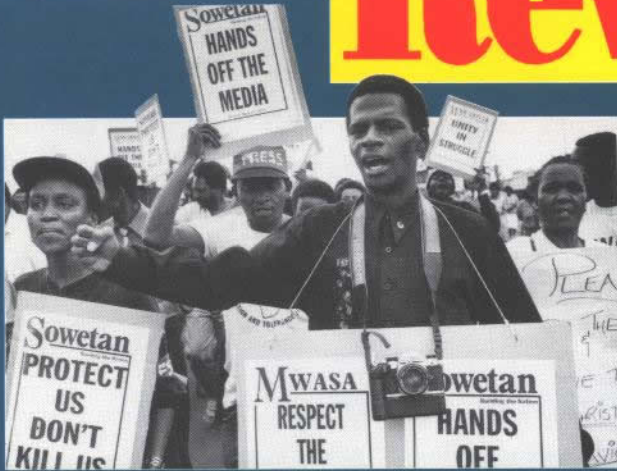


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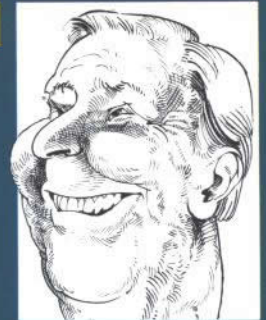
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DOUG BAND ON ARGUS HOLDINGS



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Inside the world of Joao Silva, winner of the Ilford press photo awards



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AND
STATE OF THE NATION REPORT

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State of the Nation Report from the *Sowetan* and *Vrye Weekblad*

This edition is dedicated to Calvin Thusago, murdered while reporting for the SABC in Sharpeville on April 23, 1993

A colleague remembered

THIS edition of *Review* is dedicated to Calvin Thusago, a television reporter for the SABC, who was murdered by youths in Sharpeville on April 23 in the exercise of his duties.

Thusago's killers have short memories. The irony of this latest attack, however, was not lost on media colleagues who organised a protest march through the township to remind residents that it was journalists who, 33 years earlier, had alerted the world to the massacre in which 67 members of the Pan-Africanist Congress were shot dead by police in Sharpeville while protesting against the pass laws.

Intimidation and the growing number of attacks on journalists bodes ill for the future. No democracy can blossom in the dark. Those who attack and intimidate journalists must remember that the quickest route to a totalitarian society and their own enslavement is simply to switch off the lights.

Serving the future

INCREASINGLY journalists are being asked to help build a new society and to promote the emerging values that will have to underpin it. But in wanting to play a constructive developmental role, journalists must beware that they do not surrender their independence or draw their own teeth.

South African journalists can best serve the new society by maintaining their vigilance and by studiously protecting their independence.

The journalists' job is not to cosy up to politicians

and bureaucrats or to promote their shifting interests. Their role is to see that these servants of the tax-paying public serve the taxpayers and not themselves.

Equally, their job is not to dream up or promote schemes for social advancement, it is to ensure that any social engineering is rooted in the common good, and that money spent on development is fully accounted for.

From small acorns

THIS is my last edition as editor of the *Rhodes Journalism Review* and I wish to thank everyone who had a hand in it, from the the writers, photographers and artists who have contributed without payment, to the advertisers, many of whom came on board sight-unseen, and the subscribers. Thanks also to the repro house and printer who gave us 90 days on trust when we launched. All have shown faith in an idea and this review belongs to them all.

From small acorns, they say, great oaks can grow and I trust this review develops from these humble beginnings into a journal reaching journalists, media workers and academics throughout our region, providing a platform for the important ethical and political debates that attach to media, but also as a vehicle for journalistic excellence.

I hope too that this review will never surrender its editorial independence nor settle for subsidy, and that it will always have the freedom and the courage to confront those who would capture media for narrow political, ideological or commercial interests. A window is open, let's keep it that way. ● — *Kerry Swift*

editorial



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The Independent Media Diversity Trust was launched in March with a R1-million injection from the Argus, Times Media, Nasionale Pers, M-Net and the mining house, JCI. Here the case is made for further support of the trust, and in particular international backing, in the interests of democracy

IF there is one single cause worth international support in South Africa, it is the press here. In particular, I'm talking about the principle of diversity.

The generosity and concern of the international community in South Africa, via the embassies as well as private citizens and agencies in foreign countries, has ranged from promoting human rights through voter education to small-scale farming and drought relief.

But when revelations show that South Africa rivals any other country for fraud, corruption and mismanagement, there's no doubt that our fundamental problems cannot be resolved by simply throwing resources at the situation.

Finance allocated for drought relief needs to be monitored, scrutinised and publicised to avoid a situation where it flows into private pockets or political patronage.

Funds for education should be deployed on the basis of public debate and consensus about the manifold needs and the most cost-effective options. Who will be a watchdog over all these questions?

Make no mistake, South Africa's key need is the development of a stable and economically-sound polity. To think, however, that there can be successful political or economic development without a free, vibrant and pluralistic press as a precondition, is to turn a blind eye to the realities.

Fortunately, the international community has not been a Cyclops in this regard.

All this has been money well spent

Alongside powerful diplomatic support for press freedom, many foreign countries have made tangible contributions to policy formulation, to operating costs, and to training for South Africa's press. Here one may single out the European Community, the Nordic countries, Canada and Australia for special thanks.

All this has been money well spent. Without it, there could well have been many more casualties of PW Botha's diktat. Without it, there would not have been the wealth of supremely important information about South Africa that has been made available to the public, and indeed to the world as a whole.

In this regard, small as the weekly independent papers may be, what we have published has had an impact beyond all relation to our circulation.

□ It was *South* that first published Mandela's letter

Guy Berger

from prison to PW Botha proposing the historic compromise that ended the political deadlock of the 1980s.

- *Weekly Mail* brought to public notice 'Inkathagate' and evidence of a "third force" destabilising political developments.
- *Vrye Weekblad* exposed the death squad units in the South African defence and police forces.
- *New Nation* got the story of the military signal that ordered the elimination of eastern Cape leader Matthew Goniwe and his colleagues.
- Then there has been the less high-profile, but still significant, contributions by magazines like *Die Suid Afrikaan* and *Work in Progress*.

We believe we are better

All this is not to ignore the role of the mainstream, established newspapers, and their contribution.

The whole spectrum of publications is an asset to this country. I don't want to denigrate the role of the established press even though we in the alternative/independent camp, with classic arrogance, believe we are better.

The point to make is that even if all the alternative publications closed tomorrow, their contribution to making South Africa an open democracy would still have been immense.

Naturally we do not intend to close shop tomorrow. But it is not easy. Just when political pressures on us eased, and time could be devoted to business matters, South Africa has been hit by recession. Across the media industry, advertising and sales are down.

In the eastern Cape, for example, the Afrikaans language newspaper *Oosterlig* closed in April, soon to be followed by *Die Transvaler* on the Reef. The alternative *New African* went the same way.

All alternative publications are striving right now to stabilise their performance, and substantial progress has been made. But because newsprint anywhere gobbles cash, instant viability is impossible. The *Sowetan* and *City Press* took up to 10 years before they began to pay their way.

So what are the prospects in the alternative camp? Who will invest in it, without immediate returns? This depends on the Independent Media Diversity Trust, and the capital and expertise it can mobilise.

Chaired by IDASA's Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, the venture draws from the experience of media subsidy

PLEASE TURN OVER 45

Continued support for the alternative media today is not a partisan political matter. It is a contribution to building a pluralistic press as a powerful democratic institution in this country

systems in the Netherlands and Sweden, though not receiving state funds here in South Africa. The trust will only back alternative media which can prove progress towards commercial viability and which are independent of political parties or companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

As noted, resources put into the alternative media to date represent money well spent. But everyone would agree that the outcome of any assistance should be sustainable development.

If South Africa were already a normal, thriving and stable democracy, it would still be important that publication projects initiated in earlier times be given a reasonable prospect to reach a stage of self-sufficient endurance.

South Africa is, of course, still quite a distance from being a stable democracy. Nonetheless, there is an important argument that some political progress has at least been made and it is now inappropriate for foreign donors to support as controversial an institution as the press in these circumstances.

This argument is based on the belief that it is wrong for foreign agencies to play a party political role in a situation where politics are normal or normalising. That is true.

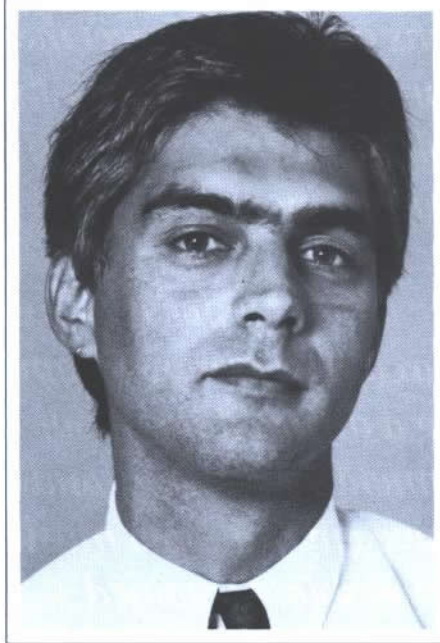
What is not true, however, is the perception that newspapers, in particular the alternative publications, are party political organs.

There was a time when there was little perceptible distinction between the demands made by many of the alternative media, and those made by the ANC. What is clear to anyone, however, is that since the ANC and other groups were unbanned, there has been a prominent distinction between the interests of the alternative press and those of that particular political organisation.

This is clear in the editorial products of our publications each week, and I can also vouch that we in the alternative press also experience this directly from the battles that we continuously wage to get the ANC and its supporters to keep their hands off. If more evidence is needed, the fact that the ANC today wishes to start its own publications network, underlines the party-political independence of the alternative media.

What I am arguing therefore is that continued support for the alternative media today is not a partisan political matter. It is a contribution to building a pluralistic press as a powerful democratic institution in this country.

It is not without significance that the most severe



Guy Berger

“
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need
spotlights.
Now, in this
transitional
period
especially,
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when we
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exist

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political pressure on the press in recent times has been in parts of the country characterised by a sad lack of media diversity. The *Evening Post* and *Eastern Province Herald* in Port Elizabeth and the *Daily Dispatch* in East London have been boycotted and burnt by radical township activists. In the case of the *Dispatch*, a delivery truck full of newspapers was hi-jacked and burned in the Transkei.

That these media — for several reasons — have reflected the views of whites and catered for a primarily white audience, may well be shortsighted and unfortunate, but it is of course their right. That there have been no alternatives in their region, however, is surely the greatest problem.

Providing people with a choice of media is the surest way of defusing dissatisfaction with any one medium. It would be a sorry situation if other parts of South Africa shared with the eastern Cape and Border, a lack of diversity of publications.

Providing the public with a choice of media is in itself an exercise in demonstrating the right of different viewpoints, products and ultimately political options to exist, and to contest for space in the marketplace. It serves, in this way, as a mechanism of keeping political control out of the

press as a whole, which is essential to the press playing its role in assisting a democracy to function via an informed citizenry.

It is this recognition of the absolutely critical value of media diversity that has won the support of the established newspaper industry for this new trust fund.

There is much talk these days about levelling the playing fields in South Africa. But it is clear that no matter how level a field, the quality of lighting is vital for the game. With skewed lights, or inadequate lighting, players will be contesting in the dark. There will be foul play in the shadows. And, this being South Africa, the referee is also likely to have his pants stolen, several spectators will be mugged and the takings at the gate will certainly go missing.

So, we need spotlights, Now, in this transitional period especially, but even beyond, when we need many more than presently exist.

Today, at the very least, we must preserve those spotlights that presently exist, especially where their power supply is still precarious. ●

GUY BERGER is editor of *South*.

Some TV tips for the reluctant chairman

MOTORING publisher, John Oxley in a letter published in the last edition of this *Review* labelled the ethical debate around motoring writers and freebies “hackneyed” and then went on to extol the virtues of the average motoring journalist.

Regarding the latter, no doubt he is correct and most motoring writers are upright citizens in good standing with their conscience.

On his charge that the ethical debate is hackneyed, however, it might interest Mr Oxley — a former office-bearer of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists — to know that around the time he was writing his letter to *Review*, the motoring editor of a leading Johannesburg newspaper was threatening to blackball a manufacturer’s cars from the pages of his newspaper because he had been overlooked for an overseas freebie. The guild, alerted by the manufacturer, took no action against the journalist in question.

‘Hackneyed’? I think not. ‘Hack’ is probably more appropriate.

I agree wholeheartedly with Frederik Ivan Zyl Slabbert that he should not have been appointed chairman of the new SABC board. After all, he gave a rousing display of ignorance about the dynamics of television when he appeared before the board’s selection panel and told the six wise men (and one woman) that he doesn’t approve of sitcoms and soap operas and that television should play more of an “educative role”, as he put it.

I’ve got news for the reluctant SABC chairman — no sitcoms and soapies, no audience; no audience, no advertising; no advertising, no revenue; no revenue, no television, or else steeply higher TV licence fees to pay for Chairman Van’s educational vision. Even then, I doubt we couch potatoes will learn much because we’ll all be glued to M-Net soapies.

SO, the nasty little secret is out. The reigning editor of *The Observer*, Donald Trelford is being punted as editor of a new ANC newspaper, to be funded — or so it is reported — by none other than that arch neo-colonialist of Lonrho fame, Tiny Rowland.

In the last edition of *Review*, Trelford wrote fondly of his early days as editor of



By Thomas Fairbairn

the old *Nyasaland Times*, explaining that his brief in Malawi was to keep the newspaper alive, “which meant making it acceptable to the country’s leader”.

Perhaps, having accepted those limitations on his editorial freedom from Roy Thomson, ‘Pixie’ Trelford is an ideal candidate to edit an ANC mouthpiece.

THERE was a story doing the rounds of the foreign correspondents in Johannesburg after the breakdown of Codesa 2 that when asked if he saw light at the end of the South African tunnel, President De Klerk replied that he couldn’t even see the tunnel.

And, if you think that is disingenuous, how about the story doing the rounds in Bosnia that if you see light at the end of the tunnel, it’s the headlamp of an on-coming train.

HATS off to the jovial Scottish peer Lord Erskine of Rerrick who has bequeathed his testicles to the Royal Bank of Scotland because, as he put it, “they haven’t got any”.

He has amended his will to include the gift of his “two most precious assets” after being bankrupted because the bank “didn’t have the balls” to accept a trust fund as equity to cover his overdraft.

I think, however, that the good Lord Erskine would make a far more telling adjunct to history if he highlighted the plight of Bosnia by bequeathing the family jewels to the European politicians because they *certainly* don’t have any.

IT takes real optimists to fly in the face of the doomsday singers by coming to South Africa from the United States to launch a computer magazine in the teeth of the deepest depression since PW Botha. Yet that’s exactly what David Allen and Kathy Fielding did by launching *Bit*, a monthly magazine for PC users.

From day one, they adopted a publishing policy of no advertorial which hardly endeared him to powerful interests in the local PC market. But it paid off as *PC Magazine* — arguably America’s best computer publication — has signed them to publish that title in southern Africa.

So it appears editorial integrity and flair do pay and that the little guy can still win big in the local magazine market.

