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critical
perspectives
on
Southern
Africa

*Special
Issue*

18/19

Research and Social Transformation



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EDITORIAL PREFACE

This special issue of TRANSFORMATION is composed of the edited papers and discussion from our recent symposium (January 1992) on the *Role of Research in Transforming South Africa*.

Our rationale in holding this symposium was that research in the social sciences in South Africa, both inside and outside the universities, has had a major effect on both the maintenance of apartheid and attempts to dismantle it.

On the one hand, a variety of research activities and projects have had an important effect in empowering organisations to struggle against the apartheid system. The influence (and receptiveness of the different mass organisations) has not however been uniform. Some have resisted analyses from outside their own ranks which differed from their own policies, programs and agendas. Others have gained advantage enormously from independent research initiatives - whether these were abstract analyses, policy programs or service projects. However, in general, the relationship between research bodies and activities, and the mass organisations has not been an easy one. It has thrown up a number of contradictions - conflicts over academic freedom and accountability/relevance; between organisational control and independent analytic inquiry; between the immediate needs of organisations and the demands for more long-term research. As the emphasis shifts from the focus on the politics of opposition to that dominated by transformation, reconstruction, and policy research, there is a grave need to reflect on these issues.

On the other hand, research has played an important role in maintaining apartheid, particularly in so far as it has been institutionalised in certain state sponsored research centres. In the last decade research institutions also played a critical role in facilitating the process of reform. Agencies such as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Human Sciences Research Council, the Development Bank and the Urban and Rural Foundations have not been analysed in terms of the relationship between research and social change. The association between such research activities and state interventions has been fairly complicated. It is of major importance to unravel the complexity of this relationship as we enter into a new political phase, particularly where those brought up in the culture of opposition may find themselves in positions of power.

The articles comprising this special issue are not identical to the papers presented at the symposium. Most were much longer and some included a number of points that were not necessarily germane to the issue at hand. We have radically edited them to ensure that the main thrust of the various inputs is reflected in the published proceedings. Some of the inputs included here are based solely on the transcript of

the presentations, and as such are shorter or have a more colloquial ring to them. We have also edited the discussion and included some of the points we considered pertinent in a few pages on each session in this special issue in order to bring out the flavour of the debate. As always, some discussion, no matter how interesting, was not germane to the topic under examination and hence was also not reflected in our published discussion notes.

The symposium was a pathbreaking event in post-1990 South Africa as the first real attempt by participants to discuss the future of research in the country. Papers reflected a range of interests: universities and establishment institutions; the interests of political and labour organisations; committed service work projects with a research component. Much of the discussion became focussed on institutions and their future. There was a tension between thinking largely in terms of annexing "space" for progressive opportunities and hoping to transform or abolish those institutions themselves. Even the most radical alternatives were tempered by the enormity of the practical tasks of reconstruction ahead and the need to get workable answers to huge but mundane questions. This in turn put in question what was meant by transformation, which differed from one speaker to another. The notion of a paradigmatic shift from research for opposition to research for transformation evoked discomfort for many as to the relation of research to authority. Suspicions of a future bureaucracy and concern for the continued future of the critical dimension of research came clearly to the fore. Perhaps there is a tendency for people to use the same terms to mean different things. If the question of what is transformation was left unclear, so indeed was what we mean by research.

In the final analysis the symposium only opened discussion on this important topic. Hopefully the range of views presented here will be a further stimulus in encouraging and sharpening debate. The issues at hand must be the most important ones in terms of the relationship of intellectuals to a society in transition.

In conclusion, we would like to thank all those who made the symposium possible. In particular we would single out Marc van Ameringen and the IDRC for the financial assistance, Linda Price for administratively coordinating the symposium, our fellow editors Vishnu Padayachee and Gerry Maré without whom the symposium would not have been possible, and lastly, but not least, all the participants who attended for making the discussion such a vital and lively part of the symposium.

Bill Freund
Mike Morris
(*Special Issue Editors*)

INTRODUCTION TO THE SYMPOSIUM

Mike Morris

On behalf of the editors of *Transformation* I would like to welcome all participants gathered here. Local academics, researchers, political activists, trade unionists, principals and vice principals and anyone else who does not fit into the previous designations. I would also like to especially welcome the guests from the rest of Africa that we have been able to bring to this symposium. We are very grateful to the Canadian IDRC for making the symposium financially possible, and in particular Marc van Ameringen and Pierre Sane (who is unfortunately unable to be here with us).

