LAS VOICES. ALL THE VOICES
DITES LES VOIX. OAXTEPEC MEX. 23 AL 30 AGOSTO



SUE VALENTINE reports on the fifth World Assembly of Community Radio Broadcasters in Mexico

world which was destroying itself through the plunder and pollution of natural resources.

In a series of presentations, indigenous people from Nicaragua, Bolivia, Mexico, USA, Peru, Ecuador, Chile and Australia spoke of their work in community radio stations.

Community radio began in the early 1970s in Australia and, as in many instances around the world, first operated as pirate stations without licences. Since then community radio and television have grown dramatically and Aboriginal radio stations have been established in central, west and northern Australia.

Representatives from the "Voice of the Maya" radio station in south east Mexico on the Yucatan peninsula said their station would celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. The Mayan people number approximately 1.8 million and their culture – which has produced scientists and mathematicians capable of calculations unknown in the West until many centuries later – is still alive.

Peasant women from Peru spoke of their radio station – born from the need for women to express themselves: "Women have been put aside for many years, but the time has now come. We are finding ourselves, we are striving to gain as much as we can for our people."

Another indigenous grouping from Bolivia told of their community radio movement which emerged in the late 1970s. Some people were shoemakers and agricultural workers who produced radio programmes in their spare hours.

"We are poor, but we are not so poor. The native people have not affected the ecology nor the environment. We are struggling to implement our own social media."

THE AMARC 5 session in which women from Africa, South America and the Philippines sketched the conditions in which they were developing radio broadcasting proved one of the most interesting opportunities to learn about what radio can offer and the difference it makes in the lives of individuals in countries we seldom hear about.

It rated well alongside the discussions on new technological developments, such as digital audio broadcasting which will change the face of radio worldwide, and the possibilities offered by shortwave radio.

Vicky Quevedo, a community radio broadcaster from

Chile, spoke of the difficulty women in her country have in finding support as they move up through the ranks. A significant part of the problem was the Catholic church, she said. It enjoys greater political power than in any other South American country and its attitude towards women is extremely reactionary.

Divorce is illegal and medical intervention in pregnancies banned. She said even though the "model" Chilean family was in crisis, it was impossible to raise questions about family structures and values.

It was out of this situation that a year ago, on August 31, Radio Tierra (Radio Earth) – with a specific feminist focus – went on air for the first time in Chile.

The station broadcasts from Monday to Sunday, 117 hours per week, between 7am and midnight, on a 5kw transmitter which ensures that programmes can be heard in most of Santiago.

Answering the question of what it meant to be a feminist radio station she said programming was aimed not only at women, but at the whole of society, based on the belief that the knowledge, experience and wisdom of women should have a place in society where it could be discussed and debated.

"Feminism is not an absolute truth, but it is a contribution to our understanding of the world. Feminist radio offers these contribu-



Libby Lloyd of Speak magazine interviews one of community radio's characters, Margareta D'Arcy who runs Radio Pirate Women from her home in Galway, Ireland.

Women: illusions of strength become reality

tions to the rest of society so they can use it in their analysis of their world."

Each day at least a dozen women – "popular correspondents" – from the poorer sectors of Santiago contribute to the daily news programmes. The idea, says Quevedo, is to allow women to decide what are newsworthy issues and how they will talk about them. To make news out of issues that other media might not even regard as news!

"It is therefore a very political project because it questions the positions of power that are deeply ingrained in all of us."

She says Radio Tierra is not "maternal or paternal" radio. "What we want is that the listeners speak with their own voices, from their social perspective and position in society."

There are 23 women working full time at Radio Tierra; but if the popular correspondents, children and young people who are involved in programming are included then the number rises to between 70 and 80 people.

Edda Sanga, a journalist from Tanzania, emphasised that whether one was talking about women's radio or general radio, men and women needed to work together.

However, the pain and anger among women caused by the way in which they saw themselves negatively portrayed in the media – as sex objects, as unequal to men, as passive recipients of themes and values

handed down from generation to generation – prompted journalists to form the Tanzanian Women's Association in 1986.

From this base women began to write and produce programmes from their perspective.

"We began with rural women who were living in superstitious environments. They were poor, uninformed, having children they could not take care of, and so we started our own forum of mothers' programmes to give them a voice for the first time and to increase the flow of information."

Other programme subjects include sexuality and in particular the Aids pandemic.

"We still see Aids patients going back to the rural areas where the women, without gloves or other sanitary equipment, take care of these people."

A radio campaign for the women of Peru has emerged under the shadow of terrorist violence and the authoritarian rule of a president who recently dissolved the country's congressional government.

SKETCHING the socio-political context in Peru a woman from the feminist radio collective, Gaby Ayzanoa, said: "The violence in our country has led to the deaths of 25 000 Peruvians and 4 000 who have disappeared. The country is also in an economic crisis with 70 percent of the people living in poverty. The Peruvian state is incapable of offering basic services to its population – people are homeless, have no lights and no water."

It is in this situation, where more than half the nation's population are women and where women are the breadwinners in more than 50 percent of households, that radio is being used to address the needs and reflect the experiences of Peruvian women.

A variety of radio programmes are produced, and with the help of sympathetic professional journalists and despite the fear of censorship, these programmes are flighted on more than 50 commercial radio stations.

To Page 19

MEDIA ALLIANCES

From Page 16

of a unification of the world with three features: a common and transnational economy; the political democratisation of most of the globe; and the emergence of a single hegemonic military power which played the role of international policeman (as witnessed by the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War).

Besides the sword and the cross, language, writing and communication had also been used in the process of conquest and devastation. However, the language of the conquerors had been resisted, incorporated and domesticated by the indigenous peoples so that indigenous cultures had survived and been kept alive during the past 500 years.

The past 1 000 years had seen Western languages, particularly English and the Latin languages (spoken by one sixth of the world) dominate communication. It had also been a millenium of the printing press: the book, daily newspapers, radio and television.

"In one thousand years, the history of the northern hemisphere has travelled from the so-called Middle Ages to the Renaissance, to modernity, passing through three industrial revolutions and now, to post-modernity...

'We want radio broadcasting to function as a loudspeaker and an echo of our multiple and diverse voices'

"But in the South, the majorities who were unattached to consular exercises and Herodian consumption moved from the original cultures to the conquest and the resistance. In a time frame of 200 years we moved into political emancipation and in this century that is now drawing to an end, we leaped almost directly from illiteracy to the new communication technologies."