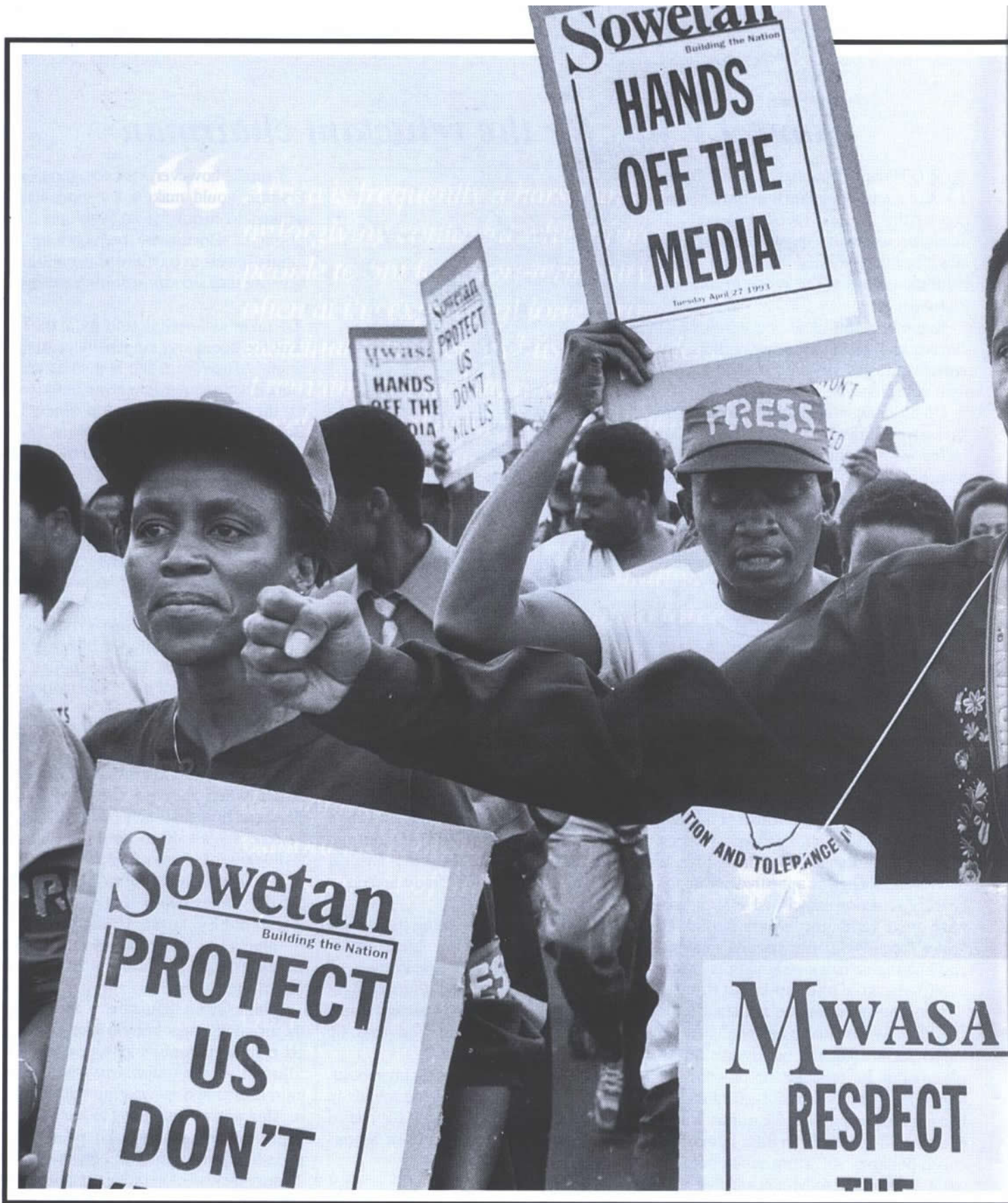
THE gutsy female editor of *The New Yorker*, Tina Brown, was paying her favourite contributors around R80 000 an article when she was editor of *Vanity Fair*, and now that she’s editing *The New Yorker*, she’s said to be paying around R100 000 for commissioned pieces.

Perhaps there’s a lesson in this for *Sunday Times* editor Ken Owen whose latest hobby horse is the “obscene frothiness” of South African journalism which, he suggests, offers more “illusion than illumination”.

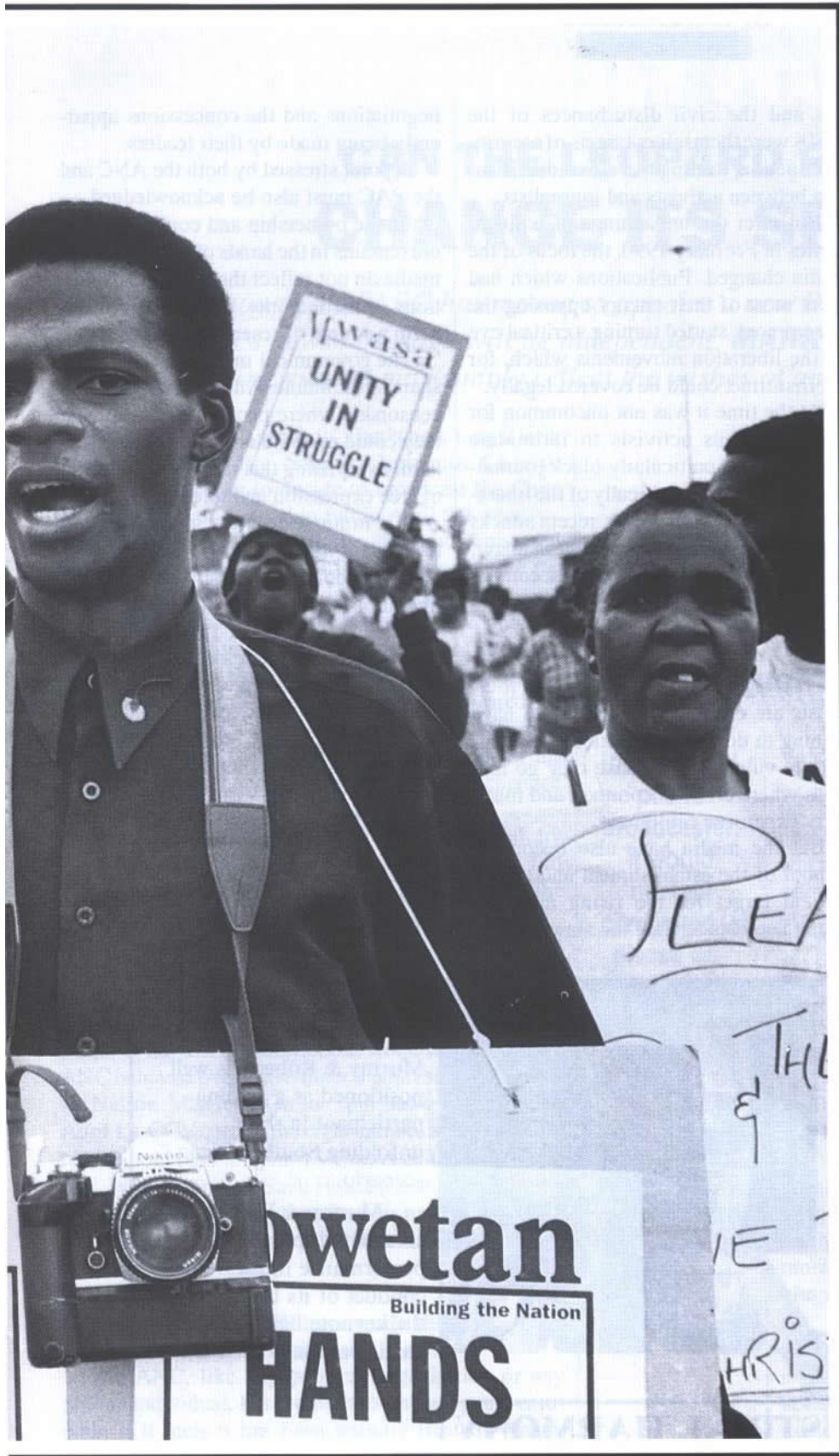
I think Owen should be seconded from the air-conditioned zone to spend a month on a local reporter’s pay covering the ‘illusion’ in the townships, where some journalists are now wearing flak jackets.

That way he might get to see just how dangerous, demanding and poorly paid front-line journalism has become in this country instead of berating his colleagues and indicting his own newspaper.

CARTOONISTS feed on idiocy, and in these barren days of political correctness, they’re having a field-day. Witness the recent cartoon in which a mother is reading a bed-time story to her children. The book’s title? *Snow so-called ‘White’ person and the Seven Vertically Challenged Workers*. ●



TARGETING THE



THE irony was not lost on the sullen-faced youths watching our progress through the dusty streets of Sharpeville. This march by hundreds of journalists and media workers was to protest the killing of a fellow journalist by a section of the Sharpeville community.

A few days before, Calvin Thusago, a television reporter for the SABC, and his cameraman Dudley Saunders were sent to do a story for CCV news about the desecration of graves in a Sharpeville cemetery, allegedly by members of the AWB.

They had shot their visuals and were leaving the township when their car was set upon by a group of about 30 pangawielding youths. Though seriously injured, Saunders was saved by a police patrol which passed by. Thusago, who had climbed out of the car to talk to the youths, was not so lucky. His forearm was slashed, opening a major artery. He died through loss of blood in a nearby doctor's surgery one hour later.

The attack galvanised journalists, seething over their recent treatment at the hands of township youths. In the two weeks since the assassination of Chris Hani, 42 journalists had been shot or attacked, some caught in the crossfire but others deliberately targeted.

While the media workers marched through the intermittent rain, thousands of Sharpeville residents gathered at the spot where the television crew's car had been attacked. Some bore hastily-made placards with messages of support for Thusago's family.

Mathata Tsedu, deputy president of the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (MWASA), made an impassioned plea to the Sharpeville community. Gesturing to a nearby police hippo, he said it was through the media that the world had heard about the Sharpeville massacre of 1960.

"We have come here today, escorted by people from Europe, who have come to make sure you don't kill us. There are people here from the OAU, from the European Community and from the local peace committee to make sure you don't kill us. What have we done to you that you are killing us?"

It was the question every journalist was asking.

Statistics gathered by the South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) show that the trend of attacks against journalists has been increasing steadily since the middle of 1990. ■

MEDIA

By Karen Stander
Pic: Kevin Carter
WEEKLY MAIL

In 1991, 13 journalists were injured in attacks. In 1992 the number rose to 46. In the first four months of this year, 60 journalists were shot or attacked.

E Lee Woodyear, human rights officer of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), who visited South Africa in April as the guest tutor on a series of safety-training seminars organised by the SAUJ, was shocked at the level of violence against South African journalists.

Woodyear's job involves monitoring censorship and the safety of journalists around the world and he has visited most of the international hotspots where journalists have been killed. But after a few days of listening to South African journalists — and almost every working journalist who participated in the seminars had a horror story to tell of assault or harassment, many describing incidents which could easily have ended tragically — he said he was amazed that more journalists had not been killed.

Journalists have not always been targets in the townships. Before February 1990 the press, and particularly the foreign press, was seen as an ally, informing the outside world of what was happening behind the curtain drawn by the states of emergency. Very often reporters and photographers covering township poli-

tics and the civil disturbances of the 1980s were themselves targets of security force action, leading to a close identification between activists and journalists.

But after the unbannings of political parties in February 1990, the focus of the media changed. Publications which had spent most of their energy opposing the government, started turning a critical eye on the liberation movements which, for the first time, could be covered legally.

At the time it was not uncommon for overly zealous activists to intimidate journalists — particularly black journalists — not to write critically of the liberation movements. However, recent attacks appear to be more a lashing out in anger, often at white faces and those accompanying them, rather than orchestrated violence against the media.

Many attacks against journalists are criminally inspired and have nothing to do with perceptions. Journalists are vulnerable because they go into areas where crime is common and many carry expensive equipment.

But the media have also become a symbol of the establishment and a convenient target for the rising anger of young activists against the slow pace of

negotiations and the concessions apparently being made by their leaders.

A point stressed by both the ANC and the PAC must also be acknowledged — while the ownership and control of media remains in the hands of whites and the media do not reflect the lives and aspirations of the majority, journalists will remain a source of resentment.

The government must also shoulder a share of the blame. After 40 years of strict censorship, where people were told what they could or could not say and read, it is hardly surprising that there is no tradition of free expression and tolerance.

It is ironic to hear the government — these days the most avid supporter of press freedom — piously accusing the liberation movements of responsibility for the death of Calvin Thusago.

But whatever the reason for attacks on journalists, they all have the same effect: they prevent the flow of information. In the wake of Thusago's death, editors are left wondering whether to send journalists back into the Vaal Triangle townships and possibly risking more lives. ●

KAREN STANDER is on the national executive of the South African Union of Journalists.

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CAN THE LEOPARD REALLY CHANGE ITS SPOTS?

*Even though the SABC has moved to appoint a new Board, it is not certain that the corporation's news coverage will be independent. **MARK GEVISSER** argues that in future newscasts may simply reflect the wishes of another Master's Voice*

ONLY 10 seconds. That's how long it took outgoing SABC chairman Christo Viljoen to decide to broadcast the Chris Hani funeral in full in April this year.

Viljoen might well have appeared dumbstruck and flabbergasted before the nation a month later when, during the public hearing to select a new SABC Board, Judge Ismail Mahomed extracted from him a reluctant apology for the corporation's past bias. But after the Hani assassination The Chairman had been a decisive man: he repeated his "only 10 seconds" defence twice during his half-hour testimony before the selection panel as proof of his *bona fides* and of how radically the SABC has changed its news policy during the past few months.

During the hearings, Viljoen was asked by KwaZulu magistrate King Ndlovu whether the full broadcasts of the Hani and Tambo funerals were the result of pressure from the African National Congress.

"There was no pressure," Viljoen responded. "We didn't even debate it."

There might not have been pressure from the ANC to broadcast the funerals, but there were shades of PW Botha at his dial-the-newsroom worst in the way the ANC behaved over a pre-funeral address to the nation by Nelson Mandela. On its 7pm news broadcast on April 13, CCV carried the eight-minute address in full, but, an hour later at 8pm, TV1 news edited it down by half. Within minutes, Shell House (headquarters of the ANC) had called Auckland Park to protest, and TV1 'rectified' the situation by broadcasting the entire address later that evening.

Should the ANC have made the phone call? Should the SABC have listened?

The ANC, like any political organisation or any private individual, has the right to phone up and complain if it feels it has been unfairly treated. What's more, it is unrealistic to expect political parties — or even governments — not to try and influence things: as SABC Board candidate Wimpie de Klerk said during the public hearings, "all politicians from all sides want a finger in the pie". Indeed, while ANC policy favours an independent SABC, there are many in its senior ranks who privately look forward to that open line to Auckland Park, no matter what they say in public.

If the SABC had the moral authority of a truly independent public broadcaster, it would not feel compelled to please any party and would have no masters save accuracy and fairness. It is going to have to earn this authority, slowly and carefully

The SABC cannot prevent this, but it can control it: Wimpie de Klerk echoed many of his fellow-candidates when he continued that "the SABC Board and management must be very strongly against [such attempts at influence]".

Which brings us to the second question: should the SABC have acquiesced to ANC complaints about the Mandela address being cut down by half?

The answer to this question is more discomfiting, and is best answered by another question: Has the SABC really become more independent, or is it just re-tuning its airwaves to the drone of another Master's Voice?

"Sometimes," says a white TV1 news-producer of the Mandela broadcast hoo-hah, "I think we're so oppressed at SABC that we just take orders, no matter where they come from. It seems as if we already have a new master, and when it gives its orders, we click our heels and obey."

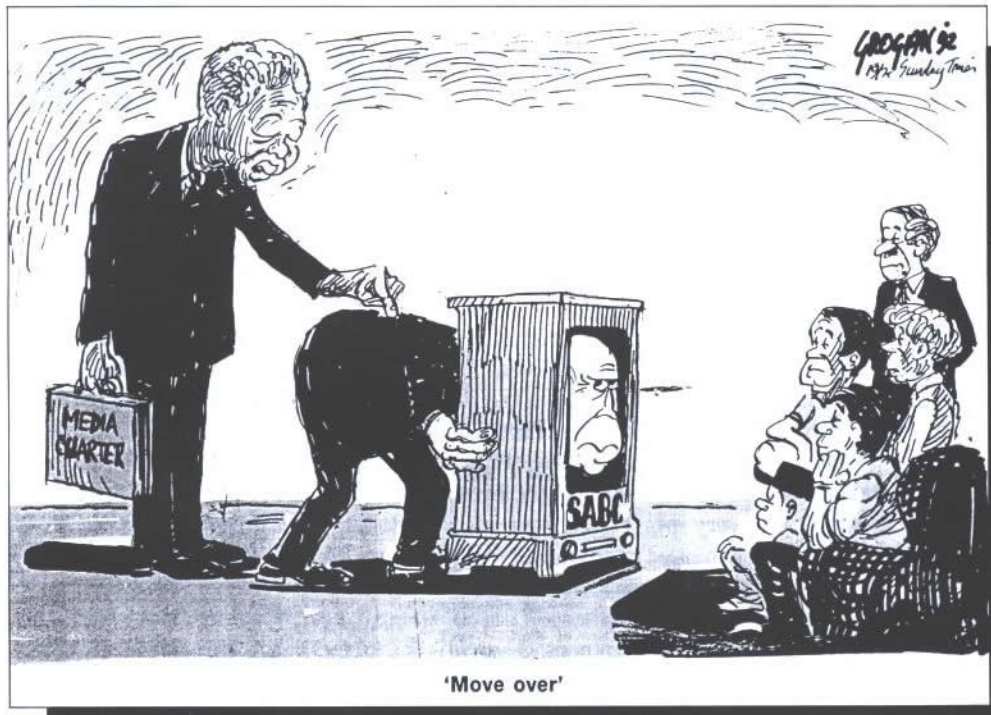
A black colleague at CCV couldn't disagree more: not only was it "imperative to broadcast Mandela's message in full to keep the peace," but "most of the news coverage was as biased as SABC has ever been". He points specifically to the way the news portrayed the massacre at Protea Police Station in Soweto as just another consequence of rioting and looting.

The CCV producer is right about the Protea shooting, and the Broadcast Monitoring Project of the Campaign for Open Media (COM) has published a damning 13-page Special Report on SABC Coverage on the Chris Hani Assassination, which proves, once more, in blow-by-blow detail, the pro-government bias at Auckland Park.

