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Codesa: Working Group One  
The Chairperson  
PO Box 307  
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April 15, 1992

Dear Sir/Madam

Broadcasting in South Africa

We submit this paper as published in our Occasional Paper series as an item to inform your deliberations on the question of broadcasting in South Africa.

The author of the paper, Ms Akwe Amosu, is an experienced radio journalist with the British Broadcasting Corporation and we believe her analysis of the South African broadcasting environment and insights into broadcasting in general are a valuable source of information worthy of consideration by Codesa.

We would be happy to make more copies of this paper available to members of the working group if you should require them. Please let us know.

Yours sincerely

S Valentine (Ms)  
Media Co-ordinator

**INSTITUTE FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA**

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**MEDIA**

New routes  
for radio

A paper by

AKWE AMOSU

## **IDASA OCCASIONAL PAPERS**

**THIS** series of papers is being published by the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa to promote discussion and debate on issues that are fundamental to democracy.

The first six papers formed part of the proceedings of Idasa's inaugural national conference held in Port Elizabeth in May 1987. Papers in the series are drawn from Idasa events and a variety of other sources. The full series is listed at the back of the publication.

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### **NEW ROUTES FOR RADIO**

by Akwe Amosu

Ms Amosu is a radio journalist for the BBC World Service and produces the programme, "Focus on Africa".

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**February 1992**

# NEW ROUTES FOR RADIO: IDEAS FOR BETTER BROADCASTING IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

Akwe Amosu

*(This is an abridged version of a paper based on research carried out over three months in South Africa from April to July 1991)*

**T**his paper sets out to discuss the policies which would create a better broadcasting environment for a newly democratic South Africa, focusing specifically on radio. <sup>(1)</sup> The subject is of considerable topical interest, especially since the publication in mid-September 1991 <sup>(2)</sup> of the report by the Government's Task Group on the future of broadcasting and the August 1991 <sup>(3)</sup> meeting in the Netherlands of nearly 50 South Africans to discuss the future of broadcasting.

The Task Group was hearing submissions, albeit in secret, for most of the period that I was researching and writing this work. My project has been to survey and record current thinking, alongside my own observations. However, most of this paper was written before the Task Group's report was published and most of those quoted here spoke without any certain knowledge of what it would include.

Very little data exists in the way of written sources on the development and "political economy" of broadcasting in South Africa. I used the research period to speak to over 100 people in broadcasting or relevant fields. <sup>(4)</sup> I asked them a range of questions, such as who they thought should be in charge of broadcasting in future, how it should be organised and regulated, whether there should be a big commercial broadcasting sector, whether censorship was still needed, what languages should be used for broadcasting, what contribution broadcasting could make to solving the education crisis, how much access members of the public should have to mainstream broadcasting and what the public's redress should be when people felt they had been wronged by broadcasters.

I have presented my findings in the form of an extended essay, deliberately subjective and polemical, intended as an intervention in the current debate around this topic. It falls into three parts: firstly, a look at the philosophy of broadcasting to date; secondly, proposals for the restructuring of radio broadcasting and thirdly, a closer look at the contribution radio could make in one sector – education.

In making my observations and suggestions I have been very conscious that I am an outsider and that I was in South Africa for all too brief a period; I would like to make it clear that I am not trying to pre-empt a democratic debate – this is raw material to go into the pot with everything else, in the hope that it will prove useful.

## PART 1: THE PHILOSOPHY OF BROADCASTING IN SOUTH AFRICA, PAST AND PRESENT

Of the existing 30-odd radio stations in South Africa, 23 are SABC stations. They include the two white nationals, the nine black stations, the regionals like Good Hope, the pop station Radio 5, the Indian station Radio Lotus, and a few others like Radio 2000 and Radio Metro (English language, aimed at black listeners in the Johannesburg area).

Radio has more than 12 million listeners every day. Some 82 percent of urban blacks have listened to radio in the past week and have a radio in their house (compared with a probable 4 million television households – the SABC says it has 2,5 million licensed viewers). Radio Zulu has more than 3 million listeners every day – over half the country's Zulu population, while at the other end of the scale, Radio Venda has only just over 100 000. The biggest white station is Radio Suid Afrika with nearly 900 000 listeners. <sup>(5)</sup>

Legal and bureaucratic means effectively block anyone except the SABC from radio broadcasting in South Africa. <sup>(6)</sup> Radio 702, Radio Bop, Radio Thoyandou and Capital Radio have used the homelands loophole but are only permitted to broadcast on medium wave, which severely limits their range and forces them to compete at a disadvantage with the SABC, which uses the far higher quality FM signal.

Thus, for most South African radio listeners it is a choice between the SABC – and the SABC.

### Apartheid's historical agenda

The only truly national stations are the white ones, Radio South Africa and Radio Suid Afrika. They can be heard everywhere. Everything else is carefully beamed to selected areas.

There are nine different African language services and the SABC broadcasts to specific listeners in specific areas; some Zulu hostel dwellers here, a patch of Ndebele speakers there or a settlement of south Sotho-speaking migrants elsewhere. Radio Zulu is found on every transmitter in the Zulu heartland of Natal but on only one in the Orange Free State and on only three in the Transvaal, apart from Johannesburg. And Radio Xhosa is found all over the eastern and western Cape but not at all in Natal, because Xhosas are not meant to be in Natal.

The origins of this policy lie in the decision, taken over three decades ago, that South Africans should listen to the radio in their mother tongue, in the place where apartheid had confined them. In order to achieve this, in the early 1960s the SABC switched to FM across the board, dropping medium wave. To quote Graham Hayman and Ruth Tomaselli: "Since the introduction of the FM system would create an entirely new market for radio receivers, and since the cheapest form of receiver would be FM only, market forces would tend to create a black audience which could listen only to the FM channels." <sup>(7)</sup>

They note that owners of such radios could not receive medium wave nor short wave broadcasts from independent (and anti-apartheid) states north of the border, nor anywhere else for that matter. (It is of course true that in recent years, people have acquired better, more expensive receivers and have acquired greater access to foreign broadcasts. But the listening habits laid down in those early years have stuck.)

Thus most people could only hear what the SABC wanted them to hear. And to make sure everyone could hear that, SABC engineers designed the first planned FM transmitter layout grid in the world, thereby guaranteeing virtual countrywide coverage. Andrew Curle of M-Net's technical team who worked for many years in the SABC, confirms that the motive of this massive re-engineering project was "to separate black people by

broadcasting to them in their own language...so they had to have many channels".<sup>(8)</sup>

There can be no doubt that the objective was to reinforce ethnic separateness and difference and actively to discourage multilingualism. Douglas Fuchs, director general of the SABC in the 1970s, wrote that the intention was to "encourage language consciousness in each of the Bantu peoples, to strengthen national consciousness".<sup>(9)</sup> As Madala Mpahlele of TV2/3/4 [now CCV] comments: "[splitting broadcasting into language services] was a conscious policy in line with Afrikaner nationalism and the grand notion of apartheid... where what came first was not being South African but being apportioned what they called a nation. Obviously language became one of the important identification tags."<sup>(10)</sup>

This is the foundation stone of broadcasting philosophy in the SABC – to buttress apartheid. This is what is meant first and foremost by public service broadcasting in South Africa. And the result of, as it were, "segregated broadcasting", has been everything that Piet Meyer could have hoped for.

## THE IMPACT OF SEGREGATION IN BROADCASTING

According to the surveys, there is very little overlap in listening habits. Most listeners choose one station, and one only, in their mother tongue.<sup>(11)</sup> Such "brand loyalty" in radio listening is a well-established pattern in other parts of the world too – the trouble is that in South Africa the exploitation of a natural tendency has had more dangerous implications than in most countries.

A BBC survey conducted in 1989 found that nearly nine out of 10 urban black people depended on the radio for news. A staggering 63 percent of blacks in the sample said they believed all they heard on the radio.<sup>(12)</sup> And when asked to rate media credibility on a scale of 1 to 100, the respondents gave African language radio 82 out of a 100.

That story is repeated in surveys carried out on behalf of the SABC itself. For example 80 percent of Radio Zulu listeners in the probably-reliable *Reaching Critical Mass* survey<sup>(13)</sup> said the station completely satisfied their needs. Among Radio Xhosa listeners it was 84 percent, Radio Sesotho 83,3 percent and so on. Some 76 percent of the total sample said that of all the media they found radio the easiest to understand; 68 percent felt entertained by it, 71 percent felt informed by it.

Even researchers within the SABC's research department doubt whether such figures are a reliable guide to the station's impact. Such high levels of satisfaction would anywhere suggest an unnaturally uncritical attitude, in South Africa suspicion must be magnified.

One of the most obvious explanations is surely lack of choice. Stations to which everyone listens because there is no alternative cannot be said to be truly popular. This is buttressed by far lower popularity figures in the white population which by virtue of wealth has access to a wider range of sources for information and entertainment.

Another reason that the SABC has been able to sustain public loyalty to its services is that in both technical quality and presentational style, a high standard has been maintained throughout. But both are irrelevant to content. Among those who see beyond the professional image, the very name of the SABC has been a synonym for bias, omission and manipulation.

The SABC claims always to have had public service at the heart of its project but this is hard to accept. Public service commitment to inform, educate and entertain was all along subordinate to the apartheid project. And others have shown that information and education SABC-style was at best, selective.<sup>(14)</sup> At worst, it actually produced disinformation and promoted ignorance about the most basic truths of human existence.

But it would be wrong to lay everything that is wrong with the SABC at the door of apartheid. It has the hallmarks of any

product of a highly centralised, state capitalist economy. It is huge and seriously overstuffed. Junior managers have been heard to complain that they do not even know who their senior managers are. Even among its own, it is perceived as nepotistic, bureaucratic, unwieldy and heavy-handed in its response to challenges from the outside world: witness the staff joke about the "three Ks" of the SABC – "koffee, knitting and kakpraat".

## PART 2: A NEW STRUCTURE FOR RADIO BROADCASTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Any reform of the broadcasting sector must start with the SABC. The state or public broadcaster stands at the heart of any broadcasting system. In South Africa it holds a monopoly and guards its hegemony jealously.

For Willie Currie of the Film and Allied Workers Organisation (Fawo) the over-arching goals of public broadcasting in South Africa should be:

- a public duty to help overcome the divisions and imbalances in South African society caused by apartheid;
- the encouragement of the development of a society and culture that all South Africans can identify with;
- the expression of the full diversity of language and culture in the country;
- to be democratic, not because a bureaucratic or commercial elite controls it, but because everyone can participate in it and see the complexity of our society reflected in it;
- to belong to everyone, in their capacity not just as consumers but in their capacity as citizens who have a say in their country.<sup>(15)</sup>

Clearly, work towards some kind of public service broadcasting charter is needed.

### The SABC's size

For the SABC to continue at its present size is crazy. It has become hugely bloated, both in order to serve apartheid's needs and because, as the only broadcaster, it has to cater extensively for all tastes.<sup>(16)</sup> In order to do that, it needs huge funds. No public subsidy could ever cover it, and with the audience's lack of enthusiasm for paying their licence fees, dependence on advertising has become inevitable.

In fact three-quarters of the SABC's income is derived from advertising and this causes a kind of schizophrenia – the corporation doesn't know whether it wants to be a public broadcasting service or a commercial station (such a financial profile is rare but not unprecedented – for example, New Zealand's state-owned broadcasting corporation earns its funding in the same proportions and has become an aggressive "commercial" station).<sup>(17)</sup>

The SABC has begun putting the cart before the horse. The annual report talks as though in order to maintain this huge income, it has to maintain its enormous number of services instead of the other way around!<sup>(18)</sup>

To my mind, this causes a serious contradiction in the SABC's function – which, to be fair, it acknowledges. While many public service broadcasters have chosen, or been forced, to supplement their income with commercials, such heavy dependence would usually be seen as a major disadvantage. As one senior newspaper executive<sup>(19)</sup> commented to me: "I think it's a serious problem for the SABC. They have an identity crisis, because they want to be all things – the national broadcaster in a public service function, and they also want to be commercial."<sup>(20)</sup>

No other public service broadcaster in the world runs so many services with such huge overlaps in content. And with an end to apartheid, and the likely entry of more radio stations into the sector, there is no need for the SABC to be so big and try to cater for everybody. Shrinking the organisation would achieve a number of things. Within the Corporation:

- loss-making services could be rationalised and therefore losses reduced;
- budgets would be smaller therefore dependence on the market would be reduced and greater programming independence achieved;
- there would be a smaller staff and thus better internal communication;
- and it would be easier for a new management to carry through change.

Outside the SABC, this would make room for new stations because:

- some previously occupied frequencies would become available;
- newly uncommitted audiences would be looking for new radio services;
- market niches would open up with the end of the SABC's blanket coverage;
- advertising would be released to support new services;
- there would be greater variety in the radio environment as a whole, and therefore greater choice for the listener; and
- radio audiences would develop better powers of discrimination and consume radio programmes more critically.

Let me say right away, this is not an argument for immediate privatisation of the SABC and a sale of bits of it to the highest bidder. I strongly support the view that a future democratically-elected government, not the present administration, should undertake the restructuring of South African broadcasting.

As regards privatisation, broadcasting observers are quite right to be troubled by the introduction of so-called business units in the SABC, in which each unit is financially responsible for itself. These units look very much like a prelude to privatisation, as Director-General Harmse has acknowledged in a speech to SASPU members. <sup>(21) (22)</sup>

There is a body of opinion which says that under no circumstances should the SABC be subject to privatisation, for the very understandable reason that public assets have been poured into developing this state corporation and should not be given away to the private sector at a knock-down price.

Pallo Jordan, the ANC's Secretary for Information told me: "We are opposed to breaking up of the SABC and selling it off piecemeal. What they would do is hive off the profitable bits and leave the rest to the state to fund. This is what we must block." <sup>(23)</sup>

Fair enough. But the SABC nonetheless costs far too much for the state to run and in its present form it combines the worst of paternalist monopoly and (because of its dependence on advertising) rampant commercialism. I would argue that some of the plant and assets should be removed in such a way that they would continue to benefit the community. For example, they could be sold to community-appointed trusts around the country who would be charged with running commercial services alongside a community service and be required to put any profits back into the local community.

It should be noted that the SABC's management is highly resistant to any plan which seeks to reduce its size. In an internal SABC broadcast to staff, Director-General Harmse noted "pressure from media and other circles for the SABC to be scaled down to a so-called PBS channel". Further, he warned: "We will have to be pro-active and look after our future." <sup>(24)</sup>

What exactly pro-active means in this context is not clear but as one newspaper publisher said: "there's definitely a thrust towards privatisation...it's been put on the back-burner because the ANC got so jittery. But they are obviously up to something...there's a hidden agenda, they're trying to restructure in such a way that the interests [they now serve] will be safeguarded into the next government." <sup>(25)</sup>

Another argument used by the SABC is that since their ser-

vices must be preserved, there is little room in the broadcasting spectrum to add others. But apart from believing that the SABC's services should be reduced, I think this is a myth. As Stan Katz of Radio 702 notes, while South Africa does have superb quality on FM, the SABC maintains such wide spaces on the broadcasting band between the different stations, that there is plenty of room for more. <sup>(26)</sup> In the Western Cape, one calculation suggests that Radio Good Hope has been broadcasting the same signal across 28 usable channels. <sup>(27)</sup> Meanwhile the AM, or medium wave band is seriously under-utilised. One source who submitted evidence to the Task Group told me that Dr Christo Viljoen, SABC chairman, had disparaged the potential value of medium wave in the future – one more sign of the Corporation's seeming obsession with quality over access and variety. <sup>(28)</sup>

It is worth comparing the South African situation with Britain. The public service broadcaster, the BBC, has five national stations and dozens of local and regional stations and occupies over 70 percent of the available radio broadcasting spectrum side by side with an already extensive commercial local radio sector.

Yet under the new Broadcasting Act, the Radio Authority is obliged to issue licences for three new national commercial stations and "hundreds" of local services. The problem is that it will clearly be struggling for frequencies. <sup>(29)</sup> Quite understandably there has been a demand that the BBC reduce its services to make more room, despite the widespread consensus that the BBC produces a top quality product. In South Africa, where any such consensus about the quality of the SABC's output is conspicuously absent, there can surely be no argument about the need to make room for commercial services.

