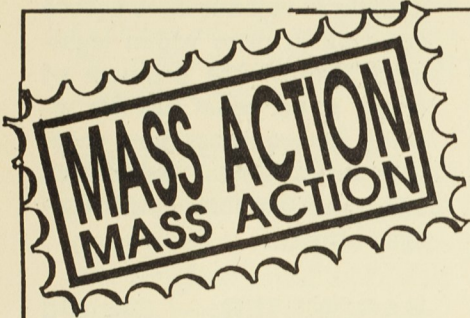


B **AROMETER**ON NEGOTIATION
ON NEGOTIATION
ON NEGOTIATION

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**COSATU****NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE**

South Africa's largest trade union federation, Cosatu, backed up by its allies, will embark on a national general strike early in November 1991 in response to what it perceives as unilateral government action on the economic and labour fronts.

Through this Cosatu is establishing itself as a major player in the negotiation context.

In view of this, Barometer asked Neil Coleman, Information officer of Cosatu, how it views mass action and got some interesting answers.

BAROMETER : The power of mass action was again demonstrated recently when the Russian people reversed the coup in Moscow. Would you say that mass action has a place in the South African democratic process

- a) during the phase of transition, and
- b) in a future dispensation?

Neil Coleman, COSATU: What is mass action? *It is the collective expression by large numbers of people of their views of a burning issue, when alternative avenues of expression have been closed off.* As such it is integral to the democratic process. It is COSATU's view that the transition in South Africa will not be successful without mass involvement in the democratisation of our country. Mass action is an

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essential form of pressure to ensure that the transition process is not unilaterally determined by a minority which holds the reigns of political and economic power. The battle around VAT clearly demonstrates the point - only mass action will ensure that economic restructuring is not unilaterally imposed in a way which is totally unacceptable to the vast majority of our country's people.

BAROMETER: Mass action (such as boycotts, protest marches and stay-aways) is regarded as a democratic way of voicing opinions or making demands. However, these actions often give rise to undemocratic behaviour such as intimidation, vandalism or even killings.

Whose responsibility is it to prevent this from happening?

COSATU: In the last 18 months alone, the mass democratic movement has pulled millions of people on the streets. The record shows that the overwhelming majority of those actions called by the democratic movement were highly disciplined, well-marshalled and peaceful. Given the heated political situation in our country, and the high-handed actions of the security forces in many instances, this is a remarkable tribute to the political maturity of our people.

These legitimate forms of political protest should not be confused, as sometimes happens in the commercial press, with marches and rallies which are used by vigilante

elements as a cover to attack communities. There is a clear distinction between these two types of action, which can be easily identified by the character of the action, for example the carrying of weapons.

It is the responsibility of the authorities to monitor these actions and contain them within legitimate limits. The problem of course is the belief that the security forces harass those engaging in legitimate mass action, and protect those engaging in vigilante activity.

BAROMETER: Should there be a code of conduct for mass action? If so, who should compile and enforce this?

COSATU: Cosatu fully supports the idea of a code of conduct for mass action, and has in fact initiated a process of drawing up such a formal code with our allies. This will in all likelihood be based on the informal code or set of ethics which has already emerged from many years experience of mass action. Ethics such as consultation, discipline and education rather than coercion. Such a code would be voluntarily adopted and monitored by our organisations.

There are also unilateral, obligatory codes of conduct emerging to bind all parties to exercise their democratic rights to mass action without infringing on the rights of others. One example of this is the code of conduct for organisations contained in the National Peace Accord, a code which draws directly on our experience of mass action in the last decade.

BAROMETER: When do you regard mass action as necessary?

In a press statement issued early in October the Central Executive Committee (CEC) decided that Cosatu should embark on a "serious and sustained" programme of action based on four main demands:

VAT :

There should be zero-rating of basic foods, water, electricity, medical services and medicine; the poverty relief programmes must be properly negotiated; better provision must be made for small businesses.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:

The establishment of a national forum to negotiate economic issues together with other major players in the economic arena.

WORKERS RIGHTS:

Required legislative amendments should be made in time to be passed during the 1992 parliamentary session.

INTERIM GOVERNMENT:

If the Government refuses to heed calls for an interim government, it will be a central demand of the national general strike.

COSATU: Generally speaking, mass action takes place when those in positions of power have refused or failed to negotiate in good faith with those who have grievances of one sort or another. In other words, when other forms of democratic pressure have been closed off. Given the structural situation in our country, this means that mass action has to be resorted to frequently.

BAROMETER: Can mass action which is conducted in a peaceful manner have any tangible results or must it have some element of disruption to prove its point?

COSATU: The purpose of mass action is to pressurise those who are abusing their power to maintain selfish interests at the expense of the majority. *It follows therefore that to be successful mass action must have a price-tag attached for those who are its target. This can be a "political" or "moral" price-tag, eg the exposure of Barend du Plessis and the government to the country through the national marches against VAT on September 30. Or it can be an economic price-tag, such as the proposed general strike action against VAT in November, which is a last resort aimed at persuading big business and the government that the price of implementing VAT against the wishes of the majority will be higher than the revenue, or input credits, they hope to gain.* In other words it focusses the minds of those abusing their power on a cost-benefit analysis of maintaining a particular course of action.