We have, as foreign guests, amongst us Abdou Bathily, from Dakar, the President of the African Political Science Association; Togba nah Tipoteh the Director of the research institute USUUKU in Monrovia; Akilagba Sawyerr, the vice-chancellor of the University of Ghana; Mahmood Mamdani from the Institute for Basic Research in Kampala; Ernest Wamba dia Wamba from Dar es Salaam University; Rene Loewenson from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions; and, from the IDRC, Marc van Ameringen from Ottawa and Firoz Manji from Nairobi. We are sorry that the other guests who were invited and prepared to come had to pull out at the last minute, but I am sure we will have many more opportunities for meeting with them.

It is of great significance, and I think the first time, that we have such a spread of eminent academics from the rest of the African continent concentrated in one symposium in South Africa. We are greatly honoured by the fact that you all took so much trouble to come. On behalf of the editors of the journal *Transformation*, the Universities of Natal and Durban-Westville and I am sure everyone else present here tonight, we are really extremely pleased to see you all and hope that this is merely the start of many more fruitful interchanges between South African intellectuals and those from the rest of our continent. We hope that you will find our discussions fruitful and that we are all able to mutually learn much from this interchange of ideas and experience.

I think it is appropriate in opening this symposium that I lay before you some of its genesis - both organisationally and conceptually. I was sitting in Ottawa about a year ago, shivering in the snow and longing for the sticky, stultifying heat of Durban, speaking with Marc van Ameringen from the IDRC when he raised a very important issue. This was that those of us who are committed to socially relevant research need to stop and reflect on what we are doing when we engage in research to effect social transformation. One thing led to another, and we soon began reflecting on the potential lessons to be drawn from the long period of struggle against apartheid. This made sense to both of us. After all the business of the IDRC is to fund research which has practical consequences, yet it has never really funded the process of reflecting on what it is doing. It struck a chord in me since, like many other researchers in the country, I have been continuously plagued by an inability to find a balance between

studying this country in abstraction and actively striving to change it. And so the idea of the symposium was born. And what better vehicle to host it than the journal *Transformation* which was founded as an attempt to intervene in the process of transforming South Africa through creating an intellectually rigorous, but politically informed and non-sectarian, debating forum for ideas, concepts and organisational lessons?

In setting up this symposium we very carefully chose the name. We did not want to have a large open academic conference, nor a large congress of social and political activists. We sought rather to try and bring together researchers from a variety of different institutions and organisations into a smaller forum where the issues that bind and divide them could be more easily debated and reflected on. That is why we have tried to keep the inputs to a manageable number and limited each speaker to 15 minutes. As regards the number of participants our original intention was a forum of around 60 people maximum. That soon proved to be a theoretically desirable but practically unattainable boundary. It grieves us to have had to say no to many who wished to attend, but if we had created an open conference we would not be able to achieve the goal we set out to achieve. Luckily the size of the room, the amount of money available and the optimal number that the caterers could deal with, created the necessary discipline to keep the number to a maximum of 100 and so still maintain its integrity as a symposium.

The word symposium has two classical meanings - 'philosophical, friendly discussion on one subject from various points of view', OR, alternatively, 'an ancient Greek drinking party'! Presumably the more one drinks the more friendly one becomes; whether this leads to philosophy or not remains to be seen.

Without pre-empting the discussion that lies before us, we thought it would be useful in opening this gathering to try and lay before you all a few ideas that sum up our intellectual reasons for hosting this symposium. We originally intended to circulate a few pages beforehand as a basis for the symposium. However due to a number of critical problems, which unfortunately can be summed up in my inability to both organise the symposium and write the introductory piece, we decided instead to rather start the proceedings with a short statement of the problem.

In reflecting on the role of research in social transformation in South Africa we were struck by three disjunctures that are likely to inform our deliberations and reconceptualisation of the issues at stake:

- the disjuncture created by the resistance period which fostered research and social action but which heavily privileged activism and thereby redirected many intellectuals away from research;
- the disjuncture between resistance and establishment researchers and institutions which so easily and clearly demarcated the lines of acceptability for many, but which is no longer viable in the current context of democratization and transformation of apartheid South Africa;
- the disjuncture between South Africa and the rest of the continent which the political process of isolating apartheid forced on all of us and which now requires us all to rapidly distill and disseminate the necessary lessons from our different experiences.

