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The Citizen 15/2/92

THE CITIZEN COMMENT

Potch

STATE President De Klerk says Potchefstroom will give the whole country hope when it elects the National Party candidate to Parliament in next week's by-election, which is regarded as a barometer, he says, of how the White voter in South Africa feels.

The deputy leader of the Conservative Party, Dr Ferdi Hartzenberg, says the CP sees the by-election as the political event of the century in which a victory will consolidate the majority of Whites behind it.

The by-election is, indeed, one of the most significant in years.

Here is a safe Nationalist seat — some say the safest Nationalist seat on the platteland — under attack from a Conservative Party that has won notable victories in by-elections in recent months.

The Potchefstroom by-election follows the death of Mr Louis le Grange, Speaker of the House of Assembly, who served Potchefstroom as its MP for 25 years.

Mr Le Grange defeated the CP candidate by 1 584 votes in the 1989 election. This time political analysts have given the CP the chance of winning by up to 1 500 votes.

However, Cabinet Ministers have launched a last-week drive to win support, particularly from young students at Potchefstroom University.

State President De Klerk has also wound up the campaign with an impressive audience of 2 500.

The CP may find the by-election is not the walk-over that it expected.

There is much at stake for the CP. It has to demonstrate that the swing to it continues and that, if there were a general election, it would be able to defeat the government.

Snatching Potchefstroom with a convincing majority would show that the NP has, indeed, lost the Transvaal platteland and that the State President's reforms do not have the support of a growing number, if not the majority, of Whites.

In normal times, a run of defeats such as the NP has suffered would force the ruling party to go to the country.

But we are not living in normal times. The present tricameral Parliament is to make way for an all-race interim Parliament.

The government does not intend to hold a general election for Whites only — and nothing that happens will change its mind.

The only chance the CP would have to halt the government in its tracks would be in a referendum.

As referendums are not run according to constituencies, but on a straight Yes or No vote, the CP would have far more difficulty winning a referendum than a general election.

For the National Party, Potchefstroom is a vital by-election. It must win it, and win it convincingly, or it will look like a party reeling against the ropes.

Mr De Klerk is confident that the NP will retain Potchefstroom, but says that governments generally fare worse in by-elections than in general elections.

"In a by-election voters realise they are not choosing a government and then often they are inclined to vote their grievances."

That may be so — the recession that has hit the pockets of the average person, the retrenchments by businesses, the political violence and the gangsterism of criminals are all factors that will influence voters.

But the voters, in essence, will be voting for the reform policies of the government — sharing of power, interim non-racial government, interim non-racial Parliament and so on — against the self-determination, partition, White State, commonwealth of states policy of the CP.

Potchefstroom, then, is a barometer of how the White voter feels about reform, and as such it is also one of the most important electoral tests in decades.

It will not bring the government down if the NP loses; it will also not bring the CP to power.

But it will strengthen the winning party immeasurably in White politics, in the dying months of the present Parliament and in the referendum.

It is a true watershed.



Picture: FANIE JASON.

□ **VIOLENCE:** A taxi-driver burns next to his blazing vehicle — a victim of fighting between warring factions.

Taxi war: 7 feared dead

ARGUS 15 FEBRUARY 1992

VUSI KAMA
Weekend Argus Reporter

AT least seven people are believed to have died in taxi-war related shootings yesterday.

In a day of drama in Khayelitsha, KTC and Guguletu, vehicles were burnt by members of the warring Lagunya and Webta taxi groups.

Three people linked to Webta were shot dead, allegedly by Lagunya men attending the funeral of Lagunya leader Mr Vuyisile Matyolo, 49, shot dead on February 1.

Panic-stricken mourners at the funeral at a Guguletu church watched as two mini-

buses, believed to belong to Webta operators, were chased by Lagunya-owned cars.

The minibuses, one with a Transkei registration, were attacked at a stop street in NY 50. Three occupants of one were shot dead.

According to Lagunya members, those in the minibuses were planning to attack mourners.

Four people in private cars were shot dead, allegedly by Lagunya drivers who believed they had shot at them earlier.

A Lagunya spokesman said the cars followed them in Khayelitsha as they picked up people going to the funeral.

He said the police refused to arrest their assailants who drove into the Site B police station.

He said he ran away from the police station without making a statement when he heard the sound of a hand-grenade blast in the yard.

Members of Webta could not be reached for comment.

KTC residents alleged they were attacked by police and members of Webta in an early morning raid.