Roncagliolo said despite coming along different paths, people from the South were now also part of the global village and global supermarket. Standing at the dawn of the new millenium they had one "simple and blunt" aspiration:

"We want radio broadcasting to function as a loudspeaker and an echo of our multiple and diverse voices; we want audiovisuals to mirror our own physiognomies in the plurality of our many identities."

It had already been shown that the new electronic technologies could be "expropriated, subverted and tamed" for the benefit of the large minorities of the planet which are



The 500th anniversary of Columbus's landing is not celebrated by all Mexicans. Here indigenous people protest against the destruction of their culture with traditional dancing in Mexico City.

not represented by the state nor the large mass media industry. This, said Roncagliolo, was what was known as the democratisation of communication, the protection of cultural environments and the universal right to communication.

Pinpointing developments in communication technology during the 20th century, Roncagliolo noted that the transmission of the human voice through Hertzian waves (the forerunner of radio) had first been done in Brazil, but patented by the British; similarly colour television had been invented in Mexico but patented in the United States.

Developments in audio-visual technology had made the original forms of human communication, sound and image, the means of mass social communication. The giants of industry which controlled communication thus controlled "collective intelligence and civil power".

Unlike previous industrial revolutions, the present technological revolution covered all sectors of socio-economic life including education, health and the use of free time.

"Computers, dish antennas and video recorders have become consumer goods which are preferred to refrigerators or electric stoves."

This sector of information and communication was the only aspect of the world economy characterised by a simultaneous and sustained growth in productivity and employment as well as a constant drop in the sale price of the final products.

At a technological level this provided ideal conditions for the growth of community radio, said Roncagliolo. But, while there was a growing number of infrastructures and means of communication, there was also

an increasing concentration of ownership and control of broadcasting licences. Communication was becoming the "hunting ground" of the transnational conglomerates. The growth of vast transnational organisations during the 1960s had led to the development of corporations which were autonomous of nation states and giants such as General Motors and IBM were more important to the world economy than any of the states of the South.

'Communication is becoming the hunting ground of the transnational conglomerates'

For this reason, argued Roncagliolo, transnationalism was more than an economic phenomenon. Politically it entailed a radical analysis of the concept and power of national states. Centralised communication affected all countries.

In response to this "more market, less state" mentality and the counter cry for "more state, less market", Roncagliolo argued that a preferable proposal, was for a "more civilian society".

Roncagliolo said new coalitions and constituencies to promote people's participation in policy-making should include a broad range of public groups, social movements and organisations such as media professionals, citizen activists, consumer groups, women, minorities and religious, labour and environmental organisations.

Illusions of strength become reality

From Page 17

Programmes reflect the work of various community health care projects such as, "A cup of milk" while others tackle issues such as violence against women, be it rape, abortion, domestic violence or structural violence.

"The voice of women through radio programmes has opened up a public space that we've wanted access to for years. It offers legitimacy for the voices of women."

The work is not limited to radio, however, campaigns are designed as multi-media projects which include a range of activities.

"We don't treat our audience as if they're all the same people, we try to incorporate all kinds of people. We recognise that within an audience of women there will be a diversity of age, race and social class."

The style of media attempts to be more subtle and less stridently political, says Ayzanoa. "We include discussions of dreams women have for changing their daily lives. Central to our work is poetry, love and creativity."

Another field where women are at work is on the international airwaves. Feminist International Radio Endeavour (Fire) broadcasts for two hours a day, an hour each in English and Spanish from the small Caribbean state of Costa Rica.

Staffed by a multi-lingual, multi-cultural team of four women based at the studios of Radio Peace International, Fire has been on the air since May 1991. A division of their project is the Women's International News Gathering Service - Wings - through which programming material is compiled.

One of the women working at the station, Jeanne Carstensen, said their aim was to strengthen an international consciousness among women via the power of shortwave radio.

"By building this consciousness we hope to be able to contribute to, for example, inter-continental campaigns for women's rights."

At the forefront of tackling stereotyping and oppression of women in the mass media is the Women's Media Circle in the Philippines.

Ana Leah Sarabia said the power of media to create illusions meant it could be used to create illusions of strength or weakness. "We women should take over the media so that we can destroy existing illusions of weakness and create our own illusion of strength, and then make it a reality."

Elections for elections' sake?

Filipino activist Aida Santos says gender and development issues must feature prominently in South Africa's first democratic elections.

By CHANTEL EDWARDS

"The most vivid image I have of South Africa is that of black women walking down a road carrying bundles on their head, looking for water," says Aida Santos. "I spoke to women who pay R10 for a barrel of water that is so brown they can't even wash their clothes in it. Further along I saw lush green farms with irrigation systems."

She is the executive director for Wedpro (Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organisation) in the Philippines, training co-ordinator for the Feminist Foundation and a women and development consultant to various local and international development organisations.

According to Santos, who visited the country as guest of the Theological Exchange Programme, the Philippines and South Africa show many similarities in gender and developmental issues, the one fundamental difference being apartheid which has had the effect of sidelining women's issues. "Many progressive political parties have a good policy of non-sexism and non-racism, but I would like to see concrete examples of this policy," she says.

Despite the relative success of the women's movement in the Philippines over the past decade, 50 per cent of women still work as domestic servants or prostitutes. The social system remains elitist and the

country's Judea-Christian principles, which disallow abortion and divorce, increase the suffering.

Women's experiences here reverberate in the Phillipine context: land resources, support services, health, migratory labour and violence (public and private) are all common issues.

Santos says it is crucial that the personal concerns of women be addressed now, and this is where developmental issues come into play.

"The gender issue is inextricably linked to developmental issues as it is the women who ultimately suffers. It is not something that can be addressed later, it must be dealt with now. Over half of the population are women and yet political parties are not addressing development issues."

Most of the women she encountered during her visit were not interested in the elections, they are consumed by the daily struggle of living.

"Women have played a very important role in your political history. What has all this struggle been for if not for the majority of people?"

"The key issue for women is what does the transition and election mean to their personal lives? You do not have elections for elections' sake. Developmental issues are election issues."

"The electoral struggle must serve the women's cause."



Aida Santos: has the struggle not been for the majority?

CISKEI: a cauldron of continuing conflict

The Bisho massacre focused the eyes of the world on the Ciskei homeland, its relations with Pretoria and the aspirations of the ANC in the region, but what are the roots of the conflict? ANDREW TRENCH examines some of the factors at play.

From September 8 to the first week of October it claimed over 600 incidents including arson, shootings, assaults, murder, handgrenade attacks and sabotage had

taken place. It also recorded that 61 houses belonging to CDF members had been destroyed by fire.

