PRESS—1994

JANUARY—JULY
Sowetan editors predict tough time

PETER FABRICIUS
The Argus, Foreign Service

WASHINGTON — The editors of the Sowetan believe they are going to have a tougher time retaining their independent voice under an ANC government than they did under apartheid.

Their fears about running South Africa's largest black newspaper under a new black government are described in a profile by Washington Post South African correspondent Paul Taylor published yesterday.

Sowetan managing editor Joe Thloboe and other Sowetan news staffers offer their views that life will get tougher for them because a black government might expect favourable coverage from the black Press.

Some staffers also express misgivings about the Sowetan's imminent transfer from the sole control of the Argus group to half-ownership by a black trust, expressing fears that this might open the way to ANC control.

"There's no doubt we will be the most vulnerable newspaper, because we have the biggest circulation in the black community," Mr Thloboe is quoted as saying.

"I expect to have to fight tooth and nail with the new government to retain our independence — but I believe we can do it."

Describing the difficulties of operating an independent newspaper in an intolerant climate, editor Aggrey Klaaste predicts that the pressures will increase after the election "for he expects the Sowetan to have lots to bark about as a watchdog of the first black-led government."

Mr Klaaste adds "I sometimes wonder why the ANC wants to get into power, it's going to be such a bloody mess at first.

"Very little work has been done to get blacks in shape to run the country. We just don't have the skills yet.

"That means the whites will still be running things for quite a while, and everyone will get mad."

Some staffers are wary about black ownership of the Sowetan "I'm afraid it could be a way for the ANC to get control of the papers," investigative reporter Ruth Bhengu is quoted as saying.

(243) ARG 51 94
First newsman to die in S Africa this year

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

SABC journalist Mr Charles Mokanyang survived a bullet in his lap to tell the story. Mr Abdul Shariff did not.

Shariff, a freelance photographer with Associated Press, is the first journalist to be killed in South Africa this year.

His death in Katlehong on Sunday brings the total to five over the past four years of newsmen who have died in the line of duty in the country.

Astoundingly, three of them were SABC staff members.

Those who have died since 1990 are:
- SABC staff member Mr Thomas Shibya, who was burned in his car in Durban in September 1990,
- Vannever journalist Mr Atax Tasseem, who died in another car accident while returning from a job,
- SABC cameraman Mr Hector Ngwenyana, who was knocked down by a car as he filmed a march in Maritzburg, and
- SABC journalist Mr Calvin Thosago, who was knifed and bashed with pangas while on duty in Sharpeville last year.

In 1992 alone, 49 journalists were killed all over the world and 11, including Thosago, in 1993.

South Africa is one of the most violent countries in the world, and that cannot be doubted.

Mortuaries on the East Rand are like a scene out of Auschwitz, said Mr Joe Slovo of the South African Communist Party. He spoke these words barely four hours before he and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa set out on a fact-finding mission which ended in the tragedy of Sunday.

Katlehong-Tokoza is where one of five women survived to tell the story of how she and four others were gang-raped almost by all the hostel inmates. The other four were later murdered.

This is like a scene out of a war-navigated Bosnia.

Tragedy

To journalists, though, what starts out as a routine assignment may end up in tragedy— as was the case with Shariff (and Thosago). Although not completely ruled out, who would expect that policemen of the stature of Cyril Ramaphosa and Joe Slovo could be shot at just like that?

Argument is that the two leaders were actually offering themselves—and their followers as sacrificial lambs by going past that hostel. They knew chaos would break out. But that is not the issue here as it was journalists and two other people still to be named who died.

Some witnesses said journalists were specifically targeted as the ANC encampment filed past Mazubuko Hostel singularly picked out.

If this is true it is indeed a sad day for freedom of expression and of the Press. One can also ask "But why?"

And this brings to mind Mokanyang's words during one of his on-the-spot reporting assignments in violence-torn Daveyton, also on the East Rand. In the background was the rapid sound of gunfire. The air around him was thick with black smoke from burning tyres— you could almost smell the smouldering rubber through the television screen.

Clutching a microphone, Mokanyang said, almost pleading to whoever sent him there—"Sometimes one wonders what one is doing here and how one arrived here in the first place."

The next day his lean frame leaped in front of you from the screen at 7pm.

Those who, like Mokanyang, have lived to tell the story, know what he has gone through.

Ninety hours after Thosago died, last April foreign television cameraman Mr Sam Mashi survived five bullets after being attacked by a group of men on the East Rand.

Thosago's colleague was attacked but was fortunate to survive.

Crisis

The Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists, which represents more than 300 000 journalists in 87 unions, said last year that a crisis was gripping journalists throughout the world.

Figures last year compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists showed that in Africa alone, at least 378 incidents of violence, involving 294 journalists, were reported.
Protest march planned

BY SUSAN SMUTS

Journalists are planning to march through Katlehong in protest against Sunday's killing of photographer Adiel Shariff and against the ongoing carnage in South Africa.

At a memorial service for Shariff organised by the Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa) yesterday, reporters vowed that violence would not stop them from exposing the truth.

International Federation of Journalists local organiser Jeanette Minnie urged journalists to refuse to cover stories in areas where their safety could not be guaranteed.

"No story is worth your life," she said.

Mwasa acting president Mathatha Tsedu said it was clear Shariff had been targeted because he was a journalist.

"The gunmen in Madibuko Hostel knew what they were doing," he said.

"They could not mistake any journalist carrying a camera or a notebook or a microphone for (Joe) Slovo or (Cyril) Ramaphosa," he said.

Shariff became the first South African pressman this year to die in the line of duty when a sniper's bullet hit him in the chest on Sunday in the strife-racked East Rand township.

Some 50 journalists lost their lives last year in trouble spots around the world.

Shariff's girlfriend of six years, Madl Peareel, thanked his "very brave" colleagues who removed him from the line of fire and took him to hospital.

IIP's Tranvaal leader Thembekho Khosa said the media were important because they covered the whole political spectrum.

Naeto general secretary Cunningham Ngcukana said it was "nauseating and disgusting that it takes one 'important' life to expose" the carnage in Katlehong.

A memorial service for Shariff will be held at the Yeoville Recreation Centre on Friday at 7pm.
Media watchdog launched

Political Staff

The law establishing the Independent Media Commission (IMC) comes into effect today.
The IMC, which was passed last year, provides for the IMC to "ensure equitable treatment of all political parties by broadcasting services", during the election period.

The IMC will also ensure that state-financed publications and state information services are not used to advance directly or indirectly the interests of any political party.
The commission will consist of "a chairperson" and not more than six other members, to be appointed by President F W de Klerk on the advice of the Transitional Executive Council.
The commission has been empowered to monitor all broadcasting services in South Africa relating to party election broadcasts and political advertisements.
It will also monitor all state-financed publications and information services during the election period.
Argus to buy Cape Times?

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG — Times Media Ltd (TML) and the Argus Group are within a few weeks of officially announcing the delinking of the two publishing groups, an exchange of newspaper titles and firm printing contracts.

Though no official confirmation was available, it appears the intention is for TML to sell the Cape Times, which it owns, its 46% stake in the Pretoria News and its 50% interest in Natal Newspapers to Argus. The price has yet to be determined, but it could be paid in cash or offset against a reduction in Argus's 50% shareholding in TML. TML's share capital would then be reduced by the value placed on the sale of its interests in the Cape and Pretoria newspapers.

Big shake-up

Argus would then sell its remaining shareholding in TML to parent company Johannes-

From page 1

barg Consolidated Investment (JCI) or distribute its holding in TML to all Argus shareholders. The latter option appeared the most likely.

The manoeuvre will cut the ties between the two groups and give JCI a direct controlling stake in both companies. JCI has a 22.7% direct

stake in Argus and a 24% direct interest in TML.

The transactions represent the biggest shake-up of the industry since the demise of the Rand Daily Mail and the reorganisation of SA Associated Newspapers, which became TML in 1995.

TML managing director Mr David Kovarsky declined to comment on the deal yesterday, apart from saying that "exploratory talks" had been held with Argus Argus chief executive Mr Doug Band was not available for comment.

News of the shake-up emerged yesterday in Finance Week, which reported that Mr Band had presented an outline of the deal to Competition Board chairman Mr Pierre Kokke last week.

It is understood that growing losses by some key Argus newspapers and concern about future government policy on cross-ownership in the media have spurred the strategy.

Cape Times editor Mr Koos Vieries said last night: "The talks that are taking place are obviously of particular concern to the Cape Times and its staff. We have always prided ourselves on our editorial independence and will want to see the implications for this in any deal."

"I have been told by David Kovarsky that the interests of Cape Times staff will be safeguarded in negotiations, and we will be at pains to ensure that this happens. However, until we have a full statement it is impossible to comment in detail and we will be pressing both TML and Argus for an announcement."
Last edition of Vrye Weekblad on February 2

JOHANNESBURG — Vrye Weekblad editor Max du Preez said today that the last issue of the newspaper will be on February 2.

He said staff decided last week that the absence of "enthusiastic" advertising and the continuing costs of judicial proceedings against the publication would have meant further cuts in editorial expenses which would have undermined the quality of journalism.

"If there is still room for a mediocre, boring publication in the Afrikaans media market, it will not be Vrye Weekblad," Mr Du Preez said.

He said the last edition of the newspaper would be a special commemorative one which would also contain final proof that the Appeal Court had made "the biggest blunder in recent legal history with their finding in the Lothar Neethling defamation case". — Sapa.
Weekblad to close next month

BY MICHAEL SPARKS

Star 18/11/94

After more than five years of publishing the viewpoint of progressive Afrikaners, court judgments and a shortage of money have forced Vrye Weekblad to close from February 2, editor Max de Preez said yesterday.

Foremost among the problems faced by the newspaper was a R1.5 million defamation suit brought against it and the Weekly Mail by former police forensics chief Lieutenant-General Lothar Neethling (243).

The papers published stories in 1989 linking Neethling to death squad activities by alleging he provided poisons and knockout drops to former police captain Dirk Coetzee.

"Our closure will leave a vacuum, but we played an interesting role. My one regret is not being part of the election coverage," he said.
Controversial Vrye Weekblad to close

Political Staff

VRYE WEEKBLAD, the newspaper which first published statements by ex-Captain Dirk Coetzee about alleged police involvement in hit squads and about the controversial Vlakplaas base, is to close down.

Launched as part of the “alternative press”, Vrye Weekblad was banned under the emergency regulations and was subjected to a number of court actions against it.

The newspaper, which appeared fortnightly last year in a magazine format, will close after the publication of its February 2 issue, its editor, Mr Max du Preez, said yesterday.

He said staff had decided last week that the absence of “enthusiastic” advertising support and the continuing costs of judicial proceedings against the publication would have meant further cuts in editorial expenses. These would have undermined the quality of journalism. (243) 5718 1194
Future of the Sunday Star in the balance

AMANDA VERMEULEN

THE future of the loss-making Sunday Star is expected to be disclosed today when the newspaper's GM, Graeme King, addresses a special staff meeting.

According to the newspaper's employees, there was little chance that publication would continue for longer than a few more issues. There had been discussions on the future of staff members for several weeks.

While redundancy levels have yet to be decided, key Sunday Star employees will be offered positions on the Star, the newspaper's sister daily.

Argus Holdings CE Doug Band said yesterday no decision on closure had been taken yet but he hoped to be able to clarify the paper's position today.

Argus Newspapers CE John Featherstone told the newspaper's staff yesterday that management was reviewing all options.

Last week the Competition Board rejected proposals for separating the Argus and Times Media Ltd, a move that would have involved the transfer of TML's interests in the Cape Times, Natal Newspapers and Pretoria News to Argus. A parallel development was to have been the closure of the Sunday Star, although this was not related to the separation of the two newspaper groups.
JOHANNESBURG. The TEC has approved appointments to the special electoral court and to the independent media commission.

The court will hear appeals from political parties, groups or individuals concerning TEC decisions.

Mr Justice I Mahomed of the Transvaal and advocate Mr Jan Reuvis of the Cape Bar were appointed by the TEC while Judges J W Smalberger, J M Diccott and P J van der Walt were Judge President appointees to the court.

The Independent Media Commission will be chaired by Judge J Trench and comprises Naa Man Maga, Raymond Louw, Willem de Klerk, Jenny Malan, Zubeida Jaffer and Labby Lloyd. An interim party liaison committee was also established yesterday.
**Sunday Star to close**

**BY SVEN LUNSCHE**

The Sunday Star will appear for the last time this weekend.

After months of speculation, the Argus Newspapers company said yesterday that the Sunday Star, which was launched in 1981, would suspend circulation after the January 23 issue.

The closure of the Sunday Star, a sister newspaper of The Star, follows hard on the heels of a similar announcement by the independent Afrikaans weekly Vrye Weekblad.

The closures have been described as a range of media and political groupings as a blow to the diversity of media opinions in South Africa.

Addressing a packed and emotional staff meeting, Argus Newspapers chairman Doug Bond said large losses by the Sunday Star and an overtraded Sunday market had necessitated the closure.

Since 1987 the Sunday Star's losses amounted to R22.6 million. More than half of these losses — R12.6 million — occurred after the paper was relaunched in May 1982.

The Star's editor-in-chief Richard Steyn added that while the Sunday Star had achieved most of its circulation targets, it had not attracted sufficient advertising support.

Steyn and Bond announced that some sections of the Sunday Star would be incorporated with the Saturday Star into a new weekend paper, the Weekend Star, to appear on Saturdays.

Bond said the Argus had not yet ruled out selling the Sunday Star to a third party, rumoured to be Caxton, but industry sources doubted that this move would succeed.

While Steyn indicated that many of the journalists would be placed with the Weekend Star and daily Star, it is feared that about a third of the 32 journalists could be laid off.

David Hambrecht, editor of the Sunday Star, said he had hoped that Argus management could have had a further look at the newspaper's cost structure before closing it. He said the newspaper "was a truly independent voice in the Sunday market".

Many analysts have attributed the losses of the Sunday Star to the failure of the paper to make serious inroads into the circulation of the rival Sunday Times.

At the same time the entire industry has been faced with poor advertising revenues.

Describing the closure as a tragedy, Campaign for Open Media chairman Raymond Louw said the Sunday Star "did not appear to have a strategy to tackle the dominance of the Sunday Times".

Dave Kowarsky, managing director of TMI, publisher of the Sunday Times, said he regretted the loss of the Sunday Star but described the paper as a "product that lacked direction".

Sunday Times editor Ken Owen said it was always sad when a newspaper had to close.

The two media trade unions, the Media Workers' Association (Mwasa) and the SA Union of Journalists (SAUJ), were highly critical of the decision.

"This is not the time to close another newspaper. As political opportunities open up for journalists, it seems that dark commercial clouds are gathering," Mwasa's acting president Martha Seeth said.

Yvonne Grimbek, president of the SAUJ, said the closure of two newspapers in one week highlighted the need for a broader spectrum of media opinions in South Africa.

This was echoed by the ANC's spokesman Carl Niehaus, who reiterated the call for a more diversified, ownership structure of the newspaper market.

The Democratic Party's media spokesman, Peter Sotho, said it was "unfortunate" that Argus could not find a way of keeping the Sunday Star going.
THE Star is to close after nine years with its final edition this weekend.

The Star plans to rationalise its two weekend products — the Saturday Star and Sunday Star — into the new Weekend Star which will appear on Saturdays.

In announcing the decision, Argus Newspapers chairman Mr Doug Band said yesterday the continuing losses incurred by the Sunday Star and an overrated Sunday market necessitated a thorough revision of strategy.

He said the proposal to rationalise the two newspapers would inevitably mean the loss of some jobs, which was deeply regretted in view of the dedicated efforts of editorial and other staff involved.

Band said the possibility of selling the publication, with the object of protecting jobs, had been under discussion and had not yet been exhausted.

"After more than nine years of Sunday publication, we have concluded that our efforts would be better focused on our daily and Saturday publications. Recent experience overseas has demonstrated a marked swing to Saturday readership.

"We believe that this trend will be paralleled in South Africa, and that we can exploit the inherent strength of the Saturday Star to a much greater extent," Band said.

He said design expert Manqo Garcia was being retained to help plan the new paper.

In an emotional speech to a packed auditorium and tearful staff, Sunday Star editor Mr Dave Hanlurat said he had not lost faith in the concept of the paper.
Sunday Star to close: R35m lost

Own Correspondent
Johannesburg -- The Sunday Star would publish its last edition this weekend, The Star editor-in-chief Mr Richard Steyn said yesterday.

The paper had failed to achieve viable readership and advertising base in a market dominated by Times Media Ltd's Sunday Times attempts to relaunch it as a tabloid 20 months ago failed.

The paper has lost R22.4 million since 1987 and R12.6m since its relaunch (20/13)

TML managing director Mr David Kovarsky said the "regrettable" closure demonstrated a lack of direction.

The circulation of other Argus Sunday papers, including the Weekend Argus, had declined against the growth in circulation of the Sunday Times.
DP calls for ‘fearless’ watch

Political Staff

THE appointment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) was welcome because the SABC was becoming a tool of the ANC, the Democratic Party’s media spokesman, Mr. Peter Sosh, said yesterday.

He said SABC broadcasts of an ANC “propaganda” film on Sundays continued “in spite of many protests”, and asked whether the SABC would broadcast similar programmes explaining the history of other parties.

For many years the SABC was controlled by the NP and the DP complained about the lack of political impartiality.

“It would appear the party apparatus at the corporation have simply switched allegiance from the NP to the ANC and happily continue their activities serving their new masters,” Mr. Sosh said in a statement.

He urged the IMC to play its watchdog role fearlessly and without bias.

The chairperson of the SABC board was a member of the ANC and she should resign from the board or from the ANC, Mr. Sosh said.
Strike may cost Naspers 'millions'

STRIKING workers occupying Nasionale Pers printing works in the city were holding up production of 1,2 million magazines worth millions of rands.

This was said yesterday by Mr Peter Maynard, general manager of the plant in Buitengracht Street. The workers had threatened to damage equipment worth millions of rands if they were evicted, he claimed.

Mr Maynard said that production runs of You and Huigenoot magazines were "critically" affected along with the printing of other publications.

The Paper Printing, Wood and Allied Worker's Union, which represents the striking workers, could not be reached last night for comment, but said in an earlier statement the strike was legal.

Workers were demanding a R85 increase on the lowest weekly wage of R225, against a company offer of 10.75.

Workers also wanted more time for general meetings.
took risks

THE decision to close the Sunday Star was a difficult one, based on commercial reasons. But its bold layout and design will have spin-offs for other Argus papers, reports MANDY JEAN WOODS.

THE Star's editor-in-chief Richard Steyn has described statements from Times Media Ltd (TML) that the Sunday Star had lacked direction as "nonsense." From the outset, the Sunday tabloid had had a very clear direction, he said.

Severely strained finances, spurred by the recession and competition from the electronic media, were the main reasons for the closure of the newspaper after nine years.

Steyn said the Sunday Star had lost R22.4 million since 1987 and R13.6 million since its relaunch 16 months ago.

"I feel deep sadness that the Sunday Star has not survived the recession. Under (editor) David Hazelhurst, the tabloid Sunday struck out in a new direction and had reached new audiences for The Star."

"We knew we were taking a risk with the new project, but we wanted to experiment with a tabloid, to innovate, to break new ground in graphics and design," Steyn said. Circulation had improved, but there was no necessary advertising support.

"From a technical point of view, the Sunday Star venture has benefited not only the Argus Group, but South African journalism generally. And the new techniques we have pioneered will be put to good use in the daily and forthcoming Weekend Star."

"Argus chairman Doug Band told Star staffers this week at a special meeting that since the advent of television, the newspaper market had become a tough business, and the brutal realities are that there will be no let-up."

It was his view, Band said, that the nine-year experience of publishing the Sunday Star had proved conclusively that "there is no viable market for Sunday Star."

The woes of the Independent Newspaper Group in the UK closely parallel our situation and point to the fact that new newspaper start-ups are a perilous business option in the late 20th century."

"The closure of the Sunday Star will leave the Sunday Times, with the country's largest Sunday circulation of more than 500,000, as the dominating player in the Sunday market. Other Sunday newspapers are City Press, Weekend Argus, Sunday Tribune, Sunday Nation and Rapport."

Band said the closing of the Sunday Star was not linked to discussions being held currently with TML for the restructuring of the two publishing groups. "It seems to me self-evident that in many ways an ongoing Sunday Star, which has proved itself to be no threat to the Sunday Times, was in fact a rather comfortable buffer for the Sunday Times."

"Closure of the Sunday Star publishing just may encourage a new competitor to enter the fray, with all the unknown threats that that may pose to TML," Band said.

News that Vrye Weekblad would be publishing its last edition on February 2 was also greeted with dismay. Editor Max du Preez blamed lack of advertising support and heavy legal costs for the closure.
‘Press has vital election role’

the commission’s report on the shooting in which photographer Mr Abdul Shariff died and two SABC journalists were wounded in Katlehong on January 9.

In a submission, the SA Union of Journalists said journalists’ fear could block information with serious implications for the free flow of information.

The SAUJ also urged the commission to recommend that protective clothing and equipment be made available to journalists and that the public should be encouraged to report information on attacks on journalists.

The commission said it had insufficient information to support a recommendation that protective equipment be provided for journalists. It asked interested parties to make submissions on journalists’ safety.
Mediator called in to end press pay dispute

A MEDIATOR was called in yesterday in a bid to defuse a pay dispute at Nasionale Tydskrifte which has threatened production of the country’s two biggest-circulating magazines.

About 200 workers have occupied the plant in the city centre since Wednesday, including a key graphics-production section, a Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers’ Union spokesman said yesterday.

Nasionale Tydskrifte chief executive Mr Salie de Swardt said a Supreme Court judge had declared the occupation unlawful in an order against the strikers on Thursday night.

He said production of You and Huigenoöt, which together had a weekly circulation of 450 000 copies, had been jeopardized by the strike.

Workers had timed their action to coincide with production of these publications and Landbou Weekblad, he said.

The union spokesman confirmed that strikers were “highly emotional”.

Mr De Swardt said the company is amenable to mediation — Sapa
Mediators for strike at Nasionale Tydskrifte

SHARON SOROUR
Weekend Argus Reporter

Mediators have been called in to resolve the wage strike by hundreds of Nasionale Tydskrifte employees which has stopped the presses and delayed the production of several magazines at a cost of R14 million.

A total of 271 of the 750-strong workforce went on strike on Wednesday.

The workers are members of the Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (Ppwwau), who have refused to accept a 10 percent weekly wage increase.

According to Ppwwau spokesman Shahed Mahomed, the situation was "devastate" and a mediator of the Independent Mediation Service of SA had been called in.

He said the union was available on a 24-hour basis to hold talks with the management, but was not prepared to accept an offer of 10 percent as Nasionale Tydskrifte had shown "massive profits" over the past three years.

A 10 percent increase did not amount to much, especially for workers on the lower grades who earned R25 a week.

Nasionale Tydskrifte obtained a temporary interdict in the Supreme Court yesterday after strikers occupied the printing works and threatened to smash equipment with iron bars.

Production manager Barend van As said "there were a lot of workers running around and obviously we called the police", but machines were not damaged.

About 40 strikers occupied and paralysed the section of the Buitengracht Street printing works where printing cylinders are made up.

Mr Van As said production had come to a standstill since the strike began on Wednesday.

"We are not doing any printing at the moment and the production of You, Huisegenoot, Landbouweekblad and Sarel has been delayed," he said.

The SA Typographical Union (Satu), which represents most of the workers, accepted the pay offer last week.

Ppwwau accused the management of "playing up one union against the other".

Satu members began partial work stoppages at Printpak on January 4. They have rejected a seven-percent weekly increase.
Delmore squatter leader slain

Plans for the safety of reporters

More Problems Journalists face pressure as elections get underway:

By Political Staff and Sapa

Workshops to educate people on the role of media workers are the main solution to constant attacks on media workers (24-3)

This emerged at a meeting between the Inkatha Freedom Party and Media Workers' Association of South Africa in Ulundi on Saturday.

In addition to setting up workshops that will deal with media education, the meeting also resolved that media workers be given the same respect and protection as "Red Cross workers."

The meeting, between a delegation of Mwasa and the Central Committee of the IFP, was part of Mwasa's programme to communicate with political parties and organisations throughout the country to highlight violence and intimidation against its members, the union's acting president, Mr Mathatha Tsedu, told the meeting.

Other parties have also been approached, he said.

Both parties identified perceptions on the role of media workers as the major stimulus to violence against media workers.

IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi said a contributing factor in the attacks on journalists was the perception that they were partial and took sides.

Buthelezi said in fact many IFP supporters saw journalists as taking the side of the African National Congress.

"Since the unbanning of the ANC in hundreds of IFP leaders and supporters have been intimidated by Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres intent on wiping our organisation from the face of the earth."

"But instead of there being widespread coverage of this genocide, there has been deathly silence on the part of the Press," he said.

He said the IFP however condemned any attack on media workers and would never justify such acts, even if conducted by their own members.

Tsedu projected that media workers would face more problems as parties start contesting elections.

He emphasised that media workers had a right to work without undue hindrance, especially in the coming months of high political activity.
Media workers, IFP to hold Press workshops

The Argus Correspondent

DURBAN — A series of workshops will be held between the Inkatha Freedom Party and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa to discuss the role of the media.

This follows a 90-minute meeting between about 60 members of the IFP's central committee and a Mwasa delegation of 12 in Umlazi at the weekend.

In a joint statement the IFP and Mwasa said they had openly and frankly discussed the increasing number of attacks on media workers.

They decided to hold workshops "that will deal with mass media education and the role of media workers".

The statement said it was suggested that political parties act as conduits between media workers and communities.

Media workers should be given the same respect and protection as Red Cross Workers, the two sides said.

The meeting was part of Mwasa's programme to meet various political parties and organisations to highlight violence and intimidation against its members.

ARG 24/11/94
A NEW, independently owned daily newspaper was likely to be launched before the elections, sources close to the ANC said yesterday. B/Dam 25/11/93

However, the ANC, which was facilitating the formation of the newspaper, was cautious when approached for comment. Spokesman Carl Niehaus said the pre-election deadline for establishing it "may or may not happen."

"We don't want to be seen to be controlling the newspaper. Our involvement is a form of criticism of the existing situation, where ownership of the print media is highly concentrated. We want to ensure the diversity of media ownership and to have as many opinions as possible represented in the media." (2/4)

He would not be drawn on financial details of the plan, apart from saying there were independent people working on it.

But market talk was that the newspaper could be launched next month.

This comes amid speculation that the closure of the Argus-owned Sunday Star might dampen the plans to launch the newspaper.

"The departure of Sunday Nation editor Zwelakhe Siyabu to the SABC was also seen as an indication that the plan for a new paper might have been put on hold. Siyabu had been tipped to edit the new paper."
South to appeal against 'gag'

SOUTH is to appeal against a gag order imposed by the Supreme Court preventing the newspaper from printing an article about Plessey-Tembara.

Passing judgement last month, Mr Justice Conradie confirmed a final interdict, saying the article was defamatory and there was no justification in printing it.

He said the article carried unfair comments by the Metal and Electrical Workers' Union (Mewusa) to the effect that Plessey did not take sexual harassment seriously.

The judge recounted undisputed facts of how senior Plessey executive Mr Kevin Bayham had made "blatant sexual advances" to a female employee, including "putting his hand under her covers and feeling her leg", as well as pulling the top off another woman.

A disciplinary hearing had produced evidence of other incidents of sexual harassment by Bayham.

But the judge said it was unfair for Mewusa to say that by retaining the services of Bayham, Plessey had not treated sexual harassment seriously enough.

The claim was unfair because the article did not explain that Bayham had been demoted, transferred and was no longer supervising any staff.

"A supervisor who cannot influence a worker's prospects is a molester, not a sexual harasser," said Justice Conradie.

He rejected Mewusa's arguments that the article about Bayham should have been published and who expressed fears that he had not been.

The presence of a known offender could "not give rise to a fear of sexual harassment if the man is not in a position over them," said the judge.

The women quoted in SOUTH's intended article should have been forthcoming about how Bayham's presence at Plessey would influence their destiny.

"Does Bayham prowl the shop floor and leap at female members as they go by? Is he known to have made lewd remarks since his demotion? Has he patted an underling's rump?"

Judge Conradie said Mewusa had made unfair comments about racial discrimination in Plessey's treatment of disciplinary cases.

"The implication is that blacks are treated less leniently (than Bayham who was keen on at the company), but there are no facts," commenting on the judgement, SOUTH's former editor Guy Berger said the newspaper had asked Plessey to respond to Mewusa's points. Instead, the company had sought to suppress rather than rebut union criticism.

"It is a most serious matter, especially at this stage of our history, that the judge has ordered that we cannot publish a topical article about a dispute between a trade union and a company.

"The dispute which the article would have aired concerned allegations of sexual harassment and racism — matters that are far from the frivolous.

"The effect of the judgement is to narrow the scope of the press to report controversial and potentially defamatory allegations about matters of public interest. It is impor-
tive that we win the appeal."
Magazine deliveries late

THOUSANDS of readers will be without the latest editions of Huizengaol and You magazines after Paper, Printing and Allied Workers Union members occupied the building housing Nasionale Tydskrif's printing presses. CT 25/11/94

Production in the city has been paralysed for six days following a wage dispute.

A union spokesman said the building was occupied because of management's reluctance to meet workers' demands.

The publisher's general secretary, Mr Robert Crowther, could not say for how long production would be stopped or when delivery of the magazines would resume.

Delivery of more than 1.5 million magazines, including Sarie, Cosmopolitan and Fair Lady, has been affected. — Sapa
Blacks buy Sowetan

BY SVEN LUNSCHBE

A group of prominent black businessmen, headed by Dr Nithatho Molana, has acquired control of the country's largest daily newspaper, The Sowetan, from the Argus Group.

The deal places control of an influential newspaper with the black business sector just three months before the April elections.

The Argus Group said in a statement yesterday it had agreed in principle to relinquish control of the Sowetan to the Prosper Africa Group, whose directors include Molana, Dr Sam Motsemayane, Franklin Sonn and Dr Enos Mabuza.

All four directors are members, but not office bearers, of the ANC. Molana stressed however that the Sowetan's editorial independence would adhere to the paper's Editorial Charter. Editor Aggrey Klaaste and senior management will retain their posts, he added.

The Argus Group has rejected offers by the ANC to acquire the Sowetan, in line with its guidelines that a potential buyer guarantee the editorial independence and commercial viability of its newspapers.

Media Workers Association of SA acting president, Mathoha Thebe, who is also political editor of the paper, said:

"As a union we welcome black business participation in the paper, but there is some concern about where the paper will move politically."

Argus chief executive Doug Band described the move as a commercial venture that would "empower black business and place control of the Sowetan in black community hands."

In terms of the deal, a complicated pyramid structure will leave Argus with about 43 percent of a newly formed company that owns the Sowetan. Prosper Africa will control 32 percent and five percent will be held by staff.

> Plan afoot to expand Sowetan - Page 16
Argus to sell Sowetan to black group

AMANDA VERMEULEN

The Argus Group has agreed in principle to relinquish control of its Sowetan daily newspaper in a partnership arrangement with a black business venture, the Prosper Africa Group. (24/3/94)

The paper will be acquired by New Africa Publishers, a newly incorporated subsidiary of Prosper Africa, as a first step towards building an independent black communications group.

Prosper Africa's nominee chairman Natho Motlana said the group was committed to spreading equity to the man in the street and ensuring that the newspaper remains commercially driven. Its editorial independence would not be affected and there was backing for an editorial charter. Editor Aggrey Kinsaie and GM Rory Wilson would retain their posts.

Motlana said the paper would need Argus's help to meet growth objectives. Argus would continue providing services in terms of a five-year support agreement.

"It would be commercial suicide for us to try to go it alone," he said.

But New Africa Publishers was looking to establish "a black communications empire" by diversifying into other media, including magazines, radio and television. It planned to expand the Sowetan's circulation in Natal and the Cape.

"For too long ownership of the media has been concentrated in the hands of two groups. We think it is time for a change."

Argus will acquire a 36% stake in Prosper Group subsidiary New Africa Communications, which will hold a 76% stake in New Africa Publishers, as well as the Prosper Group's stake in the MTN cellular telephone business. Argus will own a 19.5% stake in New Africa Publishers. With its indirect share via New Africa Communications, Argus attributable interests in New Africa Publishers will be about 43.5%.

Argus Holdings CE Doug Rand said the agreement would increase the company's interest in electronic communications and cut its exposure to print media.

Prosper Africa's directors include Sam Motumonyane, Franklin Sonn, Paul Gama and Enoch Mabuza.
CLASSIC AMERICAN TASTE

By Mzimkulu Malema

BLACK business organisation is buying a majority stake in Sowetan.

In the new ownership structure, Sowetan will be owned by a company called New Africa Publishers (NAP) — controlled by a communications group which is in turn owned by a black concern, Prosper Africa.

"Proper Africa is committed to spreading equity to the man in the street rather than allowing control of Sowetan to rest in the hands of a few people," says Prosper Africa's chairman Dr Nhlanhla Moleka.

This acquisition is viewed as the first step in the construction of a black-led communications empire.

Argus Newspapers chairman Mr Doug Band says the company is not deserting Sowetan. Instead, the deal marks the formation of a new "unbeatable team."

In addition to a 30 percent stake which Argus will hold in the communications group — New Africa Communications — that owns NAP, the company will also have a direct shareholding of 19.9 percent in NAP — the sole owner of the Sowetan.

Argus will retain an effective 43 percent stake in Sowetan.

Players on both sides of the deal are tight-lipped about the amount of money involved. But last year when Argus announced plans to unbundle, the Sowetan was valued at about R60 million.

Band says the deal is expected to be operational within the next few weeks during which a further announcement will be made.

Sowetan's staff will own five percent of NAP shares and a seat on the board of directors of that company.

Editor Mr Aggrey Klaasen and general manager Mr Rory Wilson will also serve on NAP's board.

Since Prosper Africa holds the largest share in the company which owns Sowetan, Moleka has been nominated to become the first chairman of NAP.

In another separate development a consortium of black business people is believed to be on the verge of acquiring a controlling stake in an insurance company, African Life, together with its subsidiary companies and Enterprise magazine.

The consortium is led by a long-serving Anglo-American manager Mr Don Neube.
Magazine presses running after end to printing strike

Sharon Sorour, Labour Reporter

The presses at Nasionale Tydskripte are up and running after marathon mediation at the weekend ended the crippling strike which cost the company more than R14-million and delayed production of several magazines.

A total of 41 hours of intense mediation by two mediators of the Independent Mediation Service of SA, Johann Maree and Jan Theron, brought an end to bitter conflict which had led workers to occupy the printing works, and threaten to damage expensive machines.

The company in turn obtained a temporary court order declaring the occupation unlawful.

About 270 of the 750-strong workforce, members of the Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (Pywawn) went on a wage strike on Wednesday, shutting down the presses.

Company production manager Berend van As said workers returned to work on Monday about 7.30pm, after an agreement had been signed with the union.

In terms of the agreement workers would get an increase of R40 a week or 10 percent, whichever was greater.

Mr Van As said: A shift system would start operating at the printing works.

Mr Van As said that although the company retained the right to discipline workers, it was not on a "witch hunt" and would only do so "where necessary.

Mr Maree said that in terms of the mediation both sides would agree on an independent chairman to convene the disciplinary hearings.

Mr Van As said You and Huysgeespoort magazines had had to be printed elsewhere and were available only on Monday, one day later than usual. They would be two to three days late in more remote areas.

Sars would also probably be late because the strike began in the middle of production.

Mediators were called in on Thursday night and "intense" daily mediation began on Friday at 1pm and "except for two sleepless breaks, we carried on non-stop until 7.30pm on Monday" said mediator Johann Maree.
Staffers to be axed after closure of Sunday Star

STAFF REPORTER

Several journalists from the Sunday Star and The Star will be retrenched as a result of the closure of the Sunday newspaper.

The Star’s general manager, Graeme King, told the Southern African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) at a meeting yesterday that most of the 25 journalists at the Sunday Star had been placed with other newspapers in the Argus group.

Although he told the journalists how many were to be retrenched, he requested that the number be kept confidential.

Unconfirmed reports put the number at about 10.

Last weekend saw the final edition of the Sunday Star.

King said the affected staff members would be informed of their retrenchment as soon as possible by their respective editors.

Management was offering voluntary retrenchments, at management’s discretion, to staff members, he said.

The retrenchment package, which King said was standard for the industry, was an effective two months’ notice period beginning from February 4 and one week’s payment for every year’s service.

The SAUJ said it believed that management had not consulted the union properly when announcing the closure of the Sunday Star and the subsequent retrenchment of staff.

Union organiser Marike Sorous said “We have to take the package offer back to members, but I expect they will reject it as a slap in the face.”
Argus papers to cut up to 10 workers

AMANDA VERMEULEN

UP TO 10 newspaper employees from The Star and the Sunday Star would lose their jobs following the Sunday Star closure announced by Argus management last week.

SA Union of Journalists representatives said last night: "We believe the decision is unfair.

At a meeting with union representatives yesterday, management said the staffs affected would be informed today.

Union branch co-ordinator Marika Sibos said the retrenchment numbers were not definite and management and the union were still negotiating over criteria and packages.

She said union lawyers had advised members that management's lack of meaningful consultation with employees over the closure constitutes unfair labour practice. "The union believes this has prejudiced the continued employment of members, therefore we want a more favourable retrenchment package."

Argus effectively offered two months' notice and one week's salary for each year of employment. Sibos said members would be consulted, but it was anticipated they would reject the offer out of hand.

The union believed bad management was responsible for the closure in the light of the paper's R2,4m loss since 1987.

Star GM Graeme King was unavailable for comment.
ANC's planned daily 'on track'

JOHNNY DUDELU

The ANC had approached three local printers concerning the printing of its planned independent daily newspaper, ANC information chief Pello Jordan said yesterday.

Investors in the project were evaluating the printers' offers.

Jordan was optimistic the pre-April 27 launch deadline would be met but refused to comment on speculation that it would be next month.

He said fundraising for the venture had reached an "advanced stage".

Prospective investors included foreign governments, Nigerian newspaper owner Chief Abiola, local companies and London-based Lonrho CE Tiny Rowland.

The ANC would be a minority contributor - with less than R30m - as the organisation had other priorities.

Lonrho spokesman Paul Spencer this week refused to comment on the scale of the group's involvement.

Recruitment for editorial staff began last week. London journalist Donald Telford had offered his services as an editorial consultant, but no decision had been made.

Jordan said Sunday Nation editor Zwelekhle Samu, soon to take up a senior SABC position, was on the short list for editor because of his "clout and experience".

An announcement would soon be made on whether the new daily would be a greenfield project or a buy-out of an existing title, Jordan said.

It had been speculated that Sunday Nation would be used as a vehicle.
NEWSPAPER CLOSURES: In just one week, three publications announce their decision to shut up shop
Quitting – while it’ll still be missed
After a long struggle against financial contraints, the feisty Vrye Weekblad is finally to close. Editor Max du Preez spoke to Anton Harber about five years of confrontation.

You won’t find Max du Preez, the ever-controversial founder and editor of Vrye Weekblad, looking down in the mouth about this last, sad, day. Vrye Weekblad is about to be buried, and Du Preez is probably the last man to be able to say that he has not enjoyed a hard-fought battle, whether political or press freedom.

"We need to go while people still care. It’s better to go a few more months, they may have stopped caring, but we’re not doing the same mistake," he said.

"We want to go while people will care a few more months, they may have stopped caring, but we’re not doing the same mistake," he said.

So nothing is in aid of the final edition on February 5. Du Preez will announce the unforeseeable news next week and will compile the newspaper’s archives into a magazine that has made its name on mocking Afrikaner institutions.

On the wall, hovering over the door to the editorial room is a pasting of the recent events. "As a newspaper, we are not in the business of predicting future events," he said.

"This is an opportunity to reflect on where we’ve been and where we’re going," he said.

That’s the original Vrye Weekblad, fighting for a cause against all odds, now standing in its place, new faces, new ideas, new direction. But where is the future?

"We come to this point with mixed emotions. We have fought hard and long, and we have carried the burden of this battle for far too long. It’s time for a new beginning," he said.

"Our articles have been published in the media as an ANC-sponsored publication on the Sunday Star, and we have contributed to the spread of notions that have been used against us. We have been targeted for our critical views, and we have been forced to operate in a climate of harassment and intimidation.

"We want to go while people still care. It’s better to go a few more months, they may have stopped caring, but we’re not doing the same mistake," he said.

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DAGAWA ART & CRAFT PROJECT

Director

Since April 1994

Dagawa, a dynamic art and craft project governed by an Independent Trust, which offers training for production workers in TEXTILES, POTTERY and GRAPHIC DESIGN, is looking for a Director to head the growing team of artists.

The director will:

- be directly responsible for the quality of the training and production.
- ensure close communication with funding organisations.
- ensure that a standard of work is kept at all levels and network with other organisations.
- produce regular reports for the Independent Trust.
- ideally, the successful candidate should have:
  - an arts background, particularly
  - at least 2 years supervisory experience with NGOs,
  - good written and verbal communication skills,
  - the ability to relate to community organisations as well as government and other NGOs.
- good participatory management skills.

The following will be added advantages:

- a car owner.
- knowledge of one or more of the other African languages.
- knowledge of African."
Freedom of speech: an ‘inflammable’ issue

LAST week President De Klerk had to abandon a meeting in a Western Transvaal township when African National Congress supporters threatened to disrupt it. Democratic Party meetings in the Peninsula have also been broken up.

In the crucial run-up to South Africa’s first democratic elections, one may well ask what has happened to freedom of speech. A related issue is how far we can be expected to tolerate politically inflammatory statements or those inciting others to commit acts of violence.

Staff Reporter DAVID YUTAR examines the issue.

TO speak his thoughts is every freeman’s right, in peace and war, in council and in fight (Homer, The Iliad).

WITH three months to go before the April 27 election it is becoming painfully clear that we in South Africa have drifted far from the observance of Homer’s ideal.

The Code of Conduct agreed to in terms of the National Peace Accord enjoins all political parties to “actively contribute to the creation of a climate of democratic tolerance”.

Chapter 2 specifically calls on parties to “respect and give effect to the obligation to refrain from incitement to violence and hatred”.

The code further prohibits the use of any “language calculated or likely to incite violence or hatred, including that directed against any political party or personality”.

A far more compelling code of conduct — which supercedes the National Peace Accord code — has been written into the new Electoral Act, obliging parties participating in the election to adhere to closely defined principles of tolerance and fairness to opponents.

Furthermore — unlike the Peace Accord code — this code carries penalties ranging from fines and limits on parties’ or candidates’ time on radio and television, to disqualification as contenders in the election.

For Paul Taylor, of the University of Cape Town’s philosophy department, the starting point for any discussion on freedom of speech is that it is a good thing in itself.

“People should be free to say what they want — all other things being equal. In other words, as long as this does not infringe on the rights of others or threaten them with harm.”

But, he stresses, that the same principle which makes the desirability of freedom of speech self-evident, justifies curbs on that freedom.

Such exceptions are typically situations where the exercise of the freedom poses a threat of immediate harm or incites others to commit acts of violence.

“The line is hard to draw. It is usually said there must be a clear and immediate threat of violence.”

He draws a distinction between the situation where the speaker incites others to violence (where a curb is expresses a view that is merely unpopular in a given political context, with the result that others threaten him with harm.

In the latter situation, to permit the curb would “lead one down a dangerous path of erosion of freedom of speech”, in Mr Taylor’s view.

When political rhetoric incites violence it runs contrary to the value of freedom of speech and a restriction becomes justified, he believes.

A member of the Johannesburg bar who is an expert on media law and ethics stresses that freedom of speech, “although integral to democracy, is nowhere absolute”.

“Certain categories of freedom of speech can be identified which do not fall within the usual protection. For example, when there is a threat of violence.”

He points out that South Africa is no different from many Western countries where fomenting racial hostility has been criminalised by law.

“In the context of an election, freedom of speech becomes crucial.

“Citizens are being asked to exercise a fundamental choice and to do so there needs to be exposure to a plurality of ideas.”

In such a situation the ability of a political party to convey its message is vital.

“But one cannot ignore the realities of the social context.”

“We come from a culture of suppression and many of the problems we face today are directly traceable to that heritage.”

“In an ideal world there would be no need to talk about enforcing freedom of speech, but in the context of a political culture such as ours it should come as no surprise that creating a culture conducive to freedom...”
It's not over till it's over

Closure of the *Sunday Star* brings to an end yet another abortive attack on the weekend newspaper market so dominated by the *Sunday Times*. But the war is not yet over. Argus is still intent on getting a significant stake in the huge PWV weekend market, as it has done in the Cape and Natal.

Tribune is ahead of the *Sunday Times* but in the PWV, where the *Sunday Times* has a massive all-race readership of 21%, the *Saturday Star* and *Sunday Star* each had only about 7% of the readership.

The vehicle for the new offensive will be the *Saturday Star*, which has a much bigger circulation base and a headlock on the property advertising market.

It also has a bigger ad revenue than the Sunday paper. According to Aindex, in the 12 months to November, the *Sunday Star* garnered only R3.8m, compared with R6.9m for the *Saturday Star*. The *Sunday Times* main body pulled in R72.3m and its regional Metro section R4.9m.

Why did the *Sunday Star* fail to capture the support of advertisers? Editor-in-chief Richard Steyn puts it down to the depth and duration of the recession. "We decided we needed to get circulation up to around 160,000 to attract advertising support," he says. "Though our circulation rose, we were not getting there.

"We took the view that it makes more sense to focus where we are strong — on the Saturday and daily newspapers."

He feels changing reading habits and the growth of Sunday shopping might give the Saturday paper an advantage.

Marketers, however, might take the view that it is not good tactics to tackle an entrenched market leader head-on on its own turf. Initially, the *Sunday Star* attempted to adopt a quality positioning but, since the relaunch in 1992, it has been tacking the mass-market readership that is the foundation of the *Sunday Times* following.

People in ad agencies, who were largely responsible for making advertising decisions not to support it, have little doubt. "It never found its niche in the marketplace," says SSBW media director Janet Watermeyer. "It had a progression of problems from the start and its relaunch was too late. It was an expensive way to reach readers. The *Sunday Times* was better value for money for advertisers."

BSB/Bates media director Chris Ramford saw it as not being driven by market demand. "It was not that someone really identified a niche," she says. "It failed to attract an audience unique to itself. It never had the kind of niche that the *Tribune* and *Weekend Argus* have — they are part of the way of life in their areas and enjoy regional loyalty."

Ramford found the somewhat revolutionary attempts at producing reader-friendly design achieved the opposite. "They went crazy on this American layout. It was user-unfriendly, with too many sections."

And, while the *Sunday Star* achieved a fairly substantial circulation of more than 100,000, use of competitions to do this was regarded with suspicion. Roger Garlick, media director of Bernstein Lewison Golding & Klein, says "bought" circulation is always suspect. "These are not loyal readers. The moment you stop running the competitions you lose circulation again."

Few people believe there is room for another Sunday paper, though the new option is thought to have a better chance. "There is a limited amount of advertising money and it won't support another player," says Garlick. "But if it results in a stronger *Saturday Star* the market will benefit."

**Designing men**

Jeremy Sampson, who headed one of SA's top design shops in the Eighties, is to become CE of the Johannesburg office of Grapple-group, which will be renamed Grappler Sampson.

Sampson went to Britain to join ad agency group Lopex six years ago and returned to SA in late 1992 to re-establish his local business. "But after 14 months on my own I felt I was never going to get back into the big projects," he says.

Sampson's track record (50 awards on three continents) combined with Grapple-group's record as one of SA's best design agencies makes for a powerful combination. However, a succession of CEIs at the agency in recent years suggests his biggest challenge will come in management.

Another company, Jeremy Sampson Corporate Strategies, remains a separate entity representing the London-based branding specialist, Interbrand.
National Sowetan on the cards

The Sowetan, currently South Africa’s largest daily newspaper, with a circulation of around 215 000 and an almost total black readership, could become the darling of advertisers if, as proposed, it becomes a national newspaper.

The proposal was made public this week by the acting chairman of Prosper Africa Group, Dr Nthato Motlana, following the news that the group had agreed in principle to purchase a 52 percent stake of the newspaper from the Argus Group.

Sowetan staff will hold 5 percent of the shares, while Argus will retain an indirect 43 percent stake.

Black market

As a national newspaper, circulation of the Sowetan could top 350 000 and, initially, ad rates would remain the same as they are now, according to Sowetan general manager Rory Wilson.

“We have a plan to turn Sowetan into a national newspaper, but have to make sure it will be financially viable.

“We will act as quickly as it is possible to get equipment and people. Obviously we would like to have it up and running before the election. That’s possible — but not probable,” he says.

With the black market a clear target of most advertisers, the Sowetan should enjoy higher advertising volumes as a national newspaper.

“Advertisers in the Sowetan could in future get more bang for their buck,” Wilson says.

PROSPER Africa Group this week announced its purchase of a 52 percent stake in the Sowetan newspaper from the Argus Group and disclosed plans to publish nationally, MANDY JEAN WOODS reports.

The Sowetan’s editorial independence will be entrenched and board appointments will include a majority of Prosper Africa nominees, together with Argus appointees.

“The Sowetan’s editor Algrey Klaaste, Wilson and newspaper staff representatives will also be appointed to the board.”

“There is no doubt the sale of a majority stake of the Sowetan to a black company will increase our credibility.”

Wilson says.

“The success of the Sowetan has been its editorial independence, particularly in the area of politics. As soon as we pan our groups to submit to pressure, our credibility will be lost,” he says. “We will all be watching very carefully to see if the new owners will stand up to that test and I am confident they will.”

Media control

Prosper Africa directors Motlana, Dr Sam Motsemayane, Franklin Soma, and Dr Enoch Mabuza are members, but not office-bearers, of the ANC.

The Argus will continue to provide services and support for five years.

Argus chief executive Doug Band says the transaction will reduce the group’s exposure to print media, thereby supporting its policy of reducing the concentration of media control.

The move leaves the Argus Group without any black-oriented publications in its fold, although The Star enjoys a high percentage of black readers.
Creda sees sales soar

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

CRED A Press — which prints books, company reports, magazines and other publications including the Government Gazette — has had a marked increase in business in recent months, sales director Andrew McDowell said yesterday.

Pointing out that this indicated a strengthening economy, he said: "We are always busy in October and November. But we were busy in December, which is normally a slack month, and in January too. And bookings for February are very good. "It's a very positive sign and it has lifted morale."

But Creda is not dependent on SA business alone. It also has contracts to supply school books for neighbouring African countries which are often paid for by aid agencies or overseas governments.

McDowell told guests at a luncheon to celebrate Creda's first anniversary in its new premises at Bunting that the volume of work had increased by 28% year on year. This was due partly to the improved efficiency of working in one building. Previously Creda had occupied four adjoining buildings.
Body to guard free speech

SOUTH Africans would be living in a fool’s paradise if they thought free speech would be guaranteed in the new era, media lawyer Norman Mancom said at the launch of the Freedom of Expression Foundation.

The foundation, which will act as a non-governmental free speech watchdog, was formed last week through the merger of the Anti Censorship Action Group and Campaign for Open Media.

Mancom said SA’s Bill of Rights would be “like a toy to politicians, judges and academics alike, who will doubtless be inspired to experiment with new forms of social engineering in dealing with the vexed problem of free speech”.

History showed that regulating the content of speech had been the “pet soft option of many in power” who found it easier to impose a gag than to tackle such problems as violence and racism, or ensure state security with more expensive measures.

In his guide to the Bill’s nuances, Mancom said non-political expression such as pornography would be more vulnerable to censorship than political speech. This was because the Bill of Rights made it easier for the courts to reject laws restricting speech relating to “free and fair political activity”, What was meant by political speech was not clear, and given SA’s history, the courts might favour a narrow interpretation.

There was also a danger that free speech clauses in the Bill of Rights would clash with each other. For example, it was possible that freedom of expression would be subordinate to the interests of racial equality in the new scheme of things.

“What may fall into the category of racial hate speech, for instance, is the stuff of the nation’s political dialogue.”

Mancom said these kinds of complications made the new foundation’s contribution to the free speech debate essential.

Looking ahead he said: “Even though the missiles will be thrown our way, perhaps we can throw one or two back.”

University of Fort Hare professor Mubelo Mamane said the foundation would not focus exclusively on the state’s powers over freedom of speech but on freedom of information at “grassroots level” as well. The foundation would also influence media policy developments to ensure the independence and diversity of SA’s media.
New editor for South
AMANDA VERMEULEN

RAFIQ Rohan, deputy editor of Cape Town independent newspaper South, has taken over from Guy Berger as editor.

Berger, editor since 1991, will remain as business manager. He has applied to head Rhodes University's journalism department, but will continue at South if he fails to land the post.

Rohan said South had introduced a new supplement, Chalkline, aimed at educators. South would launch a free sheet this month and a toll free telephone line to assist with voter education.

Rohan said the weekly free sheet would have a circulation of 150 000. South still required financial assistance but had managed to reduce the amount needed by two thirds in the past two years, he said. Berger said the paper's future looked good.
Prince of the Outback... Prince Charles visited the remote area of Deep Gorge, in the far north of Western Australia, yesterday to see Aboriginal carvings.

Municipal workers end wage strike

Municipal workers ended their six-month long strike after reaching a settlement with the City of Johannesburg.

The strike, which began in August last year, was sparked by a dispute over wage increases.

The city agreed to pay a 7% increase for all workers, retroactive to August 1.

The strike was called off after the city signed a new collective agreement with the union.

The agreement also included an additional 3% increase for workers with more than 20 years of service.

Workers are expected to return to work on Monday.

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Maritzburg — The Sunday Star's retrenchment offer fell far short of its obligation to the SA Union of Journalists members who were being retrenched, SAUJ president Yvonne Grimbeek said yesterday.

This was particularly so "con-sidering that Sunday Star's closure can also be attributed to a host of poor management decisions", Grimbeek said.

The offer was the barest minimum, one week per year of service, a month's notice and one month's gratuity payment.

Arguments management has rejected the SAUJ's demand for an improved package, to the dismay of the affected members.

"There are strong signs of mismanagement, one being that the paper made losses of R22 million before it closed," said Grimbeek.

The SAUJ would discuss future action, including obtaining legal advice.

The general manager of the Star, Graeme King, today declined to comment on the SAUJ allegations — Sapa.
NAP ready to buy more publications

By AST JACOBSEN

THE black-owned communications group, New Africa Publishers (NAP), which recently took up a controlling stake in the Soweto newspaper from the Argus group, will purchase other titles in the medium term according to director Ntho Motlana.

Motlana said in an interview, that the group was interested in creating a voice in the black market by gaining control of newspaper and magazine publications such as City Press, New Nation, Enterprise and Cape-based South Newspaper.
**Is this any way to empower blacks?**

A long-simmering dispute in the ANC over black empowerment has broken out into the open after last week's announcement that a group of black investors is acquiring a majority share in the Sowetan newspaper.

The ANC has no objections to blacks controlling SA's largest-selling daily newspaper — especially since four of the five investors are ANC supporters — but some officials at Shell House are upset over what the investors gave up. The group, which is led by Dr Nithato Motlana, got 52.5% of the Sowetan from the Argus Group by trading 6% in one of the two cellular telephone networks now under construction — just three months after the ANC concluded a long series of tense negotiations with the networks, government and Cosatu aimed at increasing blacks' share of the networks.

Says ANC information services head Andile Ngcaba: "This is painful after all we did for black economic empowerment. We can't recognise this deal!" But he adds "We are still discussing the issue."

Indeed, Ngcaba has been locked in meetings over the issue with other top ANC officials for much of the past two weeks. The discussions are a reprise of the long sessions held last October that finally forced the two networks — Mobile Telephone Networks and Vodacom — to sell a larger percentage of their shares to blacks and the State under threat of mass action and cancellation of their licences.

In the talks, M-Net and the UK's Cable & Wireless — the largest shareholders in Mobile Telephone Networks — each agreed to give up 5% of the network. But Motlana's group was also forced to give up a 5% share, highlighting the gulf between his market-oriented investors and the socialist outlook of Ngcaba and others in the ANC and Cosatu who believe that cellular phones should be run as a State utility.

In the end, the shares were sold loose were earmarked for a Cosatu-aligned pension fund (5%) that has still not been named and Transtel, the telecommunications subsidiary of State-owned Transnet (10%).

For its part, Cosatu says it believes that the pension fund is a way to get equity to the man in the street rather than to rich businessmen.

At the time, Transtel executive manager Alf Shulze said, "The push did not come from us. The push came from the ANC. They wanted a bigger stake for government. They felt Transtel would be a vehicle for more State ownership." (Business October 29)

Ngcaba now claims that under the agreement, Transtel has the right of first refusal to buy additional shares if one of the other shareholders reneges on the deal or does not stick to the agreement. He says Motlana's Sowetan deal violates the agreement and that the ANC is looking at taking legal action. Motlana, however, denies breaking any part of the agreement, saying all he has done is taken on a new partner (Argus).

The controversy underlines the problems in artificially empowering blacks. The next government could mandate that blacks must own a share of a new venture, but there's nothing to stop the black investors from turning around and selling their share to white investors. In this case, Motlana's group — which includes businessman Enos Mabuza, former Nafcor head Sam Motlana and Frank Son's Black Chain supermarkets founder and PAC supporter Paul Gama — gave up 6% of Mobile Telephone Networks but still keeps 14%. Argus now holds almost 12% of the network, including the share it holds through its 23% stake in M-Net (Business January 28).

Motlana, a GP in Soweto since 1957 and a close friend and the personal physician of Nelson Mandela, has had some difficulty raising the money to purchase his Prosper Africa Group's cellular network share. The amount of money that the shareholders in Mobile Telephone Networks must put up has not been made public, but each network is expected to need around R1bn to set up countrywide, with half the funds being spent upfront and half the payments spread out over several years after test operations begin next month. That means Motlana's group may have to put up as much as R70m now, even after the swap with Argus. A spokesman for MultiChoice, M-Net's sister company, says "We feel comfortable that Prosper Africa will get the money together."

Though Motlana admits that "there were some problems with funding from the Industrial Development Corp," he says "Funding has finally been arranged. The Sowetan deal is through and we just have to tie up a few loose ends."

But why is he relinquishing a share in tomorrow's technology, cellular telephony, in favour of yesterday's, the print media?

Motlana says the cellular networks will not make money for at least two years, while the Sowetan (with an estimated value of R62m) produces profits now. And he says the Sowetan investment is just the first step towards an independent black-led communications group that will extend to print and electronic media such as radio and TV.

He believes that it will be easier to sell shares in Prosper Africa to blacks now that it owns the Sowetan. "It strengthens our portfolio and balances our investment. By balancing it with cellular, we have a huge growth potential," he says. By selling Prosper Africa shares to blacks, he will be able to "spread equity to the man in the street." (Marika Bishoff)

**OLYMPICS — 1**

**Big boost for the Cape**

Winning Nocsas' backing bid for the 2004 Olympic Games was a triumph for Cape Town. But the real challenge now is to convince the new government that it won't be left with a huge financial hangover if the International Olympic Committee awards the Games to SA.

In its effort to win government endorsement and a commitment to underwrite the Games — a prerequisite for making the bid to the IOC — Cape Town's bid committee will argue that while the cost is undeniably huge, the benefits can more than compensate. On operating costs, the committee predicts a profit of R96m based on a computer software model similar to the one Sydney used for its winning bid for the 2000 Games.

Cliff McMillan, Cape Town's feasibility study team leader and SA chairman of consulting engineers Ove Arup, says operating costs are estimated at R2.8bn, which will be covered by projected revenue of R3.7bn, made up mainly of corporate sponsorships and the sale of TV rights. About R840m of the projected R936m operating surplus will go towards capital costs, leaving an operating surplus of R96m.

Though about 60% of the infrastructure necessary to support the Games must be in place by the time Cape Town makes it bid to the IOC in 1997, additional capital spending of about R2.1bn will go ahead only if the city
Boobs 'n tucks but no political ads

FAIR LADY'S fare for women this month includes a guide to healthy breasts and a feature on a plastic surgeon who re-designed the women in his family — but no political advertising.

When Lyndall Campher, deputy managing director of Eurospace Africa — responsible for placing ANC political adverts — learned of the decision, she was shocked.

"Rejecting the advert seems to suggest such an old-fashioned view of women. Do we still have to retire to the withdrawing room and swap recipes while the men discuss politics and current affairs?"

The advert in question was one for the ANC, specifically aimed at women. It carried the words "I have prayed, I have laughed, I have sung and I have cried, but until now I have not had a voice."

Fair Lady's editor, Liz Butler, said the decision not to carry any political advertising was made before any adverts were submitted.

"We decided that the party with the most money would be in a position to place the most ads. One party could then appear to be affiliated with the magazine."

But other magazines in the Nasionale Pers stable have run the advert. There were some complaints, said Sari editor Andre Rossouw: "Our conservative readers objected to the advert because the ANC is not a Christian organisation. Others complain because it's the ANC's advertisement."

Jane Raphael, editor and publisher of Cosmopolitan and Femina, said: "I can't imagine our readers are so narrow-minded as to object.

While the editors of Nasionale Pers magazines have been left to make their own decision on whether to carry political advertising, Chris Backsberg, executive director of Republican Press Publications, said all their magazines would carry such advertising.

Times Media Limited managing director, David Kovarsky, said Playboy magazine accepted political advertising but "this doesn't mean we subscribe to a particular party."
Media ‘police’ given power

By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

HEAVY penalties can be imposed on people who obstruct the Independent Media Commission or flout its rulings—but only registered political parties can lodge complaints to it.

This was disclosed yesterday by the commission’s chairman, Mr Justice John Trengrove, in a statement about the new commission’s role in monitoring broadcasting services and state-financed publications.

The IMC had been appointed by the Transitional Executive Council “to ensure that the broadcasting services treat political parties equally during the election period.”

It also had the task of ensuring that state-financed publications and state information services were not directly or indirectly used to advance the interest of any political party.

“This work is intended to promote and contribute towards the creation of a climate favourable for free political participation and a free and fair election,” Judge Trengrove said.

Anyone who wilfully hindered the commission, any committee or any commissioner in the performance of his or her duties, was liable on conviction to a maximum fine of R5 000.

Judge Trengrove said complaints of unbalanced and unfair political coverage should be brought to the attention of the commission by a political party which considered itself to be disadvantaged.

“The commission will not be receiving complaints from individual members of the public.”

All hearings of complaints to be adjudicated by the IMC would be heard in public, he said.

The other IMC commissioners are Dr Namane Magau, Mr Raymond Louw, Dr Willem de Klerk, Ms Zubenda Jaffer and Ms Libby Lloyd.
Open door to journalism

CITY Press Editor Khulu Sibiya, who is a director on the board of the Media Development Trust, this week announced that bursaries were available for a new course in journalism for young people.

The course, conducted by the MDT in association with an internationally recognised college in Johannesburg, will run for seven months on a full-time basis.

It will cover all vital aspects of journalism - including sub-editing, layout, design and photography.

"This is a rare opportunity for aspirant journalists," Sibiya said. "Our young people must take full advantage of it."

The MDT, launched three months ago, has already sponsored three Technikon students who are studying journalism.

"We have been inundated with inquiries from both media workers who want to improve their journalistic skills and young people aspiring to enter the journalism field," Sibiya said.

The MDT is also designing courses in specialised reporting in fields such as business, labour, arts, religion, motoring, politics and local government.

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Said Sibiya: "Our reporters have been conspicuous by their absence in these specialised fields. We can no longer allow the status quo to continue unchallenged."

Another area of grave concern for media workers, he said, was the scanty black representation in such departments as sub-editing, production and reproduction.

The MDT will also run electronic media courses in areas such as interviewing skills, camera work and script writing, and will provide in-house training in partnership with companies.

Applications for the course can be directed to Revelation Ntoula, MDT, PO Box 261326, Eskom 2023.

Other inquires relating to MDT can be directed to the same address.
THE world's biggest-ever International Press Institute (IPI) congress is to be opened in Cape Town on Monday by ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela and President F W de Klerk.

More than 500 editors and media executives from all around the world will gather in the city for the three-day conference on February 14, 15 and 16.

"Delegates are arriving from Iceland and Russia, Brazil and Germany, Australia and Zambia," the local IPI organising committee and in a statement "Major delegations are attending from Japan and Korea, and editors from India are coming to South Africa in their formal capacity for the first time."

Apart from Mr Mandela and Mr De Klerk, South Africa's other Nobel Peace Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, will also speak at the conference.

The IPI organising committee consists of Editor of the Star Mr Richard Steyn, former editor of the Star Mr Harvey Tyson, head of the New York-based Afro-American Institute Mr Frank Ferrari, Cape Times former editor Mr Tony Heurd, Rand Daily Mail former editor Mr Raymond Louw, editor of Tribute and Radio 702 host Mr Jon Qwelane, Cosmopolitan editor Ms Jane Raphaely, assistant to the SABC's director-general Mr Zwelethu Stnlu, and Cape Times editor Mr J C Vivers.
He explains that a firm figure cannot at this stage be placed on the value of the deal because it will be based on a price-earnings ratio ranging from 10 to 15 of Argus Newspapers' 1993 earnings.

Last year Argus Newspapers generated revenue of R665 million and pre-tax profits of R58 million. It publishes more than 4 million newspapers a week and owns the leading daily newspapers in Cape Town (The Argus), Johannesburg (The Star), and Durban (Natal Mercury and Daily News).

INP owns 65 percent of the newspapers in Ireland and is the fourth largest newspaper group in Australia. INP recently bought a 54.99 percent stake in the London daily newspaper, The Independent.

The prospective spinoffs for Argus Newspapers following the INP deal are immense. In addition to having been hived off from any connection with Argus Holdings' other newspaper interests, it now has a world player in its own industry in the driving seat.

Accordingly, at the stroke of a pen, it has opened doors in Britain, Australia and the United States.

And on the domestic front, Dr O'Reilly expresses himself as committed to grow and diversify Argus Newspapers.

"I have a deep affection for South Africa. I believe that in the next decade South Africa will be looked upon as a lucky country. It will prove to the world that a plural society can work, it will be one of the world's most dynamic economies.

"From a newspaper point of view, South Africa is enjoying a new core of literacy — but one of the many reasons my group took the decision to invest here."

INP, capitalised at R1.5 billion, is the sixth-largest industrial company on the Irish Stock Exchange. Just under 20 percent of its shares are held by Dr O'Reilly.

It is the dominant newspaper group in Ireland with a market share of more than two-and-a-half times its nearest rival. At a time when rival newspapers have struggled to break even, INP's newspaper profits have soared.

INP's strategy has been to extend its media interests overseas in addition to developing its domestic newspaper interests. It has built up significant operations in France and Australia in outdoor advertising and publishing, concentrating on establishing strong market positions in each area of its business.

In addition to its new South African interests and its recent purchase of a large stake in The Independent, its major foreign interests comprise:

• A 25 percent stake in APN, Australia's largest regional newspaper group and that country's fourth-largest newspaper group.

• Burspak, the dominant transit advertising operation in Australia.

• Poster advertising and street furniture sales in France.

• Free magazines and regional newspapers in Britain.

In the five years to December 1992, INP's earnings rose from 14.6p to 21p a share. And British investment analysts expect the growth rate to accelerate over the next few years.
O'Reilly buys Argus

Irish newspaper group acquires 31 percent of The Star's parent company

MAGNATE assures editors that the independence of their newspapers will remain intact

BY JOHN SPIRA

In a deal likely to be worth in the region of $100 million, South Africa's Independent Newspapers has bought 31 percent of Macleay Star Newspapers, owner of The Argus. The deal will give Independent Newspapers effective control of South Africa's largest newspaper group.

The Independent Newspapers press release said: "It is expected that the Independent Newspapers will use the Macleay Star Newspapers as a base to launch a new multi-national publishing operation."
Ireland’s Tony O’Reilly buys Argus

From Page 1

Town and Durban.

Its daily circulation market share in South Africa’s four largest cities is a dominant 68 percent.

According to Band, Argus Newspapers would benefit by becoming part of a powerful international media group, which would be able to offer added value in a number of areas.

The deal would also facilitate the growth and development of Argus Newspapers.

O’Reilly (57) has been interested in South Africa since his first visit in 1955 as a member of the British Lions rugby team. He has visited this country many times since then (“I have a deep and committed affection for your country”) and in the past three years has sought to identify an investment for Heinz in South Africa.

He has been chief executive of Heinz since 1979, from which time its market capitalisation has increased from $300 million to $1 billion.
NP on media 'meddling'

PRETORIA - The NP yesterday said it welcomed foreign investment - which was an advantage to South Africa - if it was regarded as being based purely on business considerations.

An NP statement, on the sale of 31% of the Argus Group's shares to the Irish Independent Newspapers, warned that there was always a danger that somebody in the position of Mr Tony O'Reilly, would succumb to the temptation of meddling in editorial policy."

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Page 19"
Argus takeover boosts group's share price

By ARI JACOBSON

Argus Holdings's share price jumped by 17.5% or R3.50 a share yesterday, as news hit the JSE at 3 to R40 a share yesterday, as news hit the JSE.

Yesterday TML MD Tony O'Reilly, controlling 35% stake in Argus Newspapers, said the move would also relieve the pressure on Argus Holdings to sell its 37% shareholding in TML but printing arrangements with Argus Newspapers and its new shareholder would have to be revised.

Meanwhile, Cameron O'Reilly, the son of the Argus Holdings, was on a whistle-stop visit to Cape Town yesterday, surveying the Argus operations.

O'Reilly said the newly acquired media investment in South Africa would be grown.

Kovarsky said Argus Holdings was likely to sell its 37% holding in TML but printing arrangements with Argus Holdings and its new shareholder would have to be revised.

Also at stake is Argus Holdings' 18% stake in pay TV network M-Net, which it could have to sell if it ceases to publish a daily newspaper.

By MARCIA KLEIN from Johannesburg

TML has a preemptive right to buy Argus M-Net, and if it fails to do so, Naspers will buy it.

It would cost TML close to R300m to buy Argus's stake.

Argus CE Doug Band said its stake in M-Net was not being considered at this stage.

JCI, and TML chairman Peter Retief said M-Net would be held in Argus Holdings, and it was the intention to keep ownership of M-Net there.
This assurance follows allegations in the pro-National Party Press that Dr O'Reilly had outspoken ANC sympathies and would give the ANC a foothold in the English-language Press.

But he has told Argus editors their independence will be assured.

His son went further, pointing out that INP was in the commercial business of running newspapers and the Argus group had built up a good reputation based on editorial integrity.

"You cannot do business by underestimating the credibility of your newspapers which, by their nature must be critics," he said.

And he pointed out that in any event INP was due to acquire its Argus shareholding in June - long after the April 26-28 elections, effectively quashing any suggestions of interference in South African politics or that it would support the ANC in the elections.

Politics aside, Mr O'Reilly says INP's expertise in other media fields will be put to good use in South Africa. This includes its involvement in pay television - although he adds that Argus Newspapers is not due to take over Argus Holdings' share of M-Net.

In addition INP is involved in other advertising projects such as outdoor advertising in Mexico, France and Australia including billboards and bus panels.

Confirming Dr O'Reilly's international reputation as a genuinely independent newspaper owner, Raymond Low of the Freedom of Expression Institute said of all "international newspaper moguls" that Dr O'Reilly had developed a reputation of not interfering in newspaper editorial policy and of allowing them to maintain their independence.

Mr Low said it was probably a good thing that Dr O'Reilly was regarded as a friend of ANC leader Nelson Mandela. "He will probably be able to persuade the ANC and elements in it which want to nationalise newspapers, not to interfere with the Press," he said.
Concern about ‘independence’

By Mzimasi Ngudle
Political Staff

FEARS about the future of editorial independence were expressed following the sale of a large chunk of Argus Newspapers shares to a foreign company.

Ireland's Independent Newspapers, an Irish newspaper group controlled by Mr Tony O'Reilly, will acquire 31 percent of Argus Newspapers, owners of Sowetan, The Star and other newspapers in the country.

O'Reilly told Argus editors that editorial independence would be assured after the transaction.

The Media Workers’ Association of South Africa said it would only be satisfied by a written undertaking from the new owners not to interfere with editorial independence.

"Verbal assurances are simply not enough," acting Mwasa president Mr Mathatha Tsechu said.

Tsechu said the union was opposed to foreign control of powerful instruments such as the media. "While unbundling is good, you don't unbundle and give to aliens," Tsechu said, adding that the union had asked for a meeting with Argus to discuss the matter.

Sowetan Editor Mr Aggrey Klaaste said the buy-out of Argus newspapers was inevitable because of the pressure on Argus Holdings to unbundle.

However, Klaaste said, a major problem would be editorial independence. "While the new owners have promised that there will be such independence, nobody can read into the future.

The National Party said more cases should be taken where non-South Africans acquired interests in our powerful media.

"There is always a danger, however, that somebody in Mr O'Reilly's position would succumb to the temptation of meddling in the newspapers' editorial policy.

"It is therefore essential that O'Reilly, a non-South African with strong ANC ties, gives assurances that he will not use his position to influence editorial policy to favour one of the political parties," NP spokesman Mr Danie du Plessis said.

Azapo spokesman Dr Gonolemo Mokae said although Azapo was not opposed to the notion of unbundling, Argus should not be sold to foreigners.

Mokae expressed doubts that editorial independence would be maintained.

Mokae said Azapo was shocked that Argus was growing "so insensitive to the feelings and plight of their workers."

"We learn that workers at The Star and Sowetan were not informed about the deals," Mokae said.

The ANC, whose president, Mr Nelson Mandela, is a close friend of O'Reilly, said it would only respond later.

PAC leaders were yesterday unavailable for comment after the news of the tragic death of army commander Sobelo Phuma.

The SACP said it would first study the details and issue a statement later.
Newspapers' future uncertain

The sale of 31 percent of Argus Newspapers to Irish billionaire Tony O'Reilly heralds a shake-up in the South African press, reports Reg Rumney.

The future of Times Media publications the Cape Times, Natal Mercury and Pretoria News are once again uncertain after the Argus newspaper unbundling deal announced this week.

Also a valuable chunk of M-Net shareholding may change hands. The arrangement whereby the Argus company prints TML publications is understood to remain intact, but may cause some discomfort to the two separately companies in future.

TML managing director David Kovarsky said yesterday talks about the future of the coastal newspapers and the Pretoria News, begun last month, will be revved.

TML owns the Cape Times, has a 30 percent stake in Natal Newspapers and 45 percent of the Pretoria News.

The proposed restructuring of TML's and Argus' newspaper interests was scotched after objections by the Competition Board and suspicions that the move was merely an attempt to consolidate the Argus company's hold on the daily newspaper market.

The implication is that once again they are up for sale to Argus.

The deal announced this week is an effective unbundling by Anglo American Corporation of its newspaper interests, with the floating off of the Argus newspaper stable into a separate company, with a 68 percent market share of the daily circulation market in the four largest cities of South Africa.

In the process Johannesburg Consolidated Investments and Anglo will sell their 31 percent shareholding in the the soon-to-be-listed Argus Newspapers company to Irish jet-setting tycoon Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers PLC for upwards of R125-million.

This is a strategic stake in the newspaper group since no other shareholder will have a similar amount. Billionaire O'Reilly (57) will probably want to test the water before trying to increase his stake.

Argus Holdings managing director Doug Band, who has been driving the process of unbundling for the past few years, said yesterday O'Reilly did not have a history of wanting controlling shares in all his newspaper investments.

O'Reilly last week acquired a 25 percent stake in London daily newspaper The Independent for £18.4-million.

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Step-by-step guide to Argus newspaper sale

BY JOHN SPIRA

Argus Holdings MD Doug Band characterised this week’s Independent Newspapers (INP)/Argus Newspapers deal as simple but complex.

Simple to some, but obviously complex to a large majority — judging from reaction from elements of the media and political parties.

Interpretation has ranged from an ANC takeover to one of subterfuge designed to ensure ongoing control of Argus Newspapers by Anglo American.

Here we offer a step-by-step explanation.

At present (prior to the deal being implemented in three months’ time), Argus Holdings owns 100 percent of Argus Newspapers, the largest single shareholder in Argus Holdings is the JCI/Anglo American grouping, with its ownership of 31 percent of Argus Holdings.

Argus Holdings is to float off Argus Newspapers on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. In the process it will proportionately allocate shares in Argus Newspapers to Argus Holdings shareholders.

Old Mutual, which owns 13 percent of Argus Holdings, will thus retain 13 percent of Argus Holdings and acquire a 13 percent stake in Argus Newspapers. JCI/Anglo, which owns 81 percent of Argus Holdings, will receive the same treatment.

But the difference between the final relative positions of JCI/Anglo, and Old Mutual and other Argus Holdings shareholders, is that JCI/Anglo will sell its newly acquired shares in Argus Newspapers to INP.

Upon conclusion of all elements of the deal, JCI/Anglo will have a 31 percent stake in Argus Holdings — but it won’t have any shares in Argus Newspapers.

Through its 31 percent interest in Argus Holdings, JCI/Anglo will have a diluted interest in Times Media (publishers of the Sunday Times, Financial Mail and Business Day) via Argus Holdings’ 37 percent stake in Times Media.

For INP, its 31 percent stake in Argus Newspapers makes it the largest shareholder, and thus in effective control.
Workers not consulted – union

The SA Union of Journalists says it is astonished at the suddenness of the buyout of Argus Newspapers by Independent Newspapers plc and that Argus employees were not timeously informed or consulted.

SAUJ general secretary Karen Stander said yesterday that staff had legitimate concerns over the security of their jobs, particularly in the light of the recent closure of the Sunday Star.

The union welcomed the buyout as being in the interests of diversifying English-language newspaper ownership and reducing cross-ownership.

In spite of NNP chairman Tony O'Reilly's apparent good track record internationally, the SAUJ had concerns about the editorial independence of Argus newspapers.

Stander said the union would take up its demand that the company sign a charter guaranteeing papers' editorial independence. — Sapa.
Irish wing scores again

Tony O'Reilly, the multi-millionaire Irish charmer who, in a surprise move this week, bought control of Argus Newspapers, has a motto that has sustained him throughout a dazzling business career: "Dress like the English, think like the Jews and talk like the Irish". Report by ALAN ROBINSON in London and MICHAEL SHAFTO in Johannesburg.

There is no prouder Irishman around than the mogul who first made his name as the innocently handsome 19-year-old wing who toured South Africa with the 1963 British Lions and who is said to have won more hearts than the record number of tries he scored.

Mr O'Reilly, now a much greyer and chunkier version of the auburn-locked flyer of 39 years ago, with a personal fortune estimated at more than £160 million, remains a fanatical supporter of the Irish rugby team.

He is said never to miss an international game, home or away, thus, next weekend, he will take his seat at Twickenham for the Five Nations fixture against England.

It was at Twickers that he said farewell to his playing career in some style, though not on the field of action. In those days of genuine amateurism, when other players arrived for internationals by bus and by battered car, Mr O'Reilly drew up outside rugby headquarters in a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce.

And he likes to tell the tale — at his own expense — of what happened when he fell on the ball in a desperate attempt to halt an England charge. As he lay there, he claims, an English voice rang out: "Don't just kick him, kick his bloody chauffeur as well!"

His glittering business career began in failure while still at school when he and a friend opened a penny lending library that folded when the first customer made off with the entire stock of six books. But that was one of the few reversals on a path that has gone from sugar to butter, baked beans to crystal glassware and taken in newspapers around the world and cable television back home in Ireland.

So diverse are Mr O'Reilly's interests, it is said that when he returns from his Heinz business in Pittsburgh, US, to Dublin, his secretary hands him six briefcases, each packed with documents covering a different aspect of his Irish activities.

The main interest at home, however, is Independent Newspapers, the company now duelling with the Mirror Group in a bid to resuscitate Newspaper Publishing, owners of the ailing London-based Independent and Independent on Sunday.

In that battle, Mr O'Reilly is up against another Irishman who could not be more different. Mirror Chief Executive David Montgomery is a dour, humourless Ulsterman with none of his rival's charisma and charm.

Mr O'Reilly has an admired reputation for not interfering in the editorial side of his newspapers, apart from an insistence that they give no publicity to the IRA, to which he is fiercely opposed.

However, there is said to be some concern about his current attempts to gain a foothold in the Irish Free Press group, his main opposition in Eire. Mr O'Reilly is reported to be concerned that if he does not step in, old rival Rupert Murdoch might pounce to challenge him in his own backyard.

Many journalistsLoch for the fact that he is not a hands-on proprietor. Contact with his editors is kept to a minimum with formal meetings held just once a year at his home in Castlemartin.

In fact, one Irish Independent journalist who has been there since Mr O'Reilly took control in 1973, says he has only ever seen his boss at headquarters twice — and one of those occasions was to show the former Irish president and his wife around the building.

The news of his takeover stunned Argus staff. But they recovered quickly by trotting out a host of often saucy Irish jokes, such as: There will no longer be Christmas bonuses, we'll be getting food parcels instead.

Former Springbok Des Sinclair who played in all the tests against the Lions in 1953 describes Mr O'Reilly as "an instinctively kind and generous man, never mind his millions". He points out that the dinner Mr O'Reilly gave at the Mount Nelson in Cape Town in 1991, to which rugby internationals past and present from all parts of the world were invited — a guest list of more than a hundred — was in fact arranged by him in honour of the late Mr Dave Cran's 80th birthday.

With such men you don't ask figures. But everyone involved agrees, "it must have cost a packet!"
Irish tycoon in Argus hot-seat

JOHN SPIRA
Weekend-Argus Correspondent

IRISH media tycoon Tony O'Reilly, who heads up Independent Newspapers (INP), the group that is to acquire effective control of Argus Newspapers, will become chairman of the South African company.

Also likely to join the Argus Newspapers board are his son Cameron (a kingpin in INP's Australian operations), INP's chief executive Liam Healy and its financial director James Parkinson.

This will give INP four directors on an Argus Newspapers board which currently comprises 12 members, four of whom will probably bow out to make room for the Irish.

Since JCI and Anglo American will no longer have a stake in Argus Newspapers, their representatives will clearly be required to give way. This means that current chairman Doug Band, Vaughan Bray and Kennedy Maxwell will resign.

Argus Newspapers' executive directors John Featherstone, Ed Booth, Noel Cohurn, Tony Howard, Graeme King and Rory Wilson will keep their positions.

Accordingly, one of the three remaining non-executive directors Colin Acock, Peter McLean or Harvey Tyson will be asked to resign, or the board will be expanded by one extra director.

JCI/Anglo will have no direct shareholding (nor any board representation), though there will be an indirect interest via the 14 percent stake in the company held by the two groups' pension funds. The only other shareholders of note are Old Mutual (13 percent) and the Argus pension fund (8 percent).

Reuters reports that Mr O'Reilly, who within a week has snapped up big chunks of South African and British newspapers, continued his buying spree yesterday when he took a majority stake in the London Press group, paying nearly 67 percent of Capital Newspapers Plc from British publishing company EMAF Plc and Stantonmill Ltd for 24.8 million (about R25 million) in cash.

Capital has nine paid-for titles and five free newspapers and Independent said it would be consolidating them with the Greater London and Essex Newspapers (Glen) group it owns. Glen has two paid-for and six free papers.

See also SATURDAY FOCUS-2, page 14.
They’re watching every move!

The Nat establishment is toning down its attack on the Argus Newspapers’ new Irish connection—but Tony O’Reilly will be closely watched for any sign of pushing a pro-ANC line.

David Breier of the Weekend Argus Political Staff reports

THE storm in an Irish coffee glass is abating after the Nats suggested your favourite family newspaper and its sister publications were about to become ANC propaganda sheets.