That SABC TV-news has changed for the better is obvious; the fact that Christo Viljoen's humiliation at the hands of Judge Mahomed was broadcast unedited on both TV1 News and *Agenda* is a case in point. But its metamorphosis into a more even-handed and challenging broadcaster does not necessarily mean that it is independent, and the evidence still suggests that it owes its allegiance to the Nationalist government — which, after all, has also changed for the better.

In his testimony at the SABC Board public hearings, IDASA director Alex Boraine actually made the point that, while indeed there has been a change in

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SABC news policy, “there has also been a change in government policy. It may be argued that the SABC still adheres to one party and is changing its policy in accordance with that party.” It may well also be argued that the SABC’s deeply-entrenched organisational culture impels it to adhere to power generally rather than to a single specific political party.

There was much I saw during the broadcasts following the Hani assassination which made me realise how dangerously easy it will be for the SABC to switch its allegiance to whatever new power replaces the FW de Klerk government. I do not believe that the current SABC has the remotest understanding of the term “Independent Public Broadcaster”, and, unless its style and management is changed radically by the new SABC Board, I fear it will slip effortlessly from being the electronic serving-boy of this government to the next one.

Take the actual coverage of the Hani funeral at the FNB Stadium and at the Elspark Cemetery. Certainly, it was right and proper for the SABC to broadcast it in full, as befitting a man who was a national hero and leader. But there was something in the tone of the broadcast that went further than respect — it was

downright obsequious. A Zimbabwean colleague noted that it reminded him of the way his country’s television behaved after independence in 1980: buttressing those in power by recording their pompous minutiae, all in the name of “progress” and “democracy”.

Why, for example, were there no cameras outside the FNB Stadium, showing viewers the mayhem and anarchy outside that was a direct counter to the pomp and dignity inside? Whatever one thinks of the disaffected and alienated youths who threatened to turn the funeral into a bloodbath, their anger too was a response to Chris Hani’s death; it too should have been recorded.

And so, while SABC’s newscasts tended to highlight the bad (concentrating, for example, on the rioting and looting at the top of the TV1 8pm newscast on April 14, and only noting much later that most marches were peaceful), SABC’s live coverage of the funeral itself showed only the good — a symptom, perhaps, of the current schizophrenia at Auckland Park, as the corporation tries to please both its current masters and its future ones.

Of course, if the SABC had the moral authority of a truly independent public

broadcaster, it would not feel compelled to please any party and would have need for no masters save accuracy and fairness. It is going to have to earn this authority, slowly and carefully. And the process takes a critical first step with the installation of a new Board and the transparency embarked upon to appoint it.

But the new Board is only a beginning. Now the tougher task of transforming the institution begins. Far from proving the SABC’s independence, Christo Viljoen’s “10-second” decision and his admission that there was “no debate” over the broadcasting of the Hani funeral is, in fact, evidence that the SABC still does not know how to think for itself. It continues to act, rather, in knee-jerk adherence to the powers of the day. That is why it changed its policy in 1989 to accommodate the government’s own changing attitude towards the liberation movements, and that, ultimately, is why it took Christo Viljoen only 10 seconds to deliberate over a decision that warranted, at the very least, a good few minutes. ●

MARK GEVISSER, a freelance journalist based in Johannesburg, writes media commentary for the Weekly Mail.

ARGUS HOLDINGS

RINGING THE CHANGES

Doug Band took over the helm of Argus Holdings on February 2, 1990, the same day President De Klerk unlocked the door to a negotiated settlement for South Africa. He too was promising change. GUS SILBER spoke to him in Johannesburg

THERE'S a big red rooster on the window-sill of Doug Band's executive office on the sixth floor of 47 Sauer Street, Johannesburg. Chest puffed out, feathers splashed with blue and orange, it basks in glorious sunshine as plump, pollution-blackened pigeons patrol the ledge outside.

Of course, it's not a real rooster. Just a ceramic memento of Doug Band's tenure as cock-of-the-hoop at the Gallo Record Company, whose heraldic symbol is a fowl in full cry.

Band, a chartered accountant by training, served as chief executive of Gallo from 1983 to 1987, when he was promoted to group chief executive of the newly-formed CNA Gallo conglomerate.

Then, on February 2, 1990, things began to get a little more complicated. For it was on this epoch-making day that Doug Band strode into his office at 47 Sauer Street to take up his new appointment as chief executive officer of Argus Holdings, an investment company with a 100 percent stake in the Argus Newspaper Group, a 37 percent stake in Times Media Limited, a 48 percent stake in the CTP newspaper and magazine group, a 33.3 percent stake in CNA Gallo, and an 18 percent stake in M-Net.

Through a steely chain of interlinking interests, this puts Band in a position of power and influence over everything from newspapers to books to television to movies to pop music to greetings cards to warehouse property, and it raises an interesting question for anyone concerned with the dynamics of information and entertainment in South Africa today.

Is this really the right kind of job for a chartered accountant?

Band laughs. He's heard all the grey-accountant jokes before; he's probably even told a few. But he's not one of them.

"Accountants generally get a bad press," says Band, who is wearing a bright red tie to offset the bold blue pin-stripes on his shirt. "Part of it is deserved — there are a hell of a lot of grey accountants out there. But there are also a number of very imaginative individuals who happen to have been trained in accounting. In my case, I've always seen it as a means to an end. Whether it's books or music or quality newspapers, I've always been very concerned with what's in the groove."

At 49, Band has been in the groove since 1972, when he completed his articles and joined Teal Records as financial director. Five years later, he left the company, convinced that it was "time to become an entrepreneur and make some money". Together with the late David Lewis, of Mike's Kitchen and Holiday Inns fame, Band took up the challenge of restoring suction and solvency to a cash-strapped vacuum-cleaner company called Columbus. Then came the first foray into publishing.

"We were told by Hamish Fraser, deputy financial editor of the *Rand Daily Mail*, that *Pace* magazine was about to fall victim to the Info Scandal," recalls Band.

"None of the big publishing groups wanted to touch it because it had been besmirched as a government project, but we managed to get it onto a very good financial footing and restore its credibility at the same time. Although it certainly wasn't planned, the government did us quite a favour by banning our first issue."

After selling *Pace* to CTP Holdings, Band returned to the corporate arena, having satisfied his aim of becoming an entrepreneur and making some money.

"I had a lot of fun. I made myself a capital grub-stake, and I learned a hell of

a lot," says Band, leaning back in his chair with his hands clasped behind his head. He unclasps them and leans forward, as if about to share the secret of entrepreneurial success.

"The most singular thing I learned is just how fat-cat big business can become if you don't keep a watch over it. How over-bureaucratic and corporate it can become. As a result, I've always tried to keep things very tight and lean, to operate the business in a more informal style. There's me, a financial director, and two secretaries. That's how we run Argus Holdings."

Even so, talk of the fatness of cats brings to mind the frequent accusation that Argus itself has become too hefty for the good of the nation, and that the time has come for that special weight-reduction process known as 'unbundling'. Already, the newspaper group has begun transferring its interests in the country's biggest metropolitan daily, the *Sowetan*, to a more representative cross-section of the community.

Part of the motivation, Band concedes, may have been to pre-empt an injunction to this effect by a future South African government. But the real reason was the spirit of change that began sweeping the nation on the same day Doug Band took office.

"As soon as I came in, I could see we were going to have to make some radical changes. I didn't see it as a tenable situation that we were running the largest daily newspaper in South Africa, that was there to service the black community, and that there was no equity-holding by that community in the newspaper. The important thing was to bring in the black shareholders, and build a shared vision of editorial independence."

But for many who share that vision, the really big bundle is the Argus Group's

“As soon as I came in, I could see we were going to have to make some radical changes. I didn’t see it as a tenable situation that we were running the largest daily newspaper in South Africa, that was there to service the black community, and that there was no equity-holding by that community in the newspaper.”

37 percent stake in Times Media Limited, and Band is quick to acknowledge that unbundling is high on the agenda.

“Unquestionably, it has to happen, and it will happen, but personally I don’t think it makes any sense to unbundle further than that. After all, when all is said and done, if you get to that position, you’re then down to four major media groupings in South Africa, plus the range of alternative papers. I believe it’s quite important to have that critical mass, in order to ensure the survivability of certain of these companies, and particularly of Argus.

“The newspaper business will continue to be a capital-intensive business, and there are a lot of areas where one can and must share resources. I would not be a supporter of fragmenting it down to the point where you end up with a bunch of single titles.”

While Band sees some merit in the view that an over-abundance of interests are concentrated in the grip of Argus Holdings, he prefers to use a more upbeat word to characterise the business. “Synergy”.

It is a word with muscle and vigour, and Band uses it to draw a line between common interests and controlling interests, as in: “We certainly don’t see ourselves as a conglomerate. We’re a group with a lot of synergies and cross-linkages, because everything we do comes together under the broad banner of communication and entertainment. One way or another, we’re out there to entertain people and keep them absorbed.”

Occasionally, however, these synergies bump into each other, and the result is fission rather than fusion.

Case in point: the recent court battle between Argus and CTP over the *Star*’s decision to publish zoned tabloid supplements in the PWV region. This has traditionally been an area of publishing



RICHARD SMITH

dominated by Caxton’s suburban weeklies, and the court action is an attempt to counter what the group sees as an infringement of its territorial rights by Argus.

“We’ve tried over more than two years to resolve these differences,” says Band, “but it’s proved impossible. Argus Newspapers sees it as very important to be able to produce limited zoned editions for different communities, not only black and white, but north and south, east and west. It’s a worldwide phenomenon, and although Argus has tried it in the past and it didn’t work, we believe it must be restarted and that it can succeed.”

To the outsider, this kind of internecine strife may seem to offer a convincing argument against the unnatural cosiness of commercial cross-linking. But the way Band sees it, it’s just another sign of the vigorous spirit of competition that thrives within the holding company’s spread of interests.

“The interesting thing about this case,” says Band, “is that it proves that there isn’t a big broad group conspiracy out there. When the crunch comes, individual companies look to their own interests, and are fiercely determined to protect them.”

What the case also proves is that newspapers, like everything else, are changing. Community-oriented news. Computer-generated graphics. Colour-coding and fact-files. Jackpot scoop-cards. In the age of CNN and the sound byte, newspapers are being forced to adapt to the changing lifestyles and shrinking attention-spans of their readers. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the radical re-design of the *Sunday Star* which changed last year from serious broadsheet to breezy, colour-splashed tabloid. Whether it has become a better newspaper in the process is open to debate, but

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"We were part of a consortium that helped the Weekly Mail survive the debacle of the Daily Mail, and we've been very much involved in getting the Independent Media Diversity Trust up and running... We live in a very different environment to anywhere else in the world, and it's only by building a diverse spread of publications that we'll be able to entrench the notion of press freedom."

for Band, the proof of the pudding is in the accounting.

"What we had before the re-design was the ultimate in moribund products," says Band. "We were at the 85 000 level of circulation, and it was clear that if we left the paper, it was simply going to fold up and die. What we have now is a radically different newspaper, with a circulation that has reached up to the mid-130s."

While the consumer-friendly re-design certainly played its part, Band makes the point that newspaper circulations invariably soar when the society they serve is in turmoil. One of the highest-selling issues of the *Sunday Star* to date was the one marked Sunday, April 11, 1993: the day after Chris Hani's assassination.

"Since I joined Argus," says Band, "we have enjoyed some very wide circulations on the back of some massive news values. But we've also spent an awful lot of money on design upgrades, and one can't underestimate the fact that we've been very aggressive in promoting our papers through competitions."

Either way, in spite or because of the tempo of the times, Band remains convinced that newspapers are not an endangered species. He should know, he reads them.

"I think one of my qualifications for this job is the fact that I have always been an exceptional reading buff," says Band. "I read anything I can lay my hands on, from toilet literature to political biographies. I've just finished reading one on Richard Nixon. The thing is, I'm a little bit of an insomniac, so I tend to have a couple of hours in the middle of the night, where I jump out of bed and go and read a book. Much to my wife's irritation."

But if any facet of Argus Holdings gives Band sleepless nights, it's more likely to be the stuff you listen to rather than the stuff you read.

As chairman of the board of CNA Gallo, Band is particularly perturbed by



the lingering downturn in the South African music industry. Last year, overall sales at Gallo fell by four percent, with sales of cassettes, the dominant format, falling by 16 percent, and vinyl falling off the map altogether.

"The positive side is that the compact disc business is really taking off. But what's really disappointing to me, is that the black side of the business has taken an enormous downturn. That's unfortunately a function of the mass unemployment we have in this country.

"Ironically, when I came into the business 10 years ago, it was the international side that had just fallen out of bed. The way we got out of that was by really stimulating the local music industry, and we did it with huge success. Now things are moving in the other direction."

Band is much more bullish on newspapers, which he sees as having a remarkable ability to adapt to circumstances. At the same time, he believes the major groups must go out of their way to help smaller independent publications weather the storm.

"We were part of a consortium that helped the *Weekly Mail* survive the debacle of the *Daily Mail*," says Band, "and we've been very much involved in getting the Independent Media Diversity Trust up and running (see page seven.) Some of my colleagues say to me, what are you actually doing here, supporting your opposition and creating opportunities for them to survive?"

"My answer is that we live in a very different environment to anywhere else in the world, and it's only by building a diverse spread of publications that we'll be able to entrench the notion of press freedom."

For now, Band is busy enough with his own diverse spread of interests, and whatever social, political, and economic challenges the new South Africa may bring, one thing's for sure — this rooster's staying put.

"I wouldn't be sitting here," says Band, "if I wasn't convinced that there is a bright future for the press in this country. It's not as if my background doesn't give me the opportunity to go elsewhere. It's very much a question at the moment of engaging in dialogue with all the political parties that have an interest in true democracy, and carefully explaining and propagating what a critical element the free press is in that equation.

"We've got to be continuously wary and watchful, but I think I can safely say we've got an enormous number of very credible allies out there." ●

GUS SILBER is a freelance writer and author based in Johannesburg.

A DAMNABLY HAZARDOUS ENTERPRISE

The celebrated case brought by Jani Allan against Channel 4 TV is a salient reminder of how difficult libel cases are to win. **KERRY SWIFT** takes a whimsical look at other examples and suggests journalists should think twice before suing for defamation

SUING for defamation (libel) is a damnably hazardous enterprise and one which journalists pursue at their peril as the celebrated case of Jani Allan Vs Channel 4 TV in London clearly showed. But Jani Allan was only one of many journalists to suffer ignominious defeat in the defamation courts, not the least of them *Citizen* editor Johnny Johnson who also took a fierce drubbing last year.

The Johnson case arose from an article Denis Beckett wrote in the old *Frontline* magazine, which referred to the "increasingly depraved Johnny Johnson".

Johnson claimed R50 000 damages on the grounds that the average reader would understand by the words "increasingly depraved" that he was morally corrupt.

Mr Justice Goldstein disagreed. In the Witwatersrand Local Supreme Court he ruled that the article was not defamatory and that, in the context of the article, "increasingly depraved" referred to Johnson's weekly column, *The Height Street Diary*, and not his person. The judge held that Beckett's description of Johnny Johnson was fair comment.

Dissatisfied with this ruling, Johnson took the judgement on appeal which was duly dismissed — with costs.

Worse was to follow for the luckless editor. Besides losing his case, Johnson had to endure a painfully schoolmarmish critique of his writing ability from the appeal judge, Mr Justice Corbett, who described his newspaper columns as "bad, both in style and content; they trivialise important matters in a manner no doubt intended to be humorous but seldom achieving this; the language used is often ungrammatical and is replete with slang, much of which is derived from



Afrikaans; certain of the writing is in extremely poor taste... and there is throughout the writings a recurring theme of sexual suggestiveness of the crude variety".

Now Johnny Johnson is a seasoned newspaperman — indeed, one of the best in the business — and should have known better than to pursue Beckett, who has the distinction of being an advocate by training if not by desire, and who has had ample practice in dealing with all manner of defamation actions over the years.

Instead, Johnson joined that long list of distinguished journalists who have been unable to stomach a dose of their own muti and who have stumbled blindly into litigation only to find that the law is no great respecter of reputations and that defamation cases are extremely difficult to win, even when *God is on your side*.

One is reminded of the celebrated case in Britain of Nora Beloff, an *Observer* columnist who came unstuck in a libel action against the satirical magazine *Private Eye*.

Ms Beloff instituted a libel action on the back of a single sentence which had appeared in the magazine. It read: "Miss Bailiff, a sister of the late Sir Alex Douglas-Home, was frequently to be found in bed with Mr Harold Wilson and senior members of the previous administration, although it is thought that nothing improper occurred."

It was an ambitious case to bring as Beloff was neither related to Sir Alex, nor was her surname Bailiff. It was also patently absurd to suggest that she had somehow managed to bed the Labour prime minister. The aggrieving sentence was obviously a joke. As a commentator at the time put it: "The idea that this dry old stick who took herself so toweringly seriously could ever have been found in bed with Wilson was too absurd to need explanation."