In our opinion the central problem that we are faced with can be reflected in a single question? How, in a society which is riven with the requirement to resist authoritarianism and gross inequality and transform it to one characterised by greater equality and democracy, does one do research that is rigorous and maintains scientific integrity but which also allows one to be ethically and socially relevant? How does one use these two imperatives in a creative manner rather than being paralysed by their potential polarisation? If one bends the stick too far in either direction this leads not only to the danger of being either epistemologically or morally illegitimate, but also very practically renders one useless to society and to the scientific community. In short bad research is useless to everyone, except perhaps the most cynical political maneuverer.

The problem is that the constituencies one is dealing with, university researchers on the one hand and organisational activists on the other, in the past at least, have tended not to understand the need to maintain both sides of the polarity in ones hand at the same time. Both constituencies have very legitimate perspectives - the problem tends to lie in the subordination of the needs of the other constituency.

Activists tend to want to subordinate research to their immediate and short term organisational needs, tend to resist conclusions and debates which run contrary to their immediate political agendas, and tend to adopt essentially a moral vision alienated by the objective necessities of rational enquiry.

Researchers, particularly university based ones, on the other hand tend to subordinate moral and social needs to analytical symmetry (the elegant simplicity of econometric model building), refuse to acknowledge the validity of a logic of social action equivalent to the logic of analytic enquiry, tend to feel individually threatened by social demands to concentrate their research agendas in this direction rather than that, and finally tend to be driven by a highly individualised moral vision of the self importance of their own intellectual work.

No matter how much each side of the polarity is irritated by the demands of the other, it helps not one iota to adopt a dismissive approach to the other's driving concerns. One cannot do good socially useful research if one is a political hack, and one cannot transform society usefully if one is not informed by sound analyses and policies.

How one achieves this balance? Well that is what we hope will emerge either from our discussions or from our drinking over the next few days!

THE RESEARCH DILEMMA:

To Lead or to Follow

Alec Erwin

It seems to me that researchers and intellectuals in general continually oscillate between two powerful imperatives - one when research is able to lead events or one when it follows events in the sense of responding to research requests. Of course, in the academic world this crisp definition of a problem could be the subject of numerous seminars - both definitional and substantive. However, in my experience there is little doubt that this tension permeates any discussion on how intellectuals conduct themselves in relation to the wider society.

In a situation of transition such as that we now face, this tension will intensify. In South Africa the racial composition of the intellectual and research community remains too white, as does its gender composition remain too male. These two factors plus the highly politicised society we are in, will push these communities toward division, doubt and an uncomfortable self-consciousness in action. If this assessment is correct then it presents certain dangers and challenges.

I would argue that it is in fact impossible for the intellectual and research community to be leaders of society in their own right. They can only play a leading role in favourable political and economic circumstances. It is very much easier to become a follower of political and economic events and to wait to be asked to do research. But to be a mere servant of political and economic organisations is to devalue the notion of intellect and to destroy the efficacy of research - lessons clearly apparent from apartheid South Africa, fascist capitalist states and authoritarian socialist states.

This poses a fine balance. On the one hand research can flourish in a favourable political (i.e. open and democratic society) and economic (i.e. resources are available) situation. This suggests that researchers and intellectuals should be active participants in striving for such a favourable situation. However, on the other hand, does this not mean that the researchers could become the instruments of particular political and economic interests in the process of transition? There is little doubt that such a dilemma exists acutely for many here tonight. Yet if the intellectual and research community can achieve a fine balance between these poles then the benefits to all aspects of society are very, very considerable, if often immeasurable.

South Africa in this transition phase needs every benefit it can get, so that a positive leading role for the research and intellectual community should be a priority goal. These communities will have to be active in achieving this goal; they cannot be passive by-standers. This of course immediately raises the dilemma mentioned above.

I know that there is a view - quite a common one - that the role of the intellectual - academic or researcher - is to be objective and stand above the currents of politics

and economics. The universities are seen as the citadels of such objectivity. It seems to me that this is a naive viewpoint leading to inaction. This is a dangerous inaction because the very positive content of objectivity that should reside in universities can be destroyed by political and economic forces that are far from inactive.

We need to seek more complex answers. Here I wish to outline very briefly some of the factors that I believe we must confront in South Africa at present. I want to concentrate now on research rather than broader intellectual activity. In the politically charged environment we live in, is it possible to be a good researcher and politically committed? I would argue that the answer is 'yes', provided that the researcher is cognisant of the difficulties that have to be addressed.