Within hours of this week’s dramatic announcement that Irish magnate Tony O’Reilly’s Independent Newspapers (INP) was buying a controlling 31 per cent share in Argus Newspapers, the Nat Press came out with all guns blazing. But now they are adopting a “wait-and-see” attitude.

“Footprint for ANC friend in the English-language media,” trumpeted the headline in Naspers flagship Die Burger. Naspers executive chairman Ton Vosloo commented that Dr O’Reilly with his “outspoken ANC sympathies” would have to be watched.

But the heat has died down after repeated assurances from Dr O’Reilly and his son Cameron that they do not interfere in editorial policy in their Irish and Australian papers.

Mr Vosloo told Weekend Argus that “the jury is still out” on the issue, suggesting he would reserve judgment.

“He embraces nationalistic leaders like Robert Mugabe and now [Mr Mandela],” Mr Vosloo said of Dr O’Reilly. “It is typical of the Irish to be for the underdog.”

“But I feel a bit uncomfortable with foreign media buying up shareholdings in the South African media which is active in politics,” said Mr Vosloo.

Asked why he thought a megamagnate should show an interest in buying into South African newspapers which did not make vast profits, Mr Vosloo said, “You get a few big players like Rupert Murdoch, Conrad Black and Kerry Packer with massive egos. They want to be up there in the big league. It gives them a feeling of power. Maybe it is part of their personality.”

The attack on Dr O’Reilly’s reputed pro-ANC sympathies is based largely on the fact that he flew ANC leader Nelson Mandela to his private pad in the Bahamas for a holiday. And the O’Reillys have never actually deemed they have a soft spot for the ANC.

Dr O’Reilly is known to be on good terms with a number of world leaders—including President de Klerk.

Ex-Rand Daily Mail editor Raymond Louw, a member of the Freedom of Expression Institute, says, “Dr O’Reilly has a reputation of not interfering in newspapers and of allowing them to maintain their independence.”

“[He] has given that assurance and I can’t see editors of the Argus group allowing themselves to be ANC mouthpieces.”

Mr Louw said it was probably a good thing Dr O’Reilly was a friend of Mr Mandela as he would be able to persuade the ANC and its elements that favoured nationalisation of the Press not to interfere with newspapers.

But Mr Louw cautioned, “One has to be aware of this relationship and be vigilant about it. Not only Argus Group editors and staff...”

Mr Louw pointed out thatArgus’s previously Anglo-American “benign ownership” was also friendly to the ANC.

Shortly after news of the deal broke, Nat spokesman Matthius van Schalkwyk said, “It is not a secret that the ANC wants to start its own paper, but all the feasibility studies show that this is very hard.” Therefore we look with concern at this development. We ask whether in the absence of their own paper this is not another channel for them.”

But Cameron O’Reilly, the magnate’s son, who helps run his Australian interests, said it would be commercial “suicide” to make newspapers support one party if they depended on editorial independence for credibility.
How the deal was done

ARGUS Holdings chairman Doug Band tells
MANDY JEAN WOODS about a heavily accented
Africans phone message in mid-January.

MOST visitors to South Africa spend
their money on anything from clothes
and jewellery to cigars. Tony O'Reilly is different.
When he jetted in on a three-day visit that
week he spent some R125 million buying
South Africa's largest newspaper group,
Argus Newspapers.
It took only 30
minutes for three execu-
tives to agree in principle to the deal. It then
took another 30 hours to prepare the short and
crisp contract that would undoubtedly link
Ireland's Independent Newspapers plc, which
O'Reilly owns, and Argus Newspapers.

"It was just Vaughn Derby, Tony O'Reilly and
myself." Argus Holdings chairman Doug Band
told this week, recalling the high moments of the
humbling deal. "Once we had agreed in principle,
the deal fell into place."

The two, backed up at
times by up to 18 bank-
ers, lawyers and execu-
tives, were directed for
the duration of the nego-
tiations at a venue in
Sandton. The aim was to
keep O'Reilly's presence
away from prying eyes.

By the time the smoke
had cleared, O'Reilly was
couraged to become the
growth owner of a
35 percent shareholding in
Argus Newspapers.

"I got this curious message on my answering
machine about a day later. It was O'Reilly,
marking an African accent, saying 'One roof-
stop hotel from the British press gets gobbled.'" (The
red-head hotel from the British team planned)

In the first week of
February, merchant bankers and financial
wizards from big companies gathered in
Johannesburg to thrash out
the deal's financial details.
O'Reilly, in Australia at the time, was
scheduled to fly to South Africa on Sunday but
a mad-hour accident in his private Gulf Stream jet
delayed him. The wind-
shield cracked, fortunately
not injuring anyone.

But it did necessitate a
return to Singapore and
renegotiating the deal.

The rest is history. "It
was a simple deal, really. We
never had a CEO. And it
shouldn't have taken a long
\time. And it didn't. We didn't
get 
acquainted with the Argus
Newspaper Group. It
was just a question of
deciding whether or not
to do the deal.

And the deal that greased the
deal. It could be said
that the chemistry be-
tween the two parties
O'Reilly has by his own
admission, "a deep, abid-
ing love" for South Afri-
canwhich began back in
1988 when he first came
to the country as a Brit-
ish Lions rugby player.

SEALING THE DEAL. JCI chairman Pat Reid (left), Argus Holdings chairman Doug Band, and Independent Newspapers' Tony O'Reilly and his son Cameron.

O'Reilly and Argus started negotiations two years ago

"Argus is still the only South African newspaper that I've ever been fully satisfied with," O'Reilly said.

"I bought the deal just before the
newspaper group was
sold to the Daily News.
I was looking for a
newspaper in South Africa that
wasn't just like the Daily News,
that was different. The
Argus was a good match for
that."
In a firm commitment to Press freedom, Mr Mandela said truth "can be arrived at only through the untrammeled contest between and among competing opinions, in which as many viewpoints as possible are given a fair hearing."

"It has therefore always been our contention that laws, mores, practices and prejudices that place constraints on freedom of expression are a disservice to society. Indeed these are the devices employed by falsehood to lend it strength in its unequal contest with truth."

Mr Mandela said a critical, independent and investigative Press was the lifeblood of any democracy.

See page 4

Mandela pledges freedom of Press

It's a cornerstone of democracy, ANC leader tells IPI conference
SA press freedom should not be taken for granted

STAFF REPORTER

The South African media was freer than at any other time in the country’s history, but that freedom should not be taken for granted as many restrictive laws were still on the statute books, despite falling out of use, warned editor-in-chief of The Star Richard Steyn.

Delivering the opening address at the 43rd general assembly of the International Press Institute (IPI) in Cape Town today, Steyn said: “We are about to be protected by a Bill of Rights which enshrines freedom of speech and free media, but those rights are weakly defined and subject to various limitations.

“Much lip service is paid by our political parties to freedom of expression, but on the ground journalists come under regular attack.

“I therefore urge IPI and other organisations to continue to monitor press freedom in the new society as closely as they did in the old.”

He told delegates their visit to South Africa was timely.

“Our tortured history has bequeathed us immense human and social problems, and presented us with some daunting problems.”

Recognising the political foresight of President de Klerk and ANC president Nelson Mandela whom he termed, “two remarkable South Africans”, Steyn described the local situation by quoting an American academic:

“South Africa is not a nation, but a collection of tribes seeking to find a common destiny.

“It is a country where every conflict of the post-war world may be encountered: colonialism versus anti-colonialism, First World versus Third World; capitalist versus socialist; haves versus have-nots; black versus white; industrial versus rural.

“It is a place to stir the soul, not to test the pieties.”
"The free flow of ideas and information is one of the objectives we will strive for in the constituent assembly that will emerge from the forthcoming democratic election," he said.

Mr De Klerk and Mr Mandela stressed their commitment to press freedom at the opening of the 45th congress of the International Press Institute in Cape Town.

Earlier, the South African representative of the IFI board and editor of the Star, Mr Richard Steyn, said the South Africa media were freer than ever, but that freedom should not be taken for granted, as many restrictive laws remained.

"People who remember the bad old days of the states of emergency might find it ironic that the government was now such an ardent supporter of the ideal of a free press," he said.

"We know how essential a free press is — and will be — to the protection of the basic rights guaranteed in our interim constitution. We support this guarantee precisely because we know from our own experience how counter-productive any attempt to interfere with the free flow of information can be," Mr De Klerk said.

Mr Mandela said the freedom of expression, of which press freedom was a crucial aspect, was among the core values of democracy that the ANC had striven for.
‘Alternative press: Heroes of journalism’

A TRADITION of bold, probing journalism had been pioneered by the few courageous publications that constituted the alternative press, ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela said yesterday.

Speaking at the International Press Institute (IPI) conference, he also said that, with the exception of the Soviet and the senior editorial staffs of all South African daily newspapers were cast in the same racial mould.

"They are white, they are male; they are from a middle-class background, they share a similar life experience."

Such people had no knowledge of the lives of South Africa’s overwhelming black majority, he said.

Mr Mandela said that while the mainstream press “preferred to accept a shameful regime of rigorous self-censorship rather than stand up to a repressive government”, the alternative press had flown the flag of press freedom.

Editors enjoyed greater freedom today thanks to them, he said.

His words caused a stir as the IPI has previously honoured commercial press staff for pursuing press freedom.

It’s a dog’s life for media

Political Staff

PRESIDENT F W de Klerk yesterday caused the 475 delegates from 40 countries to the International Press Institute to chuckle when he compared a free press with keeping a large dog.

He said society undoubtedly needed the media to play a dynamic watchdog role.

"The media must be unleashed and should be able to patrol the national property in a free and unrestricted manner. They must be able to sniff out corruption and relentlessly follow the spoor of a hot story or a good disclosure."

"They must, by barking or howling, be able to alert the household to any threat lurking in the undergrowth."

"And despite the fact that I, like most politicians, have felt their teeth, they should never be muzzled."

But, Mr de Klerk added, there was the downside.

"Large dogs sometimes bark at the moon and disturb the neighbourhood. They bound into the house with muddy paws and upset delicate and valuable crockery."

"They can be obsessed by the scent of sex. From time to time they invade the privacy of the neighbour’s garden and, alas, they have been known to bite innocent passers-by," Mr de Klerk said.

All this made up the necessary tension between the media and the government, he explained.
CAPE

‘Political parties must defend Press freedom’

Staff Reporter

A RESOLUTION calling on all political parties taking part in the April 27 election to commit themselves publicly to Press freedom has been adopted by the International Press Institute and other media organisations.

The signatories stated that no democratic country could guarantee its people freedom from fear and exploitation without a “free and unfettered Press”.

They believed the Press — whether print or electronic — should provide people with facts needed to participate effectively in a democracy and that the Press should also provide the most open forum possible for opinion and expression.

They therefore called on all parties seeking power in the coming elections — and the present and future governments — to commit themselves and their supporters to:

- Defend the right of members of the media to inquire, publish and distribute freely and without interference, now and in the future

- Uphold journalists’ rights of access to all public areas, officials, government and other events, as well as other aspects of the public’s business, without intimidation or threat

- Oppose all moves, measures or restrictions which may obstruct the development and distribution of a diversified Press

- Encourage and promote the growth of a courageous, professional and independent Press.

The signatories included the chief executives of the International Press Institute, Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers, the International Federation of the Periodical Press, and media associations in America, Japan, Norway and Portugal.
Pledge to keep eye on new SA

Staff Report

INTERNATIONAL media representatives will visit South Africa within a year to ensure that a new government elected after April 27 is holding up a free Press, says the director of the International Press Institute (IPI), Johann Fritz.

At the opening session of the IPI general assembly, Mr Fritz said good intentions had gone sour in other emerging democracies.

"Those in government, in some cases, withdrew the Press freedom in practice they had granted in principle."

South Africa would become a focal point of the international media in the coming months.

"The international community hopes that your great democratic transformation will bring peace, prosperity, and justice to all its people."

The institute wanted South Africa's political experiment to succeed and it wanted the South African Press to be free.

"In order for all this to happen, the promises you made now will have to be kept by the South African governments of the future."

"The institute and representatives of other media organisations taking part in this conference will closely monitor the situation and will return within a year to see that this new society indeed guarantees a genuine and democratic freedom of its media," Mr Fritz said.
Brain drain ‘blown out of proportion’

Staff Reporters

INSIDE OF BLOWING THE white brain drain out of proportion, the South African media should rather encourage whites “to leave to create space for the majority”, says top PAC negotiator Patricia de Lille.

Addressing the International Press Institute conference today, Ms De Lille also suggested that PAC leader Clarence Makwetu had not been invited to address delegates because “you do not want to listen to a resource that will be telling you the truth”.

This was typical of the liberal Press, she said.

There had never been Press freedom in South Africa “for the simple reason that the media as in the grip of about four conglomerates”.

The “alternative” Press, funded by overseas backers, was also not independent and “cannot be said to be unbiased because, with little exception, it follows a particular party line”.

She challenged the media to say if it was prepared to “see Africans beyond stereotypes”.

Ms De Lille said that the PAC regarded people as Africans if they owed their loyalty to Africa and were prepared to accept a democratic rule of an African majority.

“‘We guarantee no minority rights because we think in terms of individuals and not groups’.”

KwaZulu spokesman Ben Ngubane told the conference that negotiations on the transition to a new South Africa were no longer merely about federalism but about groups and national conflicts.

He said that, while he firmly endorsed democracy and the protection of individual rights, “historical imperatives are just as important”.

“We as the Zulu people have a vested, and deep, interest in territory. We are a monarchy, it is in the hearts and minds of our people, and we long for redress.”

He said the Zulu people had thought that it would be possible to have a federal dispensation in which all the people in Natal could be accommodated but the results of the KwaZulu-Natal ndaba, which laid the basis for this, were rejected.

He accused the Press of failing to focus on the “nature of the South African problem,” which had much to do with group and national interests.

Dr Ngubane proposed that the constitutional dispute should be subjected to international mediation.

Minister of State Enterprise Dawie de Villiers said the interim constitution represented a “fair compromise” between the parties, and the government believed it had the support of the overwhelming majority of South Africans.

Dr De Villiers was standing in for Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer.

The interim constitution was not perfect but provided a good base, he said.

“What we have achieved is nothing short of a miracle”.

He said the difficulty with the Freedom Alliance was that it had no united position and the government was beginning to question the will of the alliance to resolve outstanding constitutional differences.

The door was not closed and they were prepared to look at the question over and over.

“But there is no way we can prolong the uncertainty of this country any longer. Time is now of the essence.”

Mohamed Valli Moosa, head of the ANC’s negotiating committee, paid tribute to the media and said it had a fundamental role in shaping the thinking of people all over the world.

The ANC believed legislation still on the statute books restricting Press freedom should be scrapped, including Section 28 of the Internal Security Act.

“And we will support that at the Transitional Executive Council.”

He described the interim constitution as “a settlement package which constitutes the surrender of an undemocratic regime to the forces of democracy.”

But those who claimed they were staying out of the process because of the lack of true federalism were not being honest.

“The conflict really revolves around ‘what is in it for me’?”

(Photos by Ronalil Tomlinson and John Twid, F3 St George’s Mall, Cape Town)
Wise investment on the stock market can help you achieve many of your life's dreams. But let's face it, investment success
In search of media to serve the truth

Two of South Africa’s key political actors, Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk, yesterday gave their views on the press and SABC to a gathering in Cape Town of the world’s leading journalists. Michael Morris reports

ANC president Nelson Mandela and President de Klerk both contended that the media in South Africa was not free.

They were speaking at the opening session of the general assembly of the International Press Institute (IPI), which is being attended by more than 600 editors and media executives from around the world.

However, the two leaders differed sharply on the need for the transformation of the media.

De Klerk strongly criticized the ANC for attempting to exterminate influence over the SABC.

"We shall give serious attention to the implications of this situation in the days and weeks ahead," he warned.

De Klerk said it had become apparent at the time of the appointment of the corporation a new board last year that a singleable proportion of the candidates on the original were prominent members of the information and communication structures of one of the parties participating in the election.

It has become evident that his efforts to create a "more balanced" board to ensure impartiality had not succeeded.

"There is a political challenge actually sought in efforts to introduce a biased agenda into the IPI’s proceedings.

"There are well-substantiated reports of interference, including receiving direct instructions from the government department of the party involved.

"A journalist who refused to carry out the party’s instructions was told he should not report for duty at the SABC after the elections.

"The so-called Democratic Elections Broadcasting Initiative, which votes for the election, is in effect, according to proper analysis by media experts — being abused to influence voters through electoral contexts.

"De Klerk added, "There is in the South Africa that we are building, inherently unbalanced and that much media should be concentrated in a way that underlines of the state and under the threat of political intimidation.

Tenon between the media and the government was necessary. This was the case in the relationship, but the chances are that there is something between the media and the government.

Media and the government were necessary because each is dependent on the other, which media or with the government. Media was nothing to challenge interpretations, and the transfer of African newspapers to the media is not without a threat of control of the state and the Anglo-American Corporation.

However, de Klerk argued that the African media was still largely dominated by business interests and the transfer of African newspapers to the Anglo-American Corporation.

With the exception of the Sowetan, the daily editorial staffs of all South Africa’s daily newspapers are cast from the same racial social group.

They are white, they are mostly from a middle class background, and tend to share a very similar life experience.

"The same holds true for the upper echelons of the electronic media, again with a very few exceptions.

"While no one can object in principle to editors with white male, what is disturbing is the level of self-remuneration this press on our media.

"It is clearly unacceptable that, in a country whose population is overwhelmingly black, the principal players in the media have no knowledge of the life experience of that majority."

De Klerk praised the "alternative press," which "when the proprietors of the mainstream newspapers preferred to accept a shameful degree of expression rather than stand up to a repressive government, kept the flag of press freedom alive in South Africa.

In a firm commitment to press freedom, Mandela said that the SABC could be arrived at; only through the unobstructed contact between and among competing newspapers, as many viewpoints as possible are given a fair and equal hearing.

"It has always been true in our country to promote, respect, and value multiple perspectives and convictions that people construct on freedom of expression are a disservice to society. Indeed, these are the values employed by falsehood to lend it strength in its unceasing contest with truth."

Mandela said a critical, independent and investigative press was the hallmark of any democracy. It was vital that the press was free from state interference and was economically independent and protected the protection of the constitution.

Only such a free press can temper the appetite of any government to use power or expand the power of the state.

"Anti-Apartheid media that can be the vigilant watchdog in society, revealing the temptation on the part of others who would like to abuse that power."

"Biased agenda" ... President de Klerk told the International Press Institute meeting that efforts were being made to manipulate SABC-TV programming.
Call for
defence
of media

POLITICAL parties in South Africa should
defend the right of the media to inquire, pub-
lish and distribute freely and without inter-
ference, eight of the world's major newspaper
publishing groups and Unesco said yesterday.

This was contained in a resolution of the 43rd
general assembly of the International Press Insti-
tute in the city.

"We call on all parties and organisations to ex-
press their commitment publicly and unequivocal-
ly, and to impress on their supporters the need to
uphold press freedom in letter and spirit, in the
interests of democracy in South Africa," the resolu-
tion said.

It was signed by the chief executives of the Inter-
national Press Institute, International Federation
of Newspaper Publishers, International Federation
of the Periodical Press, Inter-American Press Asso-
ciation, Japanese Newspaper Publishers and Edi-
tors Association, Newspaper Publishers Associa-
tion, Norwegian Press Association and Portuguese
Sociedade Jornalística Editorial.

They said political parties should "uphold jour-
nalists' rights of access to all public areas, officials,
government and other events, as well as other as-
psects of the public's business, without intimidat-
ion or threat."

Political Staff
FW worried about ANC in SABC

IT was a matter of great concern that the African National Congress was trying to secure influence over the SABC, State President Mr FW de Klerk said yesterday.

Addressing the opening session of the International Press Institute's 43rd general assembly in Cape Town, De Klerk said this was first apparent in plans to appoint a number of senior ANC members to the SABC board.

"When I resisted this, I was heavily criticised. But it seems my efforts have not succeeded," de Klerk said.

De Klerk said a "political phalanx" was trying to influence programming at the SABC and a campaign of subtle intimidation had been started against journalists and managers who did not comply.

Journalists who resisted instructions to portray events in a certain light had been told not to return to the SABC after the upcoming election.

There was immediate response from the SABC board, with chairman Dr Ivy Masepe-Casaburri saying the corpora-

UNDUE INFLUENCE Pressmen told of 'intimidation campaign':

tion had no knowledge of any journalist being influenced or intimidated by any political organisation.

She said the SABC board had initiated an editorial code of conduct to which all editors and reporters subscribed: "The editorial code defends the rights of journalists against any interference, but also acknowledges the need to build democracy in South Africa."

SABC chief executive Mr Wynand Harmse said he was "upset and concerned" that De Klerk had publicly raised such questions without consulting the SABC board.

"We would have expected the State President to pass any such information on to the board before publicly raising it at an international conference of the media," Harmse said.

De Klerk also said developments during the next 72 days would determine whether South Africa succeeded in bringing about order, peace and stability or whether the country slid into conflict and chaos.

(Report by B Kemp, 141 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg)
Call to back press freedom

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — A resolution calling on all political parties taking part in the April election to commit themselves publicly to press freedom has been adopted by the International Press Institute and other organisations.

The signatories stated that no democratic country could guarantee its people freedom from fear and exploitation without a free and unfettered press.

They believed the press — whether print or electronic — should provide people with facts needed to participate effectively in a democracy and with the most open forum possible for opinion and expression.

They therefore called on all parties seeking power in the forthcoming election — and the present and future governments — to commit themselves and their supporters to:

- Defend the right of members of the media to inquiry, publish and distribute freely and without interference, now and in the future.
- Uphold journalists' rights of access to all public areas, officials, government and other events, as well as other aspects of the public's business, without intimidation or threat.
- Oppose all moves, measures or restrictions that might obstruct the development and distribution of a diversified press.

"We call on all parties and organisations to express this commitment publicly and unequivocally, and to impress on their supporters the need to uphold press freedom in letter and spirit, in the interests of democracy in South Africa."

The signatories included the chief executives of the International Press Institute, Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers, the International Federation of the Periodical Press, and media associations in America, Japan, Norway and Portugal.
Press freedom to be monitored

Cape Town — International media representatives will visit South Africa within a year to ensure that a new government elected after April 27 is upholding a free press, says International Press Institute director Johann Fritz.

Fritz said that originally good intentions had gone sour in other emerging new democracies.

"Those in government, in some cases, withdrew the press freedom they had granted in principle."

"The International Press Institute and other media organizations will closely monitor the situation to see that this new society indeed guarantees freedom of the media," Fritz said. — Own Correspondent.
Media have to win back credibility

freedom of press

TEC, must ensure
Tutu salutes press

By BARRY STREEK

THE media had helped to bring South Africa to the brink of a threshold of change, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said at the University of the Western Cape last night.

The country would show the world that it had a remarkable capacity to forgive, Archbishop Tutu told 500 delegates at the International Press Institute conference.

In a speech regarded by many of the delegates as the most moving they had heard, Archbishop Tutu said the violence was surprising because it was limited to

Considering South Africa's history, one might have expected blacks to embark on a campaign to kill whites — but the violence in South Africa was not even ethnic and in Natal Zulus were fighting with Zulus.

"Thank you for the important part of the struggle you have played. You helped tell our story," Archbishop Tutu said.

Many newspapers had supported the government and had vilified many people involved in the struggle, but there had always been newspapers that had told the story and helped change the climate.

"We want to say thank you, thank you, thank you," Archbishop Tutu said to loud applause.

He said he had waited 62 years to be able to vote in his own country and the media had helped make this possible.

"Tell the world these people have a remarkable capacity to forgive. After 27 years in jail they can smile and laugh and be human," he said.

The delegates gave him a prolonged standing ovation.

- The Press and Mr Mandela — Page 8
- TEC must ensure freedom of press — Page 4
Tutu salutes press

By BARRY STREET
Political Staff

THE media has helped to bring about the threshold of change, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said at the University of the Western Cape last night.

"The country would have been helpless to embark on a campaign to end apartheid if the violence in South Africa was not even defined as such," Tutu said at the University of the Western Cape last night.

"I am happy to see that the media has done a good job," Tutu said.

"Thank you for the important part you have played. You helped tell our story," Tutu said.

"We want to say thank you, thank you, thank you," Archbishop Tutu said to loud applause.

He said he had waited 62 years to be able to vote in his own country, and the media had helped make this possible.

"Tell the world these people have a remarkable capacity to forgive. After 27 years in jail they can smile and laugh and be human," he said.

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- The Press and Mr Mandela - Page 8
- TEC 'must ensure freedom of press' - Page 4

WELL DONE!... Editor of the Guardian Mr Peter Preston, with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the former editor of the Daily Dispatch, Mr Donald Woods in Cape Town last night.

Picture: BENNY GOGG

CT 16.2.94

Considering South Africa's history, one might have expected blacks to embark on a campaign to kill whites — but the violence in South Africa was not even defined as such, and in Natal, Zulus were fighting with whites.

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- TEC 'must ensure freedom of press' - Page 4
Journalist doubtful Press will be free

☐ Media must give people the ‘confidence to vote’

JOHN YELD
Staff Reporter

PRESS freedom in South Africa is experiencing a “Prague spring”, which might not last beyond the April election, British journalist and veteran foreign correspondent Patti Waldmeir has warned.

Ms Waldmeir, Johannesburg bureau chief of the London Financial Times newspaper, was chairing a session, “Living with intimidation and violence — Press freedom issues in South Africa”, during yesterday’s proceedings of the International Press Institute’s general assembly being held in Cape Town this week.

She said there were hopes for a “Prague summer” of Press freedom — “but I have my doubts about that”.

Such freedom was a habit that developed over time — “and elections are not going to solve that”.

Ms Waldmeir said she suspected the “honeymoon period” many journalists enjoyed with the African National Congress would end soon and that the organisation’s attitude to the Press could harden.

Journalists’ jobs were becoming increasingly risky. “I’ve never been so frightened in my life and I suspect I’m going to be even more frightened in the run-up to the election.”

She believed her coverage had suffered because of her fear.

The managing editor of the Sowetan newspaper, Joe Tholley, said journalists were not a breed apart — “our problems are the problems of society”.

Part of revolutionary strategy was to discredit institutions and South Africa’s liberation movements had succeeded in doing this “beyond their wildest dreams”.

The police, courts and media were now seen as instruments of oppression.

“We as the media have a responsibility. We have to win back our credibility in the same way that the police, army, civil service and others have to win back theirs.”

The mainstream Press had for years referred to ANC and Pan African Congress members as “terrorists”, Mr Tholley said.

“People don’t forget that easily. It’s going to take us years to win back the confidence of the ordinary man, not just weeks.”

Jon Qwelane, editor of Tribute magazine and radio talk-show host, said drug smuggling from South Africa was common knowledge, but no local journalists were in a hurry to break the story.

The reasons were fairly obvious — “the mere mention” of a car tyre and a few gallons of petrol was all that was required to make journalists develop severe cases of amnesia.

Deputy editor and political editor of The Star Shaun Johnson said South African journalists were facing the greatest test of their profession and would be “on trial” during the election period as much as the election process itself.

Journalists could not claim any special status.

The best protection they could aim for was the “abstract” protection of the approval of most people in society, and he did not believe the South African media had the approval, legitimacy and understanding of the public.

“And it’s at least partly our fault. I don’t think we have the trust of the public,” he said.

Tim du Plessis, assistant editor of Beeld, said he found it ironic that the rightwingers who intimidated and threatened journalists were the same people who claimed there could not be a free and fair election because the level of intimidation in black communities was too high.

SABC board member Ruth Tumaseh said the media could not ensure an absence of violence and intimidation, but could reassure voters by telling them what to expect — “in other words, (give them) the confidence to vote.”
Media bodies call for Press freedom

CAPE TOWN — The International Press Institute meeting in Cape Town and other media organisations have adopted a resolution calling on all parties taking part in the April election to commit themselves publicly to Press freedom.

The motion states that no democratic country can guarantee its people freedom from fear and exploitation without a free and unfettered Press. The media should provide people with the facts they need to take part effectively in a democracy, says the motion. It should provide, also, an open forum for opinion and expression.

The resolution calls on parties seeking power in the election, as well as the present and future governments, to:

A. Defend the right of journalists to inquire, publish and distribute freely and without interference;
B. Uphold journalists' right of access to public areas, officials, government and other events without intimidation and without threat;
C. Oppose all moves, measures or restrictions which may obstruct the development and distribution of a diversified Press; and,
D. Encourage and promote the growth of a courageous, professional and independent Press.
Press freedom in SA ‘may not last’

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — Press freedom in South Africa is experiencing a “Prague spring” which may not last beyond the April election, British journalist and veteran foreign correspondent Patil Waldmeir has warned.


She said she suspected the “honeymoon period” that many journalists enjoyed with the ANC would end soon. Journalists’ jobs were becoming increasingly risky.

Joe Thilo, managing editor of the Sowetan newspaper, said part of revolutionary strategy was to discredit institutions, and South Africa’s liberation movement had succeeded in this regard “beyond their wildest dreams”.

The country’s police, courts and media were now seen as instruments of oppression.

“We as the media have a responsibility — we have to win back our credibility in the same way that the police, army, civil service and others have to win back theirs.”

Shaun Johnson, deputy editor and political editor of The Star, said South African journalists were facing the greatest test of their profession and would be “on trial” during the election period as much as the election process itself.

The best protection journalists could aim for was the “abstract” protection of the approval of most people in the society, and he did not believe the South African media had the approval, legitimacy and understanding of the public.

Beeld assistant editor Tim du Plessis said he found it ironic that the rightwingers who intimidated and threatened journalists were the same people who said there could not be a free and fair election in South Africa because the level of intimidation in black communities was too high.
THE PRESS

'Murder of journalists the ultimate censorship'

Staff Reporter JOHN YELD reports on the final day of the 43rd annual general assembly of the International Press Institute meeting in Cape Town.

The international media - particularly those with substantial financial resources - must not ignore the "dark corners" of Africa like Angola and Cameroon where journalists are facing intimidation, repression and death.

This appeal was made by South Africa editor Ken Owen who was chairing a workshop session on Press Freedom at the International Press Institute's general assembly yesterday.

Mr. Owen's remarks followed disclosures by Pris Ndjuwe, director of Le Messager newspaper in Cameroon, that 113 journalists or media personnel were in jail - including 16 detained in eight African countries, five of them in sub-Saharan Africa - at the end of January this year.

Two journalists had been killed since the beginning of the year.

"Murder is the ultimate censorship," Mr. Ndjuwe said.

Angolan sources had claimed that at least 291 journalists had died or disappeared since the resumption of the civil war in September 1992, although official sources put the figure at 49.

Press freedom in French-speaking African countries was in a "catastrophic" state, and although most African countries enshrined freedom of speech and the media in their constitutions, this was "unfortunately generally a smokescreen," Mr. Ndjuwe said.

His eight-year-old daughter had said "I don't want to be a journalist because otherwise the police will come every day to arrest me, the way they do to daddy."

Algerian journalist Ghanna Khedila, chief editor of the newspaper Laberte, said eight colleagues and friends had been assassinated during 1998 by Algerian fundamentalists fighting the government.

"They all believed in freedom and democracy," she said.

Most Algerian journalists had been forced to leave their homes and slept at different places each night after death threats.

"We have learnt not to trust anybody, to stay alive as long as possible. Our main concern is now to survive," Ms. Khedila said.

Officials of the South African Union of Journalists believe figures quoted by Mr. Ndjuwe relating to the deaths of journalists in Angola are based on incorrect and substantially exaggerated reports.

The world is looking to South Africa to see whether it can manage the transition from racial discrimination and bitterness to democracy and a mutually supportive society, says former British cabinet minister Shirley Williams.

"Baroness Williams, professor of electoral politics at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, said this would be "perhaps the greatest challenge" of post-World World 2 history.

She was taking part in a panel discussion "Roots of Violence and Conflict".

A "profound distinction" had to be made between part of a nation and being part of a nation state, she said.

"One of South Africa's biggest challenges is how to make a nation into a nation state."

This implied changing people's primary loyalties from their ethnic group to that of the state.

AFRICA'S greatest need is to tap the resources of all its citizens and they must be drawn into as many forms of government and social institutions as possible, says writer and academic Njabulo Ndebele.

Professor Ndebele, rector of the University of the North, was speaking during the final session, entitled Vision of the Future Africa.

Africa was ravaged by famine, diseases, civil wars, military governments, stagnant bureaucracies, illiteracy and failed experiments, Professor Ndebele said.

The future of the continent could not be entrusted to fief presidents and their government ministers.

"The lack of any reference to environmental issues during the IFJ general assembly was "extremely surprising and disappo"nting", said SA Nature Foundation chief executive John Banks.

He appealed to the international media to help promote environmental literacy.

A STRONG international monitoring group of journalists, editors and publishers is likely to be based in South Africa during April to monitor and act on allegations of intimidation and violence against journalists covering the elections.

Director Johann Fritz told the closing session that the number of incidents of intimidation and harassment of journalists was increasing, and would probably increase further in the run-up to the election.

The institute's executive had agreed to set up a special monitoring group in South Africa during the period from approximately April 20-28 to receive any complaints.

These would be quickly investigated and given "full publicity" and the South African government would be pressed to take action.
THE Press Council needed to focus again on laws inhibiting the free flow of information, council chairman Prof Kobus van Rooyen told its annual meeting in Cape Town yesterday.

Among these were laws which authorised government ministers to regulate the availability of information. "These must be scrapped," he said.

"If certain aspects must remain in the interests of national security they must be checked by an independent media commission," Prof Van Rooyen told The Times yesterday.

The Publications Act should be amended to provide only for age restrictions and classifications of films. The possible prosecution of hardcore pornography should be left to the courts.

Prof Van Rooyen said he was personally disappointed by the Appellate Division's extremely narrow interpretation of the public interest defence. "One would hope that the Constitutional Court would widen this defence."

He was referring to defamation actions against the media where he felt intention to defame or at least gross negligence should be the basis of an action for contempt of court by the media.

Prof Van Rooyen said the council was particularly happy with its success in having section 205 of the Internal Security Act amended at the end of 1983.

A delegation led by the Press Council had met Justice Minister Mr Kobie Coetsee.
‘Alter Bill’s section on media freedom’

Cape Town — The Press Council should investigate the section on media freedom in the Bill of Rights to remove contradictory and ambiguous qualifications. Press Council chairman Professor Kobus van Rooyen said yesterday.

In his opening remarks at the council’s annual meeting, and later during debate on another topic, he said the guarantee of media freedom in the Bill granted substantial protection but did not go far enough.

This had been conceded by President de Klerk and ANC president Nelson Mandela.

The Bill allowed for limitations in media freedoms which were reasonable within an open democratic society based on equality. However, it also provided that, in the case of political speech, the limitation must also be necessary.

During debate, Sunday Times editor Ken Owen — also a member of the Conference of Editors, which met yesterday morning — said that body had decided to ask suitable authorities to examine the Bill and propose a new section for incorporation in the final Bill of Rights.

The Press Council should consider doing something similar, Owen said.

Van Rooyen also told the council that it needed to focus again on unnecessary laws inhibiting the free flow of information.

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Van Rooyen said the council was particularly happy with its success in having section 265 of the Internal Security Act amended at the end of 1983. — Sapa.
Viability is the best guarantee

Shakespeare's The Tempest is being performed by Capab in Cape Town this week. It is an intriguing drama in which Prospero uses his magic art to regain his dukedom, usurped by his brother, then lays aside his sorcery as a wiser and more chastened man.

The 400, mostly foreign, delegates at the annual congress of the International Press Institute are meeting simultaneously in the city. The congress was addressed on Monday by F W de Klerk and Nelson Mandela. Their speeches, particularly the latter's, so encapsulated the elements of high drama in The Tempest that it is a pity delegates won't see it. The similarities are profound and the portents ominous.

But Shakespeare is far too Eurocentric to be politically correct in our brave new world. Instead, delegates were entertained by an evening of African music at the University of the Western Cape, cradle of our new democracy.

Mandela makes a sensitive Prospero, well served in his speech writer by a mischievous Ariel. Caliban is personified in the white, male, middle-class editors of SA's daily newspapers and "upper echelons of the electronic media.

Happily, the FM is a weekly specialist publication. But in the eyes of the ANC dramatist we guess we are rather more Caliban than Caliban himself. For we have consistently criticised the ANC's democratic lapses and economic absurdities— as, indeed, we did those of the Nats for 36 years.

In our experience most of these editorial Calibans are reasonably talented journalists of democratic inclination and substantial goodwill. They tend to be economically benighted but late have been persuaded that collectivist views do not contribute much, if anything, to the upliftment of the poor.

Their sin is that they "have no knowledge of the life experience of (the) majority" and accepted a "shameful regime of vigorous self-censorship rather than stand up to a repressive government". In the eyes of the ANC, they left the alternative press—pioneering and courageous, if commercially unsound and of dubious totalitarman motive— to probing and iconoclastic journalism.

The last time Mandela and his mischievous Ariel made these accusations at an international press gathering, Argus newspapers were stung into commissioning a book to gainst these errors and establish themselves as the real mouthpiece of anti-apartheid endeavour.

The book was perhaps a little too hagiographic to be convincing to ANC sceptics or other journalists. But it had a point. Maybe now another Argus editor will be brought out of retirement to take up the cudgels. Or maybe not.

Our guess is that now the Argus newspapers are, via ambitious Irishman Tony O'Reilly, being delivered to the ANC, they will lapse gracefully into political torpidity. After Mandela's superfluous support for press freedom they're qualified to question his sincerity, let alone his accuracy— The Argus in Cape Town announced in banner headlines: "Mandela pledges freedom for the press." Speaking at the Rand Club last year, Mandela singled out The Star for political approbation. Will Durban's Daily News be next?

There were not many journalists, especially foreign ones, at the conference who left Cape Town City Hall on Monday comfortable that a free press would survive here. The rub, of course, is that while the ANC says it welcomes criticism and has nothing to fear from it, the very opposite is the case.

The ANC has had a bad press since 1990. The truth is that its economic policies are half-baked, its social policies recidivistic and its leaders eschew consistency for expediency. Even if it possessed sophisticated communications skills, facts could not be forever hidden. They have nothing to do with the Caliban editors of the daily press.

Instead of looking to its own shortcomings both in policy and in communications, the ANC is seeking other scapegoats. And like the National Party of John Vorster, it assumes it could turn the situation to advantage if it were to open its own newspaper, for which apparently US money is available once the ANC has found a local publishing partner. That is a splendid idea, though whether it will achieve ANC objectives is up to providence— and Ariel.

We don't know if O'Reilly is the conduit for those US funds. But two years ago, when he considered buying Argus's stake in Times Media Ltd, he asked Angio American for a loan to be repaid out of profits. Now he appears to have no lack of ready cash. Perhaps it is a coincidence.

Finally, Mandela, or his Ariel, told delegates that SA business, if left to its own devices, would continue "to hoard its capital and speculate for the highest profit." That was not written by anyone who is economically literate.

The ANC itself is one cause of the decline of investment in SA. If the banks lend as the ANC says it will require them to (that is, to those who won't or can't repay loans), then so-called speculation will rise even more vigorously.

Most of our daily newspapers are commercially viable concerns which, left alone, will continue to adapt to the ever-changing requirements of readers and advertisers. Now that the constraint of apartheid is removed, this adaptation should gather pace.

But if they are pushed for political expediency by ANC intervention beyond the bounds of rational commercial endeavour, the ANC will risk not only eroding press freedom but jeopardising viability and, therefore, the very existence of a free press.
Political bashing

The dominance of SA newspapers by white, middle-class males who tend to share a similar life experience, is set to become the new focus of the organisation’s efforts to reshape the media. (240)

Speaking in Cape Town this week at the annual congress of the International Press Institute, which was attended by the world’s leading newspaper publishers and editors, Mandela said: “While no one can object to knowledge of the life experience of that majority.”

While he made no suggestions for specific changes, the implication of his message is clear. The ANC expects affirmative action in the commercial press to mirror the sort of appointments that have given the SABC a new face — so much so that President F W de Klerk, speaking earlier at the congress, accused the ANC of blatantly manipulating the organisation.

The ANC’s view of press restructuring also needs to be seen in the context of Mandela’s wish for the “maintenance and extension of the diversity of the media.”

The organisation’s new focus follows the sale last week of a controlling interest in Argus Newspapers by JCI to Irishman Tony O’Reilly — a step welcomed by Mandela — which undercut one of the pillars of ANC criticism of the commercial press.

For the record, Mandela again stressed the ANC’s commitment to a press free of State interference and with the economic strength to stand up to the “blandishments of government officials.”

But, in another sideswipe at the mainstream print media, he maintained that during the years of severe repression under apartheid, the owners of mainstream newspapers “preferred to accept a shameful regime of rigorous self-censorship rather than stand up to a repressive government.”

It was, he said, the so-called alternative press that “kept the flag of press freedom aloft” during those times and whose efforts resulted today in SA editors enjoying greater freedom.

Equally worrying was Mandela’s reaffirmation of what is effectively the ANC’s threat to intervene directly if the private sector does not comply with the organisation’s political demands. He repeated his allegations that SA business prefers to “hoard capital or speculate for the highest profits” rather than invest in new productive areas.

“We are convinced that, left to its own devices, the SA business community will not rise to the challenges that face us. The objective of our policies is to create employment. While the democratic State will maintain and develop the market, we envisage occasions when it will be necessary for it to intervene where growth and development require such intervention. “Among these will be the employment of mechanisms of affirmative action to redress the effects of past discrimination against blacks, women, people in the rural areas and the physically disabled.” In addition, he said, the ANC believes public sector investment to provide basic needs and services can create about 300,000 new jobs.

An ANC government, Mandela said, would strive to attract foreign investment through stable, consistent and predictable policies.

De Klerk’s contribution focused on similar issues. He too stressed the need for stability to encourage economic growth. But he was more diplomatic in his professed support of press freedom, saying he accepted the “necessary tension” between government and the media.

However, his allegation that “one of the main parties” (clearly the ANC) was “trying to exert undue influence over the SABC” was astonishing given the National Party’s track record in this regard. Though the NP frequently complains the SABC is biased in favour of the ANC, this was the first time De Klerk had personally become involved in the row.

Among his allegations were that: the ANC propaganda department was giving SABC journalists direct instructions; a journalist who refused to obey was told not to return to work after the election; and the Democratic Eduvacation Broadcast Initiative is being abused to influence voters through its “sub-textual content.”

SABC director-general Wynand Harnse called on De Klerk to provide evidence of his allegations.
STORM CLOUDS FOR PRESS FREEDOM

DAVID BERRY REPORTS

The most of the Philippine press, for the first time under martial law, was arrested. Some of them are in prison, some are in government custody. Others are still at large, and it is feared, in hiding. Some of the arrested reporters have been charged with perjury, libel, and treason. They are being held without bail.

In addition to the arrests, the government has issued a series of orders that restrict the freedom of the press. These orders include the imposition of a curfew on news agencies, the banning of meetings of more than five people, and the censorship of all printed material.

The Philippine government's action is seen as a direct assault on the right to freedom of the press. The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines has condemned the government's actions and called for the release of the arrested reporters.

In a statement, the union said: "The arrest of journalists is a violation of their constitutional rights. We deplore the government's action and call for the immediate release of those arrested. We also call for the lifting of all orders that restrict the freedom of the press."
Threat to press freedom under the spotlight

CAPE TOWN.—Fears for press freedom in a new South Africa have grown substantially. In a week that brought the role of the media into the spotlight:

● The Conference of Editors expressed its dismay at increasing cases of abuse, threats and attacks on journalists assigned to report on politics.

● The Black Sash appealed to the Transitional Executive Council and ANC chief negotiator Cyril Ramaphosa to place the issue of press freedom on the agenda for the TEC meeting on Tuesday.

● The Democratic Party slammed a PAC youth leader's remark that perhaps a journalist should be killed before the PAC receives fair media coverage as displaying "a total lack of understanding of how the press works".

Professor Kobus van Rooyen, chairman of the Press Council, said the council should investigate the section on media freedom in the Bill of Rights to remove contradictory and ambiguous qualifications.

Delegates at the 43rd assembly of the International Press Institute heard the leaders Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk affirm their commitment to press freedom—but a leading trainer of journalists cautioned that the profession should continue to be a watchdog over its own interests.

Editors said in a statement after their conference in Cape Town this week that the accurate reporting of politics was vital to the democratic process. "The conference calls on all political leaders to re-affirm their dedication to democratic principles by urging their followers to respect the safety of journalists and their right to report freely."

Van Rooyen said the guarantee of media freedom in the Bill of Rights granted substantial protection but did not go far enough. This had been conceded by President de Klerk and ANC president Nelson Mandela.

In a letter to the TEC, Mary Burton of the Black Sash said the organisation recognised it might not be possible in the time remaining before the April election to consider and amend all of the many Acts which restricted the press' freedom to report information vital to voter awareness and the public interest.

See Page 6.

"Nevertheless, the Black Sash believes some of these measures could be given special priority." She said the Independent Media Commission would turn its attention to the independence of the media, and the Black Sash acknowledged the importance of that issue.

At this week's International Press Institute gathering, Professor George Cassen, recently-appointed head of the department of journalism at the University of Stellenbosch, warned that South Africa's emerging democracy was "very fragile" and that the media would have to be "the prop to which the new plant is attached to enable democracy to grow." — Own Correspondent, Sapa, Staff Reporter, Star 19/11/94
Sunday Nation editor queries circulation audit

SUNDAY Nation acting editor Gaba Tugwane lodged a query this week with the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) about the paper's newly released audited circulation figures for July to December, the ABC said.

Tugwane queried whether comparisons could be drawn with circulation figures for the same period in 1995, when the paper was published on Friday and named New Nation.

The paper changed its name and moved to Sunday publishing in August.

Tugwane said Sunday Nation was a different product.

The audited figures for July to December 1994 show Sunday Nation’s circulation has dropped 33% to 58,709 from 88,153 when it was still New Nation.

ABC GM Syd Pote said he had not received any notification the paper was to be considered a different product. Apart from the name change and the move to Sunday publishing, the paper had remained the same, he said.

An ABC source said Tugwane could request that New Nation's membership be suspended. This would allow him to apply for new membership for Sunday Nation. This would mean that no unfavourable comparisons could then be drawn with New Nation.

Industry sources said the paper's circulation had dropped because Sunday publishing was an overtraded market dominated by the Sunday Times.

The Sunday Times' strength was cited by Angus management as a reason for the Sunday Star's closure last month.

Sunday Nation, funded mainly by the EC, needed more aggressive marketing policy to compete with the Sunday Times, an industry analyst said.

Independent advertising consultants said the drop in circulation had been expected with the move to Sunday publishing and was not a cause for concern among national advertisers.

Newspaper distributor Allied operations manager Carl Ackerman said Sunday Nation's low circulation figures could be directly attributed to the dominance of the Sunday Times and City Press in the Sunday market.

Policy negotiations hold up hostel conversions

CAPE TOWN - A project to convert hostels and provide housing units for about 300 families on the Cape Flats has come to a virtual halt because the National Housing Board is in the process of negotiating a new housing policy.

However, 29 converted hostel units would be handed over to families in Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga today.

Project manager Hannes van der Merwe said other plans to turn hostels to homes for about 300 families - the first phase of a project to convert state-owned hostels on the Cape Flats only - had been held up because of negotiations relating to the future sustainability of housing standards and subsidies.

The handover of the 29 units was made possible by an agreement signed by the Cape Provincial Council, Umzamo Development Project and Ikapa Town Council about 18 months ago.

The CPA said the handover paved the way for conversion of more hostels on the Cape Flats. But it said it was still waiting for the National Hostels Co-ordinating Committee to approve the scheme.

Van der Merwe said divisive ethnic elements that characterised hostel occupation in Transvaal were largely absent in the Cape, where hostel dwellers were mainly Xhosa.

This made the conversion of hostels here easier, he said.

Two killed in Bekkersdal

JOHANNES NICOLO

Two people were shot dead and several others were injured yesterday during running battles between Azapo and Inkatha Freedom Party members in Bekkersdal on the West Rand.

A police spokesman said a hand grenade had been thrown at a police patrol but no one had been injured.

Two people had died when residents retaliated after a group attacked a house, he said.

Bekkersdal residents said yesterday that they were staying away from work to protest against the violence.

They were also protesting against the internal stability unit's continued presence in the township.

Residents' representatives claimed the stayaway was successful.
# ABC Circulation Figures

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Sources: Audit Bureau of Circulation

### Depressing

The ABC circulation figures for the second half of 1993 provide depressing reading for publishers. Most daily newspapers and magazines experienced lower sales than in the same period of 1992. Even the hitherto booming “black” publications suffered, with both the Sowetan and the Sunday Nation down.

Two important categories buck the trend, however: Weekly newspapers other than the troubled Sunday Nation are generally on the up. Even the now-defunct Sunday Star experienced an increase. A major factor here was obviously its circulation-building competition/promotions, to which the Sunday Times responded in kind.

**Afrikaners risk**

More interesting than this, however, is the rise in the Afrikaner newspaper sector. Beeld is up 12%, Die Burger 20%, Die Volksblad 6% and Rapport 11%, continuing a growth pattern which has been in evidence for a year. At least some of the growth must have come from picking up former purchasers of Die Transvaler since its closure.

In addition, Afrikaners are political animal and the election may have boosted circulations more than it has done for English-language newspapers.

Tony Everedman

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**FINANCIAL MAIL • FEBRUARY • 26 • 1994 • 85**
PAC denial on threat to press

Own Correspondent

DURBAN — The PAC has denied its supporters called for the killing of white journalists covering the weekend funeral in Umtata of Apla commander Ms Sabelo Phama.

PAC spokeswoman Ms Siphelele Siwele said yesterday the reports were "manufactured".

She said the PAC would "protect journalists and help them cover events. We believe in people's right to know."
Agencies criticised on affirmative action

STATE intervention on affirmative action would be the forced result of the advertising industry's inaction, ANC human resources deputy head Pape Moloto said.

Speaking at the Sunday Times appointments advertising conference last week, Moloto said the industry still lacked professional advertising in indigenous languages.

"The scarcity of black advertising agencies meant the selection of an agency to handle the ANC election campaign was approached on a racial level."

He said the industry needed to develop the organisation and infrastructure to produce a generation of advertising people fully representative of the population.

Moloto said the ANC proposed to form a national labour commission as the first step towards formalising affirmative action legislation.

Amanda Vermeulen

He suggested the commission would facilitate the establishment of equity partnerships, joint ventures and black representation on boards of directors, based on a model of industry self-regulation.

"If the private sector is allowed to regulate itself on issues of affirmative action, it will be able to blow the whistle on those who are not playing by the rules. The state will intervene only if the private sector fails to use its self-regulatory powers."

He said an ANC government would look at a system of grants and levies to assist the private sector in affirmative action programmes.

Affirmative action was a developmental issue and should not be politically motivated, he said.

"Excellence is needed in SA and affirmative action is all about excellence."

Charter Media to sell small

Amanda Vermeulen

The Newspaper Marketing Bureau has launched Charter Media to sell national advertising for small community papers.

Charter Media has 19 titles, eight owned by or linked to axions.

National advertising coordinator Danielle Klein said mainstream media reached 73% of SA's emerging markets but the small community papers were central to reaching the rest.

Charter Media was established to serve community papers and to offer advertisers the chance to reach other sections of the community.

Klein said responses from agencies were encouraging.

At present, advertising came mainly from political parties and property and furniture retailers.

She estimated that about R10m of advertising would be placed in Charter Media's first year.
Black newsmen at AWB meeting

Staff Report

TWO black photographers evicted from an AWB meeting at the City Hall on Monday night were last night allowed to cover the right-wing organisation's meeting in the Kraaifontein town hall.

Earlier in the day AWB leader Mr Eugene Terre'Blanche, explaining the ban, said at a press conference he could not guarantee the safety of black journalists covering his meetings because "nationalist emotions run high" and people "don't understand the tension of the Afrikaaner who is under threat of losing his land."

He also accused journalists attending Monday's meeting of being "confrontational" and said their bosses should know better than to send black journalists to right-wing meetings.

Last night the two photographers — Mr John Christopher of England and local photographer Mr Bernard Perez — were searched entering the hall and greeted with discontented murmurs when they sat down at press tables at the front of the hall.

The meeting was attended by about 700 people. Mr Terre'Blanche said to thunderous applause that the media "wants the freedom to go where they like but are not prepared to write about the 'Boer' who wants their own freedom in his own land."

Mr Christopher said, "I am just doing my job but I would be lying if I didn't say I was scared."

Meanwhile, the TEC yesterday called on Law and Order Minister Mr. Hermus Kriel to say what the police had done to prevent the AWB from acting against journalists because of their skin colour.

SMILE, PLEASE. AWB leader Mr Eugene Terre'Blanche, flanked by "Ironguards" including the man who evicted black journalists from a City Hall meeting last night as British press photographer John Christopher captures the moment. Picture: ANNE LAING.

SA Communist Party representative Mr Joe Slovo said the AWB action was "one of the most outrageous events since we've been engaged in the process to democratic transition."

"The security forces must prevent them from acting against people purely on grounds of their colour."

The Democratic Party's media spokesman, Mr Peter Soal, said the AWB action was "as racist" as the attitude the PAC and Azapo's display towards journalists at Aplia commander Mr Sabelo Phama's funeral at the weekend.

"It is the duty of the press to mirror society, warts and all, and the AWB should desist from their undemocratic tactics," Mr Soal said.

The Media Workers' Association of South Africa (Mwasa) said the AWB had a right to hold its beliefs and ideals, but no right to threaten journalists covering news events. Mwasa said the incident should be viewed as an effort to undermine the freedom of the press.

The union called on the Independent Electoral Commission to act against the AWB.

Jackboot politics — Page 6
Kriel quizzed about AWB

CAPE TOWN — The TEC called on Law and Order Minister Hennessy Kriel yesterday to explain what the police had done to prevent the AWB from acting against journalists because of their skin colour.

The TEC followed strong attacks at yesterday's TEC meeting on the AWB for its decision to bar black journalists from its rally in the Cape Town City Hall on Monday night.

SA Communist Party representative Joe Slovo said the AWB action was "one of the most outrageous events since we have been engaged in the process to democratic transition". This action, 56 days before the election, was part of the political threat to the election.

"This exposes what one has supposed as the real face of the volkstaat," he said.

The Freedom Alliance, particularly its black members and Afrikaans Volksfront leader Gen Constand Viljoen, should say whether they approved of the "racial thuggery" by one of their alliance partners, Slovo said.

"The security forces must prevent these brown-shirted thugs from acting against people purely on grounds of their colour," he said.

The TEC also asked Kriel to provide it with details of the police investigations into an AWB disruption of a local government forum in Newcastle recently.

DP media spokesman Peter Saal said that for the AWB to chase photographers and journalists from its meeting in Cape Town was as racist as the PAC's and Azapo's attitude towards journalists at Aplla commandant Sabela Dhama's funeral at the weekend.

"The AWB are nothing more than bigoted bullies who should be grateful that credible journalists want to report their racist outpourings," Saal said.

"It is the duty of the Press to mirror society, warts and all, and the AWB should desist from their undemocratic Nazi-type tactics!"
AWB action is condemned

By Mzimasi Ngudle

THE MEDIA Workers' Association of South Africa has condemned the mishandling of black journalists by supporters of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging in Cape Town on Monday.

"While the AWB has the right to hold high its beliefs and ideals, it does not have a right to threaten journalists in their coverage of news," (2.48) "Their behaviour and attitude have proved to be anachronistic and smack of Nazism and barbarism.

"Mwasa holds freedom of speech sacred but cannot sacrifice journalists at the altar of expediency."

The union called upon the Independent Electoral Commission to act against the perpetrators "lest it be proven to be a toothless bulldog.

"The lunatics should not be allowed to call the shots and firmly destroy the basis already laid for a free Press," Mwasa said.
As your correspondent makes very clear, his first-hand experience in the field has revealed a series of significant findings that challenge the conventional wisdom on which much of our current understanding is based. His report is based on extensive observations and interactions with key figures in the field, and it suggests a reevaluation of fundamental assumptions.

The implications of these findings are profound, calling into question many of the accepted practices and protocols. Further investigation is clearly warranted to fully assess the implications of this new information.

In the meantime, I urge all concerned parties to approach any decisions with a fresh perspective and an open mind.

Yours truly,
[Signature]
[Name]
BBC news head in SA
killed in car smash

MMABATHO — British Broadcasting
Corporation news head in South
Africa Mr John Harrison was killed in
a car accident on the road between
Mmabatho and Zeerust yesterday.
Mr Harrison and BBC cameraman
Mr Glen Middleton were returning
from Zeerust when the car in which
they were travelling left the road.

And journalists covering the vi-
olence in Bophuthatswana suffered ca-
sualties when youths attacked report-
ers at makeshift roadblocks.

Youths stopped an SABC television
crew headed by Ms Nan Roux about
5km outside Mmabatho and tried to
pull her from the car. SATV reporter
Mr Dane Hefer said he said Ms Roux
had been assaulted and the car
stoned.

Mr Hefer and his crew were also
attacked on their way back from Zeer-
ust.

A team from the British news net-
work Sky News was stopped at an-
other roadblock near Mmabatho and
told by youths they had to leave the
car or they could be shot. ITN reporter
Mr James Brittan said — Sapa
AWB members opened fire on an SABC television crew filming their withdrawal from Mimbatho yesterday.

This was one of several incidents in which right-wingers and supporters of President Lucas Mangope assaulted, shot at, and harassed journalists covering the Bophuthatswana uprising.

Two senior journalists, Mr John Battersby of the Christian Science Monitor and Mr Paul Tayler were severely beaten and kicked by the retreating AWB members outside Mafikeng as they went to the aid of the SABC crew who were shot at. The crew was filming the tail end of the AWB's retreat from Mafikeng.

SABC radio journalist Mr Eugene Yssel was earlier beaten and kicked at the AWB's so-called campaign headquarters, the Bophuthatswana Defence Force airfield.

Star photographer Mr Ken Oosterbroek was assaulted and his film confiscated, and Cape Town freelance photographer Mr Fanle Jacobs was also assaulted.

The SA government has made "strong representations" to the Bophuthatswana government about the beatings, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pik Botha said yesterday. — Sapa
O'Reilly buys the Cape Times

Business Editor
ARGUS Newspapers, headed by Irish press baron Mr Tony O'Reilly, is to buy the Cape Times with effect from April 1 as part of a R61-million cash deal.

It will also buy Times Media Limited's (TML's) minority holdings in Natal Newspapers and the Pretoria News.

This follows an announcement on February 9 that Argus Newspapers is to be listed on the JSE.

It also comes after the February 9 purchase of 31% — effective control — of Argus Newspapers by Mr O'Reilly, chairman of the Independent Newspapers group and chief executive of Heinz.

For the past eight years Argus Newspapers and TML have run a joint operating arrangement in the city, with The Argus company managing sales, distribution, printing and administration of the Cape Times.

TML owned the title of the Cape Times and ran its editorial side.

All editorial staff on the Cape Times will be offered jobs with unchanged packages.

'Growing'
Mr Koos Viviers, who remains editor, told staff yesterday that he was happy to say editorial independence would not change fundamentally.

Argus Newspapers' chief executive Mr John Featherstone said yesterday: "We are pleased to welcome the Cape Times' editorial team on board and look forward to growing the newspaper with them.

"Our experience has been that it is far better to have common objectives for both management and editorial functions of newspapers.

Mr Featherstone said the Cape Times was a valuable property.

He said it was a newspaper which 60,000 people bought daily and its advertising revenue had been improving at a faster rate than that of The Argus.
Argus takes control of Cape Times in R61-m deal

- From page 1

Announcement, the Cape Times was managed by Argus Newspapers in terms of what was called a Joint Operating Agreement with the newspapers publishing out of Argus-owned Newspaper House.

Although the financial holdings of the two newspaper groups — TML and Argus — now have been separated, they will maintain links through strengthened joint printing and distribution agreements.

Argus Newspapers' chief executive John Featherstone said at a Press conference in Cape Town last night that the deal was the natural next step in the unbundling of Argus Holdings, which had 100 percent control of Argus Newspapers as well as a stake in TML.

He said decisions affecting such things as the structure of the enlarged group would have to wait for the decisions from the new Argus Newspapers Board under the control of its Irish owners.

There were no plans to expand the group. The group was trading under difficult economic conditions and was in a period of consolidation.
ARGUS BUYS CAPE TIMES

BRUCE CAMERON
Business Editor

ARGUS Newspapers has bought the Cape Times and taken full ownership of Natal Newspapers and the Pretoria News in a R61-million deal with Times Media Limited.

The shuffling of ownership of South Africa's main English language newspapers follows the recently announced sale of a controlling 31 percent interest of Argus Newspapers to Ireland's independent Newspapers.

Argus Newspapers now owns both English daily newspapers in Cape Town and Durban. TML's main titles now are its flagship, the Sunday Times, and the niche market Business Day and Financial Mail.

The deal is effective from April 1 and will form part of the reconstructed Argus Newspapers company, which is expected to be listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in May.

The Competition Board, which carried out an investigation when the Natal Mercury in Durban was sold to the Argus Group in a deal that led to the formation of the Natal Newspapers operating company has 'indicated that it does not intend to conduct any investigation into the transaction'.

The incorporation of the Cape Times into the Argus stable has perturbed newspaper staff, but Times Editor Rose Vouers, who will be staying on at the helm, said he had been given acceptable guarantees of editorial independence.

He felt "a bit traumatised" by the announcement because of the long relationship with TML and the "obviously uncertain" future caused by Argus Newspapers' ownership.

Although the staff were "basically unhappy and uncertain" about the future, he said they were dedicated to keeping the Cape Times going.

Andrew Drysdale, the Argus' editor-in-chief, said "As jour-
PRESS UNDER FIRE

IFP official threatens journalist

Political Staff 15 July 1994

KIMBERLEY — Sapa reporter Jonathan Rees was threatened by an IFP official outside the Kimberley City Hall soon before IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi arrived to address a political meeting.

The official had apparently taken offence over Mr Rees’s repeated questions to Chief Buthelezi as to why the majority of the IFP supporters had been bussed in from the OFS goldfields and the Reef to support the IFP leader’s two-day visit to Kimberley.

"Do you want me to tell them to chase you?" the official demanded, gesturing to a makeshift impi of fewer than 100 supporters kneeling on the ground outside the Kimberley City Hall, rattling their spears and sticks behind cowhide and homemade cardboard shields.

The official accused Mr Rees of having a "destructive attitude" towards Chief Buthelezi for asking why the majority of the strong crowd at Sunday night’s Kimberley rally had been bussed in.

"But the official refused to identify himself to Mr Rees, shrugging off the question and saying "it doesn’t matter".

About 200 people attended the IFP leader’s City Hall meeting last night. They included two busses loads of IFP supporters and about 50 local residents.

There was a muted police presence outside the Kimberley City Hall as about 150 curious onlookers gathered to watch the impi sing and chant, led by indunas wearing red armbands, who performed war dances, gesturing with their spears and sticks.

(Photos by K Bickle, corner of Bees and Violeta Streets, Kimberley)
Bid to derail sale of Times

AN attempt is being made by a consortium of black businessmen, acting in association with Nationale Pers, to derail Argus Newspapers' takeover of the Cape Times which was announced last week.

The consortium recently made an unsuccessful bid to buy the Cape Times. The consortium is believed to have been advised, in the initial stages at least, by former Cape Times editor Mr Anthony Heard.

Chartered accountant Mr Mustaq Brey, who is putting together the consortium, said they had made representations to the Competition Board opposing the TML Argus arrangement and outlining their rival bid.

If their bid was successful Nationale Pers would become a minority stakeholder in the Cape Times and would print and distribute the newspaper.

Competitions Board chairman Dr Pierre Brooks confirmed the board had been approached.

"The case is far from cut and dried. We made a decision not to investigate the acquisition based on facts put before us. If new information is now provided which indicates differently, then it is possible we will have to rescind the green light and institute a full investigation," Dr Brooks said.

Due to its sensitivity and the April 1 implementation date for the Argus/TML deal, the case would be given priority.

Nationale Pers chairman Mr Ton Vorloo said he had been approached by "interested people in the Western Cape with credible links in the business community and enjoying the confidence of figures in the English business establishment" who had asked Nationale Pers to be associated with a bid to buy the Cape Times.

"Nationale Pers is in a position to play a supportive role in terms of stability, technology, marketing and finance.

"Our only stipulation would be that such a newspaper should be independent and to this end a trust of eminent people would be established to ensure editorial independence.

"Mr Vorloo named two of the consortium as Mr Brey, managing partner in chartered accountancy firm Brey & Associates, and Mr Fred Robertson, managing director of Commlife Insurance Brokers.

The names of Dr Jakes Gerwel, rector of UWC, and Mr Franklin Sonn, the rector of Pentech, both of whom have strong ANC links, have been mentioned by sources as potential trustees.

Mr John Feasterstone, chief executive of Argus Newspapers, said they had made their presentation to the Competition Board and it "was a very good case".

"Based on this case, the Competition Board said it did not intend launching an investigation into the matter and we remain confident of the intrinsic merits of Argus Newspapers' acquisition of the Cape Times." This was reiterated by TML managing director Mr David Kvarsky who confirmed that Nationale Pers, acting for a consortium, had made a written approach to TML a few weeks back to acquire the Cape Times.

"However I would not consider the approach as having been a formal bid, no figures were mentioned and they received a written response as to why we did not feel the approach was viable," ANC Western Cape leader Dr Allan Boesak said.

"We would not consider the approach as having been a formal bid, no figures were mentioned and they received a written response as to why we did not feel the approach was viable."

ANC Western Cape leader Dr Allan Boesak said he had no reason to fear the takeover of the Cape Times by Argus Newspapers would be detrimental to the ANC.

However, ANC economics spokesman Mr Trevor Manuel said he was concerned about the possible monopolistic aspects of the sale.

He did not believe the global trend towards the concentration of ownership boded well for the press.
Bank may back Cape Times bid

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Deputy Business Editor

The newly-formed black controlled Merchant & Investment Bank of Africa (Miba) would be keen to help finance a black business bid to buy the Cape Times, says chairman Mr Don Mkhwanazi.

Mr Mkhwanazi said that Miba, which was shaped out of Prima Bank in March, "would be very interested in a transaction like this which would further black economic empowerment."

City chartered accountant Mr Mustaq Brey, who is putting together a black business consortium in association with Nationale Pers to make a bid to buy the Cape Times, said the group would send its official letter of complaint about the Argus company's acquisition of the Cape Times to the Competition Board by fax late yesterday.

Competitions Board chairman Dr Pierre Brook said that the board would examine the consortium's complaint immediately it was received. This could be followed by individual meetings with concerned parties.

In terms of the consortium's takeover proposal, Nationale Pers would become a minority shareholder and would print and distribute the Cape Times.

The Cape Times branch of the South African Union of Journalists has criticised the manner in which their newspaper was taken over by the Argus company.

The union said its members were informed of the takeover long after the deal had gone through. Sapa reports.
Call to ensure media diversity

Political Correspondent

THE Transitional Executive Council should take steps to prevent the monopolisation of the media in South Africa, the Black Sash said yesterday.

Black Sash 'legislation watch' spokesperson, Ms Martha Bridgman, said "A free media is fundamental to the democratic process the world over, and is endangered in South Africa due to current attempts to monopolise sectors such as the English press.'

She urged the TEC to define a policy on media ownership and promote diversification and to appoint a task group on the media.
Press monopoly remains

Despite the unbundling of Anglo's newspaper interests, a chronic monopoly still exists in the English press, writes Bruce Cohen.

REMEMBER the good old days when Anglo owned the English language press? There was a certain comfort in the simplicity of the structure: Mining capital controlled the press and the press was its lapdog. In the last few months, however, the whole picture has changed.

Phase I was the sale by Argus of 52 percent of the Southeyan, the biggest daily in the country, to the black-owned Corporate Africa consortium headed by Dr Natial Molana. The deal was a welcome signal that the press monoculture was beginning to crack. But there is so much vertical integration in the English language press that the Southeyan continues to be intimately bound up with Argus interests that are virtually impossible to disentangle. Argus, apart from its 20 percent stake, continues to hold the printing, distribution, advertising, and management contracts for the paper. In other words, de facto control.

Phase II came in February when the "bear-like, soft-eyed" (according to a Star reporter) Irishman Tony O'Reilly, chief of Heinz, rolled into town. Before you could lick the mayonnaise from your fingers he had taken all Argus newspapers off Anglo's hands.

O'Reilly's 31 percent stake in the soon-to-be-listed Argus Newspapers makes him the most powerful newspaper magnate in the country. For R125-million he acquired control over a tidy pile of newspapers that generate around R700-million a year in revenues: 100 percent of The Star, Cape Argus, Sunday Tribune and DFA, 70 percent of Natal Newspapers (Daily News and Mercury), 55 percent of the Pretoria News, as well as a 70 percent share in the Cape Times JCA. He also gets 70 percent of the the Newspaper Printing Co in Johannesburg, the country's biggest newspaper press operation as well as control over the Allied distribution network (also 70 percent).

Last week came Phase III, the divorce with Times Media Ltd. TML's joint holdings with Argus were erased — except in distribution/printing. For R61-million, Argus Newspapers (read O'Reilly) gets 100 percent control over The Cape Times, the Pretoria News and Natal Newspapers.

The effect of these deals is that the English press is no longer a single pyramid with Anglo-JCI at the pinnacle. There are now two distinct groups: O'Reilly's Argus and Anglo-JCI's TML.

Competition Board chairman Dr Pierre Brookes says the new structure is an improvement because Anglo-JCI no longer occupy the commanding heights of the English press. Technically, he says, all that Argus Newspapers have done is to take out the minority interests (they already had control over Natal Newspapers and the Pretoria News, and a majority out of the Cape Times joint operating agreement).

It is hard, however, to view the situation in a purely technical light. The fact is that the English press remains a chronic monopoly. O'Reilly now controls:

- More than 50 percent of English language daily newspaper sales across the country (one out of every two English daily sales are sold by 100 percent Argus papers. If one adds in O'Reilly's de facto control of the Southeyan, the percentage is much higher).
- Almost 40 percent of English weekend newspaper circulation
- A total monopoly — of advertising and sales — of the English daily newspaper market in Cape Town.
- A similar monopoly in Durban.
- A prime position in the PWV.

The result is that, at the operating level, monopolisation of the English newspaper market is now even more concentrated than before. (TML at least had editorial control over the Cape Times before the latest deal.)

The main difference is that local mining capital has been replaced by foreign (private) capital.

In this post-sanctions era, it's politically incorrect to be xenophobic about the fact that the English language press in South Africa now effectively belongs to a foreigner. After all, only a handful of countries like Australia, Brazil, France, Italy and Japan bother to regulate foreign ownership of the press, and South Africa needs the tax revenue.

Neither does one want to sound alarmist warnings of the Chekovian nightmare of our press falling into the hands of that small club of transnational media giants who massage and homogenise the world's news agendas (after all, O'Reilly is a dwarf compared to Murdoch or CNN's Turner or Time-Warner's Rose). But the degree of concentration in the English press remains unacceptable high, power over the press a privilege of the select few.

The irony of the situation is that it comes hot on the heels of desperate attempts to prevent this sort of control emerging in the broadcast sector. The Independent Broadcasting Authority Act imposes specific restrictions on foreign investment in private radio and TV stations (a limit of 20 percent) and also has some very inadequate anti-monopoly regulations.

Despite its flaws, the IBA Act is a genuine attempt to promote plurality of ownership and a diversity of voices. The anomalous situation in the newspaper sector is glaring testimony to the failure of policymakers to address the issue in the context of the entire media landscape of South Africa.

Several countries such as Austria, Norway, Belgium, Sweden, France and Holland, alarmed by the high concentrations of newspaper ownership, have devised elaborate state subsidy systems to promote media diversity (financial support for new and alternative voices).

Those who believe democracy should also be a feature of the South African press, should be actively campaigning to ensure the new government takes seriously its responsibility for promoting press diversity to ensure that freedom of expression is not limited to the few who can afford to publish their opinions.
Black group ready to start own paper

Ruling on Cape Times buy-out awaited

HENRI du PLESSIS
Staff Reporter

A BLACK consortium trying to buy the Cape Times said it will launch its own daily newspaper in Cape Town if its bid fails.

Its bid depends on the Competition Board’s decision on the bid by Argus Newspapers to buy the Cape Times.

Leading members of the consortium, who held a news conference today at Gatesville, Athlone, said its bid was a serious one.

If the Argus buy-out was banned by the Competition Board, it would offer the same price for the Times Media Limited assets that Argus wanted to buy. If the buy-out went ahead, it would launch its own daily in Cape Town.

The consortium, headed by a group of Cape Flats businessmen and with the support of former Cape Times editor Tony Heard, said it believed it could raise the R61 million needed for the buy-out.

Members of the consortium condemned reports suggesting a link between its bid and the ANC, saying it was unfair because it suggested a front.

"Why is it that whenever a black group wants to buy a business, people are looking for fronts?" asked Fred Robertson, head of Commlife Insurance Brokers and Nando’s Chickenland, spokesman for the consortium.

Among the members are Ebrahim Bhorat, chief executive officer of South newspaper and managing director of Meletronics.

The consortium said it knew the Cape Times was losing money but it believed it could be turned around — just as Mr Bhorat had turned South into a profit-making venture.

Mr Robertson said the consortium believed it had access to the necessary expertise to run the paper efficiently.

It also believes aspects of the joint operating agreement with The Argus could be maintained for the foreseeable future.

The consortium promised Cape Times staff the same security as they had with TML and guaranteed editorial independence with an editorial trust similar to the Guardian Trust in Britain.

Competition Board chairman Pierre Brooks anticipates being able to make a decision on whether to launch a formal investigation into the Argus buy-out of TML’s media interests at the end of next week.

Mr Brooks said the board would not comment on any of the meetings it had scheduled with the various interested parties.

"Once we have heard everybody and have gone back to the Argus and Times Media for their response, we will comment further."
The origins of a newspaper tradition

The Cape Times was established in 1876 by F.Y. St Leger, an Anglican priest and classical scholar of Irish origin who gave up his living to take part in the Kimberley diamond rush before establishing the Cape's first daily newspaper.

St Leger insisted from the start that the Cape Times was not the paper of any political party but represented the interests of the people of the Cape as a whole. It took its stand on the principles of political liberty which, St Leger asserted, was essential to the moral and political health of the Colony.

A concern for human rights was soon evident when the paper denounced the brutal assaults of labourers on the Kimberley mines and on farms, which were an unhappy feature of colonial life at the time.

Tradition

In an imperial age, St Leger was a liberal imperialist who did not doubt that the Empire was a force for good in human affairs. His chosen successor, Edmund Garrett, was contractually bound by him to conduct the paper in every respect on the same liberal lines.

The tradition survived an attempt by Rutherford Harris, Cecil Rhodes's hatchet man, to usurp the policy of the paper at the time of the Jameson Raid in what Harris conceived to be the interests of Cecil Rhodes.

Harris had secured a half share in the paper (apparently on Rhodes's behalf) on the precise condition that this did not give him any say whatsoever in editorial policy, yet he persisted in interfering Garrett, a frail and wasted victim of tuberculosis, ordered him out of the editor's office. Harris left the paper to return to England.

Garrett collapsed on the eve of the South African War and he gave up the editorship. There was a brief and inglorious interregnum before Maitland Park, a scholarly yet tough-minded Scot, restored the paper's standing and influence, which had faded somewhat during the war.

Jingoistic

Park held that an editor must work out his own salvation—or damnation—as he told E.R. Syfret, chairman of the Cape Times board.

Park, later Sir Maitland Park, was one of the first influential figures in the English-speaking establishment to recognize General Louis Botha as a great statesman of reconciliation, at a time when the English-language Press for the most part was pro-Jameson and still rather jingoistic in tone.

The Cape Times accepted the compromise of Union by which the Cape retained its non-racial franchise while the Transvaal and the OFS retained their whites-only franchise. The paper's confidence that the Cape franchise would ultimately prevail in the North was misplaced.

The Cape Times rejected as a "lock of offence" the provision that whites only could sit in the Union Parliament.

Park was succeeded as editor by B.K. Long in the 1920s and Long, in turn, was succeeded by George Wilson in 1935. Wilson had joined the newspaper in 1896 and his editorship, which continued until 1944, did much to maintain the continuity and consistency of the newspaper's outlook.

Although the Cape Times frequently found itself in editorial agreement with the party of Botha and Smuts in opposition to Afrikaner nationalism, the paper maintained its independent position.

The South African Party, later the United Party, was never immune from criticism. As Desmond Young recalled in his memoirs, General Smuts reacted on one occasion to a Cape Times leader "as if he had been bitten by his favourite dog".

Smuts's final Rhodes lecture in England in 1929 was strongly criticised by the Cape Times on the grounds that the segregationist picture of the 'noble question' given by Smuts "seemed to have scandalously little resemblance to local realities."

The history of the paper in the Long and Wilson years has yet to be written and subsequent editorships are rather too recent for detached historical assessment. There have been ups and downs but the tradition remains intact.

The essence of this tradition is that the editor, as long as he is editor, decides what goes into the paper.

As Geoffrey Dawson told the proprietors of The Times in 1922, every editor worth his salt must have a free hand to conduct his side of the paper as he thinks best as long as he is in charge of it.

An editor, in fact, must work out his own salvation or damnation.
Probe of Times deal urged

By MAGGIE ROWLEY

PRESSURE is mounting on the Competitions Board to launch a full investigation into the takeover of the Cape Times by the Argus company, with at least three objections to the takeover being lodged with the board by late yesterday.

Board spokesman Mr. Wouter Meyer confirmed that submissions had been lodged yesterday and more were expected next week, including one from the SA Union of Journalists. He said that once all submissions had been received the board would decide whether it would launch a formal investigation into the takeover, which was announced last week.

One of the submissions was a formal complaint about the Argus acquisition of the Cape Times by a consortium of black businessmen in association with Nashonale Pers, which together are planning a rival bid for control of the Times.

Objections have also been lodged by the Freedom of Expression Institute and the Weekly Mail and Guardian.
Cape Times bidders say they're serious

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Deputy Business Editor

If the bid by a black consortium in association with Nationale Pers to buy the Cape Times failed, it would start its own independent "mainstream" newspaper, spokesman Mr Fred Robertson said yesterday.

At a press conference in Athlone, Mr Robertson, managing director of Commlife Insurance brokers and Nando's Chickenland, said: "We are extremely serious about entering the newspaper market one way or another."

The consortium members, advised by former Cape Times editor Mr Tony Heard, include some of the most prominent black businessmen in the Western Cape such as Mr Ebrahim Bhorat, chief executive officer of South newspaper and managing director of Melecronics, Mr Mustaq Brey, a senior partner in chartered accounting firm M Brey & Associates, Mr Roger Ellick, chairman of the Institute of Directors and involved with Black Enterprise magazine; Mr Sam Dube of Dube Service Station, Mr Alson Somcza of National Window Blinds and Mr Jeffery Kleinsmith, a former editor of People's Express Newspaper who is now with Radio C Flat.

The consortium's bid depends on a Competitions Board ruling against the Argus/TML deal announced a week ago and TML agreeing to sell the Cape Times to another party.

Mr Brey said Nationale Pers would take a minority stake in the company, but the size of this stake had not yet been decided.
Photographer loses claim

SUNDAY TIMES photographer Herbert Mabuza lost a R3 000 claim for damages against the Minister of Law and Order in the Johannesburg magistrate’s court this week.

The court found that the minister was not responsible for injuries suffered by Mr Mabuza when he was bitten by a police dog while covering a protest by taxi drivers on February 2 last year.

Counsel for the police, Mr Edmond Wessels, argued that Mr Mabuza went to the protest fully aware of the dangers and that he had behaved negligently by straying into an area where the dog felt threatened.
THE Independent Media Commission has asked the Transitional Executive Council and the Independent Electoral Commission to take action against the South African Communication Service.

The SACS has been accused by the IMC of being biased in favour of the Government by making available only to the Government various news evaluation reports, which include road shows and campaign trails by political parties.

The IMC said it had contracted the SACS to monitor the media during the election period, but the SACS allegedly insisted that it would only supply the Government with the reports.

IMC chairwoman Mrs Zubeida Jaffer said: "We wish to bring to the attention of all political parties that the SACS intends to continue to provide the Government with a regular news evaluation service during the election period.

"The IMC believes this would give the governing party an exclusive access to media coverage on elections matters throughout the country."

"In terms of the IMC Act, it is the responsibility of our body to ensure that State information services are not directly or indirectly used to advance the interests of any political party, whether directly or indirectly."

SACS head David Venter confirmed his organisation was not supplying the reports to other parties.
Media commission set to crack whip

THE Independent Media Commission (IMC) will look at possible ways — including legal action — to ensure that political parties and some self-governing states co-operate with pre-election broadcasting regulations.

Acting IMC chairman Raymond Louw said yesterday that some departments and some self-governing states, including Law and Order, Home Affairs and KwaZulu, had not co-operated in terms of a ruling which said that they must submit all their communications to the IMC within 48 hours of broadcast.

However, a Home Affairs spokesman said the reason his department appeared not to have co-operated was that it had not published anything.

It said that if it did, it would abide by the IMC regulations.

Law and Order could not be reached for comment yesterday, and the Inkatha Freedom Party refused to say anything.

The IMC announced, also, that it would present a formula for political broadcasts to the broadcasters and the political parties.

This formula set out the amount of free time that public broadcasters should give political parties for "party election broadcasts". According to the formula, the ANC, NP, DP and PAC would be given the most time based on the number of candidates, opinion polls and the allocation of money by the Independent Electoral Commission to the different parties.

If accepted, the formula would come into effect from the end of this week, the IMC said. The formula excludes time allocated to parties on the news and in current affairs and discussion programmes.

Although the IMC was restricted to parties taking part in the election, it would try to ensure that parties campaigning against the election should have time in the news and current affairs programmes.

The public broadcasting media had to broadcast party broadcasts as well as paid ads from political parties. Commercial broadcasters did not have to carry party programmes, but had to carry ads from all political parties based on the IMC rules of fairness.

Louw said the IMC was aimed at ensuring a free and fair election and that political parties had equitable treatment by the broadcast media.

He said the IMC was monitoring broadcasting only, and not the commercial Press media.

Report by M. Sithole, TMU, 11 December 1994
The Independent Media Diversity Trust yesterday warned it would call on the Competitions Board to intervene should Times Media Limited go ahead with the sale of the Cape Times to Argus Newspapers.

In a statement, IMDT director Mr Clive Endozi urged that consideration be given to providing the newspaper with a more representative Cape-based ownership.

If the planned sale went ahead, the trust asked the Competitions Board to hold a proper meeting to ensure the issues were heard in an "open and transparent way".

The IMDT was particularly concerned with the intended sale which would result in both daily newspapers having the same owner, which was "part of the old rather than the new" and unacceptable in a society moving towards democracy.
General clears his name in defamation fight

Papers fail in ‘proof’, court finds.

IN setting aside Mr Justice Krieger’s trial court decision in favour of the Weekly Mail and Vrye Weekblad, the Appeal Court found that the evidence of self-confessed Third Force member Dirk Coetzee had not been proven on a balance of probabilities.

The onus of proving Coetzee’s allegation lay with the defendants of the action, and this they had not been able to do.

A full Bench of the Appeal Court, therefore, concluded the newspapers had defamed the applicant — esteemed forensic scientist Major-General Lothar Neethling — by implicating him in the supply of poison used by security branch operatives against members of the African National Congress.

The newspapers based their defence largely on publishing the truth for public benefit.

But, General Neethling claimed the Vrye Weekblad articles contained “false, malicious and defamatory” matter, while statements published in the Weekly Mail were “per se defamatory.”