The African Democratic Movement has reported 55 attacks on its members and supporters of the government since July.

The ANC has not come up with a specific figure for attacks on its members saying the attacks are too numerous to document. Scores have been reported to the media, however, the CDF says there have been less than 20 attacks on ANC members from September to October. According to the ANC/SACP/Cosatu alliance more than that have been reported in a single day.

However, like the violence on the Reef and in Natal, the conflict in Ciskei is fast degenerating into a statistical count of dead and of the millions of rands damage caused to property.

Not being addressed are the root causes of the violence. At an Idasa conference on violence held shortly before the Bisho massacre, a broad range of organisations in the region were virtually unanimous (with the exception of the Ciskei government and the ADM) in identifying Brig Gqozo as a key factor in the violence. They called for his removal from power and the introduction of an interim administration in the homeland.

However, according to Brig Gqozo's ADM, a key cause of the violence is the ANC's "marxist theory of increasing human suffering sufficiently until people rise up and protest against the government of the day..."

Brig Gqozo has attempted to drive a wedge among the largely ANC supporting population. An instrument in this strategy is the ADM - launched on the back of the vilified headman system and said to represent "the silent majority" - which was intended to replace the ANC-aligned residents' associations.

Ciskei was that "we have had enough".

This apparently, was also the attitude of Brig Gqozo. Following an incident-free march of some 70 000 people on Bisho, Brig Gqozo issued a warning to ANC President Nelson Mandela saying if the ANC wanted a showdown it would get one.

At the same time there was an increase in reports of security force assaults on communities in the main urban areas of Ciskei - Mdantsane, Zwelitsha (outside King William's Town), Alice and Dimbaza.

According to reports, the attacks mainly involved members of the Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) and usually followed incidents of arson.

Late in August the ANC succeeded in an urgent Supreme Court application to restrain members of the security forces from assaulting citizens. But reports of the attacks continued.

In apparent reprisals, arson attacks on the homes of security force members also soared.

'By now the snowball of violence is well and truly rolling'

Up until this stage, casualties in the conflict were relatively few and it appeared that the key focal points of the conflict were, on the one hand, the destruction of government property and on the other, the harassment of citizens.

The Bisho massacre in September triggered an explosion in the conflict. In the weeks following the massacre almost as many people were reported killed in violence as had died in the Bisho shootings.

The Ciskei Defence Force also claimed a huge surge in "unrest related" incidents.

THE conflict in the region essentially revolves around attempts by Brigadier Oupa Gqozo to destroy the African National Congress in the homeland and attempts by the ANC to resist the move.

Violence escalated following the Bisho massacre of September 7 in which 29 were killed and 200 injured. However, this was not the spark for violence: it was the nemesis of a period of conflict which, because of its low profile grassroots origins, had been kept out of the public eye.

The months leading up to the Bisho massacre were marked by a security force crackdown on the political activities of the ANC and its allies in Ciskei. For the ANC the homeland effectively became a "no-go" zone as meeting after meeting, and march after march were forceably dispersed by homeland security forces.

It is from this climate of repression that the conflict has emerged.

The depth of popular opposition to the state crackdown was illustrated clearly on August 3 in Mdantsane, the biggest township in the region, when without warning, security forces began teargassing a crowd of thousands gathered at Edgerton station to commemorate the deaths of those killed by the Ciskei police during the bus boycott of the mid-1980s.

The reaction to the teargassing was swift and violent. Running battles between citizens and military raged for hours as government buildings were set ablaze causing millions of rands damage.

August 3 was a turning point. Following that day incidents of arson, targetting government buildings, homes of government supporters, of headmen or of those belonging to Brigadier Gqozo's African Democratic Movement, spread throughout the homeland.

Days after the August 3 battle, five policemen were gunned down in Mdantsane. No one claimed responsibility, however, senior ANC regional officials privately conceded that it was not unlikely that elements in the community had struck back. The feeling in



Residents run through teargas and smoke during the August 3 battle with Ciskei security forces in Mdantsane.

While the tripartite alliance claimed to have no problem with the political opposition posed by the ADM, his announcement that residents' associations were to be scrapped to make way for the headmen was seen as an attempt to squash community structures in the homeland and as an attempt to create a false constituency from which Brig Gqozo could legitimise his position.

In addition there was opposition to efforts by the ADM to force people, especially the elderly, into accepting the headman system which had proved to be a vehicle for corruption and nepotism under the reign of former "President for Life" Lennox Sebe.

A series of other events also led people to identify Pretoria's hand in these moves and therefore in destabilising the region.

The launch of the ADM and the re-introduction of the headmen system late last year co-incided with an extreme souring of relations between the brigadier and organisations in the area.

It also coincided with the appearance of a South African Defence Force-linked covert unit known as International Researchers - Ciskei Intelligence Services. Media investigations in the region established that the unit - which was disbanded following press disclo-

tures - had extensive influence over Brig Gqozo and was instrumental in identifying "threats" to his position purportedly emanating from the ANC and from Transkei.

The brigadier reacted to these threats with a crackdown on the ANC and the organisation's defiant response appeared to give credence to IR-CIS theory of the "ANC enemy".

'How will the bitterness and anger of people ever be stemmed in a climate of retribution'

Significantly IR-CIS was disbanded following a visit to the homeland by SADF chief General Kat Liebenburg and a senior foreign affairs official. It would seem the revelations about IR-CIS's activities had become an embarrassment to the South African government.

Reliable sources within Ciskei's state security council have also suggested that the idea to form an opposition movement to the ANC in Ciskei was born in Pretoria late in 1990.

It appears that the strategy formed part of

Pretoria's traditional "divide and rule policy", to prevent the unification of Transkei and Ciskei into a united Xhosa nation.

Noteworthy too is Pretoria's reluctance to bring the Brigadier under control despite the financial leverage it can exercise. (In 1991 the South African government contributed nearly 70 percent of Ciskei's budget.)

Pretoria also has extensive control within the government with almost 400 seconded officials working in the homeland. This reluctance, and the immediate moves by Pretoria to defend Brig Gqozo following the Bisho shootings, suggest the National Party government wishes to retain Brig Gqozo in its camp, at least until after the first open elections, either to form part of its "moderate" alliance or to frustrate the organising capacity of the ANC/SACP/Cosatu

alliance in the region.

However, until Brig Gqozo is removed from power, or at the very least forced into a more conciliatory position with the alliance, it is almost certain that violence in the region will not come to an end in the near future.