But Beloff's lawyers argued in the High Court that the offending sentence was intended to suggest that she had had an affair with Harold Wilson and, remarkably, she won her case and was awarded the equivalent of R15 000 damages.

Private Eye, however, engineered a cruel revenge on the litigious Ms Beloff. It opened a special register, calling on

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readers to contribute to "The Ballsoff Fund", an appeal which ran in the *Eye* for many months as the magazine campaigned to raise the money to pay the damages. Needless to say, nicknames have a nasty way of sticking.

All this begs the question whether journalists, regardless of provocation, should sue for defamation at all. Perhaps journalists who feel the urge to run to their lawyers at every slight should take a leaf out of *The Spectator* columnist, Auberon Waugh's book before rushing to the courts to seek redress.

Waugh certainly has a thicker hide than the editor of the *Citizen*. Following the publication of his memoirs (*Will This Do, Century*), Waugh had to endure a flurry of wicked barbs from certain 'colleagues' among the British television and newspaper critics.

Nora Bellof—the same 'dry old stick' *Private Eye* had neutered so wickedly some years before—described Waugh on *Thames Television* as "nastiness personified... a shallow, vindictive man who relies on his father's name..."

Waugh shrugged off this decidedly bitchy suggestion that he somehow trades on the late and great Evelyn Waugh's reputation by saying he could scarcely sue *Thames Television* because "Bellof's austere judgement was balanced by incense-like clouds of the most fulsome praise from other quarters".

Translated, Waugh was suggesting, in the nicest possible way, that Bellof's opinion was of small consequence compared to that of her peers.

He was equally calm in the face of the *Guardian's* description of him as "vicious, backbiting, snobbish, bullying, ignorant, puerile and slightly psychopathic," saying a defence of *volenti non fit injuria* might be applied since he had agreed to be interviewed in the first place.

Here he gracefully accepts the Confucian principle that he who breaks wind in public must expect occasional kick on shins.

Equally sanguine was his response to the *Mail on Sunday's* television critic who sneered: "Could anybody be so impossibly rude, vituperative, conceited, sexist, snobbish, reactionary, violent and self-centred?" Waugh conceded that the man was only asking—a vintage case of wagging Waugh if ever there was one.

He admitted, however, to feeling a "slight *frisson*" when the *Daily Express's* television critic described him as "arrogant, brutal, snobbish and conceited", an "unprincipled hack", a "malevolent prig" and "journalism's answer to the viper".

Waugh suggested that the expression "unprincipled hack" is certainly libellous, but he saw no reason to attempt a libel action off the back of that old taunt.

To none of these decidedly nasty jibes did this prince of columnists rise, but there is a limit to the stiff upper lip.

It was an item in the London *Sunday Times* that finally got Auberon on the Waugh-path. The incident arose from a suggestion in Waugh's *Spectator* column that the London *Sunday Times* had attempted to discredit a witness to a shooting incident in Gibraltar on March 6, 1988, when three IRA suspects were fatally shot by an Special Air Services unit. These shootings created a storm of indignation in Britain against the Thatcher government, which had long been suspected of a shoot-to-kill policy in dealing with members of the IRA.

Waugh suggested a Royal Commission should look into the shootings to determine whether, in fact, they were state-sponsored assassinations, and he questioned the possible role the *Sunday Times* had played in the whole affair.

The *Sunday Times* 'Atticus' column, written by the editor Andrew Neil and his deputy Ivan Fallon, responded to Waugh as follows:

"Atticus has several times been forced to expose the wickedness of that miser-able little man, Auberon Waugh. Now Atticus has made a more important discovery: Waugh is a liar. Writing in this week's *Spectator*, Mr Waugh implies that Mrs Thatcher 'persuaded' the *Sunday Times* to attack a witness in the 'Death on the Rock' incident. There is not an iota of truth in that. But Waugh is such a malicious creep when it comes to the *Sunday Times* that truth has rarely interfered with what he writes."

Waugh responded: "One observes the whining, persecuted note of self-pity at the end. Poor *Sunday Times*. In fact, the *Sunday Times* has paid for no fewer than three of its employees to sue me for libel and deserves everything it gets. Writing an autobiography or appearing in a television documentary is rather like

opening your house to the public, and you cannot complain too much if one or two members of the public shit on the carpet. They have not had our advantages after all... it is true that I have few genial feelings towards the *Sunday Times*, and it is possible that I was thinking of its editor when I wrote in *The Spectator* of the danger that those who lie with dogs will rise with fleas. What is not possible is that I lied in implying that Mrs Thatcher had persuaded the *Sunday Times* to attack a witness to the Gibraltar shootings because there is not the faintest hint of any such implication in my article ... To call a journalist a 'malicious creep' and a 'miserable little man' for asking such questions may be no more than the expression of an honest opinion, but to call him a liar in this context might prove rather expensive for that dismal newspaper and its snivelling flea-ridden editor."

It was at this point of the public fracas that Waugh fell silent, leaving the threat of a libel action to hang and mature in the wind like one of those plump pheasants that can still be found hanging in butcher shops around Somerset where he lives, and hungry journalists around Britain were left waiting to feast on the carcass once it was served up in the courts.

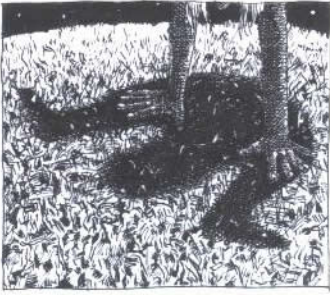
When would the writ arrive on Andrew Neil's desk at the *Sunday Times*, and, even more tantalizing, what amount was Waugh going to whack the 'flea-ridden editor' for?

Those of us following the case from afar waited patiently for the answers but alas, we waited in vain. Nothing happened. Not another word was printed on the subject and Waugh's weekly columns gave no hint of malevolent intent. The silence was deafening.

Unable to stand the tension any longer, I wrote to Auberon Waugh asking about his intentions.

I quote from his reply: "I never had the slightest intention of suing the *Sunday Times*, merely to give the snivelling Neil a few nights' anxiety. I had him over a barrel, libelwise, but I don't have the time, energy or resources to pursue the matter and the simple truth is that where either plaintiffs or defendants are backed by a rich organisation like the *Sunday Times*, it is a one-sided fight."

Surely there is a lesson for journalists in all of this? ●



Nulla dies



· VITA BREVIS ·
ARS LONGA

COVER
Life is short, art is long.



omnia mea mecum porto

HALF-TITLE DEDICATION
All I have I carry with me.

Born in Sunderland, North England, in 1951, Robin Stuart-Clark was educated in England, Zimbabwe and South Africa, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rhodes University in 1974.

Robin has worked as a graphic designer both in England and South Africa as a freelance consultant. He is married to ceramicist Jane Young with three daughters, two dogs, a cat, guinea pig and hamster.

Robin is presently preparing for his second one-man exhibition in 1994 after an absence of 18 years.



My 'formal' education

happened courtesy of a private trust. Had this not been available, I might still be a Clerk of Court doodling in the Court Minutes. I was twenty when I arrived at Rhodes University in 1971 to undertake a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree majoring in Graphics.

Brian Bradshaw instilled a sense of discipline, prompted and provoked me to look and think beyond *just* the image. Natalie Guiton (Bradshaw's stand-in during his sabbatical in 1972) taught me about perseverance – or, as she would pronounce it – per-sever-ance. The late Tom Matthews woke me up to a treasure trove of art and artists. Josh Nel knew all the techniques and let me make all the mistakes. And Noel Hodnett – a senior student then – supplied enthusiastic encouragement.

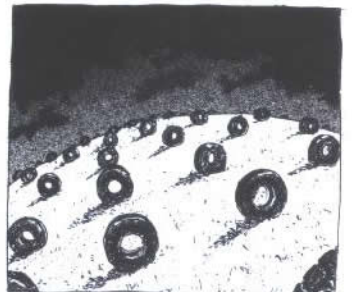
I was not taught how to draw. I did learn how to look at things differently, though. This they did with endless drawing – practicals, assignments, projects, excursions, tri-weekly crits, vacation sketchbooks. When you'd done well, they told you so; when you got big-headed, they pulled the plug.



Latet anguis in herba
virgil

JANUARY
There is a snake hidden in the grass.
Virgil, *Ecl.*, III, 93.

Solitudinem faciunt,



pacem appellant. TACITUS

FEBRUARY
They make a desert and call it peace.
Tacitus, *Agric.*, 30.

sine linea*

Today, my illustration work appears in very few publications and then only in corporate publications. This is due to choice rather than circumstance. I don't consider myself to be a mainstream South African illustrator nor do I wish to over-expose myself. In this way I am free to develop and experiment without monetary pressure. My day-to-day work is Graphic Design and this is how I make a living.

A drawing begins either as a written notation (the idea itself) or a very rough doodle. Either way, the idea goes through a process of elaboration and refinement until a final layout is achieved. The final drawing differs from the layout because of the process of execution.

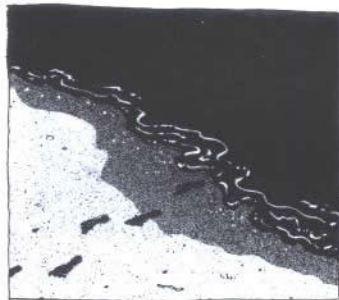
Sometimes drawings just don't work. I will do them again and again until I get what I want. Generally, drawings don't work when the idea hasn't been fully worked out – laid out and planned – beforehand. A drawing ends when you can go no further.

Sometimes drawings won't work. The idea may end up in the bin or on the shelf. Drawings won't work when the idea is weak, or a cliché, or copied, or too literal. Drawings won't work when you don't want to draw.



HONOS HABET ONUS

MARCH
Honour has its burden.



iacula est alea

APRIL
The die is cast.
(Quoted as said by Caesar at the crossing of the Rubicon.)

The idea must be challenging; it must challenge me and the viewer. I won't label things in a drawing unless the label is an integral part of the image – eg, a brand name – since in this way I can achieve an uncluttered thought-provoking image which the viewer then labels for him or herself. The image then becomes something more than just a literal representation with a tag.

In 1990 a client wanted me to work for him free of charge in exchange for the privilege of working for him – 'Quid pro quo'. This is quite acceptable in honest barter transactions where you're actually getting something for giving something, but, what my client really wanted was 'Quid pro nil' and what he actually got was 'Nil pro nil'.

This exchange was the beginning of Latin Lines. Since I had no idea what 'Quid pro quo' meant, I had to look it up and consequently found dozens of other interesting phrases, proverbs, extracts and quotations.

Please turn over...

1993 LATIN LINES

ROBIN STUART-CLARK

Latin Lines is a sixteen page A3 portrait format 1993 Calendar featuring an illustration on each page and comprising a Cover Title page, a Half-Title Dedication page, Twelve pages each with one month to view, a Preface (or Draw Word) page and an Acknowledgements page. Latin Lines is a limited Edition of 150 Calendars, distributed free to friends, clients and prospects.

The sixteen drawings were selected from a series of off-the-board in-betweeners executed for pleasure not profit. The original drawings were made on 280 gsm White El Toro Cartridge using a dip-in pen with a fine nib, a spray diffuser, No. 3 Brush, earbuds, loo paper and Rowney Kandahar Black Indian Ink and a little white opaque gouache.

Chambers 20th Century Dictionary (New Edition) W & R Chambers 1983 was used as a source for Latin phrases and quotations.

All drawings were screened 200 DPI same size to retain the character of the original drawings. No retouching was undertaken.

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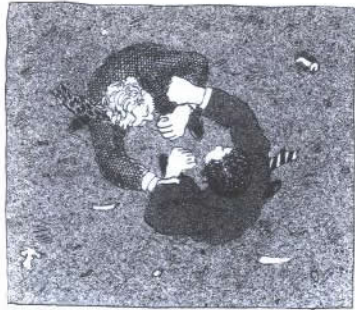




Animula vagula

little soul flitting away

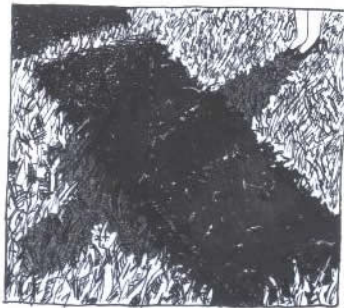
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a verbis ad verbera

MAY

From words to blows.



PULVIS ET UMBRA SUMUS

HORACE

JUNE

We are dust and a shadow.
Horace, *Ode*, IV, vii 16.

I took Latin at Marist Brothers College to Standard 6 level under instruction from a Brother James; he made Latin fun and, being a Prot in a Catholic school, I thought Latin would help me unravel the mysteries of the Catechism. It didn't. It did, however, awake an interest in English Language despite my not continuing Latin elsewhere.

The very first 'Latin' drawing was 'Animula vagula' which sounds rather anatomical but translates as 'little soul flitting away'. These words form part of the beginning of a poem ascribed to the dying Hadrian. The drawing was done for Jane, my wife, best friend and sharp critic. It depicted a girl running into a landscape under a stormy but moonlit sky. Unfortunately my dip-in pen blobbed and the blob resembled an elephant, so an elephant it became, and then, because it looked ridiculous having a girl flitting into a landscape with a lone rogue elephant, I inserted a procession of elephants. A singular romance had become a plural mystery with little to do with Hadrian – or even Hannibal.

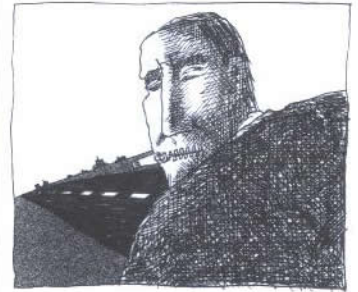
What was important to me about this drawing was the fact that I had *even* done a drawing; it had been years since I'd drawn for my own pleasure. That is not to say



cadit quaestio

JULY

The question drops.



qui tacet consentit

AUGUST

Who keeps silence consents.



callida junctura

HORACE

SEPTEMBER

A skilful connection.
Horace, *A.P.*, 47-48.



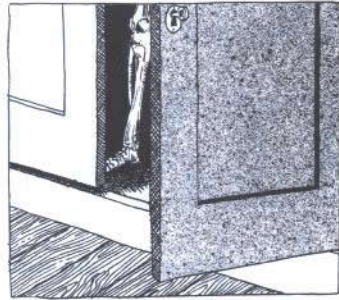
that I don't enjoy commissioned work. I count myself very lucky that I can earn a good living from something I enjoy doing. The difference is, however, that with commissioned illustration I am working within the confines of a brief – whether client or self-imposed.

With Latin Lines there was no brief. As the drawings happened I had no idea what they could or might be used for. There was no purpose or goal, other than to use a little free time now and then to get inky.

Months later, the drawings grew to become a wad of drawings; the wad became a taunt: *print me or tear me up.* Jane prevented the tearing up by shortlisting twenty drawings she felt were interesting and then added to the taunt: *do something with these for the sake of your and my sanity.*

Nothing is possible without specialist co-operation and thanks is due to Gavin Ritchie, Eckhard Heise and Stephen Carlisle of Dot Colour; Dieter Mandlmeier, Jim Spence and Caréna Büchner of Pointset; Adrian Franklin and Lorna Cuyler of Spicers, Lynn Schonfeldt and Mannie de Matos of Colourking – for your patience, perseverance and professionalism. ■

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quieta non movere

OCTOBER
To let sleeping dogs lie.



facile est inventis addere

NOVEMBER
It is easy to add to things invented already.



ars est celare artem

DECEMBER
True art is to conceal art.



in meditatione fugae

DRAW WORD
In contemplation of flight.



docendo discimus

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
We learn by teaching.

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publishing production has been revolutionised from the scalpel, scotch-tape and sticky fingers, to what it is today – clean, quiet, anti-septic, controlled and quick. No delays or hitches caused by misinterpretation. But the fundamental problems of words on paper that existed ten short or long years ago have not

gone away, nor have they been solved.

They are still here.



aLL THIS SOPHISTICATION, advancement, DTP, PP, technology stuff has only made it easier to produce or churn out printed matter faster. Rarely better. It has also forced a lot of people who had never dreamed of getting involved with the nitty-gritty DIY process of becoming the editor, the designer and the client. They are, of course, awed by the apparent complexity of the task and their own lack of expertise in the publication-making process. "I don't know how it is supposed to be done... I haven't been trained... is it

OK to indent paras or better to leave a line space between them?" They believe there must be answers, that there is an authoritative truth somewhere. But, the truth is – in communication there is no correct or incorrect. We can only rely on our judgement, and most importantly, use the technique that exposes what we have to say vividly without confusion.

So the business of publication has changed somewhat and with this flood of printed matter our audience is busy. Competition for attention has become tough given all the temptations that pull readers this way and that.

We must fascinate our audience – intrigue them. Information must be organised in logical, accessible units.

South Africa's politics, says Andrew Mapheto, has made us equipped for its future "the way we'd find. We've been told that we're the only people who can take over the reins of the country." Mapheto is a member of South Africa's premier school of thought, the school of thought at the University of Witwatersrand. He says "no person is self-made for the next 30 years."