BAROMETER: Does mass action lead to democracy or "mobocracy" where the

mobs reign and chaos and disorder result? Or put otherwise, are the masses always right?

COSATU: Ultimately, mass action must be disciplined in order to be effective. Coercion and intimidation in the short term can bulldoze a particular action, but in the long run will simply discredit demands which otherwise would have had mass support. It does happen when grievances build up to breaking point, and spontaneous mass action erupts, that steps are taken which are ill-considered and destructive. This is why it is essential that we have strong mass-based organisations, whether in the work-place or community, which can give direction and leadership to the process.

BAROMETER: How, in your opinion, should the government handle mass action? At what stage is government intervention in mass action permissible?

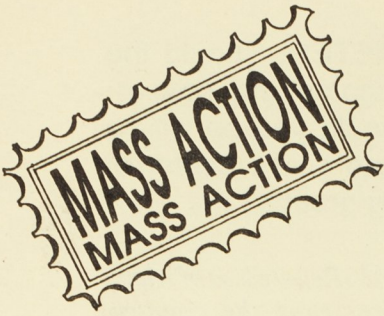
COSATU: When it comes to this question we are "free marketeers!" Government intervention should be limited to preventing mass action from resulting in violence or unreasonable disruption. However, it must be borne in mind that ill-considered government intervention is often the main factor in creating conflict and confrontation. The experiences of the last 18 months clearly demonstrate that minimal state intervention, and maximum cooperation with the organisers of the mass action, are a recipe for peace. Where intervention is necessary, consultation should take place with the organisers of the action.

BAROMETER: Should the ANC become the government, would you be willing to tolerate mass action of opposing groups?

COSATU: *Regardless of which government runs the country, now or in the future, mass action will remain an important component of the democratic process.* To have a vital and dynamic democracy, COSATU believes that strong and independent organs of civil society, such as trade unions, consumer groups and civics, must effectively represent the interests of their constituencies. This includes organising mass action where necessary.

BAROMETER: If mass action by all power-seeking groups in South Africa increases, what effect could this overheating of the political climate have on the country's economy, order and stability?

COSATU: It is wrong to suggest that people resort to mass action simply because they are "power-seeking". One shouldn't forget that mass action usually involves sacrifice. In COSATU's experience, workers resort to mass action because they have genuine grievances. If mass action is suppressed, these grievances will continue to simmer and explode in ways which are more difficult to resolve than disciplined mass action. Employers experienced this when they attempted to use the Labour Relations Act (LRA) to prevent workers from embarking on industrial action. We need to develop a new perspective on mass action. It should be seen as a constructive force for social change and progress. ■



VIEWS FROM

THE BIG THREE

On 14 September 1991 the Peace Accord was signed. SA now faces the prospect of a national strike. BAROMETER obtained the NP, ANC and IFP's opinions on mass action.

Brig Leon Mellet,
Ministry of Law & Order for the
Government.

Mr Musa Zondi,
Chairman Inkatha Youth
Brigade for the IFP

Mr Snuki Zikalala,
SA Labour Bulletin for the
ANC.

BAROMETER: *The power of mass action was again demonstrated recently when the Russian people reversed the coup in Moscow. Would you say that mass action has a place in the South African democratic process (a) during the current phase of transition (b) in a future dispensation?*

IFP: Mass action will always be justifiable in a situation where normal democratic channels of voicing dissatisfaction are blocked. People, in the ultimate analysis, retain the right to have a final say over any government. At this stage in South Africa the majority of her citizens does not have access to the "normal" channels of political participation that you would find in a

proper democracy. So in this sense people in South Africa have a right to protest.

Even in future people will have a right to publicly demonstrate their disapproval of certain practices, whoever the government happens to be. But one must emphasize that, hopefully by then South Africa will have a truly democratic government which will have proper procedures clearly laid down in the constitution as to how people can get rid of a bad government, if they want to do so. Those would be the procedures of the people and enshrined by them in the constitution of the country. As long as those procedures remain open and accessible to the people, then, in my view mass action to block the normal process of government would not be permissible.

ANC: Mass action has a place in the South African democratic process. During the phase of transition it is important to use peaceful means of protest to enable the government to speed up the process of democratizing our country.

Government: The SA Govern-

ment fully supports freedom of expression. However, protest marches, boycotts and stay-aways, serve no useful purpose and invariably lead to polarisation, confrontation and most certainly to economic disruption, which the country can ill-afford.

The Government also believes that the doors for conveying dissatisfaction and problems are so wide open that mass action is unnecessary. In the light of the above and especially the negative aspects of mass action, it cannot be supported by Government.

BAROMETER: *Mass action (such as boycotts, protest marches and stay-aways) is regarded as a democratic way of voicing opinions or making demands. However, these actions often give rise to undemocratic behaviour such as intimidation, vandalism or even killings. Whose responsibility is it to prevent this from happening?*

Government: The primary responsibility for good behaviour rests with the organisers. How-

ever, should any laws be broken, the Police will be duty-bound to act.