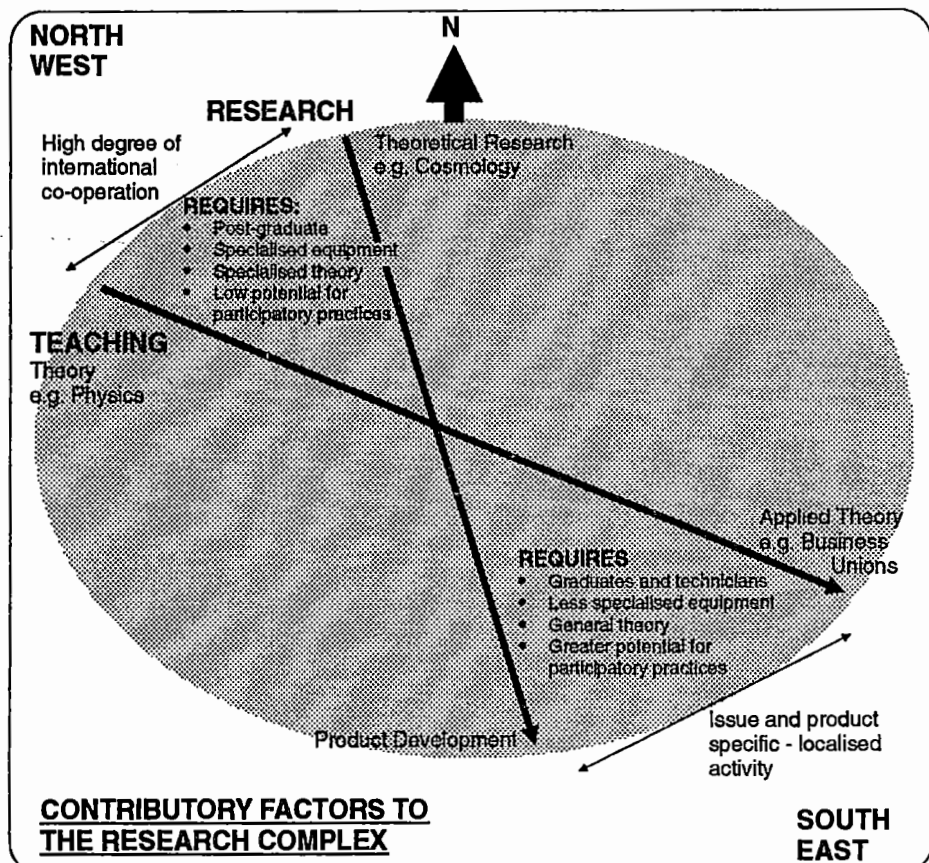
It is more difficult to separate the research agenda from political commitment or inclination than it is to separate the research method from political commitment. A completely free hand in a research agenda is a very rare luxury because at the very least the necessary resources for research are released by political - in the broad sense - decisions. In general an institution wants research done because it wishes to make some use of the results.

If the research method is going to be good and the results, therefore, of some worth, a particular relationship has to be established. I would refer to this as an 'arms length relationship'. This implies a distinction between the process of formulating policy and that of doing research. I would argue that this relationship is healthy and arms length if the researcher not only attempts to answer questions within the problematic of the policy maker but is also able to question the problematic in order to reach the best results. It is this ability to interrogate plus the usual criteria of good research that makes it essential to separate political and policy commitments from research method.

Forgive me for setting out what are basic points. However, if these are basic points then it is not only the general environment that allows for good research but also the moral courage of researchers in following these practices. We have made many mistakes in the past and we must not make them in the future. Being politically committed and a good researcher requires a conscious process - a process that must be continually renewed. We need to fight for such an ethos both in the research community and in the institutions that will use research for policy or product development purposes.

The relationship between research and user institutions is a complex one. It is necessary to see this relationship in a wider context of a research complex that requires asking questions about breadth, length and depth. The breadth refers to the range of subjects that are being taught - from advanced theory to practical occupational skills. The length refers to the nature of the research - is it 'blue sky' basic research at one end or in-house company/union research at the other end of the spectrum? The depth refers to the available resources, both intellectual and physical. The former relates to the quality and emphasis of the basic education system and the latter to the institutional arrangements that will facilitate and resource the research.

These dimensions intersect in a way which overall constitutes the research complex in a particular country. The parts are largely interdependent but are not all of equal



weight in any particular society. I have tried to represent this in a crude diagrammatic form.

You will detect in this diagram an emphasis - possibly an overemphasis - on science, technology and vocational skills. This is not to eschew or ignore research in the humanities. Rather I have two intentions. Firstly, to locate such research in a wider context and, secondly, to correct what I feel to be a preoccupation with research in the humanities.