The Appeal Court judgment — written by Mr Justice Hoexter — is reported in the latest issue of the South African Law Reports.

Concurring, Chief Justice Corbett said he wished to make clear that “this is one of those relatively rare cases where the probabilities are evenly balanced; it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty who is telling the truth.”

The court awarded costs to General Neethling, found he was entitled to damages, and granted leave to both parties to file further heads of argument.

Captain Dirk Coetzee worked for the Post Office before joining the police in 1970. He quickly rose through the ranks.

A few years later he did a stint with the Rhodesian security forces where he became acquainted with counter-murder techniques such as the use of poison and the incineration of bodies to prevent identification of corpses.

After being stationed at Sibasia for a while, he was commissioned in 1976, before ending his career as a security policeman based at the highly secret Vlakplaas camp near Pretoria where ANC cadres received instructions.

As three police generals come under the spotlight for alleged involvement in Third Force activities, another general’s protracted fight to clear his name might give them courage.

Staff Reporter ROGER FRIEDMAN looks at the Appeal Court decision in the matter between General Lothar Neethling and two weekly newspapers.

He fled South Africa for England in 1989 where he joined the ANC.

In October 1981 Coetzee claimed he received instructions to collect “poison” and “sleeping-drops” from General Neethling at his laboratory in Pretoria.

“I told him there were two men I had to get rid of, thereafter he supplied me with two packets of poison powder.”

Coetzee remembers nothing of an old police safe, a certificate stating General Neethling had flown on the Concorde and an old rugby photograph in the general’s office.

“Questioned as to exactly what General Neethling had given him Coetzee said, ‘Two packets of powder the figure 60 was mentioned. It was very little so it must have been 60 mg. I also asked for liquid (drops) that we could use in the drinks of people for purposes of abducting them. So he gave me a clear plastic container, after taking drops from his safe and saying they were expensive I think he said they cost R20/R40 a drop.’

Coetzee went to a farm near the Botswana border where he tried out the concoctions on two men — ‘Vusi’ and ‘Peter’ — with little effect.

The next day Coetzee alleges he returned to Pretoria once more where they visited General Neethling at home on a Sunday. He got dressed, took them to the office and gave them a ‘triple dose’. The powder again proved a complete failure. Finally Vusi and Peter were each shot behind the ear with a Makarov.

Coetzee alleged other another security officer had told him of a bottle of whiskey prepared for him by General Neethling. Poison had been injected into the bottle with a ‘micro-needle’ and the hole sealed.

Other incidents Coetzee testified to included

● His involvement in the killing of Durban attorney Griffiths Mxenge. In November 1981 while stationed at Vlakplaas.

● While a lieutenant stationed at the Oslokro (Swaziland) border post Coetzee admitted stealing a number of cars — plus several other incidents round the country.
Measures mooted to limit media monopoly

MEASURES should be taken to limit monopoly control of the media, the ANC said at the weekend.

The democratic government had a major role to play in the introduction of a new media policy, the ANC said in its draft reconstruction and development programme for the Western Cape. "This must, however, be limited to facilitation rather than dabbling in editorial content of media enterprises."

Open debate and transparency in government and society were a crucial element of reconstruction and development, the organisation said.
Parties allocated free radio air time

DAVID GREYBE

THE Independent Media Commission yester-
day finalised free radio time allocation
for the 27 parties taking part in the elec-
tions, with the ANC and NP receiving
almost 19 times more air time than the
smallest provincial party.

The parties will receive a total of 1,250
hours of party election broadcasts, or free
radio slots, in terms of the Independent
Media Commission Act.

The free air time is over and above the
advertising time political parties might
choose to buy, or the time they might
receive in news and current affairs
programmes.

Commission chairman Judge Richard
Leon said that apart from “a fairly high”
minimum broadcast time, parties were
granted additional free time on the basis
of “the proportion of the seats each party
is contesting” in the elections.

“In addition, general fair and pragmat-
ic considerations of the relative strengths
of the parties were taken into account,”
Leon said.

The election broadcast time allocations
had been finalised “after the commission
had considered proposals and complaints
from political parties about time
allocations”.

However, the commission had decided
that its original approach to determining
the allocations would not be changed, he
said.
IMC charge against Mopeli

By Mzimasi Ngudie
Political Staff

The Independent Media Commission has asked the Transitional Executive Council to take action against two homeland leaders.

Qwaqwa chief minister Mr TK Mopeli’s Dinkwakwela Party of South Africa reportedly abused state resources for the benefit of the party. KwaZulu chief minister and Inkatha Freedom Party leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi uttered a statement which could allegedly hamper free political activity and the holding of free and fair polls. (243)

Buthelezi reportedly said the March 28 killing of IFP supporters in Johannesburg marked “the start of a struggle to the end”.

The IMC said Qwaqwa homeland state resources were being abused to benefit the DPRA. The homeland’s communication officers also claim to have been marginalised and their functions taken over by the chief minister’s office.

IMC monitors — who said they found that Mopeli’s offices were being used for Dinkwakwelela Party business on their visit to the homeland, and Mopeli refused to discuss the allegations. The IMC said the party’s official telephone number appearing on all party documents was that of the department of education.

The home telephone number appearing on the same documents belonged to a ministerial house occupied by Mr DT Mokossa, the education minister, who is also the party’s general secretary. The IMC also proposed that action be taken against the Afrikaner Volksfront, which reportedly asked residents in a questionnaire whether they were prepared to “give everything in this town to the ANC-communists”.

26494
IMC to watch election coverage

South, 114 - 5/4/94

By Shannon Neil

FREE and fair coverage has been promised to all political parties following the Transitional Executive Council's (TEC) creation of a media-watchdog body, the Independent Media Commission (IMC).

IMC commissioner Ms Zubeida Jaffer said the TEC appointed the commission "to ensure the playing fields were levelled in both broadcasting and state information services".

The IMC is only an interim body, however. After the election the Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) will monitor broadcasting.

According to Jaffer there is as yet no authority to monitor state information services after the elections.

"There is a feeling we will need a Freedom of Information Act but it's going to take a lot of campaigning to get something like that," she said.

The IMC is based in Johannesburg but has recently opened an office at the University of Cape Town's Criminology Institute to monitor police and prisons' internal communications.

"Dr Don Pinnock will be running this branch with two other commissioners. Basically we don't want circulated in prisons which damage the election or favour one party," Jaffer said.

At the IMC a broadcast committee monitors broadcasting on public-owned television and radio and another committee monitors the 44 different government departments producing literature which might have political impact.

"The idea is that if the contents of any such document impact on the election and favour one party then it's not allowed," said Jaffer.

IMC legislature also ensures civil servants don't use state structures and resources to promote one party.

"For example, if in the Transkei the ANC produced 100 000 pamphlets using state infrastructure this would be a contravention of the Act and we would need to be informed," Jaffer said.

The IMC only hears complaints from political parties although there is an "IMC Hotline" which members of the public can phone with information or questions for the IMC.

The toll-free "Hotline" number is: 0800 112004.
Prison 'prank' sparks a riot

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG -- A prank by a warder at Johannesburystocked yesterday led to a riot by about 1,000 prisoners in which many were injured.

A spokesman said prisoners set fire to their cells after a warder fired teargas from the prison grounds at a colleague in a watchtower at 2am.

But the canister had exploded in a duct, and the gas had been blown into the cells of about 400 sleeping prisoners.

Correctional Services spokesman Mr Chris Ockers said the warder had been charged for the illegal possession of teargas.

Mr Ockers said 24 prisoners had been injured, but none had needed to be taken to hospital.

However, three ambulances were seen leaving the prison, and warders handed relatives waiting outside the gates a list of names of 46 injured prisoners.

Mr Ockers said feelings had been running high when the officer in command had addressed the prisoners at 8am, and nearly 1,000 prisoners had begun rooting, burning their blankets and mattresses.

The internal stability division had been called in as back-up, but the prison's internal task force had quelled the riot.

SA Prisoners' Organisation for Human Rights spokesman Mr Golden Bhudu said warders inside the prison had told the organisation teargas had been thrown into the cells during the night.

The riot had broken out after the prisoners' demand to see the officer in command was refused.

Two warders had been taken hostage, but had been released when the ISD intervened.

Most of the injuries had been caused by wardens assaulting prisoners, he claimed.

Mr Bhudu said the warder involved had been suspended from duty pending charges of assault.

Mr Ockers refused to name the warden and denied Mr Bhudu's allegations.

The situation had been brought under control by midday, he said.
Wage talks deadlock

By Russel Molefe

The Media Workers Association of South Africa has declared a dispute with Argus Newspapers after a deadlock during the annual wage negotiations last week.

In a meeting held in Johannesburg last week, the company offered the union an 8 percent wage increase and said that this was the final offer. Mwasa secretary general Mr S’thembile Khala said that the union initially demanded 19 percent. It has now lowered its demand to 17 percent. Khala said that Argus had opened its offer at 7 percent.

Argus representatives were not available for comment yesterday.

Khala said the 8 percent was "an insult" as some workers in Cape Town earned as little as R800 a month. He said workers were preparing for "all out war" which could cripple the country’s biggest newspaper company during the elections.

Rejected offer

The South African Union of Journalists, which represents mainly white journalists, has also rejected the offer and is demanding 14 percent.

Newspapers within the Argus group include Sowetan (partly owned), The Star, Pretoria News, Daily News, Mercury, Cape Argus and Post Natal.

Khala said management claimed inflation would drop to 7 percent, hence the justification for their offer.

Meanwhile, Mwasa has sent a letter to Kenya’s newspaper, The Nation, protesting against the dismissal of Mr. George Odoko for allegedly spending "too much time on union matters."

Odoko, who has served the newspaper for 25 years, is also secretary general of the Kenya Union of Journalists, assistant secretary general of the Union of African Journalists and executive member of the International Federation of Journalists.
Kriel hits out at Cape Times

By ANTHONY JOHNSON  
Political Correspondent

THE STRAND. — The National Party's premier candidate in the Western Cape, Mr Hermus Krool, said last night he was tired of being "a gentleman with the Cape Times".

He slammed the newspaper for "criticising you just when they want to but when they want something it's 'Please give us some information'."

The minister told a public meeting in the civic centre here that the Cape Times should in future go to its "ally", the Democratic Party, for information.

"See where you get with this bunch of people. You will get nowhere — the National Party is going to govern the Western Cape," he said to extended applause from the 150-strong audience.

When an excited NP supporter called for the Cape Times reporter covering the meeting to be thrown out of the hall, Mr Kriel responded: "No, let him stay. He's not so bad — just a little misguided."

The original attack on the Cape Times was apparently prompted by an editorial in the newspaper yesterday on the implications of a recent opinion poll showing a surge of support for the Democratic Party in the Western Cape.

Mr Kriel said that if the NP was supposed to have stolen the DP's policies, why was the DP fighting the NP in the Western Cape instead of the ANC?"
Argus is biased, says Cosatu

By Quentin Wilson

COSATU'S Western Cape region is furious with The Argus because the newspaper's management refused to run an advertisement placed by the union federation.

The ad, which calls for people not to vote for the NP, refers to the "Trojan Horse" killings in Athlone in 1985 when three children were allegedly shot dead by police.

Headlined "This is the reality of 46 years of NP rule", the advertisement shows a photograph of the funeral and carries the caption: "Michael Miranda (11), Shaun Magmoed (16) and Jonathan Klasen (18) were killed by the SAP in Thornton Road, Athlone in October 1985".

At the bottom it says: "Don't let them stain your hands with the blood of our children. Now it is time for us to use our vote to make sure the NP will never again be allowed to do to our children what they have done to us and those who have gone before."

According to The Argus editor, Mr Jonathan Hobday, the ad was turned down because it unfairly linked the killings to the police.

"The allegations made in the ad were never proven in court. At the inquest following the incident, it was never proven that the police were involved in the killings and therefore we could have faced a lawsuit if we published it," Hobday said.

Mr Martin Jansen, one of Cosatu's election campaign co-ordinators, said that The Argus' decision was "surprising and hypocritical".

"Conservative newspapers such as Die Burger and Rapport did not have a problem with the ad, but the supposedly more liberal The Argus did.

"The Argus said it was 'inflammatory' and contained unfair allegations but when you look at the ad they accept from the NP, such as the disgusting "Strangler" one, it is hard not to say that they are biased," Jansen said.

The NP ad posed the question: "Can you imagine the Cape Strangler having the vote?"

It then said: "The ANC and DP can."

— Quentin Wilson, 76 Darling Street, Cape Town.

For all your advertising requirements, contact Yvette, Jessie, Yvonne or Debbie

Tel 462-2012
ANC report about ‘stolen money’:

A report is brewing between the East London Daily Dispatch newspaper and Mrs Winnie Mandela, the president of the African National Congress Women’s League.

According to the newspaper, a secret ANC report, in which it was found that Mandela had allegedly stolen money from and defrauded her own party to the tune of hundreds of thousands of rand, was leaked to a Dispatch correspondent in Cape Town.

A statement issued by Mandela at the weekend said she had instructed her lawyers to begin litigation against the Dispatch.

The Dispatch reported that the ANC was still trying to work out how much money was missing.

Mandela, who is widely tipped as a future cabinet minister in the new South Africa, had allegedly refused to appear before an ANC commission into the affair headed by late ANC chief Mr Oliver Tambo, it said.

The ANC commission’s report, claimed the Dispatch, had found that Mandela had been caught counting piles of United States dollars and cheques after a visit to the United States.

The money was “donations” she had collected during her visit and had allegedly failed to declare to the ANC, the newspaper claims.

There were also claims that Mandela had pocketed “substantial” amounts of interest yielded by funds deposited into her account.

These funds were legally destined for the ANC’s social welfare department.

Mandela is also suspected in the ANC report, according to the Dispatch, of taking an alleged R190 000 “kickback” on a farm bought by the ANC for returning exiles.

The price paid for the Walkerville property was R350 000, yet it was only worth R160 000. Mandela was allegedly a main party in the deal.

According to the ANC report, Mandela had allegedly admitted shaving R74 000 off a donation destined for the ANC’s social welfare department.

The money had, to date, not been paid back, the newspaper claims — Saps

(Report by Ernst Odendaal, 141 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg)
Board to formally probe Times bid

HENRI du PLESSIS
Staff Reporter

THE Competition Board is to hold a formal investigation into an Argus Newspapers proposal to buy the Cape Times from Times Media Limited.

Times Media reacted by reaffirming its intention to honour the proposed transaction, pending the outcome of the investigation, and said it would not sell the newspaper if The Argus could not buy it.

Competition board chairman Pierre Brooks said the investigation would enable the board to address public concerns raised by interested parties opposed to the transaction.

"The principal concerns of most parties were the monopolisation of English daily newspapers in the Cape Town area, the possible disappearance of the Cape Times, the editorial independence of the Cape Times and Argus and what was referred to as the 'empowerment of black South Africans,'" Dr Brooks said.

"It would appear that the most expeditious and effective way of attaining the desired public objectives would be for the board to launch a formal investigation and, as soon as practicable thereafter, to enter into an arrangement with Argus Newspapers to entrench the desired objectives.

"Argus Newspapers has indicated it is prepared to give an undertaking to the board that it will meet the desired objectives for a period of three years, after which it shall have the right to terminate the agreement if it so wishes."

Times Media managing director David Kovarsky said: "We believe the investigation will prove there is no violation of the Act on monopolies, and that the verdict will be that we may proceed with the transaction."
IEC bans media from polling stations

BY JASPER MORTIMER

Thousands of journalists covering the elections will be banned from polling stations except when ANC president Nelson Mandela, President de Klerk and the other party leaders cast their ballots, the Independent Electoral Commission said yesterday.

The 1995 Electoral Act prohibits all journalists from coming within 600 m of a polling station, IEC spokesman Pieter Cronje explained.

South African Conference of Editors chairman Richard Steyn, who is also editor-in-chief of The Star, said the ban appeared to be a self-defeating exercise.

Last night the IEC did think again. Cronje said “The IEC has the right not to use the powers it was given by the Act.

The IEC has now exercised that discretion.”

On Saturday the IEC decided in principle to draw up an amendment to the Act to allow the press to cover the party leaders in the act of voting.

After what Cronje called “reconsideration” last night, the IEC decided it could itself revoke the ban on journalists.

But it decided to do so only if there were complaints or concerns about press coverage of the voting of the 26 political party leaders.

The ban on the press entering the polling stations, at other times during the election, remains.

(47 Seer St, Johannesburg)
Board to probe Cape Times purchase

Argus Newspapers chairman
Doug Band said it was the board's prerogative to institute
the probe.
Brooks said it appeared that the public was concerned about
three issues — the continued exis-
tence of the Cape Times, the
editorial independence of the
Cape Times and the need for all
sections of the community to
have a voice in the running of
the newspapers.
He said Argus Newspapers
had indicated it was prepared to
meet these objectives for a mini-
mum of three years.
Brooks said it should be em-
phasised that no other new-
paper group had given an under-
taking relating to editorial inde-
pendence or to accommodate
community interests on their
boards.

BY DEREK TOMMEEY
The Competition Board is to hold
a formal investigation into the
proposed acquisition of the Cape
Times by Argus Newspapers.
Board chairman Dr Pierre
Brooks said this would enable
the board to enter into an appro-
priate arrangement with Argus
Newspapers that would address
public interest concerns.
IEC defends keeping press 600 m away

Journalists condemn voting station ban

BY JASPER MORTIMER

Foreign journalists in South Africa have condemned the Independent Electoral Commission's ban on the media at voting stations during the election as a serious infringement of press freedom.

Joe Contreras, chairman of the 200-strong Foreign Correspondents Association, said yesterday the IEC's decision to keep journalists 600 m away from polling stations was ridiculous.

The IEC said the 1996 Electoral Act prohibits all journalists from coming within 500 m of the stations. It had decided to revoke the ban to allow press coverage of the leaders of the 26 political parties when they cast their ballots.

IEC spokesman Pieter Crouse said the exception was made because the commission had realized there would be enormous interest in photographing persons such as Nelson Mandela and President de Klerk when they cast their ballots. However, the press would be barred from polling stations when private persons were voting, he said.

Secrecy (243)

This was in order to protect voters, particularly in areas such as rural KwaZulu, where anti-election intimidation was likely to be pervasive.

"The IEC's guiding principle has been the secrecy of the vote," Crouse said. "If a polling station is beset with cameras, then the votes will not feel secure."

Contreras said this reason was not valid. "I don't think a person is going to arrive at a polling station, see a group of journalists, and say 'I'm not going to vote.'"

He believed the safety of voters would be compromised not by the press, but by the activities of certain political parties on the ground.

The presence of journalists could moderate the behaviour of political militants, Contreras argued. "By our mere presence, we will be able to make a positive contribution towards ensuring a climate for free and fair elections," he added.

Contreras suggested the no-go area around polling stations should be no more than 10 to 20 m. He predicted that, up to 2,500 foreign journalists would be covering the election.

South African Conference of Editors chairman Richard Steyn, who is also editor-in-chief of The Star, has said the ban appeared to be a "self-defeating converse."
For Community Papers
IEC to meet press over ban at polling stations

By Ray Hartley

The Independent Electoral Commission will meet newspaper editors and the Foreign Correspondents' Association this week amid a storm over whether journalists will have access to polling stations on election day.

Journalists object to an IEC decision to enforce a provision of the Electoral Act which bans those not involved in the administration of the election from polling stations.

In terms of the Act, the IEC has the discretion to allow journalists into the polling stations, but has decided it will limit access to designated times when only staged photographers of the leaders casting their ballots will be allowed.

The IEC move has led to a stream of complaints from journalists, and IEC spokesman Niki Moore. "Journalists are saying they must be able to say whether or not the election is free and fair, but that's not their role — that's why we have foreign observers and monitors.

The Electoral Act empowers the presiding officer at a polling station to keep the press 1km from the booths.

Foreign Correspondents' Association deputy chairman Paul Taylor said IEC chairman Justice Johann Kriegler had given foreign correspondents persuasive arguments on the need for secrecy during polling. "But, as a journalist, I would obviously prefer fuller access," he said.

(News by Ray Hartley, 11 Highcliff Street, Johannesburg)
Strike threat from Mwasa

THE Media Workers Association of South Africa has threatened to go on strike over wages.

Mwasa has declared a wage dispute with Argus Newspapers, owners of Sowetan, The Star and Pretoria News, among others.

The union's acting president, Mr Mathula Tsedu, said at a news conference yesterday that Mwasa had requested a meeting with the Department of Manpower's Conciliation Board.

If the dispute was not settled, a strike by Mwasa's 1,500 members at Argus Newspapers could be possible by late May, Tsedu said.

Mwasa is asking for a 15 percent wage increase for its members. The demand is down from 19 percent in March and Argus has raised its offer to eight percent from seven percent.

Argus chief executive Mr John Featherstone said the company had made a good offer to employees which was above the projected seven percent inflation rate.

"The prospect of industrial action is worrying at any time. But we deal with it on the basis that we have made a fair offer and we think that union members will come to that realisation," said Featherstone.
Newsmen allowed at poll stations — IEC

The Independent Electoral Commission is to relax restrictions preventing journalists from coming within a 600 m radius of voting stations.

In the interests of a transparent election, presiding officers at voting stations would be urged to consider permitting two journalists at a time to enter the voting centres, an IEC statement said yesterday.

"The IEC and representatives of local and foreign media organisations have agreed on guidelines for access to voting stations by journalists," IEC spokesman Pieter Cronje said last night.

According to the new guidelines, presiding officers in charge of voting stations would be advised that they could, at their discretion, allow journalists within the 600 m perimeter around polling stations.

Delight

However, presiding officers would retain absolute discretion to exclude anyone from the voting station, Cronje said. No disruption of the voting process could be allowed.

According to Cronje, "the Foreign Correspondents Association and the Conference of Editors have expressed their delight at the new agreement". — Sapa.
Knives were out for TML’s Kovarsky

An amazing tale of intrigue and internal dispute lies behind the ousting of TML’s David Kovarsky. **Reg Runney** reports

TIMES Media Limited managing director David Kovarsky’s resignation to pursue his own interests was caused by his management style — and because he appeared to be too close to the ANC, several sources said this week.

TML remains a profitable company, despite a declining list of newspaper titles after its deal to sell off interests in three newspapers — the Cape Times, Pretoria News and Daily News — and the controversial entry into the girl magazine market with Playboy.

Kovarsky (46) this week refused to disclose why he had left or been forced to leave, but he says he does not yet know what his next career move will be.

This Kovarsky isn’t talking even now, when his bitterness towards his former employer and main TML shareholder JCIR is unspoken but evident, underlines the secrecy which some say marked his management style, a secrecy which included a failure to report certain projects to his own board.

His most vociferous detractors are the editors with whom he clashed quite vehemently, and who say he had a complete lack of understanding of how newspapers are supposed to work, including a marked disrespect for editorial independence.

One of those editors, whom Kovarsky had bullied at firing, said publicly a short while ago: “When Kovarsky had the knife at my throat he should have pushed it in. When I get the chance, I won’t hesitate.”

Independent financial journal **Finance Week** has reported that Financial Mail editor Nigel Bruce and assistant editor David Gleason were trying to put together a management buy-out of TML’s core financial magazine, partly because of untenable personal tension between Bruce and Kovarsky.

Writing in the **FM** this week, Gleason puts forward this theory for Kovarsky’s departure: “Norr has he left for reasons related to projects he initiated. It is true he indulged in some expensive undertakings, but in the sweep of things, these are unimportant.

“Most notable of these was his vision of the future, and the path he intended TML to follow. In the process he fomented memories of a long-standing, bitter and trivial dispute with **FM** editor Nigel Bruce and the ANC’s ideology guru, Falo Jordan.”

That refers to a formal lunch where the ANC objected to Bruce’s presence because of what they saw as his racist comments in his magazine.

But reading between the lines, the real substance of the grievance against Kovarsky is a perceived recasting between TML and the ANC.

The firing of Playboy editor Jeremy Gordin is supposed to have been the warning shot to the remaining editors. Their grievances were conveyed to TML chairman Pat Reitief, who then acted against Kovarsky.

In the end, the straightforward and apparently gentle Kovarsky seems to have made too many enemies, even among his executive team.
Cameraman's death: Murder docket opened

Staff Reporter

POLICE have opened a murder docket following the death of top South African press photographer Mr Ken Gasterbroek, who was shot dead in Thokoza during a clash between Inkatha and National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF) members on Monday.

East Rand police spokesman Captain Wikus Weber said yesterday that a murder docket had been opened and that other charges could be included after two other photographers were injured in the same incident.
Naming of journalists slammed

The International Press Institute yesterday expressed concern about the electoral law requiring journalists to affix their names to all election stories.

In a statement to the Transition Executive Council, the Independent Media Commission and the Speaker of Parliament, the IPI urged South African authorities to scrap the law.

Intimidate

Section 141 of the Electoral Act rules that the full name and address be given of anyone who reports anything that might affect an election. The law could intimidate and endanger journalists, the IPI said.

"Attacks on journalists' homes have been reported in past elections. Most newspapers publish only their office address. Some ignore the law. Others list home addresses of freelance contributors," said the IPI.

"There was no equivalent provision in any Western election laws," it added. — Sapa

(K Swart, IPI Commissioner St. Johannesburg)
NATAL Newspapers' pay offer of 8 percent was rejected on Thursday by the South African General and Allied Workers' Union, which declared a dispute.

The union said the offer was unreasonable in view of the rising cost of living, a 14 percent rise in medical fund contributions and increases in pension contributions and taxes.

ARCT 23/4/74
'Drop all censor laws' 

THE International Press Institute has urged South Africa's president-elect and the National Assembly to repeal remaining censorship laws.

"Such an action would reinforce the spirit of the freedom of expression clause in the interim constitution and of Section 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights," the IPI's complaints commission said in a statement yesterday. The commission was given the task of monitoring intimidation of journalists and to help ensure the free flow of information during the final stages of the election campaign. — Sapa (243)
Journalists beaten up by the AWB

By Glenn McKenzie

Minutes after journalists were beaten and threatened by angry supporters of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbewegung, AWB leader Eugene Terre'Blanche said he did not order the recent spate of bombings in the PWV area.

But he sympathised with the reasons behind the attacks.

Terre'Blanche had called a meeting of rightwingers and journalists outside Paul Kruger's farmhouse near Rustenburg "to spread the message to the world that this week's elections were not free and fair."

He predicted that bombings would continue until the new government allowed Afrikaners to have their own volkstaat.

He added that journalists who spread the message that the elections were democratic would be seen by the right wing as part of a communist conspiracy.

During the meeting, which attracted several hundred armed and uniformed rightwingers, a black journalist from the New York Daily News was repeatedly beaten and driven out of the area.

Reporter Michael Allen said he was grabbed and punched by the members of the AWB.

"Before I knew it someone took a swing at me and they pulled me out of the house," he said.

Allen said the incident had helped bring home to him the harsh reality of life in South Africa.

"You understand a little bit about what this country is all about and what this conflict is all about," he said.

Other journalists were also kicked, punched and threatened with death.

Earlier AWB spokesman Mr Fred Randles told journalists that they were safe and welcome at the meeting.

Terre'Blanche predicted that Zulus would not accept the results of the elections and would fight the new government.

"In a few days, Zulus will realise they are the largest nation in South Africa yet they lost the elections. They will continue the revolution where they left off," he said.

Terre'Blanche called the elections a "farce" and added that the conditions of these elections would not be acceptable in most democratic nations.

He added that Afrikaners had an internationally respected right to self-determination and that they would not stop fighting until they received their volkstaat.
Promotable vote from the Press
Media gets credit in fighting censorship

INTERNATIONAL observers have congratulated South African journalists for their part in relaxing media restrictions, but warn that almost all the old censorship laws still exist.

The International Press Institute yesterday addressed an open letter to South African political leaders after a 13-strong observer team had monitored election campaign coverage.

“We deeply regret the death of a photographer and the wounding of two others, but we are pleased to report that journalists were generally free of hindrance from authorities and political parties other than small groups on the right.”

The institute congratulated the South African media on their “key and courageous role” in the relaxation of media restrictions.

But the IPI noted with “great concern” that all the laws of the earlier age of censorship still existed.

The IPI called for the lifting of these laws in line with the freedom of expression guaranteed in South Africa’s new constitution.

The IPI’s complaints commission sat in South Africa during the election campaign’s closing stages.

Some of the laws that concern the IPI are:

- The Internal Security Act, which permits banning of publications.
- The Defence Act, with its powerful censorship powers.
- The Publications Act, which permits wide-ranging censorship.
- The Public Safety Act, which severely restricts the media.
- The Criminal Procedure Act, which is open to abuses that hamper the work of journalists.
- The Prisons Act, which makes it virtually impossible to report on the treatment of prisoners.

By repealing such measures, the IPI said, the new South Africa could help assure the world that its society was open and free and that the old ways of secrecy and repression had gone forever.

The IPI said it would continue to monitor progress.
FOREIGN journalists have been struck by fear of 'non-event headlines' — but no violence is, of course, the real story

Taking place as South Africans stream to the polls The international media has been struck by fear of what eminent journalist Max dU Preez called "non-event headlines: no violence, no intimidation, no drive-by shootings"

That, of course, is the real story. As Du Preez noted on SABC-TV's Election '94 coverage, "the airport bomb scare, Wednesday was probably the most peaceful day of the year"

Peace was springing up everywhere — in the long voting queues under the swirling dust or in the damp rain of the Cape but the overseas media saw and heard only bombs

That led to the venerable purveyor of correctness, the BBC, broadcasting news of a bomb blast in Rosebank on Wednesday. It later transpired that the police had discovered a car bomb and disposed of it

Getting news of the explosion before it was history was local station Radio 702. Indeed, 702 listeners hadn't heard it all before — and didn't hear much about the station's blunder after it retracted its reports

While 702's Eyewitness News team coverage had an on-ground feeling that the multiverse CNN and Sky clips often lacked, it was SABC-TV's Election '94 Channels 1 and 2 that did best in reflecting the spirit and meaning of the poll

SABC-TV reporters in the field were frequently awful, but they were sufficiently hard-working to bring an affecting picture of the election to viewers Not as slick as the Allen Pixeys or Peter Arnett (both of CNN) of the world, they nevertheless had a better understanding of what the election meant to those taking part in it — and they conveyed that

The SABC journalists were chummy and sometimes nervous, but they had empathy with their subject. The CNN superstars had charisma, zippy presentation and a great script — to another story, perhaps the one they'd like to be covering

In the studio, anchors like Lester Venter and Fyres Robinson did a fine job of briefing watchers on the larger implications of what was happening in the field. The studio discussions and panels of experts produced articulate debate and a plethora of viewpoints

Hotel room

Strangely, "both sides of the story" had been promised by Peter Arnett, the world-renowned CNN reporter, when he was interviewed by Radio 702 earlier this week. Arnett, you will recall, reported the first days of the Gulf War from his Baghdad hotel room

What Arnett has given us resembles an advertising agency client presentation. It will please CNN headquarters in Atlanta and the network's viewers, used to its style-without-too-much-substance approach. But it trivialises what's happening during this auspicious week

In retrospect, the CNN packaging of the election comes as no surprise. Earlier this year, at the launch of the ANC's election manifesto, I watched aghast as a CNN correspondent filed a story full of prognostics of civil war, concluding with just the slightest hint of what the ANC was presenting it upped the adrenalin, but didn't really reflect the event
Foreign TV networks resist police demands

JOHANNESBURG — Two foreign television networks have lodged an urgent application in the Rand Supreme Court for an interdict to prevent police from seizing their footage of the Zulu march through Johannesburg last month.

The ARD German Television Network and ABC News Intercontinental Incorporated asked Mr Justice Nugent to declare a warrant issued by a Johannesburg magistrate authorising police to search their premises and seize tapes invalid.

The tapes contain footage of the Zulu march through the streets of central Johannesburg on March 28 in which 33 people were killed.

Police said that ITN, WTN, Sky News and Reuters had provided their footage of the march.

ABC Africa assignment manager Mark Foley said in an affidavit it was vital for his company to be seen as impartial and the handing over of material to police could compromise ABC's confidential sources and endanger employees' lives.

He said various other sources of information were available to the police regarding the march and it was was inappropriate and grossly unreasonable for the Law and Order Minister to attempt to exercise "drastic powers" over ABC.

ARD Johannesburg bureau chief Andreas Cichowicz said the violence during the march was witnessed by thousands of other people, including policemen.

Police could use these people as a source of information rather than demand ARD footage.

Mr Justice Nugent is expected to give judgement next week. — Sapa.
Survey: Belgium has world’s freest press

WASHINGTON. — Belgium enjoys the world's freest press, followed by New Zealand, Australia and Norway, according to a survey released by the human rights group Freedom House.

Tied for fifth place were Denmark, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland in the survey, that looked for "vibrancy, diversity and lack of government encumbrance" of the press.

The United States followed, in a tie with Luxembourg.

The survey, titled "Press Freedom Worldwide 1994," and released yesterday, gauges the extent to which newspapers, radio and television permit a free flow of ideas to and from the public in 186 countries.

It said the United States lost points because of the increasing dominance of major media groups and said that "skyrocketing costs of publishing and broadcasting" tend to make US editorial content more vulnerable to the influence of ratings and advertising.

Freedom House said the least free press was in Iraq. Others in the bottom echelon were Cuba, Tajikistan, North Korea, Burma, Turkmenistan, Sudan and China.

Of the 186 countries listed, two — Afghanistan and Somalia — were deemed impossible to monitor "because central governance has broken down, repression is complete and data is unreliable."

Leonard Sussman, a Freedom House scholar in international communications who was the study co-ordinator, said "Although the Press in the freest countries is the watchdog over government, many governments — even in some democracies — are seeking to be watchdogs over the news media."

The study said Press freedom peaked worldwide with post-communist liberalisations in 1989 but has declined since.

The survey covered January 1, 1993 to April 15 of this year and was released on the United Nations' International Press Freedom Day.

Overall, 68 countries, or about 37 percent, were judged to fall in the broad category of having "free" media, meaning journalists are "nearly free" of political pressure and other interference.

The Press was called "partly free" in 64 countries, or 34 percent, while 54 countries, 29 percent, were said to have a Press that is "not free," indicating a high degree of government control. — Sapa-Reuter
Board agrees to
Argus takeover
of Cape Times

(The Argus, Thursday May 5 1994)

Staff Reporter

THE Competition Board has
approved the purchase of the Cape Times by Argus
Newspapers

The takeover was opposed by several groups, including a black business consortium
which was prepared to make a counter-bid

The buy-out was approved
after agreement on a three-
year guarantee of editorial in-
dependence and the appoint-
ment of two non-executive
directors to represent com-
nunity interests on a separate
board for Argus Newspapers' Cape
operations.

Competition Board chairman
Pierre Brooks said the agree-
ment had been restricted to
three years because of South
Africa's changing situation

"Given the fluidity of South
Africa's political situation at
the moment, there may be new
legislation introduced which
may affect the agreement."

Neither the board nor Argus
wished to be committed to an
agreement cast in stone

Doug Band, chairman of Ar-
gus Newspapers, said he was
delighted with the ruling.

Dr Brooks said the board had
not put Argus Newspapers un-
der any pressure to include two
independent directors on the
board. This had arisen out of
discussions with Argus

Explaning the board's deci-
sion, Dr Brooks said "Certain
transactions involving Anglo
American Corporation, John-
nesburg Consolidated Invest-
ments, Independent Newspa-
ers Pic, Argus Newspapers
and Times Media elicited ex-
pressions of concern from a
number of persons and associa-
tions

"These related principally to
the view that the transactions
would result in the monopolisa-
tion of the English daily news-
papers in the Cape Town area
and the demise of the Cape
Times as a separate newspa-
per, or the undermining of its
electoral independence

"It must also be mentioned
that certain parties indicated
they were willing and able to
purchase all the shares that
Anglo/JCI had undertaken to
sell. to Independent Newspa-
ers Pic.

"Independent Newspapers
hitherto has not controlled or
had a stake in any newspaper
company in South Africa. For
this reason, as a non-compete-
tor in the relevant market, the
purchase by it of a controlling
interest in Argus Newspapers
is not a transaction that con-
stitutes an acquisition as defined
in the Maintenance and Prom-
tion of Competition Act.

"Furthermore there is no
other specific legislation regu-
lating the acquisition of new-
papers or restricting the extent
of foreign ownership of the
Press.

"In the circumstances the
board has no authority to stop
the sale of shares to Independ-
ent Newspapers or to direct
or recommend that Anglo/JCI
should sell their shares in
Argus Newspapers to a partic-
sular South African party

"Since both the Cape Times
and The Argus at present are
ultimately controlled by Ang-
lo/JCI, the board accepts that
a monopoly situation probably
exists currently in the Cape
Town area in respect of Eng-
lish daily newspapers

"Since, the Act does not dis-
stinguish between qualitatively
different categories of a mo-
nopoly situation, and the exis-
tence or non-existence of a mo-
nopoly situation cannot be
affected by a change of the
person or persons exercising
control, the relevant class of
business, the transfer of control
over the Cape Times and The
Argus from Anglo/JCI to Inde-
pendent Newspapers does not
alter the status quo

"It should be borne in mind
that under South African law,
in common with the position in
other jurisdictions, it is not
presumed that monopolies per
se are illegal or against the
public interest

"In fact even in the United
States, which arguably has the
most stringent rules on anti-
trusts, the Supreme Court has
held that illegal monopolisation
requires a showing that the
defendant (a) has monopoly pow-
er, which is substantial; (b)
has exercised that power to the
detriment of competitors and/or consumers;
and (c) has engaged in "unfair
acts" as defined by the law.
Consortium attacks decision on Cape Times

HENRI DU PLESSIS
Weekend Argus Reporter

A ROW has broken out between the Competition Board and the Western Cape Media Consortium over the board’s decision to allow The Argus to buy the Cape Times.

In a strongly worded statement, the consortium of black businessmen attacked the board for issuing a final decision before the deadline set for further representations.

Board chairman Pierre Brooks, however, insisted the board had acted within its power.

The consortium’s statement said the board’s decision was “a flagrant violation” of the law and was actionable in terms of the country’s constitution, contrary to natural justice and based on incorrect premises.

The decision to allow The Argus to buy the Cape Times was announced on May 4, 10 days before the final deadline for further written representations, the consortium said.

The consortium had been preparing further detailed representations which would have proved the sale to be monopolistic, but had missed the boat because the board made its decision before the deadline.

Thus made the decision reviewable in law, claimed the consortium.

“The consortium is constrained to express its deep and earnest concern that an administrative authority which has invited representations to be filed by the public by a particular day has been fit unilaterally to ignore the concern of interested parties and to arrive at a decision prior to the cut-off date which it had stipulated for the submission of written representations,” a spokesman said.

“The consortium does not accept that this course is consonant with the norms of justice in our country.

“The consortium is now considering its position and will take all steps necessary in the interest of the public of the Western Cape from whom its members are drawn and who have a very real interest in the maintenance of competition in the English-language Press which serves it.”

Dr Brooks said it was not up to the board to interpret the constitution, but merely to work in terms of the Act under which it was constituted.

“We are empowered by the Act to work according to special procedures and we decided we had already heard all argument pertinent to the case.

“It is not up to the board to decide what would be in the best interests of the public in the Western Cape regarding their newspapers.

“We are only allowed to decide the merits of the transaction before us. As such, we could only arrive at the decision we did. Had we decided otherwise, The Argus could have taken legal steps.”

Dr Brooks said if the consortium felt it had certain rights within the law, it should take the matter to the courts.
Bid to amend Bill of Rights

By RAYMOND LORD

The Freedom of Expression Institute has launched a campaign to amend the Bill of Rights because it is concerned about limits on freedom of speech and the right to information, says deputy chairman Raymond Lord.

The FXI was formed in January after a merger between the Campaign for Open Media and the Anti-Censorship Group.

The campaign, to be launched next month, would push for a parliamentary Act to entrench greater freedoms in these areas.

Co-ordinator Jeannette Minnie said FXI was unsatisfied with a Bill which allowed for a right to information only if other rights were threatened. Rights of access and non-access should be defined, especially where national and state security, confidential financial information and personal health details were concerned.

Minnie said the campaign would aim to promote access to information and freedom of expression to first degree rights. It would also call for the recognition of group and individual rights.

SA ‘must modernise its industrial plant capacity’

By EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN - SA businessmen should speed up their investment in modernising SA’s ailing industrial plant capacity if it wished to be competitive in world markets, Industrial Development Corporation chairman Christie Wiese said last night.

At an SA Institute of International Affairs function, Wiese said government should also reduce trade barriers and tariffs — a move to which it was already committed under GATT — reduce or even abolish exchange control mechanisms and remove the red tape associated with dealing with other countries.

He said there was agreement in business circles that the new government should be seen to quell violence and crime, and that it should create an international image of economic control and competence.

Stellenbosch University African Politics Prof Willie Breytenbach said the re-emergence of SA into the international community, which was being divided into trading blocs, raised trade bargaining prospects such as possible joint bargaining by African commodity producers on prices. SA could not afford to be antagonistic towards the US, the world’s dominant economic power.

As the strongest southern African country, SA would also have to adopt a benevolent attitude towards its neighbours, Breytenbach said. SA should also not be seen to be using its production strength to de-industrialise other African countries. SA businessmen should not only exploit, but contribute to the development of other African markets.

Institute director John Barrat said that with the admittance to international organisations, institutions and functions, SA should not overreach itself in relation to its commitments, with intervention in Rwanda a possible case in point.

US Vice-President Al Gore’s request before the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President that SA intervene in Rwanda was strange, especially considering the fact that it was proving difficult for the US administration to get congress approval for US foreign intervention.
O'Reilly spells out his intentions...

Ahead of the pre-listing of the statement of Argus Newspapers next week, PETER FABRICIUS of The Argus Foreign Service in Washington talks to Independent Newspapers chairman Tony O'Reilly about his newly acquired interests in South Africa and his plans for the future.

On the unbundling of Anglo/JIC's holdings in the South African Press

I think it's going to provide increased diversity for a rapidly changing society. The objective of the new owners of Argus newspapers — and I stress we are major shareholders but not the owners — must be to have regional boards of directors for each of the three main centres — Johannesburg/Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban — representative of all shades of political opinion and cultural diversity in surely one of the most exciting societies in the world today.

This is expressed unambiguously in the pre-listing statement. In Cape Town there is already a commitment to the Competition Board that the new board of directors will be representative of all those interests that make the Cape one of the great mosaics of South Africa. We bring the international dimension into South Africa, which is vital to its future.

We publish newspapers in Australia, where we have 13 dailies and 35 weeklies. In the UK we are the largest shareholder with 29.9 percent of the Independent and the largest publisher of regional weekly newspapers in the London and South Counties areas. And of course in Ireland we are the leading publisher.

We have represented on our board a wide diversity of people including Ben Bradlee, former and most distinguished editor of the Washington Post, on whose board I have sat for the last seven years. Plus several very distinguished Irish people drawn from all the conflicting strands of Irish opinion. I think having a shareholder like that in the new Argus adds to the international network that South Africa will need to achieve its goals.

On his links with Africa

I think we bring what South Africa needs, which is a great love of Africa generated by my own experiences there, and a sustained support for the policies of Africa. Hence was the first overseas company to back Robert Mugabe after independence, when we bought the Olifine company in 1983. We have a 51/49 venture with the government of Zimbabwe, employing 3,500 people in Bulawayo and Harare, which would claim to be the most successful joint venture in Zimbabwe since independence. It was through Robert Mugabe that I met President Mandela.

We are the sort of partners who have been supporters, not short-term opportunistic supporters, of Africa and the aims of a plural society for the consistent long term.

On his plans to develop journalistic excellence

Argus Newspapers intends to play its full part in implementing a drive for editorial excellence, affirmative action and improvement of product. We have been very innovative elsewhere. We look to the twin goals of better product and more efficiency to produce a profitable and expanding business and provide employment opportunities.

On criticism of the acquisition

There is always a natural concern in any society about foreign "interference." Nothing could be further from the case. We are not intruders — we are participants and we bring skills and a wide awareness with us, as we demonstrated in Australia and Great Britain.

In addition, it must be very clear to everyone today that newspapers compete with all forms of communication and satellite television which is the unique and universal phenomenon of our age. CNN's influence and images are available on demand in all countries around the world.

My own view is that any concern about "foreign ownership" ignores the reality of the new world we live in, which is by its nature totally international.

On suggestions that his friendship with President Mandela might lead to Argus showing an ANC bias

Anybody who has ever known me over the 25 years I have been involved as an investor in the press will know that non-interference in editorial process and the sanctity of the board are paramount principles by which I have operated, I think successfully.

What I will guarantee is that the new representative boards of directors will direct the editorial policies of the papers. And, insofar as Dr Mandela has proven to the world and the rest of South Africa that he reflects, personally and politically, the values of Africa, in that sense, his views and the views of the ANC will be reflected through the boards and through the editors of the papers.

On the values he would seek to uphold

My own view is that the values that I believe have been expressed by the people of South Africa at this miraculous election are the values which we would wish to represent in our newspapers, and that they are integrity and sharing and a certain amount of sacrifice.

There are going to be, undoubtedly, moments of anguish. And I would hope that the newspapers would reflect independent values, if there were those moments of difficulty. I believe President Mandela wishes to have a free press, and that he will champion it even if at times it is not always to his liking.

I also believe the press in South Africa has got to see its role in a constructive way, because the problems of building the new South Africa are much more difficult than those of running a conventional society like Denmark or Holland or even the United States. And we certainly, in Argus, should try to express the very positive achievements of the country in the next five, predictably difficult, years.
Homecoming

Tony O'Reilly

Africa was enormously

South Africa is not just an investment, it's a
good to own and it's worth it. To me

I intend to beat
to drum

I'm not sure about the newly acquired interests in South Africa and his plans for the future.

PETER FABRUS of the Argus Foreign Service in Washington takes to independent newspapers

the drum

Tony O'Reilly about his newly acquired interests in South Africa and his plans for the future.

On another hand
1. The effects of XYZ

2. Introduction to ABC

3. The role of DEF in GHI

4. Conclusion

5. References
As the pre-listing statement, the company achieved unaudited turnover of R706.7 million and earnings of R242 million in the financial year to March 1994. These figures were adjusted to reflect sustainable earnings. The adjusted pro forma earnings take account of discounted operations such as the Sunday Star and the sale of the majority interest in the Sowetan, and also include the effects of the acquisition of properties and the recent purchase of Times Media Limited’s minority interest in Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria. Interest flowing from the effects of these transactions has also been brought to account in these adjustments.

The directors said dividends would be covered by earnings between three and four times. The pro forma track record is 1991 R11.9 million, 1992 R21.8 million, 1993 R23.6 million, 1994 R23.1 million.

The company forecasts turnover of R799 million and earnings of R32.6 million in the current financial year to March 1995. The listing would be structured via an unbundling transaction, which was approved by the Commissioner for Inland Revenue. It was proposed that Argus Newspapers shares would be declared as a dividend in specie on a one-for-one basis to all Argus shareholders registered at the effective date.

The pre-listing statement said Argus Holdings and JCI directors would retire from the Argus Newspapers Board prior to the listing. Liam Healy and James Parkinson – respectively, managing director and financial director of Independent – would simultaneously join the board.

An Argus Holding general meeting to approve the listing would be held on June 8 — Sapa
Mwasa strike ballot

By Ike Motsapi
Labour Reporter

THE Media Workers Association of South Africa will ballot its members for possible strike action next week after wage negotiations with Argus management deadlocked last week.

The ballot of more than 1,500 Mwasa members will be held next Wednesday.

The Argus Group's human resources manager, Mr. Roger Wellstead, was not available for comment.

His office consistently said he was out attending a meeting.

Mwasa has sought the support of political organisations, trade unions, civic groups, churches and community organisations to help it "achieve our democrats demands."

The National Council of Trade Unions said it would support Mwasa in whatever action it decides to take.

The Congress of South African Trade Union is also expected to join Nactu in supporting the union.

Mwasa and the management of Argus failed to reach agreement on salary increases at a Conciliation Board hearing held in Johannesburg on May 19.

The union is demanding an across-the-board salary increase of 15 percent for its members, while management made a final offer of eight percent.

Mwasa opened its salary demand at 19 percent but lowered this during rounds of negotiations with management.

Yesterday Mwasa general secretary

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ppling strike • New constitution ‘can’t deliver’

Mwasas, SAUJ in strike ballot

By Ike Motsapi
Labour Reporter

T HE SOUTH AFRICAN Union of Journalists will ballot its members for possible strike action on Wednesday after wage talks with Argus management collapsed.

This follows an announcement by the Media Workers Association of South Africa last week that it would also ballot its more than 1 500 members employed by Argus on the same day.

The SAUJ said in a statement wage negotiations failed to resolve the dispute at a Conclition Board meeting last week.

SAUJ The Star branch co-ordinator Marilyn Choros said: “Our union is also preparing for a strike ballot on Wednesday.”

WAGE TALKS

Board talks provides no solution:

SAUJ demands a 13 percent across-the-board salary increase. Management is offering nine percent. In the middle of May (24-3) Mwasas The Star branch secretary Thabo Leslalo and Choros issued a joint statement which reads: “Management is attempting to drive a wedge between the two unions because they are aware of our collective strength.

“A yes vote does not mean an immediate strike. It is merely the first step in opening up avenues of creative and legal industrial action.

“It is important that union members stand united to achieve our common objectives.”

Mwasas demands an across-the-board salary increase of 15 percent for its members while management made a final offer of eight percent.

Mwasas opened its demand at 19 percent but lowered this during wage talks.

Mwasas and Argus failed to reach agreement on salary increases at a Conclition Board hearing on May 19.

Mwasas has sought the support of political, trade unions, civic, church and community organisations.

The National Council of Trade Unions and the Congress of South African Trade Unions have pledged support.
South African journalists have been vilified for decades. Vigilant journalists must press on.
Azapo to back Argus workers

PRETORIA—The Azanian People's Organisation yesterday pledged its support for the Argus workers' "fair" demand for a 13% wage increase. Workers will vote on Wednesday on strike action following a deadlock in negotiations. The company's final offer is eight percent.

Azapo said it would support any action taken after the ballot. — Sapa
Argus workers vote today

By Musa Zondi

MEDIA workers from Argus newspapers start balloting today for a possible strike against the company over wages.

Members of the Media Workers Association of South Africa and the South African Union of Journalists are balloting jointly across the country.

Negotiations between the two unions and the management of Argus newspapers deadlocked. The conciliation board's attempt to break the deadlock failed.

Mwasa is demanding 15 percent while the SAUJ is demanding a 13 percent increase. Argus' final offer stands at eight percent.

Mwasa said a "no" vote would mean workers accept Argus' eight percent offer.

A "yes" vote would mean the union could continue negotiating or call for the reconstitution of the conciliation board or strike. The unions could exercise any of the options, but would choose whatever is in the interests of workers.

Various political organisations have supported the workers.

In a statement, the Azanian People's Organisation said it found workers' demand of a 13 percent increase to be "a fair, legitimate demand, particularly given the fact that Argus makes millions of rand in political advertising during elections."

Azapo committed itself to respect the outcome of the ballot and pledged support for the workers.

"If Argus workers go on strike, we will go out of our way to make sure that none of the company's newspapers get delivered to any area in this country. We are confident that the black community would be fully supportive of Argus workers' demands," said Azapo executive member Dr Gomolemo Mokae.

Union federations Cosatu and Nacta have also pledged to support the media workers.
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Union federations Cosatu and Naciu have also pledged to support the media workers.
Ar Gus journalists strike ballot set for today
Delay in industrial action ballot

BY JUSTICE MALALA

Voting by about 1,500 Argus Group workers to decide whether to embark on industrial action went on smoothly at branches countrywide yesterday but was delayed at The Star.

Workers at The Star could not vote after confusion over the right of editorial executives to participate in the balloting.

The eligibility of workers who had joined the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (Mwasa) after the dispute between management and the union was declared, was also questioned and balloting was stopped by the union.

Mwasa and management finally agreed that those members with dual membership of Mwasa and the SA Typographers' Union would have to declare to which union they wished to belong. Voting would take place on Tuesday.

Members of the South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) at The Star will vote today.

The SAUJ is demanding a 13 percent across-the-board increase while Mwasa is demanding 15 percent, backdated to April 1. Argus management is offering 9 percent, backdated to April 1, or 9 percent backdated to May 13.

Argus Group personnel manager Roger Wellsted said the participation of executives who have hiring and firing power in the balloting "seems in principle wrong".

SAUJ negotiator Mari ka Sborses said any member who wants to be balloted has a right to and should be allowed to exercise that right.

In a joint statement the union and management said: "The union and management agree that the recognition agreement (regarding editorial executives) should and will be renegotiated after the present dispute."

Wellsted said management was quite disappointed that editorial workers in particular were contemplating industrial action despite salary adjustments over the past three years.

Sborses added: "Members are adamant that their demands are reasonable and believe that the time has come to back them up with action."

Mwasa Star branch secretary Thabo Leshiho accused management of trying to minimise the number of participants in the industrial action.
Mwyasa solicits major support

News: Right for higher salary increases from Argus Newspaper workers up

By Joe Mhango
Strike ballot result tomorrow

BY JUSTICE MALALA

The turnout by journalists at Argus Group newspapers to vote on industrial action yesterday left union leaders in a positive frame of mind.

"We believe that the mood in favour of industrial action is strong. The turn-out has been excellent countrywide," said SA Union of Journalists (SAUJ) negotiator Marika Sboros.

At The Star more than half the 137 SAUJ members had already turned out. At Natal Newspapers more than two-thirds of SAUJ members turned out to vote, she said.

The SAUJ is demanding a 13 percent across-the-board increase backdated to April 1. The Media Workers of SA (Mwusa) is demanding 15 percent across-the-board. Argus management is offering 8 percent backdated to April 1 or 9 percent backdated to May 13, of which 70 percent is an across-the-board figure.

The strike ballot comes after conciliation board meetings last month failed to resolve the dispute.

Balloting was delayed at The Star and several other newspapers after confusion over the right of editorial executives to take part.

Sboros said results of the balloting would be known by tomorrow.

A majority "yes" vote means workers will embark on legal industrial action while a majority "no" means an end to the dispute and acceptance of the 8 percent increase.

Mwusa said balloting at The Argus, Natal Newspapers and The Star had been postponed until next Tuesday while the eligibility of certain members was still being investigated.

Mwusa general secretary Sithembele Khala said the eligibility of workers who had joined the union after the dispute was declared was still being investigated by union lawyers.

Argus Group personnel manager Roger Wellsted said management was disappointed that editorial workers were contemplating industrial action despite salary adjustments which had been implemented over the past three years.
Challenge to the censors

Stefans Brümmer

The first court challenge to a Publications Appeal Board ruling since 1987 — by the producers of two safer sex education videos banned 18 months ago — has raised the curtain on renewed debate about censorship in the new South Africa.

The Pretoria Supreme Court on Wednesday reserved judgment after a stormy argument, mostly technical, about the process by which the Publications Appeal Board (PAB) last year decided to uphold an earlier decision by a Committee on Publications to ban the videos Safer Sex: a Lovers’ Guide and Safer Sex for Gay Men and Men who have Sex with Men.

The Publications Act allows the supreme court only to review the process by which the board reached its ruling, and not the merits of the videos themselves — whether they are in fact too explicit and transgress the freedom of expression guarantee in the new constitution.

Said Jeff van Reenen of Reel Communications: “What makes this case important is that it centres on a ruling made by the Directorate of Publications in the old South Africa. Today the censor board and the Publications Act are in violation of the new constitution. Ironically, the supreme court may have to uphold this violation.”

Advocate Gilbert Marcus, representing the producers, said there could be strong grounds for a hearing in the constitutional court if the supreme court challenge fails.

Legal argument on Wednesday centred on whether the PAB had given sufficient consideration to the likely audience, and on its treatment of expert evidence submitted to it by Professor Reuben Sher of the South African Institute for Medical Research and Mary Crewe, chief AIDS educator of the Johannesburg City Council.

Sher and Crewe endorsed the videos as a step in the right direction by treating AIDS education in the context of eroticism and emphasizing the pleasures of safer sex rather than staid lecturing.

It was common cause that the board had accepted the expert evidence on the videos’ educational value. Marcus argued that the board had not sufficiently considered the evidence. Advocate H de Wet, for the board, retorted: “At the end of the day (the board) still has to judge the vehicle in the light of the morals of society.”
Editorial independence pledged

Journalists' union votes to strike over pay
Journalists poised for industrial action

SHARON SOROUR
Weekend Argus Reporter

JOURNALISTS and other media workers at Argus Newspapers countrywide are poised to take crippling industrial action — possibly including a strike — to support pay demands.

Hundreds of SA Union of Journalists (SAUJ) members voted in favour of strike action last week at The Argus, Daily News, the Star, Natal Mercury, Pretoria News and Diamond Fields Advertiser.

Disgruntled journalists believe they are being overworked as newspapers are understaffed, and are also facing the onslaught of new technology.

Meanwhile, other media workers, including advertising and production staff who belong to the Media Workers Association of SA (Mwasa) go to the polls on Tuesday at The Argus, Pretoria News and The Star to vote on strike action.

The majority of Mwasa members at The Sowetan, Daily News and Natal Mercury already have voted in favour of going on strike.

SAUJ union negotiator Marilyn Shoros said "a clear majority" of journalists voted in favour of industrial action, and a strike co-ordinating committee was already in place even though members would decide only next week what the industrial action would entail.

Newspapers across the country may face a deluge of industrial action from disgruntled journalists, advertising and production staff after they rejected Argus Newspapers' annual pay offer.

SAUJ members at the South African Press Association (Sapa), which provides a news service to newspapers, also have elected to take action.

The SAUJ is demanding an across-the-board monthly increase of 13 percent, while Mwasa is demanding an across-the-board monthly increase of 15 percent and a minimum wage of R1 500. Management has offered the unions eight percent.

Argus Newspapers employs 6700 people and negotiates with six unions.

More than 80 percent of employees have already accepted the annual pay offer, including those belonging to the SA Typographical Union (Sata) and the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Sacawu).

Argus group personnel consultant Roger Wellsted said he was "disappointed" that settlement had not been reached with some unions.

Mr Wellsted said: "Our increases over the past few years have all exceeded inflation, and this year's increase again exceeds inflation. In addition to the annual increases, and negotiated with the co-operation of unions, we have granted additional merit and job-grading adjustments."

Mr Wellsted said the SAUJ represented 480 of the company's 720 editorial staff. Mwasa represents 580 workers, with at least 140 employed in editorial departments.

The company was still negotiating with the SA General and Allied Workers' Union.

An SAUJ spokesman said The Argus said its demand was not based on the inflation rate, which was the route chosen by management.

"Most economists know that the inflation rate would bottom out in April — and sticking to an inflation-related increase has been the feature of management's argument."

"Ours has been consistent in that staff are being overworked, newspapers are understaffed and are facing the introduction of new technology — that's why we were not prepared to accept an eight percent increase."

Expectations were that the inflation rate would increase "in any case."

Mwasa regional secretary Rayphaena Abrahams said a hold-up in balloting in the Western Cape had been caused by some staff having dual membership of Mwasa and Sata.

Ms Abrahams said: "Prior to our conciliation board meeting, management told employees they would have the opportunity of choosing which union they wanted to represent them."

Mwasa found this intimidating as some staff automatically had to belong to Sata when they joined the company. The majority of people with dual membership rejected the eight percent increase which Sata accepted."

Sata settled for eight percent in January and demanded a special clause be added in their agreement that their increase would equal that given to Mwasa.

However, Ms Abrahams said: "We are not interested in other unions riding on our negotiations and have taken legal advice on this. The new Labour Relations Act allows for exclusivity — unions negotiating for their members only."

SAUJ wage negotiations deadlocked with the union demanding a monthly increase of 13 percent and management sticking to eight percent.

Mwasa negotiations kicked off with the union asking for 19 percent.

Both unions declared a dispute and separate attempts to resolve them at conciliation board hearings with the department of manpower in May failed.
Judge gags Sunday Times on court story

Sunday Times Reporter

A SUPREME Court judge has granted an urgent interdict preventing the Sunday Times from publishing details of a court action of extraordinary public interest.

The action raises questions about medical technology and its effect on family relations.

The ethical and legal dilemmas created by drastic medical intervention in the gender and sexual characteristics of couples are of worldwide concern. Church leaders have spoken out on the issue and a number of celebrated court cases have been fought in various countries.

The South African Law Commission has in the past considered legal points raised by the issue, and a case involving similar issues is now before the European Court of Human Rights.

Newspapers in London are vying to publish details of the South African case.

However, Mr Justice Lewis Goldblatt yesterday granted an urgent interdict forbidding the Sunday Times from reporting details of the relationship between a couple involved in a pending court action.

He also ordered the Sunday Times to comply with the terms of Section 12 of the Divorce Act which says no information which comes to light in the course of a divorce action may be published.

The urgent application was brought by lawyers representing one of the parties.

The Sunday Times is consulting lawyers with a view to appealing to the Constitutional Court for a ruling under the freedom of the press guarantees in the Bill of Rights.
NEWS Strike action will coincide with Argus' Johann

Major support for unions

By Mokgadi Pela

BRITISH and Australian unions have pledged to pressure Argus Newspapers' new majority shareholder to meet the demands for a 15 percent pay increase by the Media Workers Association of South Africa.

The International Federation of Journalists, the National Union of Journalists and the Australian Union of Journalists have vowed to pressure Irish newspaper magnate Mr Tony O'Reilly to meet the demands of Mwasa and of the South African Union of Journalists.

Members of the SAUJ at the Argus and the South African Press Association voted 80 percent in favour of strike action to back up their demand for a 13 percent increase backdated to April 1.

The outcome of balloting for Mwasa's 1,500 members will be known today.

Management is offering 8 percent backdated to April 1 or 9 percent backdated to May 13. Argus Newspapers' group human resources manager, Mr Roger Wellstead, said: "Our current pay offer is one percent ahead of inflation and over the past few years our increases have exceeded inflation."

Mwasa acting president Mr Mathatha Tchulu said the date for national action was June 13 to coincide with the Argus listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. He said there would be other forms of action — go-slow, pickets and a ban on overtime.

SAUJ negotiator Miss Marika Shores said the vote was "a clear message workers are not prepared to accept starvation wages."
Argus papers picket plan

By Ike Motsapi
Labour Reporter

THE African National Congress yesterday came out in support of the Media Workers Association of South Africa and the South African Union of Journalists in their demand for a living wage from Argus management.

And about 2,000 members of Mwaau and SAUJ will begin with a national picket of all Argus outlets from tomorrow.

News blackout

In a statement yesterday ANC general secretary Mr Cyril Ramaphosa said a news blackout at this time when information flow was vital, and investors were "keenly focusing on South Africa, would be most unfortunate."

"It is therefore most unfortunate that Argus, which has such a dominant place in the industry, has not yet adequately addressed such vital issues as payment of a living wage for all staff or affirmative action including at managerial level.

"The ANC unequivocally supports the legitimate demands made by Mwaau-SAUJ and their call for mediation with Argus, recognising that this is the best way to resolve the dispute," he added.

Mr John Featherstone, chief executive of Argus Newspapers, said Argus management was prepared jointly to meet with Mwaau and SAUJ to resolve the matter as suggested by Ramaphosa.

He added that the company was also prepared to look at affirmative action, upgrading of journalists and to better conditions of employment for its employees.
Argus 'wants to meet unions'

JOHANNESBURG. — The management of Argus Newspapers Ltd says it welcomes the opportunity of meeting the South African Union of Journalists and the Media Workers Association.

Argus Newspapers chief executive J G Featherstone said this in a statement yesterday.

He was responding to the suggestion made by African National Congress secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa that management should "mediate on issues in dispute" with the unions.

Mr Featherstone said it was reassuring to learn the ANC too did not want a news blackout as a result of a strike.

"We will ask Mr Ramaphosa for the opportunity to present our side of the issue, which we believe will demonstrate our good faith in dealing with the issues he has raised. These include the question of affirmative action, upgrading journalism and conditions of employment at Argus newspapers."

SAUJ members have halted in favour of industrial action in support of their 13 percent pay rise demand. Management is offering eight percent backdated to April 1, or nine percent backdated to mid-May.

Cape Town Mwasa members voted overwhelmingly yesterday in favour of industrial action. A spokesman said members would meet this week to discuss what action would be taken.

Mwasa is demanding a 15 percent increase. — Sapa.
Argus agrees with ANC to meet unions

JOHANNESBURG. — The management of Argus Newspapers Ltd says it welcomes the opportunity of jointly meeting the South African Union of Journalists and the Media Workers Association.

In a statement issued yesterday afternoon Argus Newspapers said in response to the suggestion made by ANC secretary general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa the management of the newspaper group would welcome the opportunity of meeting jointly with the SAUJ and Mwasa "to mediate on issues in dispute".

The company was responding to an earlier development in the wage dispute between Argus Newspapers and Sapa news staffers when the ANC came out in support of the media workers. — Sapa
Media workers plan to picket

JOHANNESBURG — The SA Union of Journalists and the Media Workers' Association of SA are planning to picket outside newspaper offices today to get the Argus Group to up its wage offer.

About 2,000 workers are expected to picket in the PWV region and sympathy pickets are expected in other areas.

said SAUJ chief negotiator Ms Marika Shoros. A dispute has been declared with the Argus Group, who are offering an eight percent wage increase, while SAUJ is demanding 13% and Sowasa 15%.

Argus Group personnel director Mr Roger Wellsted said the suggestion by ANC secretary-general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa that the dispute be referred to mediation had been agreed to by the company. Mr Ramaphosa said foreign investors were focusing on South Africa and it would be unfortunate to have a news blackout.

ANC spokesman Ms Gill Marcus said yesterday the ANC's support for mediation in the dispute should not be misconstrued as interference. "We recognise the frustration of journalists and if a company expects quality work, it should be prepared to pay for services, and in this respect, Argus should lead the way by addressing reporters' concerns," Ms Marcus said — Own Correspondent, Sapa
Strike is off if today’s action fails

Journalists set to picket over pay

BY JOVIAL RANTAO
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

Lunch-hour picket demonstrations, part of a joint action by journalists’ unions in protest against a pay offer by Argus Newspapers and the South African Press Association, are to begin around the country today. Picket demonstrations will be held today outside The Star, Sowetan and Sapa offices and at other Argus newspapers nationwide.

Depending on how Argus management responds to the workers’ demands between today and tomorrow, when picket demonstrations end, members of the South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) and the Media Workers’ Association of SA (Mwasa) have threatened to embark on a massive action, which might involve a strike, on Monday.

The industrial action follows failure by management to meet a 13-15 percent wage increase demanded by workers. The company has offered an 8 percent increase.

Marlisa Shoros and Connie Molusi, the SAUJ’s negotiators, said yesterday they did not believe Argus management ever had a genuine intention of resolving the dispute amicably. Mathata Tsedu, Mwasa’s acting president, said the two unions would meet this weekend to review their strategy.

He emphasised that media workers would picket outside the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. “We will be there whether or not we are on strike or in industrial action,” he said.

The SAUJ and Mwasa yesterday also called on major shareholders in the Argus newspapers to take a stand in the wage dispute.

The unions said Tony O’Reilly, who owns a controlling share in Argus Newspapers, and Dr Nhutwa Moutlaab, who controls the majority of shares at the Sowetan newspaper, had stayed out of the dispute.

Roger Wellsted, personnel consultant for Argus, said the across-the-board 8 percent offer was above the inflation rate in addition to this increase, the company, with full co-operation of both unions, was in the process of implementing a job-grad-

Industrial action looms in the wake of a breakdown in negotiations with Argus management.

“The programme is being implemented over a three-year period, and we are in the third and final stage of the programme. Our pay rates are very competitive to other newspaper companies, as is our pay offer,” Wellsted said.

The Congress of South African Students (Cossas) has joined a list of organisations that have come out in support of the joint SAUJ and Mwasa industrial action which starts today.

Cossas expressed concern that if members of the SAUJ and Mwasa went on strike, students would be deprived of education pages, which helped them in their studies.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions yesterday offered to give assistance in whatever way it could to bring about a fair resolution to the dispute.

After a meeting with a delegation of the SAUJ and Mwasa, Cosatu also said it supported the demand for democratisation of the Argus newspapers.

Failure to implement a meaningful programme of restructuring and affirmative action would undermine the transformation of Argus newspapers into institutions sensitive to the needs and concerns of the majority of South Africans, according to Cosatu.
Plants today
Southwest power pickets at Argus
Countywide

NEWS

Prisoners strike to get pardons - workers to picket Argus offices

By the Mirror

Labour Report 4/1494

The Mirror's own reporter

Soweto Thursday June 9 1994
Picketers protest outside Argus and Sapa offices

Press row goes to mediation

JOURNALISTS who protested outside their offices plan to protest outside the JSE when Argus is listed under its new owner

BY JOVIAL RANTAO  
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

Trade unions in the Argus Group have agreed to take their wage dispute to mediation.

Hour-long picket demonstrations were held outside offices of most Argus papers and the SA Press Association yesterday.

The Media Workers' Association of South Africa and the South African Union of Journalists agreed to mediation set down for Tuesday, but said this would not alter their plan to demonstrate outside the Johannesburg Stock Exchange on Monday.

The demonstration is set to coincide with the listing of Argus Newspapers on the JSE under majority owner Tony O'Reilly.

Yesterday Argus management and the two unions agreed to appoint Wits Business School lecturer Vusi Masina and Independent Mediation Services director Charles Nupen as mediators.

Mwasa acting president Mathata Tedza said the protest actions would stay "forever" if need be. He said the union's national strike committee would be finalising a plan of action this weekend.

Mwasa and the SAUJ were to discuss joint actions today.

SAUJ chief negotiator Marka Sabor said the large turnout outside the offices of The Star yesterday showed that journalists were prepared to take action to back up their demand for a fair increase.

Sapa management yesterday raised its offer from 8 to 10 percent, backdated to April 1.

Mwasa and Allied Publishing yesterday reached an agreement on an 8 percent wage increase offered by the company.

The agreement, according to Allied managing director Steve Nortje, included a link to the three-year phase-in of the company's new pay structure initiated by the Argus Group.
on riot • Mwasa, SAUJ members picket Argus offices

Journalists employed by the Argus Company took to the streets yesterday to picket for higher wages. Demonstrations, organised by the Media Workers Association of SA and the SA Union of Journalists took place in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria and Durban. Sowetan staffs are pictured outside their offices at Commando Road, Industria, Johannesburg, during their demonstration.

PIC: JOE MOLEFE

Media
workers
Sowetan
picket

By Ike Motsapi and Sapa

About 2,000 members of the Media Workers Association of SA and the SA Union of Journalists staged countrywide demonstrations yesterday to demand a living wage from the Argus Company.

Pickets were held in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town and Kimberley.

The action followed a dispute over salary increases at Argus Newspapers and the SA Press Association.

At the time of going to press, the management of Argus and officials of the two unions had agreed to go to mediation.

Mr Mathatha Tzotz, acting president of Mwasa, said the decision to go to mediation did not mean that the intended industrial action had been abandoned.

Mr Roger Wellsted, group human resources manager of Argus, said he was pleased that there was agreement in setting up a meeting with mediators.

Outside Sowetan offices about 150 Mwasa members lined the street yesterday to register their protest. About 30 journalists and media workers picketed outside the Pretoria News.
Media workers in picket over wage demands

Staff Reporters

ABOUT 30 journalists and other media workers marched to the Mount Nelson hotel and staged a picket demonstration over two separate wage disputes with Argus Newspapers.

Members of the SA Union of Journalists and the Media Workers Association of SA (Mwasa) also picketed outside Newspaper House yesterday.

The picketers, bearing posters that said, among other slogans, "A new SA - but same old Argus" and "Argus puts people before profits", arrived at the Mount Nelson at the same time there was a two-car crash on the main road.

The journalists, watched by the police Reaction Unit, waved their posters at dignitaries heading for the World Economic Forum summit, which was attended by heads of state, including President Nelson Mandela.

The journalists were not allowed into the grounds of the hotel, and, after picketing for 30 minutes, rejoined colleagues standing in St George's Mall.

Mwasa is demanding a monthly across-the-board increase of 15 percent. The SAUJ is demanding 13 percent. Argus Newspapers is offering both unions eight percent.

SAUJ members voted last week in favour of taking some form of industrial action which might include a strike. Mwasa members voted in favour of strike action.

The action yesterday was part of a countrywide protest outside offices of all Argus newspapers and Sapa.

The Johannesburg Argus Correspondent reports that the two unions and Argus Newspapers have agreed to take their wage dispute to mediation.

The mediators agreed upon are Vusi Masinga, a lecturer from the Witwatersrand Business School, and Charles Nupen, from the Independent Mediation Services of South Africa. Mediation starts on Tuesday.

Management of the South African Press Association, which has been part of the dispute, yesterday increased its offer from eight to 10 percent, backdated to April 1, and were awaiting for the SAUJ's response.
R1-m for Cape journalists

JOHANNESBURG. — Times Media Ltd will pay a total R1 million to journalists at the Cape Times following the sale of the newspaper to Argus Newspapers, TML group secretary Barrie Harris confirmed today. (243/AR 191931)

"We thought it would be a nice gesture, considering the length and quality of their service," he said.

The payments to 68 staff members would be made on Monday according to a scale based on salary and service.

Journalists with five or more years' service would receive three months' pay while others would get one month's pay.

Mr Harris said TML had approached the Receiver of Revenue and the payments would be treated at favourable tax rates. — Sapa.
Weekly Mail faces Modise gag

THE Weekly Mail and Guardian newspaper was served papers yesterday informing it of the Defence Minister's intention to seek an interdict restraining it from further publishing a report on the former SADF's Directorate of Covert Collection.

Weekly Mail co-editor Anton Harber confirmed attorneys for Defence Minister Joe Modise had served papers indicating he would go to court yesterday to have the newspaper interdicted.

The application did not go ahead, but Weekly Mail co-editor Irwin Mannen said the minister would continue with the action, but not as a matter of urgency.

"We told them they want to interdict us about a story that we do not have in the newspaper anyway," said Harber.

"The story was not planned to appear in this week's edition, and the paper will oppose the interdict," said Harber.

The story deals with 25 'former' members of the SADF's Directorate of Covert Collection who were dismissed by former State President FW de Klerk in 1992.

Last week's Weekly Mail reported that the 23 had written to President Nelson Mandela claiming they were used as political scapegoats, and calling for their reinstatement.

Last week's Weekly Mail report said Mandela had not yet responded to the letter.

The 23 were among a total 61 people who were employed by Pan Afrik Industrial Investment Consultants, a DCC front company.

They all lost their jobs after the Goldstone Commission raided the offices of the Africa Analysis Consultancy (Pty) Ltd, the front company for DCC headquarters.

The report of the subsequent inquiry under Gen Pierre Steyn had never been made public, the newspaper article said -- Sapa.
Bid to gag paper halted

BY MICHAEL SPARKS

An application for an urgent interdict by Defence Minister Joe Modise to prevent the Weekly Mail and Guardian from publishing stories about former military spies was withdrawn yesterday, after the paper's editor assured the minister that no such stories were planned for today's issue.

Editor Anton Harber said last night that the newspaper had not intended publishing today any follow-up on last week's disclosures that former Military Intelligence spies had written to President Mandela asking for their jobs back.

But Harber said Modise had applied for an ordinary interdict to prevent publication of similar stories in future.

He felt it extraordinary that the new Government had used old, apartheid-era legislation so soon after taking power.

"It is ironic that this action was taken one day after the announcement of a truth commission by Justice Minister Dullah Omar," Harber added.

The Media Monitoring Project commented: "One month into the new South Africa we are faced with a defence ministry which appears to have as little regard for the freedom of the press as its predecessor. The eagerness with which the defence ministry appears to have embraced apartheid legislation calls into question the integrity of a democratic government."
Modise to interdict Weekly Mail

JOHANNESBURG — The Weekly Mail newspaper was served papers yesterday informing it of Defence Minister Mr Joe Modise's intention to seek an interdict restraining it from further publishing a story on the former SADF's Directorate of Covert Collection.

Weekly Mail co-editor Mr Irwin Manoim said the minister would continue with the interdict.

"We told them they are interdicting us about a story we don't have in the paper," said Mr Harber, adding it would oppose the interdict as it intended covering the story in future.

The story deals with 23 former members of the directorate who were fired by former president Mr F W de Klerk up 1992.

Last week's Weekly Mail reported the 23 had written to President Nelson Mandela complaining they were used as political scapegoats and calling for their reinstatement.

They were among the 62 people who were employed by Pan Africk Industrial Investment Consultants cc, a DCC front company.

The 62 all lost their jobs after the Goldstone Commission raided the offices of the Africa Analytica Consultancy (Pty) Ltd, the front for DCC headquarters — Sapa.
Strike looms at Argus newspapers

FAILING a last-ditch management climb-down on media workers' pay claims, the Argus group faces its first national newspaper strike from Monday.

The action, planned to coincide with the listing of Argus newspapers on the JSE, could negatively affect its share price.

On Wednesday Argus chief executive John Featherstone indicated management would not budge from its final offer of an eight percent across-the-board increase backdated to April 1, or nine percent backdated to May 13. The South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) has demanded 13 percent and the Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa) 15 percent.

Featherstone agreed potential strikers were an "important portion" of the workforce. But he was adamant the newspapers would not be brought to a standstill, and doubted the action would hit the Argus listing. He said the company could only accept ANC general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa's suggestion on Tuesday of mediation.

The SAUJ and Mwasa said this week they had asked Tony O'Reilly, the Irish press baron on the point of acquiring 31 percent of Argus, to intervene. They said the International Federation of Journalists would before Monday announce solidarity action at O'Reilly's British, Irish and Australian papers.

Eighty-five percent of Mwasa members voted for the strike, while the SAUJ's Marik Sboros said her union had won "a clear majority."
Pay row: Press unions agree to ceasefire

JOHANNESBURG. — The South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) and the Media Workers of South Africa (Mwasa), the two unions locked in a pay dispute with Argus newspapers, have agreed to suspend industrial action — pending the outcome of Tuesday's mediation.

Both parties agreed, after pocket demonstrations by workers on Thursday, to appoint Wits Business School lecturer Vusi Mananga and Independent Mediation Services director Charles Nupen as mediators.

The Argus has offered eight percent across the board. The SAUJ demands 13 percent and Mwasa 15 percent.

Yesterday the SAUJ and the South African Press Association (Sapa) settled their wage dispute Sapa journalists will receive a 10 percent increase, seven percent of which will be a across the board and the rest will be paid as merit.

In the Argus dispute Marika Sboros, the SAUJ's chief negotiator, said both her union and Mwasa, represented by S'Thembele Khala, its general secretary, decided to suspend industrial action as a compromise to give the mediation process a chance.

The decision, she said, was taken at a joint national strike committee meeting in Johannesburg yesterday. A separate Mwasa national strike committee meeting is to be held in Durban today.

"However, picketing at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, to coincide with the listing of Argus newspapers under new majority owner Tony O'Reilly, will go ahead as planned.

"We believe that management is sincere about trying to resolve the conflict amicably and we trust that their decision to agree to mediation is not just another delaying tactic."

The two unions saw mediation as a possible last chance to avert a crisis situation: "We have also taken this decision in the best interests of the community, who would otherwise be faced with a probable news blackout," she added.

The two unions' final position — they have not waived their right to strike — was dependent on the outcome of Tuesday's mediation.
Modise responds to ANC criticism

JOHANNESBURG. — The African National Congress’ Department of Information and Publicity has joined a Natal ANC spokesman in criticizing the Defence Ministry for its intention to interdict the Weekly Mail and Guardian newspaper.

The tabloid was served papers on Thursday informing it of Defence Minister Joe Modise’s intention to seek an interdict to restrain it from publishing further stories on the SA Defence Force’s former Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC).

The story, published for the first time last week, deals with 23 former members of the directorate who were dismissed by former State President F W de Klerk in 1992.

“ANC policy is unequivocally for full disclosure of past covert action and exposure of dirty tricks against the democratic movement,” the department said in a statement yesterday.

However, yesterday Mr Modise backtracked from further action against the Weekly Mail newspaper, saying he would decide on future steps about a possible report by the publication after he had studied all aspects.

Responding to the furor over the legal action, Mr Modise said he was approached on Thursday by SANDF head General Georg Meiring for permission to serve an interdict on the paper.

“I granted this permission because I did not wish to read in newspapers about covert matters pertaining to my department about which I had not yet been briefed. The reason for this decision was so I could call for reports, both from the Defence Force and the respondents.

“Only when I have all the relevant information laid before me will I be in a position to decide what steps I will take.” — Sapa
Press unions suspend strike action pending new talks

JOVIAL RANTAO and MAUREEN ISAACSON
THE SOUTH African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) and the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), lodged in a wage dispute with Argus Newspapers, yesterday agreed to suspend strike action pending the outcome of mediation on Tuesday.

The unions and management agreed, after picket demonstrations by workers on Thursday, to appoint Wits Business School lecturer Vusi Masinga and Independent Mediation Services director Charles Nupon as mediators in the dispute.

SAUJ chief negotiator Makita Sboros said the SAUJ and MWASA, represented by its general secretary Sibembelele Khala, had suspended industrial action as a compromise to give the mediation process a chance.

Picketing at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, to coincide with the listing of Argus Newspapers under new majority owner Tony O'Reilly, will go ahead as planned.

"We believe that Argus management is sincere about trying to resolve the conflict amicably and we trust that their decision to agree to mediation is not just another delaying tactic."

The unions had not waived their right to strike, and their final position would depend on the outcome of the mediation on Tuesday, she said.

The South African Press Association settled its wage dispute yesterday.

Said Sboros. "The SAUJ is disturbed at blatant attempts by the South African Press Association management to divide the union and subvert the collective bargaining process."

"It is ironic that SAPA management's 2 percent move is the first fairly substantial move in the course of protracted negotiations which began in February this year."

"SAPA management have been happy to ride on Argus management's cost-tails, stalling the process by moving only one percentage point from its original offer of 7 percent."

Sboros said the SAUJ was disturbed that it had taken the threat of industrial action to get SAPA management to move on their wage offer.

"Management's transparent attempts at concocting Justifications for making the move at this crucial and late stage confirm suspicions that they hoped to split the union and undermine our right to bargain collectively."

Sboros said that if SAPA management hoped that their action would be successful, they could not be more mistaken.

"In fact it will impact negatively on management, " she said.

Sboros added that SAUJ members at SAPA had pledged solidarity with their colleagues at Argus Newspapers.

Argus Newspapers personnel consultant Roger Welsted said Argus was still in dispute with the SAUJ, and MWASA, with Argus offering 8 percent across the board and promising to continue its salary restructuring programme.

The SAUJ is demanding 18 percent and MWASA 15 percent.

In a press release issued yesterday, SAPA general manager Wim van Ooij said SAPA management had decided to increase their offer after comparing the salaries of their journalists with those paid by the Argus company flagship newspaper, The Star. He said SAPA salaries had fallen behind those of English-language publications in Johannesburg.
ANC attacks Modise over move to gag newspaper

THE ANC yesterday criticised its own Defence Minister, Joe Modise, for barring the Weekly Mail & Guardian from reporting on military intelligence agents.

"It is regrettable that one of the first actions by the new Minister of Defence has been to interdict the paper, to prevent publication of further information on operatives of the totally discredited Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC)," an ANC information department statement said.

"ANC policy is unequivocally for full disclosure of past covert actions and exposure of the dirty tricks conducted against the democratic movement."

The newspaper last week said 23 former members of the DCC, fired in 1992, had written to President Mandela claiming they were scapegoats and asking to return to their jobs. It named agents who had been sacked for illegal activities but who had been rehired.

Editor's assistant of the Weekly Mail and Guardian, Judy Bester, said: "We received papers (from the Defence Ministry) interdicting us from further contravening the Protection of Information Act or publishing more information about the matter."

The Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party also condemned the interdict.

Modise sought yesterday to defuse the row over his gag on the newspaper, saying he needed more information before he took a final decision.

He said he was approached by SADF chief General Georg Meiring on June 9 for permission to serve the interdict.

"I granted this permission because I did not wish to read in newspapers about covert matters pertaining to my department about which I had not yet been briefed," Sapa-Reuters.

See Page 9.
Sapa strikes wage deal with journalists' union

JOHANNESBURG — The South African Press Association reached agreement yesterday with the South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) on salary increases.

Of an overall 10% increase, backdated to April 1, seven percent will be across-the-board and three percent paid on merit.

Argus Newspapers personnel consultant Mr Roger Wellsted said the Argus was still in dispute with the SAUJ and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa — Sapa.
ANC slates Modise over Mail action

THE ANC and Cosatu slammed Minister of Defence Mr Joe Modise yesterday for applying for an interdict to prevent press reports about the "totally discredited" Directorate of Covert Collections (DCC).

The ANC said it was "regrettable" that one of the first actions taken by Mr Modise was to prevent publication of the reports about the DCC in the Weekly Mail and Guardian.

Cosatu called on Mr Modise to withdraw his application.

Mr Modise's decision was also strongly criticised yesterday by a spokesman for the ANC in Natal, urging him to drop the case being heard in the Pretoria Supreme Court.

It said ANC policy is for "full disclosure of past covert actions".

The Weekly Mail story concerned the dismissal of 23 DCC members by former president Mr F W de Klerk.

The minister, who did not refer to the ANC criticism, confirmed last night he gave permission for the application after being approached by SANDF chief General Georg Meiring.

"I granted permission because I did not wish to read in newspapers about covert matters pertaining to my department about which I had not yet been briefed."

"The reason for this decision was so I could call for reports, both from the Defence Force and the respondents. "Only when I have all the relevant information before me will I be able to decide what steps to take," Mr Modise said — Political Staff, Sapa.
HOT OFF THE PRESS... the Natal Blind and Deaf Society's Rukay Mathir and Albert Peters show off their braille printer

By MEGAN POWER

THE first newspaper in South Africa to be printed in braille rolled off the "presses" yesterday.

In a trial run this weekend, 30 copies of the Sunday Times, printed in braille, were delivered to a group of blind people from the Natal Blind and Deaf Society in Durban.

The new newspaper, produced on a £10,000 computerized braille printer, means that blind people can, for the first time, read their own newspaper just hours after the printed version has hit the streets.

The Sunday Times, which has relaxed copyright restrictions in this regard, was chosen after a snap survey among a group of blind people confirmed it to be their first choice.

The Sunday Times is now also in cyberspace—the electronic information highway that straddles the world and which can be reached by anyone with a computer equipped with a modem.

Readers are invited to join the Sunday Times conference on the Digitex Online bulletin board.

Since it was introduced in the Transvaal area, this new public forum has stimulated heated discussions on a diverse range of subjects.

The forum is hosted by Digitex Online, a leading Johannesburg bulletin board system. (24-3)

All you need is a modem connected to a phone line. Once your communications software is configured, dial Johannesburg 476-2000.

If you need help call Walter Albrecht at Digitex 011-6700921 during office hours.
JOHANNESBURG — The Democratic Party has urged a review of the Defence Act and Protection of Information Act following reports that Defence Minister Joe Modise had planned an interdict against the Weekly Mail to stop it from publishing further reports on former military spies.

"No sooner is the African National Congress in office than it begins to help itself with the authorisation legacy of its junior partner, the National Party," a statement said.

The DP said the planned interdict, which did not go ahead, had demonstrated a need to urgently review the censorship sections of the two pieces of legislation.

Mr Modise had apparently attempted to halt publication of details of 23 former members of the SA Defence Force covert operations who had written to President Nelson Mandela claiming they were used as political scapegoats and calling for their reinstatement.

They were fired by former president FW de Klerk after a purge in 1992.

The DP said the incident demonstrated the need for the strengthening of the bill of rights’ freedom of expression and information clauses.

Mr Modise has come under fire for his actions, with criticism also coming from the ANC and Cosatu — Sapa
Mwasa open to mediation

DURBAN — The Media Workers Association of SA (Mwasa) decided at the weekend to join colleagues in the SA Union of Journalists in a bid to resolve a wage dispute with Argus newspapers through mediation.

"Mwasa's national strike co-ordinating committee decided here to postpone their strike action until the outcome of mediation, which begins tomorrow. Wage negotiations deadline on May 19. — Sapa"
Modise withdraws gag order

BY ABDUL MILAZI

Defence Minister Joe Modise yesterday withdrew an interdict restraining the Weekly Mail & Guardian from publishing information implicating top Umkhonto we Sizwe officials in spying for the previous government while in exile.

On Friday, Modise won an interdict against the newspaper restraining it from publishing information by former Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC) members Gerhard van Rensburg and Clive Brink, who alleged that they had names of ANC officials who had spied for the NP government while the organisation was still banned.

In a statement Modise said he had withdrawn the interdict after carefully examining information made available to him by the two former Military Intelligence officials and satisfied himself that it did not pose a threat to the democratic transition.

Modise said: "I have instructed the State attorney to withdraw the interdict restraining the former officers (Van Rensburg and Brink) from divulging information to the Weekly Mail or restraining the Weekly Mail from publishing whatever information either party so wishes."

He said his intention in initially agreeing to the defence force chief General Georg Meiring's request to gag the former agents and the paper was to satisfy himself as to the security implications of the publication of such information.

Modise said: "I granted the permission because I did not want to read in newspapers about covert issues pertaining to my department about which I had not yet been briefed."

Modise's actions last week drew strong criticism from the SACP, Cosatu and the ANC, among others.
Modise withdraws gag on Weekly Mail

PRETORIA — Defence Minister Joe Modise has withdrawn an order restraining former military-intelligence officers and the Weekly Mail & Guardian from divulging information about the former government's ANC and PAC informants.

He said he had satisfied himself that such information did not pose a threat to the democratic transition.

Intelligence sources have indicated that some senior Umkhonto we Sizwe officers, earmarked for top positions in the SANDF, had been spies for military intelligence.

Modise said that after examining information from former agents of the SANDF's Directorate of Covert Collection, he had instructed the state attorney to withdraw the interdict he had obtained last Thursday against the newspaper and two former agents. The agents, Gerhard Jansen and Clive Blain, were restrained by the Transvaal Supreme Court from disclosing the names of alleged MK spies.

"I wish to make it clear that my intention, in initially agreeing to a request by (SANDF chief) Gen Georg Merrang for an interdict, was to satisfy myself as to the security implications of this issue," Modise said, reiterating his commitment to the principle of Press freedom.
Information Act
'needed to promote new state culture'

THE Independent Media Commission has recommended a freedom of information Act "to create the context for the seeds of a new state information culture" in SA.

In its final report to the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), the commission said existing legislation placed the obligation on individuals to prove why they needed access to information in the state's possession.

"In countries which have a freedom of information Act the obligation is on the state to prove why information being requested by a member of the public cannot be provided. Such an Act will help to protect and deepen the tentative efforts made by the commission to develop a democratic culture within information services in the country?"

The commission said SA's state information services constituted an elaborate system of information gathering and recording "Making the public aware that such information can be accessed should enlarge upon the expressed commitment of these services to move away from previously secretive approaches."

It also said the TEC's lack of response to requests to amend the Independent Media Commission Act was "considered to be unsatisfactory."

It said the Act in many ways frustrated the commission in trying to achieve its aims.

"The commission requested the TEC to effect certain changes to the Act. Not all of these requests were implemented by the TEC."

Giving an example, the commission said it was unable to act against a KwaZulu government-financed publication advancing the interests of the Inkatha Freedom Party because, in terms of the Act, the IFP was not considered a political party because at that stage it was not participating in the elections.

Conversely, parties not taking part in the elections were not entitled to equitable treatment by broadcasters.

However, the commission said the IFP had received equitable election coverage before its 11th-hour decision to participate in the April polls.

"Particularly, but by no means only, on Radio Zulu, coverage of the IFP was near, or on occasion greater than, that of the ANC and the NP."

"The nature of the coverage also afforded the IFP frequent opportunity to outline its policies to the electorate," the commission said in its report.

The commission criticised SABC news managers for inadequate professionalism during the election period.

Commission chairman Judge Ramon Leon said there was no evidence to suggest deliberate bias.

"What has emerged is an inadequate standard of professionalism among middle and senior news managers. This was due in part to lack of experience and probably in part to having to deal with a new situation involving 26 political parties, 22-million voters as well as a system of proportional representation."

The report quoted European Union broadcasting expert John Grut as saying particular failures by the SABC could usually be put down to incompetence, bad habits, lack of training or poor management.

The commission included an interim report by the Media Monitoring Project that said many television news reports had lacked clarity because linked events were stenographed instead of being "packaged" in a single report.

Viewers had been distracted from the news by "bobbing heads moving across the bottom of the screen or presenters spending a good deal of time talking to the wrong camera."

Leon concluded: "Overall, I believe that equitability was achieved." — Sapa.
As Argus is listed
Pickets present
Mediation over pay dispute today
TML profit slips 3%

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Deputy Business Editor

LOSSES from Playboy and expenses incurred to strengthen certain group products saw operating profit before extraordinary items of cash-flush Times Media Ltd (TML) down 3% to R499.3m despite an 8% increase in turnover to R377.7m for the year to end March.

However, operating profit after the abnormal item was up 7%. It had not been necessary to make further provision for the incentive bonus scheme due to the lower rate of increase in the TML share price.

The lower company tax rate, and a 69% drop in the interest bill to R1.6m, saw profit after tax up 37% at R31.2m. A drop in earnings from associated companies saw profit before extraordinary items tempered to a 15% rise to R43.8m.

After extraordinary items totalling R30.8m and consisting mainly of TML's R18.4m share of M-Net's extraordinary items, the R10.4m profit on the sale of the Legion investments and the R2.7m surplus on the liquidation of Dispatch Media Limited, profit soared 94% to R74.7m.

Earnings at the share level were up 14% while the final dividend was raised to 58c (56c) bringing the total for the year to 82c — up 15%.

'Above expectations'

MD Roy Paulson said the trading level for the year was above expectations and had been helped particularly in the second half by political and cellular telephone advertising. The losses incurred by Playboy had been anticipated. However, both Playboy's circulation and advertising levels had substantially exceeded expectations.

TML was bullish about the current year's prospects. Surplus funds stood at about R100m derived in part from the sale of its minority interests in Natal Newspapers, Pretoria News and the Cape Joint Operating Agreement together with the title of the Cape Times as of April 1 for R81m.

Paulson said there were no immediate plans on how this money might be spent but they "would look at anything relevant to our organisation".
Modise backs down on Weekly Mail interdict

Political Correspondent

DEFENCE Minister Joe Modise has told the state attorney to withdraw an interdict barring publication of disclosures by former covert operations staffers.

The interdict, granted last week, prevented the Weekly Mail and Guardian from publishing claims by former covert operations staffers that members of the African National Congress alliance and Pan Africanist Congress had been informants for the Nationalist government.

Democratic Party spokesman on the media Dene Smuts welcomed Mr Modise's decision: "to desist from attempts to silence the Press".
Media commission urges freedom of information Act

The Independent Media Commission has recommended a freedom of information Act "to create the context for the seeds of a new State information culture" in South Africa.

In its final report to the Transitional Executive Council, the IMC said existing legislation placed the obligation on individuals to prove why they needed access to information in the State's possession (243).

"In countries which have a freedom of information Act the obligation is on the State to prove why information being requested by a member of the public cannot be provided.

"Such an Act will help to protect and deepen the tentative efforts made by the IMC to develop a democratic culture within information services in SA."

The IMC said South Africa's State information services constituted an elaborate system of information-gathering and recording.

"Making the public aware that such information can be accessed should enlarge upon the expressed commitment of these services to move away from previously secretive approaches."

The IMC criticized SABC news managers for inadequate professionalism during the election period. But IMC chairman Mr Justice Ramon Leon said there was no evidence to suggest deliberate bias. — Sapa.
Demand for law on the right to know

JOHANNESBURG — The Independent Media Commission has recommended a freedom of information Act "to create the context for the seeds of a new state information culture".

In its final report to the Transitional Executive Council, the IMC said existing laws placed the obligation on individuals to prove why they needed access to information in the state's possession.

"In countries which have a freedom of information act the obligation is on the state to prove why information being requested by a member of the public cannot be provided.

"Such an act will help to protect and deepen the efforts made to develop a democratic culture."

The IMC was critical in its report of SABC news managers for "inadequate" professionalism during the election period.

BIC chairman Mr Justice Ramon Leon said there was no evidence to suggest deliberate bias.

"What has emerged is an inadequate standard of professionalism due in part to lack of experience and probably in part to having to deal with a new situation involving 35 political parties and 22 million voters."

— Sapa
Modise withdraws Mail action

BY BARRY STREEK

The Minister of Defence, Mr Joe Modise, backed down yesterday from his decision to seek an interdict to prevent the Weekly Mail from publishing reports about the controversial Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC) and its former employees.

Mr Modise announced this after he was sharply criticised in the media and the ANC. He was accused of restricting press freedom and the ANC said it was "regrettable" that Mr Modise, himself a senior ANC member, had agreed to the application.

He said yesterday he had examined information from former intelligence officers of the DCC that certain members of the ANC alliance, the PAC and others, had acted as informants of the apartheid state.

"Having satisfied myself that such information does not pose a threat to the democratic transition, I have instructed the state attorney to withdraw the interdict.

"I want to make it clear that my intention, in initially agreeing to General (Georg) Bouring's request for an interdict, was to satisfy myself as to the security implications of the issue. I have now done so.

"I wish to reiterate my commitment to press freedom," he said.
JOHANNESBURG — About 80 employees of the Star and Sowetan newspapers yesterday demonstrated outside the Johannesburg Stock Exchange against Argus Newspapers’ eight percent pay rise offer.

Argus Newspapers was listed on the JSE yesterday morning.

The Media Workers of South Africa (Mwasa) acting president Mr Mathatha Teedu said the demonstrations had been held to inform the public of the employees’ plight, not to prevent the Argus listing.

Asked if the demonstrations had been effective, South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) chief negotiator Ms Marika Shoros said “Argus management is embarrassed. If there is no substantial movement (in the wage offer) things could be very bleak for the flow of information.”

A deadlock was declared last month between the Argus and the two unions and the dispute will go to mediation today. The SAUJ want a pay rise of 13% and Mwasa 19% — Sapa
Mwasa and SAUJ make offer

Breakthrough in Press wage dispute

By Sapa and Ike Motsapi

UNION representatives in the media industry have recommended a settlement of their wage dispute with Argus Newspapers following a mediation session with management in Johannesburg yesterday (243) (255).

The Media Workers' Association of South Africa and the South African Union of Journalists undertook to report back to their members this week and recommend settlement, mediators Mr Charles Nupen and Mr Vusi Masunga said in a statement last night.

The parties have arrived at a position acceptable to management but have chosen not to disclose the contents of the settlement proposal at this stage.

The unions will report back to management at noon on Friday.

Mwasa is demanding a 15 percent salary increase for its members backdated to April 1. Management has made an offer of eight percent.

Members of the SAUJ are demanding an across-the-board salary increase of 13 percent backdated to April 1.

Meanwhile, the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union yesterday said it had noted with concern the effort by Argus "to seek publicity and their bed to distort information around the dispute".

In an advertisement placed in The Star on Monday, Argus Group human resources manager Mr Roger Wellsted said the company was keen to resolve the matter.

Saccawu was reacting to the advert in which management said the union had "settled at eight percent".

Wellsted also said in the advert that more than 80 percent of the company's 6 700 staff had accepted the eight percent increase offer.
Indications yesterday were that members of trade-unions involved in a wage dispute with Argus Newspapers would accept an improved offer made by management. This would effectively remove threats of a strike. South African Union of Journalists and the Media Workers’ Association of South Africa (Mwusa) members in Johannesburg yesterday accepted the offer, but Mwusa members in Durban turned it down.

The unions and management are expected to sign a settlement agreement when they meet mediators: Charles Nupen and Vusi Masunga tomorrow. — Labour Correspondent.
For the soul of democracy
Military vs the Press: A threat
OPINION
Mushrooms and the media

Dennis Lither

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Argus pay deal with unions averts strike

JOVIAL RANTAO

ARGUS Newspapers and the SAUJ and MWASA, the two trade unions with which it has been involved in a wage dispute, yesterday reached and signed a settlement, ending a month-long pay deadlock and averting possible strike action.

The parties reached an agreement on an 8 percent wage increase, backdated to April 1, and a further 2 percent to 10 percent, across the board from July 1. The deal includes a 15 percent bonus sacrifice, limiting overall increased cost to the company of the offer to 8 percent for the 12 months, if the company does not exceed its profit forecast by 5 percent.

Argus Newspapers says:

IN A press statement issued yesterday, Argus Newspapers said the bonus sacrifice stipulated in its settlement with the two trade unions would become void if Argus Newspapers in the 12 months to March 31, 1995 achieves an attributable profit of R5240 000, effectively 5 percent higher than the profit forecast in the pre-listing statement. In this case, the overall cost to the company of the wage settlement will increase.

The Argus statement said that, furthermore, the company will, through its job pay restructuring programme, introduce a minimum salary of R1350 a month from October 1 1994.

Argus Newspapers group personnel consultant Roger Wellsted said the deal represented a significant improvement on the company’s offer, linked to an incentive profit-sharing component. “We have been looking for some time at ways to reward increased productivity and this innovative approach by the unions may lead to new initiatives to achieve this,” he said.

“This has been a year for flexible wage increases and the unions have exercised innovative variations on the agreed 8 percent annual cost to the company mandate,” said Wellsted.

“In the phase-in of the company job pay restructuring exercise, the flexibility of the wage agreements, tied in with the cost constraints resulting from the recent recession, has required careful balancing to achieve the new pay philosophy of the company agreed two years ago. We will continue exploring the principle of productivity incentives with our staff,” he said.

The unions say:

NEWSPAPER unions MWASA and SAUJ issued a statement saying the settlement showed what it was possible to achieve when workers united in action.

They expressed gratitude to all the organisations, both locally and abroad, that had offered their spontaneous and wholehearted support, including pressure on Argus management to improve their wage offer.

MWASA acting president Mathinza Tsedu said the deal highlighted the union’s justifiable opposition to management’s earlier offers.

Said Tsedu: “This is a lesson to management to take workers’ grievances seriously, and forever to negotiate in good faith with union leaders, to avoid unnecessary confrontation in the future.”

SAUJ chief negotiator Marika Serees said the extremely constructive co-operation between the unions had bolstered the strength of both sides.

“We hope it is the shape of things to come,” she said, adding: “The SAUJ will be pursuing unity talks with MWASA.”
The Media Workers Association of South Africa and the SA Union of Journalists have settled their individual disputes with Argus Newspapers following mediation by the Independent Mediation Services of SA. Argus Newspapers improved its wage offer by two percent, offering a 10 percent across-the-board increase.
ANC says news blackout would be unfortunate

Political parties support media unions in dispute

BY JOVIAL RAMAPOLO
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

The ANC and the Workers List Party threw their weight behind the two unions involved in a wage dispute with Argus Newspapers and the South African Press Association yesterday.

The Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa) and the SA Union of Journalists (SAUJ) are demanding a 15 percent and 13 percent salary increase respectively. The two companies are offering 8 percent and 9 percent backdated to April 1 or 9 percent backdated to May 13.

ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said yesterday: "One of the most important features of a democracy is a vigorous and inquiring press. It is therefore most unfortunate that..."

SUPPORT for media unions in a wage dispute with Argus Newspapers and the South African Press Association grows

Argus, which has said a dominant place in the industry, has not yet adequately addressed such vital issues as payment of a living wage for all staff or affirmative action, including at managerial level," he said.

He said a news blackout would be unfortunate at a time when the new Government was still being established and a flow of information was vital, and when foreign investors were keenly focusing on South Africa.

Argus Newspapers chief executive John Featherstone said the company would welcome an opportunity to mediate jointly with Mwasa and the SAUJ for mediation of issues in dispute.

"We will ask Ramaphosa for the opportunity to present our side of the issue, which we believe will demonstrate our good faith in dealing with the issues he has raised," he said.

Members of the SAUJ last week voted for industrial action after wage talks with management deadlocked.

Mwasa employees of Argus Newspapers in Natal and the Sovietan have voted for the strike. Results of the Mwasa strike ballot held at The Star yesterday will be announced today.

Support for the unions is growing. The Workers List Party (WLP) yesterday joined local political parties and trade unions which have pledged support.

In Ireland, England and Australia, journalists at newspapers where Tony O'Reilly - the new majority owner at Argus Newspapers - has interests have promised to embark on solidarity picket demonstrations, from tomorrow.

In a statement, the WLP said the 15 percent increase demanded by Mwasa and the 13 percent by the SAUJ was reasonable in the light of Argus's R63 million profit.

Journalists and media workers at Argus Newspapers and Sapa will begin protest action tomorrow that could culminate in a strike on Monday - the day on which Argus Newspapers is set to be listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.
Argus, unions settle wage dispute

JOHANNESBURG — Argus Newspapers yesterday settled its wage dispute with the Media Workers Association of South Africa and the South African Union of Journalists, following mediation earlier in the week.

The parties agreed to an eight percent pay rise across the board, backdated to April 1, and a further two percent from July. The deal includes a 15 percent bonus sacrifice if the company does not exceed its profit forecast by five percent. Argus agreed to set a minimum monthly salary of R1,350 from October 1.

SAUJ chief negotiator Marka Sboros said co-operation by the two unions had bolstered the strength of both. It was the first time they had co-operated on a shop-floor issue, having before joined forces only in Press freedom campaigns.

“We hope it is the shape of things to come,” said Ms Sboros.

Mwasa Acting President Mathata Tsedu said the deal showed the unions’ rejection of earlier pay offers had been justified. "This is a lesson to management to take workers’ grievances seriously and negotiate in good faith with union leaders to avoid unnecessary confrontations in the future.”

Argus Newspapers’ Group Personnel Consultant Roger Wellsted said the improved offer was linked to an incentive profit-sharing scheme.

“We have been looking for some time to ways to reward increased productivity and thus innovative approach by the unions may lead to new initiatives to achieve this” — Sapa.
Wage dispute settled

Mr. Makemba, the head of the union, said the dispute was settled.

"We hope it is a sign that things to come will be more peaceful," he added.

The union and the company agreed to a new contract that will expire in 2024.
Editor's trial: CCB man 'investigated'

JOHANNESBURG — Former Civil Co-operation Bureau co-ordinator Mr Staal Burger was mentioned in a report which led to former President FW de Klerk placing seven SADF members on compulsory leave and 16 individuals on compulsory retirement during December 1992.

This was said yesterday by former SADF Chief of Staff Lt-Gen Pierre Steyn in the Regional Court trial of Weekly Mail newspaper co-editor Mr Anton Harber, 4l and G Media Pty (Ltd) and private investigator Mr Jan Kleynhans (2423).

Gen Steyn said the report, drawn up by himself, referred to SADF members as well as civilian collaborators and that Mr Burger fell under the latter heading.

The accused have denied charges that Mr Burger's dignity had been impaired by a telephone tap in his office during August 1992.

The magistrate, Mr E Roets, refused an application to discharge these charges, but discharged a count of malicious damage to the skirting board in which a listening device was placed. According to evidence, the hole in the skirting board was barely visible.

Defence counsel Mr E Dane said that while the accused stood by their denial that Mr Burger had suffered impairment of dignity, their alternate defence was "justification" arising from the public's "right to know".

Gen Steyn was the first witness called by the defence. The trial continues on November 28 — Sapa.
Call to restrict legal sanctions on the press

JOHANNESBURG. — Press Council chairman Professor Kobus van Rooyen called yesterday for the "extremely restricted" application of Section 205 of the Criminal Procedure Act, which forces journalists to reveal sources.

He told a broadcasting industry summit: "Journalists should only in extreme circumstances, . . . be under a legal obligation to give evidence of what they have gathered in the course of their profession.

"The Appellate Division's judgment in 1983 placing absolute liability on newspapers for defamatory statements" should be rejected or repealed.

"The administration of justice should be subject to rigorous scrutiny, and unless a newspaper intentionally prints misleading information about a case or intentionally prejudices the outcome of a case, there should be no criminal sanction," he said. — Sapu
Argus Holdings income up 8.3%

JOHANNESBURG — Argus Holdings yesterday reported a 8.3% increase in attributable income to R161.8m (R94m) for the year to end March 1994.

Argus said the improved profitability came about due to enhanced trading in the second half of the financial year, lower interest charges arising from effective working capital management, and reduced taxation from the drop in the corporate tax rate.

Turnover rose 10.3% to R1.624bn (R1.533bn), while trading income only improved marginally 1.8% to R151.755m (R149.113m).

Lower interest paid of R7.369m (R11.142m) and reduced tax of R60.258m (R64.307m) resulted in a 10% improvement in net income after tax of R87.393m (R77.339m).

Earnings a share rose almost 7% to 236.5c a share (220c) and Argus declared a final dividend of 5c higher at 45c a share, increasing the total distribution for the year 8.1% to 90c a share (R0.60).

M-Net continued to experience good growth in the period under review although MultiChoice would continue to reflect development losses. — Sapa
Turnaround for Argus

Business Staff

THERE was a considerable turn-around in the fortunes of Argus Holdings in the second half of the financial year to March.

In the first half, earnings per share were down two percent, but for the full year they rose 6.8 percent to 22.5c.

After holding the interim dividend at 15c, Argus has raised the final by 12.5 percent to 45c, making a 51.1 percent increase for the year as a whole.

The most significant turn-around was at the trading profit level, in which a 22.7 percent decline was turned into a 1.8 percent increase to R151.7 million.

These are the last results to include Argus Newspapers, which was unbundled and separately listed earlier this month.

The final price for which JCI and Anglo American sold their 31 percent holding in Argus Newspapers to Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers is not being disclosed, as there is no obligation to do so under present regulations.

Argus Holdings financial director John Sturgeon says that information about the future direction of the remaining of Argus Holdings, including a new name, will be released along with the annual report at the end of July.

Group turnover was up 10.3 percent to R1.63 billion and there was a healthy decline in interest paid from R11.1 million to R7.3 million.

Pre-tax profit was up 6.3 percent and net operating income was up 13 percent to R67.1 million.

Subsidiary CNA Gallo's earnings were up 9.1 percent, despite poor consumer spending.

There was increased capital expenditure on the CNA chain and NuMetro.

Remedial action has been taken to reduce working capital and will remain a priority focus.

CNA Gallo hopes to reap the benefits of more buoyant consumer spending, once economic recovery really gets under way.

Income from associates increased 2.9 percent to R61 million.

M-Net continued to enjoy subscriber growth and good advertising support, but this was more than offset by significant development losses from MultiChoice in its operations in Africa as well as from FilmNet in Europe and its 25 percent holding in the MTN cellular network.

CTP increased earnings by 14.6 percent and was able to re-equip and expand printing capacity mainly through its own capital resources.

TML had a buoyant second half after a lacklustre start to the year. It increased earnings 15 percent, despite development losses from Playboy.

Buoyed by better results from all major divisions, Nationalale Pers Beperk lifted attributable net profit from its own operations to more than R100 million for the first time in the year to March 31.

The group, which is now heading for a JSE listing, reported turnover grew 12 percent to a record R1 billion from R894.5 million. Pre-tax profit was 35.1 percent better at R156.1 million (R115.5 million).

With the tax bill dropping to R5.7 million from R56.8 million, the group's attributable net profit before its share in associates' losses was R101.9 million (R57.9 million).

Total net profit attributable to shareholders was 55.8 percent higher at R96.4 million (R63.1 million). Earnings per share, before the addition of the interest in associated companies, improved 75.4 percent from 52c to 91c.
The right to know

To tell or not to tell?

NEWS FEATURE

Journalists still struggling to protect secrets despite law amendments

ISSUES REMAIN

How to decide when the line gets crossed:

1. The right to know
2. The right to privacy
3. The right to remain silent

Source: European Journal of Communication

By Janis Nilsone

2013

The dilemma of journalists is great as ever.

In South Africa, 'The dilemma of individual journalists is great as ever.'

How to decide when the line gets crossed:

1. The right to know
2. The right to privacy
3. The right to remain silent

Source: European Journal of Communication

By Janis Nilsone

2013
Union head quits position

JOHANNESBURG. — South African Union of Journalists president Ms Yvonne Grunbeck resigned yesterday.

The SAJU branch at the Star newspaper had unanimously called for her resignation.

This followed furious protest over a letter to the union’s general-secretary, signed by Ms Grunbeck, saying the general-secretary had not resigned but had been retrenched.

Ms Grunbeck said she resigned after giving her position "tong and thorough consideration.

Allen — Sapa
'No files’ on Weekly Mail and Guardian

JOHANNESBURG — Police say they have no files on the Weekly Mail and Guardian newspaper, the paper reported.

The newspaper recently requested its security police files and the files on several political figures, in terms of the new constitution's freedom of information clause.

The newspaper said yesterday the police had produced only one file, on co-editor Anton Harber. It contained a computer print-out of personal details, most of which were wrong.

This was the first time police had released a security file, the newspaper said.

"Other files we requested, some relating to African National Congress leaders, will not be made available. Our sources inform us that these files, too, are lost."

The Weekly Mail quoted Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi as saying the police had no files on the newspaper.

The newspaper said this was "despite the fact that during the 1980s the security police opened scores of dockets and conducted dozens of investigations into the paper."

It added "The police are either hiding the information they collected in the past, including information about individuals who are now leading members of the government, or they have destroyed the files. — Sapa."
Censorship 'by the mob' feared

LONDON. — Many people in the townships regarded criticism of the new government as disloyalty, which put black journalists in danger.

In a Sunday Express article, Sowetan managing director Mr Joe Tholoe said South Africa was moving into an era of "censorship by the mob".

Sowetan editor Mr Aggrey Klaaste also feared that black journalists might face tough times. "The ANC-led government will not be able to deliver on expectations," he said. "This will cause the first problems for newspapers."

Mr Klaaste said he was concerned that criticism of the new government might be interpreted by some people as being disloyal and destructive.
PRESS — 1994

Information Act ‘soon’

By BARRY STREEK

A FREEDOM of Information Act is expected to be drafted during the current session of Parliament, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said yesterday.

The legislation — first proposed by the Independent Media Commission — will give South Africans a legally enforceable right to information kept by the government.

Mr Mbeki said the act would extend the provisions already contained in the new constitution and bill of rights.

“The government believes that various existing provisions in the constitution necessitate a Freedom of Information Act,” he said.

“We believe that the protection of the rights of all South Africans, and the objectives of transparency and accountability, require that such an act should be passed.”

“We are therefore currently assessing how we should begin this process, because we believe that this too ought to be an inclusive process, drawing as many people as possible into a discussion leading to the drafting of such an act.”
Argus loses ground in battle for black readers

AMANDA VERMEULEN

The battle for black readership took its toll in the first half of the year as Naspers's City Press gained circulation at the expense of Argus Newspapers' Sowetan and The Star.

Sowetan's average daily circulation dropped 6.5% to 217 825 in the six months to end-June from 234 896 in the first half of last year, the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) has reported.

City Press's circulation jumped 13.5% to 263 917. According to Lynxail Campher, MD of media buying company Euromedia, the Sowetans could have lost readers to City Press, Sowetan readers could also have defected to the Citizen, which increased circulation 4.3% to 140 075.

Business Day, which is targeted at the country's business and political leadership, lifted its sales by 3.5% to a record daily figure of 34 092.

In contrast, The Star, a general interest daily, suffered a 3.7% decline to 263 182.

The Star's weekend edition also lost circulation, dropping 2.9% to 162 111.

Business Day marketing manager Gisele Wertheim-Aymes said niche papers, which appealed to a specific group of readers, were gaining ground because they focused on the needs of their readers. This resulted in less wastage for advertisers. Business Day had shown a proportionate increase in advertising as its circulation grew, she said.

But sister publication Sunday Times dropped 5.3% in circulation despite its highly successful Finders Keepers competition during the period.
Winnie demands R700 000

Staff Reporter

The Deputy Minister of Arts, Science, Culture and Technology, Mrs Winnie Mandela, yesterday fired a volley of legal actions against four newspapers and a soft porn magazine.

Her lawyer, Mr Pat Poovalingam, yesterday said Mrs Mandela was claiming R200 000 from the Cape Times and the Natal Mercury.

Her claim against the Cape Times related to a report published in July under the heading "Winnie hires 'professional' killer - claim". The Natal Mercury published a similar report.

Mrs Mandela is claiming R100 000 from the Sowetan and the Daily Dispatch following articles in April in which she was alleged to have misappropriated ANC funds to Hustler magazine, which called her a rude name, is also being sued for R100 000.
Irish group raises its stake in Argus

JOHANNESBURG — Ireland's Independent Newspapers has increased its holding in Argus Newspapers to 34.98 percent of its issued share capital.

Independent Newspapers' investment in Argus Newspapers now totals R181 million, equivalent to an average of 1.16c a share.

The Irish group bought a 30.1 percent stake last month at 1.16c after Argus Newspapers shares were listed on the JSE.

Its increased holding has two major implications:

- It reinforces Independent Newspapers' confidence in Argus Newspapers.
- It takes its stake to the maximum allowed by the Securities Regulation Panel without a similar offer having to be made to minority shareholders.

Independent Newspapers representatives are in South Africa with Irish and British analysts, giving rise to speculation that a second acquisition may be in the offing.
Independent ups stake in Argus Newspapers

DUBLIN-BASED Independent Newspapers Plc has increased its stake in Argus Newspapers from 30.1% to 34.98% of the group — the maximum it can hold without being obliged to make an offer to buy out minority shareholders.

It announced yesterday that it now holds 15.8m shares in Argus Newspapers — an investment of R101m or an average of about R11.46 a share.

The Irish group, which owns newspapers in Britain and Australia, bought its controlling shares in Argus Newspapers in July at a price of R11.41 each.

A spokesman said yesterday that the additional 4.97% had been bought from several individual shareholders on the open market, at a price Independent Newspapers considered "reasonable".

Argus Newspapers, the largest newspaper group in SA, includes both the Cape Times and The Argus.
Kasrils: ‘Difficult to ask for money for guns’

Political Staff

IT is difficult for the Minister of Defence to ask for “money for guns” when the cries of starving children can be heard, but so much of South Africa’s defence equipment is dated, says Deputy Defence Minister Ronnie Kasrils.

During the debate on the defence budget vote in parliament yesterday, Mr Kasrils said South Africa’s training aircraft were more than 40 years old.

Since 1989, defence expenditure had been cut by 44 percent with the number of warplanes dropping from 800 to 650 and staffing from 300 000 to 200 000.

The defence force had to monitor borders amid calls to switch back to the electrified fence between South Africa and Mozambique to prevent the influx of migrant workers and to curb cattle rustling and the huge trade in illegal arms.

Mr Kasrils said Armscor was an asset to the military and it was better to make South Africa’s weapons here than buy them abroad.

Minister of Defence Joe Modise said the South African National Defence Force was being “civilianised”.

Military intelligence projects would be approved by his department and the ministry of finance.

On the issue of the role of women in the defence force, Mr Modise said a white paper would be presented to parliament before the end of the session.

The process of integration was continuing smoothly, although the Azanian People’s Liberation Army had come in late.

Mr Modise announced an immediate moratorium on prosecutions of part-time forces who failed to respond to call-ups.

The SANDF would not hand over cases to the courts and would also not proceed with prosecutions in military courts,” he said.
Boost for South training course

By Alexandra Zavis

THE Independent Development Trust will donate R300 000 over two years to the Vukani Journalism Training Programme, run by SOUTH.

Vukani offers aspirant journalists from disadvantaged backgrounds a year of intensive training and on-the-job experience.

"We are trying to support initiatives which extend the dissemination of development news at community level," explained Mr Jolyon Nuttal, IDT communications director.

Linked to this was the need to extend the range of backgrounds from which aspirant journalists were drawn, and to ensure there were professional training programmes to give them the qualifications they would have difficulty achieving through traditional channels, he said.

"What we like about Vukani is that it has a track record, and that it is housed within a non-profit, independent trust. We can therefore be assured that the funding is in good hands," Nuttal said.

He added that Vukani complimented another initiative IDT was supporting in the Eastern Cape, the Development News Agency.

Community newspapers were aiming to increase the flow of development news by syndicating their services, he said.

"If this works, there should be a synergy so that some of the Vukani trainees should be able to find jobs there."

TRAINING AID: From left, Jolyon Nuttal (IDT), Alexandra Zavis (South training officer) Ebrahim Bhorat (Chair of South Press Services) and seated, Genè Fester (South trainee)
Thabo Mbeki slates media

CLIVE SAWYER
Weekend Argus
Political Correspondent

DEPUTY president Thabo Mbeki has challenged the Press to re-think its role in the new South Africa.

He told the Cape Town Press Club the media had continued its apartheid-era role of being critical of government and looking for crises.

While agreeing with President Mandela that the government of national unity should be given a clean bill of health after its first 100 days, Mr Mbeki said there were two problems.

One was within the civil service, where the ministries of defence, safety and security and agriculture were in dire need of restructuring.

The other weakness the government had was communication with ordinary people.

The Press needed to re-examine its role, he said.

He had been accused by a magazine of being lazy.

"Not a single journalist has come and asked me what I do every day, so they can reach a judgement."

As in the wartime Press in Britain had decided to fight Nazism, the Press should decide its role in building democracy, Mr Mbeki said.

ARL 20 8 74.
Press freedom ‘inviolate’

BOB TILLEY
The Argus Foreign Service

HAMBURG. — Press freedom in the new South Africa is inviolable.

This is the assurance given by Interior Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi in an interview in a German newspaper today.

Censorship and the expulsion of foreign journalists would not occur while he was in office, the Inkatha Freedom party leader told Die Welt correspondent Thomas Kneser.

As far as pornography was concerned, he said South African adults could no longer be told “what they may read or watch”.

Chief Buthelezi endorsed old political foe Nelson Mandela as "president of us all, also of those who didn’t vote for him”.

But he called on Mr Mandela’s African National Congress to dissociate itself from its alliance partners, the Communist Party and Cosatu.

The strike in the motor industry showed what a mistake it was for a government party to ally itself with a trade union, Chief Buthelezi said.

He claimed his federalist ideas were now supported by all ANC provincial leaders.
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Survey shows Cape poverty

Staff Reporter

ONLY 37.3% of black households in the Western Cape have access to piped water and the region has the highest percentage of black households with bucket toilets, a study on living standards has revealed.

The survey of 9000 households across the country was conducted by the South Africa Labour and Development Research Unit at the University of Cape Town.

It showed that 100% of white households in the Western Cape have indoor piped water and flush toilets, but only 67% of black households have flush toilets. Over 25% of black households in the Western Cape have bucket toilets and 6% have no toilet facilities at all.

Only 83.6% of South African households have access to electricity — 76.5% of black, 96.5% of coloured, 100% of Indian and 99.8% of white households.

Nearly 43% of all South Africans aged between 18 and 64 are employed — 35.4% black, 54.6% coloured, 54.1% Indian and 71.1% white.

The average monthly household income for blacks is R1 005, coloureds R2 077, Indians R4 009 and whites R6 394. The average monthly household expenditure is R1 111 for blacks, R1 854 for coloureds, R3 308 for Indians and R4 742 for whites.

Whites spend 20.3% of the household budget on housing, blacks 9.9% and coloureds 13.7%.

Over 50% of the black household budget is spent on food, while this figure is 22.1% for whites.

Dramatic differences between race groups

Whites spend 3.8% of their budget on holidays and jewellery, and blacks spend 0.6%. Almost 10% of the white household budget is spent on insurance, but this is only 0.9% of black budgets.

The survey showed that whites spend 8.4% on personal expenses including cigarettes, alcohol, entertainment and newspapers, while blacks spend 6.7%. Indians 5.8% and coloureds 9%.

The survey showed that 45.6% of blacks aged 14 and older have completed standard six; 64% of coloureds; 81.4% of Indians and 89.7% of whites. Figures revealed that 27.3% of blacks aged 16 plus have completed standard eight, 37.2% of coloureds, 63.9% of Indians and 83.4% of whites.

But only 11% of blacks aged 18 plus have completed standard ten with 15.5% of coloureds, 40.1% of Indians and 61% of whites.

The survey also showed that 16.7% of blacks and 9.3% of coloureds between the ages of 15 and 19 were pregnant, but no whites sampled in this age-group were pregnant.
Van Schoor editor-in-chief of 5 papers

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Durban — A restructuring of Natal Newspapers was announced yesterday by Argus Newspapers chief executive John Featherstone.

Featherstone reaffirmed Argus Newspapers' commitment to the principle of editorial independence — saying that the group would vigorously continue to uphold this right.


Ed Booth is managing director of Natal Newspapers.

Peter Duas, managing editor of The Daily News, has been appointed editor of The Daily News.

No changes have been made to any of the other editorships.

David Wightman is editor of Sunday Tribune, John Patton editor of The Natal Mercury, George Parker editor of Natal on Saturday and Brijbal Ramguthsee editor of Post Natal.

Reaffirming Argus Newspapers' commitment to editorial independence, Featherstone said "The content of the newspaper, both editorially and in its advertisement columns, is in law and in Argus practice the responsibility of the editor.

"We, like every other international publisher of repute, will vigorously uphold that principle."
Argus gives O'Reilly a 9% contribution

BRUCE CAMERON
Business Editor

ARGUS Newspapers made a "worthwhile" nine percent contribution to the increased half-year, gross profit of Irish-based international newspaper and media group Independent Newspapers Plc in its first month in the stable.

Independent Newspaper's operating profit was up 35 percent to £1.1 million punds (£1.3 million) on an 18 percent increase in turnover of 96.5 million punds (£132.5 million) for the six months ended June 30, 1994.

On the basis of the results, Chairman Tony O'Reilly said it had been decided to increase the interim dividend by 12 percent to three Irish pence (48c) a share.

And the results for the group for the full year "are expected to show an improvement over 1993".

Fully diluted earnings a share, excluding exceptional gains on investments and rationalisation costs, were 12.3 percent up at 9.02 Irish pence (48c).

Not profit before tax was up four percent to 11.2 million punds (£13.8 million), but down three percent to 12.5 million punds (£16.5 million) after a 32 percent increase in the tax bill and payments to minority interests.

Dr O'Reilly said Argus Newspapers Limited, which was consolidated from the beginning of June, 1994, yielded a worthwhile contribution of 1.3 million punds (£17 million) or 5.1 percent of operating profit.

Argus Newspapers Chief Executive, and a director of Independent Newspapers Plc, John Featherstone, said the June performance of Argus Newspapers had been "unusually buoyant" and the overall contribution for the second six months could be expected to be proportionally lower.

Independent Newspapers bought a 30.1 percent stake in South African Argus newspapers in June, and increased it to 35 percent in August.

Dr O'Reilly said the company's share in the Independent and Independent on Sunday titles in London, together with its Australian and more recent South African investments, "consolidates our position as an international media and communications group."

The Irish operations were the biggest contributor to operating profit, earning 10.6 million punds (£137.7 million) or 74 percent of the total. The United Kingdom operations contributed 4.8 percent, France 4.8 percent and Australia 2.7 percent.

In Ireland the group increased its advertising market share, recorded circulation increases with the Sunday Independent and The Star — which now has the second highest readership of any Irish daily — and the Independent maintained its position as the biggest-selling quality daily.

According to Reuters, the results did not surprise analysts in Ireland and echoed their expectations that Irish and British operations were going well.

"At the end of the day I would say they were pretty much in line with what I was expecting," said one
AMPS scare for SA’s print media

SOUTH Africa’s benchmark annual media and marketing research study, the All Media and Products Survey (AMPS), shows a decline in readership levels for print media across the board.

The release of AMPS 1994 this week was not without controversy. The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF), the patron of AMPS, says in a foreword to the report that pre-release scrutinisation led to considerable unease, particularly among leading newspaper publishers. This prompted the placing of an embargo on the results pending further analyses.

"Two eminent statisticians, retained for this purpose, were unable to discover any irregularities in terms of sampling, fieldwork or methodology and came to the conclusion that the data reflect the realities of the marketplace," says SAARF.

Unease

The figures explain the unease in the midst of the print media owners. Across the board, readers per copy declined from 4.59 per issue to 4.11. At the same time, television viewership increased by a significant margin.

All print media categories showed declining readership figures. English/Afrikaans Daily Newspapers (minus 10.0 percent), English/ Afrikaans Weeklies (minus 10 percent), English Black Dailies (minus 10.0 percent), English/ Afrikaans Weeklies (minus 10 percent), English Black Weeklies (minus 7.5 percent), Black Weeklies (minus 7.5 percent), English Magazines (minus 7.5 percent), Afrikaans Magazines (minus 8.2 percent) and Black Magazines (minus 8.1 percent) all showed a decline.

The Star general manager Graeme King finds strange anomalies in the figures. "It is inexplicable that a newspaper such as City Press, which has surged in circulation, could be found to have actually lost readers. I am at a loss to understand it," says King.

According to ABC figures, City Press increased its circulation from 225,298 during the period from January to June 1993 by 18 percent to 283,917 during the same period this year. Yet, according to AMPS, City Press’s black readership fell by more than 200,000 from 1,74 million last year to 1,52 million this year (see table).

"The City Press ABC figures reflect average circulation. If you look at the 1994 six-month period, there were two very high peaks, which boosted the average circulation. The newspaper also ran competitions to boost circulation — who is to say that some readers did not buy 10 to enhance their prospects of winning?" counters Moria Wegner, who is a director at Market Research Africa IBIS Media Services, which undertook the research on behalf of SAARF.

On the whole, English language newspapers tended to lose black and Afrikaans-speaking readers. Wegner ascribes this to possible political polarisation in the lead-up to the election. Another factor which could have contributed to low black readership figures was the many public holidays during this period.

Nationale Tydskrif chief executive Sallie de Swart argues that it would be wrong to interpret the figure as an abrupt swing away from print to electronic media. "It is important to take the period during which fieldwork was done into account. Undoubtedly the violence and unrest had a large impact on the pass-on factor, especially for magazines," says De Swart.

"The only fact about AMPS which is indisputable is that the people who criticised the data today will be making full use of it tomorrow," says Suatchi & Suatchi Kleerek & Barrett media director Gordon Muller.

"Warts and all, it’s still the best option we’ve got. The fuss has come from print media owners who now have to cope with a devalued currency in an increasingly competitive market. While one understands and sympathises with the problem, it does highlight the over-reliance on quantitative research in the selection process."

Print media is losing to television not just on the basis of viewership figures but because they are failing to communicate the qualitative contribution of their medium. No hype, no hope.

The extent to which the atypical period has affected the election-influenced readership patterns as revealed by AMPS will become evident only next year Wegner, though, argues that these results are not atypical. "The next six years in South Africa will be atypical," she argues. In this period, though, the readership erosion is bound to put downward pressure on print media owners.
Johannesburg. — The constitution ensures freedom of the press and the government had no power to gag the media "in general terms," Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said last night.

Mr Mbeki was responding on CTV-TV's Newsline programme to a question on how transparency in government could be reconciled with attempts by Defence Minister Mr Joe Modise to gag the Weekly Mail and attacks on Sunday Times editor Mr Ken Owen by PWV Premier Mr Tokyo Sexwale.

He said "Certainly, the view of the government is by no means to gag the press or even direct the press as to what it should say."

The government may occasionally seek interdicts against the press on certain matters, Mr Mbeki said.

On TV's Agenda programme later last night, Mr Sexwale, in response to comments that he was popular with the press in the past, denied this was so.

"I was not popular with the press in the past. The press was reflecting a popularity among certain sections of the population. So I have not been a friend of the press I have been a defender of the press in so far as that aspect of the constitution that says we should have a free press in this country."

The premier said subsequently he had come to realise there had been "a bit of irresponsible reporting."

Last week, Mr Sexwale slammed the press and Mr Owen for suggesting the PWV government preferred employing ANC members.

On Agenda, Mr Sexwale said "We want lampooning. Let's be lampooned, let's be cartooned, but let's be serious. We are rebuilding a nation here, and we can't have news disinforming the public about things the government is doing, and news seen to be undermining the efforts of government."

People had laid down their lives to have a free press defended in the interim constitution, he said, adding that there was another freedom citizens were not using properly — freedom of speech.

Sapa
THE media had to accept they were "by and large representative of the old establishment" and that they had to change, the national executive committee of the ANC Youth League said after meeting in Johannesburg at the weekend.

The comments are the latest in a series of ANC broadsides at the media since the new government came into power.

The committee was briefed by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, who was the first major ANC leader to call upon the media to define for themselves a new role in a democracy.

He has prepared a discussion document on the media to be tabled at the ANC's national conference in December.

The youth league committee said one of the major challenges facing it was "the hysteria generated by the media in response to some comments of ANC leaders."

But it reiterated the commitment of the ANCYL to press freedom.

"We wish to reject as mischievous the insinuation that ANC leaders have begun to be paranoid about criticism." — Sapa
Three Jewish newspapers to merge

Publishing group Pubhco says The Herald Times, SA's major Jewish newspaper, has been merged with the Johannesburg Jewish Voice and the Zionist Record to create the SA Jewish Times. MD Reuben Shapero says it will be the most powerful Jewish newspaper ever seen in South Africa. (243) "It combines the readership, editorial and advertising expertise of three newspapers and effectively represents well over 100 years of Jewish newspaper publishing in South Africa."
Mandela’s now

ANC

on Press Freedom

necessary

Criticism

CT 17/1994

The ANC

doesn’t

exercize their freedom of expression

on material presented to the ANC.

The recent clampdown

by the ANC on the media has

been a matter of concern to many

people. The ANC’s opposition to

the press freedom

is not only about protecting

its own interests, but also about

ensuring that the ANC

remains in power.

The clampdown on the media

has also been criticized

by many.

The ANC has been accused of

using its power to suppress

opinions that are critical of

the ANC.

The ANC claims that it has

no intention of suppressing

press freedom. However, many

people believe that the ANC

is using the media to ensure

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The ANC has been criticized for

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Media challenged to face change from conflict to reconstruction

Mandela warns of ‘unproductive dog-fight’

POLITICS

Chris Whitfield
Political Staff

President Nelson Mandela has challenged the media to come to terms with change, warning of perceptions that could lead to an “unproductive dog-fight.”

He told the Conference of Editors yesterday that the media faced a challenge to “undergo what some would characterise as a transition from the sensation of conflict to that of reconstruction and development.”

He listed three “realities” that impacted on the freedom of expression in South Africa, which had a direct bearing on whether the country’s media could “truly reflect the diverse views of society as a whole.”

The ownership of South Africa’s media, which was “not only concentrated in a few hands, but reflects the patterns of racial exclusion characteristic of the apartheid era”.

The “demographic composition of management, editorial executives and senior journalists, which mirrors the same pattern”.

Broader socio-economic issues such as illiteracy, poverty, lack of media skills and language constraints, all of which “limited the ability of the majority to exercise their freedom of expression.”

It was crucial that media establishments take the initiative in dealing with these matters, “be it in the form of unbundling, training, deployment of personnel or any other relevant actions”.

Mr Mandela — entering the growing debate on the media’s role for the first time — said that “if reported statements by public officials and related media comments are anything to go by, relations between government and sections of the media can be said to be at a relatively low ebb.”

He questioned whether this was entirely unhealthy, but added “What are the perceptions feeding what could develop into an unproductive dog-fight?”

He added that sceptics were to be found “within society in general, and in the media in particular.”

“This is to underscore a truism that the media is not an institution apart, divorced from society and deriving its ideas from some mysterious force.”

It was in the nature of journalism “that you should be searching, critical and even sceptical.”

“At the same time, you also have to exercise the responsibility of accurately reflecting the hopes and fears, apprehensions, optimism and pessimism as they exist within society.”

This was perhaps the greatest challenge facing the South African media.

“In the abnormality of apartheid, it was much easier to strive simply to be normal and defend that right.”

“In the new situation of relative normalcy, the challenge is to undergo what some would characterise as a transition from the sensation of conflict to that of reconstruction and development.”

Mr Mandela emphasised, however, that the African National Congress would ensure that the new constitution and Bill of Rights would do away with qualifications on the freedom of information that were inconsistent with international democratic norms.

“In the meantime, the government, backed by civil society, should urgently elaborate the principle of access to information in the hands of the state, in the form of legislation.”

The government was also faced with the challenge of putting into place an information service “in tune with the realities of our times.”

A partnership between the government and the media should develop that was based on the pursuit of common interests, and not “the subservience of one to the other, or on uncritical praise-singing.”

It should have its stormy moments in the knowledge that democracy would be the ultimate beneficiary.
The role of the media

By NELSON MANDELA

Like so many other aspects of society in the New South Africa, the role of the media is also undergoing important changes. This week, in an address to the South African Conference of Editors, President Nelson Mandela spelled out his views on the role of newspapers.

The opposite is also perfectly true. And this is entirely natural.

Yet we should continually challenge the kind of pessimism which can be self-serving.

This is a state of mind that hopes for and unwittingly encourages a social disaster, an approach to any developments from the point of view of confirming a pessimistic prognosis.

For the media everywhere, this has always been a difficult balancing act over the centuries. For it is in the nature of your trade, and it is absolutely crucial, that you should be searching, critical and even sceptical.

At the same time, you also have to exercise the responsibility of accurately reflecting hopes and fears, aspirations and apprehensions, optimism and pessimism as they exist within society.

Perhaps this is the greatest new challenge facing South Africa's media. In the abnormality of apartheid, it was much easier to strive simply to be normal and defend that right.

In the new situation of relative normalcy, the challenge is to undergo what some would characterize as a transition from the sensation of conflict to that of reconstruction and development.

To cite an example: One was quite surprised that only a few of the media establishments noted, at all, the advent of the date of September 1 on which the primary school feeding scheme was due to start.

Reports that we have are that 388 schools had by this date already started with the scheme, affecting more than 100,000 children. Others were due to start phasing in the programme, ultimately to cover about four million children.

But are these reports accurate? What are the positive experiences, weaknesses and failures on the ground?

By investigating and objectively reporting on such issues, the media can play a crucial role in the building of a new society.

An area that has not received sufficient attention thus far is the deepening and expansion of media freedom.
Cutbacks at Pretoria News

Du Plessis said Pages prepared in Pretoria will be electronically transmitted to TNPC by way of The Pretoria News's new newspaper pagination technology.

Du Plessis could not say how many staff members would be affected by the plan because retrenchments had yet to be negotiated with the unions.

Expanding

The company would do all it could to assist those employees whose jobs would be affected by the moves.

Du Plessis said the moves entailed The Pretoria News becoming a 24-hour newspaper.

The paper would provide a new morning edition in Pretoria to compete with the five dailies from Johannesburg, while continuing to provide an afternoon edition.

The education edition would be tagged on to the morning edition.

"We will be providing readers with our brand of capital city news in the mornings and our last edition of the day will be the only newspaper in Pretoria providing coverage of events here and elsewhere between midnight and mid-morning."

"In providing what will be, in a real sense, a 24-hour newspaper we will be expanding our service to our market as well as keeping Pretoria people abreast of local, national and international events over a longer time-frame," Du Plessis said.

The Pretoria News general manager Alden Robertson said the company's commercial printing contracts would all be honoured.

Aspects of the paper's financial administration will also in future be done in Johannesburg.
Argus move defended

JOHANNESBURG — Changes at the Pretoria News had nothing to do with violating job creation programmes or breaching the spirit of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, Argus Newspapers chief executive Mr John Featherstone said yesterday.

He was reacting to a statement on Tuesday by the SA Union of Journalists that Argus Newspapers boss Mr Tony O'Reilly had breached the spirit of the RDP by trying to retrench staff.

The SAAU also accused Mr O'Reilly of violating the spirit of the government's job creation programme.

Mr Featherstone said the company was expanding the Pretoria News, not closing it. "We are restructuring and repositioning the Pretoria News Market forces — and nothing else — have made us act now. Had we not acted, we risked losing all the jobs and the Pretoria News as a title." — Sapa
Efforts to restructure Pretoria News defended

By Shirley Woodgate

Developments at the Pretoria News should be seen as restructuring and repositioning, not mere retrenchment, says Argus Newspapers' chief executive John Featherstone.

Denying claims by the South African Union of Journalists that attempts to retrench editorial and other workers were contrary to the spirit of the Government of National Unity's RDP and job-creation programme, he said the company was expanding The Pretoria News, not closing it.

He added: "We do not resort to retrenchment as a first response. Market forces — and nothing else — have made us act now. Had we not acted, we risked losing all the jobs and the Pretoria News as a life."

The restructured Pretoria News would maintain its vibrant role and be able to increase its service to readers.

"In tough trading conditions Argus Newspapers is not closing daily, we are expanding them. Moving the Pretoria News to the morning slot, while still covering the afternoon market, increases the franchise it holds. "To prepare the paper for a successful future we have to have appropriately priced printing resources. That means using Argus Newspapers' Johannesburg plant and closing an expensive, exclusive printing facility in Pretoria. In a newspaper that is losing money, this also means the cost of producing a good newspaper must be reduced in all areas," Featherstone said.
Censorship pledge as Mbeki urges new newspaper launches
POLITICS

'Government committed to free Press'

Political Staff (243) ARC 30/1/94

The cabinet's decision to censure Home Affairs Minister and Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi for the fracas in an SABC studio is evidence of the government's commitment to media freedom, says President Mandela.

He and deputy president De Klerk were given the Johannesburg Press Club's newsmakers of the year award last night.

In a speech read on his behalf by Forestry and Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal, Mr Mandela warned that activity such as the taking of hostages and illegal roadblocks were an abuse of political rights.

"This has to be dealt with firmly so as to ensure that an exercise of rights does not degenerate into lawlessness," he said.

He said legislation to ensure the "freedom of expression" was among measures the government considered fundamental to South Africa's future.

In an apparent hint that the government may be considering subsidising small community newspapers, Mr Mandela said there was a need to create conditions for the emergence of community voices.

Turning to the Buthelezi incident, he added in an apparent explanation of the cabinet's decision: "While we are committed to national reconciliation, this cannot be allowed to take precedence over the basic principles without which democracy would be a hollow shell."

Mr De Klerk said the cabinet's censure of Chief Buthelezi showed its commitment to a free press.

He said that the country desperately needed a free and objective press now as it travelled through years of "fragile" transition.
Argus agrees to consult Mwasa

By Joe Mdhlela
Political Reporter

ARGUS Newspapers agreed during five hours of talks in Johannesburg yesterday with the Media Workers' Association of South Africa to consult the union before going ahead with rationalisation plans.

Mwasa, led by its president Mrs Sandra Nagfaal, said it was unhappy that the company had continued with restructuring without involving the union.

After the meeting, the Argus delegation, led by chief executive Mr John Featherstone, agreed it would "consult as fully as possible on all proposed changes with Argus branches nationally."

Earlier, Mwasa expressed disgust at the company's "unilateral" restructuring, saying it had only been informed after the company had accomplished its objectives.

"Mwasa saw the move by the company to unilaterally restructure in a serious light. We obviously do not take delight in rubber-stamping management's decisions," Nagfaal said.

She said the union would seek a meeting with Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni and Minister without portfolio Jay Nadoo with a view to showing that restructuring and retrenchments were inconsistent with the national spirit of reconstruction.

Argus spokesman Mr Roger Wellsted said: "The object of Featherstone's meeting with the union is to discuss future plans and to deal with a list of grievances the union currently has."
Argus to consult union on revamp

Argus Newspapers and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (Mwasa) yesterday reached an agreement that the company would, where necessary, consult the union regarding restructuring and retrenchment.

The agreement was reached at a meeting which followed Mwasa's objection to "unilateral" restructuring of Argus Newspapers.

Joe Mbhila, deputy chairman of Mwasa's southern Transvaal region, said the union had expressed concern that the restructuring would lead to retrenchments which would not be in keeping with the aims and objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

He said Mwasa had asked Argus management rather to retrain and place employees elsewhere within the company instead of retrenching them.

Argus management, Mbhila said, accepted that branches should be directly involved in negotiations regarding restructuring.

Graeme King, general manager of The Star, described the meeting between the parties as positive.

However, he said management could not give a commitment that it would not retrench people. "We can never say that because we might have to do so if necessary," Labour Correspondent.
Sappi is wearing thin, says analysts

Jacques Magilolo

Despite media hype, market reaction to Sappi’s acquisition of a controlling interest in United States-based paper company SD Warren was not positive. The share price dropped from a high of 6.50 cents on Tuesday to 5.75 cents on Thursday.

Both stockbroking and institutional analysts are concerned that Sappi may have bitten off more than it can chew. “The deal comes too closely after an extensive investment in European ventures,” says a Cape Town-based institutional analyst.

Another widely held view is that the money is not currently available to finance a variety of undertakings. “Van As should remember that his British and German companies are not profitable enough to venture into another unstable territory,” the analyst says.

Why all the negative reaction? After all, this is the largest investment made by a South African company to date. The acquisition means that Sappi will control 70 percent of SD Warren and thereby become the world’s largest producer of coated wood-free paper.

Since 1990, the company has accumulated some R1.2 billion. This year’s producing capacity is 2.3 million tonnes.

Companies in these countries have yet to produce expected yields. In Sappi’s case, the first year to end-February 1994, Hannover had shown a turnover decline of 2 percent and SD Warren Ltd suffered from the continued effect of recessions in Europe and the United Kingdom, causing line-item prices to decline by four to eight percent.

Analysts indicate that these situations “need to be assimilated in the Sappi fold before other investments can even be contemplated.” While World Bank is a respectable 41 percent of its furniture line, no further major investments are planned. In addition to the current investments in South Africa — need it — are the two main points of opposition to Sappi’s investment in the US.

Firstly, it is questionable whether Sappi has forecast the extent of the growth in demand for its products. Secondly, the present prices far forecasts offer investors marginal capital gains.

Market experts say that, if the cycle lasts until 1997/1998, Sappi’s earnings per share would equal about 800 cents, which is not to a ratio of 10 times — means that the

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**CURRENT AFFAIRS**

will be impossible to produce an upmarket product on a severely reduced budget. This may justify closing off The Argus could then be published on a morning and afternoon newspaper similar to The Star in Johannesburg.

It is understood that the restructuring includes the imminent scrapping of the Saturday edition of the Cape Times. This will give The Weekend Argus more room to fight the Sunday Times, which has made significant gains in Cape Town with its Metro edition.

The daily version of The Argus will be repositioned next month to focus on the Cape metropole’s three distinct markets: the northern and southern areas and the Cape Flats. The price is expected to increase from R1 to R1.30 and that of the Cape Times from R1 to R1.20.

The final repositioning of the Cape Times is expected to be completed during the first quarter of next year and could include a price increase to between R1.50 and R2. Circulation is expected to drop about 20% from around 60,000.

Featherstone says the unions have been consulted about proposed changes. Earlier this month Argus Newspapers agreed, after talks with the Media Workers’ Association (Mwasa), to consult the union before rationalising the company. The meeting followed a Mwasa protest over what it described as a unilateral decision to restructure the Pretoria News, which resulted in a 75% cut in staff. But Mwasa president Sandra Naglal says the union is unaware of plans to restructure the Cape Town newspapers. She expects to meet company executives next week.

The restructuring plans so far have been a blow to those who believed O’Reilly’s investment in SA would pump more resources into the ailing newspaper sector.

But Featherstone rejects as “simply untrue” the assumption that O’Reilly’s main concern is to squeeze Argus Newspapers for a better return than the company has managed in recent years.

He adds that investments by O’Reilly elsewhere in the world have created better newspapers and the company has no doubt the same will happen in SA.
Task force for Information Act

THE government yesterday announced the creation of a task force to draw up a Freedom of Information Act which would include unique provisions affecting public and private companies.

The task force would investigate the inclusion of provisions that would go beyond existing constitutional provisions which require individuals to show that the information is required to protect a right.

But task force members said the proposed legislation, due to be presented early next year, would also respect the right to privacy.

The task force would be chaired by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s legal adviser Ms Mejunku Gumbi. Other members are legal academics Mandla Mchunu and Etienne Mureziizik, advocates Vincent Maleka and Ermple van Schoor and members of the SA Communication Services Dirk Venter and Adriaan Norlje.

Ms Gumbi said the proposed act was part of an effort to achieve an open democracy.
Task force set to consult on Freedom of Information Act

Political Correspondent

A TASK force of six has been set up to consult interest groups on a Freedom of Information Act.

Half of the members of the task force are from outside the civil service and will be paid from R350 to R550 an hour for what is officially expected to be about a 10-hour week.

The act will allow people access to information held by government bodies, and other public bodies exercising power.

Citizens' right to privacy will be guaranteed.

The task force was appointed by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and its chairman is Mojanku Gumbi, Mr Mbeki's legal adviser.

Its members are Natal University professor Mandla Mchunu, Witwatersrand university professor Etienne Murenik, state law drafter Empie van Schoor and Communication Services officers Dirk Venter and Adriah Norje.

"A spokesman for Mr Mbeki's office said obstacles to a "participatory and accountable" democracy included illiteracy and an authoritarian tradition that had instilled a deferential and fearful attitude towards government.

It had also caused a "secretive and unresponsive" culture in the civil service.

Ms Gumbi said the group had yet to decide on how the legislation would affect businesses like banks.

Interest groups to be consulted included business, the media, unions, government ministries, the church and literacy groups.
Debate over companies’ disclosure

Task force to draft laws on information

CAPE TOWN — Government yesterday created a task force to draw up a Freedom of Information Act which members said would include unique provisions for affecting public and private companies.

They indicated the task force would investigate provisions that would go beyond existing constitutional conditions on access to information, which requires individuals to show that requested information is required to protect a right.

But members said the proposed legislation, to be presented early next year, would also respect the right to privacy.

The task force would be chaired by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s legal adviser Mosatse Gumba. Other members are legal academics Mandla Mchunu and Elenee Murenik, advocates Vincent Maleka and Emile van Schoor and members of the SA Communication Services, Dirk Venter and Adriann Nortje.

Gumba said the Act was part of an effort to achieve an open democracy. Such a democracy was hindered by an authoritarian tradition, which had generated a deferential attitude to government, which in turn had developed a secretive and unresponsive nature.

S Added: “In the event of a disclosure on the reach of the legislation, Gumba said provisions affecting public companies were not usually included in such legislation. But in certain situations it might be necessary to insist that these companies fall within the ambit of the Act.”

For example, when companies negotiated with unions there was a debate about whether the companies’ full financial information should be provided so that the union could put its demands in context.

Companies might also be in competition with parastatals which would be at a disadvantage if they were forced to provide information and their competitors in the private sector were not.

Companies might also be involved in business which affected the state or individuals within the society, she said.

“Anglo American is transferring all its money to Russia and it goes against government policy if it indicates a clear non-commitment to the programmes of the government. If I think government or the people should have the right to request information relating to that activity.”

Maleka said many jurisdictions operated on the basis that an individual had to show some kind of interest or need, but this had proven difficult to administer.

He favoured the view that all individuals should be given the right of access, all.

Task force

Information and the onus should be placed on the institutions concerned to show the information should not be provided. Gumba acknowledged that all jurisdictions recognised exemptions for state security and privacy, but expressed the hope they would be a narrow as possible.

The news conference ended with sharp exchanges between journalists and the panel when Gumba referred a question about task force members’ pay to the “administrative section.”

Quickly recognising the irony of the situation, Gumba apologised for seeming to be “ducking and diving” and promised to provide the information by the end of the day.

The three members not public service members would be paid either R350 an hour for the law professors, or R250 an hour for practising lawyers. They would work about 10 hours a week. 
Staff buy a little chunk of *Tribute* of Mzimku Malunga 201044

THREE black executives of *Tribute* magazine have bought a substantial stake in the company that owns the magazine.

*Tribute* editor Jon Qwelane, his deputy Sbu Magash and editorial director Maud Motanyane have acquired a 37.5 percent shareholding in Penta in a R1.2 million deal.

The deal was financed by the First Corp Merchant Bank, which gave a loan to the three.

Qwelane says one of the options they are considering is to structure themselves into a company.

He says the deal is the culmination of weeks of intensive negotiations between themselves, Penta management and the bank.

"Fortunately the Penta management did not at all stand in our way," he says.

Qwelane, who says they might consider increasing their shareholding in the company, argues that it is high time the ownership of media serving blacks was black-owned.

In addition to *Tribute*, Penta also publishes *Livng, De Kat* and a health magazine *Mega Life*.

Penta also has a stake in a book publishing company, Kepersol, and is said to be in the process of launching an entertainment magazine called *Big Screen*. 
A major change for South

By NAZEM HOWA

SOUTH, the Cape Town independent weekly, is to cease operating as a paid-for publication.

This was confirmed yesterday by South's chief executive officer, Mr Ebrahim Bhorat, who said a free-sheet was being planned to replace it.

The weekly, which has followed a policy sympathetic to anti-apartheid organisations, has been running at a loss since its inception, with international donor funding making up the deficit.

Sources close to the project confirmed that donor funding to South was "drying up", prompting its directors to look into restructuring.

"We launched South-eader as a free-sheet, and it has achieved phenomenal success. We have had a substantial amount of advertising support," Mr Bhorat said.
Police raid Joburg newspaper

JOHANNESBURG — Armed police, acting on a tip-off, raided the offices of the Lenasia-based newspaper the Indicator at the weekend, the second raid in three days.

Editor Mr Mohammed Ismail said the six policemen from John Vorster Square claimed on Saturday afternoon they were acting on an anonymous tip-off that the newspaper was selling stolen goods, including AK-47 rifles and cars.

He said the newspaper would complain to Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi and PWV Safety and Security Minister Ms Jessie Duarte.

Police raided the offices of the newspaper for the first time on Thursday, again claiming they had received information the office contained stolen goods and firearms.

The newspaper condemned the raids as a deplorable form of heavy-handed actions reminiscent of NP rule 24/110/94.

"How do the police expect respect and co-operation from the public when Net-style harassment continues?"

"Do the police not verify if there is a semblance of truth in the tip-offs? How many times do they act on hoax calls while hardened criminals go about in the PWV?" — Saps(243)
that knows the real story

A non-profit venture, the sole aim of the newspaper is to help the homeless help themselves. The Johannesburg Homeless Training Centre in Doornfontein, from where the paper is run, is entirely manned by the homeless. For distribution, people from different homeless communities buy newspapers for 20 cents a copy from the centre, making 80 cents profit on each paper they sell.

A code of conduct applies to the more than 160 sellers, who are required to wear the green Homeless Talk badges when selling the paper.

"Each badge has a seller number for individual identification, and we advise the public to refrain from buying from sellers without these tags, and to call our offices if drunk or unruly people sell them the paper," says Cassius Platjes, the co-editor.

Originally from Namibia, Platjes (23), also a former down and outer, meets Smith at Park Station before working for the paper. "I used to sell papers, but still played football."

After losing a job with a security company, he could no longer afford his rented room in Dobsonville, Soweto.

The training centre plans to offer courses to the homeless to equip them with vocational skills. It currently runs a spaza shop to raise funds for other planned projects. Homeless Talk has taken off in a major way.

The CIP has hired Smith on a part-time basis to help with research on street people on one of its schemes aimed at revitalising the inner city. It has also contributed its offices as a venue for Homeless Initiative Forums, established by Smith and his colleagues.

From these forums, the Johannesburg Homeless Association has set up negotiations with the Local Housing Department for transitional housing projects—unused government buildings used to house the homeless for a period on a rotating basis.

"When we talk about the homelessness, the street people do not just need houses, they need the support of the people to be rehabilitated and properly integrated into society."

"We have to move from the streets."

"We can only work with the government to put up 50 houses for the homeless."
Learn and Teach folds as magazine’s funds run dry

STAFF REPORTER

The curtain has fallen on Learn and Teach, the mass-circulation adult education publication aimed at providing supplementary reading material to the estimated 12 million adults in the country who have not reached adequate literacy levels.

The magazine’s last issue came out last month.

The decision to cease publication of the magazine, which was established in September 1981, was taken by the publication’s board of trustees who said they were unable to secure funds to continue publishing.

"Although Learn and Teach achieved an average monthly circulation of 25,000 copies — and a pass-along rate of eight readers per copy — these figures were not sufficient to attract advertisers," said Learn and Teach editor Saul Molobi.

"These magazine readers were, after all, among the poorest section of the population with little disposable income."

Learn and Teach’s previous overseas funders were withdrawing their support for the independent media in South Africa, he said.

The Learn and Teach Trust would continue to exist and would welcome proposals from interested parties with a view to reviving publication.

Steel nails in grenade used in church massacre

Cape Town — Steel nails thought to have been embedded in two handgrenades flung into St James’s Church in Kenilworth, Cape Town, during a service last year were found at the point where the grenades detonated, the Cape Town Supreme Court heard yesterday.

Sergeant Pieter "Stoney" Steenkamp, an explosives expert, was testifying in the trial of Gcimakaya Makoma (18), who has pleaded not guilty to 11 charges of murder, 57 of attempted murder and unlawfully possessing ammunition.

The State alleges that on July 25 last year Makoma, acting alone or in concert with a number of persons in the execution of a common purpose, fired at the congregation with a machine-gun and caused two handgrenades to explode among them.

In his plea explanation Makoma said he had been a member of the PAC since January last year. Members had been attacked by rival groups and this led to the formation of a task group under the leadership of Siphiwo Mkweso.

On August 5 he had met Mkweso at the Nyanga taxi rank and been told to take a black bag to Topcor Centre in old Crossroads. While waiting there he had been arrested.

The trial continues on Friday.

Sapa
Magazine closure a setback, says Cosatu

THE closure of Learn and Teach magazine was a serious setback for the campaign to develop a strong independent media in SA, Cosatu said at the weekend.

Work in Progress and Vrye Weekblad are other independent publications which closed recently because of a lack of funds.

Cosatu said it was “scandalous” that these publications, which struggled to stay afloat through the years of apartheid repression, had been allowed to die because foreign aid had been phased out.

The independent, non-commercial media sector was more important than ever in this phase of democratisation, as new social and political conditions had created a vastly increased space for community media to address huge audiences not catered for by the commercial media. “We should see a flowering and expansion of this sector. Instead we are seeing its contraction and withering away.”

The crisis in the independent media was taking place alongside increasing concentration of ownership in the print media, together with their stranglehold over printing and distribution, it said.

Learn and Teach played a pivotal role in giving a voice to the people who had been denied education. It would have provided an invaluable vehicle to help wipe out high levels of illiteracy.

Commitments by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and others in government on the need to establish a trust to subsidise independent media had to be set in motion, Cosatu said.

It would meet other concerned organisations and government to look at ways of ensuring the media was opened up.

KATHRYN STRACHAN
It was the latest casualty of the withdrawal of foreign funding from local media projects. It followed the closure earlier this year of Vrye Weekblad and Work in Progress.

"The independent media are generally in a crisis," says Learn & Teach editor Mr. Saul Molobi. "By the end of next year, it probably won’t exist because of lack of funding."

Foreign funders provided the main source of funding in the past, while local donors offered only limited support through the Independent Media Diversity Trust set up a year ago.

Ms Rachel Stewart, director of the Independent Magazine Group (to which Learn & Teach belonged), was scathing about this lack of support from local donors. "The media conglomerations quickly gave their support to the IMDT as a gesture," says Stewart. But, she feels, it was not a serious effort to provide assistance.

She rejects the argument that the market alone should determine which publications survive. "The independent media haven’t had a chance yet to explore the markets and become viable," says Stewart. But, she concedes, maybe some of them could never become viable.

"However, that should not be the sole determinant of social services," she counters. "The independent media serve an important social role. If they can’t survive in the market, there needs to be support from society. Half the people in South Africa are not in the market, or have minimal participation in the market."

"That doesn’t mean they don’t have a right to participate and be active members of society."

Molobi also draws attention to this problem. "Learn & Teach was the only publication of its kind serving the ordinary people marginalised by the mainstream media. There now won’t be a bridge between the Government and the people on the ground. The Government will pump resources into these communities."

"But what’s the use of pouring resources into them and not empowering them with knowledge and understanding? That’s the unfortunate part of the closure of Learn & Teach."

"It was a forum through which people could voice their complaints and demands. It kept them in touch with debates. That link has been broken."

Mr. Rafiq Roiaan, editor of the Cape newspaper South, describes the magazine’s closure as "a devastating blow" to the independent media.

"Meanwhile, the white-controlled monopolies are growing in strength all the time," he says, and attributes this to their monopoly ownership of the printing and circulation industries.

"These networks," he contends, "are providing the death blow to the alternatives."

He says South was also affected by dwindling foreign funding but will continue publishing in its current form until the end of November. It will then merge with its free sheet South Easter.

The sudden closure of the educational magazine Learn & Teach last week was yet another cruel blow to the survival of the once-proud alternative media. Features writer Tyrone August takes a look at the crisis:

FLASHBACK... New Nation’s Gaba Tugwana displays a copy of his newspaper after the publication was banned during the mid-60s.

from the beginning of December and start negotiations to sell the title South.

Mr. Chris Gatuza, the chairman of Community Media Network (an umbrella group of 57 media projects), believes the Government should assist the independent media. "There is a need to go beyond a commitment to freedom of expression in the construction and actually look at a structure to make this possible," he says.

He describes such a structure as an enabling mechanism that will be a buffer between the Government and the media because "no government really likes the media. We also have our concerns about a potentially cushy relationship with the Government," Gatuza adds.

Discussions about such a structure will look at models in countries like Sweden where the Government recognises it has a responsibility to ensure media diversity.

"But," he says, "in the short term we have a problem. To avoid more casualties, he suggests that foreign funders look at an interim phase to provide relief to the alternative media."

However, even with help, a tough battle lies ahead. Professor Guy Berger, head of Rhodes University’s journalism department, warns that the market is tough for the print media.

He attributes this to the new role of broadcasting. "During the elections, people began to realise that they could trust the SABC for sufficient and credible information. "Improved broadcasting is a big threat to the print media. In general, the print media is not in a healthy way."

Berger says there also seems to be a shift away from being prepared to pay for information and points to the new role of the SABC and knock-and-drop community newspapers.

Against that background, New Nation editor Mr. Gaba Tugwana feels some kind of intervention was necessary to assist the already-depleted independent media.

"Unless powerful forces intervene soon, the independent media - which played an important role in helping to deliver change - will be thrown on the scrap heap of history. The contradiction is that the monopolies who were silent when they were needed most are the ones who are now enjoying the fruits of the small medium," he says.
Sunday Times Rights for the Right
A new approach to communication

MARK ASHURST

The closure of the Black Sash national advice centres announced last week could be a blessing in disguise for Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, the political head of the South African Communication Service (SACS). As the communications arm of government, and formerly the Bureau of Information, it remains an unrepresentative, Afrikaner-dominated, Pretoria-based bureaucracy. Mbeki is charged with its conversion to an effective communications vehicle to promote the reconstruction and development programme and redress the information deficit left by apartheid.

Addressing Parliament on September 23, Mbeki outlined his vision of the SACS becoming fully “informed and involved” in reconstruction.

He cited SACS’s affirmative action campaign as proof of its new dispensation: 80% of staff would be black by September 1995, and they would occupy 99% of management positions by September 1996.

The services had already provided valuable assistance in the Transitional Executive Council, the Independent Media Mission, the “highly successful” presidential inauguration and preparations for October’s OAU Ministers of Information Conference at Sun City.

Personnel once charged with managing counter-intelligence campaigns to undermine the National Party government had proved equally capable of serving the parastatals that delivered a hefty ANC majority in the 1994 election. Why doubt, then, that the SACS could adjust to the new shape of provincial government, the principle of transparency and the objectives of the RDP?

MARK ASHURST

Mbeki’s conciliatory stance arguably makes him the best man for the job.

According to one black government spokesman who took office in 1989, SACS has been subject to “stinging and fierce criticism” from the President’s office. But the one department that is unlike a government department in its operation, Government’s new spokesmen are less accommodating with regard to SACS’s history.

Government’s new spokespersons are less accommodating, it has been found that the departments are more willing to distribute information.

Although Black Sash is known for its resistance to apartheid, its structures ironically embody Mbeki’s goal of facilitating “two-way communication between government and the people.”

While explaining legislation and offering advice (such as how to circumvent the Press Laws), anyone who wanted it, Black Sash used its flow of information from the ground to lobby government.

SACF spokesman, Jeremy Cronin, claims that Black Sash is operating on a “miserable budget and volunteer staff” provided a more efficient information service than the SACS.

The emphasis on the last word, they provided a service.

There is, however, an obvious conflict of interest between SACS’s role in government and Mbeki’s vision of an interactive national information service.

The strategic skills that streamline the work of ministerial departments and their spokesmen are different from those required to manage a public information service. If the service’s real value to government is indeed to protect naive officials, from the potential embarassments of their own ideological exuberance, then somebody else should be running a government information service.

Ground level

Black Sash spokesman Gili de Vlieg says the service is ill-suited to the task of disseminating government information.

The nine Black Sash advice centres provide a model infrastructure for the kind of SACS envisaged by Mbeki.

“Government does need to be able to explain its policies correctly and easily to people in language that people understand — it needs to be on ground level.” Government has a duty to publish its information but it may not be best qualified to distribute it.

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100 000 people visit the Black Sash advice office in Johannesburg every year.

Mbeki’s claim that the service can discharge its information function “in a manner which ensures government does not engage in deceitful propaganda (but) focuses its resources on communication as a bridge-builder” is a prerequisite for transformation.

Mbeki has already used the service to place full-page advertisements in the national Press and publicise the objectives of the RDP.

President Nelson Mandela’s spokesman, Joel Netshitshuka, says a strategic task team will soon be appointed to rationalise SACS’s huge publishing operation, and define new roles for its technically skilled staff. Service head, David Venter, applying his experience as a trained psychologist to his professional circumstance, approached the ANC before the election to try to do this. But plans for a joint ANC-SACS workshop, widely perceived as the first step towards a new information policy, were overtaken by events and the party took office without a policy.

A meeting this weekend between the SACS, ministerial spokesmen and the parliamentary Press lobby was the first move towards a less or less public attempt to reach a consensus on how to realise its new, politically correct objectives.

It remains to be seen how progress made in Parliament’s public relations department can set a precedent for meeting the diverse information needs of SA.

Until then, SACS spokesmen will remain shy of the Press when approached for comment on articles such as this one. And rural villages will wrestle with identical problems in developing infrastructure, industry, farming and education — without ever knowing that someone else already has the information they need.
Police bid to gag press

By COLIN HOWELL
News Editor

POLICE yesterday slapped a nationwide ban on reporters speaking to policemen in a hardline move to ensure that only "authorised" information is released to the public.

The new clampdown follows what police claim are "incorrect" reports linking the murder of a policeman and the discovery of an arsenal cache in Pretoria.

Lieutenant-General Andre Prus, head of the SAPS' community relations division, has approved an internal memorandum involving police standing orders forbidding policemen other than appointed liaison officers from speaking to the press.

Colonel Raymond Dowd, Western Cape police public relations chief, yesterday informed reporters that any policeman who passed on information to the media without express permission of the media officer would face a departmental trial.

Reporters would no longer have access to officers at the Peninsula's radio control unit, who have kept newspapers briefed on breaking news.

Col Dowd said the restriction had been endorsed by the Regional Commissioner, Mr Danie du Plessis and the discovery of an arsenal cache in Pretoria.

A spokesperson for Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi said the ministry "would not approve of anything that runs counter to the interests of transparency in the police" and noted that operational decisions by the police were not routinely cleared by the minister.

A police spokesman in Pretoria claimed police officers around the country had reported continuing problems where information "leaked" to the press prematurely had hampered investigations or had been incorrect.