Mr Gladstone Ntamo told Democratic Party MP Mr Jan van Eck and ANC officials he saw gun-toting black and white men attacking residents. He

said he also saw about 15 men carrying guns and others with axes were standing next to police vehicles.

Shopkeeper Mr Elliot Bolani said he and his son Sandile were shot at during the attack about 6am. He was hit in the thigh. Mr Bolani said he saw at least one man with white arms wearing a balaclava.

KTC brothers Xolile and Lindile Madonela were abducted allegedly by Webta members on Friday. They have not been found and are feared dead.

Another man with Lagunya links was allegedly abducted yesterday.

Vito Palazzolo back — living 'rent-free' on Ciskei farm

DURBAN. — Sicilian businessman Vito Roberto Palazzolo, who was forced to leave South Africa last year, is back, staying on a Ciskei farm often used as a weekend retreat by Briga-

dier Oupa Gqozo, head of the country's military government.

"He is free to engage in any activity as an unqualified citizen of the multi-racial Republic of Ciskei," Ciskei's Council

of State said in a statement this week.

Mr Palazzolo was living rent-free on the farm, said a business acquaintance who did not want to be named. — Weekend Argus Correspondent.

Boy airlifted to safety

A 14-YEAR-OLD schoolboy was airlifted from Cape Point to Tygerberg Hospital after he fell about five metres off a rockface onto a beach yesterday. The unidentified boy had minor injuries. — Weekend Argus Reporter.

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Give 11 languages equal status: ANC

SIXTEEN years after the Soweto riots about Afrikaans education, the ANC has proposed that 11 languages in South Africa enjoy equal status.

In language policy proposals likely to trigger intense debate, the ANC said Afrikaans and English should not be official languages in a democratic South Africa.

"ANC policy will be to remove the fetters on growth and development of languages in this country, thus granting dignity and worth to the tongues that people speak.

"Unfettering the disregarded languages is one step in the process of transforming our society."

The ANC said Afrikaans and English had enjoyed predominance over Zulu, Xhosa, Sesotho, Seswati, Sindebele, Sipe-di, Tsonga, Tswana and Venda in the political, economic, judicial, educational and administrative life of the country.

"Just as the ANC's concept of a nation is an inclusive one, so its attitude to the different languages is one which sees them all as a source of rich diversity.

"The implication of granting all major South African languages such status is that no language will be declared official."

The ANC envisaged intervention by the State in

support of African languages, seeing this as vital.

It also envisaged empowering the State to make provision's in law for the use of one or more languages in different regions of the country.

The ANC proposed all languages be:

- Developed by language agencies, guided by the wishes and needs of the users of those languages;
- Taught at all levels in educational institutions, including schools, colleges, technikons and universities;
- Available to users in courts, police stations, administrative offices, post offices and other State concerns;
- Given access to "the means of publication and distribution in written and spoken form", such as the mass media; and
- Be promoted, with State assistance, as a language of the country.

Although language was often regarded as a unifying factor in the life of a nation, the ANC believed "in our time and situation, language should not be used to assist in the process towards unity by promoting one or two languages at the expense of others."

Existing language policies of the State had failed.

"In matters of this kind, the ANC regards the opinions and preferences of parents, teachers, students and communities as very important."

Distortions in the usage of languages in South Africa were profound and would take time to rectify. — Sapa.

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IFP, ANC to set up township peace forum

THE ANC and IFP agreed yesterday to set up an interim steering committee for the restoration of peace in Meadowlands, Soweto, where violence erupted recently.

The PWV branch of the ANC said the committee would consist of three members from each organisation.

It's terms of reference would be:

- The setting up of a local Meadowlands Dispute Resolution Committee as a matter of urgency;

- Approaches to all interested groups and parties, particularly the local hostel committee, in an endeavour to bring peace;

- The counselling of ANC and IFP members about the need for peace

in the area;

- Efforts towards peace in the interim until such jurisdiction was transferred to the proposed Meadowlands Dispute Resolution Committee; and

- Ways and means of ensuring the return of looted goods by either organisation.

The chairman of the

Greater Soweto Dispute Resolution Committee, Mr Charley Nupen, said the Meadowlands committee would be set up under the National Peace Accord and would consider the grievances of people in the area.

The ANC and IFP also resolved that the police and SADF should remain in Meadowlands. —Sapa.

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Dance to freedom

IN what may have been a joyous affirmation of freedom in the new South Africa, escaped lunatics from Valkenberg hospital formed a conga line, each putting his hands on the hips of the person in front, to dance down a street in Cape Town in their bright prison garb this week.