The diagram tries to put together somewhat simplistically the contributing factors to the research complex. From this it can be seen that in terms of human and physical resources it is easier for a country in South Africa's position to concentrate in the South East Quadrant. In fact very few countries can develop the full complex outlined. On the outer edges of the North West Quadrant, international co-operation is always essential. It could be argued from this therefore that a country should concentrate on the areas where its resources allow it to be effective. Implicit in some of the arguments in South Africa about the need to be relevant is a view that the South East Quadrant, being more immediately related to products and social needs,

is where we should concentrate. Without denying the importance of our immediate needs, I want to argue that this is a dangerous path to follow. Whilst it is true that we do not have the resources to undertake all areas of research, that does not mean that we should abandon the need to seek a balance. There are three main factors that will be crucial in defining this balance.

Firstly, as we move to the outer edges of this South East Quadrant we move towards products (both physical and policy). This has two effects. It heightens the tension discussed earlier and pulls the research closer to being servile to particular political and economic institutions. Contract type research dominates and inevitably he who pays the piper calls the tune. This issue based research has a corrosive effect on the quality of research in general.

The second effect is to reduce the capacity for product innovation because the technology base that underlies these products lies with the core of the complex occupied by research of a less applied kind. In the South African context this will make us even more dependent on foreign technology and product development. This is not an argument against market influenced research. It is an argument against maintaining *only* market driven research.

This leads to the second key area and that is the significant change in the world systems of production and consumption. These processes in the advanced industrial countries are now heavily based on advanced technology and rapid changes in production processes. This is leading to changes in work organisation requiring a more skilled workforce that has a capacity for continual and rapid retraining. This capacity requires not just job specific skills but an understanding of the technology behind the jobs and equipment being introduced.

There are two important implications of this. The first is that installing and using new technology requires an understanding of it and the second is that training a skilled workforce requires trainers who understand what is happening technologically and theoretically.

If we allow the North West Quadrant to stagnate and contract, our position in relation to the world becomes uncertain. We will either be incapable of adopting new technology effectively, thus falling further and further behind and creating ever greater price, productivity and product differentials in relation to world markets. Or we will become entirely dependent on imported skills - a costly and unsustainable possibility. The long run costs of being caught in either or both these positions are very high.

This dilemma allows a more careful understanding of what we should seek to achieve in the North West Quadrant. Whilst we cannot allocate the resources necessary to develop the research and development base for the whole range of new technologies, we should allocate resources to ensure we can understand what is happening. This will require both effective secondary research and teaching processes, but it can also be enhanced by seeking to participate in international co-operation wherever and whenever possible.

However, I believe even more can be done in the North West Quadrant if we develop a particular growth path in South Africa (and Southern Africa) and its

associated technology strategy. This raises the third key area: pressure from the socio-economic momentum of society. I would argue that we have to integrate the new technologies of the advanced industrial countries into the products demanded by a growth path that addresses poverty, unemployment and a lack of infrastructure in Southern Africa.

It is out of these products that we will have to look to develop a manufactured export market - not to Europe, USA or Japan but to the giant developing economies of the South. In this way we become technological 'converters' of new technology to meet our specific product needs (by products I mean both physical and policy). By meeting our product needs we will then seek to export them to compatible economies. Exports to the advanced economies will only be on the basis of small niche markets. This still will provide an expanding and vital basis for research within the North West Quadrant. It also allows us to identify the right balance within the research complex and make other important adjustments. Two important consequences are the need to provide adequate base education and the need to create an institutional framework to undertake research within this 'technological core'.

What I have tried to argue and I hope link together is the following thread: the intellectual and research community is inevitably caught in a tension between attempting to lead social events or of following these events. Whilst it is probably not possible to lead events, these communities can play a crucial role if they can help to establish the fine balance between being instruments of change used by political and economic forces and that of being servile to existing political and economic interests.

This poses the question as to whether there can be a good researcher who is politically committed. I argued that the answer is 'yes', provided that certain protective procedures are continuously applied. However, whilst essential, these cautionary procedures are not enough. We have to seek more complex answers. To do this I attempted to identify the forces at work by defining a research complex with a 'breadth', 'length' and 'depth'.

Basically I argued that there is a real danger that in South Africa we will move too heavily toward the South East Quadrant. As indicated, I presented a number of factors impelling us in this direction: the tentative and self-conscious attitudes of the research community, the danger of seeking refuge in objectivity, the tendency to see relevance in the South East Quadrant, the inadequate resource base both financially and in human terms for research and our apparent insignificance in international terms in the endeavours of the North West Quadrant.

