

Young and old welcome new era

TYRONE SEALE
Political Staff

EDWARD Petersen, 65, has seen South Africa "at its best and worst".

He recoils when recalling the Verwoerd era, which laid the ideological foundation for successions of National Party governments' systematic violations of human rights.

For Mr Petersen and family, this meant forced removal from District Six. They now live in Strandfontein Village.

"But today it's totally different," Mr Petersen said today, briefly interrupting a stroll down Plein Street to observe a crowd gathering at Stalplein to celebrate the adoption of the new constitution.

"I remember this place, even Verwoerd's assassination. I'm glad we've got this constitution. I just want to know why De Klerk didn't give in a long time ago.

"The NP knew all along that in the end the ANC would rule."

At the other extreme of the generation gap from Mr Petersen was Tamboerskloof schoolboy Adrian Collins, 14, who was part of the Stalplein crowd anticipating the appearance, just before lunchtime, of President Mandela to address the crowd.

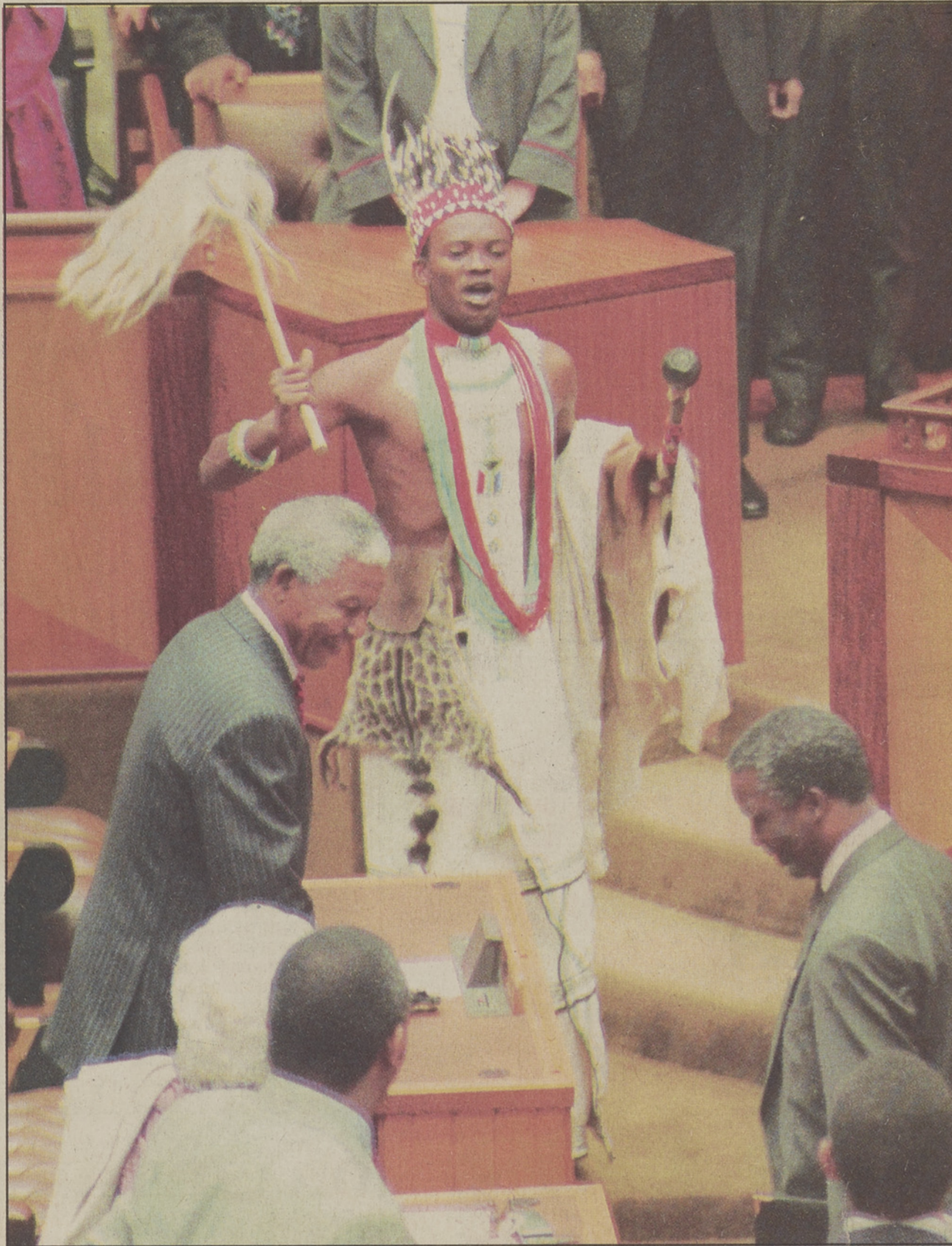
To him, the new constitution meant shelter and food for all, and "to be free, with no apartheid".