IFP: There should be very strict rules and regulations governing mass action. These should prevent organisers of such activities from employing undemocratic practices such as intimidation. Law enforcement agencies should normally see to it that law and order prevail.

ANC: It is the responsibility of the government to protect those who are involved in boycotts, protests and stayaways. It is also the duty of an organisation that has arranged mass action to control the behaviour of its members. The ANC, PAC and IFP must appeal for political tolerance at grass-roots level - NOT in hotels.

BAROMETER: *Should there be a code of conduct for mass action. If so, who should compile and enforce it?*

Government: Yes, provided it is binding on all parties involved and that it does not infringe on the functions of the SA Police.

IFP: At the moment the National Peace Initiative is working out a code of conduct in consultation with major political players in the country in the hope that other parties will also find it possible to endorse such a code of conduct. The enforcement mechanisms should be negotiated by all concerned.

ANC: There should be a code of conduct for mass action. The present government and existing political organisations should compile and enforce this. We should all be involved in the politics of reconstruction and put

away politics of opposition. A future democratic government needs a strong and stable economy.

BAROMETER: *How should the government handle mass action? At what stage is government intervention in mass action permissible?*

Government: When the law is broken or when it infringes on the democratic rights of others.

IFP: The government should generally allow mass action to take place as long as it does not involve breaking any morally defensible law.

ANC: The government should use its power to prevent mass-killings during mass action. Government intervention is permissible only when people are being attacked. They should not wait or stand around looking at people being killed. Peaceful demonstration must be allowed.

BAROMETER: *If your organisation came to power, would it be willing to change its policy because of the mass action of opposing groups?*

IFP: I believe the IFP would more or less adopt the views expressed above.

ANC: Yes. It depends as to whether the policy is contrary to the interests of the people.

BAROMETER: *Do you regard mass action as a form of tension release or does it serve to heat up the political climate even more by provoking frustration and anger?*

IFP: I do not believe that mass action is merely a form of tension release. It should normally be viewed as a legitimate instrument of democracy people can use to voice either their approval or disapproval of certain policies and practices. For example, people in the United States use mass action almost every day, be it to voice opposition to legalising abortion or police brutality. Obviously some people would be dead against what other people would be clamouring for in a particular mass action but they would have the same right to campaign for what they would prefer.

BAROMETER: *How can it be determined if mass action is supported by the majority, or if it is only minority opinion forced onto others?*

Government: Intimidation has played a crucial role in the mobilisation of masses. Only when intimidation is removed as a factor can this be evaluated. It would seem, however, that calls to mass action are being heeded less and less by the population.

IFP: Participation in such things should be voluntary and based on persuasion. Intimidation should be outlawed and there should be set up effective ways of handling intimidation.

BAROMETER: *The ANC made 1991 the year of mass action. Why has this not materialized?*

ANC: It has not materialized because the community has not been fully involved in the planning and implementation of the NEC decision. People are tired of being told what to do. ■

As the government further absolves itself of providing funds for education, the burden is falling increasingly on individuals and private enterprise.



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DISSENT AND COMMITMENT

Dr Beyers Naude
Ecumenical Advice Bureau

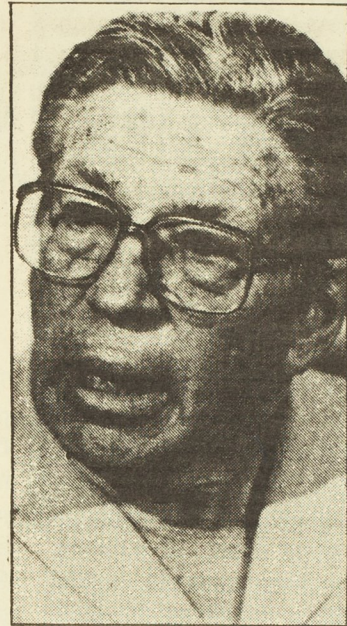


Photo: Courtesy of Beeld

"Mass action has an important role to play in a society in transition to a democratic society. Mass action, however, should ultimately be subject to democratic procedures, to determine if it is indeed supported by the majority, and not the result of the views of a minority being forced on to people."

According to Dr Beyers Naude "The final test of the measure of support for mass action can only be a referendum when in a free, secret vote, all citizens can express either approval or rejection."

Dr Naude also views mass action as a method to be employed when "all other existing legitimate channels have been utilised and produced no positive result." Mass action can also be used by "those whose government prohibits or seriously curtails the right of legitimate protest." Mass action is used to express dissent but it can also express commitment towards a meaningful democracy. Dr Naude views

mass action as an important tool in a period of political change, where people utilise it "to express their hopes and frustrations".

His views on the role of the state in the area of mass action are clear. He feels that there should be a code of conduct to regulate mass action, compiled through government consultation with political, legal, community, cultural and religious organisations. "Fundamentally important is that in South Africa a culture of democracy should be developed whereby the whole nation would be educated to submit itself voluntarily to peaceful mass action instead of seeking solutions through bloody conflict and violence", says dr Naude.