Finally, on the management of the SABC of the future, there is understandable concern that the years of National Party interference in SABC output should never be repeated. It seems that this is partly an overseer's job for an Independent Broadcasting Authority (see below).

But within the SABC itself, Pallo Jordan proposes the creation of a board of directors not appointed by the government but ethnically representative of the whole population and nominated by a legally stipulated variety of organisations – including political parties, civics, youth organisations, women's groups, religious bodies, cultural workers and trade unionists. The directors would have an overseer role, not a hands-on one, and because they would not owe their position to the government, would stand as a bulwark between the government of the day and a completely separate management board, responsible for running the corporation on a day-to-day basis. <sup>(30)</sup> That is one option; others should be discussed.

But the reform of the SABC into a new kind of public service broadcaster is only the first step. It should by now be clear that I am assuming a full reregulation of broadcasting is due. <sup>(31)</sup> This is of course because of the political transformation that is taking place, not as the SABC likes to suggest, because the rest of the world is reregulating its electronic media so South Africa might as well too. <sup>(32)</sup> People need:

- national public service stations which can give them an excellent news service, documentaries, social investigations, soap operas, serious dramas, music, etc in the nation's most widely used languages;
- truly local commercial radio, relevant to their lives, in languages and speech they understand and use locally;
- access to radio stations, in order to influence policy or complain about what they do not like – and get something done about it;
- another kind of access – community radio – the chance to become involved in broadcasting themselves, on their turf, in their own way, for their own purposes.

The immediate aim should be to create a broadcasting sector in which there is a "mixed economy" – so that ideas and principles can be tested. That way, debates about state control versus

private financial interest, or efficiency versus democracy, or about the rights of minorities versus the majority can take place against the background of real experience. <sup>(33)</sup>

I believe the private sector can become an important guarantee of independent thinking in broadcasting, but, at the same time, maintaining public programme making and non-profit community-based radio in the radio "ecology" can introduce an element of accountability to the broadcasting scene, as a foil to the natural inclination of private radio to go for profit over quality.

As Pallo Jordan warns, however, approval for reregulation and the development of a private sector should not be taken as approval for the maintaining of a white monopoly in broadcasting. There is clearly a danger that this is what could happen given that economic power remains in the hands of white South Africa. This needs consideration at a policy level. <sup>(34)</sup>

Radio at least is not prohibitively expensive and this is where I think the focus should be. In Jordan's view, television will become the dominant medium in the not too distant future, marginalising radio. <sup>(35)</sup> I doubt this. At present only two people in 10 watch television regularly. <sup>(36)</sup> Even in countries where the population as a whole has far more disposable income than most South Africans, radio has lodged in a stable niche long after television has become widespread. In South Africa, with economic power distributed as it is, I think it is safe to plan on radio being the medium with the widest reach for decades to come.

### Legal Provisions

Nahum Gorelick of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation has noted in retrospect, how important it was to get right the constitutional clauses affecting broadcasting at the drafting stage during Namibia's run-up to independence. <sup>(37)</sup>

Michael Markovitz of Fawo wants broadcasting rights specifically safeguarded within a bill of rights by an independent judiciary. <sup>(38)</sup> The broadcasting spectrum is a finite resource and for the sake of fairness and variety its use should be controlled and therefore such a "right" limited. But a principle could be established that as many broadcasters as possible should be licensed, and outlawing indirect means of censorship, such as dishonestly pleading lack of frequencies in order to keep would-be broadcasters off the air.

Obviously news broadcasters would like to see a legal obligation on politicians and civil servants to pursue open government and, provide free access to information (under a freedom of information act) and would like the freedom to broadcast it. They would also like guarantees against unwarranted interference in their affairs and should themselves be subject to anti-monopoly law.

The constitution should guarantee the individual the right to freedom of expression and speech, guarantee the freedom of the press and broadcast media and outlaw the advocacy through the media, of fascism or the incitement of ethnic or regional exclusiveness or hatred. Discrimination on grounds of race, gender, creed or sexual orientation should be banned in a bill of rights.

At the same time, rights such as freedom of speech cannot be absolute. There must be some kind of qualification to take in demands for constitutional protection from incitement to racial hatred, for example. But ideally, constraints on the broadcaster should arise out of the individual's rights, rather than the imposition of heavily proscriptive or worse, prescriptive codes of practice. If the bill of rights and the constitution are correctly drafted there should be little or no need for other interventions.

On the other hand, it is true, if unacceptable, that if you banned racist utterances on the broadcast media you would have to ban a significant proportion of influential individuals in South Africa from being quoted on the radio and TV. As Jeremy Cronin of the South African Communist Party observes: "We've come out of a time of enormously heavy censorship, and it has

had a crippling moral and intellectual effect...we can't go back in that direction, but one is looking for responsibility. Until some months ago, I would have said any racism should be outlawed, not tolerated. But one doesn't have the strength to suppress it, and given that, the best way may be to let it blow off steam but locate it on the periphery." <sup>(39)</sup>

While it is right and proper to ban the SABC and indeed any broadcaster from itself promoting racism, there remains the difficulty of how a broadcaster should handle the reflection of racism in daily life. It runs counter to the purpose of news and current affairs reporting to ban social groups and political organisations from media coverage. The experience in Britain of banning the broadcast media from directly quoting members of the IRA has in my view done plenty to make the law look ridiculous, and nothing to suppress that organisation's effectiveness.

Therefore, while I do not believe the electronic media should make themselves available as platforms from which the AWB can proselytise, I am not convinced that a ban on quoting racists on radio and television would have the desired effect. The answer, at least in the short term, may well be to allow the broadcasters themselves to make the decision on a case-by-case basis, under a strict guideline which sets out the conditions in which racist statements may be broadcast.

Those who feel that broadcasters cannot be trusted and that there is need for more than this should consider that legislation should not and cannot replace political struggle. Hemming in a radio station with a list of dos and don'ts attached to its licence in case the station errs will have the effect of strangling initiative and creativity and eroding responsibility. Equally, the constitution should underpin political debate and campaigning, not replace it.

In Britain for example, there has been a gradual accretion of public concern about the flagrant and frequent publication of lies about ordinary citizens by certain of the tabloid newspapers. This has led to press freedom being more frequently on the agenda than ever before and the press is under increasing pressure to get its house in order or face legislation imposing constraints on what it may publish.

Although self-regulation, first by a toothless press council and now with internal ombudspersons on each paper, has proved insufficient and the campaign will probably succeed in winning legal backing for the right of reply and so on, I do not think this has been a pointless process since in the course of it, the extent to which constraints are needed is being defined, instead of being arbitrarily imposed by some drafting committee.

But I should note that in Namibia, the press and broadcast media have felt strongly that they want as little official, let alone government, intervention as possible. This has led them to set up their own regulatory bodies to impose standards and discipline. To the extent that those bodies are effective, this is valuable experience for South Africa and I would expect that it would be in broadcasters' interest to set up a National Association of Broadcasters and define their own ethics, standards and disciplinary code. <sup>(40)</sup>

### Who will be in charge?

Who is going to run radio in South Africa – defend it and police it? There seems to be almost universal agreement that an Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) is needed. This is a body which does not yet exist and whose composition is necessarily contentious. But it embodies the idea shared by many, that the control of radio should be taken away from the minister, the post office or the civil servants – in short, it should be independent of the state.

Many, including John Grierson of Radio Enterprise, a would-be commercial broadcaster in Cape Town, argue that in the interest of the sector as a whole, there should be a minister of broadcast-

ing, or failing that, a special secretariat under an existing minister. <sup>(41)</sup> But equally, there was, among almost all those I talked to, a belief that the actual management of the sector should be out of government hands and that this should include the public broadcaster.

Nonetheless, even an IBA has to come from somewhere, and my view is that at least some of its members should be appointed by parliament. In most democracies, parliament is assumed to be the highest democratic expression of the people's will, and therefore the broadcasting authority should be accountable to it. But in South Africa, there is a lot of cynicism about whether parliament can act fairly, even if it is a new parliament elected by universal suffrage. Of course, the universal franchise does not instantly make parliament a reliable body. But on the other hand, at some point, liberal and progressive South Africans will have to relinquish such automatic scepticism and have faith that politics can work justly within formal structures (otherwise it doesn't seem worth fighting for those structures).

**H**owever, we should note the warning by Raymond Williams on the extent of independence that public authorities can actually wield: "After all, the government appoints the public authorities – characteristically in Britain, former ministers and politicians and members of the available full-time and part-time administrative bureaucracy. It is done with skill and with the kind of window-dressing of marginal appointments on which any such system depends for its apparent legitimacy. But within conventional terms all proposals for directly elected authorities or for a measure of internal democratic representation or control by actual producers and broadcasters are very vigorously opposed...Some independent thinking may get through but in the last analysis such a system depends on a consensus version of public/national interest, not one that is arrived at by debate or review through public airing by all comers." <sup>(42)</sup>

So, if there are doubts, the way to tackle them is to add extra checks and balances, while acknowledging parliament's role as the people's voice in government.

One such check could be a Media Advisory Council made up of nominees from a wide-ranging but specified list of extra-parliamentary organisations in civil society (i.e. not parliamentary political parties). Members would be appointed by their organisations for say one year, with each organisation annually replacing their nominees. (This would obviate the need for members to be accountable in their voting, to their own organisations – an arrangement which would make the body cumbersome and bureaucratic.)

Once constituted for the year, such a body could meet, for example, twice in that period or exceptionally, in emergency session. Its duties as a monitoring body and a voice in policy-making could be laid down in the new Broadcasting Act that will need to be passed. And while I would not advocate that it should elect an IBA out of its own members, I would argue that it should have significant and standing representation on the IBA. <sup>(43)</sup>

That would mean that at least some IBA members would be laypersons. There will certainly be disagreement on this point. For example, John Grierson <sup>(44)</sup> feels strongly that neither trade unions nor churches should be represented on an IBA, let alone political parties. He argues that political parties already have their own channels for representation and that the other two are not appropriate IBA members.

On the other hand, Moeletsi Mbeki of Cosatu's media department argues that the unions have long been the butt of victimisation and misrepresentation in the media and that therefore they need to be in a position to defend workers' interests. "Workers in Cosatu are very conscious that workers in other African countries made a major contribution to independence but that when it came to it they were worse off than they had

been before. The new government is likely to be a reform government, not a revolutionary government...unions don't trust it and want representation in an independent infrastructure." <sup>(45)</sup>

### Composition of an IBA

The IBA could be made up of, say, six permanent, hands-on commissioners, each directly responsible for different broadcasting sectors – perhaps commercial radio, public service broadcasting, community broadcasting, satellite services, and transmission and technical services. Each commissioner – likely to be a broadcasting professional of some kind – would have a small secretariat to carry out his or her commission's work.

They could be joined by six nominees of parliament (though not from political parties, and to be confirmed by an all-party committee of members of parliament) whose posts might rotate every two years. To them could be added four nominees from the Media Advisory Council – present as a voice not necessarily represented either by the parliamentary appointees or by the commissioners. Total membership would therefore be 16, only 6 of whom would have specified portfolios.

The IBA could call on advisers from time to time, from the Post Office or the armed services for example, but in order to maintain its independence it would have to exclude such bodies from membership.

This structure is more broadly-based than that proposed by the Democratic Party which argues for seven commissioners selected by the state president and chosen for their representativeness of the country's peoples and political groups, not for special broadcasting knowledge. A second chamber of parliament would be empowered to conduct hearings to confirm the presidential choice. Members of the public could also nominate potential commissioners but it is not clear how this would be handled. <sup>(46)</sup>

John Grierson argues that the IBA should be composed neither of people with total lack of knowledge in broadcasting, nor of narrow technocrats who are only there for their knowledge. He suggests instead, an "enlightened democracy" in which members are partly chosen for their specialist knowledge but, if possible, without political axes to grind. <sup>(47)</sup>

He argues that the authority should be small, and below it, there should be four or five committees responsible for fields like frequency and technical matters, international links, television, radio etc. The chairman of each committee would also serve on the authority.

### IBA remit

The IBA should be given control of the broadcasting spectrum, the power to distribute frequencies to broadcasters and license them and they should be obliged to distribute licences to the maximum extent technically possible, as suggested by a number of individuals and groups, the Democratic Party among them. (There is one important exception to which I will refer below, relating to community radio.)

The IBA would require broadcasters to adhere to a minimum code basically echoing the law – banning obscenity, incitement to crime, sexism and racism perhaps; it might also want to commit licensees to balance, fairness, decency, some kind of maximum limit on minutes of advertising per hour and maybe a minimum amount of news per day, depending on the station.

I would argue that the division of the SABC which now distributes the signal should be transferred to the IBA; in most cases this would in effect make it "the broadcaster", as in the old British system. It would then charge radio stations a transmission fee in return for broadcasting their programmes. The IBA's control of transmission could prove a useful element, where necessary, in persuading a radio station to meet the IBA's requirements – observing the broadcasting code, for example. There is no reason why broadcasters should not own their own transmitters, however, although it would not exempt them from observing IBA rules.



A separate committee of the IBA, chaired by a broadcasting ombudsman, should be created to hear complaints against broadcasters brought by anyone, ranging from other broadcasters to consumers. That committee should have judicial status and the power to require offending broadcasters to give a right of reply, the power to fine offenders and, in the final instance, to remove their broadcasting licence. (48)

In the case of the SABC specifically, leverage over the corporation should lie first with the IBA. There is little point in trying to guarantee the independence of the corporation by placing it under the IBA's wing, if parliament can step in at any time to undermine IBA authority by cutting or withdrawing the corporation's subvention.

Ray Louw of the Campaign for Open Media suggests that the corporation's independence can only be safeguarded if it is put into a legal trust out of reach of the politicians. (49) I think this goes too far. It must surely remain legitimate for the democratically elected parliament to take a view on the activities of the SABC and, if appropriate, impose some kind of ultimate legal sanction. But for most purposes, this would not be appropriate. Some means should be found to give the IBA control over the SABC's income, and there should be legal provision in the relevant act to prevent parliament acting unilaterally to block SABC funds except in those rare and extreme cases.

It is highly desirable that the audience should have access to programme makers and in the case of the public service broadcaster, that it should be accountable to its listeners. But it is important to guard against allowing programme makers to be victimised. It is easy to slip into the idea that because accountability is desirable, "the public" should be given access to the production process and end up having a power of veto. This opens the way for censorship. The principle that programme makers are allowed to make programmes their way and that the sanction should come afterwards, must be upheld.

On the question of who broadcasts what, let us tackle the national stations first. Personally I am not in favour of a national commercial radio station. The place where expansion is needed is at local level and I would favour the available adspend being concentrated there. This seems a good way to divide responsibilities within the broadcasting sector. So when I speak of national stations, I am speaking of the SABC.

### The new SABC and the language issue

The new-style SABC should only have five or six stations, all national. Not only should it do away with the regional stations altogether, but also with the two exclusively white and nine exclusively African language stations. This takes us straight into the language issue.

In the view of Professor Njabulo Ndebele, there is "nothing wrong per se with having separate language services. It is normally accepted among language scholars that ability to use your first language in the early years makes you a better communicator, with better aptitude for learning other languages. Furthermore, language is very close to identity; it carries so many values and attitudes, good and bad. The problem with the South African situation is that apartheid tainted everything, so even those things that were inherently good, because they were done by the system, became suspicious. The task is to remove the baggage of apartheid and normalise attitudes to language use." (50)

But having noted that view, it is equally important to stress that people and languages are not damaged by being mixed; they can and do maintain their identity. Ndebele also argues that English is very valuable – it is often preferred for a variety of subject discussions, "so we should not fight the tendency for English to dominate in certain spheres. The choice of English is most practical. That is why I'm saying it would be a disaster not to empower those people in a position to be empowered in English. But at the same time, put such resources as are adequate into developing African languages over a period of time –

monitoring curriculum, getting textbooks written, promoting use of language in the media – it is a long process but it ought to be done."