Luyanda Mkatali, 17, of Joe Slovo Comprehensive School in Khayelitsha, shared Adrian's enthusiasm about the new constitutional era.

"I just feel very happy today because of our new constitution. It means I will be able to do whatever I want to as this is my fundamental right."

Hundreds of schoolchildren were among those at the Constitutional Assembly-hosted celebration in Stalplein, where Mr Mandela spoke immediately after the first public performance of One Law for One Nation, a song commissioned by the CA.

Also on the programme was the unveiling of a giant mural depicting public participation in the crafting of the new constitution. The mural is on a building overlooking Stalplein.



HIGH PRAISE: President Mandela and his deputy Thabo Mbeki chat while a praise singer acclaim the approval of the new constitution in parliament today. Constitutional assembly head Cyril Ramaphosa, with his deputy Leon Wessels, won a standing ovation from negotiators for their handling of the task.

Pictures: LEON MULLER, Chief Photographer.



PROUD PROCESSION: Some of the men who made it all come true - from left, constitutional assembly head Cyril Ramaphosa, his deputy Leon Wessels, President Nelson Mandela and his deputy F W de Klerk, outside Tuynhuys today.

ONE LAW: Constitutional Assembly head Cyril Ramaphosa and, chief Nat negotiator Roelf Meyer, hold a copy of a document commemorating the new constitution.

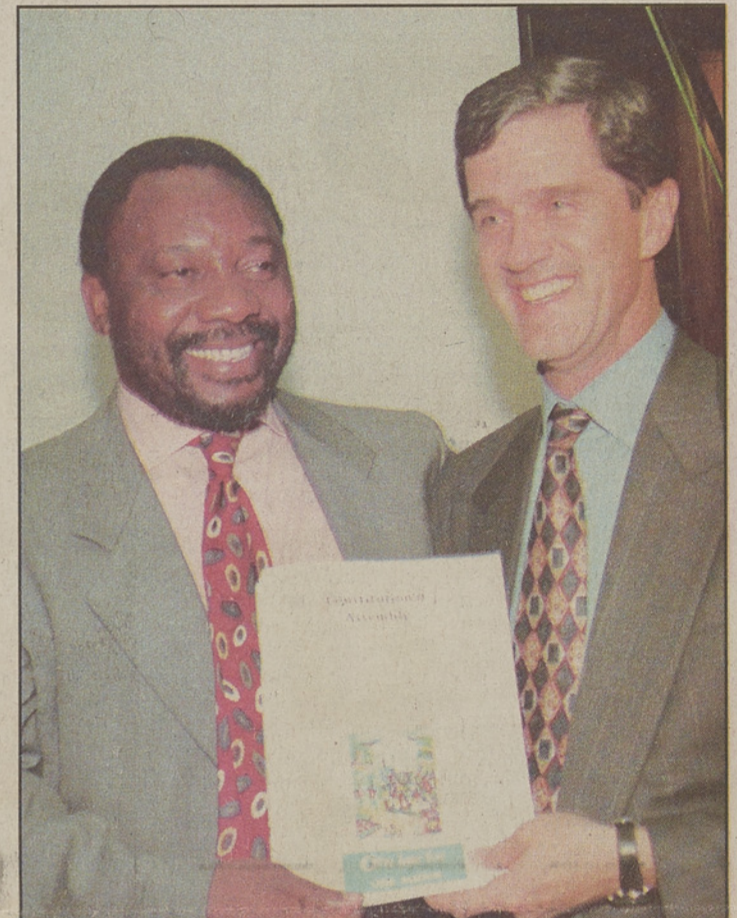
Growth rate should continue, says Sacob

Business Editor

THE rand's weakness will not slow down economic growth this year, but it could add 1.5 percent to the inflation rate, says the SA Chamber of Business.