Ultimately the watchdog over mass action is the government who has to ensure that undemocratic behaviour does not arise. "Adequate steps should therefore be taken to control masses participating in protest marches, and criteria for the organising for boycotts, protest marches and stay-

aways, and political and community groups should be honoured."

Christian leaders has, in the eyes of dr Naude, a special responsibility with regard to mass action and has to ensure that protests are just and peaceful. "Refusal or neglect on the part of the church to identify itself with such legitimate protest creates a situation where the message of the Gospel, as preached by the church, becomes unacceptable or incredible in the hearts and minds of the people."

Mass action is placed in perspective when dr Naude states that the masses are not always right, but "a situation may arise when, after decades of suppression of democratic rights, the people rise up in massive protest against oppression or suppression of human rights." Dr Naude also emphasises that the right to mass action should be allowed in any future dispensation in South Africa, to ensure that the feelings and opinions of all people can be expressed. ■

PERSPECTIVE ON MASS ACTION

Mass rallies and meetings, protest marches, school boycotts and chalk downs, rent and service charge boycotts, consumer boycotts, stay aways, sanctions, symbolic actions (such as refusing prizes or other honours), public disobedience (such as the Rev Hendrickse's dip at a (then) all-white beach), hunger strikes - don't we know this all too well in South Africa?

Worldwide mass action has emerged as a powerful and sophisticated tool, playing a major role in the successful overthrow of governments. On November 1989 half a million people marched down the streets of East Berlin demanding freedom. The Wall fell. However, where the will of the people is not strong enough, mass action fails - as happened in China on the Tianmen Square. (3)

"Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored"

**Martin Luther King
"I have a dream"**

To some, mass action is a form of passive resistance, rooted in the Ghandi tradition of satyagraha. To many it is a legitimate form of resistance. To others it is a threat capable of unravelling the very fabric of society, destabilising political and economic institutions and presaging increasing anomy and anarchy. (1)

Although mass action is at present utilised by both the right and left wings in South African politics, it is primarily the ANC which introduced this into South African politics. For the ANC mass action has always been an important means of increasing pressure on the government, which was to be weakened by armed action (through Umkhonto we Sizwe) and international sanctions: thus leading to the transfer of power to the people. (1)

Since the unbanning of the ANC, negotiation is seen as a strategy towards this goal and mass mobilisation as a tactic essential to ensure that ANC demands are met and not emasculated: to ensure that the ANC receives a 'fat plate' at the negotiating table. (1)

Support for mass action - how widespread?

From the interviews conducted by Barometer it is clear that all parties are, to a greater or lesser degree, in favour of mass action, except those at the receiving end of it - the

government and big business. Although they favour the other, less destructive and negative ways to draw attention to grievances and differences, as, for instance, negotiations, they recognise mass action as a form of legitimate protest if all other means fail.

"Mass action and negotiation are two areas of struggle that must be employed in a complementary fashion".

**Jay Naidoo
Cosatu**

An interesting development is that COSATU managed to mobilise more people against the implementation of VAT than when the ANC/SACP called for mass action. This illustrates that the support of the workers, vied for by both the ANC and SACP, is of utmost importance as far as mass action is concerned.

The PAC and AZAPO on the other hand, have charged the ANC and its affiliates with 'undemocratic' action in initiating and sustaining boycott actions.

But inside the constituencies, how much support is there for mass action? Is it really action supported by the masses or are they cajoled or intimidated into it?

Supporters of the MDM assert that everybody supports mass action, except the few who have a stake in the system, and are therefore obliged to obey their master's voice in opposing it.

On the other hand, according to a survey by Prof Lawrence Schlemmer in the townships recently, 51 percent of both recent and long-established migrants to the city declared themselves to be "very dissatisfied" with the enforcement of rent and service charge boycotts. About a third of the established city people also disapproved strongly. In a March 1991 survey made by the South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) in all metropolitan townships, a third of the residents said that they had been forced to participate in consumer boycotts and in stay-aways. ⁽²⁾

The ANC declared 1991 the year of mass action for the transfer of power to the people. But different forms of action so far have failed to mobilise sufficient numbers. In addition, this has not translated into effective pressure to ensure the transition to a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

**New Nation
07 - 13 June 1991**

Gains and drawbacks of mass action

From the ANC perspective mass action has many advantages. They view lifting of the ban on the ANC, the release of Nelson Man-

delá and the initiation of the negotiation process as dividends acquired through mass action. ⁽¹⁾

Mass action also has the advantage of building and sustaining grassroots support. It creates the feeling among supporters that they are involved in the organisation and are co-responsible for what happens. It gives a feeling of being politically effective. ⁽¹⁾

But mass action also has its drawbacks, some of which are now emerging. Protracted and frequent mass action can generate a boycott mentality. It may become an (anarchic) end in itself. It can also get out of hand and lead to violence and high levels of intimidation. The most important boomerang of mass action, when overplayed, is that people start to resist it and it then has the potential to alienate supporters.