The prisoners escaped because of overcrowding, lack of resources and incompetence at Valkenberg and found themselves in a familiar environment, where the line between incarceration and liberty has become as notoriously thin as the line between sanity and madness.

The government releases thousands of hardened criminals for no good reason; judges put people in prison, and wardens let them

out; the ANC "negotiates" with thieves to retrieve a car stolen from one of its top officials; suspects in massacre and mayhem are released on derisorily low bail, and 147 awaiting trial prisoners simply walk out of Diepkloof prison.

There is more madness than ever a madman imagined. The ANC recruits right-wing whites to spy on whites; the right-wingers court black tribalists; Inkatha accuses the ANC of murdering its own men, and ANC exiles return to join Inkatha. The government spends more to achieve less; the ANC pursues both jobs and sanctions.

Dance, everybody, dance. Join the conga line and dance to freedom.

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Stolen car released to ANC after tipoff

THE official vehicle allocated to Mr Thabo Mbeki, head of the ANC's Department of International Affairs, has been recovered after it was hijacked earlier this week.

The ANC said yesterday that on Thursday morning the ANC legal department was approached by a police officer who gave the

name, address and telephone numbers of a person who could help retrieve the vehicle.

"The ANC security department, which was dealing with the case was then given this information immediately. A small contingent was put out to follow the lead.

"Within three hours the vehicle had been

found with its radio, speakers and registration plates missing. After negotiations, the underworld released the car to the ANC security contingent."

The ANC said the agreement with the police informant was that the police should not be told about his visits to the ANC headquarters as he feared for his life. "He told the ANC legal department that some of the police officers worked with the main person in charge of the people who had taken the vehicle."

Mr Mbeki's car was taken at gun-point from his personal assistant on Wednesday morning.

A police spokesman said yesterday the ANC had telephoned and thanked them for their help in retrieving the vehicle.

"It was an ordinary car robbery," the spokesman said. — Sapa.

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Treurnicht accuses De Klerk of pact

By Keith Abendroth

THE leader of the official opposition Conservative Party, Dr Andries Treurnicht, said yesterday the "secret understanding" between the government and the ANC was making a "rubber stamp" of Codesa.

Commenting on the Potchefstroom by-election

speech on Thursday night by President De Klerk, Dr Treurnicht said he rejected Mr De Klerk's claim that NP victory would benefit Whites.

"As a multi-racial party, the NP no longer speaks for any people, or the Whites," said Dr Treurnicht.

Mr De Klerk had also "carefully withheld the

facts" on the increasing co-operation between the NP and the ANC — which pointed to a transitional government and an eventual Black-dominated Parliament and government.

Even the IFP's Chief Mangosuthu Buthezi was concerned about the "secret understanding" between the NP and the ANC.

"Mr De Klerk's vague promise about civilised values and government confirms that he no longer can maintain the right to self-determination of any specific people — not even our own people's rights.

"Such a misjudgment is fatal for any constitutional planning — and is the rock which will shipwreck Codesa," said Dr Treurnicht.

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Market economy framework vital — Buthelezi

WASHINGTON. — Constitutional talks in South Africa will fail if they do not lay down the framework for a market economy, Zulu leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi said here.

In an address to the Cato Institute think tank,

Chief Buthelezi said that there was "an urgent need, especially during the transitional phase (in South Africa), to prove to the general populace that capitalism can deliver".

In a sideswipe at Mr Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), Chief Buthelezi said that socialist-style redistribution of wealth in a transitional period would "both destroy the economy and lead to complete political instability and ultimately the breakdown of South Africa".

The president of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) arrived here after a speech in San Francisco in which he accused the ANC and the White minority government of "con-ning" to sew up South Africa's constitutional talks.

Inkatha is one of 17 other groupings involved in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) talks which are tasked with preparing a new constitutional framework and creating a climate for democracy.

Targeting the economic provisions being discussed in the CODESA talks, Chief Buthelezi said that it was vital to ensure that the "necessary economic underpinnings" were laid down before a new constitution could succeed. — Sapa-AFP.

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IFP denies part in slaying of Ngwenya

Citizen Reporter

THE Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) has strongly denied involvement in the slaying of Imbali ANC leader Mr S Khumbuzo Ngwenya, who was shot in Pietermaritzburg city centre last Saturday.

The IFP said they saw ANC claims of IFP involvement in a very serious light and expressed doubts over the legitima-

cy of the alleged eye-witnesses produced at a Press conference by the ANC.

"The time that the ANC took in producing these alleged witnesses is highly suspicious, and in the interim period a strong possibility of witness coaching exists," said Mr Kim Hodgson, head of Inkatha Institute's violence study unit.