**K**athleen Heugh of the National Language Project (NLP) is also concerned that the already marked and valuable tendency to multi-lingualism in South Africa should be encouraged. She argues: "We are not going to encourage learning of new languages if radio stations are going to retain these linguistic boundaries; people mix languages, they switch from one to the other in urban areas so it would be very artificial not to reflect that...there is a strong argument for including all languages spoken in the area of the broadcaster on the radio station." (51)

The public service broadcaster has to continue to give people easy linguistic access to programmes in their own languages but it should also empower people in other languages, particularly English, which is clearly going to be a lingua franca, alongside Zulu.

My suggestion is that while people continue to have the right to hear radio in their own language, I think it would be a good idea to let them to hear it on more than one station.

If four national channels existed, principally in the Nguni languages, the Sotho languages, English and Afrikaans then the vast majority of South Africans would have a service they could understand.

On each channel, a minimum of say 20 to 30 percent of the output could be in another language/languages. For example, the line-up might be:

- Channel 1: Nguni with English;
- Channel 2: Sotho with Nguni;
- Channel 3: English with Afrikaans;
- Channel 4: Afrikaans with Sotho.

This would establish the principle of multilingual broadcasting and serve listeners who do not want to be forced to listen to a station that is exclusively in their first language. One has only to look at TV2/3/4 to see that this can work. (52)

Whites, Coloureds and Indians who speak no African languages may be alarmed at such a proposal but Africans are not likely to be: the *Critical Mass survey* shows astonishing levels of comprehension in languages other than the mother tongue. Thirty-six percent of adult Africans speak Zulu as a mother tongue; but nearly 60 percent understand it well. Some 24 percent speak mother tongue Xhosa but over 30 percent understand it well. Only 12 percent of adult Africans speak South Sotho as their first language but 32 percent understand it well and so on.

A more useful distinction than European/African is that between "minority" and "majority" languages. Nigel Crawhall, also of the NLP, suggests that in future, schoolchildren will learn all the majority languages, from Afrikaans to Zulu as a matter of course, and the issue will be the protection of minority language rights such as Venda or Tsonga. (53)

He points out that minorities tend to learn the dominant language in their area so they are likely to have access to the national stations under a scheme like this one. But for those who do not, the commercial stations that are likely to spring up should provide services at local level, in local languages, whatever mix of dialects or languages that involves.

If there is still concern that this scheme might lead to some communities not being served, then here is one idea: I suggested above that surplus SABC plant should be sold to trusts which could run commercial and non-profit radio services for their local area. Such stations could qualify for a subsidy if they guaranteed to broadcast part of the time in local minority languages. That would still be much cheaper than the SABC running a full-blown station, and would obviate the need to pressure commercial stations into serving communities that are unattractive to advertisers.

On language use, Jeremy Cronin believes that the major cultural project facing the new South Africa is to unify: "Capitalism has half done it but it has also set people asunder; they wear the same clothes, eat at Wimpy bars, yet the whole project of apartheid has been to balkanise..." He would therefore favour policies that support the unification of society. But he warns against allowing English to dominate in such a way that African languages become "folkloric", confined to minority channels on which there is "worthy" traditional singing and no soap(!) "Xhosa or Zulu must also be heard on the station that is playing the coolest music." (54)

Ton Vosloo, the managing director of Nasionale Pers, says that such calculations will inevitably affect commercial stations too. "If Nasionale is involved (in local radio) our stations will be bilingual. A pattern has been set by our local papers which are in both English and Afrikaans. When you come to black languages...looking countrywide, Zulu is biggest, then Xhosa, then Afrikaans. It would be pointless to run a service in Port Elizabeth in Afrikaans and English – you would have it in Xhosa and English." (55)

### What to broadcast?

On the national stations there would probably be serious talk programming, lots of news and documentary, drama, stories, features, women's programmes, and light entertainment with some music requests, soap operas, quizzes and so on.

There should be a set minimum of locally-produced material. At present, economies of scale in other countries are allowing foreign producers to sell ready-for-broadcast material to South African broadcasters at prices which would scarcely fund a tenth of production costs inside the country; protection for the South African production industry is vital if it is to survive, let alone develop.

There should also be a national station exclusively for music – both for popular music and to guarantee that there is a place for African music and minority interest music. Left to themselves at present, commercial radio stations will play the music that is most popular with the richest sector of population, the whites, because those are the people the advertisers want most to reach (see below).

On these national stations we need to see a real transformation – as Pallo Jordan puts it – with black people's voices on what were previously white language stations and vice versa. (56) It would be a pity if a situation like that in Zimbabwe were to develop, where 10 years after independence there is still effectively a station for whites. (57) There should be genuinely culturally varied content on all stations; one SABC-wide news room, producing a standard news bulletin across the board, translated to suit the channel, but with genuinely impartial and professional journalists in charge.

Many of the old SABC staff will of course be without a job, once the corporation assumes its slimmed-down shape, but at least a proportion of them – those who are sympathetic to the new times – would find work in the new, commercial radio stations supplying them with a reservoir of skills. At least some SABC staff have long wanted to leave the corporation but have been stymied by the almost total lack of other employment in the broadcasting field.

### Funding the new-style SABC

I have argued that the SABC should be much reduced in size and would consequently cost much less to run. Thereafter its funding should be secured. It is quite clear that a licence fee system is inappropriate in a society where the majority of people have no surplus disposable income. The high non-payment rates bear this out. Perhaps instead there should be a universal tax – two cents on something that everyone buys, supplemented by a tax within the broadcasting industry – perhaps deducted from the transmission fees paid to the IBA; alternatively, a levy imposed on electricity bills (perhaps applicable only to bills

above a certain amount, so as to avoid taxing the very poor). (58)

While it is understandable that there should be concern about adding to the population's tax burden, there is a principle at stake here. The audience cannot demand that its public broadcasting service lives up to its expectations unless it pays for that service. The strength of the public's demand for accountability lies in its footing the bill.

As soon as the service becomes a "gift" to the public – from the advertiser, the government or the commercial radio stations – it cannot be compelled to respond to public demands. He who pays the piper calls the tune. No amount of argument against adding to the burden of the poor will change this logic. If the people of South Africa want a truly public broadcaster, then the majority of them at least, ought to pay for it, in their own interest.

If the Corporation's funding can be secured, then it will not have to carry commercials, or perhaps only on one TV channel, and perhaps one radio channel. However, as noted above, the SABC draws three-quarters of its revenue from running commercials so this would represent a sizeable cut in income, even for a corporation much reduced in size. Stan Katz, who argues strongly that the SABC should no longer carry commercials, admits that the SABC will need a lot of income. (59) But he argues that levies and licence fees from commercial broadcasters will help to make up the difference and that the licence fee might be paid by more people if the service improved (assuming that the licence fee system is retained). Katz also points out that at present a significant part of commercial radio's profit is paid to the treasury in tax; he would like to see this money lodged instead with the IBA for subsidising a public service and/or community radio.

The Democratic Party suggests that the public broadcaster should be funded from "contributions, private donations, contracts with government departments, or subscription fees, licences and taxes or other government appropriations in a manner dictated by parliament." (60)

It also suggests that instead of transferring the signal distribution unit to the IBA as I have proposed above, the SABC could become profit-making by leasing its equipment, facilities and transmission towers to new broadcasters. This would allow the corporation to subsidise its programme-making operations.

But it would be wrong to put all other broadcasters at the mercy of the SABC, a point which the DP recognises when it argues that the fees charged would have to be set by an IBA (which it calls a South African Communications Authority). The DP also suggests that broadcasters would not be obliged to use SABC facilities, but notes that this could substantially lower barriers to entry into the broadcast sector.

There are clearly a number of ways to fund the national broadcaster, and this is something that needs practical research on the basis of real figures.

### Opening up the commercial sector

With the SABC thinned down, there should be more room on the FM spectrum and a MW band which is almost empty. I would propose granting lots of licences to local commercial broadcasters – serving towns, cities and rural districts across the country, the only proviso being that they are not all in English and do not all try and do the same thing. Variety should be the objective.

Commercial radio stations take different forms. There is the model of Radio 702 in Johannesburg or Capital Radio in Durban: each independent and generating its own news from its own news room; it may offer a mix of talk and music, or concentrate on either one, serve the A-B income group as does 702, or alternatively the C-D income group in Soweto. A number of entrepreneurs have their sights set on cities like Port Elizabeth or Cape Town for such a service.

But a commercial station could also be just one outlet in a countrywide network – perhaps doing its own programming for

morning and evening drive-time, but the rest of the time taking a feed of electronic wallpaper from Johannesburg (that is the plan of at least one would-be commercial broadcaster – Caxton, presently the publisher of knock-and-drop freesheets). Or it could be dedicated to a minority – a station to serve, say, Portuguese or Greek South Africans, networked to all the towns where they live.

But all commercial stations exist first and foremost to make a profit. Their task is to deliver to the advertiser a predictable and growing audience; in return, the advertiser agrees to put their adverts on that station and pays a fee. In Britain at least, a local commercial station expects to earn between 70 and 80 percent of sales locally and that is unlikely to change until the station has a reliable audience figure with which to convince national advertisers that it is worth their while to advertise.

There is no necessary conflict between making a profit and making good radio, although inadequate radio often results. As long as people go on listening, the station manager will not worry overmuch about the quality. But the moment the audience begins to fall, he or she is in trouble and they must either improve quality to win the listeners back, or cut costs or both.

### Licensing for quality and variety on commercial radio

The major concern here is whether and how to make sure that commercial radio in South Africa is of reasonable quality and range. There are those who argue (Stan Katz among them) that if you leave it to the market, everyone will do a different kind of station because they will want to corner one niche in the market. But anyone who has listened to radio in the USA where you can find 10 stations all sounding identical right next to each other on the dial, knows that the market does not necessarily promote variety.

I think there ought to be conditions attached to the granting of a broadcasting licence so as to guarantee minimum quality and variety. But Katz argues against this: "we want an IBA but we think it should be hands-off once the licence is granted; [we don't want that] English quagmire in which your format has to be laid down in the licence agreement. How can you have a viable commercial operation when your product is dictated by some authority?" (61)

It is only natural for Radio 702 to make this argument; its wholesale shift from music to talk could not have been done, if the station had been bound to a fixed format. But that situation is somewhat specific. Faced with a highly popular rival in Radio 702's former rock and pop service, the SABC used its far superior quality FM stereo signal on Radio 5 to compete. Inevitably Radio 5 won against 702's enforced medium wave signal, triggering 702's transformation to a talk station.

But the contest was unfair since Radio 702 had been prevented by the SABC's monopoly from having an FM channel. I am assuming that in the new situation, there will be a "level playing field". It would obviously be wrong to bind one broadcaster to a particular format, only to license another broadcaster to serve the same market with a built-in quality advantage.

The central point is that in the hypothetical case that the IBA has five licences to distribute in one city, it is in everyone's interest that it gives those licences to five different kinds of broadcaster. That variety will be wiped out if, a year later, four of those stations decide to shift their focus to the same market.

Even with the advent of satellites and increased channel availability, there are only so many radio stations you can get on air in any one place; I think the public has a right to demand that they don't all sound the same. Katz spoils his own argument by admitting that when he visits the US he listens to the public broadcasters because "the rest is electronic wallpaper." (62) In his view this is acceptable, because a commercial radio station's first obligation is to make a profit and if it can be done by producing electronic wallpaper then that is reasonable.

But the question is, why should commercial radio stations be free to use a comparatively scarce resource in the most boring

way possible? The community is justified in insisting that that resource is not frittered away. One does not have to be a socialist to understand that capitalist principles are modifiable and indeed, are rarely allowed to operate unfettered.

Another of the reasons that licence conditions are vital is because, as John Montgomery, the media director of advertising agency Ogilvy Mather, remarks, "it costs more per hour to talk to the C-D income group than to talk to the A-B market which Radio 702 aims for." (64) That is to say, the C-Ds are poorer than the A-Bs and spend less. Therefore the advertiser has to spend more persuading the C-Ds to buy his or her product.

My concern here is that if the IBA makes a condition of a licence that a broadcaster must provide a service for the C-Ds, the station may balk because it will have more trouble attracting advertisers. For the radio station owner, that licence condition may cost him or her money and he/she wants to spend as little as possible.

Nowhere is this clearer than on the language issue; I predict that commercial stations will mostly choose to go for English language audiences. Noel Coburn of Caxton told me: "We're strong in the Witwatersrand and the Vaal where English is the lingua franca. I don't know what we'd do in Natal where outside Durban, English comprehension is low...we don't want to do Zulu stations because in terms of economic power, the white market is still dominant." (64)

If Katz argued that left to itself the market would cover all the available niches then it would be fine, but he admits that the market "flops towards the middle" when left to itself. (65) It is surely unacceptable that all those new commercial radio stations should devote their energy and resources to capturing the rich, white listener while whole cities of poorer communities are seen as second best. Hence my commitment to licence conditions. (66)

**H**owever, this is not necessarily bad news for commercial broadcasters. The arrival of local commercial radio will lead to a greater segmentation of the audience. Montgomery argues that "from an advertising point of view we will be able to segment the market more precisely and that means more quality. Radio Bantu used to be only one station which reached 7 million people a day. Then it was broken up into nine; but [even so] Radio Zulu is still absolutely enormous, the whole of Natal and much of the Transvaal – 3,5m listeners a week." (67) With reregulation, the Radio Zulu market will be broken up into much smaller pieces and therefore advertisers will be able to have their products targeted much more precisely. (68)

### Ownership and cross-ownership

The other key issue – possibly the most important one – about commercial stations is their ownership. As Michael Markovitz has observed, it is common practice around the world for big business to use their newspaper base to move into broadcasting. (69) South Africa is clearly not going to be an exception. National and local newspapers are gearing up to get into radio.

Few will be surprised to learn that the big newspaper corporations Argus, Times Media Ltd, Nasionale Pers and Caxton, have already expressed an interest in acquiring licences to broadcast. The deputy managing director of TML told me in July (1991) that because his company owned all the news outlets in Port Elizabeth, it was entirely natural that they should run a commercial radio station there. But one could argue that such a monopoly would be entirely unnatural. (70)

In many countries, the present situation in which three companies ultimately own nearly all South Africa's newspapers would already be considered iniquitous. Markovitz says "a private sector monopolisation of both the airwaves and the print media would be incompatible with the extension of freedom of expression and we will need anti-media monopoly laws to prevent this from happening." (71)

I should have thought there needs to be an absolute ban on

Argus, Nas Pers or whoever, owning significant stakes in both a broadcast station and a newspaper in the same town or indeed within a certain radius (in the US the limit is within a state). I would also propose that there ought to be an upper limit on the number of radio stations any individual or company can own (also as in the US).<sup>(72)</sup>

It would be important that the IBA regulates to uphold the spirit of this law; it is no use people bending the rules by using front companies. I would also agree with Ray Louw that it isn't just future holdings we need to worry about – there needs to be some redistribution of present share holdings in print and broadcast media to achieve greater diversity in ownership.<sup>(73)</sup>

### Available adspend and limiting the number of stations

In my scheme of things, commercial stations would not have to compete with the SABC for advertising and that would please them because many are worried that the R1 billion adspend now available to the electronic media may not stretch to accommodate all the new stations.<sup>(74)</sup> In fact many are arguing that there must be a ceiling on the number of commercial stations allowed to open up. But I think policy makers in this area should be wary of showing too much sympathy with the commercial sector on this issue.

Radio 702 does not appear to be worried about a major expansion in the number of broadcasters. Stan Katz comments that in the United States, Dallas, a city the same size as Johannesburg, has 28 stations. If not all of them make money then that is the law of the market – they will go to the wall if they cannot survive. He adds: “the more voices there are in the country, the more democracy there is, the better off we would be.”<sup>(75)</sup>

John Montgomery echoes the point; “Say a district has 100 restaurants which is saturation point. You don't say ‘no more restaurants’. A new one might start up and be excellent and attract the business of two restaurants, pushing the worst two in the district out of business.”<sup>(76)</sup>

But a number of people representing powerful press and broadcasting interests would like to see the number of licences severely restricted. They say there is not enough advertising to go around and that if too many stations are allowed to compete then they will all go down. Thus Noel Coburn of Caxton argues that “in Australia they allowed anyone and everyone to broadcast, and everything collapsed...so [we told the Task Group in our submission that] they should make it a free market but maybe limit the players to a low figure, say five.”<sup>(77)</sup>

Roy Paulson of TML suggested that Port Elizabeth, a site they are interested in, could only cope with one station “or it would be dog-eat-dog. Cape Town [could accommodate] two, Durban – maybe two. We are not a big country in the true sense, our population concentrations are fairly small, even in Johannesburg you are looking at 2 to 2,5 million people...this is a very strong media country with very advanced TV and newspapers. On a Thursday when *New Nation* and *Vrye Weekblad* come out (sic), Pretoria has nine newspapers; there must be 150 magazines in South Africa, all going for the same advertising cake.”