A heightened potential for conflict in society can result from mass action. Mass action increases the risk of confrontation with the police, and can result in injury or death. In addition, it provokes conflict with rival organisations, and strengthens the white right wing, encouraging it to beat the drum of 'swartgevaar'.

The economic consequences of mass action are that it deters foreign investment, sorely needed for economic growth and development. Some even argue that the disenchantment of foreign capital is indirectly beneficial to the ANC in that it prevents socio-economic grievances being met, and helps to keep the townships on the boil. ⁽¹⁾

The government and ANC are now squarely at loggerheads on the issue of mass action. The ANC is determined to pursue it. The state, in turn, is adamant that it must end. ⁽¹⁾

"Nonviolence ... is the method which seeks to implement the just law by appealing to the conscience of the great decent majority who through blindness, fear, pride, or irrationality have allowed their consciences to sleep".

**Martin Luther King
"I have a dream"**

Bringing mass action to an end or under control pose a daunting challenge for both the ANC and the government. The nineties began on a note of hope and optimism, marked by increasing confidence in the prospects for a stable and secure South Africa. Mass action now casts a sombre shadow across that hope, presaging - in the eyes of many commentators - at worst a slide into irreparable ungovernability. ⁽¹⁾

If mass action continues unchecked and unabated, even a democratic, non-racial constitution, acquiesced to by all the major players, may prove too little and too late. For the fabric of society will have been fatally undermined and the new state will be left to 'govern over the ashes'. ⁽¹⁾

Sources:

(1) Jeffery, A. 1991. *Mass mobilisation*. SAIRR.

(2) Schlemmer, L. 1991. *Dimensions of turmoil: position paper on current violence in South Africa*. Centre for Policy Studies

(3) Ley, M. 1991. *Oorlog sonder bloed*. Beeld 11 Sept 1991. ■

MASSA-AKSIE EN DIE REGSES

BAROMETER interview with Mr Eugene Terreblanche, leader of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) and Dr Andries Treurnicht, leader of the Conservative Party of South Africa (CP)

Synopsis:

The AWB uses mass action to a limited extent - mass meetings and marches. However, if the government will not listen to its demands, it might make use of boycotts and stay-aways - thereby crippling the country as whites occupy the key positions in the country. According to the AWB the government should prohibit mass action of the ANC because they have no right to in "this" country. "If they want to mobilise, let them do it in the Transkei - which is their country".

Synopsis:

The CP sometimes makes use of mass action as a method of resistance against the government, such as public meetings and congresses. This strategy is used sparingly and selectively because an escalation of mass action is "undesirable as it creates insecurity, restlessness and distrust." Peaceful mass action will be permitted by the CP under certain conditions but with certain limitations on blacks in white areas.

BAROMETER: *Watter rol, doel en effek het massa-aksie in die huidige RSA?*

Mr Eugene Terreblanche, AWB: Die AWB gebruik massavergaderings en massaoptogte. Die beweging het tot dusver nie van boikotte gebruik gemaak nie, maar as die regering en die ANC nie na ons grondeis wil luister nie, is boikotte nie uitgesluit nie. Dit impliseer dat as die blanke vakman uit die nywerheid, die mynwese of die staatsdiens onttrek word, kan ons Suid-Afrika letterlik laat stilstaan. Dis sal 'n baie groter effek hê as die ANC se massa-aksies omdat ons die sleutelposisies beklee. Daar bestaan vandag nog nie in ons myne een enkele swart hysbakdrywer nie. As die blanke hysbakdrywer staak, staan die myn stil. As die blanke elektrisiën by Eskom staak, dan maak ons van die Nuwe Suid-Afrika weer 'n donker Suid-Afrika.

Dr Andries Treurnicht,

KP: Periodiek maak die KP van massa-aksie as versetmetode gebruik. Die KP se openbare politieke vergaderings en kongresse is gewone massa-demonstrasies teen Regeringsbeleid.

BAROMETER: *Wanneer sal gebruik gemaak word van massa-aksie en wat wil daarmee bereik word?*

AWB: Nie-gewelddadige aksies

sal gebruik word om 'n verkiesing op die regering af te dwing. Ons Regses kan ons probleme oplos deur 'n vrye, algemene verkiesing. Met betrekking tot boikotte, die omstandigheid en die skuiwe wat die regering maak sal die tyd bepaal. Oorlog of vrede rus in die hande van die regering.

KP: Die KP gebruik die metode spaarsaam en selektief. Die oogmerk is mobilisering van steun om die regering van die omvang van weerstand te oortuig.

BAROMETER: *As u organisasie die mag oorneem sal u toelaat dat massa-aksie deur ander organisasies gebruik word?*

AWB: Dit is 'n onbillike vraag. My taak as leier van die AWB is die verkryging van die reg om homself te regeer in die geografiese gebied wat hy as sy vaderland beskou, nie die hele Suid-Afrika nie. Daar eindig my taak. Dan moet die regering van die dag beleid bepaal.