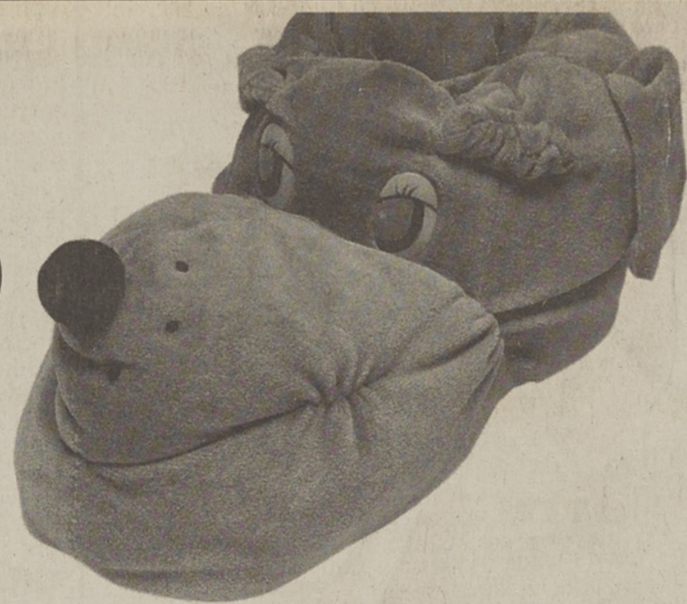
In its latest report on business confidence, Sacob says the fall in the rand could raise the average inflation rate in 1996 to 8.5 percent from a forecast seven percent. Some price increases would take place immediately, but others would take time.

The rand recovered some ground today and was quoted at between R4.34 and R4.37 to the dollar late this morning. ● See page 23.



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House for police: Plea rejected

Municipal Staff

THE Cape Town City Council's housing committee has rejected a plea by the Mitchell's Plain Police Forum to lease a house in Woodlands, which was used in the past as a satellite police station, as a base for their operations.

Last month the committee also rejected the idea, saying there was a desperate housing shortage and that all available units should be given to the homeless. But the forum requested an interview in a bid to get the resolution rescinded.

At the interview the chairman of the forum, Norman Jantjies, said their main objective was to combat the increasing crime rate in Mitchell's Plain and that this was done in collaboration with the police.

Councillor John Miranda said that if the go-ahead was given to the Mitchell's Plain forum, the council would be setting a precedent and would have a hard time trying to turn down requests from the dozens of other forums across the metro-pole.

A different kind of heritage hits the Nico - 26 years on

ESANN de KOCK
Staff Reporter

IT'S been 26 years since the Nico Malan opera and theatre complex opened amid huge controversy over coloured people not being admitted.

In 1970, the prospect of an African audience and African actors in the newly built R11 million Nico Malan wouldn't even have been debated.

Emgobohozweni, written by Fort Hare professor Bench Buyile Mkon- to and directed by Mavis Taylor, is set for a four-week run at the Nico.

No small feat for author Professor Mkonto, who explains that *Emgobohozweni*, meaning *In the Swamp*, revolves around a family feud and is a prescribed matric network in the Western Cape.

It is a story about heritage, about the struggle for power within a family.

Professor Mkonto feels the play is set to attract audiences across the board - with a little help from an English translation of each scene.

"It is accessible not only to an African audience, but will serve to make other cultural groups more fully aware of how black people think and live.

"It is a piece of direct contact with African culture" - probably exactly what the 1970 government and politicians would have tried their best to prevent from happening at the Nico Malan.

The controversy over who could and who could not attend performances at the Nico started even before the opening production of Verdi's *Aida* in mid-May 1971.

Brian Bamford, deputy leader of the United Party in the Cape Provincial Council, started an active campaign in 1970, objecting to the fact that coloureds were to be excluded from the Nico.

Mr Bamford's "sit-out" of the Nico until the theatre apartheid was lifted, was strongly supported outside government circles.

Louis Ahrens, internationally known head of the department of geochemistry at the University of

Cape Town, the then Judge-President of the Cape Justice A Beyers, and writer and philosopher Adam Small were among those who protested.

But, in the South Africa of the 1970s it came as no surprise, considering it was in the year in which the Publications Control Board threatened internationally acclaimed Athol Fugard with exercising "power not yet used by the board".

It was also the year in which that Negro soul singer Percy Sledge was granted a visa by the Department of the Interior - on condition he performed only to non-white audiences.

In fact, Fugard was refused a passport to attend the New York premiere of his play *Boesman and Lena* early in 1970.

At the time of the controversy, former Cape Administrator, J N (Nico) Malan, after whom the complex was named, criticised the proposed stay-away, saying it was "absolute nonsense to want to boycott poor Capab" which was acting

"only under the central government".

And, although the laws of the land managed to enforce the colour bar at the Nico, opening nights to all-white audiences did not go by completely unchallenged.