Not only are there no effective peace structures in place - the Ciskei government withdrew from the regional peace committee earlier this year - but by now the snowball of violence is well and truly rolling.

Even if some "peace deal" were brokered soon, the huge task of reconciling these torn communities - a task which must also be addressed on the Reef and in Natal - would still lie ahead.

How will communities receive the policemen and soldiers who have attacked them and how will the police respond to communities which have rejected and targeted them? How will the bitterness and anger of people ever be stemmed in a climate of retribution?

Meanwhile, one can only question the bona fides of those who have the capacity to start the peace and reconciliation process, yet decline to do so.

Andrew Trench is a journalist on the *Daily Dispatch* in East London.

Border people voice concerns to government

FOLLOWING weeks of negotiations between the government and Idasa, a meeting was held in October in East London between top government officials and delegations from the Border/Ciskei region.

The objective of the talks was to provide people from the region with an opportunity to voice a range of grievances in the presence of government officials to ensure that the gravity of problems are understood.

The first disappointment was the unavailability of the Minister of National Education, Mr Sam de Beer, who tendered his apology on the morning of the conference. His absence resulted in a walk-out by the education delegation, but it is hoped that Mr De Beer will meet the group in the near future.

Mr Andre de Wet, DP MP and a member of the Border Dispute Resolution Committee, deplored the escalating level of violence in the region and highlighted the withdrawal of the Ciskei government from the committee as one of the hindrances to addressing the violence.

Both the business and the violence delegations concurred with Mr De Wet that the

government had to fulfil its role, either by public censure or other means, to persuade the Ciskei government to participate in the peace structures. An impartial interim administration, however, seemed to be what the delegates favoured.

Dr Alex Boraine of Idasa, who chaired the meeting, said in his welcoming address that although reincorporation had been discussed and accepted at Codesa, timing was of the essence, and sensitivity to that was crucial. His assertion was reiterated by the delegates who unanimously called for the reincorporation of the Ciskei without further delay. The business delegation also favoured the reincorporation of Transkei.

The delegates were unanimous about the interdependent nature of the region: issues were not specific to the Ciskei, but affected the whole region. Another problem raised by the delegations concerned the capability of the Ciskei government to carry out Judge Goldstone's recommendations satisfactorily.

In response Justice Minister Kobie Coetzee said although the government supported the National Peace Secretariat through budgetary programmes, the NPS

operated autonomously and therefore carried sole responsibility for Ciskei's return. Acknowledging the greater power the government had over other signatories, he said the government could only exercise persuasion in a manner consistent with the Peace Accord. On the Goldstone recommendations, he asked that justice be allowed to take its course.

Mr Coetzee also said military governments were not favoured by the government since they were "an authority without authority". Resumption of national talks could facilitate solutions to the problem of reincorporation. Pre-empting the process could, however, hamper the search for democracy. Delegates asked that the issues raised be taken seriously and be addressed expeditiously by the government, and received a promise of a meeting with Finance Minister Derek Keys.

Although the government did not commit itself to any of the recommendations put forward by the group, the meeting laid a good foundation for resolving socio-economic and political problems in the region.

Ndumi Gwayi
Regional Director

'Visible' women break down barriers

AT AN Idasa Breakfast Forum meeting held in Durban in September, Dene Smuts, Democratic Party MP for Grootte Schuur, expressed concern that women's voices would once again be lost in the current political violence engulfing the country.

Smuts said that, before February 1990, women's movements had been shaped by apartheid. They were movements for peace and reconciliation in which the idea of women's rights briefly surfaced before being submerged by the larger issues of repression and revolt.

With the negotiation of a bill of rights and a new constitution, a new kind of women's movement could at long last concentrate on women's rights, she said.

"We must logically seize this moment in South Africa's his-

tory - the moment of transition to a rights-based order - to establish women's rights. If we do not, not only the moment, but the movement will be unforgivably lost."

Smuts no longer sees formal equality as being part of the dispute. Additional rights accruing to women because of their reproductive role are being concentrated on at this advanced stage of the constitutional debate.

Of importance to Smuts is the need to persuade society that there are benefits attached to the improvement of women's status. Society will then help rather than hinder the process.

Smuts believes that it is habit rather than prejudice that needs to be broken in getting increased female political candidacy and changing party culture. Few women also make

themselves available for selection and election.

Smuts saw three possible remedies for the situation, the first being the creation of proactive structures like the Women's Alliance and the Women's Coalition which not only influence the national political agenda but also serve as training ground for female talent.

Secondly, she suggested a scrutiny structure that compensates for the under-representation of women, including examples like a women's ministry or women's desk in government departments and an advisory council on the status of women. The third kind of structuring to be considered is the quota system.

In terms of the local culture she believes the wiser course would be a requirement of a minimum number of women



Dene Smuts

on "short lists" for constituency candidates or "long lists" selected before the final proportional representation list.

Measures, such as opposite sex party co-chairpersons and minimum-number female representation on committees are also worth exploring.

"Because half the battle is won when women become visible, and in so doing, break the stereotype," said Smuts.

Chantél Edwards
Media Department

Western Cape local government series productive



City Futures participants: Garth McKenzie of the Cape Town City Council with SA Municipal Workers Union representatives Roger Ronnie, Dennis Arendse and Howard Meyer.

IDASA'S City Futures seminar series in Cape Town has ended on a very productive note.

At the concluding seminar in October, participants decided to form a small working group to further facilitate the process of local government restructuring in the Western Cape. This may culminate in a properly constituted Cape metropolitan convention to determine the shape of local government in the metropole.

The ANC also used the occasion to publicly release its draft proposals for metropolitan government in the region. It proposes a strong metropolitan council, incorporating within its jurisdiction towns like Atlantis, Stellenbosch and

Somerset West, and up to 20 local councils.

Idasa regional director David Schmidt summarised the discussions of the five-part series, which started in March and focused on different aspects of a democratic local government system.

He highlighted points of agreement and disagreement between participants as well as areas that required further debate. However, as the forum was not wholly representative – the NP and PAC did not attend and a number of other constituencies participated intermittently – most of these points

are tentative. An adequate framework of the issues that need to be addressed has, however, emerged from the discussions.

Several speakers commended Idasa for presenting the series, saying that it was an appropriate and timely intervention, that it had brought sections of the community together in a spirit of mutual learning and built trust among

them. It also gave the different constituencies an opportunity to begin to formulate positions on aspects of local government.