Ek is nie 'n politikus wat politieke strukture en sisteme uitwerk nie. Ek is hier om grond te verkry waarbinne sisteme geïmplimenteer kan word. Andries Treurnicht en Jaap Marais, leier van die HNP, moet vir jou daardie goed verduidelik - hulle is die politici.

KP: Vreedsame massa-aksies sal toegelaat word onder bepaalde

voorwaardes en met beperkings op lede van nie-blanke gemeenskappe in blanke gebiede.

BAROMETER: *Watter effek sal massa-aksie hê op die ekonomie asook stabiliteit en vrede in die RSA?*

AWB: Ons ekonomie gaan totaal in duie stort.

KP: 'n Eskalاسie van massa-aksie is ongewens. Daar moet 'n ontstregeling van Blankes en Nie-blankes se politieke uiting kom. Oorverhitting van die politieke klimaat bevorder onsekerheid, onrustigheid en wantroue.

BAROMETER: *Hoe behoort die regering massa-aksie te hanteer?*

AWB: Die regering behoort dit te verbied want dit laat mense onveilig voel. Wat boikotte betref, moet daar opgetree word teenoor diegene wat bereid is om die land se ekonomie in duie te laat stort. Die Xhosas van Transkei kan mos nie 'n optog kom hou om stemreg te verkry in my land nie. Dit is verkeerd. Die ANC is slegs geregtig op massa-aksies in die Transkei. ■

'n Nota ...

Ek sien massamobilisasie as die mobilisering van mense op verskillende terreine, met die doel om die gemobiliseerde massa as drukgroep en magsbasis te gebruik, om spesifieke doelwitte te bereik.

Daar bestaan waarskynlik by die groep wat van massamobilisasie gebruik maak, 'n persepsie dat daar feitlik nie ander kanale is wat hulle kan gebruik om hulle doelwitte te verwesenlik nie.

Vir die regterkant van die politieke spektrum is dit 'n ander storie. Die veranderings in die land bedreig ons mees fundamentele politieke, ekonomiese, sosiale en kulturele belange.

Alhoewel ons in teorie volle politieke en ander regte het, beteken dit in die praktyk nie vir ons iets nie. Die Regering weier om 'n verkiesing te hou, niesteaande die feit dat hulle direk teen die mandaat wat hulle gekry het regeer. Verder hervorm die Regering ook net na links, terwyl FW de Klerk van elke geleentheid gebruik maak om glimlaggend aan ons te sê dat ons moet aanvaar dat die verlies van ons vryheid "onomkeerbaar" is.

Die dilemma van die regse blanke is dat al wat vir De Klerk nodig is om te slaag (en vir ons om te verloor) is dat ons niks doen nie.

Wat die regses betref, reageer De Klerk nie op billike en redelike versoeke nie, en druk blyk die enigste oplossing te wees. Hierin kan massamobilisasie 'n belangrike rol speel.

Die regses is gevolglik verplig om met 'n mobilisasieproses te begin, niesteaande die geweldige omvang daarvan.

Op die arbeidsterrein vorm die Mynwerkersunie die speerpunt deur 'n volskaalse veldtog vir 'n super blanke vakbond te voer. Ons glo dat so 'n super vakbond deur sy getalle, maar veral weens die tegnologiese kundigheid en sleutelposisies van sy lede, in staat sal wees om suksesvol namens sy lede te kan beding.

Dit is ongelukkig so dat die regses se bedingingsmag afhang van die mate waarin ons 'n bedreiging vir die vrede en stabiliteit in die "Nuwe Suid-Afrika" gaan wees.

Dit moet nie geïnterpreteer word as sou die regse blanke noodwendig ook moet oorgaan tot 'n proses van boikotte, stakings en geweld nie.

Dit beteken alleen maar dat die ander rolspelers op die Suid-Afrikaanse verhoog tot die besef gebring sal moet word dat, indien die regse blanke nie deel van die oplossing is nie, ons deel van die probleem gaan word.

**PJW Buys,
Organiserende Sekretaris:
Opleiding en Bemaking,
Mynwerkersunie. ■**

DIRECT DEMOCRACY THROUGH MASS ACTION

Dr Wim Booyse
MD of Risk Afrique

"Mass action as a democratic tool has a crucial role to play in South Africa during the transitional phase in that citizen involvement will ensure that the system and processes of transition are responsive to the people".

In an interview with Barometer, dr Booyse pointed out that mass action embodies the fundamental freedoms of speech, assembly, expression and association, and that it should, therefore, be one of the cornerstones of any future dispensation in South Africa.

The value of mass action, according to dr Booyse, is that it provides each citizen with some form of direct democracy, enabling citizens to take part personally in

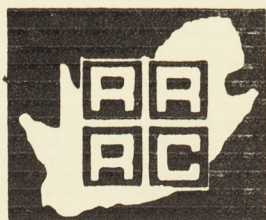
deliberations. "The democratic right of the individual to have a say in public policy about things done in the name of the public is extremely important, since they are the public!".