The IFP also questioned why the witnesses had not made statements to the police. They said the ANC was well aware of police procedures regarding confidentiality and the protection of witnesses' identities.

"The parading of the witnesses to the Press when at the same time saying that these witnesses are too scared to make statements to the police is contradictory," said Mr Hodgson.

"We suspect that this propaganda ploy is meant to divert attention away from the fact that 10 IFP office-bearers have been killed since January 31."

The IFP claim there is a link between the witnesses being produced and the fact that the IFP came up with evidence of their own.

"We also find it interesting that these witnesses were produced by the ANC after the IFP, acting on reliable information from high-placed sources within the ANC, hinted at the possibility of a faction within the Natal Midland branch of the ANC being responsible for the murder," said Mr Senzo Mfayela, IFP central committee member.

The IFP claims that one of these sources, a person within the ANC who is willing to testify to what happened but is scared to

do so, fears the ANC is pursuing him and has gone into hiding.

The Inkatha Institute is in the process of obtaining affidavits from the alleged suspects, checking alibis and pursuing follow up information from their sources.

Mr Mfayela added: "In view of the notorious history of the ANC's constant attempts to frame the IFP we call on the ANC to let justice take its course before they fuel further flames of hatred."

Sa.
Sun. Star 15/2/92

SABC unveils conduct codes

CAPE TOWN — The SABC has announced that it has adopted two codes of conduct for its staff in an effort to achieve public credibility and to counter criticism of one-sidedness and pro-Government bias.

One of its spokesmen acknowledged yesterday that these days "the SABC has no friends".

The two codes, one for the staff in general and another specifically for journalists and people dealing with information programmes, have just been adopted by the corporation's Board.

Johan Pretorius, editor-in-chief of the TV news productions of the SABC, said yesterday that the decision to have the codes had not been a sudden one as a result of recent criticism, or as a result of the transitional stage that the country was going through at present.

The codes had been considered for some time and were similar to those of the BBC and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which had been studied.

In a speech to a recent conference on the media at UWC, Mr Pretorius said that the SABC had been blamed and criticised over the years for being the Government's mouthpiece.

It would be naive to deny that the SABC had followed a fairly strict

The corporation "has no friends" and intends taking steps to remedy the situation, reports TOS WENTZEL

government-of-the-day line. It used to interpret and comment in favour of the government of the day and seldom criticised the Government.

Yesterday Mr Pretorius said: "The SABC does not have any friends. We are now trying to get our credibility to a level where at least our bona fides will be accepted, even if people do not always agree with us."

He said this was a development of moves that had started in 1989 towards a more balanced approach. He pointed out that the adoption of the codes was not meant to coincide with recent criticism of the corporation. The matter, he said, had been under consideration for a considerable time.

The corporation was still being criticised by members of all political parties and felt it was time to make its approach as professional as possible.

The "Code of conduct and values of the SABC" (for the staff in general) acknowledges that the

corporation will have an important role in the period of socio-political and economic transition in the country and the constitutional dispensation that will follow.

The code says that the SABC believes in a just society in which equality for all is the objective and believes in an orderly society characterised by peace, stability, security and prosperity.

In the fulfilment of its role as broadcaster, the corporation says it will be guided by certain values. These are freedom and responsibility, tolerance, fairness and impartiality, justice, respect for the truth, good sense and reasonableness, mutual respect for the individual and his affiliations, respect for the accepted ethical norms, values and desires of society in general and of specific target audiences and communities in particular.

The SABC says it accepts that democracy is characterised by opposing ideas and views. It would therefore reflect fairly and actively stim-

ulate the current debate.

It says it also believes that its independent functioning as a broadcaster is a prerequisite for its credibility among the general public.

The editorial code and policy acknowledges the SABC's responsibility "to serve the truth in the public interest".

It commits itself "to play an active role, in this decisive period in the country's history, in promoting reconciliation."

Programmes, the code says, would be accurate, fair, honest, open and impartial. The public interest would always come first and the public's right to know was acknowledged as a basic right.

According to the code, a wide variety of relevant views on any particular matter would be reflected fairly and without prejudice.

The SABC says it also plans to make more air time available to political parties. The code says that "appropriate opportunities will be created on radio and television to enable parties to explain their policies when circumstances require".

The code also states that members of the staff will have to declare explicitly any personal interest or activity that could conflict with the editorial approach of the SABC.

Sa.
Sun Star 15/12/92

If they're 'grilled', be sure it's on both sides

DECEMBER 1991, a day after Codesa begins and SABC anchorman Freek Robinson aggressively "grills" the ANC's Chris Hani. It's pretty good television.