Interestingly, these big operators have an ally in one of the SABC's senior editors who gave me his personal view. “Can South Africa afford the kind of media structure they have in America on account of which an FCC consultant forecast 300 stations here? Do we need all these different stations and channels? No we don't. I say we need a new structure but there will have to be a limit because we can't afford it...I think it would be irresponsible. First we need a study of the advertising market, then we can work out how many stations we can afford and then we can set a limit to the number of licences issued.”<sup>(78)</sup>

Such a scheme sounds plausible but I am not convinced, especially once I notice that all the people arguing this are either in the SABC or in one of the big newspaper corporations. The SABC in particular has little right to judge what the market will bear, after years of literally frightening away advertising (with heavily bureaucratic rules) and only just waking up to that fact;

in recent months they've put major efforts into trying to develop a radio advertising market which has been unnaturally weak for decades.<sup>(79)</sup>

It seems there is little doubt that adspend would flow into radio, notwithstanding the present recession, in the right conditions. For Matthew Bull, on the creative side of the advertising agency Hunt Lascaris, which handles the SABC account, television may be where the glamour is, but radio is the ideal small business medium; “big budget people go to TV to advertise. But at R900 to R1 000 for a radio slot, compared to R36 000 for a TV slot, radio has to be good value.”<sup>(80)</sup>

It also has better reach than any other medium. As the SABC's advertising proclaims, it reaches 77 percent of the A income group, 72 percent of the Bs, 65 percent of Cs and 51 percent of the D income group. The proportion of A group listeners reached is almost identical to the number of A group viewers reached by television, so it cannot be argued that TV reaches the rich better than radio. Matthew Bull points to Lion matches and Omo as products that owe their success to radio, and to “Clean Green” cleaner as a success story – a product that has never been advertised anywhere but on radio. Indeed radio is so cost effective that, according to one SABC source, the pop and rock station Radio 5 is able to pay its entire annual salary bill on the strength of one month's earnings.

Bull also notes that it is impossible to say how much more effective radio advertising could be if it were better done. At present black consumers are offered simplistic ads written by white copy writers because there are so few black advertising agencies or writers.

Whether and how quickly the market can expand is another question. *Weekly Mail* journalist Reg Rumney comments that the black advertising market is always promising to take off but never does because poverty is worse than people assume and there is no spiral of aspirations.<sup>(81)</sup>

Supposing it can be assumed that the black market will take off, some years down the road, then the question is whether the small-scale commercial radio station can afford to set up now, in KwaMashu, Alexandra or Khayelitsha, or whether it will have to wait until buying power has developed. Ironically, it may be that only the big media companies like Argus or TML could cope at present with subsidising black commercial radio until the black consumer base grows enough to catch up and make black radio profitable. A small company might not last the course.

The “limited adspend” argument basically assumes that there is direct competition between radio and newspapers for advertising; but Noel Coburn contradicts his own fears by suggesting that there is a lot more adspend on the ground than is presently being tapped.

He explains that when Caxton was setting up its local freesheets operation they consulted similar operations in the US and Britain. “American freesheet publishers told us that an average of 60 to 65 percent of local businesses were regular advertisers in their papers, (i.e. once in the last 3 months). I doubt if we get 25 percent of that market here. Small business is not as advertising-oriented and we haven't developed the market particularly well so there are a hell of a lot of people who don't advertise. But introduce a new medium (like local commercial radio) and you could get an explosion of ads again.”<sup>(82)</sup>

He adds: “We did some calculations, got some overseas advice and they reckoned if you had R2,5m for a small station (with a small staff) and didn't have to produce all your own programmes you'd be profitable. Some of our local freesheets generate quite a lot more than that, so there's a base.”

From the foregoing points, it should be clear that I have good reason to be doubtful about claims that there is too little adspend around to fund a thoroughgoing deregulation in the local market. Instead, what I think the big operators are saying

is: "let's sew up the market just like we've done in the print sector. That way we'll have as few in the field as possible, and we can each take home a substantial profit".

Finally, I would add a quote from British journalist, Ian Hargreaves, writing about the reregulation of the press in Eastern Europe: "The expression of consumer preference with its consequences in price movements, business failures and job losses is still something which causes fear rather than a sense of confidence that here is a working engine of a democratic society." (83) There is, in South Africa, a similar fear on the part of individuals and companies that have long operated virtual monopolies.

Personally I do not think it is helpful to advocate capitalism in its freest forms for Eastern Europe and South Africa; it is rarely acknowledged that in most successful capitalist countries in Europe and elsewhere, state intervention and guidance of the market have been ever-present features. But in the argument about whether it is "safe" to issue licences to many would-be broadcasters as opposed to the "five" that Noel Coburn and others propose, I am with the free marketeers. Monopolist instincts are powerful in South Africa and need to be challenged.

### News in the commercial sector

Finally where commercial radio is concerned, a word about news. Should there be constraints on who can produce it? I would say not. It is very likely that one or more commercial news operations will spring up. Both TML and Radio 702 are interested in doing it, the South African news agency, Sapa, jointly owned by the major newspapers, is perfectly placed to do it. But even if they choose to buy such a service, local stations will want to produce their own news about their own neighbourhoods.

Legal restrictions will already apply – libel law, for example. But I believe that in addition, special legislation to guarantee political balance – along the lines of the Representation of the People Act in Britain which regulates media coverage of political parties and events during election periods – should also be enacted.

### Last but not least, community radio

So now we should have instant variety and competition, alongside a dependable national and commercial-free service. Some would say that is quite enough radio. But I would strongly disagree. In fact the most interesting, most potentially vibrant sector is the last on my list and the most local of all – community radio.

It is true that commercial and public radio have two different agendas and you make for variety and progress if you make them compete with each other. But although making the SABC compete with Radio 702 might encourage the state broadcaster to give more balanced news, or try to broaden its appeal, it won't make the SABC offer the grassroots perspective. Because for all its good qualities, Radio 702 doesn't either. (84) The only broadcasters who start with that intention are community radio broadcasters.

Community radio goes under a number of definitions, so here is mine: a community station is not run for profit, and it is independent. It is usually run on a shoestring, by a management board, elected from a large community meeting. It survives with a tiny number of paid staff depending on the large number of volunteers who come in and work on their programmes and share the work of the station on a rota. The station is always training new people because they are always needed and its output reflects no preset agenda, just the interests of the groups who come to make programmes there.

The usual pattern is for a station to run its own low-powered transmitter, although they are sometimes made available by the state, as in Sweden. The range is usually small, sometimes aimed at only a few streets, as increasingly in US cities.

If this sounds improbable, it is done successfully in lots of

places; Latin American countries, the US (most notably by the famous Pacifica stations), Australia and Sweden to name only a few examples. Almost by definition the sector turns out challenging and interesting programming, though it is inevitably uneven in quality.

As Michael Markovitz observes: "Health and educational programmes can be prioritised by communities which lack adequate health and educational facilities. Local music and culture, often excluded by the public and private broadcast sectors could also be promoted. The emergence of a community broadcasting network is essential for the developmental, educational and cultural needs of a post-apartheid South Africa and will also lead to greater freedom of expression throughout." (85)

Local news services on community radio would also be a great asset in the South African situation, where extremely local political structures are taking decisions that deeply affect their communities and yet are effectively ignored by the mainstream media because they are "informal".

Community radio has a special role to play in a society where there is so much grassroots organisation, where the need for self-empowerment and for (non-violent) debate of local issues is so great, but also where a training ground for journalists and broadcasters is so lacking.

But it is also valuable as a foil to show up commercial radio's inadequacies and as an antidote to public service paternalism. Most important, it gives people access to a rewarding, educational and socially-valuable medium. (86)

Being small-scale and non-commercial, such a sector obviously will need protection. I think a proportion of the locally available spectrum on both MW and FM – say 15 percent – should be reserved for independent, non-profit radio stations. That part of the spectrum should not be allocated to any other kind of broadcaster, even where it is left unused. Community stations should also be guaranteed concessionary fees, where appropriate, by the IBA for transmission and other needs. A surprising range of people favour such protection, from Ton Vosloo (87) to Stan Katz. (88)

One idea might be to create some sort of fund, raised by the IBA through a levy or some other means, to support firstly, the socially useful and creative but (always) more expensive documentary programming on local commercial radio and secondly, to support community radio. It could be managed by some kind of especially created Public Broadcasting Trust, or by the National Association of Broadcasters or the IBA itself.

The community radio sector should be subject to the lightest possible regulatory regime, save on two important points:

- firstly, a community station should be obliged to give access to the full range of feeling in its community within the radius of its broadcasts (that could be as little as 3 to 5 kms or, particularly in rural areas, it could be 30 kms); and
- secondly, it should be responsible for its own financial survival and take its funding from as varied a set of sources as possible.

Thus it should be eligible for start-up costs from a special fund such as the one described above. Thereafter it could get money from local government, advertising, foreign or domestic companies and non-governmental organisations – but always within limits on the amount of funds raised from each of these sources so that control always stays in the community. The only unlimited source of funding should be the audience.

A break-down of income might look something like this:

- grants from local government to a maximum of say 30 percent of a station's annual income so that it cannot be nobbled politically;
- adverts from the local business community earning no more than 40 percent of its annual income from this source (to ensure that it remains independent of advertisers' pressure);
- grants from local or foreign foundations or companies to

- a maximum of 40 percent of its annual income; and
- to raise unlimited funds from its audience by subscription, fund-raising drives and individual donations. (89)

Another development path might be for community stations to network around suitable local commercial stations (on carefully negotiated terms which protect the community station from being swamped), thereby gaining technical and other support. Networking of some kind is bound to be beneficial, allowing for the exchange of programme material, sharing of some costs and services and swapping of experience.

The idea would be to allocate as many licences as possible, with priority going to those who want to broadcast to the smallest areas and they should be free to broadcast what they like, without the constraints of balance which I imagine the IBA would impose on other commercial and public broadcasters. (90)

If, however, it became obvious to the IBA that a station was not representative of the community it served and was in fact defying majority views within that community, it would be the IBA's duty as custodian to remove the licence from those broadcasters and give it to a more representative community body.

The problem is to get that provision right, so that natural, "non-lethal" disputes can take place in the community without external interference and so that the IBA does not get involved in political manipulation. But it seems to me that if such a station, for example, falls into the hands of one political group and others in the community are being excluded then it should be closed down as a community station. There are very few regulations in community broadcasting that are necessary, but that would be one.

However Edric Gorfinkel and Sandile Dikeni of Caset in Cape Town (91) argue that the way to deal with this problem is not to give the IBA power to close down community stations but instead to ensure that careful foundations are laid in a station's constitution and in debate during the process of establishing a station. (92)

### Training needs

Across the board in the radio sector, training is of central importance. At present there are a few radio broadcasting courses in higher education establishments. Anyone else gets on-the-job training, either in one of the small independent stations, or the giant SABC.

If the radio sector is to sustain a reregulation on the scale discussed in this paper, there is going to have to be some very fast training of new blood and considerable reorientation of present staff in the SABC. New managers will be needed who are sympathetic to the new project and have the power to deal with the more recalcitrant elements on the staff who will inevitably try and resist change.

As Stan Kahn formerly of the Urban Foundation puts it: "Anyone [at the SABC] between the ages of 45 and 65 is there because of loyalty to the Piet Meyer vision. Anyone there under 45 is a product of Christian National education." (93)

Training outside existing broadcasters, in colleges and universities, must also be expanded so as to meet the needs of a reregulated and therefore expanded broadcasting environment. A prime objective would be to correct historical imbalances by ensuring that black South Africans are trained to become advertising copy writers, managers, radio station managers, producers, presenters, researchers and all the other personnel that broadcasting demands.

This will take extra funding, thought and planning in educational establishments and perhaps international assistance. Community radio should be seen as a valuable tool in this respect, a point made by the Jabulani broadcasting conference. (94) As noted above, it is a natural "sieve" for identifying those likely to make broadcasting a career, and would benefit as a sector, from taking on a formal training function.

For Stan Katz of Radio 702 this should not mean either tokenism, or rushed and unjustified promotion. In his view, it is

important that black broadcasters get jobs because they are good. Once they are on air, then more potential black broadcasters will come forward. In this context he says, community radio is a good training ground. "People who work in it earn peanuts and they do it out of a love for the medium; those with talent will rise." (95)

## PART 3: THE FUTURE ROLE OF RADIO BROADCASTING IN EDUCATION (96)

South Africa's education system looks "like Baghdad" to quote Noel Coburn of the Newspaper Marketing Bureau in Johannesburg. (97) Not since 1976 – and that is 15 years, a whole school cycle – has any group of children had an unbroken run of secondary schooling. Millions of South Africans are functionally illiterate and innumerate.

Radio has played only a small role in formal education to date, and none at all in the non-formal sector, thanks to the virtual monopoly held by the SABC. Below I will outline what already exists in the way of educational broadcasting, and what, in my view, should be done to maximise its benefits.

I propose to make a distinction between three types of education, formal, non-formal and informal.

Formal education refers to primary, secondary and tertiary education in schools, colleges and universities offering courses of study leading to nationally recognised qualifications.

Non-formal education refers to study outside the formal sector for vocational, professional or alternative qualifications (sometimes recognised as equivalent to formal qualifications), or merely for personal improvement. It takes place in peoples' homes, in night schools, community colleges, private correspondence colleges, and professional institutes among others.

Informal education refers merely to the improvement of general knowledge according to no fixed pattern, usually by contact with the mass media; thus a nature documentary on television falls into the category of informally educational material and broadcasters often accept, or themselves set, minimum amounts of this kind of content on their channels, for the public good.

### Apartheid's educational legacy

Wally Morrow, an educationist from the University of the Western Cape, quoted in the *Weekly Mail* estimated that "there are probably more than five million South Africans between the ages of six and 16 who are not in school at all and in the existing black schools the teacher/student ratios and over-crowding are very high." (98)

There is a serious shortage of teachers for black schools. In Kwazulu alone, it is suggested that 32 000 teachers are needed. The facilities to train more teachers are not available. When white teacher training colleges were given permission to open their doors to other races earlier this year, education and culture minister Piet Clase said that while there were 4 000 empty places in white colleges, 78 000 black applicants were turned away from the black colleges, the vast majority of which are in the homelands. The result is that large numbers of teachers in black schools are struggling to teach without proper qualifications.

And that is not to talk of the problems within the packed but functioning schools. Department of Education and Training figures show that nearly half of all black students who sit Standard 10 exams score 29 percent or less.

The disruption of schooling by protests and the high drop-out rates mean there is no culture of discipline in education, no presumption of an educational cycle through which all should pass. According to the government's own data while about 82 percent of white pupils reach Standard 10, only 20 percent of coloureds and 16 percent of blacks do so. (99)

The expression "the lost generation" has become a common shorthand for denoting the crisis. One estimate, more pessimistic than Morrow, suggests that as many as 7 to 8 million

people between the ages of seven and 16 are not in school; that nearly a quarter of million people every year drop out after primary school or during secondary school; and that a million people either fail to get any certificate at the end of secondary school, or get a senior certificate which does not allow them to take their education any further. <sup>(100)</sup>

Certainly an overhaul of the formal education system is called for. But a major expansion in non-formal education is also needed – that is educational provision in community colleges, remedial and first-time literacy and numeracy classes, adult and vocational training, professional qualifications through private study and so on.

Non-formal education will prove a lifeline for the so-called lost generation – those young adults who have had little schooling and need it in order to become economically active, yet are too old to return to school, even if there were room for them there. In essence, what is being proposed is the spread of educational opportunity to the whole population – both those failed by the system, and those it never served – the extension of a democratic right to all South Africans.