In the wake of the legacy of apartheid (where the majority of South Africans did not have access to the corridors of political power) and the attempted revolutionary overthrow of the government (where mass action was used as a revolutionary or insurrectionary mechanism) the democratic practise of mass action unfortunately acquired a "non-democratic" and coercive nature. However, dr Booyse says, mass action as a democratic tool has a crucial role to play in South Africa during the transitional phase in that citizen involvement will ensure that the system and processes of transition are responsive to the people.

Asked if there should be a code of conduct for mass action, dr Booyse explained that restricting mass action with a code of conduct would constitute an inherently undemocratic procedure, as it would curtail the individual's freedom of speech and assembly.

Dr Booyse is adamant that the only valid reason for intervention in mass action, is a situation where life, liberty and property are threatened. "When mass action transgresses into mass coercion, then it is the duty and responsibility of the state and those leadership elements organising the mass action to ensure that life, liberty and property are protected."

On the issue of right-wing mass action, dr Booyse regards it as a result of the realisation by the right-wing that mass action can be used as an instrument to intimidate and coerce others. ■



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GRASSROOTS

OPINIONS

At the ballot box the opinion of the lay person weighs just as much as that of the "expert".

BAROMETER is proud to introduce this feature in which the opinions of people not necessarily involved in the field concerned, are published. One question regarding the theme of Mass Action was sent to a random number of people and some responded.

The theme of the forthcoming **BAROMETER** will be

THE PATRIOTIC FRONT

The question to be answered is: "The Patriotic Front is a joining of forces between the ANC, PAC, AZAPO, COSATU and others to lobby for a constituent assembly (implying an early election to nominate representatives who will then draw up the constitution). Will the PF influence future constitutional negotiation? How?!"

If you would like to participate, please send your answer, name and postal address to:

BAROMETER
P O Box 13060
Clubview 0014.

MASS ACTION

BAROMETER:

What role, in your opinion, should mass action (eg boycotts, protest marches, stay-aways etc) play in the South Africa of today?

Prof Piet Meiring,
*Department Sending-
wetenskap,
Universiteit van Pretoria.*

Massa-aksie is 'n wettige, eties-verantwoordbare optrede. Dat dit ook in die verlede - en in die hede - groot resultate opgelewer het, is nie te betwyfel nie. Maar juis daarom moet dit met baie groot omsigtigheid en verantwoordelikheid gebruik word. Vrae wat gedurig gestel moet word is onder meer die volgende: Wat sal die verwagte gevolg van die optrede wees? Kan die optrede binne wettige perke gehou word? Sal dit tot geweld lei? Wat is die moontlikheid dat die aksie kontraproduktief sal wees? Les bes: is dit verstandig in die oorverhitte politieke klimaat in Suid-Afrika om met sulke aksies te begin? ■

Ms Kate Prinsloo,
Brooklyn.

Mass action as a strategy in the SA of today should be approached with a great deal more circumspection than in the past. The political process has been opened up and political players have been (to a large extent) empowered. The

very difficult process of creating a more conventional and universally acceptable political culture has to begin and mass action generally has a destabilizing effect on this process. ■

Justice Mpanza,
Stanger.

Of course, if we say that we want a new SA, it means that we should have a strong organisation with tested leadership. The New South Africa does not mean changing a white jockey for a black jockey. But the people must participate in political action. It is no use having freedom from a negotiation table alone.

Fighting for freedom is the physical seizure of power from the oppressor to build a new society. People have to participate in mass action because they need to train to defend their freedom after the struggle. It is useless listening to a leader who says there must be no sanctions, no boycotts, no marches and no stay-aways. If we did not do such things, SA would not have some of the changes we now see.

De Klerk is still practising Bantustans in a way. When the National Party was implementing their Bantustan policy, through men such as the Matanzimas, Sebes, Tswanises, Mphephus, Mopelis and others, it was creating the type of leadership they would prefer to lead the new South Africa. So mass action is the school to educate the masses. ■

NEGOTIATION MECHANICS

WAGE BARGAINING

Since 1979, the labour relations field has provided South Africans with fertile ground for developing and training tough and successful negotiators. In many instances, industrial relations practice here has set the pace in the negotiating process with the SACCOLA/COSATU/NACTU Accord - being seen in many quarters as the first fully negotiated piece of legislation. As wage negotiations are one of the most important sections of the industrial relationship, experiences in this sphere may teach all of us the basic tenets of the negotiation process.

WHAT IS NEGOTIATION?

One critical factor that distinguishes wage bargaining from certain other types of negotiation is that it is mandatory for the parties to settle eventually, even if this is only achieved after a strike or lock-out. Consequently both parties share the objective of settlement. Beyond that the objectives differ somewhat radically.

The employer's aim is to settle within budgeted constraints, to secure recovery of higher wage costs through improved labour efficiency, to minimise any repercussive effects of settlement on the pay of groups outside the bargaining unit and to establish an agreed period of time within which no further substantive demands will be made.

Successful settlement will not take place if the negotiators fail to ad-

dress the primary needs of the workers affected by the outcome.

AWARENESS OF POWER

Experienced negotiators always have a keen awareness of both their own power and that of their opponent. They gather information to assess relative strengths well before negotiations begin and develop strategies accordingly. The adage "know your enemy" is as relevant to wage bargaining as it is to competitive sport or military combat.