A police spokesman said the department was working to improve its internal controls.

CHRIS BATEMAN reports that Mr McKenzie said he would summon Col Dowd first thing today to clarify the matter, but he would go out of his way to ensure there was no clampdown on the press in the Western Cape.

POLICE CHIEF ASKS FOR MEETING WITH MBeki

From page 1

He said "seriously questioned" the need for a standing order preventing policemen speaking to the media in the much-vaunted transparency of a new order.

He intended appointing a civilian to run the Western Cape police liaison department from February next year.

A spokesman for the Commissioner of Police, General Johan van der Merwe, said no new policy matters had been raised in Genl Prus' memorandum.

"While we have been lenient in this regard, matters have come to a head. Certain journalists have not complied with an agreement between the SAPS and the Conference of Editors and had approached unofficial sources, leading to major investigations being jeopardised.

"Consequently, the attention of police was drawn to the already existing instructions and no new policy is at issue.

"However, the commissioner has made it clear that the SA Police must be flexible and realistic," the spokesman said.

Accordingly, reporters at scenes of crimes could interview officers in charge there and information about the investigation of crimes could be divulged by the detective probing the case, provided the police official was identified in the report and was prepared to accept full responsibility for the information furnished"
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Colonel Raymond Dowd, Western Cape police public relations chief, yesterday informed reporters that any policeman who passed on information to the media without the express permission of the media office would face a departmental trial.

Reporters would no longer have access to officers at the Peninsula’s radio control unit, who have kept newspapers briefed on breaking news.

Col Dowd said the ban had been endorsed by the Regional Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Nic Acker.

The news clampdown from the "transparent" information strategy employed since the states of emergency were lifted.

There was an angry response:

- Western Cape Police Minister Mr Pat McKenzie said he had not been consulted. "If they are going to gag the guys in the department, they won’t gag me."

- Just when we are beginning to experience what a free South Africa is all about, the police must not be the instrument whereby the Great Shut Up comes again.

- The National Party said the press must have the freedom to communicate with any member of the SAPS Spokes.

From page 1

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He intended appointing a civilian to run the Western Cape police liaison department from February next year.

A spokesman for the Commissioner of Police, General Johan van der Merwe, said no new policy matters had been raised in General Pruis’s memorandum.

However, "during the past couple of years it has been common knowledge that reporters have received unauthorised sources within the SAPS."

"While we have been lenient in this regard, matters have come to a head."

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Police chief lifts Press contact ban

JOHANNESBURG - Police Commissioner Johan van der Merwe has lifted the ban on members of the force talking to reporters.

"I have urgently directed that an order banning SAP members (other than official liaison officers) from media contact be withdrawn immediately, as such an order undoubtedly contradicts SAP obligations and policy to be as fully transparent as possible in all circumstances," he said in a statement yesterday.

"In addition, in order to speed up and further entrench a culture of transparency and communication within the SAP, I have decided to introduce an interim transparency and communication programme."

He said this programme would "sensitise and train as many SAP members as possible in their obligations for transparency and communication." — Reuters
Police media restrictions

By COLIN HOWELL

IN a dramatic policy reversal yesterday, the commissioner of police scrapped all old-style media restrictions, including a national ban on policemen speaking to reporters.

General Johan van der Merwe rescinded the standing orders which were the backbone of the news clamp authorised on Monday by Lieutenant-General Andre Pruis of the SAPS community relations division.

He also announced a fundamental re-shaping of police communication systems, promising maximum transparency:

The about-turn followed a Cape Times front page report yesterday that Gen Pruis' internal police directive had revived the ban on all policemen, other than approved liaison officers, speaking to the press.

The clamp was announced and implemented in the Western Cape on Tuesday.

In a statement issued in Pretoria, Gen Van der Merwe said:

- No such ban can in future be placed on SAPS members
- Gen Pruis' order had been withdrawn immediately as it "undoubtedly contradicts SAPS obligations and policy to be as fully transparent as possible"
- The media would now be allowed "the broadest possible contact with the police"

A new programme had been launched nationally and regionally to speed up and entrench transparency and communication within the SAPS.

This Transparency and Communication Programme (TCP) would "sanitise and train as many SAPS members as possible with regard to their obligations concerning transparency and communication."

DOWD 'DUMPED' WITHOUT WARNING

See PAGE 2.

CALL FOR ACTION ON POLICE CRISIS

See PAGE 5

NEW ERA FOR POLICE, MEDIA

See PAGE 6

His only new requirement was that all SAPS members who liaise with the media "report such contact to the relevant media liaison office" so that media contact would be on an "orderly basis."

Gen Van der Merwe said he had instructed the SAPS to submit a draft proposal on the structuring and implementation of the TCP as soon as possible.

It is understood that Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi was not consulted before Monday's directive was made but it could not be established yesterday if political pressure had been a factor in the sudden reversal and Mr Mufamadi could not be reached for comment.

Before the commissioner's statement, an urgent meeting of the Conference of Editors was to be called to discuss the directive that only "authorised" information is to be released to the public, reports CHRIS BATEMAN.

The proposed meeting had received the immediate backing of Western Cape Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie, who described it as "excellent — to help break down the culture of the past."

He said he was "elated" at the lifting of a national ban preventing policemen from speaking to reporters.

"I believe Gen Van der Merwe did what is in the best interests of the SAPS. We the community are much happier with a transparent police service," Mr McKenzie said.

The chairman of the Editors' Conference and editor of City Press, Mr Mzimhulu Siyaba, said the press was as important to police as it was to the public because it was able to highlight "things police are unable to uncover."

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Police media restrictions scrapped

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- "No such ban can in future be placed on SAPS members."
- Gen Prus' order had been withdrawn immediately as it "undoubtedly contradicts SAPS obligations and policy to be as fully transparent as possible."
- The media would now be allowed "the broadest possible contact with the police."
- A new programme had been launched nationally and regionally to speed up and outlaw transparence and communication within the SAPS.
- The Transparency and Communication Programme (TCP), would "encourage as many SAPS members as possible to report such conduct to the relevant media liaison office so that media contact would be on an "orderly basis."
- Gen Van der Merwe said he had instructed the SAPS to submit a draft proposal on the restructuring and implementation of the TCP as soon as possible.

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The chairman of the Editors' Conference and editor of City Press, Mr Mankoe Sibuya, said the press was as important to police as it was to the public because it was "able to highlight "things police are unable to uncover.""
Mwasa in dispute

The Media Workers Association of South Africa has declared a wage dispute with Perskor and may go on a national strike if the company fails to meet the workers' demand. The union's Southern Transvaal administrative secretary, Mr Thembu Hlatshwayo, said the union expected the dispute to go for conciliation next week. Coupled with a 20 percent increase, the union is demanding an initial wage adjustment to bring the minimum to R323 a week.

Hlatshwayo said it was a disgrace that workers earned as little as R164 a week. He said the dispute could result in a national work stoppage at all Perskor plants.

Human resources manager of the company Mr鹏鹏 Gwame was not available for comment.
Media freedom 'a battle'?

MBABANE — Little was known about the battle against authoritarian media practices in Swaziland, Media Institute of Southern Africa chairwoman Ms Gwen Lister said yesterday.

Opening the third annual MISA conference attended by representatives from 11 countries, she said it was significant for the conference to take place in Swaziland to express solidarity with the media in a country without a constitution or a bill of rights.

University of Swaziland political scientist Mr Ntometho Sime- lane said: “As is characteristic of autocratic rule most African governments do not tolerate opposition and criticism. Journalists in Southern Africa have to fight for basic rights often taken for granted in other parts of the world.”

To complicate matters even more, ownership and control of newspapers is likely to be in the hands of people wishing to protect certain entrenched interests.”

The experiences of South African journalists should be an inspiration to their regional colleagues because they could not be stopped reporting critical issues by banning orders and persecution. — Sapa
Press freedom abuses should (should bring sanctions)

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG.—The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) has called for sanctions against Angola, Zambia and Swaziland for abusing press freedom.

It is to launch a “hotline” in the region to defend journalists against infringements of their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, the institute said in a press statement.

In Zambia, clauses in the Code of Ethics Bill required journalists writing about political leaders to appear before a tribunal to justify stories and disclose sources.

“This undermines press freedom, gives exclusive privilege to a few individuals and breaches ethical demands of the profession of journalism,” said MISA.

The Angolan government, MISA claimed, was applying reinforcement of governing party control of the media, applying censorship and manipulating the state-run media.

The rebel movement Unita, meanwhile, restricted the activities of journalists.

Swaziland did not have constitutional provisions guaranteeing press freedom.

MISA also announced that Zimbabwean journalist Bauldon Peta of the Harare-based Daily Gazette newspaper won this year’s MISA Press Freedom Award for exposing tax evasion by companies owned by the ruling ZANU-PF party.
committee will decide on election allegations

Moroccan King Hassan II receives President Nelson Mandela at the Royal Palace in the capital Rabat on Monday. They discussed the Angolan problem.

PIC: AFP

Press freedom abuse claim

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“This course undermines Press freedom, gives exclusive privilege to a few individuals in society and breaches ethical demands of the profession of journalism,” said Masa.

The Angolan government, Masa claimed, was applying reinforcement of governing party control of the media, applying censorship and manipulating the state-run media.

The rebel movement Unita, meanwhile, restricted the activities of journalists.

Swaziland, Masa added, did not have constitutional provisions guaranteeing Press freedom in spite of having been a signatory to the Windhoek Declaration.

Masa also announced that Zimbabwe journalist Basilde Peta of the Harare-based Daily Gazette newspaper won this year’s Misa Press Freedom Award for exposing massive tax evasion by companies owned by the ruling ZANU-PF party.

“He was repeatedly detained, interrogated and finally charged by police in terms of Zimbabwe’s Official Secrets Act,” said the Masa statement.

“During five days of incessant questioning, police tried to make Peta reveal who had given him information. However, Peta remained true to his professional ethics and refused to reveal his sources.” — Argus Foreign Service.
IBA asked to avoid rigid regulations

Appeal for media cross-ownership

The Independent Broadcasting Authority should not impose rigid regulations on cross-media ownership by newspaper groups, its panel heard yesterday.

This was submitted in Johannesburg by the Newspaper Press Union (NPU) with backing from Nasionale Pers and the Provincial Press Association (PPA) at the IBA hearing into cross-ownership.

Diversity was the key to ensuring the media was buoyant, NPU spokesman Cobus Scholtz said. The IBA should encourage investment in the industry and regulations should be measured against this criterion.

The absence of, or rigidly controlled, cross-ownership would cause struggling publications and registrations to collapse, he said.

Harsh regulations ran counter to world trends, and the economic realities of South Africa demanded flexibility.

"Regulate the industry to permit the best interests of the public and help us to ensure there are more media and more markets," Scholtz said.

The main newspaper groups did not seek to monopolise the industry and were prepared to help smaller groups.

Nasionale Pers chief executive Henkie van Deventer said the term "monopoly" had always been used loosely.

All five large groups (Nasionale Pers, Perskor, Argus, TML and Caxton) plus a wide range of publications owned by others were fighting for readers and advertising.

Fierce competition was taking place in a small economy and the application of sound business principles was paramount to survival, Van Deventer said.

Newspapers should be allowed to invest in other media forms to safeguard their future.

"If prevented from doing so, newspapers are left criminally unprotected against threats by challengers such as the computer industry that already have the capacity for carrying advertisements and could send news and pictures down the line."

PPA member Martin Dannheiser said most community-based newspapers were struggling to exist. Mergers with radio stations would be of mutual financial benefit — Sapa.
Newspapers have Skills to Run Radio

* Cape Times, Thursday, December 1, 1994
Report due on film controls

PRETORIA — The publications and film control task group appointed by Home Affairs Minister Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to investigate the validity of the Publications Act presented its report and proposed bill yesterday.

Home Affairs spokesman Mr. Hennie Meyer said the task group compiled its report after considering 2,000 written submissions as well as oral evidence from 60 other parties.

He said the report and bill would be scrutinised and submitted to the cabinet in due course. — Sapa 14/3
Bill offers access to state records

Political Staff

PRETORIA — A freedom of information bill, which could provide for special courts to give the public access to state records and put an official in every department to ensure openness, is likely to be tabled in parliament early next year.

A five-member task force responsible for drafting what will be known as the Open Democracy Act has circulated a discussion document, inside and outside of government, describing the new act's proposed main elements.

The group has already held consultations with a wide range of people including journalists, media academics and organised business. Senior members of the security and intelligence community have also been asked for comment.

Defence force and police top brass have welcomed the act, according to the chairman of the task force Mqyama Gumbi.

However, the document has sparked a fierce debate on what types of information should be protected by exemption from the act and some sectors of the security forces and business have pulled in the reigns on openness.

The discussion document suggests that national security, law enforcement, commercial confidentiality and personal privacy will be among the considerations when exemptions are written into the act.

The Open Democracy Bill, which could come before the national assembly as early as February, will incorporate elements of internationally recognised legislation.
The Star spikes first salvoes in press war

LOUIS DE VILLIERS

JOHANNESBURG — The refusal by The Star newspaper to accept a series of advertisements from Times Media Limited's Business Day this week is the first salvo in what could evolve into something of an English-language Press war in key market segments.

With copy lines such as "If you don't advertise in Business Day, you must have stars in your eyes", and "Advertise in an important business newspaper, not an important one", the Business Day ads were regarded by the Star general manager Graeme King as a direct attack on his newspaper's revenue base.

"Part of the Argus strategy is to upaweath business coverage in a very serious drive to approach the business market nationally," says Mr King.

"This is why Business Day has hit back with this advertising campaign — the paper's management clearly has the jitters," Business Day editor Jim Jones says his company is well aware of the plans at Argus.

"We're not worried — we welcome the competition which will generate interest," he says.

Both Mr Jones and Business Day marketing manager Gisele Wertheim-Aymes feel The Star should have accepted the paper's ads. "If we all have the right to market ourselves," says Miss Wertheim-Aymes.

Although relatively insignificant, this incident is a precursor of things to come.

Argus clearly has a number of tricks up its sleeve — the company's advertising business is currently up for pitch with incumbent Mundeus and NSOP coming up against heavyweights Ogilvy & Mather Rightford Searle-Tripp & Makin (Cape), Hunt Lascaris TBWA and Partnership.

Mr King will not let on what the brief is — it is understood, however, that the new direction at Argus could involve a name change as well as "a number of launches". The business may be worth in the region of R5 million.

A key figure in the Argus plans is Ivan Fallon, appointed by Tony O'Reilly as group editorial director.

"Business Day may well know about some of our plans — we have interviewed half of their staff, after all," says Mr Fallon.

"The South African newspaper market, whether by accident or design, evolved a rather strange ownership structure in the past which resulted in creating an effective cartel with one group dominating the business field and our group dominating other areas.

"One group also dominates the Sunday market, except in Durban. Now that the cartel is finished, it does not take a genius to see that there are huge glaring gaps.

"There is no competition for Business Day — there is a huge vacuum in the business market. There is also a vacuum over the weekend." Mr Fallon admits that he has been recruiting business and investment writers to drive the new Argus business initiative.

Former Playboy editor Jeremy Gordin, he says, has been appointed managing editor of a new business product which will take on Business Day.

An advertising segment which Argus papers have long missed out on is financial notices, which have to appear in morning newspapers.

This segment, which is bread and butter to Business Day, will now be targeted through a morning/afternoon strategy, says Mr Fallon.

"We will be using group resources for the benefit of all our four morning papers for the first time.

"Business advertisers will be offered the circulation base of the Cape Times, the Mercury, the Pretoria News and The Star in what we believe is a unique concept, not to my knowledge done anywhere in the world before," says Mr Fallon.

The rejected Business Day adverts used a SABRE research report to back up its claims of business superiority.

As things stand, says Partnership media director Chris Eyre, SABRE indicates that Business Day has a coverage of 24,1 percent of the corporate market against The Star's 26,4 percent.

The Star's financial section, however, lags at a coverage figure of 21,1 percent. The Star has wider coverage in all sectors bar top management, where Business Day outperforms it with a coverage of 37,7 percent against figures of 30,7 for The Star and 26,6 percent for its finance section.

With the new Argus national business offering, this will change dramatically.

Mr King estimates that Argus will be able to claim a business circulation of 150 000 once the new product is up and running against an audited Business Day circulation of 34 000.

Mr Fallon does not want to elaborate on any of the other new product plans at Argus.

It is clear that some initiatives can be expected to take on The Sunday Times, which he describes as a "lame" product.

There are also hints that a populist tabloid or a Sunday colour magazine could be in the offing.

Whenever things go, the only certainty is that a new era of intense competition has dawned in the South African English-language Press.
New legislation plans to allow greater freedom

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

FAR-REACHING liberalisation of censorship laws is contained in draft legislation to be presented to the cabinet and parliament early next year.

The draft legislation is in line with earlier statements by home affairs minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi that no one should be allowed to decide what others read, watch or hear.

All that will remain of South Africa's once-formidable censorship laws will be an outright ban on:

- Child pornography, defined as involving children younger than 16.
- The depiction of bestiality.
- The depiction of extreme violence, including rape
- Promotion of religious hatred

A report on the findings of a task group of government, religious, academic and religious experts was presented to Chief Buthelezi last week.

It will be presented to the cabinet early next year, home affairs ministry spokesman Henne Meyer said today.

The report proposes retaining a restructured version of the present publications control board

"Likely to be called the Film and Publications Board, the new body will have a director appointed for five years and advisers appointed for three years.

Unlike the present board, its task will be limited to investigating complaints from the public but will not be allowed to conduct blanket reviews of publications.

The draft legislation is part of a shift of emphasis from banning and censoring what people can see and hear, to reconciling conflicting interests.

The new law could bring to an end perceived conflict between existing censorship laws and the constitution, which guarantees the right of freedom of expression.

This right has been invoked by publishers of pornographic magazines in recent months, who claim freedom of expression extends to the explicit depiction of genitalia.

Signs of change have been a distinct decline in the number of publications banned by the existing board.

While the board's weekly list of bannings used to be comprehensive, on more than one occasion in past months the board has announced it has found "nothing undesirable" that week.

The task group which made the recommendations received more than 2,000 submissions and held hearings around the country.

Reportedly, hearings in Cape Town were dominated by religious groups strongly opposed to pornography.

Kobus van Rooyen, chairman of the group, was quoted saying it would not help to devise a law which was unconstitutional.
Naspers posts 50% surge in profits

IN ITS first report to the market since listing three months ago, Nasssele Pers (Naspers) showed net profit growth of 50% for the six months to September 30, an increase of R10,9m on the corresponding period to R32,3m.

Turnover for the period was 16% higher at R343,9m (R463,3m) while operating profit, after depreciation and interest paid, stood 24% higher at R22,9m (R142,6m).

Income derived from investments and associated companies was R4,8m — R2,1m less than in the corresponding period, bringing the profit to R27,4m (R46,2m). A lower tax burden of R25m as against R27,5m in the corresponding half-year and a lower payment to outside shareholders from subsidiaries' profits brought net profit to R32,3m.

However, Naspers' interest in the retained income of subsidiaries, mainly M-Net and Multichoice, produced a loss of R96 000 compared to a profit of R6,6m a year ago. The net profit attributable to shareholders was consequently only marginally higher than in the corresponding six months — R33,2m against R30,0m.

This represents an earnings growth of only 4% from 27c to 28c a share.

However, if the interest in associated companies is excluded, earnings per share rose 52,6% to 29c (19c).

The balance sheet shows great inherent strength. Total assets, after deducting operating liabilities of R178,6m, stood 26,8% higher at R210,6m. The net asset of the 111,4m shares in issue increased 28,4% from 356c to 457c a share.

In line with company policy, no dividend has been declared at the halfway mark.

Naspers chairman Ton Vosloo said the group had budgeted for modest growth after the exceptional results achieved in the previous year. All the main divisions — Newspapers, Magazines, Bookpublishers and Printers — returned results ranging from satisfactory to good.

The Boekhandel group had continued its recovery and was making a full contribution to overall profits.

Vosloo said the losses in M-Net/Multichoice resulted from their overseas television investments and in the local cellular telephone industry.
Censorship may be liberalised

By ANTHONY JOHNSON
Political Correspondent

PROPOSALS to liberalise the censorship laws will go before the cabinet early next year.

Draft legislation to replace the Publications Control Act and other censorship laws offending the constitution's guarantee of free expression is being examined by Home Affairs Minister Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

A spokesman for the ministry, Mr Henne Meyer, said yesterday that after the cabinet had considered the bill, and possibly made amendments, it would be published in the Government Gazette for public comment.

The next step would be for the proposed legislation to be considered by the parliamentary select committee on Home Affairs before being sent to the National Assembly and the Senate.

South Africa could have a censorship system in line with most liberal democracies before the middle of the coming year.

In its current form the draft legislation proposes a blanket ban on only four areas of publication:
- Child pornography involving anyone under 16 or who looks under 16.
- Bestiality.
- Extreme violence, including sexual violence such as rape.
- Promotion of religious hatred.

The draft bill forms part of a report compiled by a task force of government, religious, academic and legal experts that was forwarded to Chief Buthelezi last week.

More than 2 000 forms of written and oral evidence were heard by the task force over the past four months.
'50% local content not reasonable'

JOHANNESBURG.—The poor quality of local music output makes calls for 50% local content on music radio stations unreasonable, Capital Radio said yesterday. (248)

In its written submission to the Independent Broadcasting Authority, the station said record companies had prospered by releasing "cheap, badly-produced recordings with no life expectancy".

"A realistic percentage should be agreed to so that standards can be improved and record companies be forced to invest in and produce talent and superior productions." — Sapa
**Star's independence is being threatened**

**243 Business Day Reporter**

Supporters of press freedom should protest against the threat to the editorial independence of The Star and potentially to all Argus newspapers, Freedom of Expression Institute deputy chairman Raymond Louw said at the weekend.

Reacting to the Star editor-in-chief Richard Steyn's resignation, he told Sapa the restructing of Argus Newspapers under the guidance of its foreign owner, Irishman Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers, had led to the shock resignation of one of the country's finest editors.

Steyn said on Friday that he and Argus Newspapers CE John Featherstone differed in principle over how newspapers should be run.

"Supported by the new major shareholder, he is in the process of restructuring Argus Newspapers in order to make editors report to regional MDs. I do not believe the proposed new structure, which also provides for a group editorial director (British journalist Ivan Fallon), to be appropriate for The Star or its journalists."

He would leave the company at the end of January. Featherstone had earlier announced the appointment of Pretoria News editor Deon du Plessis as Argus MD for PWV operations from February 1.

Star GM Graeme Kug becomes GM of "the expanded business".

Argus PWV editors and managers will report to Du Plessis — an effective demotion, Steyn. However, Featherstone

**Star (243) BD 12-12 94**

said: "Editors will continue to have absolute authority and sole responsibility for the content — both editorial and advertising — of their newspaper."

"These changes bring us into line with the restructured Argus group in Natal and the Cape, and provide us with a platform to expand and grow our business."

Louw, a former Rand Daily Mail editor,

**From Page 1**

said that the Argus restructuring had already led to restructurings. Steyn's resignation should serve as a signal that management was more interested in profits than in protecting free and independent speech.

The institute believed 'unfair' pressures on newspapers and the inherent conflict between editors and financial managers would lead to the erosion of newspapers' editorial independence.
Media protest at the Star
CT 15/12/94

Johannesburg. — More than 100 journalists and media workers staged a lunch-time demonstration outside the offices of the Star here yesterday, to protest against what they termed increased management interference in editorial affairs.

The Star's South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) branch co-ordinator, Mr. Claire Gebhardt, said: "When editorial and commercial interests clash, commercial interests take over."
— Sapa
Media owners 'stifling'

Political Staff

BLOEMFONTEIN. — The ownership and management of the media as well as socio-economic problems did not allow for a free flow of information and comment on society, the ANC resolved yesterday.

It also called on the ANC to promote the diversification of media ownership and management.

Delegates decided unanimously at its national conference here its NEC should investigate the situation and draw up broad policy.

The conference said the NEC should draft policy regarding changing the SA Communication Services and the place, role and size of the public broadcaster as well as other matters being investigated by the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

It also decided the NEC should decide on the role of provinces regarding public media and the approach towards diversifying ownership and control of the media.

"These policies should help guide the relevant ministries as well as our parliamentary representatives," the resolution said.
Row brews as censorship report is kept under wraps

MARK ASHURST

A ROW is brewing over the forthcoming Film and Publications Bill. The Bill will be considered by the Cabinet next month even though the report of the government task group set up to review censorship policy has not been made public.

Freedom of Expression Institute co-ordinator Jeanette Minne said yesterday: "There is a lack of transparency in the process. We do not know what is in the report, so we cannot know which parts of the Bill come from the government, or how much it was influenced by the task group which undertook quite a lot of consultation."

The task group on film and publications control submitted its recommendations for the Bill to Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi early last week.

Buthelezi said the information in the report was "of such a nature that only the Minister can decide whether to release it for public consumption. . . . I doubt very much (that the report will be made public)."

Minne said that suitors to disclose the report would prevent valuable input from the public and the media.

Home Affairs communications director Henry Meyer said the draft Bill would be published "for comment" in the Government Gazette, according to protocol. Once the Cabinet had approved the Bill, the length of time available for comment would depend on public response.
Presses to stop as South loses its brave fight

GLYNNS UNDERHILL
Weekend Argus Reporter

OWNERS of South, the Cape Town independent weekly newspaper launched in 1986 as a voice for the oppressed, are applying to place it under provisional liquidation.

The major shareholder, the Ukwaziwa Trust, took the decision to apply for the provisional liquidation of South Press Services at a meeting yesterday.

In a statement issued by the directors of South Press Services and the Trustees of Ukwaziwa Trust, it was announced that the steps had been taken with the "greatest regret, but in the belief that it is in the best interests of the staff of South and its creditors."

Initially, South was formed through a loan from the trust and the statement said that other creditors should not show a loss.

The trust expressed its appreciation of the valuable contribution which South's funders, particularly the Inter-Church Organisation for Development Co-operation, which had supported the newspaper, had made.

"The trustees paid tribute to the staff of South for their dedication, courage and sacrifice in maintaining an independent and critical voice in Cape Town during the last years of the apartheid regime."

The statement said that the step of applying for liquidation of the company was taken "with the knowledge of the staff."

By Thursday this week, editor Rainy Rohan said no final or firm decisions had been made about the future of staff.

"We haven't decided what will happen to South. For all intents and purposes, we are looking at and exploring all options," he said.

Mr Rohan said South had been "clearly experiencing difficulties in the financial department", but all options had not dried up.

The decision to apply for the liquidation of South Press Services would have no implications for the continued operation of Ukwaziwa Trust, according to the statement.
Union to take TML to court

THE Eastern Cape branch of the SA Union of Journalists (SAUJ) is to take Times Media Limited to court over a wage dispute.

SAUJ Eastern Cape deputy president Mr Ed Collis said in a statement the TML's wage offer of 10.5% in the Eastern Cape instead of the 11.75% agreed upon at a national TML bargaining forum early this month "was a display of bad faith".

The union held an urgent meeting on Friday and agreed to take management to court.

"We have met with lawyers to take appropriate actions, which could include the serving of an urgent Supreme-Court interdict on the company over the Christmas weekend," Mr Collis said.

He said the SAUJ had no alternative course of action to take because of the timing of the announcement by the TML "two days before Christmas".

TML management could not be reached for comment. (T 271294)"
BRUSSELS. — At least 114 journalists were murdered in some cases gruesomely, making it the deadliest year for reporters ever, the International Federation of Journalists said yesterday.

In 1991, the Brussels-based federation listed 84 dead worldwide. This year, it registered “at least 114 confirmed cases of violent death, some in gruesome circumstances,” a federation statement said. It added that 15 other killings and reports of journalists gone missing were still being investigated.

Twelve journalists and five news team members also died in vehicle accidents while on the job this year.

More than half of all journalists who died this year were reporting on the ethnic unrest in Rwanda and on Algeria’s violent showdown between Muslim fundamentalists and the military-backed government.

Forty-eight journalists from ethnic “Hutus and Tutsis died crushed by the conflict” in Rwanda, and in Algeria 19 journalists were killed, according to a federation tally.

“But the mafia and political terrorists also claimed their toll, notably in Russia and Latin America, where journalists have been brutally assassinated,” the statement said.

The federation plans to provide guidelines for journalists’ safety to encourage the media, unions and governments to act.

“Freedom of the press is not, in terms of democracy, a marginally problem because without freedom of the press there is no democracy,” the federation concluded.

Two South African photographers died violently earlier this year. They were the Star’s chief photographer, Ken Oosterbroek, and freelance AP photographer Abdul Shariff, who both died of gunshot wounds during township clashes on the Reef — Sapa-AFP.
PRESS -

1995
Information is one of the major pillars of any society. It is only by having access to information that people can make proper and informed decisions about their lives. Unlike the old regime, the new Government recognises this. It plans to table a Freedom of Information Bill in Parliament next month.

The media is eagerly awaiting this Bill, and will discuss it at a conference co-hosted next month by Rhodes University’s journalism department and the Institute for Multi-party Democracy.

Writing in the MPD’s latest newsletter, Daily Dispatch editor Professor Gavin Stewart strongly comes out in support of a Freedom of Information Act.

“Our new governors and a whole range of new constituencies are not at all sure we can be trusted with the power we have — whether or not we think of it as power,” he notes.

“But our journalistic reflex says they cannot be trusted with the power they have. We would like to see our access to information made enforceable by a Freedom of Information Act.”

Stewart makes a crucial point: Such a law would not only benefit the media but would also greatly benefit the public at large.

“Such an Act would not only, or even primarily, protect journalists, who would have no more privileges than any other citizen.

“What we should seek to create and protect is the public right of access to information about government. And the right and duty of public servants to provide such information.”

Mr Allister Sparks, director of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, agrees.

“When we ask for a Freedom of Information Act, we are not asking for any special privileges for our particular industry,” he writes, in the same MPD newsletter.

“We are asking for no more than every individual’s democratic right to know what the people elected to government are doing.

“And that is a fundamental democratic right. To be informed. Without it there can be no democracy.”

This is where the media comes in. “We have to be the eyes and ears of the citizenry. That is our democratic role,” our Fourth Estate duty.

“It follows from this that a free media is the lifeblood of a modern democracy. If there is no media freedom there can be no democracy, because the citizenry cannot be adequately informed. It is then subject to indoctrination, manipulation and despotism.”

While Sparks commends the clause in the new constitution which guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the media, he feels that this does not go far enough.

“One can guarantee freedom of speech but still deny information,” he cautions. “Censorship can take two forms: It can prohibit publication or it can withhold information at source.”

And no matter how well-intentioned or benevolent a Government is, the temptation is always there to resort to censorship of one kind or another.

As Stewart puts it, “With power comes all the temptations that accompany it. The bright smoke of election promises is not easily conjured into reality.”

“When journalists began to peer up the sleeves of the conqueror and intrude behind the curtains, the liberators are soon unmindful.

“The souring of the relationship is beset with all sorts of complications.”

Because of this danger, believes Stewart, legal mechanisms are necessary to institutionalise the complications.

According to Sparks, what this would mean in practice is that each Ministry or Government office sets up an information access office.

A journalist or any other citizen can then make a written application to see any document in any Government department or agency.

“If that department does not have the information, the request must automatically be transferred to the right department or agency.

“Your request can only be refused if the material you want falls in the limited category of restricted information, and this decision can only be taken by a designated official,” Sparks suggests.

He also touches on another important part of the debate: The responsibility which a Freedom of Information Act places on the media.

“If we claim it is our right to serve the democratic process by keeping the citizenry informed, then we must be true to that role,” he observes. “We must exercise it responsibly and competently.”

He does not spell out what this means but does argue that this includes the training and upgrading of journalists.

In fact, he goes as far as to call for this to be incorporated in a legally binding clause in a Freedom of Information Act.

Sparks points out that Australia already has such a law (the Training Guarantee Act), which forces companies to allocate a percentage of their wages bills to training programmes.

“Training, after all, is not a privilege,” he argues, “it is a right.”

With concern, he points to the “juniorisation” of local newsgroups and to an increase in the workload of journalists.

“If we succeed in a plea for a Freedom of Information Act, those workloads will increase,” he writes, “the error rate, already unacceptably high, will soar even higher.”

These are the kinds of issues that the February conference will have to grapple with. It will need to strive for a balance between rights and responsibilities.

The debates are bound to be tense, and even acrimonious at times, but this is unavoidable. Now that media freedom is a little closer, we must reach out for it firmly.

● Those interested in attending the Freedom of Information Conference, which will be held in Grahamstown from February 7 to 9, can contact Louisa Clayton at (0461) 24032.
GOOD EVENING.
HERE IS THE...
(GLUG)...NEWS...
Long Walk on a short cut to bestseller list

PATRICK FARRELL
Staff Reporter

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela’s autobiography “Long Walk to Freedom” is on a short run to bestseller status.

The book, released in South Africa on December 15, has sold out at book stores across the country, usually within hours stocks arriving.

Fleur McFarlane, manager of Exclusive Books in Claremont, said they sold 120 copies “within an hour” on Saturday.

“This was our third shipment and we have another 400 coming in February.”

She said people were prepared to pay for the R79.95 book upfront to reserve copies.

“In my 30 years in the book business the demand for this book is unique,” she said.

This was echoed by CNA director of books Hayden Watkins who said “We have sold all 20 000 copies we got and we are shipping in another 6 500. It is really unbelievable.”

He said in his experience there had never been such demand for an autobiography.

The book is number one on the CNA bestseller list.

While the demand has made copies scarce, the good news is that the publishers Macdonald Parnell will keep supplying copies until “demand is satisfied”.

Peter Matthews, managing director of Macdonald Parnell, said 65 000 copies had been sold in Britain since it was released on November 30.

“By the end of January, 64 000 copies would have been sold in this country,” he said.

“In my 25 years in the book selling business I’ve never come across a book doing so well so quickly here,” he said.

He said 20 000 copies were sold in South Africa the day the book was released.

He ascribed the popularity of the book to Mr Mandela’s “fantastic life”

Much was written secretly on Robben Island at night and President Mandela played truant from work in the quarry so he could sleep during the day.

He wrote up to 10 pages a night and would pass them on to colleagues Mac Maharaj and Isu Chaba who would encrypt them using very small writing.

Mr Maharaj smuggled his copy of the manuscript off the island and it was sent to Britain where it was decoded and typed.

Mr Mandela’s hand-written script was hidden in cocoa tins and buried on the island. But one of the tins was found by the authorities and led to the suspension of his study privileges for four years.
Newspaper staff bitter about lack of retrenchment packages

Weekend Argus Labour Reporter
SOUTH newspaper staff returning to work after the festive season break expected to hear the terms of their retrenchment packages but were sent home empty-handed.

The weekly newspaper was placed in liquidation last month.

Staffers complained bitterly they had never been officially informed of the liquidation but had to read about it in opposition newspapers.

There was also no warning that they could end up with no January pay, let alone a retrenchment package.

The staff complaints directly contradict a statement by South Press Services at the time the liquidation was announced on December 23.

The statement said: “The trustees paid tribute to the staff of South for their dedication, courage and sacrifice in maintaining an independent and critical voice in Cape Town during the last years of the apartheid regime.”

“They added that the step of applying for liquidation of the company was taken with the knowledge of the staff.”

Trustee Essa Moosa said yesterday the newspaper had been dependent on foreign funding which “substantially dried up” about a year ago.

Realising the newspaper had to become self-sufficient or close down, a desperate attempt to save the company was made by launching a knock-and-drop tabloid — South-Easter — just before the election.

Although South-Easter had performed well, it had proved incapable of saving the mother publication.

“We agonised over how to retain both papers,” Mr Moosa said.

Negotiations were set in motion with the Sowetan but fell through.

“We were in a quandary because we had debts to be paid and the organisation had no money.”

“Our only other option was to put the company into liquidation and then see if we could not get someone interested in acquiring South-Easter together with retaining some of our staff.”

“What’s been done now is that the trustees have asked the directors to try to get a consortium together to buy out the newspaper.”

With regard to the staff, we are trying to raise funds to give some sort of retrenchment package. I do not want to raise expectations but the chances look fairly good,” Mr Moosa said.

South-Easter was a good project which could possibly sustain itself and become a viable business option, he added.

The owner of the building which housed South, Ebrahim Bhorat, said he preferred not to comment, other than to say in terms of the Liquidations Act the liquidators had the right to retain the premises for three months.

South’s trustees included beleaguered former ANC regional leader Allan Boesak and Jakes Gerwel of the president’s office.
The Gun is Quicker Than the Pen for Journalists Worldwide Who Face...
NEWSPAPERS

Battle of the business dailies

The opening salvos have been fired in a press war in which Argus Newspapers will be attacking its former stablemate, Times Mirror (TML), on several fronts. The most serious challenge comes in one of TML's major strongholds, the business publication arena, but it is also taking on the Sunday Times with a magazine inserted in its weekend newspapers. The Star's new midweek suburbinder supplement seems also to challenge the Sunday Times's hold on job vacancy ads through Business Times.

Argus is to launch a daily business supplement, Business Report, which will be inserted into the Cape Times, Natal Mercury, Pretoria News and the morning edition of The Star. This may give it a circulation of 200,000.

Will this formula succeed and will it displace Business Day (circulation 35,000) in the affections of advertisers? Until more details are known, it is not possible to say, but there is much scepticism among ad agency media directors, who influence or control most advertising budgets. What Business Day delivers is a tightly focused audience of decision makers, while Business Report delivers the ordinary readership of its career newspapers, only a portion of whom (and in the case of The Star, a tiny portion) are business people.

"It is not a particularly good strategy to throw volume after quality," says Gordon Muller, media director of Saatchi & Saatchi. "Reaching the business decision maker is about quality of readers, not circulation. I am surprised they are going this route."

To succeed in Johannesburg, Business Report will have to bring about a fairly significant change in reading patterns, in which business people tend to read Business Day in the morning and The Star (for leisure and general news) in the evening.

"I don't believe people will change their reading habits," says Media Shop media director John Barham. "Business Day is entrenched in the marketplace. It is a good, snappy, quick read and overview. It delivers the core readers you want to reach."

The new publication may have the edge in Business Day's areas of weakness, notably Cape Town and Durban. But if it is to succeed as a national newspaper, it has to achieve strength in the core market centred on Johannesburg.

Obviously the quality of the new publication is vital, but as Elliot Schwartz, MD of ad agency SBBW observes, "abuse of quality guarantees failure, but the presence of quality does not guarantee success."

The appointment of an editor without experience as a business journalist is not necessarily a handicap, but it doesn't seem to be a strength.

In making Business Report a supplement, Argus Newspapers has chosen a route that involves smaller investment, but the lack of an identity could be a serious weakness. In London and New York, specialist business papers such as the Financial Times and Wall Street Journal are commercially far stronger than the business pages of competing quality dailies with bigger circulations. And the carriers of Business Report can hardly be called quality newspapers.

"My biggest problem with it is that it is still part of a general interest newspaper, instead of being dedicated to business daily," says Mundels media director Berrie Rayner. "It flies in the face of a trend towards niche publications."

Another critical question will be the advertising rate. It will have to be fairly high to support a circulation of around 200,000 without a cover price, though initially it is likely to be heavily discounted. "They will have to reduce their rates to lower than the current carrier publications or otherwise we will be paying for wastage," says Lindsay Smurth media director Tony Banahan.

To make inroads into the overtraded business market, the new paper will have to capture advertising from existing players and the first to suffer may not be Business Day but some of the weaker business publications, such as Finance Week. A bigger problem than competition for advertising, however, may be competition for readers' time.

Argus regional MD Deon du Plessis says it is too early to comment in detail. However, he says he is not sure the new publication will be positioned head-on against Business Day. "Johannesburg is the core market and you have to be there," he agrees. "But it will have a national flavour. It will enjoy an advantage in the centres other than Johannesburg. On present thinking it will be the full run of the three papers and part of The Star. We are not sure ourselves yet of many details, including the launch date."

Employing retired editors as part-time flabglazers may have paid off well in the past for public relations consultants. Sueens Mann. But the policy has clearly been abandoned since nexecutive directors and former Star editors Harvey Tyson and Rex Gibson criticised Argus Newspapers (a major client) for its attitude towards editorial independence.

"We don't believe it's appropriate for our directors to publicly criticise our clients or media colleagues," says MD Peter Mann. "They should have resigned first."

Tyson has resigned but Gibson hasn't yet. Neither will be replaced.

"Our policy was right for the time," says Mann. "We will still have Peter Maclean (former head of Argus' newspaper division) and Michael Green (former Daily News editor) who add enormous benefit and lustre to the board. But we have restructured to focus more on providing a service to our clients. Having a lot of heavyweight names with no line function does not and that process.

"We have merged our Transvaal company with David Carter's specialist financial company, and we have identified five directors who will each handle eight or nine accounts. They will be hands-on working directors all defending income, with line responsibility and staff reporting to them."

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

80 • FINANCIAL MAIL • JANUARY • 27 • 1995
Big changes face SA media industry

Business Staff

ENORMOUS changes are taking place in SA's media industry — particularly in Cape Newspapers, which includes the Cape Times, The Argus and Unicorn Press.

The new-look Cape Times will be launched on March 6 with its new national Business Report section, which will also appear in the morning editions of The Star and in the Natal Mercury and Pretoria News.

The man directing the transformation is Ivan Fallon, former city editor of the Sunday Telegraph and deputy editor of the Sunday Times in Britain, for which he still writes a financial column.

Fallon, who has written a biography of O'Neill and two other bestsellers on the Sachtchi brothers and James Goldsmith, will speak at the next meeting of the Seeff/Cape Times Executive Breakfast Club on February 14.

Among other comments on the media scene he will disclose plans for Cape Newspapers and how they will meet the demand for informed reporting on business.

The breakfast will be at the Rotunda, Camps Bay, at 7.15am for 7.30am. Booking is essential through Sue or Sharon Tel 22-2444. The cost, payable in advance, is R56 with a discount for block bookings of 10 or more.
SA must be open society, says Mbeki

BY KAISER NYATSUMBA
POLITICAL EDITOR

Grahamstown — The Government of National Unity wanted to build a democratic system in the country which would ensure the greatest possible participation of the people in government and in changing their society, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said here last night.

Opening a three-day Freedom of Information conference at Rhodes University, Mbeki said it was critically important that the country’s citizens were empowered to intervene in an informed way in their governance.

That, together with the country’s past history of a closed society, was the reason the Interim Constitution obliged the Government to pass a Freedom of Information Act.

However, said Mbeki, such an Act by itself would not be sufficient. The Government would also have to adopt a proactive position to make information available to the public.

The media’s role, he said, would be to inform and educate the public once the required legislation had been passed.

Mbeki said previous governments were as closed to those outside them as they were to those inside them, and it was therefore “inevitable that the new constitution would seek to address that point.”
Scrap bar on public’s right to know, urges conference

GRAHAMSTOWN — A constitutional limitation on the right to official information should be scrapped, legal academic Lene Johansen told a conference on freedom of information here.

Section 23 was “seriously flawed”, said Ms Johansen, a media specialist at the University of the Witwatersrand’s Centre for Applied Legal Studies yesterday. Her view was echoed by other speakers, including Deputy Minister of Provincial Affairs Valli Moosa.

Section 23 guarantees the right to official information only if it is needed to exercise or protect one’s rights.

Ms Johansen said public access to information was essential to full democratic participation.

“People must be able to engage in public contestation of ideas, offer alternatives to proposed and official policies, and influence decisions that affect them.”

Section 23 left too much scope for unwilling public servants to refuse or delay information. It should be amended to remove the requirement of proving one’s motive for wanting information.

Mr Moosa said something had to be done about Section 23. The right to information needed to be widened when the Constitutional Assembly considered the final constitution.

Carmel Ruckard, legal affairs specialist for the Sunday Times, said Section 23 had not served the media well.

— Sapa
Serious problems in SA media

44 years lowest in standards

2013

Problems in SA media

Freedom of information, necessary

GRAHAMS TOWN

South Africa

The sooner the word to those who read the people — how it was to read the people —
and bear ever any sort of
reputation, for the sake of the liberty
of the country, for
the good of the people.

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Hopes that were madel...
Freedom of information ‘may become rallying cry’

GRAHAMSTOWN — Freedom of information risked becoming the rallying cry of non-governmental organisations, independent media and other interest groups “left stranded” by SA’s transition, SABC presenter Tim Modise warned yesterday.

In a speech on the second day of the Freedom of Information conference at Rhodes University, Modise criticised the lack of openness and accountability within the media, asking proponents of more open government: “Who is the public you are talking about?”

The absence of “people who see it as part of their duties to filter information”, such as Contralesa or tribal chiefs from KwaZulu/Natal, reinforced the perception that the kind of freedom delegates were calling for “is a class thing”.

Reiterating Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s comments on Tuesday, President Nelson Mandela’s spokesman Joel Netshitenza warned that government should not encourage “rights that end up undermining the strategic objectives that we have”. Elements of the civil service could abuse “freedom of information rights”.

Mbeki’s legal advisor, advocate

Mojanku Gumbi, said the Bill would emphasise “participative freedom of information”.

Non-disclosure of information could only be justified in the interests of the public, and not those of the government.

Deputy Constitutional Affairs Minister Valli Moosa supported this view, and called for the abolition of Section 23 of the interim constitution which requires individuals to cite reasonable grounds for seeking information. There are no such clauses in the proposed Bill.

Government’s commitment to freedom of information “was not entirely altruistic” as it hoped that releasing information “would build consensus”.

But Armoor corporate communications GM Abba Omar, describing himself as “an activist”, warned that government, the police and the armed forces could not be accountable unless civil society had a role in defining their mandate.

“Legitimacy is the end of the process”, by claiming to be accountable to the public as a whole, you end up being accountable to no one in particular,” he said.

Sapa reports Sunday Times editor Ken Owen said drafters of freedom of information legislation should be careful not to create “a playground for lawyers”.

He said defining limits on access to information would have to be done with great care.

“We are in danger of a Freedom of Information Act creating a nightmare of definitions, exceptions and legal loopholes in which we can be trapped. Badly. I think it’s a mistake to rush this legislation.”

Owen said he was “a little sceptical” of how freedom of information would work in practice. His experience of the US system was that officials could easily evade the law.

When one legitimised secrecy one made inroads into freedom of speech.

A petition signed by delegates at the conference called on national police commissioner George Fyra to release tapes of the police conversation during the January 27 raid by internal security unit members on Orlando police station.

The tapes reportedly record bitter racist exchanges between black and white policemen after a striking policeman was shot dead by the internal stability unit at Orlando police station on January 27.
Media can’t even handle info it has, says Sparks

Grahamstown — South Africa’s press was demanding access to information, it did not have the resources or skills to deal with, veteran journalist Allister Sparks said yesterday.

Reporting standards were at the lowest he had seen in his 44 years of journalism, he told a freedom of information conference in Grahamstown.

Newsrooms were being stretched to their limits and their staffs were in many cases becoming more and more junior at a time that demands on them were increasing.

Vast areas of the country, such as some of the former homelands, were not covered by the press.

“We are demanding access (to official information) but we can’t handle what we have,” he said.

Reports that were inadequate, superficial or simply wrong would test the patience of the regime and its commitment to press freedom.

Sowetan political editor Mzathuthu Tsedu said 70 percent of the paper’s reporters had less than two years’ experience.

The Sowetan had two staffers in Parliament who had to cover six Constitutional Assembly theme committees, one of which had six subcommittees, every day.

The burden of trying to provide comprehensive news coverage had become more serious because the media was being used as a recruiting ground for communications experts for the new civil service.

Tsedu said all the country’s daily newspapers together reached less than 5 percent of the population. Even the Sowetan reached only 1.6 million people.

If information was to be made available under a freedom of information Act, how was it to reach “the people”, he asked.

The Government had to pay attention to the monopoly wielded by Argus and Times Media Limited and look for ways of empowering people who ran small publications in obscure areas in a bid to inform people about things that mattered to them.

Sunday Times editor Ken Owen said a freedom of information Act would require huge resources from the Government, the media and individuals who wanted to use it.

People who had not worked on South African newspapers over the past decade could not realise how difficult, brutal and bruising an environment it had been. Several years ago, when he was appointed to head Business Day, he began with a staff of 73. Within days 14 journalists had resigned, lost to Australian media organisations.

Former Zimbabwean editor Geoff Nyarota told the conference that The Star showed “a certain eagerness to please the establishment” in its reporting on controversial Soweto police tapes.

He told delegates The Star had with “apparent glee” quoted Police Commissioner George Fivaz denying a Sunday Times report that he had blocked release of the tapes. — Sapa.
ARGUS' LAUNCH BLITZ

Argus Newspapers plans a R4.5m advertising and promotions blitz to launch its new daily supplement, Business Report, which hits the streets on March 7. It will be the biggest launch party SA has seen since the inauguration," says Argus editorial director Ivan Fallon. "Hardly a senior business person in Johannesburg will not be invited." Planes are being chartered to ferry potential decision-makers to readers from Cape Town and Durban to the launch, backed by TV, print and outdoor advertising.

Though the new publication has a captive market in its carrier publications in Cape Town and Durban, Fallon is aware of the size of the task facing him in persuading the key business community of Johannesburg to switch from the conveniently niched Business Day to a morning purchase of The Star and advertisers, in turn, to follow.

Business Report will be a broadsheet of at least eight pages inserted in the four morning editions of the group the fourth is the Pretoria News, providing national coverage with a local page in each centre and a total circulation of some 200,000 (including 50,000 in the morning edition of The Star). Initially, it will be published five days a week, but a Saturday edition is planned, concentrating on personal finance.

It will be a vehicle for both national and regional advertising. Ad rates, says Fallon, will be attractive to an advertiser now using Business Day and designed to discourage the use of Business Day in combination, for example, with the Cape Times. He says the advertising cost per thousand circulation will be half that of Business Day, though, of course, the quality of readership is much lower in that only a small percentage of the 200,000 people reached by Business Report will be business people. Though no number was given, Fallon says "we certainly have a lot more business readers than Business Day." But not in Johannesburg.

Fallon is unaware of a similar circulation formula having been used anywhere else in the world, now possible through technology which allows printing in all four centres.

Though Business Day is clearly being targeted, Fallon believes there is room for both publications. "This is not a fight to the death. Business Day has had it all itself for quite a few years with no competition at all. Most people appreciate the fact that there will be an alternative. We won't abandon Business Day overnight. I don't underestimate its entrenched position. Research shows there is great loyalty to it. We won't tackle it head-on but we have our own major editions such as Durban and Cape Town. We have a network which doesn't have. We can use all the resources of the group to feed into this."

"I don't think for a second it will be easy. But the downside is minimal. Though we have 35 journalists working for Business Report, only 10 new people have been taken on.

"A tiny increase in advertising will more than cover the extra costs, so it is almost unnecessary from Day One. Once we are up and running, whatever we do has got to be better than what we are doing now. I hope our advertising will persuade the business community to try it. They are not used to getting business news from The Star. At the end of the day, it will live or die on the actual product."

The idea is to offer advertisers a national product, which they have never had before. It will have national quality and resources. None of our papers individually produce decent business papers of their own. They don't have the resources nor the commitment to space.

Fallon spelled out the new Argus development strategy and is considering launching a downmarket tabloid newspaper. "We brought out Roy Greenslade, the world's greatest expert on tabloid newspapers, who will be reporting back on its viability."

"His initial feeling is positive. The Daily Mirror started as a comic when literacy levels in the UK were about what they are here now. I would like to do an old-style Daily Mirror, not a Sun, downmarket to the Sovetan, targeted at blacks."

LOERIE DISPUTE AT AN END

The battle for political correctness at the Loeries is over, with the Creative Directors' Forum having agreed to appoint two black creatives to the judging panel for this year's award festival. The CDF originally rejected a demand from the Association of Marketers (which organises the Loeries) for one black judge, arguing that this was tokenism and that judges should be chosen on merit alone, regardless of colour.

But, says CDF chairman Graham Worsop, there has been an "amazing turnaround" in the CDF's attitude and "we have now decided to go even further and appoint two black judges out of the nine selected by the CDF."

"We always thought of Loeries as an awards forum of international standard. But in the spirit of the new SA, we felt we should accept that there is a good possibility that that will no longer be the case. It may not have the standing internationally, but a greater good is served by having a truly representative segment of people in the country represented on the panel."

Loerie committee chairman Des Saunders says the committee was not prepared to back off on this subject. "We have to reflect the new spirit in the country," he says. "The judges must be relevant to the SA market."

However, Saunders does not believe Loerie standards will suffer. "It might have happened if you immediately put in six black judges because there are not that many senior black creatives in the industry."

BUY OR PAWN ANYTHING OF VALUE

You can't do it overnight. We want the top black people who are respected. It is not tokenism and it is not a showcase of affirmative action. Blacks have a genuine role to play because of the danger of miscommunicating."

Loerie advertising this year is by AM-C, which has produced a daring poster campaign. "It may be extravagant," says Saunders, "but it will be one of the most visible and controversial we have ever had. The paper and printing costs are donated, so this is not a cost to the Loeries. We have many donors."
Editors, careless of rights

CAPE TIMES, Friday, February 10, 1995
GRAHAMSTOWN — Minister for Telecommunications and Broadcasting Dr Pallo Jordan failed to turn up for a speaking engagement at a major freedom of information conference here yesterday.

He was to have been a keynote speaker in a debate on state policy on freedom of information. The conference co-ordinator, Rhodes University journalism department head Prof Guy Berger, told international delegates that Dr Jordan originally agreed “with some enthusiasm” to appear. However, the minister’s secretary had telephoned on Wednesday to say he would probably not attend.

No reasons had been given.

“Dr Jordan’s secretary said last night that the conference in Grahamstown had been given ample warning that the minister might not be able to meet his commitment to speak to delegates,” The secretary contradicted Prof Berger’s claim they had been informed only the day before, saying they had been told three days in advance.

The minister could not be reached for comment last night because his cellular telephone service said “the subscriber is not available” — Sapa and Political Staff
Editor warns on press freedom

Grahamstown — An editor has warned that once the ANC government started losing popularity, it would pay lip service to the freedom of the press.

Addressing the conference on freedom of information at Rhodes University yesterday, City Press editor Khulu Sibiya said while politicians claimed to support freedom of the press, they only paid lip service to it.

Sibiya warned, “Just wait until the ANC popularity declines, (Deputy President) Mbeki would say something else.”

Mbeki told the conference earlier this week that the government supported the freedom of information.

Sibiya told the conference that proposals by the Government to hold the proceedings of the truth commission in secret were but one example of how a “well-meaning” Government could try to deny people information to which they were entitled.

Sibiya said it should be made an offence for those who held public information to deliberately withhold it from the media and the public.

He called on South African publishers and editors to “look beyond the profit motive” and do more groundwork to establish a foundation for the free flow of information.

Sibiya also said the SADC could be the most effective way of informing the nation. However, its present structure needed to be looked at.

He called on the “various organs” of civil society to get more involved in the dissemination of information.

African correspondent Colin Legum told delegates that most South Africans were totally ignorant about the African continent because their mass media had failed to serve them properly.

The editor of Third World News Service and former correspondent for The Observer said that while the South African media persisted in portraying the rest of Africa as a place of corruption and war, there was in fact “only one war and two serious civil strides” on now.

He said the South African media was ignoring news that gave a positive view of the continent.

Freedom of Expression Institute deputy chairman Raymond Louw told the conference that the media was “singularly careless” about its freedoms.

The proposed freedom of information legislation gave the press an opportunity to grasp the rights it had long aspired to.

The conference was part of that process and had been recognised as such by Mbeki when he addressed it. Louw said, “But where are the editors of the country’s newspapers? Apart from those participating directly in panels, only Nigel Bruce (Financial Mail) and Gavin Stewart (Daily Dispatch) are here.” — Ecca, Saps
Defend the right to know – Sibiya

CITY Press editor Khulu Sibiya has warned that once the ANC government started losing popularity, it would “pay lip service” to the freedom of the press.

Addressing the conference on Freedom of Information at Rhodes University on Thursday, Sibiya said while politicians claimed to support the freedom of the press, they paid lip service to it.

He warned: “Just wait until the ANC’s popularity declines, (Deputy President) Mbeki would say something else.”

Mbeki told the conference earlier this week that the Government supported the freedom of information.

Sibiya warned that proposals by the Government to hold the proceedings of the Truth Commission in secret were but one example of how a “well-meaning” Government could try to deny people information to which they were entitled.

He said, “What one finds even more frightening is that Justice Minister Dullah Omar, who himself was victimised countless times by the previous regime, can support this undemocratic proposal.”

He said Omar’s position regarding the proceedings of the Commission should also be a warning to the media.

“Those who are in the trenches with us today can be our adversaries tomorrow,” said Sibiya.

He said it should be made an offence for those who hold public information to withhold it deliberately from the media and the public.

Sibiya called on South African publishers and editors to “look beyond the profit motive” and do more to establish a foundation for the free flow of information. He said workshops had to be arranged “as a matter of urgency” between the publishers and those who held information to map out a way that would ensure that access to information was a right and not a privilege.

Sibiya also said the SABC could be the most effective way of informing the nation. “The tragedy of this country would be for the SABC to pander to sectional interests.”

He called on civil society to get more involved in the dissemination of information and to guard its right to be informed.

-Ecna
Information white paper expected

Political Correspondent

A WHITE paper on freedom of information legislation will be tabled soon, says Deputy President Thabo Mbeki.

He said a conference two weeks ago at Rhodes University had been the last major consultative forum on the issue before the white paper was finalised.

He was speaking at a Press briefing yesterday.

- No decision had been taken on diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, Mr Mbeki said.

- He declined to answer a question on whether South Africa would agree to Red China's demand that a country severs ties with the Republic of China (Taiwan) before opening diplomatic links with the People's Republic.

- The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Nzo, would visit Beijing in the next few weeks to discuss the question of diplomatic ties, Mr Mbeki said.

Deputy-President F W de Klerk, at a separate Press briefing, would say only that the question of diplomatic links with the two Chinas was being discussed.

The core of the "two Chinas" dilemma is that South Africa does not want to have to choose between established relations and trade ties with Taiwan, and political loyalties and potential trade with Red China.
Global input for Argus advisory board

Board members ... Nthato Motlana (left), Eric Molobi, Wiseman Nkuhlu and Ben Bradlee will offer advice on global events and trends affecting the local media.

Argus Newspapers has established an international advisory board headed by Ben Bradlee, former editor of the Washington Post.

The board, meeting biannually alternately inside and outside South Africa, would advise and consult the group on world events and trends affecting the South African media, yesterday's announcement said.

Board members include New York's first black mayor David Dinkins; US congressman Andrew Young; Ted Sorensen, an adviser to former US president John F Kennedy; and British journalist and writer Anthony Sampson.

South Africans on the board include Kagiso Trust chief executive and Kagiso Trust Investments chairman Eric Molobi, Independent Development Trust chief executive and Development Bank of South Africa chairman Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, and businessman Dr Nthato Motlana.

Also on the board are Independent Newspapers chairman Dr Tony O'Reilly, Argus chairman Liam Healy, chief executive John Peachstone and group editorial director Ivan Fallon.

Sapa

Star 23/12/95 (243)
New advisory board for Argus

ARGUS Newspapers on Wednesday announced the establishment of an international advisory board headed by Mr Ben Bradlee, former editor of the Washington Post.

The board, which will meet twice a year alternately inside and outside South Africa, will advise and consult the newspaper group on world events and trends affecting the South African media, the announcement said.

Board members include New York's first black mayor Mr David Dinkins; US congressman Mr Andrew Young; Mr Ted Sorensen, a former adviser to US President John F Kennedy; and British journalist and writer Mr Anthony Sampson. South Africans on the board include Kagiso Trust chief executive and Kagiso Trust Investments chairman Mr Eric Molobi; Independent Development Trust chief executive officer and Development Bank of South Africa chairman Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu; and businessman Dr Nithatho Motlana.

Dr Tony O'Reilly, chairman of Independent Newspapers, the major shareholder in Argus Newspapers, will serve on the board with Argus chairman Mr Liam Healy, chief executive Mr John Featherstone and group editorial director Mr Ivan Fallon — Sapa.
Independent to up stake in Argus

JOHANNESBURG — Independent Newspapers said it was offering Argus Newspapers shareholders R13 a share in cash for 70% of their shares.

It said in a statement it wished to raise its stake in Argus to about 60% from its current 34.99% holding.

It said shareholders could elect to sell all of their shares to Independent Newspapers if they wished.

Independent said it had no intention of de-listing Argus shares from the JSE, and would ensure the necessary spread of shareholders required in terms of JSE regulations is maintained.

"Independent Newspapers has always made it clear it wanted to increase its shareholding in Argus when the time and circumstances were right," Independent Newspapers CEO and Argus chairman Liam Healy said.

"Now they are We would be delighted if the offer is fully accepted by shareholders, to bring black institutions into the group."

The offer will be open for acceptance from Monday March 6 to Friday March 24 to shareholders registered as such on March 3.

It said any additional Argus shares tendered over 70% would be at the Independent's discretion and would take place on the basis of a similar percentage to apply to all Argus shareholders who tendered additional shares.

Shareholders who accept the offer will not be entitled to any final dividend declared by Argus for the nine months to December 31, 1995.

If the offer for 70% of shares is accepted in full, Independent said it would invest about R270m.

If successful, it said it would place any shares acquired over 60% of the issued equity in Argus with selected black institutions to a maximum of 20%.
Argus posts climb in earnings

From DEREK TOMMEEY

JOHANNESBURG — Argus Newspapers, South Africa’s main newspaper publisher, increased its attributable profits by 45.4% in the nine months ended December 31.

Earnings rose from R16.2m, equal to 37.8c a share, in the nine months to December, 1993, to R23.52m equal to 52.1c a share.

Argus Newspapers has changed its financial year-end from March to December.

The company is paying a final dividend of 10c a share, making a total payment for the nine months of 20c. This compares with a payment of 16.9c a share for the previous financial year.

Chief executive John Featherstone reports that the satisfactory trend experienced in the six months to September continued through to December.

Trading income before interest rose 31.7% to R58.6m. But a swing-around from interest received to interest paid trimmed the increase in trading income to 10.3%

However, a R2.55m increase in investment income led to a 22.1% rise in taxed income to R23.8m.

And a sharp drop in income attributable to outside shareholders in subsidiary companies resulted in the taxed income, less one small provision, going to ordinary shareholders. Featherstone says that earnings for the 12 months ending March will be only marginally better than the R2.4c earned in the 12 months to March, 1994 which were abnormally high owing to heavy pre-election advertising in the first quarter of 1994.

But earnings for the 1995 financial year should show a further significant improvement helped by a number of major initiatives.

These include the imminent launch of the New Business Report, the relaunch of the group’s morning titles and the development of a new weekend strategy.

The effect of these developments is expected to work through to the operating figures this year.

He said the group was also investing in state-of-the-art technology which will result in substantial cost efficiencies and provide new business opportunities over the next few years.
Sharp improvement at Argus

BY DEREK TOMMEEY

Argus Newspapers, South Africa's main newspaper publisher, increased its attributable profits by 45.4 percent in the nine months ended December 31.

Earnings rose from R16.2 million, equal to 57.3c a share, in the nine months to December, 1993, to R23.8 million equal to 92.1c a share.

Argus Newspapers has changed its financial year-end from March to December.

The company is paying a final dividend of 10c a share, making a total payment for the nine months of 20c. This compares with a payment of 18.9c a share for the previous financial year.

Chief executive John Featherstone reports that the satisfactory trend experienced in the six months to September continued through to December 31.

Trading income before interest rose 31.7% to R39.8 million. But a swing-around from interest received to interest paid trimmed the increase in trading income to 10.3%.

However, a R2.55 million increase in investment income led to a 22.1% rise in taxed income to R23.8 million.

And a sharp drop in income attributable to outside shareholders in subsidiary companies resulted in the taxed income, less one small provision, going to ordinary shareholders.

Featherstone says that earnings for the 12 months ending March will be only marginally better than the 72.4c earned in the 12 months to March, 1994 which were abnormally high owing to heavy pre-election advertising in the first quarter of 1994.

But earnings for the 1995 financial year should show a further significant improvement helped by a number of major initiatives.

These include the imminent launch of the new Business Report, the relaunch of the group's morning titles and the development of a new weekend strategy.

The effect of these developments is expected to work through to the operating figures this year.

He said the group was also investing in state-of-the-art technology which will result in substantial cost efficiencies and provide new business opportunities over the next few years.
Argus profits jump 45 percent

Deputy Business Editor

ARGUS Newspapers' attributable profit jumped 45 percent to R23.3 million in the nine months ended December.

The group has changed its financial year end from March to December in line with controlling shareholder, Independent Newspapers.

Earnings a share of 52c (37c) reflect the acquisition of minority shareholdings in Natal Newspapers and The Pretoria News.

For the full year, earnings are expected to be in line with or only slightly better than the pre-listing forecast of 72.2c.

A final dividend of 10c a share makes 20c for the nine months, compared to 16.9c for the previous financial year.

Turnover was up only 4 percent but trading income rose nearly 32 percent compared to the same period a year ago.

An interest bill of R4.2 million chipped the increase to 10.3 percent but this was partly offset by higher investment income arising from the group's 32.5 percent interest in The Sowetan, which was previously a wholly-owned business whose results were reflected in trading income.

Directors said profits in the year to December 1995 should show further significant improvements.

Better conditions at most of the group's titles had continued into 1996 and major initiatives, including the launch of Business Report, the relaunch of morning titles and the development of a new week-end strategy, should boost operating figures this year.

The group was also investing in state-of-the-art editorial and production technology which should cut costs and open up new business opportunities over the next few years.
The Star’s Code of Ethics

Responsibilities:
1. In its reporting and comment, The Star should be accurate, fair, honest and true.
2. The Star should aim to give all sides of an issue, by means of balanced presentation without bias, distortion, undue emphasis or omission.
3. The Star should be independent of government, commerce or any other vested interest.
4. The Star should expose wrongdoing, misuse of power and corruption, both in the public and private sectors.
5. The Star should encourage racial co-operation, and pursue a policy aimed at enhancing the welfare and progress of all sections of the population.
6. The Star should endeavour to be positive and constructive but not misleadingly optimistic or trivial.
7. The Star should not pander to personal or sectional interests, but speak candidly with the public interest.
8. The public’s right to know about matters of importance is paramount. The Star should therefore fight vigorously any measure to conceal facts of public interest, any attempt to prevent public access to the news.

FOR the guidance of readers and advertisers, The Star today publishes its Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for surveys and advertising features. We believe that this will serve as a guide for the whole newspaper industry.

The Star’s Code of Conduct for surveys and advertising features

1 The Star’s Code of Ethics should be observed in all respects.
2. Readers should be left in no doubt about the source and nature of our material. Information is provided by advertisers or sources outside The Star, this should be clearly stated. Other companies must be attributed and not presumed as fact.
3. Sales representatives may not promise use of photography in editorial space in order to solicit advertisements.
4. Reports or references to authorities related to a survey or advertising feature may not be omitted merely because they have declined to advertise.
5. All involved in the production of surveys or advertising features must declare any connections or bias with individuals or companies which are the focus of the feature or advertising in it.

Advertisements
This is material provided by advertisers or produced to their specifications being a space bought by them. Clients may have complete control over concept and design as long as The Star’s rules on advertising material are observed.

All attempts must be made to prevent readers confusing advertisements with editorial. They may therefore not be presented in The Star’s editorial style or format. If there is a possibility of confusion still arising with readers, the material must be clearly labeled “Advertisement.”

Surveys
Features which receive this annotation must consist of editorial independently gathered by a writer commissioned by The Star and meeting all criteria laid down in The Star’s Code of Ethics.

Writers may act on helpful leads from the sales representatives and may contact companies which may be advertisers or potential advertisers during the course of their research. However, there must be no liaison whatsoever between writers and sales representatives or advertisers on the question of specific editorial content.

Service features
Although these features attempt to attract advertising of a particular nature, their primary aim is to provide a service to readers and tend to appear regularly or seasonally and include such themes as adult education, holiday destinations and training for careers.

The writer should attempt to give readers a balanced view of the subject and present items which are worthwhile and of service to readers.

Sales representatives may write to advertisers to submit editorial for consideration but may not guarantee its use.

Material submitted by advertisers must be reviewed and approved. The Star reserves the right to edit material submitted.

There is space after worthier items of service or news interest have been used.

Material submitted by advertisers must be reviewed and approved. The Star reserves the right to edit material submitted.

Advertisements
Advertisements are processed by a writer commissioned by The Star to ensure it meets editorial standards. If such material is used in a service feature, readers must be told in an italic note at the end of the report “Information in this report was supplied by [name of company].”

Advertisements should have no control over the appearance and the content of the feature.

Advertising features
The aim of advertising features is to give clients an opportunity to promote their activities, services or products.

These features are made visible by support from primary advertisers and their suppliers or clients.

Editorial material should preferably be generated by a writer commissioned by The Star if material is provided by advertisers. It should be processed by a writer commissioned by The Star to ensure it meets standards.

Client may brief writer on what aspects of their business they want covered and provide illustrative material to accompany the text. They must be given the opportunity to check the contribution.

The values of space and content design will be协商 on a case by case basis but may supercede considerations of standards and style of The Star. For example, reports and illustrative material may be supplied if there is no space or they are of inferior quality. Elements that are not identified with The Star, such as banners, must follow style manuals. The Star reserves the right to reject any proposal.

Where possible, clients may be given an opportunity to see proofs of pages and suggest amendments; however, no such changes may be made after proofreading is complete. This will be determined in consultation with the Production Department.

These products must be clearly identified as such. Certain features and, in addition, readers of the Star are made aware this feature was supplied by [name company].
Spectacular new publication launch

JOHN VILJOEN (243)
Business Staff

JOHANNESBURG — Argus Newspapers promised a new era here during a big-budget lights and music show which lived up to its advance billing as the most spectacular media launch South Africa has seen.

The group, which in future is to be known as Independent Newspapers of South Africa, invited 1,000 guests from Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town to celebrate the first edition of Business Report, which appeared in newspapers across the country, including the Cape Times, today.

Braamfontein's concrete facades were transformed as they became the backdrop for a visual feast of lasers and fireworks, which also saw a team of abseilers unveil the largest South African flag yet produced.

The guests, commerce and industry leaders, advertising executives, media chiefs and politicians, were treated to an impressive video display on a giant screen set up at the venue, outdoors at the Braamfontein Civic Centre.

When he addressed the gathering, Independent Newspapers chairman Tony O'Reilly announced a new era of competition in business reporting.

"South Africa has never had a national business daily paper before. From tomorrow it will have it — an international class, highly informed, well-researched and well-written business section, treating business in South Africa not just as regional national news, but as what it is, international news".

"Two months from now we will announce similar dramatic changes to our weekend titles, with the addition of a new national magazine, so that by mid-year every one of our titles will have been greatly changed and improved".
THE Weekly Mail & Guardian (WM&G) is considering a rights offer to finance a new publishing project and its plans to venture into radio broadcasting.

Editor Anton Harber said yesterday that the company had restructured, leaving him sole editor of the newspaper, while former co-editor Irwin Masoin would concentrate on developing the new publishing project. The new publishing project would either be incorporated into the WM&G or produced as a stand-alone paper. No decision had been taken yet.

Harber said a rights offer was one of the options under consideration to finance the expansion plans. Discussions were at an embryonic stage, but it was possible that the UK-based Guardian group would underwrite the offer.

He said the Guardian supported the publishing company’s plans, and depending on the degree to which the proposed rights offer was taken up by minority shareholders, could raise its stake in the company.

He could not put a figure on the amount the proposed rights offer would raise as the costing plans for new developments were still being drawn up. “Two or three projects” were being investigated.

The WM&G is a consortium with film producer Anant Singh, publishing group Publica and Kagiso Trust Investments to launch a national radio station with first rights to the BBC’s worldwide services.
Major victory for Mwasa over Perskor

By Joe Mdhlalela
Political Reporter

The Media Workers Association of South Africa this week gained a major victory when Perskor agreed to give workers a minimum wage of R1 500 a month.

General secretary of Mwasa in the KwaZulu-Natal region, Mr Mike Makan, said the union regarded the developments at Perskor as "a major victory" for workers.

"Until Monday, when we settled with the company, there were still workers who earned as little as R980 a month," Mikan said.

Perskor general manager Mr Fanie Gouws confirmed that his company had settled with the union—a move that averted industrial action.

Working relationship

"We are glad we have reached a settlement with Mwasa on all their demands. We hope to have an improved working relationship with the union," Gouws said.

The company has also agreed to give weekly paid staff a 12 percent increase, as opposed to its initial offer of eight percent.

A general labourer will now earn a minimum of R287.84 a week, with drivers, representatives and clerks, earning a minimum of R360.64 a week.

Workers earning more than R1 500 a month will gain a ten percent increase.

Mikan disclosed that Perskor and Mwasa would establish a disparity committee to "ensure that all disparities are rooted out."
New Nation joins New Africa stable

JOHANNESBURG: New Africa Publications yesterday announced it had purchased the title of the weekly publication New Nation.

New Africa Publications chairman Dr Nthato Motlana said the acquisition was in line with the group's plans to add publications to its stable, which already includes The Sowetan.

NAF would take over management of New Nation with immediate effect, Dr Motlana said.

In his reaction, Sowetan editor Mr Aggrey Klaaste said the transaction would further empower black business and make New Africa Publications a powerful player in print media. — Sepa
have the controversial Lothar Neethling
defamation case reopened

The application will be based on evi-
dence from new witnesses

Neethling, former head of the SAP's
forensic laboratory, brought a R1m libel
action against the two newspapers, theireditors — Anton Harber (The Weekly Mail)
and Max du Preez (Vrye Weekblad) — and
Vrye Weekblad reporter Jacopen Pauw

Neethling claimed that reports which
linked him to the deaths of various people
by poison allegedly prepared at his lab-

eratory had defamed him

Trail judge Johann Kriegler, now on the
Constitutional Court, found that Neethling
had not been defamed

The Appeal Court overturned Kriegler's

finding and ruled that he should hear
evidence on the quantum of Neethling's
damages

Attorney Karen Norval of the firm David
Dixon, Norval & Wheeldon has interviewed
a number of new witnesses.

"These are people who were not available
to give evidence during the first trial. We
will base our application on their evidence
and the reasons why they were not available
at the time"
More time needed to prepare defence

WeekendStar has hearing postponed

A Press Council hearing involving Armscor and the WeekendStar newspaper was postponed in Johannesburg yesterday to allow the newspaper more time to gather evidence for its defence.

Armscor has lodged several complaints with the council over a series of articles published by the WeekendStar implicating Armscor in the South African Airways Helderberg crash in November 1987.

**Damages**

Armscor lodged 32 complaints against the newspaper and quoted sections of the reports it objected to.

Some of the newspaper reports also made mention of South African Airways — the owners of the Helderberg aircraft.

WeekendStar lawyer Malcolm Fried said on Wednesday the newspaper had been informed last Thursday that SAA planned to sue the publication for "substantial damages arising from the reports".

WeekendStar editor David Allen said only six of the 32 complaints dealt solely with Armscor while the remaining complaints involved both Armscor and SAA.

Allen said that by giving evidence pertinent to complaints involving the airline, the newspaper could jeopardise its position if SAA went ahead with civil action.

Press Council chairman Professor Kobus van Rooyen rejected Allen's statement and ordered the newspaper to reply to all 32 complaints by April 7.

"If we are forced to deal with SAA, then we will go to review," Allen said.

Fried said if the WeekendStar's position remained unchanged at the start of the hearing on April 19, the newspaper would review its situation.

According to Van Rooyen, the WeekendStar reserved the right to appeal to the Supreme Court to suspend the hearing if the newspaper deemed it would prejudice if SAA took action.

Fried said if SAA decided not to act, the newspaper would require a written waiver from the airline.

Armscor waived all rights to sue the WeekendStar since the matter was brought before the Press Council.

In his application for a postponement of the hearing, Allen said a "momentous task" lay before the WeekendStar to obtain evidence to support its defence.

He said it would take days to contact sources both in South Africa and abroad.

Allen added that some sources might be reluctant to provide sworn statements because they had been intimidated.

**'Unreasonable'**

Armscor rejected WeekendStar's application, saying the newspaper had had ample time to prepare for and reply to the hearing.

Van Rooyen concurred, but said it would be "objectively unreasonable" not to grant a postponement.

The hearing is expected to resume on April 19. — Sapa.
New Nation gets new owner and new look

CORPORATE Africa subsidiary New Africa Investments (Nai) has bought independent newspaper New Nation, its second newspaper after last year’s acquisition of the Sowetan from Argus Newspapers.

Nai MD Jony Sandler said yesterday the transaction would be finalised today. He would not put a purchase price on the deal. New Nation would fall under Nai’s New Africa Publications (NAP).

New Nation was launched by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference in 1966 under the editorship of Zwelakhe Smuts, who is now SABC group CE. In 1995 it was relaunched as Sunday Nation, but closed in June last year after the reintroduction of the Friday edition of New Nation.

Sandler said several million rands would be invested in New Nation. The acquisition would be bedded down in the next few months, while management was considering its title.

The paper would continue to target upper-income black readers, but Sandler said it was likely that the editorial focus would become more balanced, with less political coverage and more business news.

Sandler said there would be a rationalisation of staff, but the majority would remain with the paper, including editor Gaba Tugwana. The paper would continue to be published on Fridays.

AMANDA VERMEULEN
Armscor goes to press body

MAX GEBHARDT

THE Press Council this week began hearing a complaint by Armscor against a series of articles on the Flanderberg plane crash published by WeekendStar.

The articles appeared over several weeks, starting in November last year. The complaint consists of general criticisms of the articles and 32 specific complaints. It is one of the most wide-ranging ever brought against a newspaper at a formal inquiry.

Press Council chairman Professor Kobus van Roonen granted an adjournment until April 19, after WeekendStar editor David Allen had asked for more time. He said it would take days to contact sources.

According to Allen, of the 32 complaints brought by Armscor before the Press Council, only six dealt specifically with Armscor, while the others involved both Armscor and SAA.

WeekendStar lawyer Malcolm Fried said the newspaper had been informed last Thursday that SAA planned to sue the publication for damages.

Allen said that by giving evidence before the Press Council on complaints involving the airline, the newspaper could jeopardize its position if SAA went ahead with civil action.

Armscor opposed WeekendStar's applications saying it had had ample time to prepare for the hearing.

The chairman criticised WeekendStar for not being ready to present its case immediately, but said plans to clear the newspaper would need time to respond.
State censorship and an information unfriendly government has, in the past, severely limited access to official and other types of information, says Cathy Stadler, information collection manager of the Human Rights Institute of South Africa.

"The Interim Constitution's Bill of Rights enshrines the right of access to all information held by the State, but only in so far as this information is required for the exercise or protection of any of his or her rights," explains Stadler.

"This clause of the Interim Constitution has been the subject of a campaign launched by the Freedom of Expression Institute and other organisations who argue that this is not enough. Government information, it is argued, should be more accessible as citizens should have the right to know and the Government should become progressively more accessible and accountable," she says.

Stadler says some of the persuasive reasons for access to government information include:

- Information is one of the cornerstones of building a culture of human rights in South Africa.
- Increasing the accountability of the Government through a better knowledge of the actions of government officials.
- Giving individuals and organisations access to policy documents and facilitating input on new developments.
- Allowing access to information which has been notoriously difficult to extract from government departments.
- Facilitating the free flow of information at all levels of society.

A new Freedom of Information Act will be passed by Parliament shortly and it is expected that this act will outline the procedures by which the public and the media will exercise their right of official information.

"The Government will not only have to ensure that access to information is made possible, but that the organisation of relevant information is improved," says Stadler.

"Apartheid has had a catastrophic impact on the quality, collection, organisation and dissemination of information by the State — in some cases more catastrophic than the mechanisms of censorship have been. Little information has been collected on marginalised, rural communities, about women or about the impact of violence on children to name but a few areas," she says.

Stadler believes a more creative approach to providing access to official information is required to bridge the gap between "information rich and information poor communities" to ensure that all citizens are aware of their new rights.

"The provision of information to communities who have in the past been deprived of such information would constitute an important step in ensuring that the Government remains accountable and in touch with its constituencies, and that culture of human rights is nurtured and supported in South Africa," concludes Stadler.
NASIONALE PERS

Going for new niche

With the recent launch of Argus Newspapers’ Business Report and talk of a joint venture publication by Enterprise magazine and Swedish newspaper group Dagens Industri, it does not seem the best time to launch yet another English-language weekly in what shows signs of rapidly becoming an overtraded market.

Yet Nasionale Pers has been mulling over the idea of an English equivalent of Finansser & Tegnekr for some time, following earlier successful language crossovers with Huisgenoot/You and Drum magazines.

Nobody at the Cape-based press giant is saying it openly but the recent damaging battle for control at Finance Week presented Nasionale Pers with the gap it was seeking.

Chairman Ton Vosloo says the latest unaudited circulation figures for Finansser & Tegnekr are 24,000 copies a week. Magazine sector CE Saleh de Swardt says he hopes the new English F&T Weekly, due to be launched in June, will reach 10,000 “in a year or so.” If he is correct, the combined circulation of the two magazines, at today’s figures, would be among the highest in the industry, excluding publications inserted into national newspapers.

While Finance Week is the most likely victim of the growing chase after business advertising revenue, De Swardt emphasises the new magazine, the eleventh fully owned title in the Nasionale group, is not aiming at the FM’s target market.

“There are a number of market niches. We think we can find a place in the sun without clashing with the FM,” he says.

But what about hitting Finansser & Tegnekr’s circulation? “We considered that but, as far as we can tell, only about 5% of the publication’s readers are English-speaking. Therefore, it should not make much difference to Finansser & Tegnekr.”

The new publication will have a big advantage in costs. By sharing journalists and advertising staff, technology, distribution and other overheads, De Swardt hopes the new weekly will break even in a year or two. He won’t disclose start-up costs but says they’ll be nowhere near “the razzmatazz we have seen lately.”

Publications aimed at black readers also appear to be increasing their focus on the business community. New Africa Investments, which last year bought control of the Sowetan and this week added the small New Nation newspaper to its stable, will seek a better balance for the acquisition by concentrating more on business news, claims MD Jonty Sandler.
Deadlock in Argus pay talks

The South African Union of Journalists, representing journalists on Argus newspapers countrywide, yesterday declared a dispute with Argus management after a deadlock in wage talks.

The move came as about 30 SAJJ members staged a lunchtime picket outside The Star's Sauer Street entrance in support of the union's demand for higher salaries and other benefits.

The dispute was declared after Argus management's final offer on wages of 10.5% in negotiations yesterday, with management retaining the prerogative to allocate 20% of that increase on the basis of merit.

Negotiations with the Media Workers' Association of SA, also representing Argus workers, resume today. A source within Mwasaa said the union would demand a revised 15% across-the-board increase.
Argus ordered not to publish papers

BLOEMFONTEIN — The Appeal Court has ordered Argus Holdings Ltd and Argus Newspapers not to publish a range of suburban newspapers.

This overturns the dismissal of an earlier application to restrain the company from issuing the publications.

CTP Ltd of Industrial West and its directors Terrance N Desmon Moolman, Noël Malcolm Coburn and Meredith Favid William Short wanted Argus to be interdicted and restrained from publishing the newspapers Southern Star/Focus, Sandton Star, Eastern Star/Focus, Northern Star/Focus and Western Star/Focus, either together or separately from the Star newspaper.

The case arose from agreements between Mr Coburn, Mr Short and Argus Holdings on January 17, 1986, and the four appellants and Argus Holdings on May 15, 1986.

The application was dismissed by Mr Justice E L Goldstein in the Rand Supreme Court on May 18, 1989.