### The limits of broadcast technology

For Alex Quarmyne, Unesco adviser to the Zimbabwe Institute of Communications, “[the] democratisation of education rests principally on the spread and maintenance of its delivery system. The traditional mechanisms of education, mainly schools, are structurally incapable of carrying out this task of democratisation.” In that context, he says, radio is one of Africa’s most wasted resources. <sup>(101)</sup>

He argues that apart from individual learning ability, “nothing need constrain the radio listener from benefitting from an educational program – not age, not sex, not the lack of certificates or transport or clean clothes and all the other barriers that effectively select who may benefit from traditional modes of education.”

**B**ut, it is vital to note, broadcasting should not, for the most part, replace more traditional educational methods.

Radio and television might extend the capacity of educationists to reach learners, but they cannot make teachers, books and active discussion redundant.

Yet some people are evidently panicking about the depth of the education crisis and trying to come up with “quick-fix” solutions, fearing that restoring the old style, teacher-led education to an adequate level would take too long, be too expensive and painstaking to build up.

One broadcast engineer told me he was trying to find financial backing for a scheme to bypass schools in the townships altogether and provide a kind of video-on-wheels service instead; prospective learners would pay a fee less than the cost of locally-available private tuition. This would guarantee a minimum period in front of a video machine in the lorry, with access to a range of tapes on different topics and it would be up to the learner to decide what to “consume”.

On a less extravagant note, Roy Paulson of deputy MD of Times Media Ltd argues that if the country is to develop, “the medium of education has got to be television. Because of the shortage of good teachers, the schools of future will employ low-grade people who can keep discipline with fairly high grade TV instruction films shown in townships by broadcast or through video tapes.” <sup>(102)</sup>

He adds that other African countries have already walked this road and found their teachers unable to meet necessary standards. Thus in Nigeria, he suggests, the English language taught in schools was poor because the teaching was inadequate, despite a mass education programme. According to this argument, if lessons in standard English were broadcast by competent teachers, it would be possible to get around this problem. <sup>(103)</sup>

While it cannot be denied that a great many South African teachers have been deprived of adequate training and that there are too few of them, it is naive to suppose that simply placing children “under guard” while they watch educational material on the screen will result in learning taking place. Vital aspects of the teaching process would thus be eliminated.

Whether in the classroom or in the college, teachers are real where screen characters are not. Learners have a dynamic relationship with their teachers which may even affect how much they learn. Teachers can invite students to ask questions. They can offer an alternative, appropriate explanation where the first was not understood; they mark student’s work and offer feedback to pupils, they spot students’ difficulties even where the student is unaware of them, and so on. None of these things can be done by a video player.

The SABC’s head of educational broadcasting Gerrit Coetzee has no doubts about the role of technology: ‘I’m a teacher. I’ve used video, radio, 35 mm, cassettes, but it all boils down to the teacher. You’ve got to find the teacher that’s trained properly. That’s [true] all over the world. You don’t switch on a cassette and sit back. You’ve got to use it like any other source, like a book. You must intervene and integrate it [into your teaching]. It needs preparation...I don’t think that school radio and television can handle a whole school on its own, but it can be supplementary.’ <sup>(104)</sup>

Indeed there exists already in South Africa, substantial evidence of the major problems that can result with an educational system which is highly dependent on broadcast material, in this case television and video as used in Bophutswana. <sup>(105)</sup>

For Professor John Van Zyl, of the University of the Witwatersrand, it is not the technology that is the issue, but the context. “It is now universally accepted that both radio and television...create an interest-rich environment. But both must be supported by written material to prepare the instructor and assist the student. Before the programme is engaged and after the programme has been seen or heard, reinforcement is needed to assimilate the knowledge gained.” <sup>(106)</sup>

Helene Perold of the South African Council for Higher Education (Sached) is also concerned that teachers and their wider role in the community are being undervalued in the rush to try and solve educational shortfalls. “Our perception is that teachers need to be empowered. They need to be restored as rightful role-models. They need to be supported in regaining their rightful status within communities – which took a major knock post-1976.

“The fact remains that if learning is going to carry on and if community development is to become [a] dynamic process, teachers have a major role to play. Radio and other mechanisms, like computers, should be there to support teachers, not to undermine or replace them. They cannot be replaced in the educational process.” <sup>(107)</sup>

Prudence Smith, a veteran British educationist/broadcaster and trainer takes a more moderate view, however, suggesting that if teachers are prepared to “replace themselves” by co-operating to produce supporting texts and materials, broadcasters can effectively replace teachers in some situations.

But for both women, the implications are that teachers will have to be consulted and involved in the development of education support material for broadcast, and be trained thoroughly in its use. That way, teachers’ needs in working with the technology will be catered for.

Alex Quarmyne argues that radio can be a stand-alone educational tool in some circumstances so long as there is “creative compensation for [the missing] interpersonal and other support inputs.” But for it to be successful, he says, there will have to be “the most intimate collaboration between broadcasters, stretching their craft to the limit and educators testing the validity of their teaching skills.” <sup>(108)</sup>

In short, radio and TV must not be seen as a carpet under which to sweep the state’s failure to meet the admittedly expen-

sive task of providing teachers and facilities. Not only will such a project fail, it will be an expensive waste of resources which the country can ill afford.

### Television or radio?

It appears to be a widely-held assumption in South Africa, to judge from my discussions with many (from the educationist planning educational broadcasts who initially "forgot about radio" to the newspaper manager who wants to "invest" in educational TV) that the educational medium for South Africa will be television or video.

I believe that is an assumption that has to be challenged. Television clearly has a strong and continuing role in educational broadcasting for the future. But it should never be forgotten that while there are less than 4 million television sets in South Africa mostly concentrated in the (comparatively rich) urban centres, 12 million people listen to the radio every day – a third of the population. The real access, for the time being at least, to the mass of potential beneficiaries of broadcast education programmes is through radio.

Khetsi Lehoko, of Cosatu's education department says they have chosen to target radio rather than television in developing their education programme because the majority of the federation's members already have radios and do not have access to the electricity supply on which TV is dependent. <sup>(109)</sup>

Alex Quarmyne argues that the cost-effectiveness of radio in education can be as high as five times that of television, The SABC's Gerrit Coetzee underlines the point: "With a million rand for radio, you can cover several subjects. With a million rand for television, you can only cover one. Some educationists would think that you should go for television but I think you should start by doing radio programmes. We started that 25 years ago. We are continuing it. When we come to school television eventually, we will tie school radio to it because never will anyone be able to supply television to every far corner of Africa and South Africa. But you can always use radio as a supplementary source."

Apart from the cost, some, like Ruth Tomaselli, <sup>(110)</sup> argue that thinking on a small scale is part of the democratisation project. Even if it were possible, spreading high-tech televisions and video recorders around South Africa's local communities would overawe and intimidate rather than extend access.

For a start, it would be difficult to involve students, teachers and the wider community in programme-making if television was the prime medium; with its high production and transmission costs and demand for minimum skills, it does not lend itself to amateur access. Radio however is the perfect access medium – simple to learn, cheap to produce and easy to retransmit both locally and more widely. This, I will argue below, should be considered an important attribute for the future.

As Tomaselli puts it, "let's not think about TV screens in every school, let's think about a radio station in every community and avoid a 'top-down' approach."

### How can radio help?

In my view broadcasters should be preparing to offer:

- support for formal education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels;
- planned and integrated back-up for Adult Basic Education (ABE) or non-formal education – i.e. for coursework in community colleges, and other structures;
- a broadcasting structure that can both take advantage of economies of scale by pooling resources to make educational material for broadcasting but, at the same time, work in a decentralised way. Thus it would produce nationally broadcast material for formal education and at the same time respond to local needs by backing up locally-available non-formal education projects. Although I have made the distinction between formal

and non-formal education for clarity's sake, there is substantial overlap and for the broadcaster, both draw on a similar range of skills and techniques.

### Radio in formal education

The SABC began producing school support materials 27 years ago, in 1964. Today it broadcasts radio programmes intended only for black students according to the Department of Education and Training (DET) syllabus.

School programmes go out every weekday morning, for 45 minutes. From 9.45am to 10am programmes are for young children (pre-school to standard 2) and then from 10 to 10.30 broadcasts are aimed at Standard 3 to 10.

Subjects for the younger group include Afrikaans, English, Environmental Studies, Health Education and a programme called "Storytime" – a story with a moral. There is series called "For Your Information", answering pupils' queries on such topics as "Why does the moon follow us when we ride our car in the night?" or "What does the hippo eat?" These programmes are translated from English, the language in which they are prepared, for broadcast on the African language stations.

For the Std 3 to 10 group, programmes are in the language of instruction, English. Subjects include Afrikaans, English, mathematics, mother tongue instruction, geography, religious education, general science, biology, agricultural science, and a social orientation programme under the rubric "guidance". <sup>(111)</sup>

Once a programme has been recorded, it will stay in use for four years, unless it deals with prescribed work which changes every year. Programme content is planned in co-operation with the DET; Esme Verway, who heads the school programmes unit explains that once DET approval for a programme is granted "then we sit down, in a working committee with people from the department, the SABC and then people from the outside. If, say it's environmental studies, then we use boffins on the environmental side." <sup>(112)</sup>

The striking thing about the SABC's school service is how small its audience is. A report based on AMPS data <sup>(113)</sup> commissioned by the SABC for the period October to December 1989 found that among pupils average listenership was 13,5 percent. <sup>(114)</sup>

There are a range of reasons why such a small number of school students should not be hearing these programmes, most of them already well recognised elsewhere.

There is the political dimension. For students who are politically active, the programmes are seen as coming from the SABC, the government's mouthpiece. Khetsi Lehoko of Cosatu fears that even Cosatu's educational programmes may face resistance from listeners because the plan is for them to be broadcast by the SABC. "Once it comes from the SABC it is seen as state propaganda. There [is already] some resistance to the SABC's [education] programmes, as an extension of the DET's authority."

But there are also practical problems, for example, scheduling: a teacher whose timetable says students should be doing geography at 10am on a Tuesday morning, will be annoyed at having to interrupt the lesson in order to let them hear a radio programme on some aspect of the Afrikaans syllabus. In fact few schools will go to the trouble of building their weekly timetables around the broadcasts so this is a perennial difficulty.

As a result, according to Christa Van Zyl, researcher at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), most senior class teachers do not use the service. On the other hand the teachers of the younger children do use it – items such as storytime slots are attractive and timetabling is less of a problem in primary school. <sup>(115)</sup>

The obvious solution for older children's programmes is to have someone available with a tape recorder to record the programmes every morning so that they can be played back at the appropriate time. But teachers lack the technical means to do this. Many schools have no electricity supply and must in any case use battery operated radios.



According to Dr Van Zyl, the DET has considered making radio cassette recorders available to schools and running a training programme for teachers since HSRC research suggests that this would lead to better use of materials. "Training is necessary. It is not a good idea to take teachers out of the school to train them because the teacher ends up not using the radio when they get back to school: the big difference is when you train them on site". However this proposal has never been implemented by the authorities, largely for reasons of cost.

Another problem is that teachers are not integrated into the process of making the programmes and are therefore unable to incorporate them into their classes. Verway believes that this problem is not of the SABC's making. "That is actually the function of the DET. They are meant to send people out to teach them how to use the school radio. That is the intention, but they don't do it. They're too busy, always complaining of not enough manpower. They also don't have their own research department. If they did have their own, I think they would have done much more."

Where the service is being used at senior students' level, clear distortions of the purpose of school broadcasting are evident, resulting in programmes being less a support than a replacement of the teacher.

For example, there is no school radio for white children (although there are television programmes) and in explaining this, Verway reveals what may be another fatal flaw in the attitude to the radio service for black schools. "I believe there was also a school radio service [for whites] in 1964/65, but those schools didn't use it because the white teachers were better qualified than the black teachers. Most of the black teachers in black education don't even have matric and [yet] they teach the matric [students]. In the white schools, there is no need for a service like that so it was stopped."

In other words, the view of Roy Paulson quoted above, that black teachers need somehow to be upgraded by school radio is shared within the SABC (and presumably the DET). Verway admits this is the case, although, she adds, they do not say so openly.

"I think [the teachers] welcome these programmes. For example, [in one of our programmes on a prescribed work] we asked questions and didn't supply the answers. But then they wrote in and said we musn't do that because they didn't know the answers. So now we see to it that if we do ask questions, we give the answers too."

Although she argues that her service is not intended to substitute the teacher, rather to reinforce and assist them, it is clear from the above that at least some teachers use the service as a way to "replace" themselves. That impression is reinforced by her account of the requests she receives from listeners.

"The only feedback we get [is from] the people who write letters to us...Especially [about] prescribed work. It seems to be they don't have enough books at school so they're very much dependent on our broadcasts. They can buy the scripts from us after broadcast. We advertise them on the air. It's 80 cents a script."

Clearly at least some teachers are out of their depth, and lacking in the most basic resources, and are therefore keen to use the SABC's service. However, this is not as it should be. As Verway's boss Gerrit Coetzee comments; "We're broadcasters with an educational background, we're not educationists." Teachers should not be relying on school programmes to explain the syllabus. The scripts of such programmes should not be treated by students as textbooks. Yet that is where the serious underfunding of black education has led.

For Gerrit Coetzee there are clear limits on what his school service can be expected to achieve. "I only see our role as supplementary. You've got to look to the limitations of three-quarters of an hour per day in seven language services. If you've got seven school radio services running for five hours a day that's a totally different ball game and you'd have to look at the cost. If

you have access to the schools for only seven hours a week you can only pick out the problem areas of certain subjects."

Esme Verway is keen to point out that given the opportunity, she would like to do more to improve their output: "We don't have enough money. We get a subsidy from the DET but it's not enough. What we really want to do is to dramatise each lesson. Make it more interesting, have competitions and quizzes for the kids. At the moment I'm busy with negotiations with the sponsors. If we get a sponsorship, we'll get more programmes and get more time on the radio."

**T**here is more of a success story at tertiary level, where South Africa's correspondence university Unisa has pioneered a radio back-up service.

The project was started by Professor De Munnik in the education department in 1987 with programmes being made to back up specific courses. With thousands of students enrolled in "Education I" alone, it is difficult to have a personal relationship between students and tutors, so extensive use is made of other forms of support.

Students were sent a tutorial letter giving the times of broadcast and programmes were repeated several times, late in evenings and at weekends. Most Unisa students are working people, who find it convenient to tune in outside working hours to listen to their lecturer.

Unisa doctoral student Louis Van Niekerk submitted his thesis earlier this year on radio and distance education which was partly based on research of student response to the Unisa programme. He reports that the take-up rate and satisfaction among students is extremely high. <sup>(116)</sup>

In 1989, the Bureau for Market Research was commissioned to circulate a questionnaire to 6 000 students to poll opinions on the radio programmes that supported their course. There was a 71 percent response rate and a similar proportion of the responses were overwhelmingly in favour. The survey was repeated in 1990 to confirm the result, which it did.

Unisa Professor of Communications Pieter Fourie sees the programme as just an extra teaching method. "We have study guides, tutorial letters, communication with students via assignments...then group discussions, especially in postgraduate studies using telephone conferences; we use audio cassettes, and now we have radio." <sup>(117)</sup>

Van Niekerk cautions that it is important that students take an active part in the process; they are encouraged to record their responses to programmes and to produce their own programme material. But he feels that the same principles could be applied in secondary education and non-formal education, "especially considering that such huge numbers of young adults are so poorly equipped that all our school teaching is effectively remedial teaching."

Some 70 percent of respondents said they listened to education programmes regularly, but they failed to reach the other 30 percent. Van Niekerk feels this is unsurprising. "Perhaps that 30 percent would slip behind in even a normal educational situation. They might not read their textbooks. You can't force people. You could tell students that they cannot complete this assignment without listening to such and such a programme, thereby integrating it into the whole package, but that would defeat the object." In short, the programmes are there to support study, not to add to the student's burden.

### Lessons for school and college radio

While the Unisa Radio project is a success, it is targeted at students who are already highly motivated to study, whatever sacrifices that may entail. Clearly school radio as conceived by the DET and the SABC as having limited impact and has both pedestrian content and dubious underlying assumptions. It also appears somewhat hidebound, with Esme Verway admitting

that she would like to get away from a classroom format and use more interesting methods of gaining students' attention.