AWARENESS OF FACTS

No experienced negotiator will enter the bargaining arena without thorough preparation in obtaining factual information necessary to support his position.

Of primary importance is a sound knowledge of the going rate and the general level of settlement currently being achieved within the particular industry or geographic area in which the negotiations are taking place.

Secondly the parties require a sensitivity to the prevailing economic climate in which they are negotiating and the history of events leading up to the negotiations. Demands by workers which on the surface may seem excessive may on further consideration appear more reasonable if viewed in the context of a history of inequitable treatment.

Thirdly the negotiator must be

acutely aware of the priorities of his constituency. Union negotiators may find that certain anomalies in the reward system create at least as much resentment as perceived inadequacies of current wage levels. Employers on the other hand, having fully costed the implications of the package of demands, may have a very clear interest in avoiding concessions on certain items.

GOING IN POSITIONS

In any negotiations the higher your demands the higher your potential settlement level. However, this generalisation only holds true if the final level of expectation is realistic and the party making the demands has bargaining power.

CONCESSIONS

Small concessions are good, large concessions are bad. The credibility of negotiators rests on their grasp of factual information in support of their position, and the consequent level of their confidence in it as perceived by their opponent. A dramatic movement on their part indicates to the opponent that the initial position was either taken arbitrarily or was based on erroneous factual information, and whatever the reason further concessions are on the way. If dramatic movement proves necessary it must be accompanied by a full explanation of the reason for making it, preferably with a trade-off concession from the opponent if credibility is to be maintained.

LINKING

Wage negotiations invariably involve not only wages but also such issues as shift and overtime premia, bonuses, etc. Experienced negotiators will not fall into the trap of attempting to settle item by item. Indeed most successful negotiations have an element of "bad news - good news". Normally it is more effective to deal with the difficult issues first, which may take a lot of time and heartache, finally moving to a "happy ending" with rapid settlement of the easier items on the agenda.

DISGUIISING PRIORITIES

In negotiating packages each party will attempt to place the other off balance by moving from issue to issue and back again. The successful negotiator must retain overall perception of costs and

relative importance in responding to these tactics. Perhaps the most vital rule for negotiators in this situation is not to disclose the item or items that are most important to them as negotiations sway from issue to issue. Awareness of the priorities of an opponent will inevitably raise the asking price of a concession.

FEAR

The wage negotiating process has been associated with two basic fears: fear of the unknown and fear of loss.

Fear of the unknown may stem from a lack of knowledge of facts used by the opponent or a lack of certainty as to what his next move will be. Fear of loss is more clearly identified in terms of potential loss of wages - and possibly jobs - for strikers, and loss of profits and market share for em-

ployers if negotiations break down.

COMPROMISE

No professional negotiator is satisfied with achieving anything less than his realistic negotiating objectives. However, in the words of Vic Feather, former Trades Union Congress (TUC) General Secretary, the experienced negotiator will leave his opponent "with the bus fare home". The very nature of the process of negotiation implies a willingness to compromise. The wage-bargaining relationship is a continuing one and depends on co-operation in the future. Such co-operation is unlikely to be forthcoming if any party emerges from the negotiation with a Pyrric victory. ■

Pat Stone, author of "Wage bargaining in South Africa."

VIEWS FROM THE **OK**

"I hope mass action will defuse conflict situations at present and in the future, and that people will rather turn to negotiation for meaningful settlements. We now have a better chance of negotiating solutions, better now than four to five years ago, because the climate is more conducive to negotiations".

Mr Gordon Hood, Md of OK Bazaars.

However, Mr Hood qualifies his preference to negotiations by stating clearly that mass action is justifiable only when the objectives you believe in, cannot be achieved by other means.

In an interview with BAROMETER, Mr Hood expressed concern for the negative effects of mass action. He views mass action as a "clumsy tool" to obtain certain results and emphasises that negotiating can be much more effective than mass action in terms of cost, results and amicability between repre-

sentatives of groups in a conflict situation. "In many cases mass action comes at a high cost for the participants, who have to live with it long after the event."

Another important aspect highlighted by Mr Hood is the fact that where parties are locked in a conflict, there very often is a bottom line, which cannot be exceeded (for various reasons) even if the will to do so exists. In the business world it is often a case of "we can go so far and no further". In many respects the same applies to politics. With regard to the government's intention to negotiate, Mr Hood is optimistic. An important point raised by Mr Hood is that this willingness to negotiate has not filtered down to "lower" levels, such as third tier municipal structures.

Preventing mass action, according to Mr Hood, is a good policy. Good and open communication is the only way of creating a climate where differences can be discussed promptly and effectively to the satisfaction of all the parties. ■

BAROMETER ON NEGOTIATION has the objective of providing decision-makers at all levels with an outline of the negotiation scene in South Africa.

BAROMETER endeavours to foster a climate conducive to negotiations by introducing all relevant parties and organisations in South African politics. Their policies and opinions on important constitutional and other questions are publicised through this newsletter, which acts as an imaginary negotiation table.

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