Since leaving prison, Mapheto, a former guerrilla, has worked for the African National Congress and the executive wing of the ANC. He says he's not a politician, he's a writer. He says he's not a politician, he's a writer. He says he's not a politician, he's a writer.

His political conviction, his education, his activism – these are the things that Mapheto deals with. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write.

But for his career and his education, his activism – these are the things that Mapheto deals with. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write.

He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write. He's a job, and his primary concern is to write.



The next thirty years
Andrew Mapheto
Johannesburg, Soweto

Spirits of the Time



"I'm trying to prepare myself for the next 30 years," said Andrew Mapheto, whose story is among those told on the following pages. Writer Georgina Hamilton and photographer David Goldblatt set out on a journey around South Africa in February 1992, searching for people like Mapheto. On their way they found an artist, a lawyer, a comedian, a writer, a worker, a shopkeeper, a scientist, a musician – people who constitute a representative variety of positions, professions and pursuits. What they do, though, is almost less important than what they are – for they are people who in some way or other are trying to prepare themselves and their country for the long road into the future.

I remember Johannesburg city quiet like peace-time. In that release all could endeavour toward their daily bread and the city began to re-invent itself on the pavements in the streets – life reclaimed itself outside a city park the hum of a portable kawasaki generator as a white boy has his hair cut by a black street barber – a woman in day-glo ethnic wear sits on a corner embroidering the letters on an empty sausage meal bag as glass temples rise around her – scraping the sky in the window of a multi-shop in diagonal street the stuffed carcass of a jones watches motionless – inside you can buy molala root which can cure, they say, even a broken heart – an old man sits on a bench under the eaves of a building – the children of the street – find under the city waterfall a place to wash and clean – street sisters from Lagos graduate the paucity of pavement to the respectability of exact agencies – across the blonde divide business is brisk – packets of matches and potatoes, jars of vaseline and bottles of cash diary room – the smell of smoke and meat – the small business man sets up his micro market – in a tenement block owned by my leviathan my mynagintin taxi-driver pays R800 for a fat praline in its lack of excess, a prayer hangs above the bed:

o lord between
me
and my husband
keep us
together
forever

a school of hillbrow children – a labyrinth of trash cans – where to hide? – whom to work? – a playground – mi sugar shines the shoes of stockbrokers – only R2 ladies & gents! the alien mirror of babel glass towers reflects the surrounding decay being face-lifted – a great clean-up has begun! everyone wants a place in the sun – vive great! jesus on the wall! "o you think i like doing this?" an evangelist girl shouts – "my shame! and do you know what you're going to do when you get home? take off your shoes? run a bath? turn on the tv? and put a frozen box in the oven? – and all the time it's time that's passing and your heart's beating closer to the finish line..." at five in the afternoon the queues stretch forever at taxi ranks bus stops and stations – great movements of people along highways stretched against the orange napalm of the setting sun your survival is your mobility – how fast how light you can move in this city that vandalises and extinguishes its past – relentless in its insouciance – in its desire to survive – no work – no job – no money – no sugar – no honey pictures in parks – dogs and babies and portuguese brides – gift edge frames and stipes cameras or imitations from talawa – the photographer evangelist – eager to catch your spirit – (convert it) – (freeze it in the frame)

WORDS BY JENNIFER FERGUSON

CONTENTS

- From The Publisher
- The Editor's Introduction
- 11 Years On The Road
- 12 Years On The Road
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- 30 Years On The Road

We must present the materials so its segments are easy to recognise and find. We must interpret the questions the reader might ask or lead the

designer forum ODETTE MARAIS

We can only rely on our judgement – use the technique that exposes what we have to say vividly without confusion.

i remember joh'burg city



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIDEON MENDEL

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TOP LEFT: A vendor at the Best Street taxi rank. Scooting and honking yellow taxis is a common feature on the streets of the city, probably as old as Johannesburg itself.

BOTTOM LEFT: They were waiting for a taxi which would transport them to the bus stop at night.

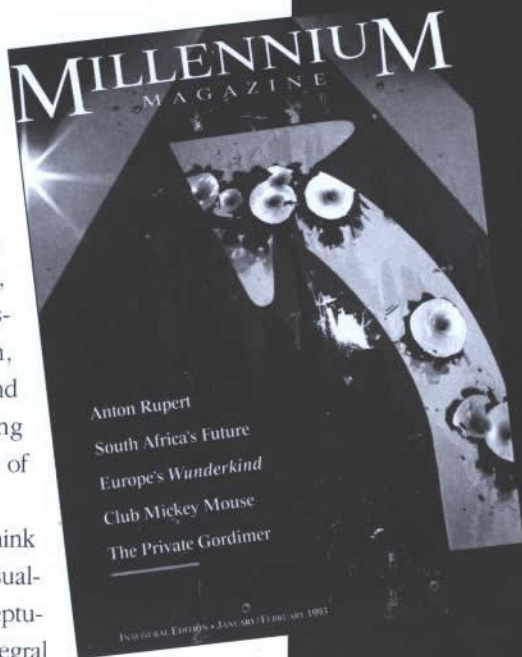
OPPOSITE: Mothers for R2 of the Best Street taxi rank. These mothers place a great emphasis on passing their assets.

PREVIOUS PAGE: One of the crowd at the City Hall that welcomed the South African cricket side home after a triumphant return to international cricket at the World Cup center in Australia in March. The men had opposed England in the semi-finals.



all could endeavor toward their daily bread and the city began to re-invent itself on the pavements

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reader in a direction, teasing, pointing, highlighting, tantalising, drawing in, informing, and first and foremost, entertaining whatever the content of the material may be.

We must learn to think both verbally and visually, never mind conceptually. Design is an integral factor in structure, presentation and interpretation of the product that is the message or word.

It is most important that the word, the layout and the generators thereof, work as an integral unit or team.

So very often the writer is commissioned by the editor and only when commission is completed and the editor happy is the copy (blank, dead, word-processed) passed onto layout artist or designer for he or she has do his or her thing. I believe in magazine publishing especially, that presentation is first and foremost: it shows. A package is being bought.

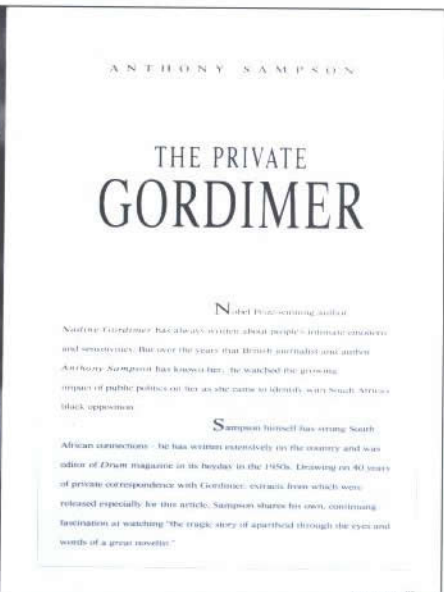
Copy, pics, info are working as one – like cogs in an engine to hum-copy and pics and concept therefore should be discussed from inception. It's an organic think-tank-thing.

The prime purpose of an art director's work is to apply his or her

designer forum ODETTE MARAIS

knowledge of design technologies to catapult ideas off the page into the reader's mind. Thoughts should be clear, directed, unconfused and the flowing from the headline and intro, to the body of the story, with pulls pulling the "flip-through" in. This implies that an absolute understanding of both editorial purposes and graphic techniques are essential, to make sure that the graphic technologies chosen are the right ones for the job, for editorial reasons and not solely for graphic ones – for reasons that are significant and justified in terms of the content of the story.

Understanding the core of the story is imperative for the designer. That is why book and magazine designers have to add journalistic ambition to their artistic ambition and get their kick from achieving a well-commun-icated message rather than merely from devising a stunning layout. ●



*Winner of
the 1993
Ilford Press
Photographer
of the Year
award*



*Police
attempt
to arrest
an armed
man in
Ratanda
township.*

Joao SILVA

JOAO SILVA, one of South Africa's leading conflict photographers and winner of the Ilford Press Photographer of the Year award, is reluctant to talk about himself or his work.

Born in Portugal, Silva grew up in Mozambique and spent some time in Lisbon before arriving in South Africa in 1976. He doesn't fill in any of the biographical details, but says he came to photography by chance about five years ago when he borrowed a friend's camera at Johannesburg's Grand Prix race track at Kyalami and realised that photography was "something I could do". **HAROLD GESS** reports

Joao
SILVA



1992: An Inkatha war party comes under fire as they attempt to board a train at Phumalong Station, Soweto.

“Some frontline people can go through a lot and cope with it. Others can’t.”

Not only could he take photographs instinctively but he also had the inclination to take his cameras into the eye of the storm, recording at source the violence that has turned South Africa into one of the news capitals of the world.

He had only been shooting news pictures for two years when the Reef started cooking and he took his cameras into high-risk situations. “I wanted to show people what was really happening. They have a right to know.”

Going to the source was a decision that has won Joao Silva acclaim but it has also immersed him in the searing violence that is tearing the social fabric of South Africa apart and which threatens any hope of a future democracy.

“Ultimately the real story isn’t about me, it’s about the people around me. I’m there by my own choice to record an event. That’s what I choose to do. But for me it’s a personal choice. I don’t see myself as a news item.

“Nobody tells me ‘you must go into this conflict situation and do this’. Nobody has the right to do that to anybody, but for me

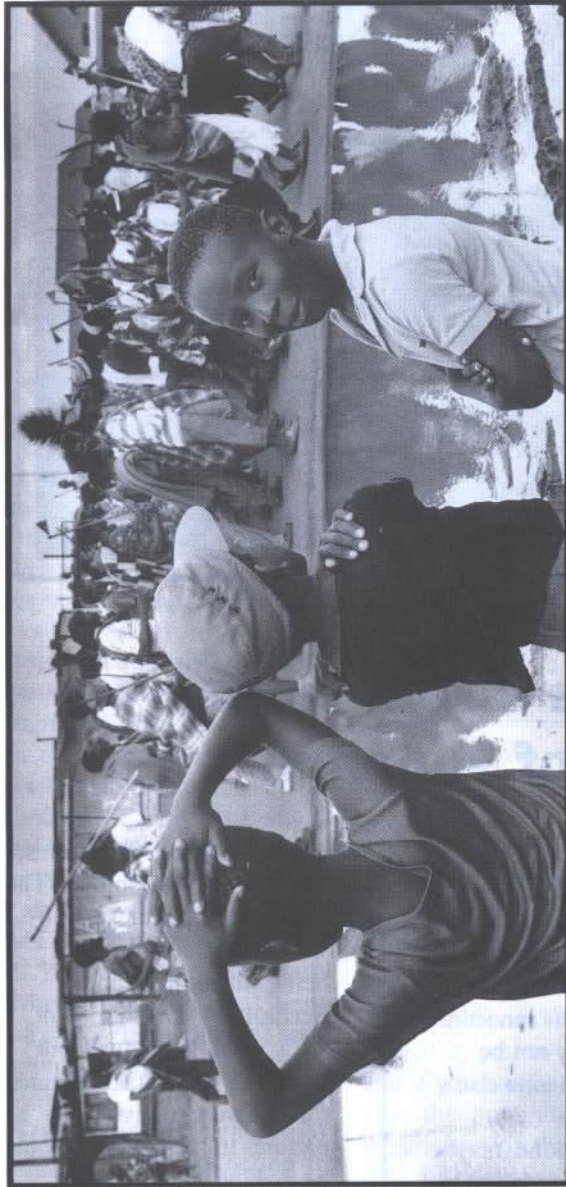
bodies, bodies... That can be very emotionally draining... It’s saturating, but then I think the conflict situation is also very addictive.

“When its Sam and you’re in a place like Sebokeng and there’s mist and fog and barricades and guys sitting in the shadows with guns and so on, you feel tension and fear, but it’s more like it only hits you afterwards and you think, ‘shit that was heavy’. But you always go back for more.

The danger is always there. I got hit with shrapnel in Soweto. Some guys from a TV crew and I were getting back in our car when there was an explosion, a hand grenade, and I thought ‘shit that was close’ and I just carried on taking pics. Then I saw some of the TV crew lying on the ground. I didn’t even realise I was injured too, ‘till someone told me I was bleeding. At other times I’ve had my head cracked with a rock.

“It’s often a crazy experience out there; being shot at, kicked in the face, having guns pushed in your mouth or being dragged away from the scene at gunpoint. But that goes with the

PLEASE TURN OVER



1993: Children in Thokoza watch the adults go to war.

it’s a personal choice. It’s what I’m here to do. My mission is to show people the truth. A lot of my stuff isn’t the best but it’s an authentic historical record.

“I’m not at all gung-ho. In fact, I’m completely anti-war. It’s just that most of the major changes in life or in history come about through violence. Sometimes the truth is shock and horror and I’m not against showing that. It wasn’t for all the press coverage of violence and brutality there wouldn’t be such an outcry against violence.

“Some frontline people

can go through a lot and cope with it, others can’t. If they can’t take it, they won’t stay in the frontline. It’s as simple as that. There are very few real frontline photographers in South Africa — people like Greg Marinovich, Kevin Carter, Ken Oosterbroek and myself.

“I don’t feel I have any psychological problems, if you look for signs like recurring dreams or something like that to measure them. I don’t have any of that. Obviously I get emotional... I’m only human.

“Seeing the effects of violence, seeing bodies,



Joao

SILVA



1990: Zulu women attack an ANC supporter in Thokoza.

“The camera is a threat to the perpetrators of violence”

CONTINUED

territory. If you can't take that you shouldn't be there.

“Still, South Africa's relatively easy to work in because you always come back out into your sane reality, your home and your TV and music and everything. I've been in other places like Angola, Sudan, Somalia and Mozambique. In places like Somalia you live in a war zone all the time. There's no comfortable hotel to go back to. There's no getting back to reality. It leaves you very, very tired and emotionally drained.

“The press has exposed so much with pictures of

executions, massacres, brutality and so on. You may see something going on and think, ‘God that's so gross. How can they do that?’ The point is that what's innocence in your mind may not be innocence in someone else's mind.

“You see someone, maybe an Inkatha guy gets killed and it's clearly murder, but you don't know what happened before the incident. Maybe he was involved in a killing earlier on and what you're watching is revenge. You can't know.

“The camera is a threat to the perpetrators of violence. A number of people are

arrested because of pictures. Then, it's often complex. The police want pictures and I won't give them any. I'm being subpoenaed under Section 205 at the moment. They want the pictures but that's not what I take pictures for. If I were to give my pictures to the police, I would be making myself and all journalists more of a target than they already are.

“I like motorcycles. Watching Grand Prix racing is good. If I get time off on a Sunday — but often Sundays are busy with funerals or something — I go rock climbing. Nothing makes you feel more alive.” ●

OF PENS AND PLOUGHSHARES

A recent conference dealing with media and development in southern Africa attracted over 200 communicators and students from 13 countries to Grahamstown.

*Conference organiser **DON PINNOCK** examines the threads*

SHARP intakes of breath could be heard from the largely South African audience as the editor of the independent *Weekly Post* in Zambia, Fred M'membe, claimed that majority rule was not necessarily democratic, and that democracy, anyway, guaranteed people nothing.

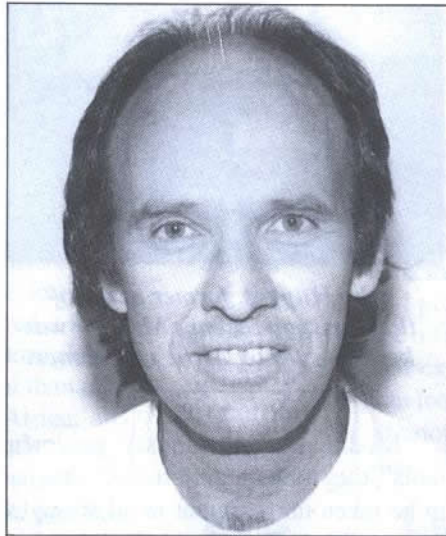
Insights from the front line of African independence clearly offered no comfort for those seeking it in a new South Africa. But by the end of the three-day conference on the future of the media in southern Africa at Rhodes University, the 200 delegates and students had become used to shocks.

By then it seemed quite natural for the editor of *South* and former exile, Guy Berger, to embrace liberal freedoms and warn against a 'responsible' press tied hand and foot to nation-building. Or for the deputy editor of *The Star* and a representative of the biggest press monopoly in Africa, Shaun Johnson, to declare his company ready for penetration by the Left. Or even for Johannes Froneman of Potchefstroom University to wonder whether the Afrikaans press was a phoenix or a lame duck. These, clearly, were unusual times.

But if the South Africans took away anything from this gathering of communicators from 13 countries, it was a knowledge of their relative privilege.