**A** number of ideas and comments naturally arise. It is somewhat premature to sketch out a plan for school radio when the whole system is in need of an overhaul, with schools to be transformed and syllabi re-written. Will, for example, subjects such as "guidance" be retained in the future democratised education? Yet assuming that desegregation will take place and that a new unified syllabus will be established, the following general points can be made:

- Radio can be very beneficial for schools and colleges. It should provide strong support for teachers and students in the future in a situation where the maximum efforts to boost a learning culture and make education attractive must be employed. <sup>(118)</sup>
- Radio could be very supportive in an initiative to train teachers by distance education, as proposed by Young et al <sup>(119)</sup>. This would depend on efforts by both the teacher training establishment and the distance education movement to develop courses and programmes in co-operation with broadcasters.
- Schools must be equipped with radios, tape recorders, batteries, and cassettes as well as a full and detailed resumes of what is to be broadcast during a school term. It is a false economy to provide education programmes but not to provide equipment.
- There must always be written texts for both teacher and student to accompany programmes and a support unit within the broadcaster dedicated to handling queries and following up problems.
- Teachers must be consulted in the preparation of supportive radio programmes, and indeed must be involved in making those programmes and must, as part of their training, learn to incorporate and make use of radio programmes in their courses. Those teachers already up and running, must be given on-site training in the use of equipment and use of programmes.
- It should be understood by those providing the programmes and those consuming them that they are supplementary to teacher-led study, not intended to replace other traditional teaching methods.
- Whatever the future syllabus, it is pointless to try and reproduce the classroom format on the radio – the medium is not suited to it and this only duplicates the teacher's teaching methods. Innovative, accessible and illustrative production is vital so that students have a fair chance of understanding what they hear and absorbing it.
- While cost is always a factor, forcing educational programmes to depend on sponsorship is invidious. While it is inevitable in a third world country that there will be some recourse to private sector assistance, there should be enough funding to ensure that an adequate service can be maintained whether sponsorship is forthcoming or not. The latter, by its very nature, tends to fluctuate. It is ridiculous to make the student's learning dependent on the generosity of private companies. Furthermore, an educational broadcasting service which cannot pay its own way is vulnerable to becoming merely a vehicle for advertising the sponsoring company rather than being free to decide how much exposure the sponsor may have.
- The broadcaster must be seen to be free of any hidden political agenda. This, I believe, will only be possible if there is an independent, non-profit making educational broadcaster (quite separate from the Public Broadcasting

Service that the SABC will presumably become – see below).

### Radio's role in distance learning

It is in the non-formal sector that radio can do most to help. Although school programmes and broadcasts supporting university study are potentially enormously valuable, they should be considered supplementary to an already developed teaching system.

By contrast, much study in non-formal education takes place in the learner's home or workplace with only occasional class and teacher support. In this case the electronic media can become an invaluable support.

The arguments in favour of a big expansion in non-formal education take a variety of forms.

For the IEC team, the situation can only be likened to that after a major war. The veterans of the long struggle against apartheid in South Africa are like the veterans of a war. They should now be given a second chance in education to help their country "win the peace". <sup>(120)</sup>

Pointing out that in Britain and the US demobbed soldiers were given major incentives and opportunities to take up further education, Young et al note that in post-war Britain, for example, an emergency teacher training scheme trained 35 000 new school teachers in a shorter time than ever before.

For the government, the cost of providing such education is the central issue. Discussing the option of distance education, the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) discussion document notes that "state expenditure on education currently amounting to approximately 19 percent of the total budget has probably reached near limits. Alternative and possibly cheaper ways of providing education have therefore become crucially important." <sup>(121)</sup>

This is the same thinking that underpins the "quick-fix" views quoted above. Distance education does of course offer room for some economy. Yet as Young et al remark: "We have been struck by the number of people we have met who think that good quality distance education comes cheaper than is possible, or can be delivered by broadcasting all on its own. There is no magic in distance education. It is useful for certain educational purposes, not for all." <sup>(122)</sup>

But more alarming, the ERS report itself suggests that in any case non-formal education is not really the state's job: "There are increasing demands for the in-service training of pupils who drop out of the school system and also a plea for well-organised literacy and numeracy programmes on a national basis. [These] cannot be regarded as part of the formal education programmes and funding of such programmes is therefore not the responsibility of the state." <sup>(123)</sup>

This is a disappointing and mistaken attitude. While it is obvious that opportunities for funding from diverse sources exist where non-formal education is concerned, this does not absolve the state of all responsibility to itself find funds. Young et al make it clear that on the contrary, it is in the national interest that this kind of education should be given official support in order that the quality of work and output in South Africa may rise.

Khetsi Lehoko of Cosatu focuses on economic realities; "There are thousands of youth who are out of school and unemployed. One of the problems is that they are not only unemployed but are also unemployable, in the sense that they don't have the necessary skills to be absorbed into the mainstream economy. The restructuring of education must be tied to our economic growth model."

But education consultant Stan Kahn warns that the formal employment sector is so small, relative to the potential workforce, that there is little point in expecting it to absorb large numbers of people coming onto the job market, even once they have the right certificates. He believes that there are employ-

ment opportunities for no more than 12 percent of school output. For him, therefore, the strongest argument for non-formal education is that it acts as an antidote to unemployment by training people in a trade so that they become self-employed or successful in the private sector. Once again, it would seem to be in the state's best interest to avoid a major expansion in the number of unemployed and any intensification of their discontent.

For Kahn, "You can't have too much non-formal education. Carpenters and plumbers in Soweto have to walk around with albums of photographs of work they have done to show their competence, because they have no certificate. Those guys come back to learn when they need more skills. A man may have carpentry but can't bookkeep. After underquoting a few times, he knows he has to improve his costing and his marketing skills."

Whatever the practical justification for providing non-formal education opportunities may be, Zakes Muloko, principal of the Adult Education Centre, Kwathema, believes that any attempt to streamline study towards "useful goals" is wrong in principle. Citing Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire, he says people should be free to pick and choose what they want to learn and to leave aside what they do not. In his view, potential learners will do well at what interests them and educationists' priority should be to support them according to their own perception of their needs. <sup>(124)</sup>

This seems perfectly reasonable on the surface although it may be a counsel of perfection in conditions where so many skills are needed and yet poorly developed.

### Types of non-formal education and Adult Basic Education

Non-formal education is a catch-all term for several different areas of mainly adult learning among which the most important are:

- study for Adult Basic Education (ABE) grades, i.e. catching up with the formal education system, including literacy and numeracy training;
- vocational training in an artisanal or other trade or skill;
- study of life skills – job application techniques, setting up small businesses, care of the elderly and dependents, health awareness etc.
- study for a professional body's qualifications;
- industrial training courses. <sup>(125)</sup>

There seems no reason why radio cannot eventually assist in all these areas, although conditions do not yet exist for it to do so. In some of them, there is likely to be national consensus and indeed definition of course content – for example in the ABE courses, trade union or professional qualifications. Here, radio programmes can be made available nationwide.

In others, courses will be highly local in character, developed to suit local needs – perhaps in an area of the country where a special craft is practised, or a course designed to help rural dwellers tackle their local soil erosion problems. In such cases, radio programmes will need to be specially designed and produced in the locality.

The question of who is to make those programmes, who is to broadcast them and how, is dealt with below. First, what is involved in these areas?

### Adult Basic Education

The central theme of this area of non-formal education is that all those adults who dropped out of school and are unable to find work because they have no educational certificates should be helped to catch up.

This implies that every level, from literacy training up to teaching, the equivalent of a matric course must be offered to full-time and part-time adult students. A key element must be that those students can gain certificates which are generally

recognised as equivalent to school certificates, hence the demand for a planned sequence of ABE study which will be recognised by employers as having the same validity as formal school experience.

Thus study for ABE certificates will develop among others, literacy and numeracy skills, general geographical and historical knowledge, perhaps basic science and language development.

Adrienne Bird, education officer with the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) argues that "grading is the key to progression. You want your training to...articulate with the general education. We're saying we don't want [a] proliferation of small courses because ultimately it doesn't give you a toe-hold onto the system. You've got to have national, certificated courses that are meaningful." <sup>(126)</sup>

Courses of this kind could be studied full-time or part-time, centred on colleges, or followed by correspondence. Obviously in the latter case, radio could be vitally important. But even for students doing full-time courses at a study centre, radio support would be useful.

Young et al propose that a Foundation for Basic Education (FBE) "to support organisations engaged in literacy, basic education and training up to the level of primary equivalence at Standard 5" should be set up in March 1992. The secondary level adult education needs would, in their scheme, be met by an expanded Turret College running distance education. Both would be helped to get off the ground by a South African Institute of Distance Education (SAIDE) able to advise, among other things, on the use of radio in courses.

At present, there is no radio broadcasting programme in the SABC designed to support adult education. It is presumably for this reason that Young et al propose that initial reliance should be on pre-recorded audio and video cassettes which do not depend on being broadcast. <sup>(127)</sup> They propose that Turret college should have a commissioning editor who works with subject experts and writers to produce explanatory and illustrative materials. While this is a perfectly reasonable starting point, in the longer term in order to reach sufficient numbers of students at reasonable cost the emphasis should be on broadcasting programmes produced by a combination of educationists and broadcasters specialising in educational work.

Educational broadcasters need to become involved at an early stage with the educationists planning courses so that they can participate in that process and integrate their input with others.

This is important partly because educationists need to be made aware of what can and can't be achieved through radio; for example, radio is not very useful in teaching basic literacy and numeracy. The visual aspect of learning to read and write is very important to the learner which makes radio fairly redundant (although radio is very useful before that stage, in mobilising both learners and teachers to join literacy campaigns); the most useful assistance a literacy student can have is from a real live teacher who can respond directly to their efforts to form letters and read them. <sup>(128)</sup>

Once an individual has got the basics though, radio can be helpful in proposing exercises and taking a student through them, releasing the teacher from being constantly present.

On other fronts, if radio is to be an important point of contact for students, then educational broadcasters need to be involved in course planning so that they can agree with course designers about what does and does not lend itself to broadcast format, where to put most emphasis, what aspects of a course to highlight throughout a study period, how to order a course and the length of time it may take to complete and so on. In summary, radio producers will be hamstrung if they are presented with a completed syllabus and told to "illustrate" it.

### Vocational training

South Africa is presently far behind other countries in providing facilities for training people in economically viable artisan work

as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, builders, book-keepers, mechanics and so on.

There is great room for expansion in this area of adult education and training whether according to a nationally defined and agreed programme or not. It is obviously important to meet the right needs and these can change fast. Stan Kahn notes that US community colleges are highly responsive to needs in the market-place, developing courses quickly enough to serve those who wish to develop skills as the need for them becomes apparent.

It is in the nature of this sector that courses will be offered to serve local demand and will often be developed locally. While it may seem easy to develop a course nationally in cabinet-making or book-keeping to be taught in colleges all over the country, it is less reasonable to forecast national demand for a course in, say, textile-printing, or basket-making.

To the extent that radio can be useful in these courses, this suggests that either local tutors are going to need individually to seek out broadcasters and solicit support for their work or that the country's broadcasting infrastructure will need to have the capacity to respond to locally developing non-formal education, on its own initiative. I favour the latter course but I believe this will only happen if there is an independently constituted education broadcasting network whose job it is to respond to grassroots educational initiatives. I discuss this in detail below.

### Professional/institutional courses

This area covers a range from trade union orientation for members to night study for accountancy institute exams. In the latter case, a professional body often requires would-be members to study in their own time to reach a required standard before they are admitted. Self-advancement courses for accountants, teachers, social workers, nurses, civil servants and others can be located within local educational establishments.

Trade unions, like the civil service need to train people to work for them. Cosatu's Khetsi Lehoko suggests "[programmes] dealing with union constitutions, recognition agreements and disciplinary and grievance procedures, the nature of a trade union, its objectives, and why it has adopted certain policies and principles" as topics which all full-time officials must at some stage study.

There is clearly scope for co-operation between professional institutes and broadcasters to develop radio programmes which will amplify and enrich such study; in my view, this is a legitimate area of development for any future educational broadcasting.

### Industrial qualifications

Employers are already discussing with unions the possibility of industrial study modules designed to raise the abilities and understanding of workers with the potential to advance but in need of better grounding in relevant subjects.

Unions welcome in principle the idea of employer-supported study for workers but argue that such training should, like ABE certificates, be nationally recognised and given equivalence to present grades in formal education so that the recipients are able to carry their resulting certificates to other jobs and have them treated as valid by new employers.

Radio is a natural aide to such study, offering the opportunity to set up dramatised workplace scenarios for subsequent discussion, interview individuals working in related industries and bring colour to topics which are dull on the page.

But Adrienne Bird of Numsa says it is premature at the moment to begin working on a specific plan for broadcasting in this area. "A whole range of preparation has to be done first. You have to have infrastructures up and running first. And even before you have those infrastructures, you have to know what it is you're trying to do. We're hoping to negotiate that nationally

with the employers, both on the level of ABE and in the question of training. But once that is in place, and once you've addressed the question of [who is to do the] training, then providing radio support – for both teachers and the learners – seems to me invaluable".

### The educational broadcasters: an independent Educational Broadcasting Corporation

From the foregoing, it should be evident that there is scope for the production of a very large amount of radio programming in the education field, some of it geared to some kind of curriculum for Adult Basic Education, some of it prepared especially for specific, one-off courses.

The question is, who is going to research and put those radio programmes together and who is going to broadcast them?

In my view South African educationists and broadcasters should consider creating an independent Educational Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), independent of the SABC and free of direct government interference, charged with producing a wide range of educational material for both television and radio (although these comments are confined to radio) aimed at both the formal and the non-formal education sectors.

For example, there are some kinds of programming that will have to come from a national centre. First and foremost, radio for primary and secondary schools; it would also be natural to share production of programmes like those made by Radio Unisa, offering facilities and advice.

But there are also areas in the non-formal sector which need a nationally applicable service. It is no use instituting nationally recognised ABE certification and then allowing each individual college to decide what it is going to teach in the ABE curriculum. By the same token, radio materials in support of ABE courses need firstly to be produced by broadcasting and education professionals according to the nationally-agreed plan.

There might be other clients at national level – the health ministry for example, wanting programmes to support annual courses for nurses, community carers, rural clinics and so on. Likewise there are several distance education colleges, for example Damelin and Vista, which provide distance courses for students all over the country and could presumably make use of a nationally available radio service to provide study support.

But equally at local level, it would be up to radio and television producers to go to colleges, institutions, trade unions, farmers' associations, local drama groups and so on, working closely with the recipients and consumers of educational broadcasting, learning their needs, and what contribution they could make to programmes. Thus a group of farmers worried about soil erosion in their area might approach the EBC to come and look at the situation, bring in both local expertise and advice from outside and make a short series of programmes on the way to tackle the existing problem and prevent it from worsening for the benefit of agricultural extension workers.

The EBC should be a publicly-owned state corporation. Certainly it should be protected by its constitution from any political or bureaucratic manipulation by the government of the day. Its funding should be guaranteed in such a way as to ensure there is no threat of blackmail by the withholding of its subvention, perhaps setting its funds up in a statutory trust. It would be free to supplement its funds where that was thought desirable from sponsors and donors and to spend its funds as it saw fit. <sup>(129)</sup> It would have radio and television channels reserved exclusively for its use 24 hours a day. <sup>(130)</sup>

Like the SABC at present, it would have regional centres as well as its national unit and would generate programming dedicated to courses in those localities. It would be staffed by broadcasters trained and specialising in education. This is an aspect vital to the "democratisation" aspect of the EBC's task. It has to be accessible and to involve members of the public in its work at grassroots level. For Alex Quarmyne: "democratisation of edu-

cational radio will require the decentralisation of production and transmission facilities. It will require opportunities for citizens to have closer access to the programme building machinery and to help ensure that programming reflects their concerns and their communities educational needs."

Pieter Fourie predicts that such a body dedicated to "developmental and educational broadcasting could become a huge enterprise, because programmes must be followed up with printed lectures, there must be focus groups discussing programmes [and feeding their views back to the producers]. If you had an EBC, it would have a printing department to produce materials to go with programmes, a photographic unit, field workers responsible for going out to discuss programmes and provide back-up for the consumers."

### Breaking away from the SABC

The EBC should be separate from the SABC so that it is free to pursue its task of producing education programmes without being hindered by having to compete for funds and channels with other types of programme.