On April 24, 1972, the audience at the opening night of *Swan Lake* was greeted by more than 60 placard-bearing members of the Black Sash and a group of students from the University of Cape Town.

Opera house officials and members of the security police asked the students to leave the premises, and press photographers were told not to photograph the demonstrators.

Today, Professor Mkonto, author of various short stories, essays and plays, says *Emgobohozweni* - the first Xhosa play to be performed at the Nico - stands as an example of "the RDP in practice".

In this context, the theme of *Emgobohozweni*, a play about the struggle for heritage, might not be entirely coincidental.



Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.
XHOSA DRAMA: Ben Ngubane, Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, centre, meets the lead actors in *Emgobohozweni*. From left, they are Zoliswa Kawe, Theo Vilakazi and Nkosinathi Gqotso. Also in the picture are director of the play, Mavis Taylor, and Ivan Abrahams, front, co-ordinator of education and community services in Capab's drama department.

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Candidates tested on environment

ANDREA WEISS
Metro Reporter

THE Wildlife Society has challenged local election candidates to commit themselves to the environment by sending out questionnaires to survey their attitudes.

The society also has announced it will be inviting the main political parties to take part in a debate around environmental issues on May 15.

Questions candidates are being asked include how seriously they view environmental problems such as air pollution, particularly "brown haze" over Cape Town, marine pollution, the lack of effective waste management, insensitive land use and shack fires due to inadequate provision of electricity.

Other issues concern the proximity of Koeberg nuclear power station to Cape Town, the lack of water and sanitation services, loss of indigenous plant and animal species, water wastage and alien vegetation.

In a test of how candidates will perform after the elections, they are also asked how they will vote on issues such as the Table Mountain cableway upgrade, increasing water tariffs to reduce water usage, compelling consumers to pay for plastic bags and restricting private vehicles in busy urban centres.

● The Cape Independent Alliance led by Clive Keegan and Arthur Wienburg has set up a "Citizens Information Centre" to enable voters to find out more about their campaign. The telephone number is 481 2111.

The CIA will also be holding public meetings in the United Church Hall, Belmont Road, Rondebosch, on Thursday this week, and in the Claremont Civic Centre on Monday, May 13.

● A cellphone company will be making 800 cellphones available to organisers and officials for the May 29 election, with the aim to have a cellphone on standby at each polling station on the day to fill the gaps where fixed-line telephones are unavailable.

Confusion over Newlands

Staff Reporter

CONFUSION reigns over renaming Newlands rugby stadium with the name of sponsor Norwich Life as part of a R10 million sponsorship deal.

The Western Province Rugby Football Union (WPRFU) says the stadium will be called "Norwich Park Newlands" but ex-Bok manager Jannie Engelbrecht says it will continue to be called just plain "Newlands".

He says Norwich has merely bought the rights to the name to keep out the names of other potential sponsors.

Norwich Life itself is keeping tight-lipped and insists it will remain so until Friday when the details of the deal will be announced at a Press

conference.

WPRFU president Ronnie Masson has confirmed a deal with Norwich Life to change the name of South Africa's oldest rugby test stadium to Norwich Park Newlands.

He said, however, that he believed the name of "Newlands" would "never die".

Contradicting this, Mr Engelbrecht said the truth was that Norwich Life had bought the "rights to the stadium's name".

Mr Engelbrecht said the sponsors were not planning on renaming the stadium, because this would result in "negative publicity".

All Norwich Life was interested in was ensuring that "no-one else ever buys the rights to the name".

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ANC

Shortfall on housing MPs

THE three government villages in Cape Town were costing more than R8,6 million in maintenance and upkeep annually, Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe said in the senate.

Rentals received from parliamentarians and government officials totalled R1,85 million, leaving a shortfall of R6,75 million. - Sapa.

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Smuts study being restocked, restored

The Argus Correspondent

PRETORIA. - After standing empty for decades, the study at Smuts House in Irene is being restored to its former glory with the return of hundreds of books to their original home.

The study, originally donated by the Smuts family to Witwatersrand University in an attempt to preserve it, has been completely reassembled and will be officially opened to the public later this month.

When Mrs Smuts died in 1954 the Nationalist government had no desire to preserve his house, explained museum curator Penny Grimbeek.

In a desperate attempt to preserve Smuts's possessions, the family divided them up and donated them to museums and similar institutions around the country.

His medals went to Johannesburg's War Museum, his love letters to his wife Issy to the

State Archives in Hamilton Street, his comprehensive botanical collection to the Botanical Institute and his furniture was divided among family members.