The working group, which will be convened by Idasa, will do the groundwork for joint action to restructure local government in the Peninsula when a national framework becomes available.

Ronel Scheffer
Production Editor

Need for network of democrats

SOME 40 people from a wide range of organisations in the Free State participated in a recent regional consultative workshop which Idasa had convened to come to a better understanding of regional dynamics and to get some indication of what other people in the province would like Idasa to be doing.

More opportunities for informal interaction and exposure and education for democracy were some of the key elements identified as necessary to prepare people for democracy.

It was quite clear that a strong network was necessary to promote a culture of democracy in the province.

Kobus van Loggerenberg
Regional Co-ordinator

Cape youth unite in forum

UNITED we stand, divided we fall... This was one of the songs sung at an inter-faith service held during the launch of the Western Cape Youth Forum (WCYF) over a weekend in October. It expressed in a succinct way the sentiments of the 100 or so delegates which represented most major political parties and organisations, religious denominations and other student and youth formations.

The launch of the forum was the result of a long and intensive process of discussion initiated by the youth liaison committee of the Cape Town City Council in July 1989, and facilitated at a later stage by public affairs consultant Ms Helen Zille.

The first meeting of a broad range of youth formations in the Western Cape, amongst them the ANC Youth League, NP Youth, DP Youth, the Muslim Youth Movement, the Junior Town Council of Cape Town, the Pan African Students Organisation, the Congress of South African Students and others, took place in March this year.

The forum has the following as its aims and objectives:

- to create a platform for youth to share their views and experiences
- to represent the interests and concerns of youth in the WCYF at all levels necessary
- to generate a spirit of tolerance and respect for each other
- to redress the imbalances and the inequalities created by apartheid

At the launching conference the debates were lively and displayed the high level of enthusiasm among the youth to build the unity pledged throughout the weekend. A number of proposals were made regarding the key areas of concern: youth empowerment, social issues, education and violence and security. It was also agreed to create two additional sub-committees, namely a gender and an inter-faith sub-committee.

The launch of the WCYF was an historic occasion. It is the most representative body of its kind and, as one of the delegates remarked, represents a "youth-Codesa". If the fervour and commitment of the past few months is anything to go by, there is no way that it will follow the same route as Codesa proper.

Vincent Williams
Regional Co-ordinator

Technology no substitute for proper consultation with communities

DISCUSSING toilets and transport may seem rather unlikely ways to spend one's Saturday morning. However, these two topics were the cause of much debate during two seminars organised in East London recently.

The discussions formed part of a breakfast seminar series organised by Idasa and Corplan around issues of urban development.

The first seminar on 29 August, entitled "Roads to ruin? Towards a national transport policy", focused on the way in which apartheid physical planning has left us with a transport network of gross inefficiency. Colleen McCall, a transport consultant, pointed out that apartheid had separated people away from the places where they needed to be and that its planners had regarded this as a "necessary evil".

She also showed that at least 80 percent of the black popula-

tion of South Africa was dependent on public transport, and that since the early 1980s the taxi industry has taken over this captive market.

Paul Mann, a transport engineer, also blamed the present transport crisis on policies of the past. He said that transport planning had "failed to grasp the difference between mobility and accessibility".

He argued that it was fruitless to try to depoliticise transport as it had social, political and moral ramifications. Colleen McCall suggested that transport should begin to be understood as a social service which could not be based on profit. She said that a much more sophisticated infrastructure needed to be developed.

The second seminar on 19 September entitled "All cisterns go? Provision of water and sanitation", dealt broadly with the question of what "proper services" were and whether these services were

affordable. Speakers were Barry Jackson of the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Hamish Scott from Ove Arups consulting engineers and Abner Jack from the Duncan Village Residents Association.

A fiery debate developed between those on the "DBSA side" who were arguing for "appropriate and affordable technology", such as ventilated pit latrines, and those from the civics who were demanding "proper" water and sewerage provision.

What became clear was that, like transport, the whole question of the provision and quality of services had political, social and moral ramifications, and was not simply a question of addressing the backlog created by apartheid through "cost effective" technology. The whole issue of proper and effective consultation with the community is crucial.

Glenn Bownes
Regional Co-ordinator

Tshwete fields questions in Bloem

STEVE TSHWETE of the ANC recently addressed business people and decisionmakers at a lunch hour meeting in Bloemfontein. Events surrounding mass action and the Bisho massacre were clearly of the greatest concern to those present.

Mr Tshwete was told that the current unstable political situation and the ANC's role in this regard negatively affected whites' expectations of a negotiated settlement. He replied that the ANC's campaign in the Ciskei, KwaZulu and Bophuthatswana was aimed at creating free political activity in those areas. The campaign was not aimed primarily at bringing those governments down.

He questioned the performance of the government and police in combating violence, saying that the security forces, who had been very effective in crushing resistance in the past, now seemed unable to control the violence.

Regarding government demands that the ANC should rid itself of the influence of the communists, Mr Tshwete said that the obsession with the SACP was a sign of political intolerance. It was the same people who were claiming that communism had failed everywhere in the world that were so afraid of this failed ideology.

Mr Tshwete also addressed a mass meeting at the local Vista University campus where he urged students to commit themselves to their studies and to make the practice of political tolerance a way of life. He also paid a visit to Springbok Park, the headquarters of cricket in the Free State, and met with officials and players participating in the National Single Wicket Championships.

Kobus van Loggerenberg
Regional Co-ordinator

'Voice of reason' charms E Cape

EDITORIALISED the following day as "the voice of reason", Thabo Mbeki, during his visit to the ports of Elizabeth and Alfred in the Eastern Cape in October, did not let up for a minute in exhorting his fellow South Africans to work fast for a quick transition.

Five public meetings in one day might well have prepared Mr Mbeki for the election trail he might soon be embarking upon, but if he was fatigued, he wasn't showing it.

Such is the disarming and engaging nature of the man that in Port Alfred, at a VIP function attended by the mayor and his entire council, the deputy mayor in her closing remarks referred quite comfortably to him as "comrade" - and

nobody blushed! And it was reported that at a pub in the "Kowie" that night, a very conservative fisherman who had been at the same function, announced for all to hear that "he was prepared to live under a leader like Mbeki"!

So to some important points made during his visit:

"There is almost no reason why an election date for a constituent assembly will not be known by the end of this year and, rest assured, this election will be in 1993. The world and the country can no longer wait for this event - sooner is better, despite the obstacles."