Although the SABC would no doubt consider this part of its natural territory, I believe that it should not have responsibility for education, beyond the dictates of its public service commitment to inform, educate and entertain. As Unisa's Professor of Communications Peter Fourie comments "one of our big problems is that the SABC tries to do some of this stuff but the people who produce the programmes are not trained from the developmental and educational point of view, and nor are the researchers."

Furthermore, there is the question of credibility. An education department within the SABC could not help but be seen as subscribing to the ideological perspective of the SABC. It is of course to be hoped that the SABC as an institution will undergo a transformation in line with the political changes taking place. But there is no reason why educational broadcasting should be tied to the SABC's political salvation. In an environment where media manipulation has been almost a reflex response, it seems safer to insulate education.

Apart from the question of competence, education is too important to have to compete with current affairs, or worse, soap operas, for its slice of the SABC's budget. It is too important to be slotted in around other programmes at the times of the day when there are the fewest listeners and therefore little advertiser interest. Education programmes should not have to compete for the listeners' attention with pop music, or sport.

Unsurprisingly, Esme Verway is unhappy about the idea of responsibility for education programming being taken away from the SABC, but she does favour having "our own channel" so that "[we] don't interfere (sic) with entertainment [and] can have [our] own infrastructure, and policy."

### The issue of democracy

There are some who see the idea of a central education broadcaster as sinister and inherently anti-democratic. Subscribers to this view want the bulk of such programme-making left to the community radio sector, or at least to local branches of the SABC and commercial radio stations. The argument goes that the education and broadcasting infrastructures (the SABC and the DET) are too "top-down", and deliberately ignore the real needs of the consumers of both programmes and courses. According to this view all educational broadcasting should be kept out of the national broadcaster's hands.

During my research period I was disturbed by a kind of Luddite approach to professional competence – the way many people seemed to confuse the way the SABC or the DET has operated with what I see as a professional approach to work. To assume that the only way to be a professional broadcaster is to behave like an SABC producer and therefore that professionalism should be done away with is to throw the baby out with the bath water. On the contrary, committed and honest professionals

should have found the dictates of either the education departments or the national broadcaster in past years unacceptable.

I sympathise with the anger and discontent caused by the lack of democracy in both South African broadcasting and education and understand the reasons that some argue for both to be bypassed altogether. However, I believe the latter path would be wrong and lead to confusion in education and educational broadcasting and a "tyranny of structurelessness" in which it is impossible to develop sound practices and generalise them throughout the broadcasting system and to guarantee a high quality service across the board.

As Heather Hills of Sached argued at the Jabulani conference, education remains the state's responsibility and it is a mistake to get confused by the habitual assumption of always being in opposition and end up relieving the state of that responsibility.

That is not to dismiss the contribution of community radio in this field. Ideally, an EBC would see community stations as partners offering a route by which to work closely with learners, and invite their participation in making programmes. Community stations may well embark on educational projects of their own and should be able to draw on the EBC's resources and expertise in the process.

### Building a consensus

Given South African history and the experience that ordinary people have had of well-meaning projects which rarely bother to find out what the supposed beneficiaries really want, it is important that there is a proper process of consultation about the establishment of an EBC.

Khetsi Lehoko of Cosatu agrees with the idea of an independent education broadcaster but adds: "The process of getting to that corporation is as important as the idea of having one. People have to be able to get together to discuss it and develop trust in the idea and build in accountability, kids and adults."

Nokuzola Moilola of Sached <sup>(131)</sup> says all the potential stakeholders in the educational system must have a say. "What is the ground like in a particular area? You have to know that because that determines the needs and aspirations of the community. It also tells you about the sort of things that would tick for that community, the things they want to hear about, or not hear about, the people they want to listen to, or perhaps the people they want to challenge. <sup>(132)</sup>

For Moilola, that is a continuing responsibility which exists every time a programme is made. "It's [about] more than just empowering...the people have to feel that they've done something for themselves. So in a way, you don't determine the nature of the programme and the content but you trigger off certain things that people need to think about."

Her colleague Helene Perold warns that if people do not feel they have been consulted they will not have confidence in the product. "If we're going to have literacy programmes instituted by a state that doesn't go the way people want to go and doesn't have meaning, people won't take it on board."

But, she believes, "if on the other hand [we build an alliance with grassroots consumers] we will start putting in motion something that is very critical for the institutionalisation, and that is, in our view, the building of some kind of social movement in education. That is where the community-based learning network becomes so important. Once people start feeling that they have a stake, once they start feeling that, 'this matters to me, it is accessible, it can give me a certificate, I can advance my self' you start getting the connection, [a sense of] ownership, participation."

Lehoko's suggestion, however, that some kind of forum with a broad membership should take the EBC's decisions seems to me a recipe for censorship. As I argued above, accountability ought to operate retrospectively. Broadcasters should be able to get on with the job of broadcasting without anybody having a veto on their work while they are doing it. Once the programme is broadcast, it should be subject to public scrutiny, not before.

Likewise, the business of running a corporation; let it have a management board and a board of governors to which it is accountable, and let the governors represent the public interest, not merely be obliging friends of the government of the day. Beyond that, people should be free to get on with their work.

But I agree with Adrienne Bird that the structures are important. "You have to consider carefully who sits on that board and how decision-making processes are structured... Our thinking at the moment is that there must be negotiations [on these matters] not attempts to conceal the fact that there are profoundly different interests in society."

### Arguments against an EBC

There are two strong arguments against choosing to establish a separate educational broadcaster.

The first is the cost of building up a public broadcasting facility at public expense, additional to the already oversized SABC (although I have argued above that it should be substantially trimmed back).

The only answer to this seems to be the importance of what is at stake: that education is one of the biggest challenges facing the country and needs funds not subject to sectional contests, that there is a history of political manipulation of education to be overcome, that doing this work properly requires special disciplines and ways of working foreign, in several respects, to more traditional broadcasting concerns and because of the sheer amount of work to be done, this is the most effective way to proceed.

The second area of doubt concerns the possibility that by separating educational broadcasting from the mainstream broadcaster, it will become sidelined and seen as less important or significant than entertainment or current affairs.

This is a more worrying possibility; but as should by now be clear, I consider the issue of education to be such a pressing one that I find it hard to believe that this will happen. It is of course, up to those committed to education to ensure that the sector is not ghettoised and I believe that they will be better served in this task by having an independent EBC than not.

There is of course a difference between the kinds of educational programming we have been discussing here, and informal educational programmes. The introduction of an EBC would not absolve the SABC from broadcasting good quality educational material which is part of its responsibility as a public service broadcaster.

Such programmes should offer insights into how the society works, offer the public better understanding about how institutions such as trade unions or charities tick. Documentaries, nature programmes, social investigation, and other material which forms such an important part of mainstream public service broadcasting should continue to demand the listeners' attention side by side with other programmes.

By contrast the programmes provided on an EBC, while they will sometimes be of general interest, will be there to support existing education initiatives to which listeners will already have committed themselves. Although no radio programme can afford to be boring, to this extent there will be a pre-existing demand for EBC output and therefore the question of being sidelined – at this level at least – scarcely arises.

### Training the educational broadcaster

So far the educational broadcaster is an animal that scarcely exists in South Africa, beyond the staff of the SABC's schools department. Professor Pieter Fourie points out that until recently, only Unisa and Fort Hare were offering black students communications degrees. Now all the universities are open but even so, most communications degrees offer little practical training. That must change if any of the above ideas are to take practical shape.

In terms of attracting students too, new strategies are needed. Until now, the broadcast media have been anonymous entities,

inviting no public involvement.

Wits professor John Van Zyl also emphasises training, firstly of the broadcasters who are to specialise in education, more specifically of the writers and producers who are to produce programmes and then the teachers and students who are to use the end product. <sup>(133)</sup>

Prudence Smith suggests that the right approach would be to seek out teachers and educationists who are willing to make the transition to broadcasting. That professional knowledge is, she feels, a better asset than a history in broadcasting.

There needs to be discussion about who is to do this training, and where.

### What could go wrong?

According to Alex Quarmyne – "there is a multitude of reports of countless seminars with the ever present title 'The role of broadcasting in education' which assert that educational radio has failed – because of budgetary constraints, the lack of listening facilities, or the shortage of trained personnel. Year after year, this same list of problems surfaces and nothing ever seems to be an adequate solution, not the use of low-cost portable production equipment, not the provision by the government of free receivers, not even the increase in the number of communication graduates."

The problem, he says, is that educators and broadcasters have to be more flexible about letting each other into the "mystique" of each other's craft. The educators and broadcasters themselves are the problem. Educators are unwilling to break free of traditional education classroom format in which they have a lot of power and broadcasters will not share their knowledge of their medium. Both need to be committed to facilitating wider learning.

This is a salutary reminder that there is a trail of failures already littering the field of educational broadcasting. And as his "cure" suggests, it is a lot easier to propose a synthesis of educational knowledge and broadcasting know-how than to do it. However, it seems to me that it must be done, if radio is to make any significant contribution to this most vital area of South Africa's development and that, therefore, the sooner a start is made, the better.

## APPENDIX: THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

The Task Group report was handed to the government on August 27 1991. As widely predicted it is, on the surface, a liberal document. But as delegates at the Jabulani conference on broadcasting in The Netherlands feared, it is short on some important detail. For example, while many are pleased to see that the report endorses the proposal for an IBA, others have correctly noted that allowing the composition of the authority to be determined solely by the state president, as the Task Group recommends, is a recipe for political interference and the undermining of any intended independence.

Indeed, taken as a whole, the proposals as they now stand would allow the present government to handpick a small group of powerful and relatively unaccountable individuals, give them more or less complete control of the broadcasting sector for the period they are in office and the power to grant licences to broadcast which would last well into the next century. This is not the opening up of the sector that many are calling for.

Similarly, those who feared that the government would use the Task Group report to restructure broadcasting in its own interest have had their concern buttressed by the exclusion of Radio 702 and Capital Radio from the "grandfather" clause (under which existing broadcasters would be guaranteed a licence under any future dispensation) on the grounds that these stations are not presently licensed in South Africa (but in the "independent" homelands).

It is clear that a large number of views on the future of broadcasting have yet to be expressed, as a result of the way the Task Group was constituted and subsequently carried out its brief. It is important for democracy in South Africa that in the coming months, those views find public expression, alongside the published report.

The Jabulani conference's recommendation that a commission of inquiry should be set up to collate all perspectives, including that of the Task Group, and come up with proposals for reregulation would be one way to do this.

Whatever the eventual policies may be, the immediate preoccupation must be the transitional period during which a new constitution will be agreed and elections held. Many feel there is a need not just for the long-term policies I have focused on in this paper, but some immediate action to end the SABC's monopoly and get some other voices on the air.

For Jeremy Cronin "our people are getting massacred twice over...physically and then ideologically in the media: they are portrayed as blacks who will never be able govern themselves. What sets the pace in that is the TV and radio. The two key things to go for in the transitional period are the constraint of security forces by a judicial body with teeth, and secondly the constraint of the media with a similar structure – a commission, with the power to impose sanctions. We want a code of conduct (on how to tackle the violence and other issues) and a monitoring body."<sup>(134)</sup>

In one possible scenario, an all-party conference or an interim government could firstly, appoint an Interim Broadcasting Commission made up of political parties, extra-parliamentary organisations and independent individuals and secondly, pass a set of regulations:

1. setting out the interim administration's expectations of all the country's broadcasters across the full range of programming;
2. setting the mandatory obligations of broadcasters during the life of the transitional administration regarding political and news broadcasts:
  - a) to guarantee balance in normal coverage
  - b) to observe a special set of requirements during the election period;
3. giving the commission power to license all broadcasters to continue under the new regulations up to, say, six months beyond the election of new democratic government and empowering it to licence a certain number of new broadcasters for the transition period, with all stations required to surrender their licences on the due date and reapply (some kind of protection could be guaranteed for present broadcasters);
4. appointing some foreign broadcasting body to assist the commission as supplementary monitors to ensure that rules are adhered to;
5. giving the Commission some teeth – the power to fine and/or limit the licences it issues.

Then once a new democratically-elected government was in place, bills could be presented to parliament on both the broadcasting sector as a whole, and its regulation, and on the public broadcaster's status, rights and obligations. Once these were passed, the way would be open for the establishment of an Independent Broadcasting Authority and the various other proposals chosen by the commission of inquiry.

SABC Chairman Christo Viljoen confirmed in answer to a question at the Jabulani conference that he would be willing for the SABC to be subject to a monitoring commission in the transitional period charged with ensuring that balance and impartiality was maintained in the broadcasting sector.<sup>(135)</sup>

Meanwhile I think would-be broadcasters should prepare to apply for licences to broadcast in the transitional period. Quite clearly, the present situation should not continue a day longer than necessary – it is very one-sided. There is a need for other voices to get on air now, to give people a chance to hear some-

thing other than the Voice of Auckland Park.

It could be argued that while the Task Group report might be inadequate, it represents a comparatively liberal reform and should be accepted in the interests of opening up the broadcasting sector as quickly as possible, for everyone's benefit.

In my view it would be inappropriate, within months of what one trusts will be a major transfer of power, for a brand new media policy to be set in stone. Good or bad, that policy would have been reached in a highly secretive and undemocratic manner and implemented by an illegitimate power.

A matter as vital as the way the nation talks to itself is worthy of wider and more profound consideration.

## Sources

The following list includes all those with whom I conducted in-depth interviews on issues discussed in the foregoing paper excepting a few individuals who asked to remain anonymous.

The list also includes some of those who in casual or informal conversation discussed relevant matters with me and others whose views I heard and discussed at the "Jabulani Freedom of the Airwaves conference in Holland, August 1991 (delegates denoted by an asterisk).

I hereby thank them all for their generosity – in granting me their time, their knowledge and understanding, and their assistance in tracing documents and new informants. Any errors in the completed work are, of course, entirely mine.

There are others, friends and almost-family not named here but who offered extensive support and friendship both in Britain and during my stay in South Africa. They know who they are and I thank them warmly for all they gave me.

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### Abbreviations

ADJ – Association of Democratic Journalists

ANC – African National Congress

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

Caset – Cassette Education Trust

Com – Campaign for Open Media

Concra – Congress of Natal Campus Radio

Cosatu – Congress of South African Trade Unions

CVET – Community Video Education Trust

DIP – Department of Information and Publicity, ANC

DMTG – Durban Media Trainers Group

DP – Democratic Party

Ecna – Eastern Cape News Agencies

ERS – Education Renewal Strategy

Fawo – Film and Allied Workers Organisation

FM – Frequency Modulation, the same as VHF (Very High Frequency)

HSRC – Human Sciences Research Council

Idaf – International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa

Idasa – Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa

IEC – International Extension College

IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party

MW – Medium wave

Mwasa – Media Workers Association of South Africa

Nactu – National Council of Trade Unions

NBC – Namibia Broadcasting Corporations

NECC – National Education Coordinating Committee

NICC – National Interim Civics Committee

NLP – National Language Project

Novaw – National Organisation of Video and Allied Workers

Numsa – National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa

RBC – Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

Unisa – University of South Africa

SACC – South African Council of Churches

Sached – South African Council for Higher Education

SACP – South African Communist Party

Saspu – South African Students Press Union

SAUJ – South African Union of Journalists

TBC – Transkei Broadcasting Corporation

TML – Times Media Ltd

UCT – University of Cape Town

UWC – University of the Western Cape

ZBC – Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation

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Footnotes

1. This paper is the result of research carried out over three months in South Africa from April to July 1991 as an Harry Oppenheimer research fellow at the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town. I am grateful to CAS for its hospitality and support, and in particular to director Brenda Cooper, and to Kathy Erasmus and Verna Naidoo. This paper has been slightly abridged. The full length version is lodged with CAS.

2. Full reference for Task Group report; this paper will not consider the Task Group findings in any detail

3. The Jabulani Freedom of the Airwaves Conference at Doorn, Netherlands 11-18 August 1991, hosted by the Dutch African European Institute and Omroep voor Radio Freedom.