The study was reconstructed in Jan Smuts House, headquarters of the South African Institute of International Affairs, on the Wits campus.

Until 1960 the so-called Big House at Irene stood empty and was eventually bought by a war veteran with the aim of turning it into a museum.

Since then museum staff have been battling to recover the house's original contents and although many artefacts, including the statesman's bedroom furniture and botanical collection, have been returned, many items are still missing.

The library itself seems haphazardly arranged, with volumes often in no apparently logical order, but it has actually been painstakingly reconstructed from old records and

photographs taken before it was dismantled.

The shelves were numbered before being dismantled and reassembled and the books were carefully wrapped.

Among the collection is Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* which Smuts is reputed to have carried around in his saddle bag during the South African War.

Both Smuts and his wife were known for their love of reading and the number of books in the house bears testimony to this.

The study was Jan Smuts's refuge from the cares of the world, Mrs Grimbeek said.

The General Smuts Foundation has, with the return of the study, been able to restore and recreate the interior of the house as a fitting memorial to Jan Smuts and as a significant historical national monument.

The study will be officially opened by Conrad Strauss, president of the South Africa Foundation, on May 26.



SMUTS'S STUDY RESTORED: Joseph Mogwaneng, left, and Philip Mahlangu doing restoration work at Smuts House at Irene before the official opening of the reconstructed study at the end of this month.

Thousands in Hermanus debts demo

Staff Reporter

THOUSANDS of people from Zwebhile township marched on Hermanus to demand free houses and debt write-offs.

They also demanded the reinstatement of six councillors dismissed from the council after falling into arrears with payments for services.

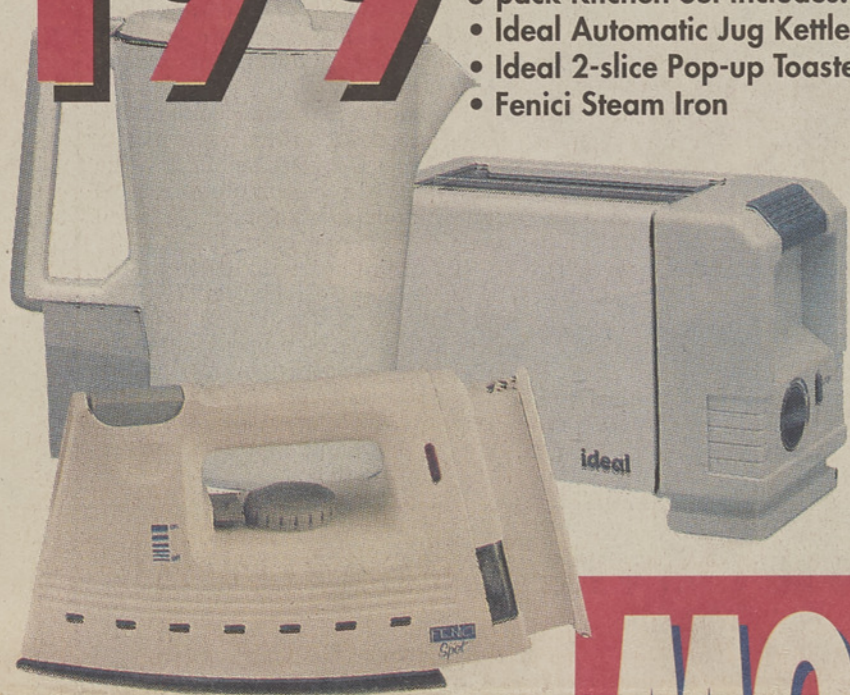
Yesterday about 2 000 people under the banner of the local branch of the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) handed over a petition to town clerk Thys van Rooyen and mayor Gideon van Wyk.

The long list of demands included the scrapping of all arrears and the transfer of old houses in the township to the present occupants at no cost.

Sanco spokesman Morris Tshabalala said that at the heart of residents' unhappiness was R2,06 million they believed was paid to the local council by the provincial government to be used to scrap all arrears. This money, they claimed, was not being used for that purpose.

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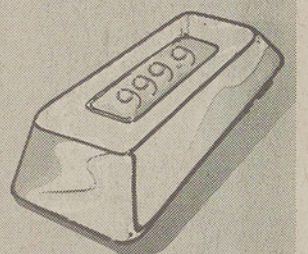
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Constitution will be adopted today, and submitted to the Constitutional Court for certification. Written by the people

of South Africa, it's going to protect us all and unite us. It's one law for one nation. It's ours.

