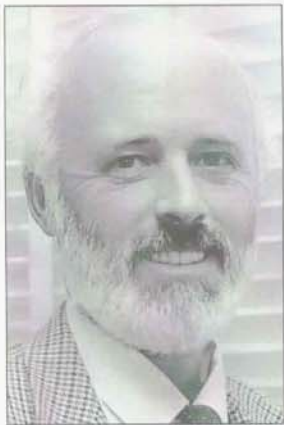


# It's legit, guv

**R**evolutionary third-world writers like Fanon had this uncanny ability to look back on history even before that history was fully formed. A little bit of this prescience would not go amiss in modern-day South Africa. Legitimacy, after all, is what the new state is all about. To prove it we have the black journalistic intelligentsia taking up their high-minded pens to defend the arms industry against the scurrilous liberal press.

**The native intellectual (wrote Frantz Fanon), who takes up arms to defend his nation's legitimacy and who wants to bring proofs to bear out that legitimacy, who is willing to strip himself naked to study the history of his body, is obliged to dissect the heart of his body.**  
**By GRAEME ADDISON**



They have dissected their hearts and found nothing but patriotism, the first refuge of the sound-of-heart.

Meanwhile, tush, tush, the naughty Independent group, owned by a foreign baked beans baron who is totally unaccountable to the people (except that he is a good friend of Mandela), has refused to go naked or bare its heart. Counter-revolutionaries that they are, they have draped themselves with the Constitution, thinking that freedom of information was meant for them. Of course, it never was. The baked bean baron has forgotten his friendship and allowed his editors to destabilise a commercial transaction. That's treason, you know, disclosing commercial secrets. It's like revealing that Sol gave Nelson R500 000 – or R2-million was it? Whatever.

You can't do that and get away with it, publicise it, I mean.

The interests of big, privatised capitalistic parastatals like Denel are identical to those of the state and the people in the socialist mass democracy we are building. Secrecy, dollars and the struggle are one. Viva!

To claim that revealing arms negotiations is a form of political destabilisation may seem a

funny concept to some, but when you think about it "destabilise" is absolutely the right verb. It is a doing-word with the most sinister implications. It means conniving to throw someone off balance, and that's exactly what the papers did to Denel while it quietly went about its business in an absolutely balanced and secretive way.

It is very normal and decent – nothing to be ashamed of – to sell as many weapons of death as possible to Middle Eastern potentates. They may have enough weapons already but we don't have enough of their money, which we need very dearly. Money means jobs. Jobs mean development, and that's a magic word.

Say "development". It rolls off the tongue almost as nicely as that other nice word "redeployment", to which we will come in the course of this study of the magical new language of democracy which waves away all ills with the flick of a verbal wand. Development means votes. Votes mean another term, and another, in power. It's all very balanced, it hangs together nicely.

It is amazing how the arms trading that would have been seen as the dealings of the devil under the old regime is now acceptable, indeed, good. The fundamental logic of this has been spelt out by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki who is reported to have said, courteously but firmly, that in the past the South African media had correctly adopted an adversarial approach to the Nationalist Government, but now that apartheid was gone this attitude was no longer appropriate.

There you have it. Everyone now realises that the media should be on the RDP team, or the GEAR team, or the Denel team, or whatever team the government is fielding at the moment, even if the team is running around in total confusion and own goals are the order of play. There is really no place for adversarial journalism in such a system because no-one can figure out who the adversaries are.

Winnie? Heaven forbid. No-one wants her as an adversary in any soccer game. Sankie? Look, the government is cash-strapped and really can't afford more than the odd judicial commission of inquiry. Since rugby is much more important than housing, Louis Luyt's the one to go for. He must disclose all, including whether he bribed someone in Mpumalanga for a licence to drive his fleet of BMWs and Mercs, and by God if he doesn't we'll leak the story to the Sunday Times.

The way to deal with sports criminals is to smear them with their own dung. Remember that Luyt was a press baron himself once, in the beer line rather than baked beans, a bully rather than a fart. He did the old Nats a service

or two that they bitterly regretted just as the rugby unions are today regretting having a billionaire at the helm. Sport, dollars and disclosure are one. Viva!

The press should be used against enemies of the system, that's what newspapers are really for. If sports administrators don't understand the meaning of development, we'll have to teach them. That is, unless you mean family development in which case the Luyts and Sankie may have more in common than anyone could possibly have guessed, and no-one can teach them anything.

My editor tells me I am running out of words so the time has come to address that beautiful South African neologism, redeployment. To my mind this represents the acme of rainbow newspeak. It came in with all the Mkhonto weSizwe generals who took up provincial premierships and jobs in Parliament where, oddly, people get elected rather than militarily deployed.

Of course, Parliament and all such chambers are mere talking-shops of the bourgeoisie and despicable for that reason. True democracy means marshalling your forces for an assault via the committee structure, outflanking the enemy by not appearing at question-time, and bombarding the media with denials, counter-charges, conspiracy theories involving the Auditor-General, and other such entertainments in lieu of accountable governance.

Even if the media knew who the adversaries were, they would have to give up laughing at the sheer inventiveness of ministers like Penuel Maduna, who really should be in show business.

Let us not forget that the baked bean baron and his ilk, including Cyril, have never been voted into their positions in a free and fair election by the masses, but were deployed there to serve the interests of shareholders. In effect, their papers are totally undemocratic.

Deployment is respectable, so redeployment must be doubly so. Look at Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri: she was deployed once to the SABC and then trucked off to the Free State. She's super-legit, guv. Stare into your heart as you might, go naked for a year, publish and be damned, nothing short of some other party redeployment will undeploy her. Undeploy: never heard the word? It's mine. I stumbled across it at the revolutionary dictionary discount sale.

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