Yesterday, Mr Justice Nienaber amended the lower court order to interdict Argus Holdings and Argus Newspapers from directly or indirectly publishing the relevant newspapers or any newspaper substantially similar in nature and circulation.

Leave was granted to the Argus companies, jointly or severally, to approach the court, on due notice to the other parties, and on good cause being shown that circumstances had materially changed, for an order to rescind or amend the order.

The Chief Justice Mr Justice Corbett, Mr Justice Z E M Grosskopf, Mr Justice Smalberger and Mr Justice Nicholas were also present.

Mr Justice Nienaber found that it could not be said that theinserts were not newspapers for the purposes of the two agreements.

On the question as to whether the Focus inserts were "free", the judge was prepared to assume that they were separate, but by no stretch of imagination could they be said to be free.

When a recipient purchased The Star, in which the publication in question was enfolded, he paid for a single article that consisted of different parts.

The recipient in effect got two papers for the price of one — as he would in the rare instance where he was anxious to acquire a Focus rather than a Star.

In either case he paid for both Neither was free, said the judge.

The restraint clauses in the two agreements drew a distinction between different categories of publications, some of which the Argus companies were permitted to publish and distribute, others not.

The Focus newspapers, inserted into The Star and comparable to the Caxton publications in appearance and content, were clearly local and not regional, although distributed in selected localities together with and as part of a regional paper.

What mattered was that the newspapers were distributed by the Argus companies in substantially smaller geographical areas than The Star which, by common consent, was a regional publication.

It was in that sense that the Focus publications could properly be described as "local newspapers" for purposes of the restraint clauses.

As such their publication and distribution offended against the restraint on publishing local newspapers — Sapa.
The Star ready to challenge court ruling on regionals

BY BRENDAN TEMPLETON

Argus Newspapers is seeking to regain the initiative from Caxton publishers following an Appeal Court ruling yesterday that The Star may no longer distribute its popular local supplements.

The court held that The Star, by publishing supplements such as Looking North, Looking East and Looking South, was contravening a 1965 trade restraint agreement between Caxton and Argus Newspapers, which owns The Star.

Argus Newspapers might launch an urgent interdict against the ruling today. The supplements will not be appearing until the matter has been resolved.

The ruling can be overturned if Argus Newspapers is able to show that material changes have occurred since it signed the deal with Caxton. Argus Newspapers attorney Jonathan Witt-Hewinson said he believed independent newspapers' takeover of Argus last year constituted such a change.

Witt-Hewinson said he had informed Caxton of this opinion and had given it until Sunday to agree that the Appeal Court order had no force and effect. If Caxton did not do so, Argus intended bringing an urgent application in the Supreme Court against it.

Mr Justice Nienaber said the restraint agreement prevented Argus Newspapers from publishing local newspapers in Caxton's distribution areas. Argus had argued that the supplements were only inserts and could not be described as newspapers in their own right, but the judge disagreed.

The Chief Justice, Mr Justice Corbett, Mr Justice E M Groenewald, Mr Justice Smallberger and Acting Judge of Appeal Mr Justice Nicholas concurred.

The Appeal Court overturned a May 1983 Rand Supreme Court decision by Mr Justice E Goldberg which had found in favour of Argus Newspapers.
Gauteng newspaper war

Bruce Cohen

A BITTER battle for the knock 'n drop newspaper market in Gauteng between the Argus Company and Caxtons has ended — and just begun.

The Appeal Court this week upheld an appeal by Caxtons-CTP against an 18-month-old Supreme Court judgment which allowed Argus to publish freesheets in competition with Caxtons.

Caxtons, which was previously 50 percent owned by Argus until Tony O'Reilly bought the newspaper group last year, had a restraint of trade agreement with Argus going back to 1985 when Argus acquired its share in Caxtons, preventing it from competing in the freesheet market.

But Argus went ahead with a series of zoned inserts called "Focus" in The Star which hushed them in court facing a Caxtons interdict.

Argus won that round in 1998, but this week Caxtons won the second. It may, however, be a temporary victory for Caxtons managing director Terry Moodman. The Appeal Court judgment has given Argus a fresh window of opportunity to get back into the lucrative market. The court ruled that no interdict could operate in perpetuity. The judge pointed out that in changed circumstances, the CTP restraint might not be worthy of protection.

Argus immediately responded by saying it would launch a fresh court application to allow it to publish the regional supplements.
Mokaba sues TML

When ANC officials tried to learn more about SATTI - after Frelimo let slip the offer at a meeting to discuss the October elections in Mozambique - they had been hard-pressed to learn a single concrete detail.

Mokaba claimed that the above allegations were defamatory and that he was understood by readers to have acted in a dishonest and improper manner, and the article implied that he:

- Was misusing his position as a public official to gather personal wealth and advantage.
- Was involved in illegal dealings which were in a conflict of interests.
- In collusion with SATTI, was misusing his position to negotiate secret deals with foreign governments and.
- Was involved in clandestine commercial activities which he concealed from his own political party.
Caxton to file papers over regionals deal

BY JANINE SIMON

Caxton publishers is expected to file papers with the Rand Supreme Court today explaining why The Star should be prevented from publishing its popular regional supplements.

Argus attorney Jonathan Witte-Hewinson said Independent Newspapers' takeover last year of Argus Newspapers warranted the Appeal Court order — that the publishing of the supplements contravened a restraint of trade agreement with Caxton — being set aside, and he accordingly filed an application in the Rand Supreme Court.

In another development Caxton MD Terry Moolman yesterday confirmed Caxton's intention to sue Argus for "tens of millions" of rands in compensation for breaking the restraint order.

Argus Newspapers' Gauteng GM Graeme King said no formal advice of a civil action had been received. "We have published the supplements only since winning the Supreme Court case in May 1993, and believe we have been totally within our rights."

The supplements will not be appearing until the matter is resolved. King said The Star would be publishing some local pages in all editions for the full run of the newspaper.
ANC seeks answer to media ‘pressure’

TYRONE SEALE
Political Staff

WHO watches the watchdog?

"This is one of the questions the African National Congress will seek to answer as it launches an investigation into how to respond to media pressure to censure errant, or apparently errant, members.

At yesterday's meeting of the ANC parliamentary caucus, ANC deputy president Thabo Mbeki implored members to find ways to deal with what Chief Whip Arnold Stofile referred to as "negative", and later "offensive", media coverage of the organisation, particularly on matters of internal discipline.

Mr Stofile said Mr Mbeki had given the caucus "breakdowns" of high-profile cases such as those involving Allan Boesak, Lefuno Kalako, Peter Mokaba and Winnie Mandela, where the media consistently pressured the organisation to "take decisions on the basis of what the media had alleged to be the case about these members”.

Mr Stofile said the organisation had consistently resisted making decisions based on such reports.

In the case of Allan Boesak, the former ambassador-designate to Geneva alleged to have misappropriated Foundation for Peace and Justice funds, inquiries were not exactly proving what had been alleged about him, Mr Stofile said.

The same had applied to Lefuno Kalako, who had been cleared by a commission of inquiry of alleged misuse of public funds while he was Western Cape minister of environment affairs and tourism.

Mr Stofile said Mr Mbeki had warned the ANC "not to fall into the trap of reporting recklessly to the press without verification of the status quo”. A strategy was being sought to deal with this question."
Non-party local govt is organisation's aim

Non-political local government would be more effective in delivering services and combating violence because conflicts were the result of political differences. Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations of SA spokesman Koos van Rensburg said yesterday.

Van Rensburg said his organisation would campaign against political parties in Gauteng constituencies and said it had received support from a large number of ratepayers in Midrand, Chilliatt, Kliroen, Secunda, West Rand, East Rand and Kempton Park.

The organisation would intensify its campaign in Greater Johannesburg and townships. Affiliates would campaign nationwide.

He said the well-being of communities, and not party political control of demen-making, would be the basis of the campaign strategy. The organisation would involve itself in the voter registration campaign. On April 23, the organisation would launch its manifesto and embark on a national advertising campaign. This would be funded by the R10 registration fee that members paid.

Van Rensburg said the aims of his organisation included the establishment of local government on non-political grounds; solving the backlog of services and amenities in black townships while maintaining levels in white areas; ensuring distribution of finances was equitable for townships and suburbs, and maintenance of law and order everywhere.

Meanwhile, the ANC in Gauteng announced its "Operation Last 30 Days" campaign aimed at boosting local government to allow registration and encouraging 75% of the 6-million potential voters who have not registered to do so in the next 23 days.

ANC regional deputy secretary Obed Bapela said the organisation would mobilise 500 volunteers per branch for registration on a daily basis. They would establish a registration form distribution network that would cover residential, work and public places. A collection task team and a management and monitoring team would speed up registration. Rallies would be organised to encourage registration.

CJ Sapa reports that the office of the Northwest local government minister said yesterday political parties, canvassers and enumerators in the Northwest might be deliberately holding back signed registration forms for the November 1 local elections.

Spokesman Erick Matiase warned that any person or political party withholding forms would be "severely punished".

Withholding registration forms was an offence punishable by a fine of up to R60 000 or imprisonment for as long as three years.

SACP to maintain tripartite alliance

THE SA Communist Party had not abandoned its socialist programme, nor was the tripartite alliance in danger of splitting, SACP general secretary Charles Nqakula said yesterday.

Speaking at the 9th SACP congress in Crown Mines in Johannesburg yesterday, Nqakula said his party had contributed greatly to the building of the alliance but warned that it would not be maintained "at any price, or simply for old times' sake".

Nqakula said one of the SACP's critical tasks was to transform the party into an organisation capable of playing a vanguard role within the progressive movement. It would have to do so by consolidating cadre structures rather than through mass recruitment. This did not mean recruitment would be suspended.

"It is a question of recruiting strategically, and ensuring that organisationally we are able to service those we recruit," Nqakula said defending the national democratic revolution demanded a decisive move towards socialism. He said part of the SACP's emerging perspective was that socialism was not just a desirable future, but that it had to be struggled for "here and now".

Central committee member Blade Nzimande commented on the effect of the end of the Cold War on SA, which had resulted in a negotiated transition.

Nzimande warned of "international hoodwinking". He said SA should be wary of taking advice that might "weaken some of the advances made" and warned against compromising SA's sovereignty.

He hit out at class forces which had been "dependent on the apartheid government", including the right wing and elites of the former homelands. He warned the "Kwa-Zulu government ... would like to roll back the past".

CJ Sapa reports a strategic document prepared for discussion at the congress said the party should ensure key public utilities such as Eskom, Transnet, Telkom, the Post Office and the SABC were not privatised or run down.

Titled "Strategy and Tactics Document" and expected to be overwhelmingly adopted when the congress ends on Saturday, it says: "While it is necessary to transform public corporations, an effective public sector is necessary."

The congress will be addressed by President Nelson Mandela today.

Argus continues supplements bid

ARGUS Newspapers continued its bid in the Rand Supreme Court yesterday to overturn an Appellate Division order prohibiting the company from publishing supplements to rival the Caxton Group's local "knock and drop" publications.

Judge J Beetz, however, reserved his judgment yesterday (24 J 1).

The Appellate decision was made in Caxton's favour last month, but contained a proviso which stated Argus was entitled to have the order reviewed in the Rand Supreme Court if the company could prove the conditions under which it was formerly bound to uphold trade restraint agreements with Caxton had changed.

Argus submitted the conditions had changed as a result of the company's takeover by Independent Newspapers.

In 1980, Argus Holdings acquired a substantial stake in Caxton through the acquisition of shareholdings in the Ahmed Group, Caxton's holding company.

As a result, Argus Holdings acquired a stake in CTP Ltd, the Caxton subsidiary which published "knock and drop". In 1987, Argus Holdings established Argus Newspapers as a wholly owned but separate newspaper division. As a result of its association with Argus Holdings, Argus Newspapers was obliged to honour the restraint agreements with Caxton.

Last year Argus Holdings disposed of all its interests in Argus Newspapers by selling to Independent Newspapers.

Advocate Dennis Fane, SC, for Argus Newspapers, argued yesterday his client's obligation to honour the restraint agreements had arisen only through Argus Holdings' association with Caxton and CTP.
Argus Newspapers seems to be fighting fires on several fronts. Apart from the growing battle with the *Sunday Times* about the marketing confusion and success or otherwise of *Business Report*, litigation over *The Star* carrying local newspapers as inserts looks set to continue.

Argus Holdings (now Ouma Media), owner of *The Star* and other metropolitan newspapers before Tony O’Rielly bought control, appeared to have won the battle to produce local newspapers against the Caxton group when the Rand Supreme Court ruled in Argus’s favour some time ago.

Until then, a cosy relationship existed between Argus and Caxton Contracts, including restraint clauses, were in place which effectively divided the turf between Argus’s national and regional newspapers and Caxton’s local publications.

The relationship soured after the court ruling, with, among other things, former Argus Holdings CE Doug Band leaving the board of Caxton. After that, O’Rielly took control and Argus Newspapers was listed separately.

Last week, the Appeal Court overturned the earlier decision in favour of Argus. It ruled that the inserts carried by *The Star* were “local newspapers” and in breach of earlier restraint agreements. But the Appeal Division allowed one or both parties the opportunity to seek relief if they could show a material change in the relationship between the two companies.

**Urgent application**

Argus Newspapers wasted no time. Last Friday, it brought an urgent application to the Rand Supreme Court.

The matter was due to be heard on Thursday this week. Argus Newspapers’ attorney confirmed it would be argued that the relationship had changed materially because, among other reasons, cross-shareholdings and directorships had been removed since the change of control.

Meanwhile, Caxton joint MD Noel Coburn confirmed his group was considering a damages claim against Argus Newspapers. “For a number of years, they (Argus Newspapers) have been producing products they were not entitled to under existing contracts. That had an impact on the growth of this company. We believe we suffered damages and we are now looking at taking appropriate action,” he says.

Whether Caxton files for damages probably depends on the outcome of Thursday’s Supreme Court hearing. That aside, Argus Newspapers can expect increasing opposition from Caxton as it expands its publications from the traditional freesheets to paid-for weeklies such as the relaunched *West Rand Times*.
Argus accused of fudging figures

By SUE BLAINE

A JOHANNESBURG publishing company has accused Argus Newspapers of artificially inflating circulation figures in an attempt to capture advertising.

Argus Newspapers will defend Spinney Communications' R1,7-million damages claim in the Rand Supreme Court.

On Wednesday Argus Newspapers will apply for an amendment to the printing company's allegation that it inflated the monthly circulation numbers of The Star's hospitality guide, Star Menu, by 30 000 in an attempt to elbow Spinney's Hello Johannesburg out of that market. Both guides rely on advertising revenue.

The dispute began when Star Menu was started four years ago. Spinney Communications alleges that it lost custom and incurred added expenses when Argus Newspapers deliberately tried to divert custom from it. Argus Newspapers says it initially printed 80 000 copies of each Star Menu edition. It later only published 50 000. The alleged false representations would have had no effect on Hello Johannesburg, said the newspaper company in court papers.

Argus Newspapers contended that it had done nothing unlawful in terms of constitutional clauses that upheld freedom of expression and economic enterprise.
Yengeni slams media
(243) STA 10/4/95

Umzimkulu — ANC MP Toni Yengeni criticised the media yesterday, charg-
ing it had started a cam-
paign to discredit ANC leaders as well as advov-
cating "sectional" inter-
est of white South Afri-
cans.

Yengeni was speaking
at a rally in Umzimkulu to
commemorate SA Com-
munist Party leader
Chris Hani, who was as-
sassinated on April 10
1993.

He said the media had
tried to describe him, Wil-
kie Mandela, En-
vironmental Affairs De-
puty Minister Bantu Hol-
ombe, and ANC MP Peter
Mokaba as radicals.

ANC leaders, who
showed resilience and
were vocal about their
criticism of apartheid,
were now dubbed as
"radicals who should be
kicked out from the Gov-
ernment and the ANC",
he said.

But those leaders had
been democratically
elected.

"If I'm dubbed a popu-
list because of articulat-
ing the truth, then I'm
proud to be one. It's be-
cause there is not a sin-
gle newspaper in the
country which is owned
by blacks — all are
owned by white capital-
ists."

Mrs Mandela, who had
been expected to address
the rally, was unable to
do so because of a "fami-
ly problem" in Johannes-
burg, he added. — Sapa.
Attacks on the press disturbing

BY KAIZER NYATSUMBA
POLITICAL EDITOR

Two weeks ago at Phuphi squatter camp, just outside Cape Town, former Deputy Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Minister Winnie Mandela launched a blistering attack on Sunday Times political correspondent Edith Bulbring, calling her "a lying journalist".

Bulbring had written a story about Mandela, and the ANC Women's League president was not happy.

A few days later, the ANC's Northern Transvaal region issued a statement, circulated through the South African Press Association for maximum publicity, taking issue with Sowetan political editor Madoda Tsechu over his analysis of the resurgence of ethnic hostility in the area after the removal of former Venda president Patrick Nhlapho's statue.

Tsechu said the statement, had "a hidden agenda".

In Johannesburg on Thursday, South African Communist Party general secretary Charles Nqakula condemned without giving any details "the abject moral failing of a number of black journalists and of some newspapers directed towards a largely black readership", before tearing into The Star's political reporter, Mondli Makhanya.

Nqakula did not agree with Makhanya's analysis two weeks ago, on the opinion page of this paper, in which Makhanya was critical of the ANC leadership and argued that "populists" should be tolerated rather than punished.

Makhanya's was clearly an opinion, and was marked as such. He is entitled to it, just as Tsechu is entitled to his about developments in the Northern Transvaal. Freedom of speech and expression are, after all, two of the many rights enshrined in chapter 3 of the Interim Constitution.

Incite crowds

We do not claim any special rights for ourselves, but we do believe these new developments are disturbing, if not altogether dangerous.

Politicians, like individual citizens or any other group of citizens, have a right to respond to things written about them, but they have no right to incite crowds against journalists because they don't like what was written about them, their parties or organisations. And launching scathing attacks on journalists, by name, at emotion-charged rallies and mass meetings is certainly incitement.

It is dangerous and desperate politics. There are graves in this country of people who were killed merely for holding and expressing views which were anathema to some political hotheads.

Among the avenues open to aggrieved politicians is writing a letter to a newspaper, demanding a correction, seeking an audience with the journalist concerned, going to the Media Council, or even litigation.

We share Voltaire's view "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it".
Argus looks to constitution in damages claim

Argus Newspapers will rely on the constitution, among other arguments, when it applies to have a R1.7-million damages claim by Spinner Communications struck out on exception in the Rand Supreme Court tomorrow.

Spinner Communications, a Johannesburg publishing company, has accused Argus Newspapers of artifically inflating the circulation figures of The Star newspaper's hospitality guide Star Menu by 30,000 in an attempt to capture advertising.

Argus Newspapers will be objecting to the allegation that it unlawfully inflated the monthly circulation figures of Star Menu in an attempt to elbow Spinner's Hello Johannesburg out of the market.

Both publications rely on advertising revenue and Spinner Communications has alleged it lost custom and incurred added expenses when Argus Newspapers deliberately tried to "divert custom from it".

Argus Newspapers said it initially printed 60,000 copies four years ago when Star Menu started, and later published only 50,000.

The company contends this is not unlawful in terms of the constitutional clauses which uphold freedom of expression and economy enterprise.
Argus looks to constitution in damages claim

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Argus Newspapers said it initially printed 80,000 copies four years ago when Star Menu started and later published only 50,000.

The company contends this is not unlawful in terms of the constitutional clauses which uphold freedom of expression and economic enterprise.
Go-ahead for Star supplements

BY SUSAN MILLER

Caxton Publishers (CTP Ltd), Caxton managing director Terrence Moolman and Caxton directors Noel Coburn and Meredith Short were yesterday ordered to pay the full legal costs of Argus Newspapers, including the cost of their two legal counsel, after a Rand Supreme Court judge ruled in Argus Newspapers' favour.

Mr Justice I Heher yesterday rescinded an Appeal Court order which prohibited the publication of Argus Newspapers' regional supplements.

He ruled that circumstances had material changed in the Argus company since a restraint of trade agreement was signed with Caxton Publishers in 1980 and 1985 which barred The Star from publishing local supplements.

Caxton Publishers applied for and received permission to appeal against Mr Justice Heher's ruling.

Legal counsel for Argus Newspapers will be applying for leave to execute Judge Heher's ruling this morning in the Rand Supreme Court.

If they are successful, Argus Newspapers will be able to continue publishing its various supplements pending the outcome of the Caxton appeal.

During his summation, Judge Heher rejected arguments advanced by Moolman about why the trade agreements should remain in place.

He said he could find no reason why the restraint agreement should be maintained or justified after the unbundling of Argus Holdings.

The case attracted wide attention because of the changing interpretations of the law and because of the immediate effect on hundreds of thousands of readers of the supplements.

The first argument, won in the Supreme Court, then lost in the Appeal Court by Argus, was over the definitions of a free newspaper and a supplement.

The current argument, won yesterday by Argus Newspapers, is over whether circumstances have changed since the original agreement between the companies.

Earlier this month, a full Bench of the Appellate Division in Bloemfontein overturned a 1993 Rand Supreme Court decision which had found in favour of Argus Newspapers in the battle between Caxton and the Argus on whether The Star's regional supplements could be published.

After the 1993 court decision, The Star began publishing supplements such as Looking North, Looking East and Looking South. Publication of the supplements was halted after the Appeal Court reversed the decision.

However, the Appeal Court also ruled that its decision could be reversed if Argus Newspapers could show that material changes had occurred since it signed the deal with Caxton.

> To Page 3
Argus Newspapers win case against Caxton Publishers

The Argus Correspondent

Johannesburg. — Caxton Publishers (CTP Ltd), Caxton managing-director Terrence Moolman and Caxton directors Noel Coburn and Meredith Short have been ordered to pay the full legal costs of Argus Newspapers, including the cost of their two legal counsel, after a Rand Supreme Court judge ruled in Argus Newspapers' favour.

Mr Justice Heber yesterday rescinded an Appeal Court order which prohibited the publication of Argus Newspapers regional supplements. (The Appeal Court had ruled that its decision could be reversed if Argus Newspapers could show material changes had occurred since it signed the deal with Caxton.) Judge Heber ruled that circumstances had indeed materially changed in the Argus Newspapers company since a restraint of trade agreement was signed with Caxton publishers in 1960 and 1965 which barred the Star from publishing local supplements.

Caxton publishers applied for and received permission to appeal against Mr Justice Heber's ruling.

Legal counsel for Argus newspapers will be applying for leave to execute Mr Justice Heber's ruling today at the Rand Supreme Court.

If they are successful Argus will be able to continue publishing its supplements pending the outcome of the Caxton appeal.

During his summation Mr Justice Heber rejected arguments advanced by Mr Moolman on why the trade agreements should remain in place.

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG: Caxton Publishers (CTP Ltd), Caxton managing director Mr Terence Moolman and Caxton directors Mr Noel Coburn and Mr Meredith Short were ordered yesterday to pay the full legal costs of Argus Newspapers after a Rand Supreme Court Judge ruled in Argus Newspaper's favour.

Mr Justice J Heher yesterday rescinded an Appeal Court order that prohibited the publication of Argus Newspapers regional supplements.

He ruled that circumstances had materially changed in the Argus Newspaper company since a restraint of trade agreement was signed with Caxton publishers in 1980 and 1985.

The agreement had barred The Star from publishing local supplements.

Caxton Publishers applied for and received permission to appeal against Mr Justice Heher's ruling.

Argus will apply today to continue publishing its supplements pending the outcome of the Caxton appeal.

The judge found in favour of Argus after its counsel argued that the unbundling of the Argus group and the disposal by Argus Holdings of its interests in Argus Newspapers to the Independent Newspaper Group of Ireland had materially changed conditions.
Argus wins fight to publish

ARGUS Newspapers Limited were granted permission in the Rand Supreme Court yesterday to publish local supplements to rival the Caxton Group's "knock and drop" newspapers.

Judge J Heber rescinded an Appellate Division order granted in Caxton's favour last month which prohibited Argus from publishing the supplements in terms of trade restraint agreements entered into with Caxton in 1980 and 1985.

Argus was granted permission by the Appellate Division to have the order overturned in the Rand Supreme Court if the company proved circumstances had changed so that Argus was no longer bound to the agreements.

Heber found the agreements were made after Argus's former holding company, Argus Holdings Ltd, had acquired a substantial stake in Caxton's newspaper business.

The agreements had been to protect a joint venture, and to prevent the companies encroaching on each other's territory.

Argus Holdings sold Argus Newspapers to Irish concern, Independent Newspapers, last year, Argus Holdings retained its stake in the Caxton Group, but the association between Argus Newspapers and Caxton was severed.

Heber found the trade restraints were enforceable only as long as there was an association between Argus Newspapers and Caxton.

The judge granted Caxton leave to appeal his decision.

Argus Newspapers is expected to apply today for leave to execute the order pending the Appellate Division's decision.
Argus contests damages claim

(243) Jan 13 1988

STAFF REPORTER

Argus Newspapers yesterday launched a Rand Supreme Court bid to have Johannesburg publishing company Spinner Communications' R1.7-million damages claim struck out on exception.

Spinner Communications has accused Argus Newspapers of artificially inflating the circulation figures of The Star newspaper's hospitality guide Star Menu by 30,000 in a bid to capture advertising.

Argus denies this and is objecting to the allegation that it unlawfully inflated Star Menu's monthly circulation figures in an effort to elbow Spinner Communications' Hello Johannesburg out of the market.

Both publications rely on advertising revenue and Spinner has alleged it lost custom and incurred added expenses when Argus allegedly tried to 'divert custom from it'.

Argus Newspapers said it initially printed 80,000 copies four years ago when Star Menu started, and later published only 50,000.

Besides other exceptions it is taking, the company contends this is not unlawful in terms of constitutional clauses upholding freedom of expression and economic enterprise.

Counsel for Argus Newspapers advocate Gilbert Marcus, said in argument yesterday it was not sufficient for Spinner to prove, as it alleged, that there had been deception and diversion of custom in Argus' advertising strategy for Star Menu. The company had to prove that Argus had passed itself off as Spinner Communications or had used the company's unique creation.

Judgment was reserved.
Argus in bid to have claim amended

ARGUS Newspapers yesterday argued an interlocutory application for an amendment to the particulars of a claim lodged by Johannesburg publishing company Spinner Communications on the grounds that the publisher's documents contained no alleged wrongdoing.

The publishing company, which produces the Johannesburg hospitality guide, Hello Johannesburg, has alleged Argus artificially inflated the circulation figures of its own hospitality guide, Star Menu, by 30,000.

DEBORAH FINE

in an attempt to capture the restaurant guide market and Spiner Communications' clients.

It has sued Argus R4.2m for damages allegedly incurred when it lost custom and incurred added expenses as a result of Argus's misrepresentations.

Adv Gilbert Marcus, for Argus, argued it was not sufficient for Spinner Communications' particulars of claim to simply state they had suffered losses.

The particulars of claim had to state how the alleged falsehoods had affected and denigrated Spiner Communications' business.

Schalk Burger, SC, appearing for Spiner Communications, said such detail was not necessary at this stage.

His client was required to claim only that they had suffered financial losses as a result of Argus's misconduct to convince the court there had been a potential wrongdoing.

Judge R van Schalkwyk reserved his judgment.
Judge rules in favour of The Star, criticises Caxton head

BRENDAN TEMPLETON
CAXTON Publishers director Terry Moodman was criticized in the Rand Supreme Court this week for contradicting himself in his abortive battle against Argus Newspapers.

In Mr Justice Heher’s ruling against Moodman and Caxton, allowing The Star to continue publishing its popular local supplements, Moodman’s statements, came in for special criticism from the judge who described them as “an extraordinary submission”.

Argus Newspapers had been prevented, under a restraint of trade agreement, from publishing local newspapers in areas where Caxton published. However, that restraint agreement had been drawn up between Caxton and Argus Holdings, the company which owned Argus Newspapers and The Star until last year.

Independent Newspapers took over Argus Newspapers in 1994 and so Newspapers argued that it was no longer bound by the restraints agreed to by its former owner.

Moodman, Caxton and its other directors agreed in a previous court battle, which eventually ended in the Appeal Court, that Argus Newspapers was bound because of the agreement with Holdings.

But this week Moodman attempted to shift from that position by trying to make out that Argus Newspapers had voluntarily taken on the obligations and benefits of the restraint agreement and was therefore still bound by it — an attitude which “presents a strange face”, Judge Heher said.

“Moodman was aware that there had been a transfer of assets, rights and obligations,” he said.

“He does not explain how, but neither does he explain his ignorance of the foundation of the situation which had been treated as a reality by all parties since 1988,” the judge said.

Finding that Moodman had been “tripped up by his own words,” Judge Heher ruled in The Star’s favour.
THE RIGHT TO CRITICISE

(soon it is, without doubt, venomous, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp.)
Call for tolerance to ensure free press

STAFF REPORTER

Those whose business it is to report the truth are all too often the targets of intolerance and organised crime. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation secretary-general Frederiko Mayor said in a statement ahead of World Press Freedom Day tomorrow.

Mayor's statement comes with the UN's proclamation of 1995 as being the "Year of Tolerance" and coincides with the opening of Unesco's South African office, headed by a special representative of the organisation's director-general for South Africa, Louis Bernardo Homwowu.

Mayor's statement said more than 180 journalists were being held in jails around the world and over 100 died violently.

"It is more important than ever to speak up about press freedom and tolerance," he said.

"While press freedom is a fundamental right that should be embodied in national law, one cannot legislate for tolerance. It should be taught from the earliest age at home."
Mandela reassures press

BY PATRICK BULGER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — The Government had an obligation to communicate with the public but had no wish to infringe on media independence, President Mandela told the National Assembly yesterday.

He was referring to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki's proposal for the SABC to allow the Government prime time radio and TV slots to communicate its actions to the country.

Mandela said in debate that the Government welcomed the “vibrancy of public criticism and scrutiny of the working and performance of government at all levels”.

"Here we see the constitutional right to freedom of opinion and information taking life.

"In its appraisal of developments, the Government looks upon the critical media as partners in the enterprise of building a new society.

Communicate

"At the same time (the) Government has to consider its own obligation, in a democracy committed to openness and transparency, to communicate to the public what it is doing," said Mandela.

"In exploring options as to how best to meet this obligation, there is no wish to infringe on the independence of the news media," he added.

Earlier, ANC MP and chairman of the parliamentary portfolio committee on communications, Saki Macozoma, said in a statement that the Government of National Unity’s communication with the citizenry in its first year in office had been dismal.

Macozoma said recent reports on the Government’s approach to the SABC had "generated more heat and propaganda than light on how the Government should communicate with the media".
Alarm over Press freedom and the ANC

DAVID BREIER
Political Staff

ALARM bells are ringing over hostile attitudes at a high level in the African National Congress towards Press freedom and the right to criticise the government of the new South Africa.

The Freedom of Expression Institute has detected intolerance towards the Press among several important ANC members of the government, says the institute's chairman, Raymond Louw.

The most widely publicised example is that of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, the man most likely to succeed President Mandela.

But other prominent political figures have expressed similar intolerant views, Mr Louw warned this week on World Press Freedom Day.

Mr Louw cited the case of influential Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale who talks of Press "muckraking" — which Mr Sexwale says is a guise to use Press freedom to indulge in "character assassination".

Mr Sexwale reportedly demanded greater publicity for himself from the SABC — in spite of the widespread coverage he already receives on TV and radio.

But Mr Mbeki's attitude has caused the most concern as he is a heartbeat away from succeeding Mr Mandela as president.

Mr Mandela has already indicated his desire to step down when the life of the present government ends in 1999 — and Mr Mbeki is regarded as the most likely man to replace him.

Mr Mbeki recently said in an interview published in The Argus that it was normal for the media to "look at what is bad and what goes wrong" in the former apartheid government.

But he said the media should not adopt the same approach to the current democratic government.

Mr Mbeki also said "we need to persuade the SABC to allow 30 minutes a week to the government to report what it is doing."

This led to suggestions that the government wanted prime time on TV to state its case — and fears that the state-owned medium would become a propaganda platform as it was in the worst days of apartheid.

While SABC chief group executive Zwelakhe Sisulu said the SABC must retain its independence, and the SABC board denied the government had asked for prime time, David Noddrie, SABC general manager of strategic planning, confirmed this week that several suggestions from Mr Mbeki had been discussed — including a prime-time slot for the government.

Mr Louw said this was not the first time Mr Mbeki had suggested the media should not criticise the new government as it had criticised the old apartheid government.

Mr Louw, an editor of the former Rand Daily Mail, once the most bitter foe of the apartheid government, said he was very concerned over Mr Mbeki's attitude to the media.

"It indicates that the deputy president does not appear to be well-versed in the practices of democracy."

"One of the cornerstones of democracy is a free press, and a free Press must be critical, observant and vigilant against the government — whether it is a democratic or a dictatorial government."

Mr Louw said that under a truly democratic government, the media would be able to perform the function of being a critical watchdog.

He said the situation was not as simple as Mr Mbeki's "advice" — where the media had the duty to exercise vigilance on any government.

"There is now an even greater call on the Press to be vigilant," Mr Louw said.

The example of Mr Mbeki's recent involvement in the Allan Boesak affair was a case in point, he said, referring to an attempt by Mr Mbeki to clear Dr Boesak of misuse of foreign funds while a police investigation was still in progress.

"This indicates an attempt to short-circuit a legitimate process of investigation through the media. This is a case in point for the media to be vigilant," Mr Louw said.

He added his impression was that some other government members had similar intolerance of the Press keeping a vigilant eye on government.

"I don't have concerns about Mr Mandela. He has consistently upheld the principles of Press freedom," Mr Louw said.

But while Mr Louw expresses concerns on anti-Press sentiments in the government, the media aren't entirely blameless, he points out.

An incident that gave rise to Mr Mbeki's request for SABC time was TV's failure to mention a major water project in North West province when reporting Mr Mandela's speech at the time.

"While it is very worrying that these attitudes are surfacing in the ANC now that it is in power, I think it would be well worth the Press's while to take heed of these statements and perhaps try to rectify the imbalances in their coverage," Mr Louw said.

"There is some logic to government criticism where they attempt to carry out the recon- struction and development programme and have had some successes, but the Press has not paid sufficient attention to these.

"There is a case for the Press to examine its own actions as well," Mr Louw said.
Mwasa workers get 10,5 percent

By Abdul Milazi
Labour Reporter

The Media Workers Association of South Africa settled its wage dispute with Argus Newspapers before a scheduled Conciliation Board hearing. Mwasa Southern Transvaal deputy chairman Mr Mokgadi Pela told union members at a meeting in Johannesburg yesterday that the two parties had settled at 11 percent across-the-board for the lowest paid workers and 10,5 percent for workers on higher grades. These would be backdated to April 1. Negotiations deadlocked when management refused to accede to the union’s opening demand of a 12,4 percent across-the-board increase.

Management opened at 8,4 percent and later moved to 10,5 percent, which was accepted by Mwasa’s counterpart, the South African Union of Journalists. Mwasa, however, rejected the offer on the grounds that members in the lowest paid category would not benefit.

“We are happy with the present arrangement because workers in the lowest grades are getting more and they were our prime concern,” said Pela.

Management also agreed to increase housing subsidies from R200 to R250 a month. The company further agreed to pay an additional R30 for two years for first-time home buyers and to increase the minimum wage to R1,500 a month. Employees would also be entitled to six-months maternity leave and five days paternity leave.
Draft publications control law may be passed soon

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

PORNOGRAPHY and illegal aliens dominated the debate on the budget of Minister of Home Affairs Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The debate was held in an extended public committee of the national assembly yesterday. Chief Buthelezi said it was hoped that draft legislation on control of films and publications would be passed soon.

The legislation allows freedom of choice for adults on access to explicit material while banning child pornography and the depiction of bestiality and crude mixtures of sex and violence.

Desmond Lockey (ANC) said the bill did away with vague criteria for publications control. Freedom of speech and expression, including freedom of media, were guaranteed by the constitution.

But no intellectual argument could contradict the fact there were many South Africans with religious convictions who were bitterly opposed to the legalisation of pornography.

Frik van Deventer (NP) held up examples of "adult" magazines to illustrate what was freely on sale.

Petru Groenewald (FF) said the "asshole of the month" feature in Hustler magazine was a disgrace.

His party's leader, Constand Viljoen, had featured in this article.

Dene Smuts (DP) said citizens should be given full opportunity to give their views when the parliamentary committee held hearings about the bill.

"Citizens, having had a taste — not to mention a bellyful — of Hustler and other magazines over the past year, have articulated their protest in many forms."

Mdamusane Sikakane (ANC) said there was pornographic material on the wall of his son's room.

"It's there on the wall because they like them."

Louis Green (ACDP) said 98 percent of those who had given evidence to the task group on publications and film control were against pornography, but their views were ignored.

Esme Chat (NP) said parents should accept greater responsibility in educating their children, after having relied on the state to protect their morality.

Replying to the debate, Chief Buthelezi said nine out of 10 letters written to him were about publications control.

He was regularly sent petitions against the legalisation of pornography, and was asked how as a Christian he could allow it. He had a duty to uphold the constitution.

• Referring to illegal aliens, Chief Buthelezi said 90 692 were repatriated last year, mainly to Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

An inter-departmental committee appointed by the cabinet last year was working on ways to combat the problem.

Mr. Lockey said his party strongly condemned witch hunts by South Africans against illegal aliens.

In other points in the debate:

• Milly Richards (ANC) called for recognition of all marriages including religious marriages.

"I am still regarded as illegitimate although my mother married my father in a mosque and they were married by a religious leader."

• Petru Groenewald (FF) said his party would move for a new Ascension Day be reinstated as a paid public holiday.

• Janine Monberg (ANC) said public holidays should be spread out better to avoid carnage on the country's roads.
Attack on freedom of Press ‘misconstrued’

DEPUTY President Thabo Mbeki’s attack on the media for criticising the government has been completely misunderstood and the Press had no reason to fear it would be muzzled if and when Mr Mbeki succeeded President Mandela.

This is the view of Mr Mbeki’s spokesman, Thams Ntientsi. He was responding to recent criticisms of what has been viewed by the media as intolerance by the ANC and especially Mr Mbeki of press freedom.

A remark by Mr Mbeki that it was normal for the media to look at what was bad in the apartheid government, but that it should not adopt the same approach to the current democratic government, has been cited as an example of what is seen by the media as increasing sensitivity on ANC curtails and the government towards criticism.

The Freedom of Expression Institute has said it was not just the deputy president who has expressed hostility towards the media. Greenpeace International, which is currently referred to the media as guilty of “muckraking” and accused of “using press freedom to indulge in character assassination.”

Mr Ntientsi refuted the charges. The government has banned the ANC, he said, were committed to freedom of expression and of the Press. There were cardinal principles of the country’s new democracy embodied in the constitution, he said.

“Although we say the government must tolerate and accept criticism and opposing views from the media and society, we also believe the media must show some tolerance and understanding of criticism levied at it by the government.”

“Then the deputy president has criticised the media is a misnomer. All he is saying is that within the context of the new South Africa, which is in the process of transition, the media must also examine and refine its role within the process of these changes.”

Mr Ntientsi said he welcomed Weekend Argus’ initiative in seeking the deputy president’s response to recent media criticism on the issue because he had been considering writing a letter to the editor to straighten the record once and for all, although he said he was not certain how much of his response would be printed.

He cited as an example of unfair media criticism the fact that the government had not moved as fast as people wanted in appointing the new officeholders. “He said this was unjust.”

“Before you start building houses for the needy you also have to begin with the process of planning. You would like to identify the land and do other things in a manner that would, of course, not be as perpetuating the same apartheid practices which had designated certain areas as black or as ‘townships’.”

On the controversial case of Allan Boesak and the media criticism on the manner the government and the ANC had handled it. Mr Ntientsi said Mr Mbeki’s and President Mandela’s remarks on Mr Boesak as “unjustified” were based purely on the report submitted by government lawyers and were not in any way an attempt to “whitewash” him.

“It was not even an attempt to pre-empt the office for serious economic offences investigation and final submissions,” he added. “We have expressed the conventional wisdom that ‘a person is innocent until proven otherwise in a court of law’.”

He said if the Office for Serious Economic Offences came out with evidence the law would have to take its course without interference.

Mr Ntientsi stressed that it was very important for the media to criticise and identify the problems of the country and the government were facing and come out with a more analytical approach and not merely to “criticise for the sake of criticising.”

He said he thought the media was much more free today than it had ever been.

“If we are criticising the Church or the state, it is not just the Church or the state that is free to criticise and comment, it is the society as a whole that is free to comment on the state and the Church.”

Mr Ntientsi also stressed the importance of the role of the media as a watchdog for our newly-won democracy. Mr Ntientsi asserted.

He said while the Church’s role in the country’s history had been as a guardian of freedom of others in exercising that duty by compromising their priority.

Mr Ntientsi said the deputy president was a friend of the media and a champion of freedom of expression.

He had demonstrated that attitude not only in this country, but also in other African countries, where he has called for the exercise of freedom of information laws that would show people their governments were committed to freedom of expression, transparency and democracy.
Argus and unions
settle wage dispute

Argus Newspapers announced yesterday that it had settled on an effective 10.5% across-the-board wage increase, following disputes with all three of its trade unions earlier this year. 

Argus management said it had looked at special issues raised by the three unions — the SA Typographical Union, the Media Workers' Association of SA and the SA Union of Journalists — and decided that some benefits should be extended to all staff. Management said in a statement that benefits included an increase in its housing subsidy to a maximum of R250 a month; a R1500 minimum wage; five days' paternity leave every two years; and improved maternity benefits.

Gauteng regional managing director Deon du Plessis said he was happy the agreement had been achieved and hoped it would herald a new "business partnership" with the unions. "We will work together to further our mutual objective," he said. — Staff Reporter
Government criticised over media

(243) WM 26/5/61/45

Gaye Davis

MEDIA-BASHING and government-run media slots offered no solution to the problems the government was having in informing people about what it was doing, ANC MP Carl Niehaus said this week.

Calling for an urgent presidential commission to investigate how government communicates, Niehaus said the South African Communications Service (Sacs), formerly the propaganda arm of the National Party government, was an "entirely unconstructed" organisation. He was speaking during a Sacs budget vote debate on Wednesday.

In what could be interpreted as veiled criticism of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, under whose portfolio it falls, Niehaus said Sacs, whose budget last year was almost R52-million, had not been subjected to the detailed scrutiny other key institutions had faced. While there were "many good people within it, dedicated to free and open information", it still carried baggage from the past.

Government had started delivering, Niehaus said. "Why then the sensitivity about how the government and its work are being perceived? Is it because the media in this country is not always accurately and adequately reflecting the progress we are making for ordinary people? Or does at least some of the problem lie closer to home?"

"Our aim must be to ensure that those who communicate on behalf of the government do so fairly, effectively and in a manner which better equips the media to reflect on what we are doing." People had a right to know what the government was doing. But there could be little purpose in "declaring the media to be an enemy as a first justification for withdrawing from an ongoing engagement with them in favour of government-run or controlled media slots."

Mbeki said assessing Sacs' role could not be done without addressing all other information structures within government. He said a conference of all central and provincial government communications had been planned for August to recommend a "comprehensive and all-embracing government communication policy", including the issue of government-controlled media slots.
Eight complaints upheld, 16 dismissed

The Argus investigative charter

Below is the charter according to which the Argus Investigative Unit, under Editor David Allen, will operate. The unit is based in Johannesburg and can be contacted at (011) 631-2877, or through any Argus newspaper.

The Argus Investigative Unit will hold the public’s right to know about matters of importance to be paramount. It will fight vigorously any measure to conceal facts of public interest, to prevent public access to the same, or to curtail freedom of speech.

Therefore

1. The Argus Investigative Unit will continue to oppose wrongdoing, misuse of power and unnecessary secrecy wherever these may exist.
2. In doing so, it will not pander to personal or sectional interests, but be solely concerned with the public interest.
3. The unit will attempt to serve the public interest through hard and balanced reporting. Should it feel the need to comment on issues, such comment will be identified as such.
4. It will always endeavour to verify information through more than one source, if this should not be possible, it will say so.
5. It will respect the individual's right to privacy at all times except where this conflicts with the public interest.
6. It will identify sources wherever possible. But where there are good reasons to guarantee confidentiality, such confidentiality will be vigorously protected.
7. The unit will not pay money for information.

THE Press Council yesterday delivered its judgment in a case brought by Armstrong against Weekend World over a series of articles published in December 1993 and January this year on the Heidelberg disaster.

Of the 28 separate complaints brought by Armstrong, the Press Council upheld eight, dismissed 19 and partially dismissed two. No fine or reprimand was imposed.

The council said in its judgment that the main thrust of the finding had been in favour of Armstrong and that this was a "significant sanction" against Weekend World.

Armstrong was asked yesterday for its comment on the judgment, but spokesman Keith Naidoo said the arm corporation did not want to break the embargo on what today set by Professor Kahnis van Rooyen, chairman of the Press Council. Armstrong will issue a press statement later today, he said.

In its finding, the Press Council endorsed the principle of newspapers using anonymous sources, a matter which was strenuously challenged by Armstrong throughout the hearing.

In the light of some of the comments made in his judgment by Van Rooyen, the Argus Investigative Unit under David Allen, who was editor of Weekend World (which is no longer exists under this title) at the time the articles in dispute were published, has moved to draw up a charter to set guidelines for its investigations.

This is the first time such a charter has been created specifically for investigative journalism. The charter appears on this page today.

Allen said yesterday he thought the ordinary reader would be unlikely to support the Press Council's recommendation that Armstrong had succeeded in the main thrust of its complaints. "The council did not fine or reprimand the newspaper even though it had the authority to do so," he said.

According to the Press Council, Weekend World had suppressed allegations as fast as it could in reporting three stories and had failed to obtain verification from Armstrong for its reporting on another three.

Armstrong had also complained that the Weekend World summaries, read as a whole, constituted a "propaganda campaign" to discredit Armstrong. The Press Council rejected this complaint.

It also rejected Armstrong's objection to a statement by Weekend World that there were an astonishing number of anecdotal and unverified events. The council said that Armstrong had not argued that Weekend World had been "compromising or misleading its readers". It did argue that Weekend World's charges of "unfounded reports" should be justified in the light of the charges brought against it.

The Press Council also said that statements accusing the council of "bias" against Armstrong were not supported by the facts.

The council also dismissed Armstrong's complaint against Weekend World for not publishing in full a letter from the council.

The council also said that Weekend World's attempt to explain the "deception" in its reporting was "unsatisfactory and unacceptable".

The council also said that Weekend World had failed to truthfully report the council's decision on the Armstrong case.

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Extract from findings of the Press Council

Participants: Council, complainant, respondent

The Press Council of South Africa hearing on the Heiderberg coverage took place in March and April this year. The complainant was the Armaguard Corporation of South Africa Limited, and the respondent was Weekend Star.

The council panel comprised Professor Kobus van Rooyen, chairman; F Peer, public representative; and de Wet, the co-opted press representative. The council's conciliator was Ed Ledington.

Armaguard was represented by Dr Andre Botes, assisted by H Canpiger and F Guest from attorneys Goldblatts, Van der Merwe.

Weekend Star was represented by Max Gibson, assisted by P Reynolds and M Fried from attorneys Webber Wentzel.

Bowers

Findings:

- The panel held that there was no evidence of murder that the term international criminal should have been qualified by inserted commas and that the third item should have included the denial and explanation which had previously been published by The Citizen and Sunday Times.

- The complaints were upheld.

- Fourthly, there were some general matters that Weekend Star had waged a propaganda campaign against Armaguard over 52 articles in eight issues that there was an astounding number of inaccuracies and unanswered questions in the story of the Heiderberg inquiry, that the death of a former Armaguard employee, Heidrie Sayman, was cleared in the story.

- These complaints were dismissed on the basis that the media had the right to duty to address matters of public interest.

- It was held that Weekend Star was entitled to raise the death of Heidrie Sayman as a mystery. Both sides were given, and it was presented as opinion.

- Filthy, three complaints were not adjudicated upon in the light of the procedural arrangements that issues and relevant Armaguard would not be adjudicated upon they were complaints concerning the pilot who had been "ordered" to fly on in spite of a first fire, that he was earning those who had ordered him to accept the charge, and that the ZFAP turns went missing.

- Sixthly, a further question raised at the hearing was whether Weekend Star should not have verified a statement by a Mrs Gesel, that an SA manager had told her that the pilot had been unhappy about the cargo, with the "SAA manager".

- The panel felt this should have been done, but that procedurally it could not pronounce on this matter as the complaint did not claim that verification should have been done with the "SAA manager" at its formal complaint. The claim that verification should have been done with the "SAA manager" in Taipei was not justified. This complaint was accordingly dismissed.
Eight complaints upheld, 16 dismissed

NEWS/11

May 27, 1995

Sunday Star
Eight complaints upheld, 16 dismissed

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tance to be paramount. It will fight vigorously any measure to conceal facts of public inter-
T. To prevent public access to the news, or to curtail freedom of speech.

The Argus investigative unit will continue to exposure wrongdoing, misuse of powers and unnecessary secrecy wherever these may exist.

No site or personal or sectional in-

ferences, but be solely con-

cerned with the public interest.

1. In all cases brought to the unit by the public, it will be disposed of in a

fair and balanced manner.

2. The unit will endeavor to verify information through more than one source. If this should not be possible, it will verify any information through more than one source. If this should not be possible, it shall verify such information through more than one source.

3. The unit will respect the individual's right to privacy at all times except where this conflicts with the public interest.

4. It will identify sources wherever possible but where there are good reasons to guarantee confidentiality, such confidentiality will be rigorously protected.

5. The unit will not pay money for information.

6. The unit will not publish material that is not in the public interest.

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Press panned by ANC leader

Cape Town — South Africa’s monopoly print media had failed South Africans in a crucial period of their history, Sani Macozoma (ANC) said yesterday.

"Notwithstanding the celebrated examples of the courage and vision of the South African print media, their collective record is a woeful one," he said in the broadcasting budget vote in Parliament.

The print media had failed South Africa in its crucial period of transition.

Stampede

"It is parochial, ranalist, impervious to the real issues, peddles unfounded pessimism, lacks courage and is petulantly intolerant of criticism which it mechanically and often arrogantly dismisses as an attack on press freedom."

He was reacting to yesterday’s Sunday newspaper which was sponsored by the Financial Mail, advertising its forthcoming article on the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

The commercial was "most uncomplimentary" and bordered on the abusive, Macozoma said.

The Weekly Mail had also carried a two-page article in which it labelled the IBA as the "Inert Broadcasting Authority".

The mention behind both articles was to stampede the IBA into granting licences to the same vested interests that controlled the print media, he said. They also aimed at "discrediting the IBA even before it had completed its recommendations — Sapa."
Draft ‘access’ Bill will affect firms

Adrian Hedland

CAPE TOWN — All private sector companies will be compelled to provide clients and individuals with fuller access to information, according to draft legislation being considered by Cabinet.

The original intention was to improve access to information held by government departments and institutions, but the team drafting the Open Democracy Bill had decided to extend it to include the private sector, team head and government legal advisor Mojanku Gumbi told a news briefing yesterday.

The Bill is unlikely to force companies to reveal strategic information but will allow individuals to request and check personal details as well as to “argue and put pressure” on companies to correct data or credit ratings.

During extensive consultations, private sector representatives had indicated they were concerned with the creation of legal duties and the implied costs envisaged by the Bill, Gumbi said. “They instinctively think they will have to spend money.”

Gumbi said that while the objective of including the private sector, which often had great power over the lives of individuals, was to prevent abuse and allow the correction of inaccurate or incomplete data, she conceded there could be constitutional problems with the legislation.

Section 23 of the Constitution did not specifically include the private sector, Gumbi said.

The legal team, however, had decided that the ambit of the Bill could be extended in this direction.

A further problem concerned the disputed notion of the vertical and horizontal applicability of the constitution, whether only the state or also other sectors of society could be bound by it.

The main purposes of the Bill were to give citizens access to information and important government meetings, to protect personal privacy and to protect officials wanting to disclose crime, maladministration or corruption.

The Bill proposes the establishment of an “open democracy commission” to supervise the application of the legislation, and an information court — which will fall within the Supreme Court — to enforce its directives.

Contravention of the law, once it is adopted, will give complaints recourse to civil remedies.

The draft Bill will be considered by a Cabinet committee next week.

The NP welcomed the Bill but expressed reservations about some provisions. “Care needs to be taken that in the laudable effort to create greater openness and accountability, the operation of the government is not detrimentally affected.”
Freedom of information bill unveiled

ANTHONY JOHNSON
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE government unveiled a draft law yesterday that could make it easier for ordinary citizens to get information about the inner workings of the government — ending decades of official secrecy in government.

The Open Democracy Bill, which spells out the public's right to freedom of information on most government bodies and meetings, will be considered by a cabinet committee next Wednesday and the full executive in a fortnight.

The bill includes a "whistle-blowing" clause that prohibits the victimisation of officials who disclose details about government corruption, lawbreaking and maladministration.

Members of the task force who drafted the legislation, Professor Mandla Mchunu and advocate Ms Mokunku Gumbi, emphasised during a briefing yesterday that the government would have to take the initiative in making information available to the public. They could publish manuals detailing their functions and the documents they held or include information in telephone books.

The legislation proposes that an Open Democracy Commission and an Information Court be set up to supervise the application of the act and to ensure the public's requests are dealt with rapidly and fairly.

However, the draft law does make provision for some categories of information — such as those relating to national security — to be exempted from disclosure.

A full list of exemptions will be released soon.
ARGUS NEWSPAPERS

Premium on the man

Activities: Printing and publishing of newspapers
Control: Independent Newspapers plc 56%
Chairman: L.P O'Reilly MD J.G. Featherstone
Capital structure: 45.1m ords. Market capitalisation R564m
Share market: Price R12.50 Yield: 2.1% on dividend, 5.6% on earnings, p/e ratio, 18, cover, 2.6. 12-month high, R15, low, R10. Trading volume last quarter, 10,7m shares

Year to
Mar 31
Dec 31

94
94

St debt (Rm)
63.7
61.5

LH debt (Rm)
61.0
6.0

Debentures ratio
0.46
0.34

Shareholders' Interest
0.39
0.45

Net & leasing cover
0.95
1.10

Return on cap (Rm)
16.0
10.0

Turnover (Rm)
704
730

Pre-es profit (Rm)
65.0
43.0

Pre-tax margin (%)
6.3
7.2

Earnings (c)
72.0
57.0

Dividends (c)
3.0
2.0

Tangable NAV (c)
303
390

+ Nine-month period * 60c annualised

This is almost certainly the same newspaper group will be reviewed under the Argus banner. Next week shareholders will be asked to change the name to Independent Newspaper Holdings, in line with the title of Dublin-based controlling shareholder Independent Newspapers plc. Resolutions of a more far-reaching nature will also be considered. The structure is to be changed and a wholly owned operating company, Independent Newspapers Ltd, will manage regional interests through three subsidiaries: Gauteng, Natal and Cape Newspapers.

The most interesting resolution though is to expand the memorandum of association describing the company's main business to include "media, communications, education, entertainment, information and related industries."

This certainly signals new owner Tony O'Reilly's long-term plans for what has become the SA arm of his newspaper group. It also underlines the extent to which his increased stake, up from 35% to 58% following an offer to minoritys in February, makes Argus an increasingly important contributor to world group profits and highlights a problem with the investment.

Some analysts are divided on the present value of the share, but at R12.50 on a p/e ratio of 18 the FMP sides with those who feel it is overpriced. One reason for this is the risk attached to what is currently a pure printing and publishing investment.

O'Reilly clearly intends to expand into the broader media, probably broadcasting or the electronic media, though now Argus is banging heads with the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), mainly because it is foreign-controlled.

Until — if ever — it is able to diversify, the share offers limited potential. In the shorter term, though, prospects for earnings growth appear good, especially if economic growth is maintained.

Results in the annual report are of limited value, covering a nine-month period as Argus gets its year-end in line with Independent Newspapers; limitations with the previous, unaudited nine-month period are flattening — turnover declined in real terms, but trading profits soared by 32% to R40m and earnings by 45% to R24m, diluted to a 40% increase in EPS.

The nine months covered, however, include much of the huge deluge of pre-election advertising and the effects on advertising revenue of the strengthening economy. The previous period was characterised by political uncertainty and the tentative end of recession, when business was slow and advertising revenue still down in the dumps.

Results were also boosted by the closure of the loss-making Sunday Star and other retreats and reentries, including the Pretoria News' printing and production works.

CE John Featherstone notes that circulation and advertising volumes came off after-the-elections, with advertising particularly affected by mid-year strikes in the retail and motor industries. The last four months of the year showed an encouraging improvement, he says.

Better prospects, apart from increased cover prices, probably lie, however, with Argus's traditional strength in retail advertising and classified advertisements, con
Shaping the direction of SA newspapers

Sowetan Correspondent

A GLOBAL perspective on the 21st century, aimed at shaping the direction of newspapers in South Africa, was emerging from the new international advisory board of Argus Newspapers which met for the first time in Cape Town yesterday.

This was the view of board member and former US ambassador to the United Nations, Mr Andrew Young.

The advisory board was established by the majority shareholder of Argus Newspapers, Mr Tony O'Reilly.

Among its other members are SABC CEO Mr Zwelakhe Sisulu and businessman Dr Nhutso Motlama.

"The whole world is looking at the 21st century with a big question mark. Governments are losing their nerve. Business is not sure which way to go — they say they want to go global. I see one of the roles of the media, especially newspapers in an exciting environment like South Africa, as sharing a vision of the future for the whole world," Young said. He said many problems South Africa faced like cultural diversity and poverty, were similar to problems in other countries such as the United States and Latin America.

"What (Dr Tony) O'Reilly has done in establishing this board is to bring together a very interesting cross-section of people from South Africa, Europe and the United States. What is emerging is a global perspective on the 21st century which has just got to help shape the direction of newspapers," said Young.

Play no role

Advisory board chairman and former editor of the Washington Post Mr Ben Bradlee said the board would play no role in the day-to-day running of Argus newspapers.

"I'm not about to tell another editor what to do. My bias is towards journalists. I think what O'Reilly and his crowd have in mind is for all of us to lend our experience with the goal of improving the excellence of newspapers," Bradlee said.
Omni Media income up 51% to reach R86,3m

Amade Vermeulen

PERFORMANCES above expectation from group companies helped Omni Media — formerly Argus Holdings — to lift net attributable income 51% to R86,3m in the year to March.

Earnings a share for the group, whose associated companies include Times Media (TML), CNA Gallo, M-Net, MultiChoice and CTP/Caxton, increased 23% to 16c and a final dividend of 5c was declared, bringing to 45c the dividend for the year.

The directors said group companies had performed above expectation during the year, with trading profit improving 26% to R162,2m against a restated figure of R128,7m for financial 1994. CNA Gallo and TML recorded pleasing increases, they said.

The group's 1994 results have been restated to exclude the results of Argus Newspapers and to consolidate TML as a 36%-owned subsidiary.

Net income before tax of R185,1m was 24% up on last year, and taxed income, after a tax bill of R93,1m (R49,4m), was 17% higher at R115,9m.

Income attributable to outside shareholders was down at R57,9m (R63,3m).

The share of retained income of associates of R23,3m (R25,8m) left net attributable income at R86,3m.

An extraordinary item of R11,6m reflected the group's restructuring of its newspaper interests, and M-Net/MultiChoice's restructuring of their offshore interests.

The directors said that despite a good performance from CTP, associated companies' earnings had increased modestly due to the costs incurred by MultiChoice in the development of its cellular telephone interests and overseas subscription telecommunication interests.

TML recorded a 24% increase in trading profit following strong advertising support and cost controls. This, combined with substantial investment income on cash balances, resulted in the publishing group reporting a 30% increase in earnings prior to associates.

CNA Gallo reported a 21% increase in earnings as a result of good increases from CNA stores and Gallo Entertainment.

M-Net continued to trade well, while the board was confident that MultiChoice, which incurred losses in the development of certain operations, would begin to contribute to group earnings in due course.

The group's balance sheet reflected cash and redeemable investments of R194m. The directors said they would offer shareholders the option of capitalisation shares or a cash dividend.
Farewell to our old Auntie Argus

Staff Writer

Argus Newspapers, a dominant name in South African journalism for more than a century, yesterday changed its name to Independent Newspapers Holdings.

"The new name is effective immediately and follows a resolution of shareholders. The change flows from the acquisition of a majority of the old Argus shares by the Dublin-based Independent Newspapers Group headed by Tony O'Reilly, Irish food and media magnate.

The newly-named holding company presides over three regional operating divisions from today — Gauteng Newspapers, Natal Newspapers and Cape Newspapers."
Proposed legislation called a dream for media barons
Proposed info bill a 'dream' for Media

A draft bill proposing right of access to all information held by the state was a "dream clause for the media barons", Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development Valli Moosa said.

It would enable media organisations free access to all government information, but the media itself would not be subject to the same scrutiny, he told a constitutional committee meeting.

"The government will not have the same right to ask questions of the media barons, such as who funds them and which parties they support."

The African National Congress believed the right of access to information should also apply horizontally (to institutions other than the state).

Mr Moosa also said a draft formulation on academic freedom could prevent the state from taking specific steps to "restructure and transform universities and other tertiary institutions in order to serve the goals of the RDP".

The committee also debated new draft clauses on the freedom of expression, including provisions which prohibited "propaganda for war" and the advocacy of racial or religious hatred.

The ANC objected to a clause stating that all state-financed or controlled media should be regulated to ensure independence, impartiality and diversity of opinion.

Frene Ginwala said this provision could impose "serious restrictions" on the state's efforts to propagate information on matters such as immunisation.

— Sapa
Call for censorship referendum

Political Staff

THE African Christian Democratic Party has called for a referendum on the liberalisation of the law on publications.

ACDP leader Kenneth Meshoe made the call — which includes the retention of the Publications Act of 1974 currently under review by parliament — in the national assembly yesterday during the second reading debate on the Home Affairs Laws Rationalisation Bill.

The bill, approved almost unanimously, save for a few ACDP reservations, repeals certain laws which apply to the former homelands and self-governing territories.

It also introduces certain transitional measures in terms of the Publications Act, the Aliens Control Act, the Births and Deaths Registration Act and the Marriage Act.

One of the new provisions extends the period for the registration of a birth from seven to 30 days, to allow ample opportunity to parents living in rural communities.

Dealing with the law on publications, Mr Meshoe said worldwide there was a great degree of consensus that some form of control was imperative in any normal society.

He said the Publications Act of 1974 should be retained, pending a referendum.
Work stoppage:
Eight suspended

Mr September said workers, who earned between R280 and R350 a week, were motivated by a fear of retrenchment, fuelled by the company's decision to employ contract workers, and frustration over autocratic management styles.

The chief executive of Nationale Tydskrifte, Salie de Swart, said workers had "hijacked our press like one hijacks an aeroplane."

He added "They want no punishment, but there are allegations of intimidation, assault and damaging machines. We will prosecute them if we find them guilty at an inquiry."

SEVEN workers and the personnel manager of Nationale Tydskrifte have been suspended on full pay after a work stoppage by 300 employees and their occupation of the company's hi-tech gravure printing press room.

A Supreme Court eviction order led to policemen surrounding the building in Buitengracht Street yesterday afternoon and employees returned to work.

Personnel manager Michael Voges and seven members of the Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (Ppwwu), including the union leader Solly Staggie and four shop stewards, were suspended pending investigations of alleged misconduct.

Production stopped on Tuesday at 4:30 pm.

Workers said the stoppage came after claims of overwork by four employees were allegedly ignored by three managers, including Mr Voges.
The credentials to defend press freedom

JOHN VILJOEN
Business Reporter

THE members of the Independent Newspapers of South Africa International Advisory Board have the credentials to defend press freedom in the potentially difficult years ahead.

This is the view of Cape Newspapers MD Rory Wilson, who addressed the high-profile group in Cape Town.

"I got a very strong impression that they have the interests of the press generally and of our newspapers in particular very much at heart," Mr Wilson said this week.

"Their interests range from the people who work inside our newspapers to the environment in which our newspapers operate — the political ebb and flow — through to the readers and the advertisers that we serve.

Mr Wilson said he told the board there was a wave of optimism running through the country as to what could be a potentially great and glorious future. "But, while I'm generally enthusiastic about that, I'm very worried too.

"I'm worried that this optimism will blind newspapers to the fact that there's hardly been a government in history which hasn't sought to curtail freedom of the press in some form or another to apply some restrictions on newspapers and the media.

"I think now is the time to be vigilant about these things. Now is the time to be debating in public the incredibly important role newspapers play in our democracy.

"When President Mandela goes, do we know who is going to replace him? Do we know what is going to happen? Are we as newspapers going to be struggling to implement the new constitution? Are we going to have a vast array of social problems?

"And if we newspapers are going to be doing our jobs, we are going to be reporting on those social problems."

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The members of the Independent Newspapers of South Africa International Advisory Board, which will meet twice a year, are Ted Sorenson, former adviser to President Kennedy; former New York mayor David Dinkins, Independent Newspapers of SA majority shareholder Tony O'Reilly, chief executive John Featherstone, chairman Lionel Hoyle and group editorial executive Ivan Fallon.


Watchdog role essential for newspapers

Business Reporter

SUPPORT for democracy should not be confused with support for political parties — a watchdog role is still essential, Kaiser Nyatsamba, political editor of The Star, told the Independent Newspapers International Advisory Board.

"A heated debate has raged about the role The Star should play in our fledgling democracy.

"Yes, I do think the Press has a special role to play in present-day South Africa, but I think that role is the one usually played by the Press the world over as watchdog over government."

"In my view, Independent Newspapers should take it upon themselves to be custodians of the present interim constitution, which is the final one once it is concluded.

"This means that we will have to, as our new name now implies, be Tintenquilli independent, both of our former political masters and of big business.

"It means that we will have to be critical of the government, whatever party may be in power, when we believe criticism is justified, and not be afraid to praise the government when we believe praise is deserved."

"That, I think, is the watchdogs role of Independent Newspapers and the Press can and should play, for who thinks patriotism means hypocrisy?"
Editors to quit role with council

THE CONFERENCE of Editors has resolved to cease voluntary co-operation with the SA Press Council, chairman Khule Sibiya announced after a meeting of editors in Durban on Friday.

He said editors had decided to recommend to the Print Media Association that an ombudsmen be appointed to resolve complaints against the Press "as speedily as possible, while allowing easy access to all South Africans".

"They had noted "with distress" that a parliamentary theme committee had concluded its report to the Constitutional Assembly on freedom of expression without hearing the views of leading editors."

The committee had ignored repeated requests from the Conference of Editors for a delegation of its leading editors to appear before the committee. The requests, both written and oral, were made to Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa in September 1994.

Sibiya said the conference had also noted that editors' views were similar to those dismissed when the interim constitution was drafted at the Kempton Park multi-party negotiations, and as a result the constitution was defective.

"These deficiencies now appear certain to be carried over to the final constitution. Therefore the Conference of Editors has no alternative but to appeal to international agencies and supporters of a free press for assurance in establishing an acceptable degree of free speech in South Africa."

"The conference resolved to embark immediately on a campaign to rally international support," Sibiya said.

The authority and powers of the SA Press Council arise from an agreement entered into by all newspaper proprietors who are members of the Newspaper Press Union, binding themselves and all the editors and journalists they employ to observe the provisions of the constitution and deal with infringements of a recognised code of conduct.

This includes an obligation by newspapers to report the news truthfully, accurately and objectively, and to comment and criticise fairly and honestly. - Sapa
Campaign to support free press

Newspaper editors want an ombudsman

Durban — The Conference of Editors has resolved to cease voluntary co-operation with the SA Press Council, chairman Khulu Sibaya announced after a meeting of editors in Durban at the weekend.

He said in a statement that editors had decided to recommend to the Print Media Association that an ombudsman be appointed to resolve complaints against the press “as speedily as possible, while allowing easy access to all South Africans.”

They had noted “with distress” that a parliamentary theme committee had concluded its report to the Constitutional Assembly on freedom of expression without hearing the views of the country’s leading editors.

The committee had ignored repeated requests from the Conference of Editors for a delegation of six leading editors to appear before the committee.

The requests, both written and oral, were made to Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa in September 1994.

Sibaya said the conference had also noted that editors’ views were similarly dismissed when the interim constitution was drafted at the Kempton Park multiparty negotiations. The constitution, as a result, was defective.

“These deficiencies now appear certain to be carried over to the final constitution. Therefore, the Conference of Editors has no alternative but to appeal to international agencies and supporters of a free press for assistance in establishing an acceptable degree of free speech in South Africa,” Sibaya said.

“The conference resolved to embark immediately on a campaign to rally international support,” Sibaya said.

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Editors withdraw from press accord

DURBAN: The Conference of Editors has resolved to cease voluntary co-operation with the SA Press Council, chairman Mr Khulu Shibya announced after a meeting of editors here on Friday.

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Objective

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This includes an obligation by newspapers to report the news accurately and objectively, and to comment fairly." — Sapa
Reddy urges the Press to reflect new realities

IF THE SA Press continued to be dominated by four publishing houses, debate on major issues like the changeover from the old Radio SA to SAm would continue to be one-sided and hardly reflective of diverse opinions in the country, SABC Radio CE Govan Reddy said earlier this week (243).

Addressing the Cape Town Press Club, he said two prerequisites for a democratic media culture remained problematic — the independent media, reflecting diversity of opinion, and respect for the professional integrity and independent role of journalists.

"If journalism persist with inaccurate, unbalanced reporting, they are unlikely to win public respect," he said.

SA had one of the highest concentrations of Press ownership in the world, with Times Media Limited and Independent Newspapers accounting for about 90% of daily English readership.

It was no secret that there was little divergence of interest between the two newspaper companies' owners and the old Radio SA listeners, he said.

SA media were also impoverished by the fact that the profile of its editors tended to be white, middle-class and male, he said.

Telecommunications Minister Pallo Jordan has written in a weekend newspaper.

"Little wonder then that some of the most vociferous and vitriolic critics of SAm are white, middle-aged, English-speaking male radio critics writing for The Star, The Argus, The Star and The Mercury, a bird of a colonial feather battling to come to grips with the realities of a nonracial society."

Ownership and staffing problems were compounded by the 'appalling ethical standards' of the SA Press, Reddy said. - Reap.

ack community station...
Constitutional assembly denies it ignored editors

CLAIMS that it had ignored a request for a hearing from the Conference of Editors have been rebutted by the constitutional assembly (CA).

At a meeting in Durban last Friday the editors noted "with distress" that a parliamentary theme committee had completed its report on freedom of expression and submitted it to the assembly without hearing the views of leading editors.

The committee reportedly ignored repeated requests from the Conference of Editors for a delegation of six leading editors to appear before it.

Reacting to the reports yesterday, assembly spokesman Enoch Sithole said the assembly regarded editors as an "important component" in the writing of the final constitution.

Last September Sunday Times editor Ken Owen wrote to assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa, asking whether the Conference of Editors could address the committee dealing with freedom of expression, Mr Sithole said.

Attached to Mr Owen's letter had been a memorandum suggesting amendments to the interim constitution. The letter was forwarded to the committee as a submission from the editors, Mr Sithole said.

The committee's technical adviser, John Dugard, had later approached Gilbert Marcus, who had written a paper on freedom of expression which formed the basis of the editors' memorandum.

Mr Sithole said that after receiving this document the committee was satisfied that it had enough evidence to prepare a report on the subject.

"On the concern that the theme committee has completed its report without having given a hearing to the editors and 'without a full public debate', we would like to record that theme committee reports are compiled without any debate whatsoever."

The reports were merely a summary of the views submitted by individuals, organisations and political parties.

"Debate on all the views starts at the constitutional committee before reaching the CA, where some finality can be reached. Public debate on the new constitution has not yet begun."

The assembly planned to publish all draft reports - including the one on freedom of expression - and to invite the entire South African public to debate and send in comments - Sapa
Council presses on without editors

By PHYLLIS OPPEN

THE Press Council would continue to operate despite a decision by the Conference of Editors to cease cooperating with the watchdog body, council registrar Ed Linitong said this week.

"But he urged interested parties to discuss a possible replacement to the council, which was set up by newspaper proprietors to serve as a watchdog on professional ethics."

"The Conference of Editors, which met in Durban last week, suggested that an ombudsman be appointed to replace the council."

"Mr Lindsay declined to comment on the proposal."

"Times Media Limited's managing director, Roy Paulson, said an ombudsman was too-limited a solution and suggested a reduced council might be a better option."

"He said the council had been useful in promoting confidence among the public and had helped re-establish the bona fides of newspapers in South Africa. "Newspapers make mistakes and the council is known as a last resort to lodge complaints."

"Khulu Sibuya, the chairman of the Conference of Editors, said the council was outdated."

"The country's apartheid policies have gone. We have a constitution which guarantees greater press freedom. There is no need for the structure."

"Mr Sibuya said an ombudsman might be more effective and an appeal board could deal with difficult cases."

"Deon du Plessis, the managing director of Independent Newspapers in Gauteng, said he supported the editors' decision."

"Editors want speedy solutions when problems arise and the council can't provide that."

"Ton Vosloo of Nasionale Pers said he could not comment."
Snubbing denied (249)
CT 10/17/95

The Constitutional Assembly has denied reports that it ignored a request for a hearing from the Conference of Editors.

The editors had noted "with distress" that a parliamentary theme committee had completed its report on freedom of expression and submitted it to the assembly without hearing editors' views.

An Assembly spokesman said it regarded editors as an "important component" in the writing of the final constitution.

Theme committee reports were a summary of views submitted by individuals and organisations and "were compiled without debate". Public debate will take place later — Sapa
Consumers can vote with voices

CLaire BissekER
STAFF REPORTER

CONSUMERS were given a voice at the launch of the National Service Excellence Awards yesterday.

The annual competition aims to foster a culture of service in South Africa, which has acquired an international reputation for poor service.

The winner will be the company, across all sectors of commerce and industry, that consistently performs best over a three-month period according to ratings awarded by consumers in a national research survey.

Researchers will interview a minimum of 3,000 people per entrant who have visited the company in the past year and feel qualified to comment on its service.

The competition was initiated by radio personality Mr Allan Barnard, who said, "Consumers, too, need to become aware of their spending power and vote with their feet."

"This will motivate companies to pay more attention to staff training and improved people skills."

Speaking at the launch in the city yesterday, Stratagem training specialist Mr Anthony Galloway urged businesses to commit themselves to service excellence by entering the competition

More than 20 companies have already entered. Entrance fees range from R1 800 to R8 600, depending on the company size.
New way to take the measure of companies

BY AUDREY D'ANGELO

Companies countrywide are being invited to take part in a new venture – Voices of the Consumer (VOC) – which will measure their performance in the eyes of the consumer.

The project was launched simultaneously in Johannesburg and Cape Town yesterday.

Project co-ordinator Liza Dawson of VOC told business people in Cape Town it was proposed to present national service excellence awards to the companies perceived by consumers to be the best when giving their views to research surveys.

The surveys will be limited to companies applying to take part. The results of the winners will be published. Other companies looked at in surveys will receive confidential reports, enabling them to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses.

Companies which have already applied to take part include major chains such as OK Bazaars, Shoprite-Cheetahs, Clicks, Truworths, No-Metro Theatres, Rennies Travel, domestic airlines Comair and City Lodge Hotels.

VOC is the brainchild of Allan Barnard, currently presenter of the breakfast show on KFNI radio, who says he has, over the years, taken hundreds of calls from consumers unhappy with the service they have received.

Dawson said that since the preliminary announcement “we have been inundated with calls from all sectors of business”.

Competition

She pointed out that attracting and retaining customers was essential for business success.

“VOC is not to condemn bad service but to help raise standards.”

The awards would foster a spirit of competition and the feedback from the research would be of great value to the companies whose performance was measured.

Colleen Sutherland of Research Surveys said the performance of participating companies would be measured by the perceptions of customers of both sexes and all races and age groups in all major urban centres. It would be the consumers themselves who would give companies a score ranging from one to ten they would never use again to one they would always deal with.

Anthony Holloway, a specialist in customer relations, said it was the mindset of many people dealing with the public that had to be changed if service standards were to be lifted.
No lunching lady who pokes in pools

By Nikki Whitfield

The department will be headed by a Provincial Consumer Forum, made up of representatives from consumer, civic, labour and other organisations with interests in consumer affairs. The Consumer Affairs Department will carry out research, communications and media and consumer education.

Caine said it was hoped the whole component would be up and running in all provinces by the beginning of next year. The only province which might not be able to stick to this schedule are KwaZulu-Natal and North-West.

In KwaZulu-Natal, political instability has delayed the process of establishing provincial and local government structures.

In North-West, the new government inherited the former Botshabelo Consumer Council with a budget of R11-million and a staff of 117. The province is currently evaluating the role of all parastatals, including the consumer council. After this it will decide how to restructure the North-West Council.

Caine said a draft copy of the Consumer Affairs Act would soon be made available, and would be adopted throughout the country, based on the provisions contained in the Harmful Business Practices Act, which allows for dubious businesses to be banned and their assets redistributed.

The Harmful Business Practices Act is a powerful piece of legislation but has never been effectively implemented because the Business Practices Committee is grossly understaffed and operated on a tiny budget.

"But the Consumer Affairs Act will be powerful, it will have teeth, and will bring protection for consumers to be investigated and closed if necessary, and will therefore have a major influence on consumer affairs," she said.

And what about the jobs of the people employed by the old Consumer Council, those who have not gone for the retrenchment packages?

Caine said people would apply for jobs in the provincial offices when they are advertised. Obviously, they will have experience in consumer affairs and this will count in their favour.

for two decades, the South African Consumer Council was run by white, middle-class, white-garbed women. Now, it is to be dissolved, and several members of the Pretoria-based office have opted to take anti-smelting packages. Things are pretty quiet there at the moment.

But at the Gauteng Department of Economic Affairs in Johannesburg, the office is almost constantly busy.

Collette Caine, co-ordinator of the Inter-provincial Consumer Affairs Working Group and consultant to the Minister of Economic Affairs on consumer affairs, has a very important task. One that she hopes will substantially change the way consumers are treated in this country.

Consumer affairs have now been given a Schedule 6 competency, which means their primary responsibility exists with the provincial government, not some obscure organisation, as many consumers knew very much about.

When it comes to consumer matters, South Africa is quite a way behind the rest of the world. For years, we have put up with bad service, inferior products and lousy deals, whining and whining, sure, but ultimately shrugging our shoulders.

But now there is hope. The aim is to give consumers a better deal, where people’s basic rights are being addressed, the homeless are getting houses and the jobless are allowed to trade freely in the market place.

The old Consumer Council’s term of office came to an end last month. From July 1 to December 31, there will be a new council to oversee this transition, made up of representatives of the provinces and consumer organisations.

The council’s headquarters are in Pretoria, and there were small offices in Bellville in the Cape, in Durban and Bloemfontein, each manned by about four people. Unfortunately, it lacked a profile among black consumers, although to be fair more recently it did look into complaints from townships. But it lacked credibility and was refused affiliation to Consumers International.

That was what things were like then. Now, all the provinces will be establishing their own organisations to take care of consumers.

For example, in Gauteng, the government has allocated consumer affairs a budget of R1.3 million so far, and the first people will take up office at the beginning of next month.

Each province will establish a department of consumer affairs with several advice offices. In Gauteng, there will be regional advice offices on the East and West Rand, in Soweto, Pretoria, the Vaal Triangle and central...
Battle looms over state info policy

A behind-the-scenes battle is raging in the government as state communication agency Sacs fights for its life, reports Gaye Davis

**Battle for the heart and soul of government communications policy is underway**

The first shots have been fired in a series of behind-the-scenes skirmishes between government spokespeople and the central state information agency, the South African Communication Service (Sacs). At issue is creating the means whereby all citizens of South Africa — rather than just the educated elite — get the information they need to participate in the new democracy.

The first salvos were fired during preparations for a major conference to be attended by all government communicators next month. Lines were drawn over what the conference was intended to achieve.

According to sources, Sacs representatives wanted the conference itself to formulate policy on communications structures and how the government talks to citizens. This was seen as a bid to ensure its continued existence in a climate where MPs and even ministers were questioning the relevance and necessity of a centralised organisation employing about 500 people and costing R53-million a year to run, when most ministries and departments had their own media sections.

The sources said this would have allowed Sacs to reassert its own role and make recommendations on its own future. But this was deemed unacceptable by those who saw the debate as part of the broader issue of transforming South African society and who wanted the issue discussed outside government structures.

A corps of government spokespeople — new appointments made since the change in government — initially pushed for a commission of inquiry to audit the entire gamut of government communications, including Sacs, ministries, departments, provinces and the Constitutional Assembly. The idea was that the commission would independently examine strengths and weaknesses of government communications, tapping local and international expert opinion as well as the public, with a view to much broader conference later.

This move was spiked when Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, during the Sacs budget debate on May 24, announced the conference.

After a number of meetings, the preparatory committee finally agreed this week that the conference, set for August 25 to 27 at Armstrong, would be only the first step in a wide-ranging consultation process that would eventually reach all stakeholders — including the public — before any white paper was produced.

Sacs acting head David Venter conceded this week there had been political wrangles but dismissed as "malicious" suggestions that Sacs
OFFICIALS LAID ‘GIRLIE’ MAG COMPLAINTS

We acted unjustly — chief state censor

RUTINE complaints that the censors lodged against "girlie magazines" were not in keeping with "administrative justice", says the chief censor. CLAIRE BISSEKEN reports.

THE chief state censor has admitted that the country's censorship authorities committed an injustice by routinely lodging their own complaints against "girlie magazines" instead of acting on complaints from the public.

Dr. Bram Coetzee also said it had been his "prime responsibility" to personally alert the attorney-general to the sale of prohibited and undesirable publications at the Nice and Naughty sex shop in the city.

He had submitted a written report, not a complaint, to Mr. Frank Kahn and had left it up to him to decide what action to take.

Dr. Coetzee said he supported the statement made last year by Home Affairs Minister Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi that "never again in this country will anyone decide what other intelligent and rational human beings may or may not read, watch or hear".

Dr. Coetzee said he also agreed with the recommendation of the task group set up by Chief Buthelezi to investigate film and publication control, that sex shops and other adult establishments "should be managed rather than prohibited".

But such recommendations were a long way from being made law, and until they were he had to administer the Publications Act of 1974.

The act allows the directorate of publications to submit its own complaints.

Dr. Coetzee said the directorate had received hundreds of complaints about certain magazines, but the complaints had either arrived too late or were not specific about the issue they referred to.

This had resulted in publications being banned long after all copies had been sold and had subjected the directorate to public ridicule and charges of "ineffectiveness".

Stopped

The directorate had therefore begun submitting its own complaints, but had stopped doing so last year when it accepted that there could hardly be "administrative justice" in submitting a complaint to a committee they had appointed and whose decisions they could appeal against.
Press body sets up local panel

THE International Press Institute has established a national committee in South Africa.

The committee will be headed by Mr Moepsen Williams, editor of the Pretoria News, editor-designate of the Cape Times and an executive board member of IPI. Other committee members are Mr Raymond Louw and Mr Richard Steyn, elected fellows of the IPI.
By far the most popular daily newspaper

Circulation figures to be published soon by the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) will reflect a significant, but not critical, decline in newspaper sales.

The Star's recent cover price increase and continued popularity as a powerful advertising choice have, however, cushioned the negative effect.

While circulation figures of The Star submitted to the ABC show an overall decline of 12% (Saturday Star 9.2%) for the six months preceding June, its share of the Greater Johannesburg market still far exceeds all other daily newspapers. In fact, its share is greater than the combined market share of the Citizen, Sowetan and Beeld.

A general circulation downturn was anticipated in the news "boom" that followed the election euphoria and the drop in political violence.