"It is within the powers of the government to bring about free political activity in the quasi-independent homelands;

kowtowing magistrates must no longer be permitted to decide which marches and meetings can be allowed and which not."

"Foreign tourism can be earning R5 billion in hard currency in just three years' time - jobs and training must be created now in preparation for that likelihood."

"The Madala hostel in Alexandra was forcibly occupied by armed unemployed militant men who evicted the Sandton municipal employees who had been living there. Who are these men? And how can anyone not agree with their immediate expulsion, leave alone simply fencing the hostel property."

Keith Watrus
Regional Director

Striding out against oppression

By RONEL SCHEFFER

ON OUR FEET. TAKING STEPS TO CHALLENGE WOMEN'S OPPRESSION by Liz Mackenzie, Cace Publications, 1992. (171 pages)

AS I was paging through this handbook at my desk (the sun was shining, it was a beautiful day outside), I received an obscene telephone call. Yes, women in political organisations continue to receive these calls in the new South Africa.

When I put the receiver down, seething and close to tears, a particular line of text caught my eye. It referred to moments when you felt undermined as a woman and asked the question, "What else could you have done?". I wildly resented the question at that moment, for obvious reasons. How does one protect oneself against obscene telephone calls? Must the onus to act always be on women? When will we see a concerted initiative to encourage men to seriously look at how they behave towards women. Why can't there be such a course for boys at school level.

The process that gave birth to the publication of this handbook - women's organisation throughout the country participated - included several workshops, one of which was designed to include men but very few attended. One hopes that those who make use of this excellent manual will do their best to make men part of the process.

Although the book was intended for workshops on gender and women's oppression, the outline on how to prepare, plan, design and run a workshop is of a general nature, and it therefore makes for a very useful introduction to running workshops on other issues and, in fact, to the popular education methodology itself.

Cace (Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, based at UWC) hopes it will help to create a network of adult or popular educators who will actively challenge gender oppression. The book is aimed at educators and is suitable for both beginners and the initiated. It is well presented and illustrated and the content should be accessible to most. Chapters on the nuts and bolts of workshop design and raising aspects of women's oppression are augmented by background information on the concept of gender and gender oppression as experienced locally and worldwide.

A compact resource to change thinking in schools

By TERRY DE JONG

MAKING A DIFFERENCE. IDEAS FOR CHANGE IN SCHOOLS by Penny Berens, Emelia Potenza and Ruth Versfeld, Idasa and Oxford University Press, 1992. (28 pages). R15,00.

CHANGES in structures, such as "Model C" schools, do not guarantee meaningful changes in attitudes and values. There has to be a clearly conceptualised plan of action which will facilitate a process of conscientising, of raising awareness and of developing cultural literacy.

In short, we need a proactive attempt to address openly and constructively the myriad of complex issues that accompany South Africa's transition towards a democratically constituted society which upholds all those universally fundamental non-"isms". "Making a Difference" is about examining this transition, a compact resource which offers a series of workshops designed to promote positive attitudes and values in a changing educational context.

The title of this publication alone embodies the potent message it communicates unequivocally throughout.

Schools are powerful agents of socialisation and are a crucial medium for creating an educational environment for a different



acknowledging that integration without social education is at best naive and at worst irresponsible. For example, the workshop design entitled "Types of intergration" is strikingly introduced by Joanna's statement:

We talk to each other, and do home economics together, and cook in groups together, and stuff like that. But you discuss why your cake's burnt; you don't discuss why there's racism.

THE book documents 13 workshops which, as the authors put it, aim to "...highlight our prejudices and attitudes; they enable us to examine the 'hidden curricula' in our classrooms and the assumptions behind our schools' culture. They go on to investigate how school structures can be changed to accommodate the different backgrounds and lifestyles of the students. Finally, they propose ways for formulating new school policy and practice."



future which will benefit all South African children. This conviction is not only encompassed in the generally positive and encouraging style of writing and presentation, such as the introductory session on "Making sure change happens", but also evident in linking the book closely with its partner volume, "All Schools for All Children" by Julie Frederikse, giving us a valuable opportunity to learn from Zimbabwe's experience. The inclusion of interview excerpts from this publication highlights the importance of

The range of workshops is comprehensive and incremental, starting with an innovative introductory "Bingo" exercise (Getting off to a good start), then focusing on personal feelings and attitudes (eg Practices and prejudices, Where do our attitudes come from?) to examining "school culture" (eg Understanding your school), and curriculum and language issues (eg What the textbooks tell us, Multilingual classrooms), and culminating in policy formulation (Creating new policy).

To Page 26

From Page 25

Each workshop description outlines its aims, method, materials and possible follow-up activities and, with appropriate adaptations, can be used for students, teachers and parents. Creative worksheets, including illustrations and photographs, accompany the outlines and are designed for reproduction or photocopying. The average duration of each workshop is 40 minutes.

An attribute of the book is that the workshops have been piloted in schools by the authors. Although this feature does not in itself ensure success, it does add a level of credibility to implementation. In spite of the fairly explicit guidelines and the encouragement proffered by the authors to adapt and develop one's own workshop style, the impact of these workshops will depend largely on the sensitivity and skills of the facilitator. Some general suggestions on workshop skills would have been an additional bonus.

This is a timely publication. It is a practical resource which is essentially person-centred, creative and flexible. Its great challenge is how strategically it is used in a school community and the broadness of its target audience which ought to include parents, the management team, as well as teachers and students.

Terry de Jong is an educationist based at the University of Cape Town

Eerlike werk oor Afrikanerkrisis

Deur BRAAM VILJOEN

AFRIKANERS NA APARTHEID deur Carel IV Boshoff, Afrikaner Vryheidsstigting, 1992. R38,70.

IN die gelede van die Afrikaner kultuurkorps is krisis deesdae, om verstaanbare redes, aan die orde van die dag. Dikwels word dit as bestaanskrisis of oorlewingskrisis identifiseer en dui dit in elk geval op 'n wyer dimensie as die politieke. Waar die ontwikkelende dialoog in hierdie verband soms herinner aan die kultuurkrisis van die dertigerjare is dit reeds duidelik dat die afmetings sowel as die intensiteit van die hedendaagse krisis 'n karakter van sy eie aanneem en van beslissende betekenis sal word vir die selfpersepsie van "die Afrikaner" in die hede en in die onsekere toekoms.

Dit is in hierdie konteks dat dié werkie van Carel IV Boshoff (seun van prof Carel Boshoff) 'n uiters belangrike bydrae maak wat die aandag verdien van elkeen wat belang het in die gesprek wat onder Afrikaners ontwikkel. Dit verskyn in die "Vryheidsreeks" wat deur die Afrikaner Vryheidsstigting bevorder word.

