

11/2/2/12

bush radio

P.O. BOX 13290, MOWBRAY, 7705,
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.
TEL: (021) 448 5450
FAX: 448 5451

28th April, 1993.

TO: MULTI-PARTY FORUM
011 397 2211
ATT: THEUNS ELOFF.
RE: PROTECTION for BUSH RADIO

Dear Mr. Eloff,

Bush Radio is a community owned and controlled radio station serving the people of the Cape Flats. We have spent almost four years working and waiting to get on the air. We have built up a studio and office infrastructure at a cost of over half a million rand. We are now adding to that investment another studio worth over half a million rand. We have trained and continue to train members of our community in radio broadcasting skills. We have been involved in national policy debates which sought to expedite a democratic dispensation for the broadcasting sector. We have applied, without success, for a permit to broadcast.

Finally, with no other apparent option, we started broadcasting at 4 pm on Sunday 25th April. On Tuesday 27th, we were visited by officials of the Department of Posts and Telecommunications, and informed that we were broadcasting in contravention of existing legislation. We were warned that if we continue to broadcast, action might be taken against us. We will broadcast on Saturday 1st May (as part of the National Community Radio Forum's "switch on campaign"), and will continue to broadcast thereafter. This is the mandate of our membership and we are supported in this by a broad range of people and organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

It is common cause that the broadcast media urgently need to be removed from government control and opened up to a greater diversity of voices. Bush Radio has been active in attempts to establish an independent regulatory authority for the broadcasting sector. We hope this will be done in an appropriate and democratic fashion, enabling communities to own and control their own media, including radio stations. Broadcasting is a uniquely influential medium in our country and could play a constructive role in the transition to democracy. Bush Radio is committed to encouraging peaceful participation in this process and can see no justifiable reason for being taken off the air at this time.

Bush Radio appeals to all those in the Multi-Party Forum who support the right of communities to speak for themselves to do all in their power to regularise community radio broadcasting, and to dissuade the government from disrupting our broadcasts.

Yours sincerely,

for the Bush Radio Coordinating Committee.