But later on at the same function he turns his microphone towards President de Klerk and slides on velvet gloves. Not once is Mr de Klerk "put on the spot."

If anybody notices, nothing is said or done to make sure the playing fields are flatter next time around. Certainly no one at the SABC is known to have wagged a finger at Robinson.

Robust

Zooming into the future, say May 1992 and hypothetically, on Agenda chaired by John Bishop. The cut and thrust is robust, and rhetoric is exposed on a panel discussion with Dr Andries Treurnicht. It is Bishop at his best. But then when he comes around to Nelson Mandela he lets the ANC president off the hook.

Not only does the Conservative Party notice and complain, but a team of four foreigners and four South Africans appointed as monitors also notice and make their disquiet public in one of their regular reports.

The SABC's chief executive thus learns of the accusations of bias and that a presenter/journalist must be seen to be impartial.

The SABC, by May, is

starting to look more like the BBC. Codesa had agreed to the establishment of an Independent Communications Authority to regulate broadcasting in transition by March 31. And it has teeth.

So the SABC's news department tells presenters that if they show "perceived" bias, they will, unfortunately have to be reassigned to a less public part of the Corporation.

Of course, by May the present SABC board has already disappeared. In its place is one made up of media academics, perhaps a sportsman, an entertainer maybe, and a couple of other local personalities appointed for the first time not by politicians but, after a series of public hearings, by a panel of eminent personalities. None of the members of the new board is waving any party political flag.

By July, the kind of competence routinely demanded by journalists and presenters at the BBC is taking its toll at Auckland Park. While no one has been sacked, some decide they can't take the heat and leave or get offered other jobs in the SABC.

Some journalists cum presenters, who for years behaved "irrationally and illogically" in their obeisance to the National Party, strive for impartiality.

But their very association with the SABC's "shameful" past ham-

PETA THORNYCROFT

pers their credibility and they too move on. Others like Bishop — who was part of the old order — rise to the occasion magnificently.

Some rusticated over the years — because they challenged the SABC's status quo as the propaganda arm of the National Party — are brought in from the cold. And those journalists/presenters, members of an unofficial "red list" of unemployables — because of their independence in the bad old days — find a new home at Auckland Park.

Reality

And by September, the SABC's 700-strong, nationwide news team has changed.

But back to reality.

Someone did in fact notice the Freek Robinson/Chris Hani/FW de Klerk interviews late last year — the Independent Broadcast Monitoring Network. It watched the SABC coverage of Codesa and presented its findings to last weekend's historic and hurriedly put together conference on South Africa's Media in the Transition to Democracy.

Sitting in padded blue leather seats in the old Coloured Representative Council at the University of the Western Cape was the largest gathering yet seen of present

and future movers and shakers in the press.

Over a stinking hot weekend the Conference was told that despite some radical changes at Auckland Park, the independent monitoring group still finds the SABC is biased towards the Government.

Johan Pretorius, SABC's diffident and pleasant news chief, compared his participation at the conference to "Daniel in the lion's den."

Of all the changes ahead, there is one which is going to enter the living room of every TV and radio subscriber in the country, and soon. Mr Pretorius was conciliatory and accepted that changes and a new authority was on the way.

Recommendations for a far-reaching shake-up at the SABC have been presented to Codesa with a deadline for action of March 31.

And the recommendations for transition include monitoring, the "urgent replacement" of Wynand Harnse, a halt to any restructuring of the SABC, the establishment of the Independent Communications Authority, and of course the removal of all existing laws which still hamstring the press.

Even M-Net, the "whore" of the airwaves as it is called in some academic circles, may have to poke around in its bulging pockets and play a genuine media role.

M-Net's licence to broadcast, thanks to the "patronage" of the National Party, may be forced to stick to its contractual obligations to beam a substantial chunk of local content among its present blue-chip schedules.

Recommendations by the conference for interim measures which were delivered to Codesa this week are not going to be "perfect... bound to be a compromise, but it could do something to bring fair and impartial reporting into people's homes now," according to Akwe Amofo of the BBC.

The conference concentrated on the electronic media but the role of the mainstream press monopolies was also on the agenda.

Conceded

Only one of the big three newspaper proprietors was substantially represented — the Argus Group.

Its representatives conceded, as they have in the past, that there are too many newspapers in too few hands including their own.

While the earth may not be moving yet at Auckland Park, its past and some of its present performance concentrated minds over a broad political spectrum last weekend.