Wat die werk verder belangrik maak, is die feit dat dit uit die pen van die jeug kom en inderdaad poog om soveel oop gesprek te wees dat dit van belang word ook in die wyer samelewing van die "nuwe werklikheid" vir almal wat belangstel om mede-Suid Afrikaners te verstaan al sou dit gepaard gaan met meningsverskil.

Die geartikuleerde en konsekwente hantering van die probleme van ons dag op kulturele en staatkundige gebied sal meebring dat verskillende lesers verskillende voordele uit die lees van die werk sal haal maar ek verstout my om te sê dat niemand sonder voordeel daaraan sal kou nie.

Met verrassende openheid erken die skrywer dat daar geen gerusstellende abstrakte antwoorde vir die bestaansvrae van die Afrikaner meer oor is nie. 'n "Geslag politici" het probeer om met retoriek klaar te speel met deurslaggewende probleme en is daarin gesteun deur 'n "geslag kiesers". Dit laat die huidige geslag met 'n gewetensvraag wat na "meer voldoende en konkrete antwoorde" vra.

Die doel van sy studie, wat aanvanklik die tema van 'n magister verhandeling was, is

om 'n eie geldige Afrikaanse kultuurbegrip vir die huidige tyd uit te werk en dit in verhouding te sien met aspekte van die krisis in geskiedkundige, religieuse, etniese en multi-etniese verband asook in sy staatkundige relevansie.

Daarvoor gebruik hy die uitgangspunte van die bekende Afrikaanse skrywer N P van Wyk Louw, wie se kritiese (maar lojale) gesigspunte van die jare vyftig nou juis van toepassing bly en as riglyne kan dien. Immers Van Wyk Louw het juis ruimte wou maak vir die skeppende enkeling wie se kreatiwiteit die kern van die kultuur en geesteslewe van die volk bevrug (al word hy soms in 'n proses van vervreemding vasgevang). Daarom mag die kultuurgemeenskap nie skrik vir kritiek nie. Dit moet inderdaad sy waardes oopstel aan interaksie of die oop gesprek en moet mensvriendelik wees. Dit moet ook weerstand kan bied teen die skynbare tydelike voordeel van politieke diensbaarheid want daar is iets groter as die krisis wat nie deur een geslag se "keuse teen vryheid" tot niet gemaak kan word nie.

BOSHOFF kom nie met maklike antwoorde soos dikwels in die misweer van kultuurpolitiek gebeur nie. Trouens hy erken dat 'n fyn en volledig geformuleerde kultuurbegrip hom ontwyk het en dat dit as kollektiewe selfbewussyn van 'n "volk" deur 'n interaksie van baie faktore bepaal word, veral in die sogenaamde oop gesprek. Hy praat van sy werk as "kursoriese opmerkings" "érens op die weg" van 'n eie Afrikaanse kultuurbegrip.

Miskien is dit 'n vraag wat oorbly na sy werk - die van dié voortdurende dinamiek van kultuur. Die werk van Boshoff is 'n waardige poging om in moderne idioom die kulturbepaaldheid van identiteit te artikuleer. Die gevaar bly bestaan dat dit wat nie vasgevang en tot groepsieendom gemaak kan word nie, word juis tot statiese steriliteit gedoem as ons dit in 'n vorm wil giet - wat begrensing impliseer en so die volgende oomblik aan irrelevantie blootgestel word.

'n Uitstekende bydrae egter - pregnant, moeilik en kompak geskryf maar die moeite werd om deur te werk.

Braam Viljoen, 'n voormalige teoloog, boer en is deelyds konsultant by Idasa-

Nuut: Vryheidsreeks no 6



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A video to help the next generation understand

By MOIRA LEVY

APARTHEID, Video documentary by Doxa Productions/Point du Jour. Available from Louise du Toit, telephone 021-246791.

YOU probably have heard it all before, but you can never be reminded often enough of the horror and misery that characterised the decades of apartheid. This video, a joint production by Doxa Productions of Cape Town and Point du Jour of Paris, is a timely reminder, in these days of negotiation and attempts at reconciliation, of a past steeped in oppression, cruelty and resistance.

When the time comes to explain to the next generation of the madness of the Group Areas Act, of the violence of forced removals, of the bannings, the detentions without trial, the assassinations, the unrestrained police and SADF incursions at home and further afield, this 120-minute documentary will hold its own as an invaluable record.

For one thing, the footage is extraordinary, much of it revealed for the first time. There is a short sequence from the Boer War, the first film ever made of war; a smiling and genial Verwoerd explains his policy of apartheid as simply "good neighbourliness"; a Bantu education classroom featuring a teacher showing a class of children how to wash a shirt, in preparation for their role as Verwoerd's hewers of wood and drawers of water; and clips secretly filmed by a witness of the 1950s Treason Trial.

It should be noted that visual impact may have taken priority over factual accuracy in places; for instance, a clip on Mandela's court appearance is described as his arrest and the UDF is identified as the Unified Democratic Front, this last particularly unforgivable as it accompanies a shot of a United Democratic Front poster. This video, shown on French national television earlier this year, takes you through the heady days of the unbannings and release of the Rivonia leaders. The narrator makes the point, and it couldn't be more appropriate, that if only the story ended there. But it doesn't and the video rolls on to its close, with harrowing depictions of the violence, the breakdowns in negotiations, the power-wranglings that form the backdrop to the continued poverty and misery.

Useful summary of positions on foreign investment

By JON BEVERLEY

ECONOMIC GROWTH & FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA compiled by Patrick Cull, Idasa 1992. R10 (incl VAT).

MEET Mr Johnny Ho. He is the amalgam of several Chinese businessmen I met in Newcastle recently who between them have ploughed R73-million into the town after being encouraged to set up there by the government's decentralisation benefits.

Why are they, a small sector of our foreign investors, happy there? One is that they have industrial peace, second is that they have domestic peace in the streets and their homes, and third they have become part of the community.

They have taught their workforce to use the machines that make clothing and shoes and the other goods, not because of some altruistic sentiment but because they have to meet sales contracts.

Why do I start a review of "Economic Growth & Foreign Investment in South Africa" in this way? Because I need to say that however laudable many of the sentiments expressed in the book may be, foreign investors have to weigh up the opportunity cost of coming here, or anywhere else.