This was brought home to them when the editor-in-chief of *Financial Post* in Malawi, Al Osman, used the microphone to appeal, not for press freedom, but for a rotary press. 'Please', he said, 'has anybody got one to sell?' The only rotary in his country was owned by His Excellency the Life President Kamuzu Banda — not a man known to embrace liberal freedoms.

The conference was an exercise in



Don Pinnock

bringing together, for the first time, journalists from both sides of the Limpopo and getting them to share their ideas about the way forward for their profession.

A paper by Bruce Cohen of *Weekly Mail* chalked the starting line: In South Africa 94% of the daily newspapers are owned by just two press conglomerates. But if you divide the sale of newspapers into the population, the total market penetration of the press is a miniscule 4%. Of these papers, most are aimed at whites but read, predominantly, by blacks.

Not that anybody was denying the importance of newspapers. But as Hendrik Bussiek of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (one of the biggest funders of media in the region) said, "radio is clearly the most important medium of communication in the entire region". And in much of the rest of Africa, as M'membe was to observe, press freedom was an idea still

struggling to be born. "Our first priority", he said, "is simply to survive".

A strong theme of the conference was development, but it was a term with as many definitions as speakers.

Hein Marais of *Work in Progress* insisted that it wasn't simply about housing, roads, wells, literacy and civics, but about enabling people to live up to their potentials, to live their lives extensively. Shaun Johnson wondered if journalists could help to develop a decent, prosperous society without being slavish praise-poets, mean-minded underminers or trivial titillators. And Guy Berger warned that democratic freedoms, including press freedom, had no intrinsic connection to development at all. We should be careful, he said, not to underestimate the pressures and predilections that could lead a democratically-elected government, bent on development, to behave undemocratically.

And old habits often died hard. In Namibia, Gwen Lister of *The Namibian* pointed out, even though press freedom had been accepted in practice and enshrined in the constitution many public officials had yet to come to terms with this.

Graeme Addison, head of journalism at the Natal Technicon, approached the problem from another angle. Development journalism was obviously critical and adversary, but a distinction had to be drawn between 'journalism' and 'media work'. While journalism was associated with the mass media, media work found its place in development organisations. And it was convenient, he said, to draw a distinction between journalism *about* and media work *for* development. Media work varied from the promotion of adult

PLEASE TURN OVER 

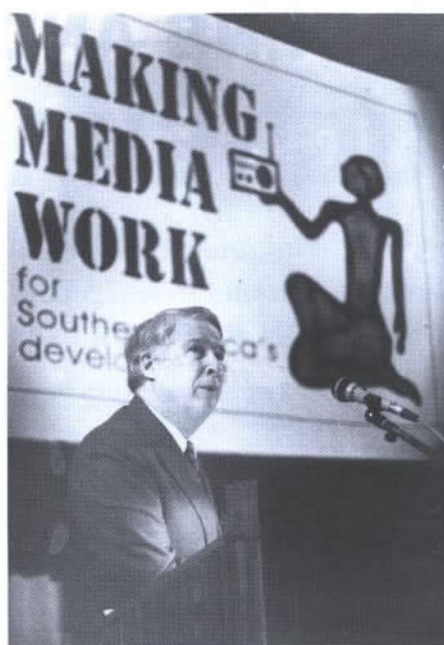
literacy and rural development to building awareness around issues such as feminism, labour rights, ecology, gay rights and national liberation.

"The mix is enough to appall Western traditionalists", he said. "But there is no doubt that activism is widespread throughout the world's media and there is nothing particularly new in this. John Stewart Mill, the icon of Western press liberalism, maintained that politically partisan newspapers and committed journalists were the lifeblood of a free and competitive system".

But were these activist journalists ethical? And, asked Francis Kasoma of the University of Zambia, were they free enough from their master's voice, whoever that master was, to take part in "the second liberation struggle for African democracy" which was sweeping the continent?

The key, he said, was not the desire to do good work, but to be fair. It was not development journalism that was needed but *ethical* journalism. The new journalism of Africa was about "safeguarding people's right to receive and propagate information and opinions through the media of public communication without jeopardising any other equally important rights that all human beings are entitled to".

Libby Lloyd of *Speak* and Susan Holland-Muter of *Agenda* found the problem to be more than ethics. Daily, without much thought, the world was being man-made. Women, unless they undressed, were simply being deemed unnewsworthy:



John Hughes, former editor of the Christian Science Monitor was keynote speaker at the conference.

"Media are enormously powerful tools", they told the conference. "This has to be taken into account in all struggles for equality, self-determination, development and peace. In order to change society and assist in the development of our country and the region, 'man-made' media and 'man-made' development must be challenged and transformed".

The media were reporting political violence, they said. But in South Africa each day more than 1 000 women were raped and hundreds were forced to become refugees from a war waged on them by their male partners. Even in the

independent media, said Lloyd and Holland-Muter, sexist and gender-blind reporting was the order of the day. Half a nation was waiting to tell its story and was being ignored. When *Speak* ran a radio workshop in Khayelitsha the women took to it like ducks to water. "You must teach us", they said, "to get inside that box".

On the final day of the conference, Gill Marcus of the African National Congress called on journalists to help build open media and to give them a backbone that decades of banning, control, manipulation and self-censorship had removed.

"We set great store by vigorous and free media which we hope will flourish in a democratic society", she said.

"A press that has the courage to speak its mind without fear or favour is essential to ensure an informed, vigilant and vocal public, alert to any attempts by any government to succumb to the temptation of abusing its powers.

"Any government that seeks to muzzle, control or constrain media scrutiny is a government that risks evading accountability to the people."

Graeme Addison concluded the conference by issuing a series of challenges:

- To corporate media to stay out of community radio;
- To the alternative press to continue to serve their audiences and not their profits;
- To academics to get off their butts and produce research useful to the media;
- To journalists to not compromise on libertarian ideals;
- To pressure groups to understand that the media are vehicles for pluralism and not there to serve a single sector;
- To trainers of journalists to reorient their teaching content to include issues of gender, development, the environment and race; and
- To Africa Information Afrique, one of the organisers of the conference, to send middle-level sub-editors on study trips around the region to show them that the lands south of the Limpopo are, indeed, part of Africa. ●

DR DON PINNOCK is a senior lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University.

A cautionary tale from Nigeria

THE hard-eyed cynicism with which journalists from independent Africa viewed development was captured in a story told by Professor Onoura Nweneli of Lagos University.

The Minister of Development of some un-named African country was invited to visit his counterpart in an un-named South American country.

The African was clearly impressed with the South American's house.

"How did you organise this?" the guest inquired.

His host led him to a window,

opened the curtain and said, "You see that railway line? Thirty percent."

Two years later the African Minister reciprocated the invitation.

The South American was overawed by his host's palatial home.

"How did you organise this?" he asked.

The African took him to a window and opened the curtain.

"I don't see anything," said his guest.

"That's right," his host replied, "one hundred percent!"

MOULDING THE CLAY OF A NEW DISPENSATION

Deputy editor of the *Star*, **SHAUN JOHNSON** argues that 'mainstream' media have many faults, but they are still precious assets that can be moulded to aid development

IN this South Africa which is hopefully, finally, on the brink of beginning its transition to democracy, what is the 'mainstream' in newspaper terms? Is it a stream which should be diverted — and, if so, how? Is it a stream which should be dammed up, or allowed to flow on?

I take it as read that most people accept, as I do, the limitations, as well as the powers, of the press. It seems clear to me that in terms of mass penetration, radio is the media's big brother now, and will become more so when it is belatedly unshackled by the government.

Television, which is about to enter the exciting phase of independence it should have entered a long time ago, will always be more immediate, more glamorous, and possibly more directly influential than our newspapers. This is not unique to South Africa; all around the world the printed media is fighting — and often losing — a titanic battle against its electronic brethren. In our country, too, newspapers are half the size they were a decade ago, and shrinking. Long-standing titles are disappearing. Newspapers still reach only a fraction of the population.

I make no easy assumptions about the preordained survival of the existing papers — even my own — either in economic or political terms.

But newspapers there will be in the new South Africa, and they are a significant potential force for good or evil. Increasingly, I believe, their importance will lie in the quality of the myriad services they supply, rather than the cold statistics of the numbers they reach or the party they endorse in elections. Some will grow within the limitations of increasing educational parity, availability and affordability, others will shrink and close.

I asked what the 'mainstream' is today. Well, in the case of the *Star*, the established English-language daily I work for, it is interesting to note that soon, after a lifetime of being in opposition to the government of the day (the quality of that opposition is subject for a different debate), it will face the prospect of being broadly in tune with the new, developing democratic structures of State.

The same applies, I should think, to many of the brave weeklies which kept the candle of protest alive in the darkest days of the 1980s. This is a source of pleasure, and to an extent vindication, but it is going to force us to look long and hard at what we are really

As far as the mainstream press is concerned, I would like to see us take the clay we already have, knead it and mould it

here for, and how we can play a "developmental" role — by which I simply mean helping to develop a decent, prosperous society — without being slavish praise-poets, mean-minded underminers or, needless to say, trivial titillators.

But the 'mainstream' means to most of us the established mass media, and the term carries with it a bagful of connotations. Of course the lopsided structure of press ownership and control has come under the microscope. It has been self-evident for so long that I'm reluctant to spell out the obvious yet again.

I prefer to look at it this way: the major press groups are a fact of our lives, and you can damn their power and exclusivity until you are blue in the face, or you can look very carefully at what they are and what they are not — and within that context, see what can be done to make them want to serve their society better.

I stress this: make them want to serve their society better. I know very little about the other big press companies, but I know something about the one I work for, the Argus company. I believe that for all the accusations which can be levelled at the 'moguls', they have given us something precious, worth preserving and improving upon.

That is a professional, established, and diverse press — diverse in terms of the numbers of newspapers available, if not ideology. That is the basis from which I start: if it were attempted to break down this foundation, and start from scratch, I believe we might never even reach the same imperfect point again. And that would be a terrible waste.

I have learnt, through painful and humbling experience, that the politics of a newspaper is only one part of its selling appeal. I am fully aware that if my editor had to choose between firing me, and firing the racing editor, I'd be packing my bags.

There are many other practical, even mundane, services it provides which make people — right across society — want to buy it. And as we have surely all learnt by now, if you want a general interest newspaper to grow and prosper, people must want to buy it and advertisers must want to advertise in it. Foreign funding was crucial, but impermanent; State funding on its own could not sustain even a fraction of the limited diversity we have at present.

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So those of us who see journalism as among other things a marvellous calling; one that can root out injustice and improve people's lives, have to be very realistic when formulating options. As far as the 'mainstream' press is concerned, I would like to see us take the clay we already have, knead it, and mould it.

The diversity we should aim for operates on a general and on a specific level.

Generally, we need as many newspapers of different types as possible. There should be "qualities", simple-English papers, pop tabloids, if necessary party-aligned newspapers, and valuable specialist papers which are supported via structures like the Independent Media Diversity Trust, to give them a fair chance to establish themselves. That is the right mix, and I do not think that this vision is one from which all media bosses would shrink. The experiment with the ownership structure of the *Sowetan* is not an insignificant development.

In sum: I think there should be some newspapers which appeal to and are useful to the masses, some which appeal to those with secondary school education and above, and some which appeal to the intelligentsia. They should be representative of the voices of all the different

peoples of our country; and all can help to build a "South Africanism", using the language their readers want them to use.

Specifically, the culture within existing mainstream papers needs to change further. This has been obvious for a long time. But I think there has been a tendency, because of the flaws of the 'mainstream' press, to underestimate the fluidity and unpredictability within it now. From political groups, this is often born of frustration and I understand that. But I think it is specious and hollow at this stage to talk monochromatically about "the media" as if there is no discernible difference in the way various newspapers are treating developments — like, to use two recent, tragic examples, the murder of Chris Hani and the Sebokeng massacre. There were vast differences, as anyone who spent half an hour doing a case study would be able to tell you.

The mainstream is an unfolding, uncertain phenomenon, and there are opportunities for diverting the stream in the direction which those who see journalism as a developmental tool believe in.

On a broader point, in politico-repressive terms, the South African press has never been as free as it is now. The old system no longer has the power or the will

to beat it into submission; the new system is not yet in place. What we journalists do in this period of transition will live with us for a long time to come. Among other things, it will inform the views of those who are soon to assume their rightful places in the government of this country.

There has been much to be ashamed of, in places, in the press. There has been distortion, disinformation, scare-mongering; a recurring inability to see reality from someone else's — particularly a voteless someone else's — perspective. But there has, in places, also been growth, learning, change, open-mindedness, responsibility and goodwill.

This reflects the internal battles that are going on, to varying degrees, in newsrooms around the country. These, in turn, reflect the larger battles being fought on the national stage. But I have no doubt that the exponents of the latter beliefs are winning. And I believe that those outside who share the same vision should not, out of frustration or ignorance, abandon them. ●

SHAUN JOHNSON, a graduate of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies, delivered this paper at the recent media and development conference at Rhodes.

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GETTING THE LAMBS TO GAMBOL

*Some of the greatest journalism has been produced by a single photograph. Yet the camera can deceive just as much as the written word; and deception is characteristic of certain brands of popular photo-journalism as **HUGH CUDLIPP** describes*

THEY tell me, but who really knows, that Frank Charman died in East Molesey. It may have been West Molesey, or North or South Molesey, or some place miles away. He died in January 1985, so they say. You could never tell with Charman; he orbited in a darkling world where fact was twinned with fiction and the counterfeit was indistinguishable from the genuine.

He proved the camera can lie, and I mean bloody lie. Somewhere or other there should be one of those white-and-blue plaques commemorating his birth or death, preferably in Dayglo in the newspaper office darkroom where he practised his art of artifice, or alchemy. To put it bluntly, our Frankie aimed to achieve the sort of perfection in his photographs that God might Himself have achieved had He not worked to rule on the seventh day.

In Frank's pictures flowers bloomed where they had never bloomed before, rivers flowed from estuary to source, the hands of village clocks that had tick-tocked and tolled the hour trouble-free for decades denoted the time that suited Charman.

But Charman was increasingly unfulfilled. "Hugh," he said to me one Tuesday when the rest of the staff were composing their expenses, "I want to come off the art editor's f***ing rota. I want to range around. To be a creative photographer, working on my own ideas, bringing in my own work direct to you every Saturday without anyone telling me what to do."

No doubt about it, he became a creative photographer with the addiction of a serial killer. When the paparazzi were snapping the newsworthy wedding couple from the front as they left the cathedral, Charman would be operating furtively in the rear, producing a shot of the bride scratching her bottom. You could see Her Majesty the Queen waving to the crowds in any old newspaper, but in the Charman exclusive there were additionally two Welsh miners being sick in the gutter or a mongrel pissing on a lamp-post. I began to wonder why Frank was always there when it happened; later I began to suspect why it always happened when Frank was there.

He took to ordering the provincial weeklies, ripping out promising items and stuffing them in his pocket. Legless men marrying stringbean women. Parrots

clumping with budgerigars. Allotment holders who knew how to cultivate carrots and turnips as phallic symbols for display in pubs. Albinos and girls with tattooed tits. Dwarfs with glass eyes.

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I took Frank aside one day and explained that though I was philosophically in sympathy with his urge for creative photography, we were producing a Sunday family newspaper and not a sleazy sideshow in Coney Island, USA; maybe he could upmarket his creativity, or something.

He responded beginning with Spring, the front-page Spring-is-here-at-last picture, a mandatory ingredient of popular newspapers. "This year gambolling lambs are out," I said. "Too corny. Lambs have been gambolling on our front page for years. Something new."

"Thank God," he said, "getting the sods to gambol when you are ready with the camera isn't easy."

Getting the sods to gambol? Somewhere, faintly, an alarm bell was ringing; it was my mission as Saint Francis of Assisi's stand-in to monitor Charman's metamorphosis into creative photography with something more cautionary than a cry of hosanna every Saturday when he delivered the precious goods, especially when the four-legged or two-winged were in the cast. A shriek from a copse, a growl in the zoo, or a yelp of instant pain at Crufts might have signalled yet another Charman scoop.

"I know," said Frank, "you said so, gambolling lambs are out. How's about this?" Perfect. Two sprightly bright-eyed tortoises weaving their front claws through stems of a clutch of giggling daffodils, with a wispy Spring sky in the background. It had been raining most of the week but miraculously he had captured one of the few rays of sunshine which had eluded the weather forecasters.

"Frank," I said, "you're a genius." Later that night when we were having a congratulatory drink together, the creative photographer and the creative editor, I said: "How did you manage to find not one but two tortoises with their eyes wide open as early in the year as this? I've a tortoise in our garden, name of Sam, and the bugger's still hibernating." He fidgeted with his tie. "Hugh," he said, "if you want Sam to wake up sooner than he or God intends, just pop him in the oven, a slow

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oven I advise. He'll be wishing you a Happy Easter in no time at all."

Admittedly, the first tortoises in history to make the front page were Sam's kith and kin, but there were reasons why I could not afford to be over-hasty in probing just where in Charman's pictures creativity began and reality was given the golden handshake. His weekly contributions were invaluable and, after all, he wasn't pinching money from the pension fund.