The style and shape of the media message that will be seen and heard in our living rooms is now on the negotiating table.

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Sa.
Sun Star 15/2/92

Analysis of Codesa based on a shaky assumption

AT THE heart of R W Johnson's recent analysis of Codesa and what he sees as the likely pattern of South African political development ("Spectrum", January 18) lies a shaky assumption about the ANC's readiness to govern.

He says: "The movement cannot call on sufficient reserves of skilled manpower to be able simultaneously to organise a mass movement, conduct international diplomacy, negotiate a constitution and help govern a modern, sophisticated

country."

The kindest thing to be said of this statement is that Johnson confuses the need for political leaders with that for skilled technicians and administrators.

Whatever the state of Trevor Manuel's economics knowledge it could hardly be worse than Barend du Plessis' when he became Minister of Finance, or even now.

Neither was, nor should be, selected primarily for technical skills in economics.

Of course, technical experts and well-trained administrators will be required by a democratic government.

Granted that the benign authoritarianism of tertiary education afforded blacks in this country hardly equips them to work with initiative and responsibility in a democratic society, but at least some senior officials will bring to bear education and experience achieved in democratic settings abroad, while the same criticism can

rightly be made of the present set of administrators, fewer of whom have had learning or working experience in democratic multicultural situations.

A start is being made to redress the quality of public administration in this country. It will not be easy to provide better training for present officials, both black and white, at all levels of administration, in South Africa and the homelands, and then to bring them together into effective working arrangements. But at least the

ANC is demonstrating the political will to do this.

All areas of policy will pose tensions, especially when a new government sets different priorities and establishes a different (genuinely civil, one hopes) approach to its administration. All officials will be expected to work towards the achievement of these priorities and, with the aid of short-term, intensive training programmes, be responsive to all South African constituencies.

Of course, Johnson is right to remind us of the human frailties of the prospective governors.

It is unfortunate that, for whatever reasons, he cannot recognise those shortcomings of authoritarian and even racist values that sorely hamper the effectiveness of the present crop and pose evident problems for a successful South African democracy.

Dr John Seiler
Sandton

Sa.
Sun. Star 15/2/92

Many have fled the violence, but for those left behind even the church doors are locked

The despair of Meadowlands

BRENDAN TEMPLETON
describes the night he spent in
Meadowlands this week.

EVEN God seems to have turned his back on Meadowlands.

After nine people were killed in the Soweto township last weekend, terrified residents started sleeping in nearby schools and churches to escape the ever-present fear of more attacks from neighbouring hostel dwellers.

But now, even there, the doors and windows are locked to those who seek sanctuary.

The Dogs of War might have been quiet when I slept there on Wednesday night, but tension was thick in the air when darkness fell.

A pall of despair embraced the area this week. Hostels bordering the Meadowlands "Bantank" hostel looked as if they had been uprooted from a war zone and transplanted there.

Corrugated iron covered most of the windows — the majority of which had been smashed — doors had gaping holes in them, and a few gutted houses bore mute testimony to the mindless violence which swept the area a week ago.

It was a sad, much-repeated South African tale I heard from all the people I spoke to about the troubles which have plagued the area since violence erupted there again last year.

They have no confidence in the far removed attempts by Inkatha and the ANC to find a peaceful solution, and it is clear that, amid their bitterness, there is no place for reconciliation.

Residents want the hostels demolished and their inhabitants moved away. All blame the police of colluding with the men who live in the hostels.

'Peace is dead'

Lydia Kgatimotswedi is in her 70s. She sees no use in talking with the people from the hostels. "They say we must make peace, but how do you make peace with people like this?"

"Peace is dead. That peace will be there only as long as it suits the hostel people."

For her, November 29 1988 was a proud and happy day. It was the day the construction of Zone 1 was completed and residents were allowed to move in.

Houses in those days were overhauled from today, and she lavished loving attention on her home and garden. Her pride and joy is a healthy "yesterday-today-and-tomorrow" bush. But her future looks grim.

The war with the hostel dwellers can be traced back to the 1970s, when friction rose between the men in the hostels and residents. Not long ago, the hostel dwellers were disinterested in community issues, particularly the stayaways.

It was often said that they were used by the police to attack residents who took part in stayaways. Police always denied the allegations.

This did nothing to allay suspicion, and the friction between those in the hostels and residents has continued, occasionally spilling up into the kind of violence seen last weekend.

The latest spate of violence took place after the funeral of a man killed by a petrol bomb thrown through a hostel window.