Despite the several strong reasons for the decline, editors, managers and marketers of Johannesburg's largest daily newspaper are not taking the situation lightly. There are a number of plans in the pipeline to counter the trend.

Advertising revenue has recovered after the pre-election political turmoil and as a result The Star's editorial team has increased significantly—particularly in business coverage—that has seen the launch of the nationally popular Business Report.

A major development has been The Star's popular regional supplements, which also necessitated rapid staff recruitment.

Ironically, the improvement in a political climate that increased profits, is also one of the reasons for the full-off in circulation. Readership of The Star soared in the weeks preceding and following the historic April 27 election. But demand for information declined slightly in the more settled political climate that followed.

Another major factor which has contributed to the decline in circulation is the increased cover price of The Star. In January 1994 The Star cost R1. This increased to R1.10 in June 1994 and went up to R1.50 at the beginning of 1995—representing a 50% increase in a year.

The drop in newspaper sales has, in part, also been attributed to the rising crime rate. Car hijackings and attacks on motorists have made many motorists wary of conducting transactions from their car windows. Street sales account for about a quarter of total newspaper sales.

The Star's management, marketing and editorial teams have set up a joint task force to examine circulation issues and have come up with a positive, proactive policy.

All newspapers will face similar strategy questions, but The Star's readers can rest assured that it remains Greater Johannesburg's most popular newspaper.
Censorship, publication control and arts councils must go
Business Day circulation hits record high

Business Day Reporter

(242) 601 1345

BUSINESS Day's average daily circulation reached a record high of 36,650 during the first half of this year. Circulation was 8.4% higher than the 33,923 average in the corresponding period of 1994 and higher than the 36,076 of last year's second half.

Other newspapers have yet to announce circulation figures, but yesterday The Star said it anticipated a 12% circulation drop, with Saturday Star sales falling 9.2%.

Business Day editor Jim Jones said the sales increase was most encouraging.

"Other newspapers have blamed sharp circulation drops on falling demand for information after last year's election. Business Day's readers have proved this to be incorrect. They are looking for informed comment and useful news. They want to know where their country is going.

"Advertisers realise the advantages of using an authoritative newspaper to carry their message, with the result that Business Day's advertising revenues have risen this year. Rising costs compelled us to increase the cover price, but this did not adversely affect sales."
Sowetan launches a
drive to go national

Amanda Vermoulen

SA's largest black daily newspaper, Sowetan, kicks off its campaign to establish itself nationally by printing in Durban next month.

GM Roger Wellsted said plans to print in Cape Town would follow at a later stage as the market was still being tested in that region.

The print run in Durban would be 30,000, and infrastructure and technology would be developed in the Eastern Cape next year for a move into that region. Regional editions are currently inserted in the Durban papers, and plans for a similar move in Cape Town are on the drawing board.

At present only about 2,000 copies are distributed in Cape Town.

Wellsted said Sowetan would also open advertising offices in KwaZulu-Natal next month to canvass advertising from local companies in the province. New Nation, which was acquired by Sowetan parent Corporate Africa earlier this year, has been rejuvenated and circulation steadily improved in its first auditing period from April to June.

Both newspapers would soon be available on subscription in the Johannesburg CBD and the northern suburbs. Wellsted said there was a growing base of white readers of the Sowetan.

Sowetan's average daily sales for the audited period January to June declined to 248,358 compared to 217,813 for the corresponding period last year, but the circulation was up on the July to December 1994 figures of 190,566.

Wellsted said the high January to June figures last year reflected the media attention around the election period.

New Nation's audited figures for April to June showed the weekly peaking at 20,684 copies in June, with an average of almost 18,000 sales for the three month period.
Cape Newspapers on top

STAFF REPORTER

THE newspapers in the Cape Newspapers stable have performed well in the first half of this year despite a generally depressed newspaper sales market, managing director Mr Rory Wilson said yesterday.

Both the Cape Times and the Argus continued to provide total domination of the core area, the Peninsula, and were way ahead of their nearest competitor, the Afrikaans language morning newspaper the Burger.

"Indeed, the Argus alone continues to reach more than twice the daily sale of the Burger in the Peninsula. This is where the most economically active people of the Western Cape live and these are the people whom we are single-mindedly and successfully delivering to our advertisers."

The recent relaunch of both newspapers had ensured a better service to their chosen markets and both the Cape Times and the Argus now reached different audiences (243,518). The change in readership figures for the first six months of the year reflected this, Mr Wilson said.
Argus dominates Peninsula market

THE ARGUS and Weekend Argus continue to dominate the core market of the Cape Peninsula.

Papers in the Cape Newspapers stable performed well in the first half of the year in a generally depressed newspaper sales market, says Rory Wilson, the company's managing director.

He was commenting on circulation figures for January-June.

The Argus ABC January to June 1995 was 99 014 (1994 - 97 966).

Weekend Argus ABC January to June 1995 was 119 844 (1994 - 111 964).

Cape Times ABC January to June 1995 was 34 947 (1994 - 57 815).

“We have done what we set out to do: deliver a targeted readership to our many and varied advertisers,” Mr Wilson said today.

While The Argus daily editions concentrate on the Peninsula and immediate Western Cape environs, Weekend Argus covers that area plus an extended market elsewhere.

"This is where the most economically active people of the Western Cape live and these are the people we serve," Mr Wilson said.

“Our two daily newspapers, The Argus and the Cape Times, continue to provide total dominance of our core area. They are both way, way ahead of our nearest competitor in both sales and readership in our core area, the Peninsula.

"Indeed, The Argus alone continues to reach more than twice the daily sale of Die Burger in the Peninsula. This is where the most economically active people of the Western Cape live and these are the people who we serve," Mr Wilson said.

"Both our daily newspapers have been carefully re-crafted by their editors to ensure that they better serve their chosen markets. The Cape Times and The Argus now reach different audiences and the change in our readership figures for the first six months of the year reflects this.

"Weekend Argus has also adopted a more focused strategy, providing a completely different editorial pace and content in its two editions. The Saturday reader and the Sunday reader now have a range of supplements and sections which together cater for every reading taste."
Press freedom is scarce in Africa

The access to information and media freedom is often restricted in many African countries. Government censorship, media control, and political influence limit the freedom of the press in many areas of the continent. This can result in a lack of diversity in views and opinions, as well as a reduced ability to hold authorities accountable for their actions. The consequences of these restrictions can be seen in the limited availability of independent news sources and the underrepresentation of certain perspectives in the media.

In recent years, international organizations and some African countries have taken steps to improve media freedom and ensure that the press can operate independently. However, challenges remain, including the need for stronger legal protections for journalists and the need for a more conducive environment for the free exchange of information.

Efforts to promote media freedom and ensure the free flow of information are ongoing, and there is a growing awareness of the importance of an independent press in promoting democracy and good governance. However, much work remains to be done to achieve a free and fair media landscape across the continent.
City Press group on top

OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE NASPERS Group, which owns City Press, had an excellent first quarter to June, creating a solid foundation for strong growth in the rest of the financial year, executive chairman Ton Vosloo said at the company's AGM on Friday.

Vosloo also announced that City Press had made a profit for the first time in its existence.

He said the group hoped to build on the growth patterns established in the 1994 financial year in which all the major divisions performed exceptionally well. During that period, pretax profit grew 45 percent from R156m to R226m while earnings per share, before extraordinary items, had been raised by 51 percent to 139c.

The dividend for the year had been increased by 50 percent.

Vosloo also announced plans to restructure the Naspers group in order to increase the tradeability of the shares in the unlisted Naspers Holdings. The latter was created at the time of the listing of Naspers in September last year to safeguard control of the group.

It was anticipated at the time that trading in Holdings's shares would be cumbersome because of the tender system used. "As a result, the gap between the price of Naspers's quoted shares and Holdings' unquoted shares widened. A further problem was that future rights issues by Naspers could dilute Holdings' interest."

"However, since the listing of Naspers, the rules of the JSE have been changed in such a way that the shares of Holdings can now be listed without control of Naspers being jeopardised in the process," Vosloo said.

The scheme for restructuring was being finalised and should be in place before the end of the year.

Vosloo said among the highlights of the year were the excellent results achieved by City Press and Drum magazine, which increased circulation dramatically in the six months to June.

The group's three Afrikaans dailies gained more in-circulation than any of their competitors and enjoyed strong advertising support, Vosloo said.
Public servants could fight new 'glasnost' Bill

CAPE TOWN — SA's public servants were likely to "fight" new laws which would give the public greater access to government documents through SA's Open Democracy Bill, the house communications committee heard yesterday.

This had been so with public servants in other countries where similar freedom of information laws had been enacted, Canadian information expert Thomas Riley told the committee.

"The law will go through a difficult process. Public servants will fight it before a culture of releasing documents is established," he said.

The Bill was a "step up" on the US Freedom of Information Act, said Riley, who helped to draw up a code on access to government information for the Hong Kong government in 1994.

The Bill detailed the administrative steps to be followed to assist members of the public, even illiterates who wanted information.

When the Bill was passed SA would become the 15th country in the world to have freedom of information laws, Riley said.

While the Bill correctly restricted public access to certain types of government information, Riley said he knew of no instance where information released had harmed government.

"It might have embarrassed the government but never harmed it. Of course, though, there is no such thing as total openness. Government cannot operate in a fishbowl. There must be a certain amount of secrecy." In 1969, of the 531,000 requests made to the US government for information only 4% of the requests had been turned down.

While the cost of implementing freedom of information laws was low — in Canada the federal government spent only a few million dollars annually — the legislation would help democratise government institutions. — Sapa.
Independent’s new launches pay off

BY CHARLOTTE MATHEWS

Strong advertising and circulation revenue boosted attributable profit from Independent Newspapers, formerly Argus Newspapers, by 45 percent to R21.3 million in the six months to June compared with the same period last year.

"It has been a busy half-year with the successful launch of The Sunday Independent, Sunday Life and Business Report, and the relaunch of The Cape Times and The Mercury," said John Featherstone, the chief executive.

Turnover grew 20 percent to R418.3 million on which trading income rose by 43 percent to R40.2 million, showing operating margins at close to 10 percent from 8 percent previously.

Asked about the costs of the new launches, Tony Howard, the financial director of Independent Newspapers, said the board had decided it would be fairer to match costs with revenue since, for example, only one issue of The Sunday Independent and Sunday Life magazine had appeared by the end of June.

Featherstone said increased revenue from these initiatives would start to flow in the second half of the year.

An abnormal item of R44.6 million (R1.9 million) was incurred on the costs of the move to a full-page make-up system.

On earnings of 47.1c (33.0c) a share, a dividend of 20c (16.9c) was declared, covered nearly two-and-a-half times by earnings. That cover is in line with the dividend declared last December and it is likely to be similar in the future.

The group has capital commitments of R25.7 million on the costs of installing the new electronic pagination package.

Featherstone said Business Report and The Sunday Independent had proven more successful than expected and had significantly boosted revenues, both nationally and regionally.

Additional sources of revenue, over the next few months, such as the printing of educational supplements, were being investigated.

Deon du Plessis, the managing director of Gauteng Newspapers, said plans for the future included the launch of The Star and SA Times International in London and the possibility of moving into electronic publishing.
Newspaper firm beats lower circulation blues

Marcia Klein

INDEPENDENT Newspapers — formerly Argus Newspapers — increased earnings by 42.7% to R17.1c (33c) a share in the six months to June despite lower circulation levels.

Results are not strictly comparable due to the change in year-end from March to December and the unbundling of the company from Argus Holdings. The company, whose publications include The Star, The Saturday Star, The Sunday Independent and publications in Pretoria, Natal and the Cape, increased turnover almost 20% to R18.2m (R15.9m) and operating profit 43.4% to R10.9m (R7.6m).

Comparative figures for the previous year have been restated to reflect the change in its interest in The Sowetan from being wholly owned to an associate and the elimination of certain abnormal items included in the year to March 1994, its former year-end.

After abnormal items of R1.4m (R1.2m), interest paid and income from investments, pre-tax income was R35.1% higher at R34.6m (R25.6m) Net attributable income was R21.3m against R14.6m, and a dividend of 20c a share was declared.

CE John Featherstone said the results were achieved "notwithstanding the decline in circulation levels industrywide".

The results placed Independent Newspapers on track to report the strong earnings growth predicted in the annual report.

The group had benefited from strong advertising and circulation revenue, "the latter at some cost to sales levels in common with much of the industry".

The launch of Business Report and The Sunday Independent had "proved more successful than expected and boosted revenues on both a national and regional basis".

Research had shown a higher readership of Business Report than expected, "more than four times" that of Business Day. It was also well received in Pretoria and Cape Town.

Sunday Independent had only been published for six weeks, but initial indications were that it would "exceed forecast circulation (30 000 copies) by 15% to 20% this year alone".
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Flattering earnings

Since Tony O'Reilly's Independent Group took over the former Argus Newspapers there have been a number of changes, including the name change of the SA operations and a new year-end. Consequently, interim results to end-June offer the first clear view of Independent Newspapers since the change in control.

The shape of the numbers is attractive — an increase of almost 20% in turnover, with margins which have widened from 8% to nearly 10% and a healthy looking 45% increase in attributable earnings. But a number of factors — not apparent in the accounts — flatter the performance.

First is the low base that the interims are coming off. The previous period included three good months of revenue as political advertisements were placed before the elections and reader interest in the run-up to the elections was high.

In the second quarter, though, circulation and revenue fell dramatically as major strikes hit the motor and retail industries and business productivity declined with the high number of holidays. The change of year-end from March allows calculation of quarterly results, and this shows Independent Newspapers making an attributable loss of about R600 000 in the second quarter of 1994.

Results have also been boosted by a bold strategy of increasing cover prices, on average by about 40%, and, perversely, by declining circulation, which must lower production costs. This, with advertising volumes which management says were "firm," fed the increase in turnover.

The problem is that it could be a short-term benefit if circulation does not improve. Sales volumes are down across the board. For example, latest audited figures show The Star losing 12.5% over the same period. If the downward trend continues, advertising rates could come under pressure.

The third issue is the most contentious. Unquantified launch costs of three new titles — Business Report, The Sunday Independent and Sunday Life (the new Sunday magazine) — have been deferred until they can be matched by revenue from the publications.

Financial director Tony Howard says that the board took this decision because little revenue had been generated by the new papers in the reporting period. He adds that the final figure for the launches has not been calculated and, even if he had it, he could probably not disclose the amounts.

These must be significant. "Had we included the costs now, it would have unfairly depressed shareholders' earnings. They will be brought to book to match future revenue from the new publications," he says adding that this may take longer than the next six months. "It's possible the launch costs will not be seen in full-year results Independent Newspapers could choose to write them off over a number of years. It's an odd accounting practice, offsetting expenses already incurred against hypothetical future revenue."

Perhaps shareholders would have preferred to take the costs upfront and enjoy the full and undiluted benefits of revenue from the new publications later. That is what other companies have done.

The share price — R12.75 this week — has firmed since earlier this year, but is only marginally above year-ago levels and below the R15 high soon after listing. These results lower the p/e to a more realistic 12.6.

The FM felt the share was expensive in the past — it looks more fairly priced now as full-year EPS will probably increase by more than 30%.
CALL FOR GOVT TO FUND BLACK MEDIA PROJECTS

Editors differ on foreign ownership

BLACK EDITORS have called for measures to be included in the constitution that would ensure the media are no longer monopolised by white owners. ANTHONY JOHNSON, Political Correspondent, reports.

BLACK and white editors are united in calling for rights to freedom of expression to be bequeathed in the final constitution — but differ sharply on the effect of foreign ownership on press freedom.

In evidence presented to a sub-committee of the Constitutional Assembly yesterday, differences also emerged between the Black Editors Forum (BEF) and the Conference of Editors on how diversity in the press should be achieved.

The chairman of the BEF and editor of Tribute magazine, Mr Thami Mazwa, said the constitution should limit foreign ownership to 20% stake.

"It would be folly to allow the media to come under foreign control as they would "dance to the tune of foreigners", he said.

The BEF called for anti-trust or anti-monopoly restrictions that would facilitate the entry of players from the black communities into the media to ensure diversity.

It said the constitution should also enable the government to finance media operations owned by entrepreneurs from the African, coloured and Indian communities.

Imbalances

"The constitution must provide for the eradication of the imbalances of the past to ensure that the media do not continue to be in the hands of the white minority," the BEF said.

The political editor of the Sowetan and former president of the Media Workers Association of SA (Mwasa), Mr Mathiusu Feeder, said the dominance by four major newspaper groups did not allow for freedom of expression in practice.

The editor of the Natal Mercury and deputy chairman of the Conference of Editors, Mr John Putten, said the press was undergoing a transition that could be facilitated by foreign capital.

Foreign money had helped the alternative media and could now boost diversity.

Sunday Times editor Mr Ken Owen questioned the practicability of trying to restrict foreign influence. "What do we do, shoot down their satellites?"

The Conference of Editors asked the constitution be amended to elevate freedom of expression to the highest values recognised by the constitution.

It also asked that common law be brought under the constitution's sway to halt the law of defamation being used to curtail the press's scope to raise matters of
A remarkable 'gift' from Govt – SA media will 

cumbersome
t

The most democratic piece of legislation yet drafted in this country, other than the Constitution itself, will soon be ready for adoption by the Cabinet and could become law early next year.

This is the Open Democracy Bill, which quite literally throws open the whole of the government to public scrutiny.

Any member of the public, which also means any newspaper, television or radio reporter, will have the right to attend any meeting of a governmental body, and to have access to any document or record relating to the affairs of such a body, except for certain restricted categories of information which are precisely defined in the proposed new law.

There is also a 'whistle-blower's' clause to protect any government employee who reveals information to the media or the authorities about malpractices in the department where he or she works.

There are only 14 other countries in the world which have such freedom of information laws, entrenching the principle that citizens have a right to know what their government is doing, and that the government has a legal obligation to tell them.

With the clause in the Constitution guaranteeing freedom of speech and the media, this places us not only in an altogether different league from the rest of the African continent, but right up among the handful of real democracies in the world.

Amid all the carping and scepticism one hears at the moment, I hope this fact is appreciated. Given what we were told would happen if South Africa ever got majority rule, it is astounding. And a revelation, surely, of the extent to which the people of this nation were indoctrinated.

What surprises me, though, is that the media, which stands to be the main beneficiary of this new law, has shown so little interest in it.

Input

The task force drafting the Bill has held a series of workshops around the country for nearly a year, listening to input from a wide range of organisations and individuals — trade unions, human rights organisations, universities, law schools, community groups, the Rural Foundation, even the Development Bank. But few of the country's newspaper editors or other senior journalists have bothered to attend.

Now, inexplicably, one publication, the Financial Mail, is campaigning against the Bill. Its reasons are beyond my understanding.

"Even a superficial examination of the Bill," the magazine said in a leading article, "reveals Government's inability to understand the concept of press freedom and the public's right to be informed."

The FM goes on to contend that far from promoting open government, the Bill will achieve the opposite. "It will effectively give government at all levels powers to manage news and create additional obstacles to the free flow of information."

It must have been a superficial examination indeed, for I have studied this Bill in detail at various stages of its evolution — it is now in the fourth version of its ninth draft — and I cannot for the life of me see how such a conclusion can be drawn.

How can giving reporters the right to attend meetings of governmental bodies, such as the boards of parastatal corporations, be seen as restricting the press or obstructing the free flow of information?

How can giving reporters the right to access to any document, or record, or piece of information in the possession of a governmental body, be seen as some new form of censorship or news management?

True, there are categories of information that are excluded — the invasion of privacy of individuals, certain national security information about employees, matters that might prejudice law enforcement or legal proceedings, that might jeopardise state security or damage a governmental body's economic or commercial interests, that kind of thing.

Some of these exemption clauses may be open to question, some may yet be amended. That is what the workshops have been about. But none, absolutely none, removes any existing right. These are exemptions from a legal right of access that we have never had before.

Cumbersome

It is true, too, that some of the procedures to gain access to information are slower and more cumbersome than they need to be, and there is a compendium of appeals if the information is refused on the grounds that it falls under one of the restrictive clauses. But the sensible thing is surely to press for improvements to these provisions rather than to denounce the Bill as a whole because of them.

Already such discussions have resulted in the changing of a clause to provide for urgent requests, which will enable one to get the information within five days instead of the standard thirty.

I certainly would like to see the appeal procedures simplified and I shall be arguing for this. But whatever the outcome of those representations, I recognise the Bill for what it is - a landmark breakthrough for the media, for the right of every citizen to know what the Government is doing, and thus for the building of an open democracy.

And, of course, it could be the very framework for the building of a publication industry worthy of the name.
info services,
says Mbeki

SLAVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

GOVERNMENT information services — previously slammed for duplication and inefficiency — should be transformed into a centralised agency, says Deputy President Thabo Mbeki.

Mr Mbeki is political head of the present SA Communications Services, which has been criticised by some as too much of a relic of the old order.

The new centralised service could gather, analyse and process information for all government structures.

The call was made at the start of a conference of government spokespeople, called against a background of government concern about its troubled image and wasteful duplication of effort.

In further calls, designed to usher in a new information age, Mr Mbeki said:

■ All "unwarranted" limitations on freedom of information and expression would be done away with in the new constitution.

■ The media had to be beyond the control of government.

■ South Africa had to take swift steps to get on to the information superhighway.

He repeated a call for debate on a "government slot" in the media.

The conference, being held in Wagenhuskraans in Arniston, is a prelude to the drafting of government information policy.

Mr Mbeki asked delegates, who included ministerial public relations officers, editors and academics, to produce concrete proposals for government consideration.

In a reference to the row about the SA Communications Service, Mr Mbeki said the conference would have to "look into this organisation in a purposeful and meaningful manner".

Issues included whether the government information service should be merely an arm of the executive, whether it should be a statutory body, and whether the information portfolio required a fully-fledged ministry.
No govt ads for ‘biased’ papers

ARNISTON: A resolution to effectively penalise newspapers without “verifiable affirmative action” policies was adopted by a conference of government communicators at Arniston, yesterday.

The proposal seeks to ensure the government places its advertising in "appropriate community media, publications and newspaper groups that implement verifiable affirmative action.”

Delegates, including central and provincial government spokesmen, journalists and communications experts, met to devise a new government communication and information policy.

The lack of media diversity and the question of ownership and management of newspapers produced heated debate.

The resolution was a watered-down version of another, rejected by delegates. The resolution reflected strong opposition to newspaper monopolies.

Delegates noted that access to the media was largely limited "to those who had benefited most from the country’s economic and political circumstances.”

These interests enjoyed disproportionate access and undue influence on the outcome and directions of debates. This limited “the growth and vigour of democracy.”

Delegates resolved that government should use its advertising muscle to ensure greater media diversity, and that control and ownership should reflect South African society.

The special communication task force to investigate government communication policy and structures would have to “formulate criteria and mechanisms to test the implementation of affirmative action.” — Sapa

‘Pandering publications don’t get read’

ARNISTON: The more a newspaper pleases the ruling elite, the less likely it is to be read, Sunday Times editor Mr. Ken Owen told delegates at a conference of communicators here at the weekend.

On media diversity, Mr. Owen said the problem was not a lack of different voices, but rather that the ANC leadership did not like the voices it heard.

He felt dissatisfaction with the invention of a monopoly where none existed. This had to be seen in the context of criticism “notably from (Deputy President) Thabo Mbeki” that newspapers did not fairly report what the government was doing.

"I think most of our newspapers are dreadful. Our difficulty is not to find newspapers for black editors who have suffered discrimination, our difficulty is to find competent journalists, at almost any level, to keep our newspapers going,” Mr. Owen said. — Sapa
Foreign ownership of the media: Probe urged

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

The government is to be asked to set up an independent probe into foreign ownership of the media. 13/6/95

It will be asked to shift its advertising to media practising "verifiable affirmative action".

These were among resolutions adopted at a "conference of communicators" in Arniston at the weekend.

The conference was attended by national and provincial ministerial and departmental liaison officers, academics and senior journalists.

Resolutions aimed at breaking up the partly foreign-owned "cartel" of the four major newspaper groups were sponsored by a group at the conference which believed the mainstream media did not serve the interests of the majority of South Africans.

There was heated debate on the proposals, with concerns expressed that limitations on foreign ownership of the media could damage foreign investment across the board.

Critics of proposals to subsidise community media and news organisations practising affirmative action said pumping government money into publications was no guarantee that anyone would read them.

Deputy-President Thabo Mbeki will be asked to appoint a task group to investigate issues raised at the conference.

The group, which must be appointed by September 15, will consist of from five to seven eminent communicators and will have to report by January.

Among its terms of reference will be to find ways to improve communication between the government and poor, mainly illiterate, communities in rural areas.

A further conference will be held to discuss the task group's report.

*See page 17.*
Press role 'accepted'

(Cape Town) Jan 24 1985

BY PATRICK SULGER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — The Government accepted that the media could play the role of "critical commentator" but did not believe that government-media relations should be hostile, according to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki.

Mbeki made the comments in his opening address at a conference of government communicators held at Arniston in the Western Cape at the weekend.

He called for the conference earlier this year after he had repeatedly appealed to the media to adjust itself. He alleged at the time that the media was carrying on its role as an opponent of the Government even though democracy had replaced apartheid.

At the conference Mbeki reaffirmed the Government's commitment to freedom of expression.

The Government had an obligation to keep people informed of its activities and this obligation should be seen in the context of the Government's reconstruction and development efforts, he said.

Two academic speakers — Guy Berger who is head of Rhodes University's media studies department, and the University of Fort Hare's Professor Murej Olienio Mak'Ochieng — both advised against an earlier government plan to apply to the SABC for a special government slot to put across its views.
Govt and media: it takes two to tango

T his past weekend an impor-
tant event—Government-sponsored "con-
ference of communicators" took
place in the Western Cape. It was
attended by the political editor of The Star, to present a
report on the strengths and weak-
nesses of Government communi-
tication. Owing to ill-health I could
not attend, but colleague Patrick
Bulger read my prepared speech, a
short version of which follows.

About a year ago, Deputy Presi-
dent Thabo Mbeki got entangled in a
furor over an alleged match with the
South African press, particularly the
print media. The row had been oc-
casioned by remarks he had made in
an address to the Cape Town Press
Club on Sunday following the
elections.

Mbeki had raised a number of im-
portant points including the racial
composition of the top echelons of
the country's newspapers. He had
pointed out, quite unusually, that ex-
cept in the case of the two newspa-
pers aimed primarily at a black
readership, Sowetan and City Press,
top role-playing and decision-making
positions were monopolised by white
males.

This position, Mbeki had argued,
could not but influence the way de-
velopments were presented and in-
terpreted.

Now, the local press has operated
under very harsh conditions in the
past and is indeed still smarting from
the heavy restrictions of the era of
P W Botha’s State of Emergency. It
is, therefore, sensitive — perhaps too
sensitive — to perceived threats to
its freedom.

So although Mbeki’s criticism was
valid and remains so, the Press
reacted out of context, angrily hitting
back at the deputy president, por-
traying him as someone less than
happy with the Fourth Estate’s newly
acquired and constitutionally pro-
tected freedom.

But that was not all he had said.
He had asked whether, in the after-
math of our democracy, the Press
did not want to take a long and
critical look at itself and see if it
should not now adopt a more "con-
structive" role instead of adopting the
hostile posture it had "correctly" adopted
with regard to the previous apart-
headed governments.

That, if the truth be told, was what
led to the attack on the deputy presi-
dent.

Clearly, the government has a re-
sponsibility to communicate with the
country’s citizens, and some of us do
approve Mbeki’s concern about a
hostile Press more interested in sen-
sationalism than in sensational
but nevertheless important
Government developments.

But communication is always a
two-way process, and what the pub-
lic gets to know depends not only on
the Fourth Estate but also on Govern-
ment itself.

Let us be frank with one another.
Boring government announcements
or developments, like other news,
competes with the important and
perhaps "sensational" or "interesting"
news — as it is often de-
scribed peripherally — for space.

We need to accept Government and
Press have different agendas. By
their very nature, governments want
to inform the citizens what their suc-
cesses are, and they want to keep
hidded away the things which may
embarrass them.

Comparison

The Press wants to inform the pub-
lic about the good (and bad) things
Government and in the country, but
especially to disclose those govern-
ments want hidden away.

You may dislike the comparison,
but people employed by the various
arms of the Government are like as-
sen and saleswomen. You have a
product to sell, and that product is
your department, ministry or, indeed,
the Government.

How well you succeed at your job
will determine, to a certain extent,
the amount and kind of publicity your
department, ministry or, indeed,
the Government gets.

Nobody is guaranteed any pos-
tive publicity if you do your
homework, but this much I can say:
the amount and kind of publicity
received by your ministry will be
directly proportional to the effort you
put into your work. With a bit of skill
and expertise, even the most adverse
publicity can be turned around.

It must be said, however, that it is
time always better to be on the offensive
rather than on the defensive, to be
pro-active rather than reactive with
regard to any news. That means that
if you know something negative about
your ministry that you would know
be public knowledge, you do not wait
for it to be made public by others and
then react to destroy it. Your reac-
tion or denial can never be as
effective as the original story to
which you are reacting, no matter how
unfair it may be.

What would be better would be for
you to take the initiative to make the
information public. That way you
have a better chance of affecting the
way it is presented to the public.

Let us make an example. About a
month ago some newspapers ran re-
ports that Reconstruction and De-
velopment Programme (RDP) money
allocated to the schools in our town’s
feeding scheme in the Eastern Cape
had allegedly ended up in the po-
kets of some corrupt individuals.

In its response, the government
denied the alleged corruption, but
said it had appointed the investigat-
ing team which had unearthed the
fraud in the first place.

Minister-without-Portfolio Jay Nau-
doo, who has been singed out for
particularlly vicious but unfair criti-
cism, assures me that his depart-
ment had indeed appointed the team
which unearthed the alleged fraud.

And that the Government was in
pos-
session of the information long be-
fore it was made public. Had Ndou’s
ministry gone public with the infor-
\mation as soon as it received it, it
would have come out on the side of
angels, and credit would rightly have
gone to it for discovering and ex-
posing, exposing it and taking concrete
ac-
tion to deal with it.

The major weakness of Govern-
ment communication, therefore, is its
ineffectiveness instead of being pro-
active.

We all need to realise that ours is
a mutually beneficial relationship.
We need you in the Government be-
cause we have a responsibility to
inform our readers, you need us in
the Press, for you have a responsibility to
inform our citizens.

I am sure you can also say the
same about us, but one sometimes
senses that some among you feel
they do us a favour by making either
information or our ministers avail-
able to us.

1, for instance, have started invit-
ing political leaders to a lun-
ner as well as top private and manage-
ment from the main political parties
as well as top business and manage-
ment as well as top business and manage-
ment.

This, as far as we are concerned,
is an important step in our effort to
write a history that we can be proud
of. For it is an app

PRINT industry is dominated by monopolies, Mbeki’s conference concludes

BY PATRICK BULGER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — A conference of government communicators has called for a wide-ranging investigation into the South African media, including its ownership and affirmative action.

The conference also called on the Government to direct its multi-billion-rand advertising budget to newspapers which have implemented affirmative-action policies.

The conference said it would ask the Government to appoint an independent task group to conduct the investigation and to report its findings to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki by the end of January.

The Government is not obliged to accept the recommendations following the three-day conference held at Arnum in the Western Cape at the weekend.

But the presence at the conference of about 150 senior spokesmen for the Government at national and provincial level, including representatives from Mbeki’s office, suggested the Government will agree to the request to set up the task group.

The conference said it wanted the task group formed by the middle of next month and that its findings would culminate in a policy paper which could form the basis of legislation by the middle of next year.

The conference was called by Mbeki against a background of government dissatisfaction with the way it is being portrayed in the media, especially the print media. It was also intended to define a role for the SA Communication Service (Sacs), which has been criticized for its role as an apologist for the previous government.

Repeated allegations that the English press in particular was monopolistic led to demands from the floor that the monopoly be broken up.

Also nevany criticised was foreign ownership of the media. The example of Independent Newspapers Plc of Ireland’s purchase of the former Argus titles attracted criticism but a suggestion that foreign ownership be restricted to 20% of equity was not endorsed.

The assault on the perceived monopoly was led by Enterprise magazine publisher Tian-mi Mazwi, who said black banks had no “mentionable stake” in the four major newspaper groups.

“The mainstream media, like many other institutions in the country, is still consciously and unconsciously clinging to the past. Appropriate steps will have to be taken to make it more South African,” he said.

Sunday Times editor Ken Owen, among a group of prominent editors present, argued that the monopoly was a myth. “The truth is that South Africa’s newspaper market is open, fluid and highly dangerous to existing products that do not keep pace with its demands.”

Citing the disappearance of several titles in the past two decades, Owen argued there was a “vigorous market, full of surprises and opportunities.”

The conference resolutions contained three broad recommendations.

The first related to Sacs and upheld the need for a centralized government communication body to manage the Government’s corporate image, monitor the media, undertake research, co-ordinate government communications programmes and provide training and capacity building.

The second related to setting up a task group to establish “criteria and mechanisms to test the implementation of affirmative action” and to probe government support for community media training, limitations on cross-media ownership and foreign ownership, and tariffs on items like TV and radio sets.

The third said the task group should vet all major communications projects, including those launched by Sacs, and which have long-term implications for government communications policy.

Among the more controversial proposals was that dealing with government advertising. Although the Government does not yet have a policy on affirmative action, it will be asked to define what criteria would constitute such a policy.

On the basis of these, advertising would be directed at publications that have implemented affirmative action policies.
Giving the state a voice

The Government has begun the long process of changing its relationship with the media to be that of a partner in communications and RDP. Political Editor Mathatha Tsedu explains why

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki ... working out a new communications policy for the Government.

Fundamental rights

The conference also noted that access to information and freedom of expression were fundamental human rights "and that people have both the right to know and the right to communicate.

It called for the task group to ensure a policy that would enable more effective communication between citizens, between citizens and government, and that communication of government policies and activities reach all sections of the population.

This, the conference noted, would need the use of existing media such as print, electronic and outdoor, adding to these media by facilitating greater diversity within print and electronic media, and the use of the Internet (the computer-linked communications system that is growing worldwide).

Spectral emphasis would have to be placed on government support for community media, limitations on foreign ownership and control of local media, training and capacity development, cross-media ownership, the dropping of import tariffs on radio and TV production equipment, and the formulation of a policy and criteria as well as mechanisms to test the implementation of affirmative action in the media.

Emergency funding

Regarding affirmative action, the conference called on the Government to use its monorail and advertising muscle by placing advertisements in newspapers and other media that show compliance with affirmative action in their employment codes and ownership stakes.

It called for emergency funding for community media, especially the newly licensed radio stations, that were unable to take off due to lack of finance.

This funding was to ensure that there was diversity in the media, which was presently a monopoly of four print giants and the SABC.

A lively debate ensued — with sharp differences that almost ran along racial lines — on the incentive clause for affirmative action, with pro-print people saying that insisting on equity participation was tampering with private enterprise.

The feeling was, however, largely that unless that monopoly in the print media was broken, the struggle for an effective communication policy by Government would be futile as they would be hoping for understanding by forces which are themselves interested in guarding their wealth, amassed through conquest and exploitation of workers.

The conference ended on a high note and the task group now has to be appointed.

But the challenge, as the BEF has noted, remains: Can this Government of mainly black people rely on the benevolence of a white-owned and -controlled media to communicate its policies?

Mbeki will probably supply some answers on September 9.
Newspaper reality eye-opener

Thami Mazwai enjōy it to accept the reality that monopolistic conditions prevail in the South African print media and that white middle class males dominate the media agenda. But is this the reality?

Mazwai, who is chairman of the Black Editors' Forum and editor of the prospering Enterprise magazine, used the argument at a conference of senior government communication personnel at Arniston in the Western Cape this past weekend.

The conference was called by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki who has argued that while government is duty-bound to communicate itself to the citizenry, this is not happening for a variety of reasons.

Whether the communications conference correctly assessed these reasons is open to question. For a start, the conference would have benefited from a more head statement of the problem.

What exactly is that problem? It cannot be bad publicity alone because along with the Allan Boesak-type scandals, government has been lauded and praised by a press that Democratic Party leader Tony Leon says is supine.

On the one hand government argues that newspapers lack credibility and that they only reach 5% of the population anyway but government's close scrutiny of what the newspapers are saying suggests that the newspapers have a level of credibility that far surpasses television and radio.

Interestingly, the SABC has been the subject of a far-reaching process of ideological and racial cleansing that has not assisted its own attempts at credibility in the runup to last April's election and in the preceding four years, the ANC showed great skill at putting across its message.

Then, the monopoly argument was rather less stentive. The criticism of newspapers' ownership continued with some delegates objecting to the sale of Argus Newspapers to Independent Newspapers Plc of Ireland.

Nobody recalled that President Nelson Mandela's close personal relationship with the Independent's Tony O'Reilly was as important a factor in the sale as was the alleged mineowners' device to sell the Argus titles to head off an ANC nationalisation bid.

The spotlighting of ownership suggested to some a more sinister agenda. And Mazwai's injunction to delegates to accept the reality of white domination strengthened this perception.

He quoted figures of black staff on newspapers like The Star that were so ludicrously inaccurate as to bring into question his motives. To allege as he did that there are 20 senior whites to four senior blacks on The Star is absurd. He then further suggests that even if his "estimates" are wrong, it is the perception of the facts rather than the facts themselves that should inform a course of action.

The reality, as Sunday Times editor Ken Owen pointed out, is that the newspaper market is highly fluid and dangerous. Readerships are plummeting on all but the major black titles like The Sowetan and City Press.

What some in the government really want is a major title like The Star or the Sunday Times to promote the ANC's hegemonic ambitions.

More important than ownership was the issue of credibility. Owen said, suggesting that the government could annex all the newspapers it wanted to but if in doing so those newspapers lost credibility, the whole exercise would have been in vain.

ANC MP Stel Maceozoma reminded the conference what communication could not achieve and that communication was no substitute for workable government policies that uplift the people. In other words, the shack dweller wants a house and running water, not a barrage of sophistry to explain his predicament.

The conference's call for government's multi-million rand advertising budget to be directed at newspapers that implement affirmative action was transparently venal.

With a bit of luck the voices of reason will make themselves heard when and if the government accepts the recommendation to appoint a task group to look into all these issues.

As a priority, the task group must rigorously investigate the reality of newspaper ownership and black staffing.

It will be interesting then to compare its findings with Thami Mazwai's reality.
‘Prevent newspaper control’

Cape Town — Newspaper owners should be barred from owning controlling shares in radio or television stations, the Independent Broadcasting Authority recommended in yesterday’s report.

The IBA said a 15% shareholding would constitute control. It says a newspaper owner should not be allowed control in an area where his publication had more than 15% of total newspaper readership, and its circulation substantially overlapped with the radio or TV licence target audience.

“The effect of this regulation is that the newspaper will still be able to acquire or retain a financial interest in a radio or television licence, but may not be in a position of control over such licence if its readership exceeds the prescribed figure,” the report said.

Exemptions from the restrictions on control would only be granted where “good cause” was shown.

The IBA said its recommendations might need to be reconsidered when anti-trust legislation was reviewed.

The major newspaper groups had argued that media economies demanded that they rationalise and synergise their media production facilities to achieve economies of scale — Sapa.
Leon slams 'ANC attack on freedom of the Press'

**Political Correspondent**

The ANC and its allies have started a campaign against Press freedom which could stifle foreign investment in South Africa, said Democratic Party leader Tony Leon.

He said the campaign began more than a month ago with an attack by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki on "predominantly white-owned, white-edited and largely white-written newspapers and magazines".

It had gathered momentum with the resignation of Khulu Sibiyia from the Conference of Editors.

Mr Leon said Mr. Sibiyia had said black media ownership was more important than Press freedom.

"Hot on its heels, the ANC's official viewpoint was expressed by spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa who stated that the sale of media businesses to foreigners was an attempt to keep media resources out of the hands of black South Africans."

Mr Leon said the ANC's viewpoint would have seemed more sincere, if muddle-headed, had they had a sustained programme for affirmative action and empowerment.

He said the ANC's ire presumably was aimed at Tony O'Reilly and Independent Newspapers - "a most unlikely target, since Dr O'Reilly has invested nearly R1 billion in this country in little over two years."

Had other investors shown similar sentiment, the economy would be far more robust.

Subordinating Press freedom in favour of so-called black empowerment had nothing to do with community upliftment and everything to do with muzzling the growth of vibrant, critical and diverse media, he said.
Red tape is tying up the news

BY ANNA COX
HOPEWELL RADEBE
AND LORNA ZOKUFA

Obtaining information from officials of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council has proved to be a daunting task entailing the council's communication bureaucracy. The Star's city desk reporters have discovered.

The council's policy is that reporters should put their questions in writing and fax them to the communications department, who will then liaise with the department heads to respond, also in writing.

But, when this is done, reporters often find that it takes two to three days, sometimes even a week, before they receive any response, regardless of urgency and daily deadlines. Some questions are completely ignored.

Questions relating to matters in the substructures take even longer as they are sent by the communications department to the substructure for a reply. Once received, GJTMG officials still have to approve them.

The response is often short and lacks substance. For follow-up questions, a repetition of the whole process is necessary.

Last week at a press conference, councillor Lindsay Bromme, who is the chairman of the housing and urbanisation committee, accused the press of not properly informing the public, especially about the Molfal Park land invasion.

DP councillor Anchen Dreyer said she recently proposed a motion that, as was policy with former councils, and in the interests of transparency and democracy, all heads of departments should be allowed to speak directly to the press.

However, the ANC and the NP voted against it and the motion was defeated.
Giving the media a black eye

Thami Mzimai: "My task is to let blacks see themselves in a positive light."

Photographs: HENRIK TWENDEL

Thami Mzimai of the Black Editors Forum in THE MARK GEVERS PROFILE

The New Age Saturday 16 to 21 November 1995

Thami Mzimai, the editor of the Black Editors Forum (BEF) gathered to contemplate the relationship of his organisation to the press and freedom of practice.

The BEF is trying to redress the imbalance against blacks in the media.

Thami Mzimai is a member of the editorial board of the Black Editors Forum (BEF), which is an organisation of black editors and writers in South Africa. The BEF was established in 1993 to promote the interests of black editors and writers in the media.

Thami Mzimai is a well-known figure in the South African media industry and has been involved in various media-related initiatives. He has been a vocal advocate for the rights of black editors and writers in the media and has worked to promote the interests of black journalists in the industry.

Thami Mzimai is also known for his role as an editor and writer. He has written extensively on media and journalism-related issues and has published articles in various media outlets.

Thami Mzimai's work has been influential in shaping the discourse around media and journalism in South Africa. He is a respected figure in the media industry and his contributions to the field have been widely recognised.

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Ndebele under attack at tense Turfloop

W hen Nkabuloe Ndebele took up his position as vice-chancellor of the University of the North over two years ago, he was glowing with optimism about the university's future. His enthusiasm was not without its "tremendous potential", but "not to be a part of the process mapping that potential"

Now, staff are on strike, the university's board has been suspended and a number of students has united against him and is demanding his resignation. Where did the archetypical university administrator go wrong? He went awry. When the problems hit one by one of the country's poorest universities, they were too huge for one person - even the merest principled academic to bear - to solve. So the students who commented at the university's annual general meeting that the university's board was not fit for purpose, it is no longer fit for purpose. We believe education is a human right. We believe that the students who today are exerting their right to participate in the university's governance are not learners. They are not students. They are not part of the institution.

"We are not aware of him travelling to make funds and project the image of our institution, but as the principal, he has to make the ultimate decisions. Our grievances are not directed at him as a person but at his office. While we do not have the inside story of the students is the fact that Nkabuloe is a lack of communication with him as he is away there. Zuma is busy trying to find out about "the issue of staff and students problems that are widespread."

As South African Students Congress (SASC) president, Nkabuloe Makhura put it, "the students feel that they are being left behind by the university. The problem at Turfloop is that there is no back-up staff. When he is not there, the campus is left without a leader."

While Sasc's national office does not support the strike, it supports the students' "position that he should stay and deal with the problems at Turfloop. He is the only person that can replace him. He will be leaving the campus on three occasions this week, both in the morning and in the afternoon."

The Sasc and its local branch also support the strike, also demanding the resignation of Nkabuloe's assistant, John Wolhuter, whom they accuse of being snoopy among warring university workers. "At the moment in the university campus, we need demands that come out of the blue that have not been given any prior warning before he was dragged off to the university."

Nkabuloe said he would not resign unless students realized the university has to meet demands that he had made at an emergency meeting. "We have not gathered all the information that you have responded to, but we believe you are being overcharged, we challenge you to present your case."

"Nkabuloe said he would not resign unless students realized the university faces a strategic planning process of the university to ensure that all state commitments are met. However, demands that he has met at an emergency meeting scheduled for this weekend, which he had "urgently prepared a strategic plan to resolve the university's financial problems."

One of the students' major grievances is that the university has been unable to provide basic services, including accommodation, housing and transportation. The university has been unable to provide basic services, including accommodation, housing and transportation. The university has been unable to provide basic services, including accommodation, housing and transportation.

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Rooiwal revisits

THE SOUTH AFRICA Campus has installed a very effective new security system at Cape Town offices. The security system is that of Philip Dester, the party's national communications manager, who has spent a week out of his office as he has not yet acquired the relevant keys.

Gogo is watching you

(ABRC) the wave technology is getting the better of us. As Gogo, who was sold to Microsoft recently acquired a cellphone, reports that Vodacom has come up with a selective solution for those who need to pay their bills. On switching on their phones, the default is to receive a message instructing them to pay up. When they get seriously into debt, every call they make gets automatically forwarded to the accounting department in their service provider. Oom Krisjan is trying to think that maybe Tomorl is not a bad name after all.

Krisjan's kidnappings

"WE want to warn very strongly that we shall not accept any situation when men are forced to submit applications when the employers are already given to certain women in bad when having sex." - Oom Krisjan, Police Province Education Ministry

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"We are not aware of him travelling to make funds and project the image of our institution, but as the principal, he has to make the ultimate decisions. Our grievances are not directed at him as a person but at his office. While we do not have the inside story of the students is the fact that Nkabuloe is a lack of communication with him as he is away there. Zuma is busy trying to find out about "the issue of staff and students problems that are widespread."

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TML set to publish Elle magazine

Adrienne Gilliomee (243)

Ed 15/1995

TIMES Media Limited's magazine division announced yesterday it had reached an agreement to publish Elle magazine in SA under a joint venture agreement with French publisher Hachette Filipacchi Press.

Elle is a leading women's fashion and beauty magazine with 25 international editions and a monthly circulation of 4.9-million. Elle magazine's international editions director Francois Vincens said it was the first international women's magazine to be launched into the new SA.

Elle SA will be published in the first quarter of 1996.
Journalists must give guidance

Black lawyers and newsmen must lead in the transformation process

By Mathatha Tsedu
Political Editor

WHEN THE BLACK Lawyers Association celebrated the 10 years of existence of its Legal Education Centre in February, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki was the guest speaker.

In his speech bemoaning the continued domination of the legal system by whites in a country that was now under virtual black rule, Mbeki called on black lawyers to take the constitutional opportunity to “form workers, the rural poor, the labourer, the domestic worker in a language that all our people can easily understand”.

But he added his voice to those who have used the power of the BLA, asking whether the need still existed for unusual organisations such as the BLA in a democratic South Africa.

The response from former national executive director Mr Justice Moloto was swift. South Africa, he said, needed the BLA now more than ever before.

Last weekend, Mbeki was guest speaker at the Black Editors Forum, an organisation of black editors and senior editorial executives dedicated to redressing the imbalances in the media in favour of blacks.

Speaking of the need for blacks as the majority component in the country to set the national agenda, Mbeki said the BEF had a “crucial role to play”

“...And in playing that role I also believe we have to take courage into our hands, knowing that whatever we say, fundamentally to address the interests of the marginalised will be shouted down by powerful voices as being contrary to national reconciliation, as being racist, as being inspired by our own frustration at our own inability to deliver.”

Mbeki said the voice of the majority black citizens who see the Government as their own, who see it as a democratic entity which is trying against serious odds to deliver a better life for all could never be heard above the din of the noise of an allegedly failing government.

“...That voice may never be heard or may be heard faintly because the level of editorial diversity in our society is at a level that objectively permits for the amplification of the voice of those that are happy to mock and reduce to absurdity the serious efforts in which millions are engaged to transform our society into the opposite of what the apartheid system made of it.”

“I would therefore again seem clear that this (Black Editors Forum) has a responsibility to continue to engage the question of what we as a country should do to give voice to the marginalised to ensure that these unheard masses are not left to the vicissitudes of those that are happy to mock and reduce to absurdity the serious efforts in which millions are engaged to transform our society into the opposite of what the apartheid system made of it.”

Transformer had to be the national agenda, he said, which would manifest itself not only in President Nelson Mandela exuding charm “drinking tea with Mrs Verwoerd in Orlando” but one that also made the president a steadfast fighter for genuine liberation.

This transformation had not occurred yet, Mbeki said, citing continued white domination of land ownership and the wealth of the country.

Whites, he said, continued to dominate the management of the economy, the higher echelons of the public service and the ownership and editing and writing of newspapers and magazines.

It was this reality that dictated that affirmative action and empowerment had to be vigorously implemented.

Those who had benefited from the old system, however, “would like us to believe that there is no such thing as an apartheid heritage which continues to define the socio-economic reality of this country.”

Mbeki said the apartheid regime had left a huge foreign debt and a national budget that left very little for development.

When the black-led government failed to accomplish some of the objectives needed for transformation, the same people shout the loudest.

Black newsmen and women had a critical role to show the reality of the South African situation, he said.
Times Media to buy Daily Dispatch

CAPE TOWN — Times Media Limited is poised to conclude a deal which will see one of the country's oldest newspapers, the East London's Daily Dispatch, changing hands within weeks.

Confirming the negotiations between Dispatch Media and TML, Dispatch Media MD Alan Beaumont said yesterday the two parties were close to an agreement, although there were a few "issues" still to be resolved.

Beaumont said the negotiations had been triggered by Dispatch Media's executive chairman Terry Briceland's announcement that he planned to retire at the end of the year. Up for sale is Briceland's 37% shareholding in the company, which de-listed from the JSE in 1993 after he and Beaumont, who held an equal holding, staged a management buyout. Other minority shareholders include Standard Merchant Bank and TML, which has a 20% stake and a seat on the board.

Beaumont said Dispatch Media had a close relationship with TML, which reduced its 29% holding in the company following the 1993 buyout. The negotiations should be seen against the background of the restructuring of TML's own operations and its parent company's reported plans to "empower black ownership in the media".

The announcement on a deal with TML and the change of ownership would take place simultaneously.

Dispatch Media's flagship is the Daily Dispatch, the Eastern Cape's largest daily newspaper with readership figures far above TML's Eastern Province Herald and Evening Post.

The newspaper is also one of the few in the country which has managed to show an increase in daily sales — up last year from 37 083 to 37 703.

Madden Cole reports Times Media MD Roy Faulson said last night TML held a 20% share in the Daily Dispatch and had first option on Briceland's and Beaumont's shareholdings. "We had been informed earlier this year they intended selling their shares, and have been involved in negotiations with them to discuss taking up the option."

The parties were close to a deal, but matters had not been finalized.
TML poised to buy Daily Dispatch

TIMES Mediá Limited is poised to conclude a deal which will see one of the country’s only two remaining independent daily newspapers — East London’s Daily Dispatch — changing hands in a matter of weeks.

Confirming the negotiations between Dispatch Media and TML, Dispatch Media MD Alan Beaumont said the two parties were close to an agreement, although there were a few “issues” still to be resolved.

Mr Beaumont said the negotiations had been triggered by Dispatch Media’s executive chairman Terry Briceland’s recent announcement that he planned to retire at the end of the year.

Up for sale is Mr Briceland’s 35 percent shareholding in the company, which delisted from the JSE in 1993 after he and Mr Beaumont, who has an equal holding, staged a management buyout.

Other minority shareholders include Standard Merchant Bank and TML, which has a 20 percent stake and a seat on the board.

— Sapa.
Times Media won't cede control to FT

By Charlotte Mathews

Discussions between Omnia Media subsidiary Times Media Limited and the Financial Times are continuing but there is no question of selling the business or surrendering control, Omnia Media chairman Vaughan Bray said yesterday.

He was speaking after Omnia Media's annual general meeting — which was poorly attended by shareholders.

The meeting approved three special and three ordinary resolutions, including the amendment of the description of the company's business in the articles of association and the reduction of the share premium account to R381,9 million from R481,3 million because the goodwill on the acquisition of shares in TML and CNA Gallo was not easily determinable on a continuing basis.

Questioned on issues relating to Omnia Media, Bray said the discussions with the Financial Times contained the possibility of selling the Financial Mail and Business Day separately, but no decision had been taken.

There would be significant benefits for the group in a strategic alliance with the Financial Times group because it would give Omnia Media access to one of the world's top financial databases.

On discussions with Dispatch Media, Bray said talks were continuing and TML wanted to acquire the 80 percent of shares which it did not hold.

The deal would cost R30 million to R40 million. However, there were certain hurdles to overcome, such as the Competition Board.

It has recently been reported that executive chairman Terry Breedland's 35 percent stake in Dispatch Media, which owns East London's Daily Dispatch, has come up for sale because of his pending retirement.

The other shareholders include Alan Beaumont, the managing director of Dispatch Media, who also has 35 percent, and Standard Merchant Bank.
Leaked: Government rules to prevent leaks
White Press tends to knock blacks
ANC slams ‘superficial’ media

BARRY STREEK
POLITICAL STAFF

THE white-owned media monopolies portrayed the transformation of South Africa in a superficial and one-dimensional way and foreign media ownership was excluding blacks, the ANC said yesterday.

It also challenged the Conference of Editors to state its position on media diversity and the ownership of newspaper companies.

However, Independent Newspaper Group chief executive Mr John Featherstone said the group was fully committed to the new SA and to media diversity.

The ANC statement, issued by Mr Ronnie Mamoepa for its Department of Information and Publicity, followed the resignation this week of City Press editor Mr Khulu Sibuya as chairman of the Conference of Editors.

Mr Mamoepa said Mr Sibuya’s resignation had highlighted the lack of media diversity in SA.

He added the one-dimensional portrayal of political and social transformation by white-owned monopolies had “led to a significant distortion in the free flow of information to the people of SA, particularly around the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the entire transformation process.”

The ANC had noted with concern the sale of some media, “in the name of creating diversity”, to foreigners.

“This seems to be an attempt to keep media resources out of the reach of black South Africans,” Mr Mamoepa said.

Mr Featherstone said, however, a great deal had been accomplished to create greater diversity, competition and improved standards in South Africa’s media in the 18 months since control of his group passed from Johannesburg Consolidated Investments into international hands.

**Investment**

Almost every newspaper in the group had been upgraded, redesigned or relaunched, requiring considerable investment in journalists, equipment, new techniques and training.

“This group is fully committed to diversity of the South African media, to greater competition, to improved journalistic standards and better newspapers.”

He added that the first black editor of a previously major “white” newspaper had been appointed and other appointments would follow. Already a number of blacks occupied senior roles in the group’s newspapers.

Cape Times editor Mr Moegoa Williams, who is a member of the Board of the International Press Institute, said he hoped the institute would be able to play a role in bringing all editors together to fight for a free press in South Africa.
Conference of Editors’ head quits

BY TARYN LAMBERTI

City Press editor Khulu Sibuya resigned as head of the predominantly-white Conference of Editors yesterday saying he was leaving the organisation because his efforts to unite black and white editors had failed.

Sibuya, who joined the organisation eight years ago in an attempt to bridge the apartheid divide between white and black controlled media in SA, said growing disillusionment had dictated his departure.

“Taryn is thankfully gone we should try to scrap race altogether as a criterion for membership of any body I will support any move to create a new dispensation.”

Natal Mercury editor John Paton said he would be calling a meeting of the Conference of Editors to address the issue next month.

Sunday Times editor Ken Owen said last night that the conference was now destined to disintegrate. “The pity is that the editors have been split by race and I think that a number of people have worked towards that end.”
Resignation highlights lack of diversity – ANC

The exclusive dissemination of news by white-owned monopolies had led to a significant distortion in the free flow of information, ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said yesterday.

He was commenting on the resignation on Wednesday of City Press editor Khulu Sibiya as chairman of the Conference of Editors (COE).

Sibiya’s resignation highlighted the lack of media diversity and ownership in South Africa, Mamoepa said.

White-owned media monopolies portrayed the complex processes of political and social transformation of South African society in a superficial and one-dimensional manner.

“This has led to a significant distortion in the free flow of information to the people of South Africa, particularly around the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the entire transformation process. The ANC had noted with concern the sale of some media to foreigners "in the name of creating diversity." This seems to be an attempt to keep media resources out of the reach of black South Africans," Mamoepa said.

In his reaction, Black Editors’ Forum chairman Thamsanqa Mazwai commended Sibiya "for having soldiered on tirelessly despite the racism and resistance to change (displayed) by some of his colleagues in their newspapers and even in the COE."

"We are aware that the more progressive white editors in the COE are just as frustrated and it is a matter of time before they also walk out," Mazwai said.

Mazwai hoped that these editors and Sibiya would be part of changes in the media "which will be responsive to our new democracy and actually underpin and reflect its new norms and values."

Mazwai added that there was an initiative by Cape Times editor Moegane Williams, in his capacity as local chairman of the International Press Institute, to form a new editors’ association.

The new body would bring together black and white editors to define their role in the new South Africa, he said. — Sapa
Media lagging in the new SA, says Tokyo

BY TARYN LAMBERT

Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwane last night lashed out at Independent Newspapers, and accused the mass media of lagging behind in the country’s democratic transformation.

“We believe that mass media institutions are lagging behind other sectors in transforming themselves to suit the new South African environment,” said Sexwane in a statement.

The statement follows a clash between South African newspaper editors over the resignation of Wednesday of City Press editor, Khasho Sibiya, as chairman of the Conference of Editors. Sibiya said he was forced to resign because his efforts to unite black and white editors had failed.

Irishman Tony O’Reilly recently acquired 60% of Independent Newspapers. "The fact that a foreign investor is the majority shareholder in a South African media institution is cause for concern,” said Sexwane.

He said Deputy-President Thabo Mbeki would head an independent panel to discuss concentration of ownership, and many other aspects of the media, which would later be developed into a communications policy for South Africa.

Editor of The Natal Mercury and new chairman of the Conference of Editors, John Patten, said "I would say the members are generally in favour of empowerment and diversity of media control.

"It is true that South African newspapers are in white hands and they control the dissemination of news in a majority black country. "We need to sort this out without damaging freedom of the press," he added.

The Conference of Editors is to hold a meeting in Johannesburg on October 9 to discuss Sibiya’s allegations.
Independent leading the way

Statement by John Featherstone, chief executive of Independent Newspapers.

In a statement yesterday Ronnie Mamoeza of the ANC attacked the "continued exclusive dissemination of news and information by white-owned monopolies" in South Africa which he says has led to a distortion in the free flow of information insofar as that relates to Independent Newspapers. We believe that a great deal has been accomplished to create greater diversity, competition and improved standards in South Africa's media in the 18 months since control passed from JCI into international hands. These include

- The Sowetan, South Africa's best-selling daily newspaper, is now controlled by black owners, with Independent only a minority shareholder. Independent's management has helped it to grow towards its target of becoming South Africa's first national newspaper - the Sowetan will shortly be printed and distributed by Independent Newspapers, a subsidiary of Independent.

- New Nation has joined the Sowetan stable, and with Independent's help and support has been redesigned, repackaged and relaunched. Its Independent voice has been preserved in the process.

- The new owners appointed the first black editor of a major previously "white" newspaper in Moesien Williams, first to The Pretoria News and now to The Cape Times. Others will follow.

- Independent has also created more than 20 new journalists to shape the newspaper's content and commitment on the part of the group, and already has a readership of nearly 340,000, nearly five times that of Business Day. Most important of all, the group has created a new "rainbow" readership of multi-ethnic, young and educated people, a quarter of whom have never previously read business pages. This is vitally important for the future of emerging business in South Africa.

- The Sunday Independent is the new all-african newspaper for the new South Africa, and is the first independent newspaper launched in this country for some years. It is a high-quality, international-class paper which fills a major gap in the South African market.

- In the past, Independent Newspapers has undergone training of some kind, which is more than half the total staff. This has been a huge improvement on the past.

- In addition, Independent Newspapers has launched a number of new and innovative products into a market that has been badly served by other newspapers in recent years. These include:
  1. Business Report, an international quality business and finance section which circulates almost nationwide.
  2. Cape Times, a daily free-flow of information to the people of this country.
  3. Sunday Independent, a greatly upgraded Cape Times, containing the redesign and relaunch of a greatly upgraded Mercury, containing business news and features.

This group is fully committed to diversity of the South African media, to greater competition, to improved journalistic standards and to new newspapers. It is fully committed to all the new SA newspapers for:

- In the past year, Independent Newspapers have undergone training of some kind, which is more than half the total staff. This has been a huge improvement on the past.
- In addition, Independent Newspapers has launched a number of new and innovative products into a market which has been poorly served by other newspapers in recent years. These include:
  1. Business Report, an international quality business and finance section which circulates almost nationwide, and will soon have a circulation of nearly 200,000.
  2. Cape Times, a daily free-flow of information to the people of this country.
  3. Sunday Independent, a greatly upgraded Cape Times, containing the redesign and relaunch of a greatly upgraded Mercury, containing
Editor sparks off media row

By CHARLES MOGALE, SAPA and ECNA

CITY PRESS editor Khulu Sibiya's resignation as chairman of the Conference of Editors this week sparked off an outcry about media ownership in the country.

Gauteng premierTokyo Sexwale expressed concern at the "lagging behind" of the mass media in regard to the new changes in the country. It was also cause for concern that irritation on one hand, had acquired a majority shareholding (60 percent) in the local Independent newspaper, Sexwale said.

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki will soon head a panel to investigate the concentration of ownership of the media.

Sibiya said his attempts to unite black editors and their white counterparts had failed.

He said he would not be joining the rival Black Editors Forum, which has been calling on government to intervene to minimize white control of the media.

"I am returning to the sidelines at the moment, with the hope that a new body, which does not have any racial connotations, will be formed soon," he said.

ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said Sibiya's resignation highlighted the lack of media diversity and ownership in South Africa.

The ANC had noted with concern the sale of some newspapers "in the name of creating diversity" to foreigners.

"This seems to be an attempt to keep media resources out of the reach of black South Africans," Mamoepa said.

Black Editors Forum chairman Thami Mazwai said: "We are aware that the more progressive white editors in the Conference of Editors are also frustrated. It is a matter of time before they also resign." He added that there was an initiative by Cape Times editor Moesien Williams, in his capacity as local chairman of the International Press Institute, to form a new editors' association, which will bring black and white editors together to define their role in the new South Africa.

Sibiya said in his resignation letter that some of his white colleagues had taken "fixed" positions on questions of media diversity and ownership, which were "a source of embarrassment to me as their chairman, even though they do not speak on behalf of the Conference of Editors, but in their capacity as editors of their various publications".

The Independent's chief executive John Feathers-tone disputed claims that his group had not introduced changes in the spirit of the new climate in the country.

He said his group had reduced its control of the Sowetan, rendering it black-controlled, and had assisted New Nation to join the Sowetan stable while preserving its "independent voice".

At The Star, the Independent's flagship publication, blacks hold senior positions and the Independent's school of journalism had over a period of 10 years produced 113 black graduates.

The row about media diversity intensified on Friday, when the ANC and a coalition of journalists and media organizations expressed their intentions that it was going to control the media.

Recent attempts to portray its view on the issue as a walk to control the media were a gross misrepresentation of its intentions, the ANC said in a statement.

"The unfounded accusation that the ANC is itching to control the media is a deliberate misrepresentation designed to deflect attention from the white capitalist monopoly over South Africa's print media," it said.
ANC 'threat to press' (243)

JOHANNESBURG: There is a carefully orchestrated campaign by the ANC to stifle press freedom, Democratic Party leader Mr. Tony Leon said yesterday.

Speaking at an election rally here, Mr Leon said the onslaught against a free press would end existing and future foreign investment in the country.

He said the campaign started when Deputy President Thabo Mbeki chose the Black Editors' Forum to launch "a scathing, racially motivated attack" on the "white-owned, white-edited and largely white-written" press of SA.

"Subordinating press freedom to the dictates of so-called 'black empowerment' has nothing to do with mass community upliftment and everything to do with muzzling the growth of a vibrant and chivalric culture," Mr Leon said. — Sapa
New curb on media criticised

BY LEE-ANN ALFRED

Most of the media have been caught unaware by new legislation which bans newspapers from publishing photographs of people in police custody. The police also seem to have been unaware that the legislation has been passed by Parliament and will become law at the end of October.

Section 69 of the South African Police Service Bill which replaces Section 27 of the old Police Act of 1923 appears to have caught media organisations and police alike unaware, but was criticised as a step backwards by The Star's lawyers and the Freedom of Expression Institute after they examined the clauses.

Malcolm Fried of Weber Wentzel Bowens, The Star's lawyers, said that while one section of the new legislation, 2a, allowed the press greater freedom, clause 3 of the Act showed "no progress at all." According to Fried, section 2a will allow photographers to take photos of anybody in custody unless a policeman prevents them from doing so.

Newspapers who publish a photograph when they have been forbidden to do so by a policeman may be prosecuted and the offender may face up to one year in jail or a fine. The old legislation stated that newspapers were not allowed to publish photographs of anyone in custody.

In terms of section 3 of the new legislation, newspapers cannot publish the photograph of a suspect who is fleeing, or anybody in custody who is being tried, or anyone in custody involved in criminal proceedings without the written permission of the national or provincial police commissioner.

He said that it was absolutely and totally unacceptable that any police officer could forbid the taking of photographs "no matter what the circumstances" or that a police commissioner could forbid the taking of photographs of people in prison.

"There is no call for such restrictions to creep in to the new South Africa. It is in contravention of the constitution and we will fight it," Louw said.

However, SAPS Witwatersrand head of the Community Relations Division in Gauteng, Brigadier Dirk Gous, said an undertaking at the weekend that the police would not abuse the new legislation. "If applied strictly, there will be considerable administrative problems. But we are not going to be fusty and stickly about it," he said.

Gous said the legislation had come about as a result of "ministerial decision-making" that had only been conveyed to police about two weeks ago.

He said it had been passed in Parliament and was expected to become law at the end of the month when it was published in the Government Gazette.

PICTURES of people in police custody may no longer be published, according to new legislation.

So far, newspapers were only banned from publishing photographs of people who had escaped from police custody and people who had not been brought to trial.

"Section 3 is awful. It does not represent progress at all, but takes several steps backwards," Fried said.

"It could mean that newspapers will have to wait till after sentencing to publish a picture or maybe even longer if the case goes to the appeal court. This could take years," Fried said.

He said that the section could also lead to an anomalous situation where a newspaper was held liable for publishing a picture of a fleeing suspect without being aware that they had transgressed the law at all.

Freedom of Expression Institute chairman Raymond Louw said both sections were unacceptable and that his organisation would contest them in the Constitutional Court.

He said it was absolutely and totally unacceptable that any police officer could forbid the taking of photographs "no matter what the circumstances" or that a police commissioner could forbid the taking of photographs of people in prison.

"There is no call for such restrictions to creep in to the new South Africa. It is in contravention of the constitution and we will fight it," Louw said.

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He said it had been passed in Parliament and was expected to become law at the end of the month when it was published in the Government Gazette.
SAUJ gets new acting president

South African Transport Union's political reporter, Sue Sie, has been appointed acting president of the union. Mr. Sie (38) was co-opted as acting president by the union's national executive committee, the SAUJ said.
Move towards one SA press organisation

JOHANNESBURG: The Conference of Editors and the Black Editors' Forum met yesterday, and will meet again next month, in a move to establish a single organisation for the press.

Yesterday's meeting follows City Press editor Mr Khulu Sibuya's resignation as chairman of the predominantly white conference two weeks ago. Mr Sibuya, who joined the organisation eight years ago with the hope of unifying white and black press, cited disillusionment as the reason for his resignation.

The brief preliminary meeting to discuss the creation of a unified press body was facilitated by Cape Times editor and International Press Institute member Mr Moegsna Williams.

"We are concerned that divisiveness will damage our profession and the country. We believe a single body will be supported by most journalists," he said afterwards. — Special Correspondent
IFP’s hardline strategy will deepen tension, warns ANC

Farouk Chothia

JHB/BRAN — The strain within the KwaZulu-Natal government would deepen if the IFP failed to reverse the hardline strategy it adopted in the legislature session which ended on Monday this week, ANC provincial chairman Jacob Zuma warned yesterday.

Zuma said the IFP should realise that it had a mere one-member majority in the provincial legislature, and that it could not govern without the co-operation of the other parties.

"The next six months are crucial for the IFP to mend its ways. If it does not, it will be under perpetual pressure," Zuma said.

The IFP has 81 MPs in the legislature, which is including the speaker. The six opposition parties have a total of 40 of which the ANC has 26.

Premier Frank Mdlalose’s spokesman,Thembinkosi Memela, said that an "ordinary" cabinet meeting had been held yesterday — the first since the legislature crisis started.

Confirming that no "heavy stuff" was discussed in the meeting, Zuma said: "I think everybody wanted to cool off."

Memela said the cabinet had met a delegation from one of the German states. Investment and tourism were discussed.

Zuma said he still got along "very well" with Mdlalose.

"I sympathise with him. He ought to be a father figure but his party is forcing him to behave as though he is only an IFP premier," Zuma said.

He warned the IFP not to introduce further legislation intended to challenge central government — including Bills to re-enact the Ingnomma Trust Act and an Electoral Act — at the legislature session scheduled for next month.

Zuma said that if the IFP did so, the ANC would respond in the same meeting, he said.

The session which ended on Monday.

Zuma said there was no prospect of the ANC pulling out of the government, as it was one of the "cornerstones" of ANC policy for the transition period.

But the ANC would introduce a motion of no-confidence in the IFP if it continued using "bullying tactics". The IFP should also stop behaving as though it was "still running a one-party homeland".

"If they can’t govern the province, the province must be taken out of their hands. It is our duty to defend democracy in the province," Zuma said.

He warned the ANC caucus was to discuss the conduct of speaker Gideon Mdlalose who reversed an earlier ruling he made and allowed debate to take place on Bills intended to prevent traditional leaders from accepting remuneration from central government.

Niehaus attacks whites’ dominance of the Press

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — White and foreign dominance of the SA Press was yesterday criticised by the ANC.

ANC NEC member Carl Niehaus told a news briefing the SA Press was not reflecting the country’s full diversity of voices.

The ANC said in a statement released at the briefing: "Without fundamental change in the patterned make-up of the Press or the media, the sale of large sections of the print media industry to foreign interests can only further disenfranchise South Africans."

The Press had been slow in responding to the far-reaching changes that SA was undergoing and most newsmen remained predominantly white.

"Consequently most mainstream newspapers have white editors who are often perceived to be some of the strongest opponents of the democratic majority government."

The statement singled out Star editor Peter Sullivan, accusing him of trying to stifle opposition within his own staff.

The statement appended an internal memorandum agreed by Sullivan which said the Star "must speak with one voice" on the issue of foreign ownership and the racial make-up of the Press because of the topic's "sensativity".

"The Press is one issue which requires experience and strategic formulation," it said.

Niehaus denied that his organisation was "soft on crime".

"Commenting on the decline in the safety and security budget, Niehaus said the ANC would have liked to have seen more spent directly on crime prevention."

But the ANC had a holistic approach to the problem which included a socioeconomic component and therefore required expenditure in other areas as well.

He said the ANC was concerned about "negative messages" on the local government elections, particularly statements made recently by local government election task force co-chairman Von Zyl Slabbert. Despite hysterics, the election was going to take place in most areas of the country and a positive message about the elections ought to be expressed, Niehaus said.

R140m for Soweto roads

Molebudwe Harvey

This greater Johannesburg transitional metropolitan council has allocated more than R140m from its budget in the current financial year to implement 30 road projects in Soweto.

Launching the RDP/Massakane roads project in Orlando East yesterday, Johannesburg mayor Isaac Mogase said the greater Johannesburg council would ensure service delivery, but delivery had to be supported by the community.

The projects, he said, were a way of encouraging the community to support both Massakane and the RDP.

The best structure to deliver to the community was local government. But the best service delivery would require the best service payment in return, Mogase said.

Soweto mayor Danny Kekana echoed his sentiments, saying that residents should pay for services, because without funds there could be no service delivery.

Soweto Civic Association spokesman Pule Buthela encouraged residents to support the campaign. For local government to be successful, he said, it had to be people-driven.

Johannesburg council RDP unit head John Singh said that community involvement would be the project's main thrust.

The aim was to implement a philosophy of empowering communities, by promoting joint ventures between local and conventional contractors.
ANC accuses editor of gagging staff
Nasionale Pers restructuring

Edward West

CAPE TOWN — Nasionale Pers (Naspers) would be restructured to allow the 50% interest held in it by Nasionale Fern Beherend to also be traded directly on the JSE, the diversified media group said yesterday.

Executive chairman Ton Vosloo said the proposed steps had already been provisionally approved by the JSE, and the restructuring was expected to be completed early in December.

Beherend was established when Naspers was listed in September 1994 to retain control of the company.

In terms of the restructuring, which shareholders would be asked to approve at a special meeting on November 10, Naspers would convert its existing ordinary shares into "N" ordinary shares, with the same rights. A new class of share known as "A" ordinary shares would be created, but these would not be eligible for a dividend of more than 20% of that paid in respect of "N" shares.

The "A" shares not taken up by Beherend would be placed in subsidiary Nasionale Pers Beleggings.

Shareholding of Beleggings would change via issue of new shares, leaving Beherend with 51% and Naspers 49%.

Beherend would then go into voluntary liquidation, distributing its assets by way of a liquidation dividend.

The effect of the proposal was that Beherend shareholders — after liquidation — would, for every 100 shares held in Beherend, retain 100 "N" ordinary shares in Naspers plus one ordinary share in Beleggings.
Naspers to 'unlock' value in Beherend

BY AUDREY D'ANGELO
(243) 313-10/95

A restructuring of Nationale Pers is aimed at unlocking value in Nationale Pers Beherend, the existence of which is now unnecessary, the executive chairman, Ton Vosloo, announced yesterday.

He said that when Nationale Pers was listed in September, Beherend was created to ensure control of the company. For each original share they held, shareholders were allocated five in the listed company and five in Beherend.

"However, the tender system for the trading of shares in Beherend has proved inefficient, and shares have started to trade at a discount, to shareholders' disadvantage."

The change in stock exchange rules allowed other control mechanisms, Vosloo said.

The restructuring, which shareholders will be asked to approve on November 16, will create N ordinary shares with the same rights as the present ones, and A shares, each with 1 000 votes but which will never be eligible for more than 50 percent of the N-share dividend.

There will then be a capitalisation issue on the basis of one share for each 100 held, offering a choice between A and N shares Beherend will then go into voluntary liquidation, distributing its assets, its stake in Beleggings and 55,7 million N shares in Naspers, to shareholders as a liquidation dividend. Shareholders will receive 100 shares in Naspers and one in Beleggings for each 100 shares in Beherend.
Naspers to liquidate Beherend

BY AUDREY D'ANGELO

A restructuring of the Nationale Pers group is aimed at unlocking value in Nationale Pers Beherend, the existence of which is now unnecessary, the executive chairman, Ton Vosloo, announced yesterday.

He said that when Nationale Pers was listed in September, Beherend was created as a mechanism to ensure control of the company. For each original share they held, shareholders were allocated five in the listed company and five in Beherend.

"However, the tender system being used for the trading of shares in Beherend has proved to be an inefficient instrument, and shares have started to trade at a discount, to the disadvantage of shareholders."

"In the meantime, the Stock Exchange regulations were changed in such a way that other control mechanisms could be implemented," said Vosloo.

Rights

The restructuring, which shareholders will be asked to approve at a special meeting on November 10, involves the creation of N ordinary shares with the same rights as the present ones, and A shares, each of which will have 1,000 votes but which will never be eligible for more than 20 percent of the dividend paid to N shares.

There will then be a capitalisation issue on the basis of one share for each 100 held, with shareholders able to choose between A and N shares. Beherend will then go into voluntary liquidation, distributing its assets, its stake in Beleggings and 33.7 million N shares in Naspers, to shareholders as a liquidation dividend. As a result, shareholders will receive 100 shares in Naspers and one in Beleggings for each 100 shares in Beherend.
Pallo Jordan speaks on Press owners

PATRICK BULGER
Political Staff
ARG 14/10/75

THE ANC did not believe that limits should be placed on foreign ownership of the South African Press, an ANC Cabinet minister and member of the national executive said yesterday.

The ANC was concerned, however, that foreign investment in the South African media did not necessarily contribute to the diversity of ownership and expression it supported.

Postal, Telecommunications and Broadcasting Minister Pallo Jordan told a media briefing on the state of the government that the ANC did not have "an in-principle opposition to foreign ownership of the South African Press." Dr Jordan was responding to questions about the ANC's stance on the sale of the Argus Newspaper titles, including The Star, to Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers.

His comments appear to soften the stance taken in a statement issued by ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa on behalf of the ANC's NEC at the end of last month. Mr Mamoepa said the sale of South African media interests "seems to be an attempt to keep media resources out of the reach of black South Africans".

Mr Mamoepa's statement was contested by the editor of The Star, Peter Sullivan, who told an Agenda/Newsline debate this week that Mr Mamoepa's views did not reflect the views of the ANC leadership on the issue.

The ANC, in response to Mr Sullivan's comments, issued a subsequent statement which accused Mr Sullivan of trying to gag reporters on The Star by not publishing articles which opposed his (Mr Sullivan's) view on the matter.

The ANC also took the extraordinary step of issuing with its statement an in-house memorandum from Mr Sullivan to his staff in which he said "there are some issues on which, because of their sensitivity, The Star as a newspaper must speak with one voice."

Dr Jordan said "I do not think there should be limits on foreign ownership of the Press. The issue has been ownership, access and control of the mass media in general; everyone agrees that the issue of foreign ownership has to be seen in that context."

Asked on whose behalf he was speaking, Dr Jordan replied "I do not think the ANC has a position in opposition to foreign ownership of the Press."

He added: "If one says we require greater diversity in ownership and then we sell off half the Press to the New York Times so that now you have diversity because you have South African and American ownership, that is not really the answer."

He said everybody agreed that the ownership of the South Africa media was "skewed".
TML to purchase Dispatch Media

Sunday Times Reporter

THE Competition Board has given the go-ahead for Times Media Limited to purchase Dispatch Media, publisher of East London's Daily Dispatch.

The Competition Board chairman, Dr Pierre Brooks, this week told TML that the board did not consider it necessary to undertake a formal investigation of the deal.

Dr Brooks said it had been noted that the editorial independence of the Daily Dispatch would not be affected and that TML was committed to expanding its shareholder base.

TML's managing director, Roy Paulson, said TML intended selling a percentage of the shareholding of Dispatch Media to a Port Elizabeth-based consortium of black entrepreneurs.

He said TML owned 20 percent of Dispatch Media, Standard Corporate Merchant Bank 10 percent and the balance of shares was held by Dispatch Media directors Terry Briceland and Alan Beaumont.

Mr Paulson said the opportunity to acquire the shareholding had arisen when Mr Briceland, due to turn 60 years of age, had announced his wish to retire and sell his shares.

For the past six months, TML has been discussing a partnership with the PE consortium.

"We would not sell the control but would be quite happy to sell a fair percentage," said Mr Paulson. He said the size of the consortium's shareholding had not yet been established.

Dispatch Media, said Mr Paulson, was "a very good little group, highly efficient and they make good profits." He foresees no major changes.

Dispatch Media director, Mr Beaumont, said negotiations on the sale would proceed.

"We will try to conclude negotiations within the next few weeks," said Mr Beaumont.
TML set to cut first major black empowerment deal

Amanda Vermeulen
and Adriéne Giitomoee

TIMES Media Limited (TML) is poised to cut its first major black empowerment deal, with two potential agreements centred on its newspaper interests in the Eastern Cape.

MD Roy Paulson said yesterday that the group — which publishes Business Day — was in talks with a Port Elizabeth-based black business consortium to sell a slice of its Eastern Province Newspapers (EPN) division. The company had also been contacted by an East London-based consortium about a deal involving Dispatch Media.

TML received the Competition Board go-ahead on Friday to take sole control of Dispatch Media, publisher of the Daily Dispatch.

Paulson declined to name the parties, though he said the Port Elizabeth group had strong financial backing.

The EPN division publishes the Eastern Province Herald, the Evening Post, Weekend Post and the Eastern Cape edition of the Sunday Times.

Paulson said the other consortium had contacted Dispatch Media executive chairman Terry Brieland before TML’s bid went up.

Brieland holds 35% of Dispatch Media and plans to retire, but TML has pre-emptive rights over his shares. The consortium contacted Paulson once TML unveiled its plans.

“I said we’d be happy to talk to them, once the deal had gone through,” Paulson said.

Competition Board chairman Pierre Brooks told Paulson on Friday that he had decided against a formal investigation into the Dispatch deal, provided the Daily Dispatch’s editorial independence was not compromised by the takeover. Brooks said the decision was subject to no new information arising that could affect the ruling.

TML would also have to commit

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Continued on Page 2

TML

Continued from Page 1

...ted to expanding its shareholder base to include disadvantaged sections of the community.

Under the deal, TML will buy 80% of Dispatch Media from Brieland and MD Alan Beaumont, and from 10% stakeholder Standard Bank. No cash figures have been released for the deal, although market estimates put the value at about R35m. TML already owns 20% of Dispatch.

Paulson said TML was also interested in buying Enterprise magazine, although no new talks had taken place since exploratory discussions in 1983.

Enterprise editor Thami Mazwai, a vocal critic of white-owned publishing groups, said a linkup with one of the large publishing groups would give the magazine access to skills and resources it could not currently afford.

Tord.
Cape Times editor calls for change in media industry

DEEP-ROOTED change in the media industry was necessary, Cape Times editor Mr. Moegeni Williams said at the Western Cape congress of the Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasa) yesterday.

It would be ridiculous to pretend that we have "years and years" to deliver that change, he added.

He said the extent of changes in the industry "will not depend on people like me in positions of authority."

"It depends on us all."

He said media workers had a responsibility to provide the information necessary to make democracy meaningful.

"Our fellow citizens want as much information as possible — information which is reliable, truthful and tuned to the real needs of society."

"They want us to ensure that no more will our people be mere receivers of news from those who sometimes live in another world — those who do not yet see the need to share in the pain and joy of making the RDP work."

He also said media workers needed to "get our own house in order."

"We cannot hope to be taken seriously if we are fighting among ourselves, if we are divided as union members, and as unions."

He urged Mwasa to unite everyone in the industry "so that together we can build a new way of doing things — so that we can get rid of the discrimination that persists despite the ending of apartheid."

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STAFF REPORTER
Be more positive, BBC man urges SA journalists

SOUTH AFRICAN journalists have a responsibility to present a more positive image of changes in society, says BBC news reader Marlyn Lewis.

Lewis triggered heated debate in Britain last year when he suggested that reporters habitually took too negative a view of society. He urged the South African media to record successes as well as failures.

"Journalists (have) a responsibility to present a more accurate mirror image of the overall balance of events and issues shaping the society in which we live," he told the Cape Town Press Club yesterday.

"It is a responsibility that is particularly great in societies wrestling with sudden and often awesome change. Here in South Africa, it will condition, perhaps even decide, the future of democracy itself," he said.

He is in South Africa to conduct interviews for a book he is writing on achievers and the secrets of their success. He said he did not believe news bulletins should have an artificial balance between good and bad news.