4. For a full list of those consulted, see Appendix 2

5. Source: Reaching Critical Mass, Market Research Africa 1989

6. There are two statutory instruments for regulating broadcasting in South Africa, The Radio Act of 1952 and the Broadcasting Act of 1976; for a full discussion of their implementation, see Markovitz 1991

7. Tomaselli, Tomaselli and Muller 1989

8. Curle; personal communication 16.5.91

9. quoted in Tomaselli et al: *ibid*; p89

10. Mpahlele; personal communication 28.6.91

11. There is, of course, more overlap listening to the regional stations: Radio Good Hope in the Cape picks up mostly white, but a number of other listeners from the Coloured, African and Indian communities; likewise in Johannesburg Radio Metro has 30,000 white listeners as well as its much larger black audience.

12. IBAR survey 1990; cf IBAR 1984

13. Market Research Africa *ibid*

14. cf Tomaselli et al 1989; Phelan 1987; Frederikse 1986; FAWO 1990;2; IDASA 1990; etc

15. Currie 1991;3

16. It is in fact a public broadcaster's duty to cater for the widest possible range of tastes in its society; this does not mean, however, giving each ethnic group its own radio service.

17. Goodwin 1991

18. SABC annual report *ibid*.

19. Vosloo personal communication 16.7.91

20. Thus, when SATV felt it had to compete more effectively with M-Net's popular soaps shown during "open time" (the daily period during which the privately owned subscription service was accessible to all viewers) it introduced an hour of soaps at peak viewing time. It subsequently had to reverse that decision because so many people complained that their children were being adversely affected by the increasingly amoral content of such programmes. Meeting the children's needs fell within the obligations of public service. But competing with M-Net was a market necessity.

21. Harmse, *ibid*

22. There are a number of privatisation schemes doing the rounds. For example a US diplomat argued to me that the SABC should be split three ways. The profitable services like Radio 5, Radio Zulu, TV1 etc should all be offered for sale, as a package. A second batch of products - unprofitable like Radio Venda and TV2/3/4 would become the public service broadcaster (it is unfortunately typical that the commercial lobby expects the public to foot the bill for minority services, as if it should, by right, appropriate the popular ones: the BBC annually has to fight off suggestions that it should surrender its massively popular Radio 1 and its top-of-the-ratings soaps to the private sector, the very services which underpin public willingness to pay the licence fee!). And thirdly the technical services would be made a separate corporation to service the reregulated broadcasting sector.

This bears more than a passing resemblance to the recently unveiled Democratic Party's policy on the SABC; Peter Soal MP has advocated dividing the Corporation into three parts; firstly, a "commercial broadcaster" - while still state-owned, advertiser-supported. The second would be a "public broadcast unit" the national, non-commercial radio and TV service, supported by fees, contracts with other government agencies, corporate contributions and government grants, which would help build national unity and identity, provide educational service, and cultural development. The third part would be a technical unit.

23. Jordan, personal communication 22.5.91

24. Harmse, in a closed circuit televised address to members of staff, Jan/Feb 1991

25. Coburn, personal communication 15.5.91

26. Katz, personal communication 22.5.91

27. Grierson personal communication 2.5.91

28. Grierson *ibid*

29. Riddell 1990

30. Jordan *ibid*
31. In this paper I have used the word "reregulation" in preference to "deregulation" in recognition of the fact that reform of the electronic media rarely means simply the removal of rules, but rather their substitution with other rules. However the meaning of the two words in the minds of most people is similar – the relaxation of broadcasting regulations and the opening up of the broadcasting spectrum to more broadcasters.
32. cf Raubenheimer 1990;1 p1
33. Heller 1978
34. Jordan *ibid*
35. Jordan *ibid*
36. Pinnock 1991;2
37. Gorelick 1990
38. Markovitz 1990
39. Cronin personal communication 25.6.91
40. A cautionary note from the newly reregulated UK however: "Under the broadcasting act, broadcasters themselves must monitor their own impartiality where in the past the IBA would have done it with them. The ITC [which replaces the IBA] will not longer have that role. Some programme makers feel that this will inhibit them from making controversial programmes because there is no referee with whom one can share the responsibility if there is complaint afterwards. This may not be such a problem for [big, well established licence holders like] Thames or Granada, but for new licence holders without the experience it could be difficult." (Goodwin, P *Courage of conviction*, Broadcast, London)
41. Grierson, *ibid*
42. Williams 1974
43. A Media Advisory Council could presumably elect from among its membership representatives to the press's equivalent of the IBA, and indeed any other media body which would benefit from a "grassroots" input
44. Grierson *ibid*
45. Mbeki *ibid*
46. Democratic Party 1991
47. Grierson *ibid*
48. A senior editor in the SABC suggests that the monitoring of the radio broadcasting sector should lie with a special committee made up of individuals appointed by the industry, all of whom should be either professional experts or representatives of various interest groups. He warns of the dangers of imposing such a body, commenting: "If I were F W de Klerk I would say that the constitution of this new body must also be negotiated."
49. Louw personal communication 15.8.91
50. Ndebele personal communication 24.6.91
51. Heugh personal communication 14.6.91
52. TV 2/3/4 [now CCV] head, Madala Mpahlele strongly believes that where programme quality is high, a multilingual approach will cause few problems. He has been quoted as saying: "There is an older, more conservative, rural group of viewers who want – and perhaps even need – a channel in their vernacular. But there is a younger, more sophisticated group who don't give a damn about the Zulu-ness or Sotho-ness of something. They are interested in quality and better entertainment. In creating a multilingual channel, the trick will be to find a balance between the two." See Rulashe 1991
53. Crawhall personal communication 14.6.91
54. Cronin *ibid*
55. Vosloo *ibid*
56. Jordan *ibid*
57. Only cursory listening to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Authority's Radio 1 is necessary to conclude that it is a station effectively there to serve a white audience. Local sources confirm this; Fiona Lloyd, an independent radio producer in Harare has, during some periods, produced an arts programme regularly for the station. She told me: "[the audience] hated anything African. If you played mbira music you got a torrent of calls demanding to know why you were playing that African stuff on 'our English station'. There's supposed to be minimum amount of African material on Radio 1 but it has never been met; the problem isn't addressed within ZBC. Radio 1 and Radio 3 are the commercial stations. They depend on sponsorship for the morning programmes which are made outside by independent studios. The old 'forces favourite' Sally Donaldson is still popular and produces features which sound like 1975 RBC."
58. The government's broadcasting task group appears to have reached very similar conclusions on this point
59. Katz *ibid*
60. Democratic Party *ibid*
61. Katz *ibid*
62. Katz *ibid*
63. Montgomery, personal communication 23.5.91
64. Coburn *ibid*.
65. The reason for this, as he rightly explains, is that when five stations are all competing in the same market, market research tells them all the same thing – which is the biggest group of listeners likely to be attracted by their service. All five stations then set about trying to capture that group's attention and they tend to try and do it in the same way. Another problem is syndicated radio programming produced in one place and sold to local broadcasters around the country; this often replaces local programming.
66. I should note Stan Katz's view that there is enough buying power in black communities now to sustain radio stations but that poor management in the SABC has made the black language stations seem like inevitable loss makers.
67. Montgomery *ibid*
68. Of course, against this, it is going to cost advertisers more to advertise than in the past. At present Lever, manufacturer of Omo washing powder wants 300 gross ratings points a week. Montgomery says: "we would like to reach black housewives country-wide on a weekly basis, at a minimum frequency of five opportunities to hear [the advertisement]. It will now become twice as expensive to achieve because ads will need to be placed on perhaps 40 stations instead of nine."
69. Markovitz, 1990
70. Paulson, personal communication 26.6.91
71. Markovitz *ibid*
72. On the issue of diverse ownership, it is very important for variety in the future that the "alternative" press, and the democratic movement should not see themselves as inevitably disqualified from participating in the commercial sector.
- I think it worth considering how to bring black and liberal entrepreneurs into broadcasting when reregulation finally comes and to think about establishing consortia of interests to get on the air in the commercial sector. This is something that has to begin now – would-be broadcasters will need to be ready when the starting pistol is eventually fired.
73. Louw 1990
74. In fact Jonathan Proctor, director general of the Boputhatswana Broadcasting company told the Jabulani Freedom of the Airwaves conference in Holland, August 1991 that even as things stand, the SABC is killing off the private broadcasting sector (insofar as one exists) by absorbing most of the available advertising. The SABC's income from advertising (TV and radio) is R775 million.
75. Katz *ibid*
76. Montgomery *ibid*
77. Coburn *ibid*
78. Senior editor, SABC *ibid*
79. Both Madala Mpahlele and Noel Coburn emphasised this point. Coburn says of the SABC's sales department in the 1970s: "their job was to tell you you couldn't have advertising, nastily...[under their] allocation system [you had to] decide what to buy for the whole year, and then you'd only get 20 percent of it. You were not allowed spots of more than 30 seconds and in the over-regulated environment, they checked everything. Anything risqué or humorous went out. Radio was the victim – copywriters didn't like writing for it because you couldn't be creative and had to do it in 30 seconds. There was no theatre of the mind...with the result that we never developed a radio generation."
- Madala Mpahlele, formerly in advertising, recalls: "they adopted a policy of language purity. They hired a bunch of people who were supposed to be experts in the [relevant African] language as though language was static – these guys would axe words from the commercials we made or reject the ad as not being in line with their regulations..."
- An SABC editor accounts for the lack of interest in radio advertising differently, blaming the ad agencies for preferring television: "The reason why the SABC commissioned the *Critical Mass Survey*, was to jack up the advertising agencies...We wanted to prove to them that there was a substantial market that they were ignoring. The survey showed that rural black people buy as much sophisticated electronic apparatus like stoves, TV sets, fridges, hi-fi as people in the towns. But rural people are divided into all these different ethnic groups. If we had a situation with only one language group in rural areas it would be easier for the ad agency. But it has to make eight ads. This seems to be a factor."
- The SABC is now trying to catch up, running radio workshops and offering one or two minute slots. But according to Coburn, radio advertising has atrophied as a result of this history; 95 percent of slots sold are still 30 seconds and of such low quality that in four out of the last six years there have been no Loerie advertising award presented for radio because the international judges say the requisite standard is not being achieved.

80. Bull personal communication 27.6.91
81. Rumney personal communication 13.5.91
82. Coburn *ibid*
83. Hargreaves 1991
84. Radio 702's regular phone-in programmes do not count in this regard. They are valuable because they give a subject an airing but they are inevitably superficial and by definition refereed by the station, whose attitude is always as prominent as the callers' comments.
85. Markovitz 1990 *ibid*
86. For a more detailed exposition of the arguments, see Hein Marais' polemical but illuminating paper on the case for community radio in South Africa (Idasa Occasional Paper no 35).
87. Vosloo *ibid*
88. Katz *ibid*
89. The figures proposed here are entirely notional, designed to illustrate the principle of spreading a station's funding base.
90. The reason for this exemption is simply that the station exists to express the views of those in the community. That, rather than an obligation to represent views in the community is the guideline by which the output of the station should be judged.
91. Caset is already coordinating well-advanced plans to get a community station on the air at the earliest opportunity. They have begun preparations to train dozens of people from local organisations and to work out policies on advertising and other issues. They anticipate a networked community radio system in which campus radio stations form the nucleus of a national network, but they acknowledge that much will depend on how much local communities are willing to do on their own initiative.
92. Gorfinkel/Dikeni personal communication 9.4.91
93. Kahn personal communication 2.7.91
94. The Jabulani conference delegates agreed on an eight-point list of recommendations on training for the broadcasting sector.
95. Katz *ibid*
96. I am grateful to the National Education Project Investigation for granting me financial assistance in order that I could spend extra time on this aspect of the research.
97. Coburn personal communication 1991
98. Maurice 1991
99. ERS discussion document June 1991
100. Young et al 1991
101. Quarmyne 1985
102. Paulson personal communication 1991
103. His interpretation of the situation in Nigeria is of course open to dispute. Many Nigerians would argue that they have merely customised the English language for Nigerian usage and that while standard English speakers find the Nigerian variant inadequate, Nigerians know what they mean when they are using it.
104. Coetzee personal communication 28.6.91
105. In an enlightening study, Bill Cowan of the Energy for Development Research Centre, UCT, has taken a close look at the Edutel project in Bophutatswana and found a range of problems including inadequate planning, purchase of inappropriate material from abroad for reasons unrelated to quality, unpreparedness of teachers and lack of consultation, equipment difficulties and so on, all of which led to extremely low use of the video cassettes provided for the classroom. As a result of the research, he has produced a document entitled "Key Questions for Policy makers" intended, most valuably, to offer practical guidelines arising from his research.
106. Van Zyl personal communication 1991
107. Perold personal communication 26.6.91
108. Quarmyne, *op cit*
109. Lehoko personal communication 4.7.91
110. Tomaselli, Jabulani conference contribution, Doorn, Holland 1991
111. According to the SABC this falls into three parts, firstly social guidance "like what is a family, how does a family function, what is the role of every person in the family". Secondly vocational guidance and thirdly community guidance, which appears to cover topics like environmental cleanliness.
112. Verway personal communication 28.6.91
113. Duby 1991
114. Even more surprisingly, the schools programmes share of the adult audience was 17,6 percent. Both in terms of the share of potential

- listenership and in terms of the actual number of listeners more adults listen to schools programmes than children. But this seems to be a case of adult listeners already listening to the radio when the school programmes come on, and either not bothering to turn off or hoping to pick up useable knowledge by listening.
115. Van Zyl, C personal communication 27.6.91
116. Van Niekerk personal communication 8.7.91
117. Fourie personal communication 16.5.91
118. The writers of the ERS are keen to see first excursions into this territory by the SABC continued. It proposes close evaluation of a pilot programme run in 1990 through television to help pupils prepare for senior certificate "with a view to expanding this project into a permanent programme in which the education departments and the SABC, together with the private sector assume responsibility for programme materials, and the SABC for the necessary television and radio transmission. Once this programme has been firmly established for the senior secondary school phase of education an extension to the junior secondary phase would be considered with a view to eventually establishing a "school of the air" for secondary school education" (ERS p34).
119. Young et al p16
120. Young et al p6-7
121. ERS 1991 p28
122. Young et al p12
123. ERS 1991 p51
124. Muloko personal communication 1.8.91
125. cf Khanya College's plan to transform into a community college offering a range of study fields, including firstly, community studies – courses for trade unions and civics, office management, computer software, bookkeeping, industrial health and safety, general education e.g. labour history; secondly, skills training – such as professional grades for laboratory technicians, training in pre-school care, geriatric care, for nurse's aides, counselling, electronics, sports administration, environmental management; thirdly the pre-existing university bridging programme and fourthly, teacher training – through accredited courses).
126. Bird personal communication 2.8.91
127. Young et al p43
128. cf Young et al p21-2
129. I think such funds would be readily forthcoming. TML's Roy Paulson among others told me his company would "happily get involved even if we didn't make money, as public service" providing they were convinced that they were not funding a political mouth-piece.
130. To the argument that there may be too few channels available for this to be possible, Fawo's Willie Currie points out that with the greater use of satellite due by the mid-90s, there will be many more channels to distribute. I have earlier discussed the under-usage of the radio channels presently available.
131. Moilola personal communication 26.6.91
132. In this context it would be valuable to look at the radio forums programme run since early 1990 by Thembeke Nkamba based at the Centre for Continuing Education, University of the Witwatersrand; working around a series of programmes specially run by the SABC, groups were established after discussions with the ANC, PAC, Azapo, the Zamani Soweto Sisters and the SACC among others. Despite early problems (respondents didn't feel free to speak openly, the SABC was seen as propaganda tool, there were equipment shortages, programmes were not broadcast on schedule) respondents slowly became more outspoken and critical. According to Nkamba, they complained that the programmes were too short at 15 minutes and too piecemeal. She says they wanted the programmes rebroadcast at more convenient times and called for the programmes, which consider health and other social issues, to use real people from the community instead of dramatising incidents. They asked for their discussions to be recorded and broadcast on the radio and eventually asked to make programmes themselves.
133. Van Zyl 1991
134. Cronin *ibid*
135. Viljoen question and answer session, Jabulani conference, Doorn, Holland, 16.8.91

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Presented by Andrew Boraine on behalf of the United Democratic Front.
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6. **Democracy and the Media**  
Joe Latakgoma, editor, The Sowetan.  
**Democracy and Education**  
M Ralawe, chairman, Neusa (Eastern Cape region).  
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