Mrs Kgatimotswedi now sleeps alone in the house, as her daughter has been too afraid to return home at night since the last attack.

"If I wasn't old like this, I would move out of this house," she says.

Her tale is repeated by everyone I speak to. Norman Mokhele (40) would also like to move out, but says: "Where would I go to, Mt. Mothone?"

He was sitting outside his house with his son last Saturday when his neighbour ran up to him and told him the hostel residents were attacking.

He could not run away because he had his son, who is only three, with him.

They hid in one of the rooms and listened in terror

as the mob smashed his windows and furniture in a mindless fury.

Across the road, 22-year-old Thomas Moshole's house was subjected to the same treatment. He was also lucky — he was out visiting friends at the time of the attack.

Violence in the area is an all-too-familiar phenomenon for him. He was stunned by rampaging mobs in May.

"But I survived," he says, almost proudly.

Most of his children have "disappeared". Now he lives with his one remaining school-going child and does not know what to do, because he struggles to survive on his R225 monthly pension.

He portrays his shattered home with despair. In an attack during May last year, damage to his windows cost him R225. He does not know how he will replace the latest damage.

He believes he is "taking chances" by sleeping in his home at night.

He may be old, but his pride prevents him from living on other people's charity. "It's difficult to sleep in other people's houses," he says.

His neighbour, who did not want to give his name, says he was shot at by a white policeman who was with the attackers last Saturday.

He points to what he says is the print of a policeman's canvas boot on his door.

He claims the policeman shot at him, but asked: "You will never end this violence because it is being started by police," he says.

"This thing won't stop," he says.

As we talk, a gunshot is heard from the direction of the hostels.

Suddenly there is panic. Residents begin to gather in small knots, gazing at the hostel where sinister small groups are watching them.

A whistle — often the signal of an impending attack — sounds from the vicinity of the hostels.

The tension grows, and someone shouts: "Wanhi, they are coming!"

People flee.

It turns out to be a false alarm, but demonstrates the level of tension in this township.

As darkness descends, Mrs Kgatimotswedi shares a meal with her friend across the road, Paulina Mabane.

Mrs Mabane is the hero of the community — she fought off three men who forced their way into her

house. She does not know where she got the courage.

Three houses away, a family packs its belongings on to the back of a truck. Its members have had enough, and are moving out.

As they leave, they are closely shadowed by a police Casspir. Two policemen shine torches on their faces.

"Where were they on Saturday? The police station is only three minutes away from here," a man says.

A group of youths emerges from the gloom. They have been keeping watch on the houses which have been abandoned for the night.

I ask them if they are forming defence committees, but their leader will say nothing.

"If we tell you anything, the police will get to hear about it," one of the youths says.

Clearly, he is angry. His voice thickens as he discusses the hostel residents.

He describes these things.

Neither he nor his companions agree with the ANC's call earlier in the week for the police to stay in the area.

"The police must move out of here. Every time we want to attack, the police are here, but when they (those who live in the hostels) attack us, the police never come."

"These hostels must be demolished."

"If they cannot do it, we will," he says.

He believes a "third force" is at work, and says policemen in camouflage uniforms in minibuses and beat up their guard patrols at night.

However, he says the violence is not an Inkatha-ANC issue.

"It's not political. It's just thugs," he says angrily.

As we move off, I notice that the lights in Mrs Mabane's house have been switched off.

It seems she has left for a safer place.

Mrs Kgatimotswedi will have to face more whatever comes in the night.

New twist in murder row

THE row between the ANC and the IFP over the murder of ANC Natal Midlands official and peace negotiator S'kumbuzo Ngwenya continues — with two alleged witnesses of the killing implicating the son of a top Inkatha man.

The witnesses made the allegation at a news conference called by the ANC in Maritzburg this week.

According to ANC Natal Midlands deputy chairman Reggie Hadebe, the witnesses implicated three IFP members.

One of the three men accused — whose names were given to Saturday Star — is said to be the son of a top Imball IFP official.

Mr Hadebe said two other people had remained in the car, a white XR0 Ford Sierra, used in the "hit", and could not be identified clearly by the witnesses.

'Witnesses' accuse IFP trio after killing of ANC man

THABO LSHILO, Political Staff

Mr Hadebe said both witnesses were prepared to testify in court.

One of them, a woman, feared for her life after having seen the alleged killers in the vicinity of her home in Imball, he said.

IFP central committee member Senzo Mfayela strongly denied that Inkatha was involved in Mr Ngwenya's murder.

The claim was, he said, viewed in an extremely serious light.

"We find it significant that it has taken six days for these so-called witnesses to come forward," he said.