"When we come to decide the editorial priorities for each day's news, we should be more prepared than we have been in the past to weigh the positive stories - on the same set of journalistic scales on which we weigh negative stories.

"And, those are criteria which will allow us not only to expose the injustices and the tragedies of the world, but also to give proper weight to the successes and triumphs," said Lewis.

He said afterwards he had delivered a similar message in meetings with journalists in Johannesburg, but had not been in contact with government or party officials.

The media have been under increasing pressure from the National Congress to focus on the successes rather than failures of the transition from white rule to democracy.

-- Reuters.
Freedom of the press is vital - ANC

The ANC would always resist attempts to undermine the independence and integrity of South Africa's media, it said in a statement ahead of World Press Day today.

The ANC commemorated the World and Weekend World's forced closure on October 19, 1977, when the former government detained the editors and also banned the Union of Black Journalists.

"Never again should the State be empowered to flagrantly violate people's rights to information and alternative views. Never again can we allow a government to suppress the freedom of the media."

A free flow of ideas was central to a democratic society, it said. - Sapa

/[Signature] 19/10/195
Pretoria: In a ruling that has implications for press freedom the television series, Die Laksman, has been granted a reprieve and will again be broadcast tonight on TV1.

This follows Mr Justice C F Elloff’s dismissal of an application by the Atomic Energy Corporation (AEC) yesterday to stop further broadcasting of the series.

AEC chief executive Dr Waldo Stumpf said in court documents the series put the AEC in a bad light.

The broadcaster said the relief sought by the AEC violated the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

Justice Elloff said the AEC and Stumpf’s application failed because their integrity, as well as that of the relevant government minister were never under threat — Sapa
is a critical, material, component of the environment which it seeks out to report on, or to analyse. The challenge is to abstract yourself from the environment in which you exist, and to consequently make the correct analysis of that environment.

Our observation points to the fact that not many in the media have been able to live up to that challenge. In concrete terms, the challenge of understanding the past and rapidly changing South African story.

Nevertheless, the rainbow of our nation instructs us that all is not gloom. There are many exceptions within the media industry; there are products out there, such as The Sunday Independent, which make a vital, independent contribution to intelligent thought in our country. We also have some fine documentaries in radio and television.

primary school to prepare a solid foundation for better matric results; the story of opening the doors of learning to all and sundry; with no consideration for colour or class, the story of free health care for mothers and kids who used to die in the scorching sun or the winter chill; the story of the river of joy as kinsfolk retrace their footsteps to ancestral lands.

In a word, the story which is encapsulated in a positive growth rate in a country which experienced negative growth for more than 10 years. Are we sure we all understand this story from the same point of view? Or are we sitting on different sides of the fire, where we see a country that does not work, a country that rides into chaos, where cynicism has overtaken the intellect in a country where seemingly nothing works?

For those of us who slave away at the rock-face of change, sometimes when we read such cynicism we wonder if people are writing about the same country in which we live, the same country in which we work, the same country which we are working so hard to change.

Millions of our countrymen seem to share our view: Sadly, in note, in all honesty, the popularity ratings of some of South Africa’s mass media is at a record low — not only among political parties but also among the ordinary people. It is our estimation that, if an election was held tomorrow, a large majority of South Africa’s journalists, most of you would lose your deposits.

There is a great deal of evidence circulating that many newspapers are declining in the declining interest of readership in many radio stations, and in the “missing million” TV viewers who have stopped watching what SABC produces. Some call it the Big Yawn; others the Big Turn-Off.

In cancelling their subscriptions and switching off the people of South Africa are sending a crucial message to our mass media owners and those who work in the mass media, a message which the media shall ignore at its peril.

Consequently, it is true that journalists live or die by the support of their followers. Publications thrive or wither upon the will of their critical readers.

Nevertheless, the rainbow of our nation instructs us that not all is gloom. There are many exceptions within the media industry; there are excellent products out there, such as the Sunday Independent, which make a vital, independent contribution to intelligent thought in our country. We also experience some fine documentary programmes on radio and TV, both by black and white journalists, particularly those on NNTV. And it is no coincidence that the readership and viewership of these programmes is increasing.

There are also, in our view, numerous quality journalists who write, record and film in nooks and corners in various parts of the country — people who carry on the tradition of the heroes of October 1977, such as Peng Qoboza.

The challenge is to have these excellent journalists being the rule rather than the exception. Currently, the converse applies. In our interaction with many media workers — in our public positions they haunt us like shadows — one hears the same story over and over. The story of frustrated journalists, be it in the

NOT ALL IS GLOOM: Gauteng premier, yesterday highlighted some encouraging developments on his newspaper front. His office’s weekly progress report, presented to the Mail and Guardian yesterday, makes a number of positive contributions to the social and economic issues in the province. A significant development in recent weeks is the establishment of the provincial newspaper, with the aim of providing a voice for the voices of the voiceless. This initiative is seen as a positive step towards greater transparency and accountability in the province. The newspaper has been lauded for its in-depth coverage of issues such as education, health, and the environment, and is considered a valuable resource for citizens. In the next edition, the newspaper will focus on the role of the media in building a more inclusive society, highlighting the work of local journalists who are working towards a more just and equitable future. The newspaper has also been praised for its commitment to promoting diversity and representing the voices of marginalized communities in the province.
s in media election, says Sexwale, pictured

Autograph of Sexwale, pictured

The encouraging aspects of the media

PHOTOGRAPHS ANTON HAMMERS.

Africandi, deriding itself irrelevant on serious matters of national debate. In this publication, we the dark-skinned people of this country - the overwhelming majority of us, coloured, African and Indian, over 60% of the nation - are still referred to as "Extra," as they continue to produce "Extra" covers around their white supremacist main publication.

In the past, we heard of the departure of the likes of Allister Sparks and Richard Steyn from the newspaper scene, knowing their commitment to this country, we were tempted to lower our flags in salute. However, with the departure of some of the editors of our famous weeklies, although we may miss their wit, many of us are tempted to say: It's about time.

Similarly, our advice to the "Sunday Times" owners is as follows: Until you reflect the nation as the main content of your publication, and not as a wrap-around "Extra," there is no future for you in South Africa.

To the general media, in 1995 and beyond, hard-working journalists will strive to write feature stories which document the real "extra" - and joy - of life in the new South Africa. Photographers and camera people wish to capture the lecture of South African society.

TV producers want to go beyond the confines of a 30-second soundbite.

Often they are unable to be blocked by the older, more conservative controllers at the top, who, like many journalists of old, seem to have embraced the culture of cynicism and negativity as if it is a lifestyle for surviving the challenges of the new country. This is the passion of Mandela's South Africa.

The situation is obviously that of great concern to anyone committed to the free press in South Africa, as it is having a profound impact on the future generation of media workers - those who will be the Kalekera Nyakane and Mathatha Mudlothu of the 21st century.

The young journalists in the media meet the old almost unanimously, that some of their employers are not geared towards the new South Africa. They seem to be more terrified than ordinary people, because some of the stories of hope which they come across never reach the news in brief sections.

Some of those in decision-making positions are not ready to accept change. They refuse to accept that things are in fact better: that the economy is growing at the rate of 3% a year, and promises to improve, that investor confidence is at an all-time high in South Africa, that the growth rate is private sector driven, with high capital investments reflected in fixed domestic investment; and that we are still hammering Natal, by large political violence is under control, that the crime rate, although troublesome, has its roots in the past and did not come with the inauguration of Mandela, as some false prophets would have us believe. The water is being pumped into informal settlements where, in the past, 1,000 families survived around one tap.

It is ironic that the major changes we have seen in the South African mass print media have been in the field of design and packaging, rather than content.

We have seen millions of rand spent on building new facades for the conservative or neo-liberal media institutions of old - and inside, the same old race tick away, blocking change and entrenched in their belief that blacks cannot rule, that ordinary people are stupid and incapable of making sound judgments.

Concerning the SABC, change has arrived here and is coming slowly but surely to the rest of the electronic media. But the SABC still has to manage change at middle management level. Change is still desperately needed in the bordures of South Africa's print media, at Sapsers, Perskor, TML and Independent Newspapers.

The potential of the new media ventures is exciting. It is the kind of development we need if we are to meet the objective, enshrined in the constitution, of ensuring freedom of expression in our country.

On this special day we invite them to get aggressive in their quest to reflect a rapidly changing society with his pillars of reconstruction, growth and development. But we note that their success can be much enhanced when the traditional mainstream media passes on its positive experiences to these alternative voices.

Above all, we cannot escape from asking the question: Whither the alternative media? The SABC is too critical for today's race-tinged communities, programme and products from water to brick-making, reconstruction heroes and heroes, who are forgotten by the traditional media, need to be reflected? We pose this question to those individuals, organisations, institutions and NGOs that used to produce these remarkable publications.

I conclude by taking this opportunity to remind all of us of our responsibilities towards one another. As an organisation, we expect you to continue to keep us on our toes, as you are the conscience of our society.

We expect you to do, critically, with a bit of intellectual aggression, with grace; language will not always be adequate. If you succeed, you are in the thick of it, but the competition is not easy. If you fail, you are in the thick of it, but the competition is not easy. If you fail, you are in the thick of it, but the competition is not easy.

We expect you to do, critically, with a bit of intellectual aggression, with grace; language will not always be adequate. If you succeed, you are in the thick of it, but the competition is not easy. If you fail, you are in the thick of it, but the competition is not easy.

Relevant, nevertheless, society at large - which you constantly have to mirror and, which, in turn, also reflect on you - exist within a society that is culturally, institutionally, and, in the media, writing about a South African story - a changing story, a changing environment, and inevitably a changing media. Don't let change leave you behind.
'SA media too white'

By SIFELANI MLAMBO

MEDIA diversification in South Africa came under the spotlight at the celebration of the 18th anniversary of Press Freedom Day this week.

At a seminar in Johannesburg on Thursday, organised by the Soetan newspaper, media gurus discussed ways of broadening press ownership in South Africa.

Editors at the seminar agreed there was a need to broaden press ownership to reflect the country's demography.

The editors noted that the South African press had been slow to respond to the changes the country was undergoing.

Speaking at the seminar, City Press Editor Khulu Sibiya said blacks should look at ways and means of making the white media realise it was imperative to broaden press ownership.

He said if the white media were still sceptical about the capabilities of blacks to run and own newspapers, blacks should consider seeking help from outside South Africa.

The help should not be in the form of overseas business tycoons coming in to take over the newspapers, Sibiya warned.

He said if help from the white media was not forthcoming, blacks should use their numbers to get a press of their own.

"Form a board of trustees and ask every single black person in this country to contribute anything from R10 to R1-million, and those who can afford it can pay even more towards starting our own media," he said.

Enterprise magazine Editor Thami Mazwai echoed these sentiments, saying pressure must be put on the government to facilitate change in press ownership through legislation.

Mazwai said the media in South Africa were still owned by whites and many newspapers reflected the views and ideas of white people.

He said the liberation struggle was both socio-economic and political and the media also had to respond to the changes the struggle achieved.

The Star Editor Peter Sullivan acknowledged the imbalances in press ownership but attributed them to South Africa's history.

However, he said the white media were prepared to sit down and discuss issues such as ownership and diversity...
Mandela calls for Press changes to be handled frankly

JOHANNESBURG.—The transformation of the Press should be handled frankly to ensure the emerging unity is real, unpretentious and enduring, President Mandela told members of the Black Editors' Forum here today.

"The recent moves towards establishing an all-embracing forum for editors are most encouraging and we hope that they will facilitate the transformation required in South Africa's media," he said.

Mr. Mandela was referring to developments following the recent resignation of City Press editor Khulu Sibiya as chairman and member of the Conference of Editors.

Sibiya cited continuing disputes, adding he did not believe black and white editors would ever agree on certain crucial issues.

Mr. Mandela said the country had inherited media institutions whose account of society reflected the unequal distribution of political and economic power.

But better representation alone would not "give South Africa the journalism it deserves."

While foreign investment in the media brought money, innovation and technology, Mr. Mandela said it could also help to entrench the current management make-up.

Referring to the local government elections, he said there was a danger of reacting "to the negativity and shallowness that characterised white electoral politics in the apartheid era."

The president addressed the meeting on a number of other issues, some of which he said were "off the record." — Sapa.
Foreign investment in local media can be constructive

Staff Reporter
A press is at the crossroads. It must now find itself.
press must find ways to perform its craft better.
Unity among editors ‘must be enduring’

JOHANNESBURG. — President Nelson Mandela has intervened in the debate over international investment in the South African media, saying the issue had been raised in a way that could lead to confusion.

Addressing a meeting of the Black Editors’ Forum yesterday, Mr Mandela said his impression was that the manner in which the foreign investment debate had been aired thus far “can divert us from the central question of diversity”.

He said there was “nothing in foreign investment (in the media) that is inherently good or bad. It depends on how such investment advances the cause of diversity and empowerment; and ensures an orientation in content that is truly South African”.

Mr Mandela said foreign investment brought financial resources, innovation and technology to our country.

The President said the recent “turmoil amongst the editors of our country’s newspapers” was to be expected “because, in the reconstruction of our country, each sector and structure must undergo its own transformation”.

The issues should be handled frankly “so that the unity (among editors) that should surely emerge from this process is real, unpretentious and enduring”. He specifically welcomed the initiative to form an all-embracing, non-racial editors forum.

Mr Mandela praised black editors for involving themselves in the debate about the transformation of the media, but warned: “We should guard against the belief that media institutions which are more representative, whether in ownership, editorship or operations, will by that fact alone give South Africa the journalism it deserves”.

Professionalism was the greatest challenge, he said, and black entrepreneurs should also develop greater interest in the media industry.
AND DEMOCRACY
Investment

In recent years, the South African government has been focusing on attracting foreign investment. The country's strategic location, abundant natural resources, and a skilled workforce make it an attractive destination for businesses. The government has also implemented various policies to facilitate investment, including tax incentives and streamlined bureaucratic processes. However, despite these efforts, investment flows have been erratic, and the country remains heavily dependent on traditional sources of capital. The lack of sustained investment has hindered economic growth and development, exacerbating income inequality and poverty.

Unity must be for real!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

The transformation of black and white media – Mandela
Media diversity controls disputed

Ingrid Salgado

THE print media industry told the parliamentary committee on communications yesterday that it would reserve the right to challenge further restrictions on cross-media ownership in the Constitutional Court.

Print Media Association of southern Africa representative and Times Media (TML) electronic media GM Neil Jacobsen denied this was a threat to the parliamentary process. This view was echoed by Independent Newspapers' Gauteng GM Graeme King.

Urging the committee to reject the IBA's recent report on cross-media ownership, Jacobsen said the IBA's recommendation that a 15% shareholding in a radio or TV licence constitute control of that licence was unacceptably low.

The definition of control in the IBA Act — more than 25% — was "more than adequate" to regulate cross-media ownership.

The legal definition of control was any shareholding above 50%, while a shareholding of more than 25% entitled a shareholder to block special resolutions. The association was prepared to accept that 25% constituted control.

Jacobsen said it was "unnecessary and restrictive" that no person who controlled a newspaper could acquire financial control in both a radio and a television licence. Current provisions in the IBA Act limiting one party to the control of one private TV licence, two private AM and two private FM radio licences were sufficient, he said.

Jacobsen said TML had no intention of applying for a licence in which it had a 100% stake. But newspapers were keen to be part of licence-seeking consortia which represented a variety of interests. The association was not seeking control of licence applications but wanted the opportunity to have a "fair shareholding of the natural extent of the business we are in".

Committee member and ANC MP Carl Niehaus said it seemed contradictory that the association accepted the need for greater diversity, while resisting further restrictions on cross-media ownership. A variety of different voices was needed, not just different titles, Niehaus said.

NP MP Martinus van Schalkwyk said the committee had "great reservations" about the 15% cut-off line. It wanted to create stability and certainty in the industry.
Media diversity controls disputed

Ingrid Salgado

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Urging the committee to reject the IBA's recent report on cross-media ownership, Jacobsohn said the IBA's recommendation that a 15% shareholding in a radio or TV licence constitute control of that licence was unacceptable.

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NP MP Martinus van Schalkwyk said the committee had "great reservations" about the 15% cut-off line. It wanted to create stability and certainty in the industry.
News views in parliament

NEWSPAPERS had no desire to monopolise radio stations or broadcasting, the parliamentary portfolio committee on communications has heard from representatives of major English newspapers.

However, newspapers could make a substantial contribution to emerging broadcasters, Neil Jacobsohn said on behalf of the Print Media Association yesterday.

Independent Newspapers editorial director Ivan Fallon said newspapers were the dinosaurs of the media industry and were in a long, slow decline, forcing them to become involved in the electronic media to survive.

"If a group like ours is de-
JOHANNESBURG: Representatives of major English-language newspapers yesterday made representations to the parliamentary portfolio committee on communications in an attempt to reduce restrictions on their future ownership of radio stations.

Mr Ivan Fallon, editorial director of Independent Newspapers, said that when Independent bought substantial shares in the Argus company before last year's election, the company was in the unusual situation of only being involved in newspapers.

While the company had made considerable investments in its products, "newspapers are the dross of the media industry which are in a long, slow decline," forcing us to become involved in the electronic media to survive," he said.

Mr Neil Jacobsohn, general manager of electronic media at Times Media Limited, and representing the PRINT Media Association, said that there was no desire for newspapers to monopolise radio stations, but they could make a substantial contribution to emerging broadcasters.

Mr Jacobsohn said the restrictions of 25% newspaper ownership of a radio station was sufficient, and the 15% restriction called for by the ISA was unnecessary.
No further curbs on cross-media ownership needed, hearing told

**BY MICHAEL SPARKS**

Representatives of major English-language newspapers made representations to the parliamentary portfolio committee on communications yesterday in an attempt to reduce restrictions on their future ownership of radio stations.

Ivan Fallon, editorial director of Independent Newspapers, which owns The Star, said that when Independent bought a substantial shareholding in the Argus company before last year’s election, the company was in the unusual situation of being involved only in newspapers.

While the company had made considerable investment into its products, “newspapers are the darlings of the media market which are in a long slow decline, forcing us to become involved in the electronic media to survive”, Fallon said.

“If a group like ours is deprived of that opportunity, we will continue to function but we would be hugely inhibited in terms of growth,” he said. “We are not asking to dominate the broadcasting arena, but just to be enabled to grow,” he added.

Gauteng Newspapers general manager Graeme King said that while newspapers recognised the authority of the Independent Broadcasting Authority to impose certain restrictions on cross-media ownership, and the IBA Act gave sufficient powers to do so, no further regulation was necessary. He added there should be no blanket regulation, and controls should be in the public interest, with individual applications considered on merit.

Discussing the company’s efforts at empowering the previously disadvantaged, King’s special assistant, Noel Ntshona, said the process had seen the appointment of the first black editor of a traditionally white newspaper when Moegane Williams was made editor of The Pretoria News, before being made editor of the Cape Times.

And now, for the first time, The Star had a black news editor and political editor. But he added that the company realised it was not enough, and also had other plans.

Neil Jacobsohn, general manager of electronic media at Times Media Limited, and representing the Print Media Association, agreed there was no desire for papers to monopolise radio stations, but said they could make a substantial contribution to emerging broadcasters. He said the restrictions of 25% newspaper ownership of a radio was sufficient, and the 15% restriction urged by the IBA was unnecessary, since the IBA had the ultimate sanction of not granting licences.

ANC MP Carl Niehaus said the current situation did not allow for the development of a greater diversity of voices.

“It is irrelevant to talk about the large number of titles you represent, if it all boils down to newspapers being owned by the same small number of groups,” he said.

The hearings continue today.
Defamation law
put to the test

BY HELEN GRANGE
Constitutional Court Correspondent

The Pretoria News newspaper has asked the Constitutional Court to grant it the right to defend a defamation action on the grounds of freedom of speech, a ruling which would overturn the current law governing defamation in the press.

The request arises from a R5,75-million defamation action brought against the Pretoria News by businessman Gert de Klerk and his aircraft company Wonder Air.

He claims the Pretoria News, its then editor Deon da Plessis and the author, then political correspondent Dale Lautenbach, defamed him in a series of articles published during February and March 1995, which implied he and his company were involved in the supply of arms, ammunition, medical relief and fuel to the Angolan Unita movement.

The defamatory points he claims were made are that such flights were illegal, that the flights were in conflict with legislation and air traffic control regulations, were in conflict with government policy and international interest, that it was for financial gain without regard to moral issues and that those involved were callous, unscrupulous, immoral and greedy.

De Klerk is claiming personal damages of R250,000 and company damages of R5-million. Judgment was reserved.
will become a net cash generator. He is happy with the credit system, 85% of sales are on hire purchase.

Since the start of the current financial year an economic value-added system has been in place. Expected benefits include lower-risk sales. So far, Sussman is happy with the results.

Sales have increased about 22% (year on year) in the four months since year-end, with cash flow R91m ahead of forecast. These figures include the 23 store closings that were part of the restructuring.

Analysts are divided on J D Group's share rating and how far the run on the share price will go. Many now prefer the counter to traditional sector leader Ellerine.

Some feel J D Group's R4.8m last month has discounted much of the future earnings growth. But one leading analyst argues that well-managed and well-financed furniture merchants' shares should no longer trade at discounts to the ratings of quality clothing and food merchants — and he is forecasting J D Group will lift EPS by more than 30% over each of the next two years.

At 1825c, the p/e ratio of 11.8 is below the sector average of 15.8. There could still be useful capital appreciation.

**PERSKOR**

**FM 10/11/95**

**Returns still too low**

Perskor management has good reason to be pleased with the group performance during the 1995 book year as benefits of continuing rationalisation and re-engineering started to bear fruit in a big way.

It is also clear that the 30.5% improvement in attributable earnings took the market by surprise. For much of the past year, the share has moved sideways within a narrow band. But, after the preliminary results at the end of September, the share has moved up proportionately with the increase in EPS, adding about R150m to the market capitalisation of Perskorgroup.

Main thrust behind the improvement was an uptick in trading margin from 5.6% to 7.1%. Achieved against a background of

**Activities:** Printing and publishing of newspapers, magazines and books

**Control:** Dagbreek Trust through Perskor Beleggings 42.5%

**Executive chairman:** J M Buitendag

**Capital structure:** J Dorn (on market capitalisation R852m)

**Share market:** Price 6800c Yields 1.1% on dividend. 7.6% on earnings, p/e ratio, 12.2, cover, 7.2. 12-month high, 8800c. low, 4500c. Trading volume last quart, 63,787 shares

**Year to June 30**

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different business conditions — turnover declined in real terms again — the improvement in operational efficiencies is clear.

This point is further underscored in that total investment income (dividends, retained earnings of associates and net interest receipts), which has been the mainstay of earnings growth in recent years, rose only 9% in 1995.

But Perskor remains one of the most enigmatic companies on the JSE in terms of assessing its true performance and profitability. Taken at face value, the latest financial statements continue to reflect a group which is grossly under-profitable in relation to its considerable asset base.

Pre-interest return on assets, for example (with investments at market/directors' valuation), is shown to be only 7.6%: similarly calculated ROE is not much better at 8.1%.

Both record improvements on 1994 but were still down on 1993 and prior years.

The problem here is an investment portfolio (including investments in associates) which accounts for 46% of total assets and provides a minimal return. This is compounded by the growing liquidity of the group, which ended the year with a net R26.8m in the bank, also providing minimal income.

If the investments and cash are excluded from the balance sheet, and the related income from the income statement, the picture changes considerably. The pre-interest return on the remaining total assets doubles to a more respectable 15%. An adjusted ROE is more difficult to calculate, but some idea of the effect of excluding these low-yielding investments and cash is obtained from the relationship of net income to capital employed, where the return would increase from 7.6% to almost 19%.

Notwithstanding the strategic importance of these investments to Perskor, the opportunity cost of holding them is high — and one cannot help wondering if it is not too high. For example, if the R45m now tied up in investments and in the bank was invested at a net return of even 10%, the attributable income would be R31m more than the R14m earned from these sources last year. Equity earnings would be about 39.5% (65%) higher than the 60.8% achieved.

And does Perskor really have to compound the problem by continuing with a highly restrictive dividend policy which is

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FINANCIAL MAIL • NOVEMBER 10 • 1995 • 113
The editorship of the Sunday Times is up for grabs. Reg Rumney reports on the fight for the most powerful newspaper position in the country.

The battle is on for the most powerful newspaper position in the country: editor of the country's biggest paper, The Sunday Times.

The choice of who will replace Ken Owen who will retire next year is the subject of unbridled speculation. The party game will be played and the competition is fierce among the circle of candidates.

The result: a big surprise, Owen's final decision, is likely to surprise everyone.

Succession in newspapers is never clear cut. Witness the appointment of the new editor in South Africa's Newsday, where Owen is editor of Business Day in 1995, to his equally surprising appointment after only a few days, followed by an equally surprising reappointment of about a year later.

Owen, asked if he knew who his successor might be, replied, "I don't know. I'll find out eventually."

The board will have to focus on collecting the decision, or else set up a successor to Owen. He is due to leave the newspaper in a few months, but an announcement of leave will likely mean he will depart earlier.

Business Day editor Jim Jones and electronic media general manager Neil Jacobsen have been mentioned as possible successors.

The board must consider government pressure to replace mainly black editors with non-black editors, or else risk losing the newspaper to another black-owned company. The board has been threatened with legal action.

The board, looking to the future, are said to be considering a black editor or a non-black editor who is willing to accept the position.

One candidate, who has been mentioned, is Thami Mzawu, a deputy editor at the Sunday Times, who is said to be interested in the position.

The board, looking to the future, may decide to appoint a non-black editor if they believe it will be in the best interests of the newspaper.

The result of the succession is likely to be a major shake-up in the editorial team, with new faces taking on key roles.

The battle for the top job at the Sunday Times is heating up, with the board considering a range of candidates to replace Ken Owen.
Fallon promoted to top job at Independent Newspapers

By KURT SWART

Independent Newspapers group editorial director Ivan Fallon was appointed deputy chief executive of the group yesterday.

Fallon retains his title as editorial director and will remain responsible for company diversification, including new titles and developments in electronic media. He is also a business columnist for the Saturday Star's sister newspaper, The Sunday Independent.

Fallon (51) joined the board of Independent Newspapers on November 1, 1984 when he arrived in South Africa from London, where he was one of Britain's leading financial journalists.

In the past year he has been responsible for the launch of Business Report, the group's business section, which is carried in four titles across the country, and Sunday Life magazine.

He also played an important role in the conception of The Sunday Independent, the first new newspaper of democratic SA.

Business Report now has a circulation of nearly 300,000 and includes a four-page Wall Street Journal section every Monday.

"We had a few problems with Business Report in the early days. It was a new product with new staff, using new technology," Fallon said yesterday.

"The staff under editor Jim Smith succeeded through incredible effort. Business Report is now a significant contributor to our group's profits."

Sales of The Sunday Independent, originally targeted at 30,000, have been consistently above that figure, and have increased each week for the past two months.

"The event that has given us more satisfaction than anything else is the reaction to the launch of The Sunday Independent," Fallon said.

"Sceptics said you'll never find 30,000 people willing to pay R5 for such an upmarket product every Sunday, but considerably more than that are doing so."

"It is not only the first new paper launched in the new South Africa, but also the first newspaper that Independent Newspapers has launched anywhere in the world, and (chairman) Tony O'Reilly is probably more proud of it than any of his titles," Fallon said.

Fallon, based in Johannesburg, will continue to report directly to group chief executive John Featherstone.

In 1981, Fallon won the Wincott Award for outstanding contribution to financial journalism, and was Financial Journalist of the Year again in 1991.

One of his five books, DeLorean, Life of a Dream-maker, was the first ever business biography to be a Book of the Month in the US. Two others, The Saatchi & Saatchi Story and Billionaire, The Life and Times of Jimmy Goldsmith, were best sellers in Britain. His most recent book was The Player, The Life of Tony O'Reilly.

Educated at St Peter's College, Wexford and Trinity College Dublin, where he graduated with a degree in business studies, he started his journalistic career on the Irish Times, before joining Thomson Newspapers in London in 1986.

Since then he has worked for most of the big Fleet Street papers, including the Daily Mirror, the Sunday Express and the Telegraph.

After Rupert Murdoch bought Times Newspapers, he brought Fallon in as deputy editor of The Sunday Times, a position he held for 10 years.

When Andrew Neil was seconded to Sky Television in 1989, Fallon was appointed acting editor of the paper, which has more than 200 journalists and a circulation of 1.4 million.
Advocate says defamation law must echo new democracy
Press tests its freedom

SUNDAY TIMES, November 12, 1999
Print media opposes IBA

By CHIARA CARTER

SOUTH AFRICA's major newspaper groups have declared their opposition to further restrictions on the involvement of the print media in radio and television broadcasting.

Nasionale Pers, Independent Newspapers, and Times Media Limited, all of whom are members of the Prmt Media Association, have backed the association's objections to regulations proposed by the Independent Broadcasting Authority's "Triple Board of Inquiry".

The board's proposals include a recommendation that any person who controls a newspaper should be prevented from acquiring financial control of both a radio and a television licence.

In a submission this week to the parliamentary committee considering the board's proposals, the association said the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act of 1993 adequately regulated cross-media ownership.

The association said it accepted the need for "intelligent regulation of broadcast ownership", but it believed the proposed limit of a 15 percent shareholding in a broadcasting licence was unacceptably low. The IBA Act allows for a limit of 25 percent.

The PMA also opposed a recommendation that any person who controls a newspaper read by more than 15 percent of readers in an area should not be allowed to control a radio or television licence which overlapped with the paper's circulation area.

The PMA said if the proposals were adopted, it might challenge them in the Constitutional Court.
SOUTH AFRICA did not need a society of yes-men, Nasionale Pers chairman Ton Vosloo said this week in reaction to claims that his newspaper group tended to be negative toward the government.

"The test of democracy is the right to disagree with one another," he told the parliamentary communications portfolio committee in Pretoria on Wednesday.

"We don't need a society in the future of a lot of 'ja-broers', as we may have had in the past."

A committee member had earlier accused newspapers, especially those of Nasionale Pers, of painting a negative picture of the government, saying they focused on "gravy train" allegations while ignoring the "gravy jumbo jet" the previous government had travelled in.

This was denied by Vosloo, who said: "We can go into our files and bring you numerous stories where we tore into the previous government when they abused the taxpayers' money."

Committee chairman Saki Macozoma said there were allegations of editorial decisions by Die Burger, a Naspers daily newspaper in Cape Town, being aimed at preventing the African National Congress from being put in too good a light.

Naspers's claim that it did not interfere with editorial decisions did not hold water, he said.

"The question is: what is going to be done with the print media to address the fact that these resources are controlled by a particular group in society, which has a different world view altogether from the rest of us?"

Vosloo reacted by saying Naspers had a full-blown policy of affirmative action and no discrimination.

"Yes, we probably have too many white males in the top echelons, but our board already reflects South Africa in part," he said. "Two of our 12 board members are black."

Laughter from some committee members prompted Vosloo to add: "It is a start. You must remember where we come from. We have our own culture that was put together to reflect a certain viewpoint."

On ownership of the company, he said it had shareholders in all sectors. Control rested with them, and should not be imposed by the state.

Vosloo said Naspers intended to sell 51 percent of the shares in its weekly black newspaper City Press to blacks. This was measurable advancement because it meant that the newspaper would belong to blacks.

"My philosophy is that we will not have full democracy until and unless the majority of the people in this country own mainstream media," Vosloo said.

"There should be main media players from the disadvantaged group." - Sapa
Naspers shareholders back restructuring

Edward West

CAPE TOWN — Nearly all Nasionale Pers (Naspers) shareholders gave the go-ahead to the group's restructuring plans at an extraordinary shareholders' meeting on Friday.

As a result of the restructuring, the 50% interest in the listed company Nasionale Pers Beheer held in Naspers will in future also be traded directly by the company's shareholders on the JSE.

Naspers executive chairman Ton Vosloo told shareholders he was aware that the restructuring had drawn criticism in some quarters, but these views had been taken into account in the restructurings and much of the criticism had been uninformed.

A company spokesperson said shareholders representing just less than 50 million shares had approved the restructure. One shareholder holding 20 000 shares, representing 0.025% of the total, notably the Protea Pension Fund, had voted against the move because of a technical default.

Vosloo said the creation of Beheer at the time of Naspers's listing in September last year was a mechanism through which control of the group could be ensured. However, the unlisted Beheer shares had started trading at a discount because of the tender system of trading.

Since Naspers's listing, JSE rules had changed and the group had decided to follow the route whereby the extent of control could be effected through the voting rights accorded certain classes of shares.

The special shareholders' meeting for Beheer was postponed until November 20 because too few attended to form a quorum.
Banning books will become difficult

CAPE TOWN — New publication laws which will make it more difficult to ban films and books, and which will replace the infamous Publications Control Board, were tabled in Parliament last week.

The Films and Publications Bill says specifically that the protection of race relations and state security should reside with the law courts, not a state board.

The new measures seek to protect children from pornography by the implementation of age restrictions and packaging rather than banning. "Bona fide" artistic and scientific works will be protected and may be restricted only through age limitations.

Distribution of material to adults will be restricted only in the case of child pornography, certain mixtures of sex and violence, bestiality and extreme violence.

Distribution to adults will be prohibited also where a publication, as a whole, promotes hatred against the religious convictions of a section of the population. Bona fide religious works will be exempted.

The legislation is based on the deliberations of a task group appointed by Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The task group considered about 1 600 representations from the public and interested organisations.

It decided current legislation "regulates the domain of the adult too strenuously", infringed on the freedom of adults to make a choice, was too vague and was subject to abuse.

Introduced by Deputy Home Affairs Minister Femuile Maduna the legislation will be presented to the portfolio committee on home affairs before being placed before the National Assembly and Senate in the new year.
Naspers shake up goes smoothly

BY MAGGIE ROWLEY

Cape Town — Shareholders of Naspers overwhelmingly approved the restructuring of the listed company and its unlisted pyramid, Nasionale Pers Beherend, at a special meeting on Friday.

The restructuring had sparked heated debate in some quarters about pyramid control and whether minority rights were being infringed. There was even speculation that minority shareholders, including institutions, would put a spanner in the works at Friday’s meeting.

But this was not the case. A confident Naspers chairman, Ton Vosloo, opened the meeting armed with proxies representing 79 percent of the issued share capital in support of the restructuring.

Vosloo’s proxies included all the major shareholders, of which Servcon is the largest. Only one shareholder, representing 0.025 percent of the equity, opposed the scheme.

No dissent emerged from the two dozen or so shareholders who packed the 18th-floor boardroom of Naspers’ Cape Town headquarters.

All three resolutions pertaining to the restructuring were passed unanimously from the floor.

The only minor hiccup was over the special meeting of the pyramid company that was to follow. It had to be postponed until November 20 because the quorum required by the Companies Act was not present.

Vosloo said company deliberations had considered criticisms of the scheme. But much of the criticism had been uninformed and based on factually incorrect information, he said.

The pyramid company was created to ensure control of the group when Naspers was listed in September last year.

Shareholders were sold on the idea of Nasionale Pers Beleggings, a wholly owned subsidiary of Nasionale Pers Beherend, taking over all its rights in A shares.

Beherend will then be collapsed. Beleggings will be controlled by Nasionale Pers Beleggings, by way of 49 percent of the votes in Beleggings through the A shares.
Naspers shake up goes smoothly

By Maggie Bowley

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Shares in Beheerend were sold by tender. Vosloo said this had proved to be an efficient instrument.

Beheerend’s shares are trading on the JSE at a considerably discount to the Naspers shares.

Vosloo said that in terms of amendments to JSE rules since the listing of Naspers, control could now be effected through different voting rights accorded different classes of shares.

Naspers is pursuing this route by creating a new class of shares known as A ordinary shares.

Each A share will have 1000 votes, compared with one vote for existing shares. The existing shares will be known in future as N ordinary shares.

The new shares will only be eligible for dividends no higher than 20 percent of those paid to N ordinary shareholders.

Crowther said after the meeting that institutional shareholders had indicated they would all be taking up their rights in N shares, receiving 100 N ordinary shares in Naspers for every 100 shares they held in Beheerend.

Nationale Pers Beleggings, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Beheerend, will take up all its rights in A shares.

Beheerend will then be collapsed. Beleggings will be controlled by Newco, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Naspers, by way of 49 percent of the votes in Beleggings through the A shares.

CONFIDENT Ton Vosloo, the chairman of Naspers

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TML’s operating profit up by a third

Adrienne Gillomess

TIMES Media Ltd (TML), the publisher of Business Day, lifted its operating profit a third in the six months to September 30 but suffered a drop in attributable income as non-trading income fell from an abnormally high level in the corresponding period of 1994. The first half’s turnover was 16% ahead at R249,5m (1994: R215,5m), propelled by a 20% advance in advertising revenue. Operating profit climbed 35% to R58,5m (R43,7m), based on a strong performance from core publishing operations.

Earnings excluding non-trading items grew to 139c from 74c a share. An unchanged interim dividend of 28c a share has been declared.

The group’s core publishing business — Business Day, Sunday Times and Financial Mail — contributed R36,1m of the period’s R38,3m operating profit. Strong circulation growth was recorded by Business Day and the Eastern Province Herald, with unaudi-
dited circulation figures indicating Business Day’s current circulation was more than 37,500, or 6% higher than a year ago. Circulation revenues were helped by higher cover prices, but were affected by a decline in the Sunday Times’s circulation. Advertising volumes grew 12%.

Continued on Page 2

TML

Continued from Page 1

Profit from non-trading items dropped from R39,3m to R9,3m. Chairman Vaughn Bray said although TML made R10,5m profit from its sale of a portion of M-Net shares to Phuthuma Investments, the comparative figure for last year had included the R41,4m profit on the sale of TML’s interests in Natal Newspapers, Pretoria News, the Cape Times Operating Agreement and the Cape Times.

Parent company Omni Media Corporation and TML are considering a rationalisation scheme which would result in TML transferring all its shares in MNH Holdings, M-Net, MultiChoice and M-Cell to Omni. An announcement is expected soon.

Losses from associated companies were R2,2m lower than last year’s and included substantial losses from MultiChoice. No losses from MultiChoice were accounted for after the writing down of this investment to nil in March. Total expenditure was 13% higher due to the raised level of activ-

Continued on Page 2

TML (243)

Continued from Page 1

ally, increased newspaper usage resulting from higher advertising volumes and increased editorial and production costs during the conversion to electronic page makeup systems in the Gauteng division.

In the magazine division, a sharp drop in Playboy’s circulation was attributed to the “unsettled situation” in the men’s magazine market. TML financial director Lawrence Clarke said the group would manage the magazine through the trough in the cycle. The magazine division, which was set to launch its new adventure magazine Out There, recorded an interim loss of R100,000 ($300,000).

Continued improvements in the results from ware services I-Net and Trade Information Services were reflected in the reduced losses — R300,000 against R800,000 from electronic media.

The acquisition of 80% in Despatch Media, making it a wholly owned subsidiary, will be included only in the annual financial statements, as the deal came into effect on October 1. Clarke said trading levels in the second half of the year were expected to show continued improvement as the economy maintained its growth.
A journalist’s last few words before his execution

TIM COHEN in Cape Town

Africans. ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa asks, for example: “Do the life experiences of most journalists enable them to understand the importance of delivering water to people who have never had access to it before?” (Business Day, November 8)

Arguments are also made on questions of ownership of the Press, but this is an issue for the management of newspapers in general (as they have been done). There is also some criticism of certain editorial decisions concerning the local govt elections.

But the real issue lies elsewhere. What seems to stir ANC members most is their belief that the majority of senior political reporters, most of whom are white, middle-class men, set the political agenda in SA and tend to be negative, hostile and unresponsive to what party members see as the information needs of SA citizens. As one of the “endangered species” in question, I wish to make a few remarks before my execution.

Firstly, as to the central charge, I plead guilty. It cannot seriously be disputed that the personal background of journalists, including race, gender and class, influences their decisions on how news is presented.

Of course, good reporters are able to imagine the life circumstances of other people and reflect their plights accurately. The capacity to conceive of another’s predicament is, after all, a peculiarly human trait — even a political earning, say, R245 000 a year, has the capacity to feel something for the predicament of poor, working-class people.

In addition, the perceived information needs of the population all too often coincide with the party’s political programme. While it may be true that reporters do not share the “life experiences” of many unprivileged citizens, it is equally true that the information needs of ordinary people are generally seen by politicians as their messages.

But this is not what I am about. The argument is that white, middle-class media reporters tend to be negative about the government because they are white middle-class men. Thus, with respect, your honour, is bunk.

Firstly, the alleged negativity that the ANC member speaks of is overstated. Criticism of the government has, in general, so mild that one shudders to think what the response would be if the Press started meeting out the kind of stuff routinely published by, for example, The Sun in support of the European Union. (Remember “Up yours, Delors”?) In contrast to Press conferences overseas, most local reporters are notably unaggressive when questioning government ministers. Secondly, what criticism there has been in the past from journalists of all races, all classes and both sexes. It was not the “white” Press that pursued most strongly allegations that money from the President’s Children’s Fund was removed from the African Bank just before it was closed; it was the Sowetan. And the opposite is also true: some of the most plausibly toady pieces of “sunshine” journalism and editorialising seen in the recent past have been written by white male journalists under the oversight of white male editors.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the critical character of the SA Press (such as it is) derives more from its history of opposition to apartheid than from the make-up of the journalistic profession and the current socio-political arrangements.

The vast majority of political journalists active today might not have made anything like the kinds of sacrifices thousands of African activists have suffered the kind of hardships many more endured. But many journalists did what they could to support the struggle.

They operated in an extraordinary legislative environment with nervous advertisers, sometimes barely (sometimes not-so-brave) editors and, most of all, a quite deranged government that was hostile to most of the Press.

In the process of dealing at close quarters with this kind of government, they built a tradition of which in short, they learned that governments can be understood as brutal and comprehensively callous.

Members of the present government might think of themselves, as fundamentally different, but a valuable tradition of “the journalist as societal watchdog” has developed.

What is more, this tradition is expanding fast. Always evident in the black Press, it has quickly incorporated the Africans Press and is now evident even on the outer fringes of the SABC.

This tradition must be preserved, even if it does stimulate new sensitivities of some members of government. There is, after all, enough support for it. After all, it is about Press bashing. I can just see that famous finger wagging again.

The strangest things about the ANC’s criticism of the Press is that it comes at a time when the party has just reaffirmed its status as by far the most powerful political force in the country. If the Press is being so negative, why isn’t the ANC losing support as a result?

Perhaps this is not strange at all. Perhaps the ANC is critical of the Press precisely because it feels itself to be politically unchallengeable. Perhaps we are seeing the beginnings of Mugabe-style state arrogance?

Oh dear, there I go again. Just being negative as usual.
The growing economy and costs which were contained to an increase of 13%, margin widened from 13.3% to 15.3%, feeding the one-third gain in operating profit.

The first half nontrading profit of R9.3m reflects the sale of M-Nct shares to Phutima Investments, to spread the pay-TV investment among black shareholders. This full profit of R10.5m was offset by a R1.2m charge for the amortisation of teflo.

Earnings from associates were spared the R14.4m loss recorded at year-end as profits from East London's Daily Dispatch newspaper, fully owned by TML, since the interim, offset development losses from cellphone operator M-Cell.

The investment in MultiChoice has been written down to nil, protecting TML's earnings base from continuing development losses in Europe.

But these investments will soon be transferred to 92% controlling shareholder Omni Media Corp. That will result in a nontrading, one-off loss for the full year as the book value of the investments (they have a market value of about R750m) is effectively given to Omni.

Minority shareholders will be compensated with equivalent shares or cash. In the short term, this will cost TML the write-off of the investment as well as compensation to option holders and professional fees.

Financial director Lawrence Clark cites longer-term benefits. The unbundling of the M-Net, MultiChoice and M-Cell investments (TML recently spent R52.5m following its rights in M-Cell's cash call) should unlock value in TML's share.

These investments now account for about R37.50 of TML's share price of R41.50. That puts TML on an implied pe for its publishing interests of about two times.

The share price could appreciate as soon as the market sees the low value placed on the publications. Though TML's price has already made significant gains on thin volumes, better liquidity would also help. Omni has indicated it will reduce its shareholding in TML, probably to a spread of black shareholders, while retaining control.

Clark says the removal of the pay-TV and cellphone interests will allow management to focus on the publications without distraction. Shareholders will have the flexibility to invest directly in TML as an almost pure publishing investment or in the TV or cell.
Naspers approves sale of City Press

20 21/11/95

Jacqueline Zaina

NASIONALE Pers was in talks to sell 51% of weekend newspaper City Press to a black consortium, the group said yesterday.

Chairman Ton Vosloo said that talks with one group were at an advanced stage, and that shares were also likely to be offered to other black investors in a low-cost entry scheme similar to that recently employed by M-Net.

He refused to name the consortium involved, though sources said Thebe Investments could be a strong contender. Vosloo said Corporate Africa Holdings was not in the running, while both Real Africa Investments and Kagiso Trust declined to comment.

Vosloo said the plans had been welcomed by City Press' staff. Editor Khulu Silbya was unavailable for comment.

Vosloo said he hoped the newspaper—which lifted sales 14% to 267,560 for the six months to June—would become the kernel of a new black publishing house.

City Press would be spun off from its current Naspers' division National Media as a separate company. National Media's magazines—Drum and True Love—would not be included in the deal.

Vosloo said a new board of directors would be created in terms of which the black investors would hold a majority share in the City Press business.

Naspers would retain control of printing and distribution.

He said black shareholders—who held a majority stake in Naspers’ Via Africa associated companies—would also be encouraged to buy shares.

Other shares would be made available to staff members and the public to spread ownership as widely as possible.

Vosloo said the share scheme would be similar to M-Net's Phuthuma share initiative, under which shares were bought by putting down a deposit equal to 10% of the share price.

The restructuring of unlisted parent Nasionale Pers Bohemond was approved by a majority of shareholders yesterday.
Shareholders approve Naspers restructuring

BY MAGGIE RODEY

Cape Town — The restructuring of Nasionale Pers was unanimously approved yesterday by the shareholders of the unlisted Nasionale Pers Beherend.

Yesterday’s extraordinary meeting, postponed from November 10 when a quorum could not be obtained because of an insufficient number of shareholders with voting rights in Beherend, followed the go-ahead by shareholders in the listed company.

As a result of the restructuring, which was due for completion by December 29, Beherend’s 50 percent share in Naspers would be traded directly by shareholders on the JSE.

Beherend was created at the time of Naspers’ listing in September last year as a mechanism through which control of the group could be ensured. However, its structure soon proved to be detrimental to shareholders, with the shares trading at a discount to shares in the listed company.

Owing to a change in the JSE’s rules, the control sought by Naspers can now be achieved by according special voting rights to certain categories of shares.

Naspers will create a new class of share to be known as A ordinary shares which will each attract 1 000 votes, but which will never be eligible for a dividend of more than 20 percent of that paid to holders of existing ordinary shares. These will be known as N ordinary shares.

The scheme has been approved in principle by the JSE.
Monopoly on media slammed

Black Editors Forum calls for changes to the power base of SA’s white media

By Christine Qunta

The last few months have seen some very sharp exchanges between black journalists and the white media. It all started when the Black Editors Forum (BEF) in its submissions to Parliament suggested that media diversity should be encouraged and foreign ownership limited.

These calls have subsequently been repeated by the BDF. The fear that the black editors caused in white media circles is not surprising. It is not easy for people who have always had power to accept even minor alterations to their power base.

The fear is not necessarily a bad thing. This country, so accustomed to a media that is both biased and parochial, is badly in need of intellectual revival.

The pedestrian nature of the South Africa media is of course not an accident. It is concentrated in the hands of a few who do not see the media as a national resource, where information is mixed with requiring and accurate journalism but rather as a mechanism for control of the moods and wealth of the population.

Having followed the debate closely, I noticed something which perhaps has not been sufficiently highlighted: the whole white media, from the conservative to the liberal, rallied to attack the black editors and the nature of the attacks.

The focus on BEF chairman Thami Mzwakhe as the trouble source was interesting. The Sunday Times quickly tied a profile on him. All they could come up with was that he once belonged to the PAC. The Mail and Guardian went one further.

In typical American "elitist to assassinate" style, they told us how he was a reformed alcoholic, how he "splutters" and grovels widely when he talks and the coup de grace - how he is not really as brilliant as the Drum journalists of the fifties.

Contrast this profile and that of Ministry of Health’s Dr Olive Shisana, with the flattering profiles of Robb-Cyril Harris and Charles Nqen, the latter being so fawning as to make one sick.

It seems that Afriwax, especially those who openly challenge white power structures and racism, come off rather badly in Mail and Guardian profiles.

One of the most distressing aspects of the white monopoly of the media is the way it demonises African people. Having years presented Africa as a chaotic place of darkness and death, a world of evil, inept and corrupt people exist, it now continues the steering work done by previous generations of "civilised" whites to rescue the country from the African curse.

And the way to save us is to make sure our achievers are cut down so that we do not have role models we can be proud of. It does not do this only on the basis of ingrained racism towards Africans, but more specifically because white power is being threatened by the emergence of democracy in this country.

In that period of transformation, much that has been a source of comfort to whites will change, and for every change, no matter how small, the media had a field day in denouncing it.

At this, the liberal English-speaking Press has been very adept. The storm over the changes at SAm is but one example of an artificial crisis orchestrated by this section of the media.

But it is when we look at the fate of some black professionals within white institutions that we realise we are dealing with more than simply a vigilant Press.

We realise that there is in fact a campaign being waged at a subliminal level. In this campaign, white policemen, civil servants, academics and corporate executives are arrayed against black politicians, professionals, corporate executives and new civil servants.

It is fought not only in the corridors of Parliament, boardrooms and exclusive golf clubs, but in the media. In fact, the most powerful tool in the hands of the white establishment is the white media.

There is an important lesson to be learnt by all Africans who are potential targets of the white media. Do not leave yourself open to attack. Integrity and a morally upright life are essential at all times, but especially during this difficult period in our country’s history.

The malevolence of the white media is a very serious problem. A new, more open media is needed in this country. The white media monopoly is out of step with progress and democracy that is beginning to emerge.

It represents a hyena era where Afriwax people are merely background images fluttering across the landscape of white privilege.

Such false images cannot continue because we are the centre, not the periphery and the sooner the white media realises this the better for all of us.

Christine Qunta is an attorney and freelance writer who returned to South Africa recently after...
Christine Qunta ... Information is used to control the minds and wealth of people in South Africa.
holding in TML, possibly down to 51%
Paulson says this could be put into effect early next year.

TML MD Roy Paulson says the R55 reached on Tuesday for TML shares indicates the value placed by the market on the package.

That, however, could be at the lower end of TML's implied value. Based on a p/e ratio of 25.8 at the share's closing price of R48 on Monday, the publishing interests — removed from the influence of pay-TV and cellphone investments — are on a 5.3 p/e.

That clearly is too low. Though the comparison is not exact, the p/e ratio of a share like Naspers, with similar holdings in M-Net, MCL and M-Cell, declines from 24.3 to 12.9 when stripped of the electronic investments. On the same p/e, TML shares would be worth about R62.

Independent newspapers is on a p/e of about 17.

The close relationship between TML's share price and those of M-Net, MCL and M-Cell was becoming a problem, with the investment tail wagging the dog.

Paulson says management had felt for some time that the investments were clouding the true value of TML. With the formation of Omni from the former Argus Holdings, it seemed logical to transfer the investments to the holding company, he says.

"It will allow TML to operate in its own right and unlock the value of TML shares," he adds.

The transfer will affect TML's balance sheet — removing the book value of the investments — and its market capitalisation. At current prices, the aggregate market value of the investments (R781m) represents about four-fifths of TML's total capitalisation.

But Paulson points out that these changes will not affect the managed operations.

The offer appears favourable to minorities, certainly, the market seems to think so. Equivalent shares in M-Net, MCL and M-Cell is probably the most attractive option. That would allow investors to acquire a spread of direct investments which can be traded to build the portfolio which best suits minority shareholders.

The true value of TML's shares, though, will only be shown once the shareholding structure has been broadened and the stock becomes more liquid.

Omnimedia has undertaken to reduce its share-
Paper's racial split attacked

The Sunday Times' policy of producing racially targeted 'Extra' editions has come under fire.

Neil Bierbaum reports

As the country's biggest-selling newspaper, The Sunday Times, living in the past? Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale took aim at the paper's separate racially-targeted editions last week, criticising the paper for continuing to "produce 'Extra' covers around their white supremacist main publication".

It seems Sexwale has not bought the paper for the past four-and-a-half years, the Extra has been produced as a separate edition during that period, and not as a wrapper. Nevertheless, he pointed out his own position, and he's not the only reader who has criticised the perceived need for a separate edition. Many staffers such as sports editor Charlotte Bauer, who says she finds the separate editions "illicitious", have raised the same point.

Bauer's section is one of those most affected by the decision not to print separate editions. The arts section in the Extra edition has a separate editor, Doc Bikapu. The sports pages also differ significantly from the two, with the Extra edition featuring boxing and soccer while the main edition features rugby and cricket.

The front pages differ and some emphasis is given to a few stories inside the paper. The Inside magazine and the Business Times section are identical, while the Extra edition does not carry the Metro, which in Gauteng has a separate edition. It is distributed in KwaZulu-Natal "reflects the population and reader profile of Durban," according to chief assistant editor Mike Robertson. An Indian Extra is still distributed in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal country districts, "because the readers want it," he adds.

There is also a Cape Metro.

Advertisers ignore the splits and the same appears in the main and Extra editions. Separate editions for different race groups have a long history in South African newspapers. Until recently, The Star was putting out six editions a day, including an 'Afrikaans' edition which "placed a greater emphasis on soccer and boxing." The Sunday Times started out with regional wraparounds which eventually became the Metro sections, which were aimed at coloured, Indian and black readers. Robertson says that the paper's first circulation when the wraparound was converted to the inserted Metro section. Today, the Cape and Gauteng Metro sections are more in line with the reader's profile targeted by the main edition of the paper.

The Star Africa edition was dropped in June 1993. Since then, the circulation of The Star has declined, and has its black readership profile falling. The Sunday Times total readership in 1993 to 41.4 percent in 1995, according to the All Media Product Survey.

General manager of The Star Graeme King points out that increased price increases over that period are the reason for this decreases in black readership. He does not think that dropping the Africa edition played any part. "It was a political decision," he says. "We thought it was wrong to have a separate edition. I don't think any newspaper can afford to have editions based on race these days." He does not think The Sunday Times would suffer by incorporating all the sports and arts coverage in one paper.

Robertson is not convinced. "Readers do have different interests whether we like it or not, and we straddle so many circulation markets. If the readers want it this way the editor must serve them and the board that appoints him. The editor may choose to do it but I don't think he would if it meant losing circulation." Amps figures show that the Sunday Times has steadily lost black readers over the past five years, with its profile going from being 41.5 percent black to 35.7 percent black. Ironically, it has lost much of this to Cug Press, of which more than 90 percent of its readers are black.

Most of the circulation of the Extra edition goes to Soweto and the East Rand townships. One alternative which has been considered is a Sowetan Metro. The logistical problem, according to Robertson, is to find printing time. The ideological problem is clear; would soccer then be relegated to the Metro section?

Clearly, having two editions is seen as the correct way to keep the circulation up or at least to slow the fall. If this paper were to make a choice, the outcome might tell us something about the state of our news media system.

The global trend is towards niche print products and the Sunday Times remains one of the highest circulating newspapers in the world, in a relatively small market. Perhaps it is trying to hold on to the past in more ways than one.
Radical law to shake up government

A groundbreaking freedom of information Bill will guarantee public access to government meetings, writes Anton Harber

Imagine turning up at a government departmental meeting and demanding your right to listen in. Consider when you have a difficulty with the way a government official operates, being able to demand to see the internal instructions manual which outlines how the task should be done.

And think about having the power, if you dispute information carried by a credit bureau or a bank about your financial history, to force them to append your correction to their records.

You will have these powers and rights if a draft Bill, about to go before Cabinet, becomes law.

The Open Democracy Bill, which should be tabled in Parliament next year, is one of those rare, groundbreaking laws which will bring fundamental changes in the operation of government. Its purpose is to deepen democracy by enforcing the kind of public scrutiny and government openness which should significantly increase the level of accountability.

It is radical in concept, establishing the individual's right to attend government meetings, demand official documents, see the internal memos which set out how state departments work, correct misinformation about oneself in the public and private sector, and encourage civil servants to blow the whistle on corruption without losing their jobs.

It applies at all levels of the state, from the Banana Board to a local city council, from the National Intelligence Agency to the presidency, from a commission to the police commissioner's office. The only blanket exceptions are meetings of the Cabinet and "judicial organs." The qualifications are enormous. If the official holding the meeting does not want you there, they will have to say why, show that this complies with the narrowly defined reasons outlined as acceptable in the law, and have a majority of the participants agree. If you think they have still denied you a right, you will be able to take them to a new Information Court.

The Bill very carefully sets out valid reasons for denying these rights, such as national security, privacy, the protection of a third party's commercial information, the obstruction of law enforcement and harm to the country's international relations or economic interests.

But the onus will be on the government officials to prove that those do in fact apply and to provide full reasons, allowing one to challenge them in court if one does not accept them.

One of the far-reaching aspects of this Bill is that a "whistleblower" — an official who exposes corruption or misadministration — gets full protection. They cannot lose their jobs, be disciplined, for speaking out, even if they do so in the public interest. That is the law.

This will fundamentally change the way government departments work, forcing them on a practical, day-to-day level to become more open and accountable, and challenging the secrecy and defensiveness which characterise most of the civil service. It will implement and make tangible our Constitution's commitment to openness.

It will make South Africa a world leader in the implementation of democracy. Although a number of other countries have equivalent freedom of information laws — such as the US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Korea — none is as comprehensive as the Bill going before our National Assembly.

The Bill grants these rights to everyone, but in particular it massively empowers the media, giving them the right to sue where it has never been possible before and gain access to information previously unavailable.

The Bill was quietly assembled by a special task force in the office of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, who bears responsibility for information matters.

Headed by advocate Mojandza Guma, the group has so far produced nine drafts of the law, the latest of which is now being circulated for comment.

Some of the unusual features of the law are:

- Any person will be able to exercise these rights, not just citizens or voters.
- Every government body will have to designate an information officer to deal with these matters and a list of these officers will be published in the telephone directory.
- Every state body will have to publish an index to its records.
- Formal rules for departments to give notification of meetings, to prevent them from meeting in secret to avoid scrutiny.
- A right to correct misinformation about oneself. If you discover that someone has filed false information about you, you can demand its correction or at least have your version appended to the file. This also applies to information in the private sector — such as that held by credit bureaus.
- The rules apply not just to formal government departments, but to any body delegated government powers, such as councils and commissions.
- A quiet triumph for the rights of the disabled. All reasonable steps have to be taken to ensure that official meetings are accessible to the physically handicapped.
- Even if you are refused information on good grounds, such as national security, you can demand its release if you can show that no harm will be done by its release.
- Whistleblowers can demand to be moved to another equivalent job if their position is harmed by their exposure of wrongdoing.

The Bill does have its critics, most of whom argue that it will create an expensive and cumbersome bureaucracy, raising the cost of finding information for individuals citizens or the media.

In the US, which has had a similar law for over two decades, the major problem is the abuse of the system by companies seeking information about their competitors. The task group's answer to this is to charge companies which seek for information in order to assess the cost of finding information for individuals or the media.

The Bill will put strain on government departments having to deal with its requirements and some may push for delays. Although international experience suggests it is possible to make this law work, it is not an easy task.
Share sales help
Naspers boost
earnings 30%

By Maggie Bowley

Cape Town — Naspers lifted earnings before abnormal items by 30 percent to R43.5 million in the six months to the end of September.

Extraordinary items, comprising the profit from the sale of 12 million M-Net shares to Phuthuma Trust and the sale of its 25 percent stake in Master Directories to ITT World Directories, boosted the bottom line by a further R68.9 million.

This resulted in attributable earnings surging to R92.4 million, up 192 percent over the corresponding period last year.

Profit generated by Naspers' own operations showed a 19 percent improvement at R38.5 million on the back of a 25 percent increase in turnover to R667 million.

Naspers' interest in associated companies contributed an additional R5.9 million against a loss of about R1 million at the halfway mark last year.

Earnings per share calculated on the total net profit were up 196 percent at 83c (88c).

However, shareholders will have to wait until the end of March for a slice of the improved earnings as it is Naspers' policy to declare a dividend only at the end of the year.

Naspers chairman Ton Vosloo said the main reason for the turnaround in contributions by associated companies was that the investment in MultiChoice was written down to zero after the unliking of the M-Net and MultiChoice shares and the transfer of MultiChoice's interests in the cellphone industry to M-Cell.

He said any further losses that might result from this investment would no longer be equitable accounted in the income statement.

Vosloo said the relatively small profit increase in respect of Naspers' own operations was partly attributable to the benefit the company had derived, during the corresponding period last year, from premature turnover in the Boekhandel group.

This turnover, he said, would be reflected in the financial statements for the full year.
Sale of shareholdings helps boost Naspers bottom line

Edward West

CAPE TOWN — Nasionale Pers' sale of M-Net shares and its stake in Master Directories boosted the group's bottom line in the six months to end-September, with its share earnings on total net profit nearly three times higher at R3c (29c).

Profit before abnormal items — the profit from the two transactions — was 39% higher at R43,5m compared with R31,3m the previous year.

Profit generated by Naspers' own operations increased 19% to R36,8m on a 25% turnover hike to R677m. Naspers' interest in associated companies contributed R5,9m, bringing profit before abnormal items to R43,5m in the corresponding six months this resulted in a loss of just below R1m.

Net asset value increased to R5,10 from R4,75. It is Naspers policy to declare a dividend only at year-end.

The two transactions — which showed a R48,9m profit — were the sale of 12-million M-Net shares to the Phutuma Trust and the disposal of its 25% interest in Master Directories. The M-Net shares were sold in line with a resolution by newspaper groups to offload 10% of their shareholding in M-Net to Phutuma Trust, to be made available to disadvantaged communities on favourable conditions. Naspers' interest in M-Net after the sale was just below 20%.

The group's stake in Master Directories was sold to ITT World Directories, which would continue the Yellow Pages operation in conjunction with the Master family.

During the review period Naspers acquired an interest in Denbury Electronic Publishing and in Electronic Network News. It also bought the Free State knock-and-drop Express, took over the publication of Who's Who and acquired Mast's academic bookshops. The cost of these investments, together with the M-Cell rights issue, was R32m.

A Naspers spokesman said it was mainly these investments, as well as the construction of the R350m magazine printing works in Cape Town, which had pushed interest-bearing debt to R31m from R40 000.

Naspers executive chairman Tony Vellie said the main reason for the turnaround from associates was that after the delinking of M-Net and MultiChoice shares and the transfer of MultiChoice's cellphone interests to M-Cell, the investment in MultiChoice was written down to zero.

The spokesman said the group as a whole was trading well despite the fact the investment in M-Net had not yet started paying off.
New press body announced

Johannesburg: Four press bodies have decided to invite public proposals for the formation of a new complaints forum that would replace the Press Council of South Africa, the council has announced.

The Newspaper Press Union, the Conference of Editors, the Black Editors Forum, and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa yesterday agreed that advertisements would be published inviting the public to put forward their ideas as to how and by whom their complaints should be settled — Sapa
Holomisa versus Independent Newspapers

BY SUSAN MILLER

Independent Newspapers has asked the Rand Supreme Court to overturn a decades-old presumption in common law in a defamation suit brought against the company by Deputy Environment Affairs Minister Bantu Holomisa.

According to the dictates of common law, Independent Newspapers has to prove that allegations made about Holomisa in The Star are true. However, the company’s lawyers are arguing that this is an unfair and unconstitutional burden.

Holomisa is suing Independent Newspapers Ltd for an article which appeared in The Star on May 27 1993 alleging that “military intelligence sources believed him to be directly involved in the initialization into South Africa of Apla and Transkei Defence Force troops.”

The article further alleged that the operation was “aimed at killing whites in the northern Natal region” and that “assassinating a top South African official in Transkei”.

Gilbert Marcus, appearing for Independent Newspapers Ltd, said the company was applying for an exception to the particulars of Holomisa’s claim, as he was a public official at the time the article was written and was still a public official.

Marcus argued that Holomisa should have to prove that the allegation was false and that The Star knew it was false when it published the report.

He said that in accordance with the interim constitution which came into effect on April 27 1994, in the case of public figures, newspapers had the inherent right to free speech and expression under Section 15.

He said the exception was brought on the grounds that Holomisa’s particulars of claim disclosed no cause of action.

“When the article was written he was the military ruler of the Transkei and he is now the deputy minister of environmental affairs,” he said.

Marcus said Holomisa’s action was instituted in August 1994, “well after the coming into operation of the interim constitution.”

He said a public figure must therefore prove that the press had abused its right to freedom of expression.

“This article was clearly written about Holomisa in his capacity as a military ruler and therefore in his capacity as a public figure,” he said.

Marcus said that if the court ruled in Independent Newspapers’ favour, Holomisa would have to amend or rephrase his claim to allege and prove “actual knowledge that the matter published was in fact false” or alternatively that the newspaper in question went ahead with “publication of the matter in question with reckless disregard as to whether it was false or not.”

Marcus said the exception to the particulars of claim was based squarely upon the impact of the constitution on the common law of defamation.

He asked Mr Justice Edwin Cameron to accept the principles of an American case, The New York Times versus Sullivan, in which it was held that a public official should be prohibited from recovering damages for defamation relating to his official conduct unless he proved the statement was made with “actual malice.”

Dah Mpofu, appearing for Holomisa, said the constitution could not be applied to this case because it was litigation between two private persons. He said Holomisa was suing Independent Newspapers in his personal capacity.

He said if the court held that the constitution did apply, then the Sullivan case must be rejected as it was based on different standards and “our courts have always upheld the individual’s right to dignity.”
The monopoly is the message

The structure — not just the colour — of South Africa's newspaper industry is where the real problem lies, writes Bruce Cohen.

CARL NIEHAUS should know better.

As one of the African National Congress' key media liaison figures during the run-up to the April 1994 elections, he got to know the press as well as any. So his outburst in the Sunday Independent this past weekend — a contribution to the increasingly ugly but nonetheless vital debate over media control in this country — was unacceptable.

The issue, he suggests, boils down to a conspiracy of (white) sub-editors who spiked and maul the copy of black journalists.

The silliness of Niehaus's contribution is matched only by the attack of the attorney Christine Gqunta, who raged in the Sunday Independent last week against Mark Gevasser, arguably the country's most thoughtful writer.

Gevasser, she alleges, uses "elevate-to-assassinate" tactics to destroy the black elite in his weekly profiles in the Mail & Guardian. After all, he described Enterprise editor Thams Mazwai as "splattering".

But Mazwai, who has given the debate over media control a fresh and welcome kick-start, is also guilty of narrow typecasting, of reducing this important issue to white versus black, contributing to an unnecessary polarisation of hard-working journalists in this country and diverting focus away from the core problem facing the press in South Africa.

The crisis facing the South African press is not only one of colour. It is one of control. Three companies (Independent, Naspers and Times Media Limited) hold an intolerable monopoly of ideas, information and communication. Niehaus, in his hunt for a scapegoat, conveniently ignores his party's own responsibility for this. The ANC has systematically supported the further consolidation of the newspaper monopolies and has failed utterly to deal with the issue of promoting press diversity.

It was the ANC that welcomed Tony O'Reilly into the country to grab from Anglo, at a price that defies logic, the assets of Argus newspapers and then to allow the baked bread to consolidate its position so that he now holds a total monopoly of the English language daily newspaper market in Cape Town and Durban in addition to his control over the Gauteng market.

It was the ANC that conveniently shut up percent belong directly to, or are controlled by, Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers (formerly Argus). If we ignore the Afrikaans Press, then fully 75 percent of all English language daily newspapers sold in this country are O'Reilly papers.

O'Reilly's monopoly is truly awesome at a metropolitan level. In the country's second and third biggest cities (Cape Town and Durban), every single English daily metro newspaper — morning and afternoon — is an O'Reilly newspaper (Cape Times, The Argus, Daily News and Mercury). In Johannesburg and Pretoria, where around 580,000 daily English language newspapers are sold, O'Reilly controls 70 percent of the market (The Star, Sowetan, Pretoria News).

Few countries in the world can boast such a massive concentration of power.

Whether these monopolies employ white or black editors is a very important issue and Mazwai has rightly thrown down the gauntlet, but what matters more is that power in the market, in their extraordinary influence and control over the advertising and distribution channels — whether anyone else (black or white) could ever get a foot in the door.

In many countries there is clear recognition of the umbilical link between a diversity of press voices and the proper functioning of a democracy. They acknowledge that without state support, freedom of expression would become the right of the few who could afford to publish their opinions.

These countries — and they include Sweden, Norway, France, Holland, and Belgium — actively promote and support diversity of the press with a variety of financial incentives and tax breaks. They acknowledge that the state bears significant responsibility for the fulfilment of the goal of promoting a democratic — diverse — press.

Some take press diversity so seriously that they channel public funds directly into small newspapers. Countries like Austria, France, Sweden and Holland have devised elaborate schemes to ensure that all sectors of society have adequate media voices.

Instead of blunting pale sub-editors and intelligent writers for the miserable state of the South African press, Niehaus and others ought to be tackling the real issues.

Bruce Cohen is executive trustee of the South African Newspaper Education Trust and governing council member of the Media Institute of Southern Africa. He helped found the Independent Media Diversity Trust.
Opening those info floodgates

New SACS boss has big plans to inform all South Africans

By SOKOLA SELLO

SLIGHT-of-build Solly Kotane does not cut the image of a fighter. But since his return from exile, it seems he has been the bane of his life to take on jobs that others would prefer to give a wide berth.

Kotane shot into national prominence less than two years ago when he was appointed chief of the Bophuthatswana Broadcasting Corporation—an appointment it was said only someone with a masochistic streak would pursue.

Bophuthatswana was an unnatural Union. Lucas Mangope had been toppled in a popular uprising, and the various structures of the homeland administration were on the verge of collapse.

Kotane was one of the “firefighters” who were “called in to restore order.”

Apart from his background in journalism, he had all the right qualifications for the job. But, most important, he was politically correct.

He was one of the brght sparks of the ANC, a fact the organization calculated would send him in good stead in the turbulence sweeping Bophuthatswana.

It was a miscalcula-

tion which almost went awry. Instead of getting a red carpet welcome, he ran into a hailstorm of opposition which at times bordered on open hostility.

The worker, spear-

headed by the powerful Media Workers Association of South Africa, were opposed to his appointment. He was con-

sidered an outsider im-

pacted on them by big

brother (ANC).

Weathered

Yet, in no time Kotane had weathered all the storm. In his quiet and unassuming manner, he won over the confidence of the workers and later emerged as the cham-

pion of their rights.

Kotane has since left Bophuthatswana to head the South African Communication Services.

Since taking over at SAComs from the middle of last month, he has not encountered any resistance.

But Kotane is a bit starry-eyed to believe that everyone has laid out a welcome mat for him.

He concedes that “not everybody is happy about the new changes (in the country). Some people are still nostalgic about the past”.

But he is not going to waste time brooding about these stragglers. He has a mammoth task ahead of him to

his task, he says, is to ensure that government

achievements are ade-

quately communicated to the people

The Department of Information has been trying to live down since the infamous days of “info-
gate”.

Kotane argues that the mainstream press is failing to inform the people adequately about what the government is doing.

But Kotane is not try-

ing to pick a fight with the mainstream press. He acknowledges that the commercial press have a particular turf to corner, and the govern-

ment another.

“The majority of the people who live in the country,” he states mas-

ter of fact, “are the middle-aged majority. Those are the poor majority. Although radio reaches them, some of them are too poor to afford a TV. This is where SACS comes in—to devise means that will ensure that those people are not denied information.”

“We will embark on joint ventures with various government institutions, for example, the Ministry of Local Government and, in this respect, local authorities, to establish a broadcasting department.”

Radio, says Kotane, is going to play a crucial role and can help to simplify communication by government officials.

“Failing people about their rights,” he says, “is no longer an acceptable way to economically empower them.”

Kotane is now at his

offices in the heart of Pretoria and is still settling into a picture of Presi-

dent Nelson Mandela’s hanging on the wall behind his desk.

“I need to get pictures of the other guys,” he tells his chief of com-
munications, Madisilia Thembu.

The “other guys” are second deputy president PW de Klerk and Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Kotane is aware that this commission could lead to accusations of political bias and tried hard not to bring in his ANC affiliations to the workplace.

Given the enormity of the task that Kotane has set for his team, how does he hope to achieve his goals?

A practical man, he does not pretend to have ready answers.

But “it is not advisable to extend your vision beyond the normal” as his constant refrain as he charts out some of his most ambitious plans to transform, redefine and reorient SACS.

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Kotane was one of the "firefighters" who were "called in to restore order." Apart from his background in journalism, he had all the right qualifications for the job. But, most important, he was politically correct.

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CONFIDENT... SACS boss Solly Kotane (left) and communications chief Madosilia Thembu (right) believe they will overcome all obstacles and succeed in their endeavour to empower the people with knowledge.

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Grant established to assist land reform beneficiaries

First application under government's new settlement planning grant to help land reform beneficiaries to employ professional planners will begin this week, land affairs department says.

Land Affairs director Nico van Rensburg said the amount available for the grants was not specified but the money would come from the land reform budget of R600m.

"So far one application has been received from 40 farmers at Veldsdorp in the Western Cape," he said. "They have enlisted the help of the Rural Foundation to acquire state land and have applied for a grant of R54 000 to turn the property into a viable undertaking."

He said another 70 applications for settlement aid, submitted under the previous government, were likely to qualify for government's planning grants.

Next year the number of applications for the grants were expected to rocket, he said.

"The move is aimed at avoiding poverty traps from people not being able to develop redistributed land into financially viable units," he said.

"Initially, during the first phase of development, the size of the grant was 2% of the total project cost. Thereafter it went up to 4%," he said.

A land affairs department grants and services document released last week stated that the grant enabled prospective and actual beneficiaries of land reform to appoint planners and professionals from private firms, government and non-governmental organisations for legal and financial planning and planning land use and infrastructure, as well as help with land purchase negotiations.

"The objective of the grant is to assist poor communities to plan for their settlement needs in terms of acquisition, use and development of the land and mobilisation of resources required to do this,"

The document said the grant could finance planning of preliminary and detailed settlement beneficiaries could also use the grant to appoint land valuers from a panel of government accredited valuers.

The grant was one of three new schemes of the land affairs department to kick-start land reform. A settlement grant of R18 000 a household and a district planning scheme aimed at towns and local authorities wanting to embark on land development would come into full operation next year, Van Rensburg said.

Press Council may be replaced

Farouk Chothia

DURBAN — The Conference of Editors hoped to meet the Black Editors Forum in early February to get clarification talks on the ground, conference chairman John Patten said at the weekend.

He said little progress had been made so far to create a single body for editors to work together — along with the Newspaper Press Union, the Media Workers Association of SA and the SA Union of Journalists — to establish an independent mechanism to deal with public complaints against press reports.

A new body would replace the press council.

Patten said he did not think the debate on a replacement to the council had "virtually restarted" at the request of the forum. The forum had been brought into negotiations over the issue within the last year, and said it still needed to formulate a position.

Jo'burg-Pretoria speeding fines at R2m

Bonile Ngqiyaza

ABOUT 8 000 speeding offences are committed by motorists on the freeway from Johannesburg to Pretoria each month, Midrand Traffic Department superintendent Willie van Rooyen said at the weekend.

The Midrand Traffic Department monitors the N1 section of the freeway, which stretches between the Bucieheu area and Pretoria.

Van Rooyen would not say whether the freeway was the most dangerous in the country. But the Sandton Traffic Department, which monitors the M1 as far as Corlett Drive, has reported collected fines worth more than R2m from drivers transgressing traffic rules on the N1, N3 and the M1 in the last six months.

Agribank to stop tool confiscation

Bonile Ngqiyaza

THE Agribank has put a moratorium on the confiscation of farming implements in Northwest Province following a meeting last week between the province's agriculture and environment MEC Johannes Tselapede, Agribank and representatives of Ditsoboha farmers.

Agriculture department spokesman Lana Quinn said drought conditions in the past three years had made it difficult for some emerging farmers to repay their debts, causing the bank to foreclose on their loans and to reposess farming implements.

At the meeting Tselapede had expressed concern at the problems experienced by black farmers during the current ploughing season.

It was agreed that Agribank would cease its "call-up activities" from today until January 31 when the Agribank board would hold its next meeting.

Tselapede would discuss the issue with them, with a view to extending the moratorium to February 28 next year.

Any agreement should not be seen to exempt farmers from honouring their obligations with the bank.
Archive Bill to lift veil of secrecy

Tim Cohen

DETAILS of the heated Cabinet debates that took place in the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprising will become public knowledge next year following the introduction of legislation that will reduce the period restricted documents must remain secret.

Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Minister Ben Ngubane announced yesterday the Cabinet had approved the tabling early next year of the National Archives of SA Bill, which would strive to introduce a more transparent and reflective system.

One of the sections of the Bill proposed a reduction in the time restricted documents would have to remain secret from 30 to 20 years. This would allow access for the first time to the minutes of the previous president EJ Vorster’s Cabinet meetings at the time of the 1976 uprising, which was sparked by a decision by then education minister Andries Treurnicht to enforce Afrikaans-language tuition at all black schools.

The minutes could provide new insights into the then government’s reasons for this and other controversial decisions, and may even prove embarrassing to currently active politicians such as then foreign minister Pik Botha and also to then defence minister PW Botha.

The minutes could also reveal unknown details of the clandestine pro-government propaganda campaign which was exposed in 1978 as the information scandal which resulted in the downfall of the Vorster government.

Ngubane said the problems which could be caused by the long passage of time before restricted archives could become public knowledge were illustrated by the fact that government only last year determined that the records of the Rivonia trial, preserved by the Master of the Supreme Court, were incomplete.

The Bill, which would revise the existing legislation, would align the archives with the democratic reform that was taking place in the country.

The current Archives Act, as well as archives Acts promulgated by the former homelands, were limited in scope and nature, lacked clarity and did not reflect the political and institutional changes in the country.

Ngubane said the legislation included provisions for the maintenance of national registers of non-public records of enduring value. For example, the archives of the Christian Institute, banned in the 1970s, had been searched for unsuccessfully.

These records were currently not required to be listed and preserved in terms of existing legislation. Many invaluable non-public records which filled the gaps in SA’s recorded past had been lost because of the absence of legal provisions for their preservation in existing legislation.

Ngubane said the new Act would define professional terminology extensively, which would close loopholes which had resulted in legal interpretations which excluded certain categories of archives, for example tape recordings.

In the proposed new legislation, “record” is defined as recorded information regardless of form or medium.

He was confident that the proposed new system, under the direction of a national archivist, would further the protection of SA’s national heritage and set the tone for an open and democratic archival dispensation for SA.
Govt to probe media ownership

PRETORIA: The government had appointed a 10-member task group to investigate its communications policy and review issues such as the ownership and control of the media, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s office said yesterday.

The task group, which was constituted by Mr Mbeki, will make its recommendations to his office.

The group’s broad terms of reference include a review of government communications policy on all levels, relationships between government communication functions, government budgets, relationships between government communications bodies and non-government information providers.

The group will also review ownership and control of the media and how this affects government communication.

Members of the group are Dr Stephen Mncube, Mandle Langa, Mathata Tsedu, Thoepo Ranbho, David Dixon, Sebileto Mokone Matabane, Raymond Louw, Prof Willem de Klerk (subject to confirmation), Val Pauguet and Steve Godfrey.

Mr Mbeki’s office said here that the task group was expected to begin its work in January — Sapa
A new mechanism should be set up to fund the community media sector, the 37-member Community Print Sector of South Africa (Copasa) said yesterday.

It also rejected a proposal that the Independent Media and Diversity Trust (IMDT) should be the conduit for government or foreign funds.

Copasa, through its general secretary, Mr Sifiso Nhlazi, said the proposal to see the IMDT contradict the decision of the national community media conference to establish an accountable and independent Support Mechanism for the media and the creation of a short-term Transitional Emergency Relief Fund for the crisis facing the community media sector. Copasa was convinced the IMDT did not have the will and capacity to avert the crisis.

The media were still largely controlled by a few whites.
Row bursts over media

Print media sector is opposed to funds being channelled to trust

By Pamela Dube
Political Staff

The community print sector of South Africa has come out in opposition to the suggestion that funds for the community media sector should be channelled through to the Independent Media and Diversity Trust.

Copssa general secretary Mr Sifiso Ndlazi said yesterday that at a meeting with the National Community Media Fund (NCMF) last week his organisation rejected a proposal from the director of communications of the Independent Development Trust (IMDT), Mr Jolyon Nuttall, that funds for the community media sector should be channelled through the IMDT.

Ndlazi said the suggestion, given to Copssa via the NCMF, was against the decision of the national community media conference to establish a credible and accountable Enabling Support Mechanism for South African media and the creation of a short-term Transitional Emergency Relief Fund.

Copsaa is also challenging the fact that Nuttall "is a trustee of the IMDT and there is conflict of interest in his suggestion to the community media sector," Ndlazi said.

"It appears that Nuttall is trying to find a role for his organisation. We believe that this organisation is being shoved down the throats of the community media sector as the 'saviour' of the Independent Media and Diversity Trust," he added.

He also said his organisation was convinced that IMDT "does not have the will and the capacity to avert the crisis faced by the community media sector. "If the IMDT has all the magic answers that could save the community media sector from the crisis, why did it not provide these devices to save the now defunct Independent Magazines Group which was at its mercy?"

He added that Copssa appealed to the government and the international donors not to recognise the IMDT as a channel for community media.

Nuttall is on leave and was unavailable for comment.
Media task group members named

BY PATRICK BULGER
Political Correspondent

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki has named the members of a media task group that will investigate government-media communications and patterns of media ownership and control.

According to a statement issued by Mbeki's office, the task group was first mooted earlier this year at a government communications conference held at Arniston on the Western Cape south coast.

That meeting came about largely as a result of Mbeki's perception that the Government was not communicating its message adequately to the media and that the media was dominated by white middle-aged males who set a media agenda that persistently criticized the Government.

The conference also recommended that affirmative action policies be examined and that government advertising be withheld from publications that did not implement affirmative advertising policies.

The task group comprises Stephen Mbizvo, universal manager of the Development Information Service of the Centre for Policy and Information, Mandla Langa, director of Interface Consultancy-Productions, Mathata Tsedu, political editor of the Sovietan newspaper, Tshepo Ran-ko, president of the National Community Media Forum, David Dison, a leading media attorney, Sebuleto Mokone Matabane, co-chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, Raymond Louw, a former editor of the Rand Daily Mail and chairman of the Freedom of Expression Institute, Willem de Klerk, a former editor of Rapport newspaper and now a private communications and political consultant; Val Fontenay, national communications co-ordinator of the National Peace Accord; and Steve Godfrey of the Commonwealth.

The terms of reference of the inquiry include a review of existing government communications policy at national, provincial and local level, existing government communications structures and policies, national and local level, existing government budgets with special reference to personnel, operations and equipment, relationships between government communications structures and non-governmental information providers, government communication, training and capacity-building with special emphasis on affirmative action, the ownership and control of South African media and how this affects government communication, defining existing information delivery mechanisms, examining international communication functions with special emphasis on information dissemination, and researching government communications policies, functions and structures in other democracies, especially developing countries.

Mbeki's spokesman, Thami Ntleni, said the group was expected to begin its work next month and that it would report to Mbeki when it finished.

No budget had yet been set aside, Ntleni said, adding that it was not expected that any of the members would perform work full-time on the group.