He was compassionate towards those who lost their loved ones. In the same way that mourning became Electra, bereavement brought out the best (or worst) in Frank Charman. Widows played a role as "props" in his creative photography similar to the conspicuous boy cripples and co-operative mules in the crowd scenes in Zefferelli's filmed operas, notably *Carmen* with Domingo; one gets to know the mule quite well as the passion and violence among the humans escalate.

Charman's affinity with widows was exhibited to advantage, I'm not sure whose advantage, in a masterpiece of creative photography arising from a fishing boat tragedy, I think in Cornwell. A number of men were drowned, some of them sadly from the same family. "See you Saturday morning," said Frank, which he did.

There was the silver-haired widow all right, looking wistfully out of her cottage window to the hazy sea horizon in the distance. By her side was a rocking chair and on the mantelpiece, framed, a miniature Wayside Pulpit text: *Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted*. By its side was a vase containing dark tulips, languidly curtsying towards the widow, an effect that could, I suppose, be produced by depriving them of water. On the back of the photograph Charman had scrawled *The Empty Chair*.

"The rocking chair adds to the pathos," he said as I was scrutinising the picture with some suspicion. "See what I mean?" I saw what he meant. No picture in any other newspaper could portray the poignancy of the event and its aftermath with more sincerity than Charman's muted masterpiece. "Great," I said, "it will be the splash on the double-spread. Get me a bigger print, quick."

In a letter to the editor the bereaved lady expressed her appreciation of Mr Charman's courtesy and requested a copy of his "beautiful photograph" which I duly despatched in a silver frame with my sympathy.

On Frank's expense account were three interesting items: "Donation to vicar of St Giles Church to acquire Wayside Pulpit text, £10. Hire of antique rocking chair, £25. Spring flowers, £4." Of course, the tulips. I do not know how many widows he charmed in that seaside village before he found a widow with a window with a view and space for the chair.

Talk about intrusion into private grief, there was no Press Council or Press Complaints Commission and

Talk about intrusion into private grief, there was no Press Council or Press Complaints Commission and all that jazz in the early 1950s when Charman was perfecting the art of "the creative"

all that jazz in the early 1950s when Charman was perfecting the art of "the creative".

A final example from the creative portfolio. Two young RAF pilots were killed in a mid-air crash not far from London during a training exercise. "Back Saturday," said Frank half-way through the week. Unless he sought my opinion I did not ask him to discuss the assignment he selected, what it was, where it was, or who it was; perhaps just as well. The pilots had been friends and were buried in adjacent graves. When Frank returned to the office, a little flustered and later than usual, he said: "Sorry I'm running late. It will be with you in an hour, guaranteed. I've some work to do in the darkroom."

I had already surveyed with chagrin the Saturday morning offering presented by the art editor, a few expensive "exclusives" and the daily paper left-overs: another view of Betty Grable's legs and *derrière*, a Siamese mother who had given birth to two sets of Siamese twins, a Hamburg circus trainer with his head in a forest-bred lion's mouth (the drugged King of the Jungle obviously more terrified than the trainer), a 100-year-old biddy who cooked muffins for Baden-Powell the day Mafeking was relieved, the mandatory fat baby with a conical paper-hat inscribed "Kiss Me Quick", the young American lovers married underwater in goggles, flippers and aqualungs with a dolphin as best man. The *pièce de résistance* was two copulating Indian elephants I had rejected several times before (too early for that sort of thing — they had to hold it until they could copulate in colour a few decades later in an Endangered Species Issue of one of the upmarket weekend mags.) Then in rushes Charman intoning: "Think you'll like it." Good old Frank, just in time. I chucked the randy elephants into the basket and got to work with my self-adjusting ruler and Black Prince pencil.

The photograph was in his idiom, as instantly identifiable as a Rembrandt or a Van Gogh. The mourners in dark suits or black dresses and the priest in a white surplice were receding in the background of the village cemetery towards the Norman church where the service had been held. The young widows, chestfallen but radiant and serene, were standing each at the head of her husband's grave, smartly saluting. Above in a cloudless sky two RAF planes were streaking ahead of their slipstreams.

It crossed my mind that to achieve the co-operation required to depict it all in one moving picture Frank had casually mentioned that he had served in the Air Force himself. On the back was scribbled *The Last Farewell*, in case I didn't get the idea. His virtuosity at being in the right place at the right time, or the harrowing place at the harrowing time, again aroused envy on the editorial floor when the first edition materialised. Who else could have captured the pathos and the inspiring loyalty of *The Last Farewell* in one

“Frank, no more funerals. Except, of course, your own.”

magical shot? Were we paying him enough? Was he under contract? Would some other Sunday paper bribe him away?

I was soliloquising over the indispensability of the creative photographer when the news editor informed me that an irate gentleman describing himself as the father of one of the widows was demanding to speak to me.

“Sir,” he said, “I am phoning to protest about the abominable behaviour of your cameraman at the funeral this morning. My daughter has just told me what happened. He lured them back to the graveside on the pretext of taking a tasteful photograph of them together which they could treasure all their lives, or some bloody nonsense. He then asked them to imagine that an RAF plane was flying overhead and persuaded them to salute. All this disgusting charade took place in the pouring rain, etc. etc.” I assured him I would look into the matter and return his call late that night.

Pouring rain? The sky in Charman’s picture was clear. Asked them to imagine that an RAF plane was flying overhead? In the picture there were two. Hadn’t I seen those two planes before, possibly in a fly-past viewed by the Royals from Buck House balcony? Was it really a Norman church in that cemetery or a Victorian monstrosity Frank didn’t fancy? Were the other mourners receding in the background as the widows saluted, or was that scene from an earlier shot, or from some other funeral?

In the final edition, fortunately the one delivered where the families lived, the copulating elephants still didn’t make it but the under-water wedding with the attendant dolphin was substituted for *The Last Farewell*, and I informed the father that the photograph had been removed.

Charman left the office an hour before I launched a search; he had told the art editor he had caught a chill on the morning assignment. “Frank,” I said when he reported back for duty the following Tuesday, “no more funerals. Except, of course, your own.”

When they buried him in East, West, North or South Molesey in 1985, I wondered who was really in the coffin. ●

LORD Cudlipp — Baron Hugh Cudlipp of Aldingbourne — was editor of the Sunday Pictorial (now Sunday Mirror) from 1937 to 1940 and again from 1946 to 1949. He was chairman of Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd 1963-1968, deputy chairman of International Publishing Corporation (IPC) 1964-1968 and chairman from 1968-1973. This piece was first published in the British Journalism Review.



FROM July, the *Rhodes Journalism Review* will have a new editor in Charles Riddle, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies and the design and production function will fall to Jane Burnett, a fellow lecturer in the department.

Advertising will be the responsibility of Chloë O’Keefe, administrator in the department.

The journal will continue to be published twice a year as usual, in July and December each year.

Members of the new editorial team can be contacted at Rhodes University’s Department of Journalism and Media Studies on the telephone number: RSA(0461) 22023.

All correspondence should go to:

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**THE 1993
FREEDOM
OF THE PRESS
LECTURE**

Jane Raphaely



THE burning question at the moment for most journalists, editors and publishers here is whether we will have more or less freedom in the press in our new

South Africa. There is a distinction between freedom in the press and freedom of the press. Though journalists do get bitter and sometimes twisted when any one has the temerity to tell them what they can and cannot do, we do realise that as a profession we have more responsibilities than rights. Wherever journalists gather to discuss press freedom we start and end with the 'people's right to know' rather than our own right to tell or tattle. 🍷

But, as Stan Winder writes in the April issue of *The Journalist*, “the press in this country has a lot to account for”. Our record is not uniformly good — particularly in black eyes — because, as he says, “for decades, the South African media provided a willing complicity in covert operations by publishing only the official and hence accepted version of events”.

In some cases the press concocted their own dangerous and damning inventions. Arthur Goldstuck’s second collection of South African myths, were taken mostly from newspapers where they were originally printed as fact.

Just as it is incumbent on the press to report the truth and nothing but, it is also incumbent on us not to become an active part of the political process or to become partisans ourselves.

We should accept that it is our responsibility to disseminate as much information as possible inside the constraints of time and space, but after that it is the readers’ role and right to act upon the information.

However much we may sympathise with any particular cause, journalists cannot be activists, because this would damage the unblinking impartiality that is the prerequisite of a good reporter and destroy the credibility that is a journalist’s most precious credential. The same applies to the publications for which we work, but in practice a publication may be forgiven for an occasional lapse into partiality or even quite gross errors. Individual journalists can be haunted for years and sometimes ruined by a single instance of what their colleagues and readers see as bias or ignorance of the true facts.

In repressive societies journalists often become partisans in the press involuntarily, but this is almost always to their own detriment. This is one of many factors that has led to the present decline in the standards of journalism in South Africa and, by the same token, to the diminishing of press freedom. The people have the right to know everything there is to know, not just what anyone of us might decide, on the basis of our own convictions, is right or best for them to know.

Paradoxically, in this brief interval between acts in the history of this country, the silence on subjects that desperately need attention is almost deafening. It is true that we still labour under some of the most restrictive legislation ever devised to shut journalists up. Even though the outgoing government has rushed through several bills, including those long-overdue ones aimed at removing discrimination against women, there has not been a murmur, either in government or in any of the political groups, about the removal of: the entire Internal Security Act; relevant sections in the Defence Act and the Police Act; a whole range of sections from the Prisons Act; Section 205 from the Criminal Procedure Act; and the entire Protection of Information Act.



WORSE still, is the most brazen attempt to patch over the past. The equally brazen hatch and despatch of the Amnesty Bill through a thoroughly discredited President’s Council ensured that any disclosures made either to presiding committees or judges will never be revealed to the public, or anyone else.

We might have expected a government that is looking at a future in opposition, after what seemed set to be a century of dominance, to remove these Acts before doing anything else. Who should know better what horrors can be hidden behind restrictions such as these. Even if the government does not have the sense to protect itself from future mauling when it’s in opposition, why haven’t editors and publishers seized the moment either to cry for their removal or, better still, to behave as if they did not exist. What muzzles the Media Council now, apart from the Newspaper Press Union’s decision to cut it down to the size of one committee?

Because of the Acts mentioned above, the whole question of a conspiracy to kill Chris Hani hung in the air while the police detained and interrogated a series of suspects at their leisure. As a result, the country was in the kind of turmoil for which the murderers of Chris Hani must have aimed, and inevitably the violence escalated.

We were reduced yet again to receiving a dribble of information about the case from police sources and, because of the tameness and the timidity that have become endemic to the South African press, no-one seemed prepared to do the investigative reporting that the story would justify in any other equally developed country. We were still basically reprinting what official sources told us, long after those sources had been absolutely discredited. Even during the most repressive period of apartheid, Kit Katzen managed to produce a ‘Muldergate’. Just what on earth is stopping us now?

Many journalists tell me that the problem lies more in repressive management than in repressive government. All other aims are said to be subordinated to profitability, and though I am the first to admit that a healthy bottom-line is the best protection of editorial independence, this must not be achieved at the cost of the quality and integrity of the product.

For instance, disbanding cadet schools would be a tragic mistake and would be to the detriment of future generations who will expect and need more training and more help in advancement, not less.

This is possibly why the dirtiest words in a journalist’s lexicon at the moment are ‘market-related’ and ‘market-driven’, and why journalists, who see the space devoted to news shrinking in order to accommodate competitions and other circulation-builders, accuse their employers of selling newspapers rather than news.

What puzzles me is why our newspapers cannot do both. The extraordinary success story of the *Sowetan* and the steady growth of the *Weekly Mail* show that, in our market, papers with punch that reflect the reality of the readers’ lives can do extremely well.

In our own comparatively tame field of women’s magazines, our titles

scored remarkable circulation gains last year with content that was tough, realistic and, in the case of anything to do with abortion reform, extremely unpopular with a very large section of the reading... and ranting... population.

Femina has had a running battle over this period with the Hillbrow police who took exception, and were within their legal rights to do so, to our printing photographs of street children who were being held on an indefinite basis in their cells.

It is perhaps because they realise that *Femina* would be extremely happy to see them in court over this matter that they have not pursued it.

It may be also that there is something inherently ridiculous in pursuing a publication which is essentially concerned with far tamer issues over an infringement of a law that may be obsolete in the very near future.

Meanwhile, some of the best writing on the South African situation by South Africans tends to appear overseas. The best example of this is Rian Malan, whose brilliant dissection of the impenetrable murkiness of the Boipatong massacre first appeared in *British Esquire*.

We bought second rights to this for *Cosmopolitan* in February and were subsequently contacted by a Sergeant van der Merwe who wished to obtain third rights or the police magazine, *Servamus*.

Whatever you may think of Malan's personal politics, it is about as far from advocacy journalism as you can get. In fact, no-one escapes his withering criticism as he lists every known fact which emerged after this event and refuses to be drawn into a conclusion himself.

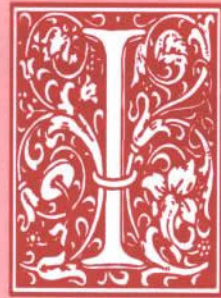
We have also purchased Malan's most recent piece on the tribal warfare in Northern Ireland, which has great relevance to our situation here. This picking up of other editors' original inspirations does not reflect much glory on *Cosmopolitan*. I am the first to regret that we did not think of commissioning him first, but it does surprise me that we were able to obtain first South African rights to these pieces so easily. It may be that in South Africa today an independent, icono-

clastic, hyper-critical voice is not what is most wanted.

One voice does continue to speak the unspeakable and dare to yell about the unthinkable, and it is perhaps worth noting that Ken Owen is not only the most hated journalist in this country but also the one who couldn't care less. His *Sunday Times* pieces continue to infuriate almost everyone who appears in them, but week after week he puts his finger on the pulse of the nation and reports with deadly accuracy on his findings. These may be morbid but they are undeniably and horribly true.

There has never been a time when the truth, in all its forms, was needed more in our country. As Rian Malan said in *The Farce Continues*: "This is South Africa where nothing can be taken for granted, even if you see it with your own eyes."

We have gone through such a long period of lies, have lived with such systematic lying on every side of our political spectrum, that perhaps the only two places where people might hope to get a glimmer of the truth are the press and the courts.



LHAVE deliberately excluded the SABC from most of these remarks because it continues to be government-owned and run. Though its creative and production staff have recently made great leaps in applying a more professional and objective approach to news reporting, and it is obvious that the SABC and the government are trying to become more independent of one another, it will never achieve real independence until it is totally privatised and run like a business.

The complete proof of this was shown in the television coverage given to Mr Mandela prior to the day of protest against Hani's assassina-

tion. The editing of his message that night on TV1 provoked instant political interference from the ANC, and TV1 re-broadcast the full unedited version of the address that night at 11pm.

Old habits die hard and the SABC had simply switched its slavish obedience to previous masters to the incoming new ones.

I do not blame the ANC in any way for pushing their new advantage and nor do I debate the calming effect of Mr Mandela's words. What I am criticising is the SABC's failure to use its own initiative on that fateful eve. Their grounds for cutting the original broadcast during the news programme were valid. Their best defence would have been a new, fresh wrap-up at 11pm including the full spectrum of all political groups calling for peace and calm on the following day. That would have been in the best interests of the people, not one political party. And that should have been the first duty of a broadcasting service.

The role of television and radio in a time of crisis is so vital that privatisation or independence are not likely under an interim or an ANC government.

It is also obvious from the ANC's media charter that the ANC regards its own government control of television and radio as essential. This is invariably described in terms of democratisation of 'the people's media'. And in this they are no better or worse than any other political player in our present situation. But this is also why it will be the party that gets the most votes that will change the composition of any future SABC Board to its own satisfaction and, through this, the policy of any future SABC.

I have slightly more hope for the deregulation of the air-waves, which might yet turn out to be a Pandora's Box of dissenting voices if communities realise that regional radio is not only accessible to them but affordable.

It was announced recently that the government has drafted proposals to free South African television and radio from the SABC's monopoly control. It is far more likely that this freedom will be applied to radio, though one does wonder why the

authorities confiscated the Bush Radio transmitter.

Who is calling the shots here? It's estimated that more than 100 local community radio services could be started.

I have a great respect for radio because I know it can reach that 50 percent of the population which cannot now, nor will be able in the foreseeable future, to read a word that any of us might print. Also there is a spontaneity, an immediacy, and a one-on-one opportunity in radio broadcasting that does not apply to the printed word which has to go through several hands and stages before it reaches the public.

Nevertheless, in the end, it will probably come back to newspapers and journals to do their best to keep the people of this country informed as to what is actually going on here.



DARTISAN or not, journalists will find themselves actively involved in the new struggle to keep those little points of light, which represent accurate, un-

baised information, burning in the darkness that threatens to engulf us now.