"We also find it interesting that

these witnesses were produced by the ANC after the IFP, acting on reliable information from a faction of the ANC, hinted at the possibility of a faction within the Natal Midlands branch of the ANC as being responsible for the murder."

The witnesses' claim comes after Kim Hodgson of the Inkatha Institute's violence monitoring unit said this week that there was a good chance that Mr Ngwenya was murdered by the ANC.

The allegation has been rejected "with contempt" by ANC spokesman Saki Macozoma.

Mr Macozoma said: "The anti-ANC sentiment in the Inkatha Institute reaches pathological levels at times, and finds outlets in this kind of propaganda."

Mr Ngwenya was killed in the parking lot of a Maritzburg hotel after meeting a group of visiting American businessmen at the hotel.

Mr Hadebe alleged that he and four other high-ranking members of the ANC/SACP alliance in the area were on the hit list of a death squad operating in the area.

He named other people on the hit list as Natal Midlands ANC/SACP leader Harry Gwala, ANC regional secretary Siso Nkabinde, SACP deputy secretary Casius Lubisi, and Chief Zbuse Mlaba of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa.

Earlier this week, the IFP said evidence seemed to suggest that the ANC was involved in the recent killings and attempts on the lives of its leaders in the area.

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ANC, IFP in joint push on violence

THE African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party last night formed a joint working committee to look into ways of resolving the conflict between battle-scarred Meadowlands residents and hostel dwellers.

The six-member committee was formed as a result of various meetings held between the ANC and the IFP in the area, after last weekend's bloody clashes left nine people dead and scores of others injured.

A number of houses were also destroyed when the residents and IFP supporters from the hostel attacked each other with AK-47s and hand-grenades during running skirmishes.

ZINGISA MKHUMA

Many of the residents have fled their houses and sought refuge elsewhere in Soweto. The residents have blamed hostel-dwellers for looting their houses and have demanded that their goods be restored as a matter of urgency.

See Page 8.

Although the hostel dwellers were not represented at the meetings because, the IFP says, "they were not involved in the violence", it was agreed that members of the committee would take responsibility for consulting the inmates to ensure that they

participated in the workings of the committee.

It was agreed that the committee would look into the issue of restoring the looted goods as a matter of urgency.

The committee would also ask the police to be deployed around the area for 24 hours to help restore peace and to keep the warring factions apart.

Other resolutions taken at the meeting were that:

- The committee would establish a local dispute resolution committee (LDRC) in the Meadowlands area.
- The committee would be responsible for ensuring peace in the area until the responsibilities were transferred to the established LDRC.

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Sun Star 15/2/92

It's official, in 11 languages

ANC aims for equality

JOHN PERLMAN and SAPA

IT'S official. It's also amptelik, unthetho, molao and seven other versions of the same.

Language policy proposals released this week by the African National Congress confer equal status on all 11 South African languages. "The implication of granting all major South African languages such status is that no language will be declared official," the ANC said.

Its policy would be to "remove the fetters on growth and development of languages in this country, thus granting dignity and worth to the tongues that people speak".

The ANC proposals give some detail of how the policy will be implemented. Each language will be:

- Developed by language agencies guided by needs of those who use it.
- Taught at all levels in schools, colleges, technikons and universities.
- Promoted, with State assistance, as the language of the country.
- Made available to users in courts, police stations, administrative offices, post offices and other State concerns.

Observers are divided as to whether the ANC's all-inclusive policy is due to the fact that "the ANC's concept of a nation is an inclusive one" or whether the movement is simply hedging its bets.

Cost

There are also questions being asked about the workability of such a proposal. Hans Olivier, managing director of the Public Servants Association, said he had no problem with "the principle that everybody can use his own language. But there might be some problems with the practical implementation of the thing."

"Everybody is entitled to write a letter to a government department in his own language and get a reply back in his own language. That is not a problem. We are doing it already."

"But service across a counter is a different thing. You cannot have enough people at every post able to speak in each of the 11 languages. Can you imagine what it would cost?"

Mr Olivier said other problems might arise with the career movements of senior officials. "Let us say someone moves to Natal to take up a director's post and learns Zulu for the job. If he is then made chief director in the northern Transvaal, must he now learn Venda?"

Mr Olivier said he did not expect massive duplication of State media such as census forms and other documents. "In 60 or 70 percent of the country, the language is regionally bound."

He said every government department would have to work out its own set of rules. "Our association is one of 11 public sector organisations and we have regular joint forums. We have people who speak every language and we decided in our meetings that we would speak English."