And they will make their choice because they see a chance of a good return on their capital - not because they consider the masses require some quid pro quo because they have been denied opportunity.

But does South Africa really need foreign

capital? Probably much less than it needs investment in human capital. Winning countries are there because of a long determined period to educate, not only in the basic skills taught at school but in the talents needed to see and exploit the economic gaps.

The next forum of the kind which this book is based on must surely deal with this issue. We should not have to import clever people who will send their profits earned here "home".

The book is a compilation of contributions at the 1992 Forum on Investment Policy for a Post-Apartheid South Africa. One quarter is devoted to policy statements on the issues from four business bodies and six political entities. Cosatu, while not present, contributed its Investment Code.

Therein lies the value of the thin volume because no matter how you may disagree with their varied standpoints they are set out ready for debate.

Two economists, one an academic and speaking for the ANC, one in business, set out the need and prospects for foreign investment. Foreign views are provided by a World Bank consultant and a representative of the bi-national Chambers of Commerce Consultative Committee, and Dr Lin See Yan, of the Bank of Malaysia, tells of their success in that country. A number of appendices spell out the position of the churches and give a summary of tax and other rules concerning foreign investment.

Jon Beverley is finance editor of the *Natal Mercury*.

Letters

UN method helps reintegration

A recent *Democracy in Action* featured an explanation of the Model United Nations (MUNs) as a training tool for democracy.

I did want to correct one minor error in the report. Ms Devraun recommended that Idasa's Training Centre "host Africa's first MUN conference". In fact, there are two major MUN conferences for secondary school students on the continent of Africa - in Cairo and Nairobi.

To my knowledge, there is not a univer-

sity level conference regularly conducted in Africa and the first conference at this level could indeed be pioneered by Idasa as Ms Devraun's suggests.

James P Muldoon, Jr
UNA-USA, New York

Groot deurbraak

GRAAG wens ek Idasa geluk met die deurbraak om 13 jeugorganisasies byeen te bring. Die voorreg om die proses te kon beleef was ongelooflik en die verwagtinge vir 'n spoedige nasionale ooreenkoms groot!

Weitz Botes
Welkom

The future beyond the darkness

WHEN Ruth First was blown to pieces on August 17, 1982, I was a conscript in the South African Defence Force. When the bomb exploded in her office at the Centre for African Studies at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, I was somewhere in Pretoria or Namibia writing propaganda for the SADF's official magazine.

I have no recollection of her death. I cannot remember reading or discussing the event. Anyway, at the time, she would have been nothing more to me than just another radical terrorist failing in her efforts to achieve a communist takeover of my fatherland.

It was only two years later, one evening in a Pretoria bar, that a former South African Security Branch policeman told me: "We also killed Ruth First."

The policeman's name was Captain Dirk Coetzee, former commander of a police death squad. That evening, which was a turning point in my life, this man, who had killed seven people and committed another 22 crimes as a policeman, told me that the SAP was waging a secret war against anti-apartheid activists.

My conservative upbringing in a traditional Afrikaans home in Pretoria had taught me that the SAP was the protector and guardian of democracy and Christianity. And now I was told that they were also killers! It was a rude awakening to South African reality.

Coetzee mentioned three names of activists murdered by death squads: Griffiths Mxenge, Sphiwe Mtimkulu and Ruth First. At first, these names meant nothing to me: I didn't know who they were or what they had done.

I was then a reporter at *Rapport*, and I remember going to the newspaper's library the next morning to look for the three names. I discovered to my shock and horror that they were assassinated in exactly the way Coetzee had described the killings to me.

Human rights lawyer Mxenge brutally stabbed to death in November 1981 while returning home from work; student leader Mtimkulu disappeared mysteriously in April 1982 shortly after having instituted a civil claim against the Minister of Police for being poisoned in detention; and academic Ruth First, blown up in her office in Maputo as she opened the parcel.

Coetzee told me he and his Askaris of the Section C1 counter insurgency force based at Vlakplaas had assassinated Mxenge and participated in the disappearance of Mtimkulu, but that First was killed by his colleagues of Section A (the foreign section) of the security police. Section A was at the time commanded by Brigadier Piet Goosen, the notorious policeman in charge of the interrogation of activist Steve Biko.

Section A was based on its own farm next to Vlakplaas. It was on this farm, 10 years ago, that Goosen and his colleagues manufactured the bomb posted to Ruth First. Shortly after the

killing, superspy Craig Williamson, a member of Section A, told his friend Dirk Coetzee: "We got First."

Successive National Party governments tried their utmost to silence her. They banned her, charged her with treason, detained and interrogated her for 117 days. When nothing helped, they used apartheid's ultimate weapon.

If there is one aspect surrounding the death of Ruth First that stands out, it was the reaction of the media. Her death led to the most horrendous journalism ever practised in South Africa.

Two years after her death, *The Star*, mouthpiece of English liberalism at the time, wrote that Slovo engineered the death of his own wife.

The Western diplomatic source they anonymously quoted, I discovered later, was none other than Craig Williamson. Joe Slovo sued for defamation in the United Kingdom, and the English judge who presided over the case called it the worst libel he had ever experienced in his entire career and awarded 25 000 British pounds to Slovo. *The Star* refused to adhere to the jurisdiction of an English court.

BUT the worst was still to come. On April 8, 1988, days after Albie Sachs' arm was blown off by a CCB operative in Maputo, the political commentator of *Die Volksblad*, mouthpiece of the National Party in the Free State, wrote in a column that "the death of Ruth First was Colonel Slovo's KGB method of getting rid of an unhappy marriage".

As a journalist, I can only hang my head in shame for the media's contribution in creating the culture in which these atrocities could happen.

The political philosopher Victor Hugo once said: "If a man sinned because of darkness, the guilty one is not he that sinned, but he who created the darkness."

The media in South Africa, especially the mainstream newspapers, are responsible for helping to create this darkness in which people like Coetzee could freely operate. We must never allow this to happen again.

Ruth First did not deserve to die. Neither did many, many other people. Good people, just people, honest people.

The South African security forces have in many ways become havens for criminals where some policemen and soldiers could for years act safely and with absolute impunity above the law.

That is why the book on the death of Ruth First can never be closed and stacked away in apartheid's dirty cupboard. We are commemorating her death tonight not only to remember her, but to never forget why and how she was killed.

This is an edited version of Jacques Pauw's keynote address at the Ruth First Journalism Award ceremony. Mr Pauw is the author of "In the Heart of the Whore: The story of apartheid's death squads". He is based at The Star.

By JACQUES PAUW