It will be journalists who become the heroes of this struggle and already our profession has begun to count its fallen. In 1991, 84 journalists died worldwide while working (two in South Africa); last year at least 61 were killed; and according to Reporters Sans Frontieres (a French anti-censorship group) "scores" of journalists have been killed this year — at least one in South Africa, where many more have been assaulted, some seriously.

In early April the South African Union of Journalists held a seminar to discuss safety on the job. Journalists reported that there was no respect for the media from either the authorities or members of political organisations.

Perhaps it's a hopeful sign that it was local leaders of the ANC in the PWV region who made a citizen's arrest of the attackers who killed the SABC television reporter Calvin Thusago in late April.

The media show a curious shyness about publicising their own losses. It's a 'cowboys don't cry' syndrome, but if you accept that the public has a right to know and the press has a responsibility to supply that knowledge, surely the public also has a right to know the conditions and circumstances under which information is sometimes obtained and printed... or not printed.

One of my greatest fears for future freedom in the press in South Africa is that those journalists who are closest to their subject material because they are part of the communities that they are writing about will be those who are most at risk of intimidation and terror tactics. If we cannot defend them when they perform the vital task of telling those who live in much more sheltered circumstances just what is going on out there, the very least we could do is to carve their names with pride.

If, in the light of what is patently some pretty heroic activity in our profession, some of my comments might seem too harsh or critical, please blame this on the strength of my concern, both for the future of a country that I love and for a profession of which I am proud to be a part.

It will also be apparent that I am expecting that the main, if not the only, defenders of freedom in the press in our new South African will be journalists themselves.

On the whole I think that is a good thing. We have expected and allowed external authorities to control and dominate individual behaviour in this country for too long. Who better than journalists to embody and express that which is novel in this country — the right of an individual against the state.

*JANE RAPHAELY is publisher and editor of *Cosmopolitan* and *Femina*. The *Freedom of Speech Lecture* is delivered annually at Rhodes University.*



THE ANNUAL
**FREEDOM OF
THE PRESS
LECTURE**

THE annual Freedom of the Press Lecture at Rhodes University was initiated in 1990 on the 21st anniversary of the founding the Department of Journalism and Media Studies.

Originally sponsored by the Ackerman Family in memory of Sam Mabe, a *Sowetan* journalist who was murdered under mysterious circumstances, the Freedom of the Press Lecture has become a highlight in the calendar at Rhodes University.

Speakers have included:

- Max du Preez, award-winning editor of the independent Afrikaans weekly newspaper, *Vrye Weekblad*.

- Trevor Ncube, editor of the *Financial Gazette*, the crusading weekly in Harare, Zimbabwe.

- Jane Raphaely, editor and publisher of *Cosmopolitan* and *Femina* magazines.

When legendary *Life* magazine photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt accompanied an exhibition of his photographs to South Africa, **MICHAEL ETTERSHPANK** interviewed and photographed him in Johannesburg

EISENSTAEDT

ALFRED Eisenstaedt is very old. He is also very famous. I think of the many, many books on photographers where I have seen his photographs before, never imagining that one day I would meet him in South Africa.

I ask him about the early days of photo-journalism, when he started taking photographs.

"I got my first camera from an uncle when I was 13 years old. That was in Germany," he says. "I photographed like an amateur and I soon gave it up to join the German Army as Europe was about to go to war.

"I was only 16 when I was wounded during the Flanders offensive. My fingers were frosted. I was shot through the legs," says Eisenstaedt. He tells me the year, the date, the time. Even at 94, the man has a memory as quick as a rat trap.

After the Great War, he became a button salesman in Berlin, but he took his Zeiss along on his various sales trips.

"In Johannesbad I photographed a woman tennis player and when I returned to Berlin I enlarged that picture and showed it to the editor of *Wereldspiegel*. He liked it and gave me three dollars. He wanted more pictures." Eisenstaedt hadn't realised that photographs could be sold.

Soon Eisenstaedt was photographing a range of social events for the Associated Press while still doubling up as a salesman.

"I was a very bad salesman and my boss told me to make up my mind. 'What is it to be,' he asked, 'you want to sell photographs or buttons?'"

Eight days later Eisenstaedt was on his way to Stockholm to photograph the Nobel Prize winner Thomas Mann. It was December 9, 1929. Once made, that decision launched the career of the 'Father of Photo-journalism', a career which has left us with some of the most enduring images of our times.



"I was a very bad salesman and my boss told me to make up my mind. 'What is it to be,' he asked, 'you want to sell photographs or buttons?'"

His next assignment proved to be something of a professional disaster. Travelling to Assisi, north of Rome, he was to photograph the wedding of King George of Bulgaria to Sophia, youngest daughter of King Victor of Italy.

"I was fascinated by all the pageantry, all the wonderful art, the lanterns. It was so beautiful that I photographed everything, the pageantry, even Mussolini strutting by.

"When I got back, they asked me for my photographs of the bride and groom. I said, 'what bride and groom?'"

A telegram from London ordered that Eisenstaedt be fired. He laughs. "They couldn't fire me, I was a freelancer."

Eisenstaedt left Germany for America when war loomed again in Europe and joined *Life* magazine after a stint photographing filmstars in Hollywood.

I ask Eisenstaedt which of his many famous photographs is his most important.

"The picture I took at VJ Day when the war was over," he says. "Well, they say that is *the* picture... everybody *knows* that picture, I guess.

"*Life* covered the VJ Day celebrations in New York with five photographers. I was assigned to Time Square where I photographed everybody kissing each other.

"Then I saw a sailor grabbing every women in sight, very fast... He was in navy uniform, many of the women he grabbed were also darkly dressed. You couldn't tell them apart... I ran ahead of him. Then he grabbed somebody in a white dress and kissed her. I clicked four times."

Eisenstaedt tells me how he put his film through at 8pm that night and forgot all about it until his editor saw him the next day. He says it was a snapshot, the perfect moment in a series of four frames that he captured on film for posterity.

PLEASE TURN OVER

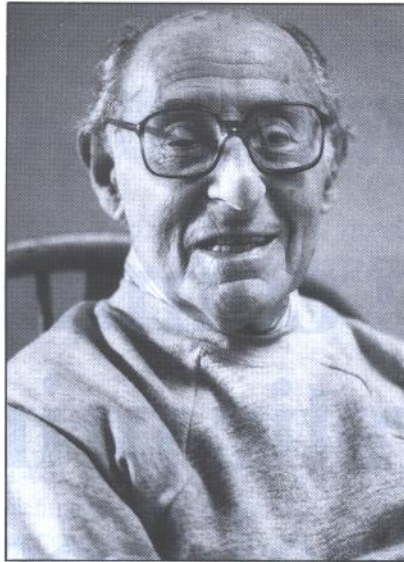
EISENSTAEDT

To imagine a career that spans such a long time is not easy. I ask Eisenstaedt if the world has changed. "Everything changes all the time," he replies. "Reporters, young photographers, they ask me for advice. But I ask them for advice. They know more about modern cameras than I do."

However, Eisenstaedt says the eye for a good photograph is as important now as it has ever been.

"After my first exhibition, *Witness to our Times*, was over, about 30 people crowded around me to ask questions. Among them was this father and son. The father said, 'My son, I'm going to buy you the same camera Mr Eisenstaedt has so you can do the same'. I said, 'I have two hands and 10 fingers, but I can't paint like Picasso. I have 10 fingers but I can't play the piano like Rubenstein'.

"I always wanted one really beautiful picture in each story," he says. "I'm often asked why I have so many people in pictures. The editors thought I worked best with people. That is possibly why I have few expeditions and nature stories.



"Reporters and photographers ask me for advice. But I ask them for advice. They know more about modern cameras than I do."

I photographed more people than anybody else." Eisenstaedt has nine famous autograph books full of the signatures of rich and famous subjects of his lens. He still photographs them, but at a price and the money from these rare photo sessions goes to children's charities.

I am conducting this interview at the lovely Parkwood home of Eve Jammy, wife of Eisenstaedt's nephew. There is a skylight in the roof and Eisenstaedt is sitting in its soft glow looking frail and tired. He picks up a passing cat, holds it on his knee, then asks if we can go outside. He wants to sit in the sun as he suffers much pain from arthritis — the result of his war wounds. Eisenstaedt loves the sun. He says he is a sunbird and although he can fly no more, he has certainly left his mark upon our world. ●

MICHAEL ETTERSHANK is a graduate from Rhodes University, working as a photo-journalist with Penta Publishing, proprietors of De Kat, Living and Tribute.

The soul truth, daily.

Sowetan

Building the Nation

RADIO, SCHMADIO!

Conventional wisdom has it that radio is the best medium to reach the majority of South Africans. CHARLES RIDDLE and LARRY STRELITZ, who have been doing some primary research on television penetration in the Eastern Cape are not so sure

IT'S time to challenge the conventional wisdom that radio is the peoples' medium.

Recent research into television ownership and viewership in Grahamstown's black townships appear to threaten this basic assumption, for while it is correct that radio reaches "the people", so does television, and especially in urban areas.

In a country that is rapidly urbanising, it might well be that television is the medium to reach the masses.

Grahamstown is a small town in the most economically depressed part of South Africa. Yet, in an area with over 70 percent unemployment, 66 per cent of households have a television set and 67 percent of respondents claimed to watch television "today/yesterday". Just over 96 percent of respondents claimed to watch the news on television regularly.

Most startling of all was that 37 percent of squatter households own a television set.

We should not be surprised by these findings. SABC researcher Francis Chosane, for example, published figures last year which showed a 62 per cent ownership of television in urban townships throughout South Africa in 1991.

Thinking about radio hasn't moved much beyond the 1950's when British colonial authorities in Africa also championed the medium as the best way to reach "the people" and aimed to have a radio in 20 000 villages by 1955.

At that time, of course, television wasn't an option in African countries. But the current penetration of television in South Africa contradicts those who see

it as a "First World" medium. For example, some still argue that the cost of a television set prevents the medium from reaching the broad base of society in developing countries.

The Grahamstown research, for example, showed that 70 percent of the minority who did not have a set in their household, regularly watched with friends or neighbours.

Even appointees to the new SABC Board seem to underrate the penetration of television in this country. Professor Fatima Meer, for example, recently noted that radio, not television, was the medium which reached the people. She may be correct as far as the rural areas go, but the same no longer holds for people living in cities and small towns such as Grahamstown.

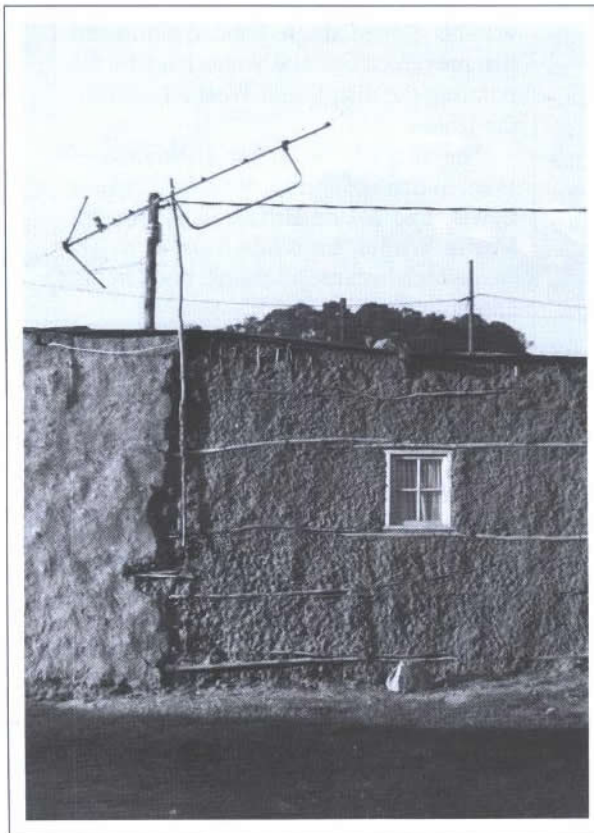
Those who champion radio pay little attention to the way people use different media. Studies suggest that television has a higher credibility than radio, and that audiences get their political information from television rather than other media.

With this country's first democratic elections less than a year away, further thought urgently needs to be given to the efficacy of the different media in communicating information. There may be fewer television sets out there, but television is both an audio and a visual medium and has definite advantages over radio. For example, in terms of voter education, the visual channel of television will

help explain not only what a ballot is, but also what it looks like.

A blind championing of radio simply based on high ownership figures is, in our view, shortsighted. ●

CHARLES RIDDLE and Larry Strelitz are lecturers in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University.



A sign of the times... one of the many switched-on informal settlements around Grahamstown.

Pic: Monty Cooper

In the 1950's the authorities banked on communal listening to radio and felt there was "no doubt" that every set sold meant 10 new listeners. This phenomenon of communal listening now applies to television viewing. Television is, after all, now reasonably accessible to all in an urban environment — even to those who do not own sets.

Colin Legum's long journey home

IT'S been a long way from Kestell to Fleet Street and back again. The round trip took me over 60 years. Fleet Street may be universally known as the former Mecca of journalists before they were relocated across London, but where on earth, you may ask, is Kestell?

It is a small Free State village across the way from QwaQwa, below the Mont Aux Sources. How does one get from there to Fleet Street? I am reminded of the answer given to a magistrate by a young PAC militant who had been arrested after returning from military training in China. "Well meneer," he told the magistrate who had asked him how he had got to China, "You leave Soweto by the Muldersdrift Road..."

In my own case I went by a bus to the railhead at Afrika's Kop to entrain for Johannesburg to take up my first job on a newspaper.

I combined my work as a journalist with a political career, serving for almost seven years on the Johannesburg City Council and, for a time, as general secretary of the old Labour Party.

When the Afrikaner Nationalists won the 1948 elections on their apartheid manifesto, I decided to go to England both because I saw no future for my brand of politics in the country, or for an independent career in journalism, but especially because I did not want to be part of the new apartheid society.

Two other reasons helped to guide my decision. The first was to inform British opinion about the true nature of apartheid; and the second was because I felt that the future course of events in South Africa would be determined largely by developments in the rest of the continent which was then poised on the eve of the decolonisation era.

On my arrival in London I was extremely fortunate to find that David Astor, the new young editor of *The Observer* was thinking along my lines. He made me the first Africa Correspondent in Fleet Street — a role later enlarged first to that of Commonwealth Correspondent and then as the paper's associate editor concerned mainly with Third World affairs.

My work gave me wonderful opportunities to cover the exciting years of the end of the British Empire and the birth of the new Commonwealth of Nations.

I was able to travel extensively across Africa and to meet the continent's future leaders. These personal contacts were of great value to me as a journalist when they later became heads of government.

With David Astor we enlarged our role as journalists to participate actively in the anti-colonial movement, notably in support of that early campaigner against apartheid, the Rev. Michael Scott. Among his other creditable achievements was his almost single-handed campaign that prevented General Smuts from incorporating the then South West Africa into the Union.

Together with Scott, the distinguished West Indian economist, Professor Arthur Lewis, and a fine British academician, Martin Wright, we wrote *Attitude to Africa* which became a seminal book in the anti-colonial struggle.

The Observer's special role in the struggle for African and colonial liberation was recognised by pundits like John Gunther who, in his valuable book *Inside Africa*, described the paper as 'the capital of Africa', by which he meant no more than that it was both the source for information about the changing continent and that it had extensive contacts with the still largely unknown new African leaders.

Until 1964 I was still able to make periodic visits back home to keep up with developments there. But in that year my wife and I wrote a book entitled *South Africa — Crisis for the West*.



'Apparently he wore a clip-on bow tie.'

We argued that if the South African conflict were to be prevented from descending into racial violence, it was necessary for the international community to become involved to break the deadlock. Our proposal was for an effective international campaign of sanctions.

It was the first book to argue this case. Not unexpectedly, the book riled Pretoria. My wife and I were banned from returning to South Africa without a special visa which, naturally, was always refused. Our exile lasted 34 years.

What has my experience in newspapers taught me?

First, the vital importance of journalists learning to write in plain, crisp and clear language.

Second, even as a committed journalist, it is crucially important to distinguish in one's reporting between straightforward information and opinion; there is room for both, but not in the same piece.

Third, the absolute need for a pluralist press, free from censorship, and with at least some papers not controlled by vested-interest proprietors or party-controlled ownership.

Fourth, the importance of independent-minded journalists willing to put their jobs on the line if necessary. (I resigned from *The Observer* when it was sold to Lonrho because I was not willing to work for a proprietor like Tiny Rowland who has his own agenda for Africa).

Fifth, the need for South African journalists, black and white, to learn about Africa; now that South Africa is about to join the continent politically there can no longer be any excuse for the widespread ignorance I find everywhere.

My own faith in Africa's future (as well as in South Africa's future) remains strong and undisturbed by the current fashion of writing the continent off as a 'basket-case'. One has only to travel around Africa, as I still do, to find the green shoots of revival and confidence.

COLIN LEGUM edits a weekly newsletter from London called *Third World Reports*. He is the author or editor of over 40 books and edited the *Africa Contemporary Record* for 20 years.