I have tried to argue that such an imbalance in the research complex would be bad for research and even worse for the longer term socio-economic development of South Africa within a continuously changing world context.

If the argument is correct then it poses a number of challenges. The key factors in these challenges are not only the political and economic institutions that are the users of research results. As important are the critical linchpin institutions that traverse both base research and the 'technological core' as defined in the diagram. These are basically the universities (and their research institutes), advanced technical colleges

and publicly funded research institutes.

In the current environment in South Africa there is a great emphasis on cost effectiveness and market forces, thus increasingly seeing contract research as the answer. This is a mistake and a misunderstanding of the role that market forces can play in R & D. The market is product and policy orientated and therefore issue orientated. Because it is pre-occupied with cost effectiveness and defined pay-back periods, it will drastically underfund base research and the areas within the 'technological core'. This corrodes research capacity.

Key institutions are under two sources of pressure at present. The one is the pressure toward the market outlined above. The other (one with its own complications that I don't have the time to address), is the pressure for greater participation in both higher education and research projects from communities. This is healthy and other speakers in this symposium will speak on some of its challenges. However, an unintended consequence of this pressure can also be to move us to the South East.

The real challenge, therefore, facing these institutions - and they are critical to all other research - is to define a new set of practices that will define the overall 'balance' of the research complex and their role within it. If such a balance is attained, then the role of the market becomes important as an influence on research. This is by no means an easy task but in my opinion not enough is being done about it. We are pre-occupied with market forces, participation and student numbers. We have to emerge soon with a more complex and layered answer. Then researchers and their institutions will have to enter the fray and fight for that answer.

This allows me to conclude where I started which is whether researchers lead social events or follow them. The answer is perhaps best illustrated by an uncomfortable image. Researchers (and their institutions) are destined to sit uncomfortably on a barbed wire fence between leading and following. I'm not advocating that you step off and locate more comfortably. If you want to be good researchers, you can't do that. I regret to say that a leading role - something I feel you must play - consists of moving the fence forward toward the light and away from the dark. You'll need tough skins in the right places. Good luck. You'll need it!

DISCUSSION

HAROLD WOLPE: I'm not very clear on what you mean by leading events in their own forum. I know obviously there's the whole debate about researchers making policy or attempting to make the policy or simply confirming, perhaps in criticising those policies.

ALEC ERWIN: What I would define as leading in their own right would be a situation where we assess and conduct the research; we assess what the present situation is; we assess what the resources are; we do endless comparison studies; and if we come up with this it will meet all our needs and that gets implemented. That is the ideal situation where the researchers lead. They are offering a solution to

your problem, and you apply the solution and you move forward.

I think that capacity, where the rational processes, detailed scholarly process of research, become the actual policy, is not possible. That's what I define by 'leading.' Equally, by 'following' I mean that the researcher sits and waits. He says, 'I can't move on education until the ANC asks me a question.' Or 'I can't move on the economy until the Chamber of Mines asks me a question.'

It seems to me the researcher, or the research community, is always caught. They can't just sit and wait for someone to ask them to do something. Equally, when they do, it is unlikely that it will be fully implemented. It's an interactive process. And what gets implemented and what doesn't get implemented depends far more heavily on the political and economic circumstances of that period -- and that's the dilemma which I was posing -- in which the research community needs to play a role in some other way.

One of the dangers is that the universities plus the attendant research community don't really have a very clear vision of what they should be doing in the society because they are focusing too heavily on the immediate problems of costs, resources which they can't avoid.

There is a fairly substantial problem in South Africa's mechanism for funding research. We're starving institutions of resources, starving funding for researching, forcing the institutions more and more into the market, to issue-based things.

FRANCIE LUND: We need to also find out who funds visions any more.

ALEC ERWIN: The most successful companies in the world all fund visions. That's why they're successful.

RENE LOEWENSON: What is the role of the producer, the worker, those at the production site, in that process of innovation?

ALEC ERWIN: The particular priority we've chosen is a new training system which allows people to participate in the production processes by giving them greater information and technology. What we've done is to set up research and development groupings, consisting of worker leaders, and try to give an adult education that will allow them to formulate proposals. We're attempting to create a capacity within our own ranks of actively inserting ourselves as actors in this change in technology.

MALE VOICE: It seems to me that there is a set of social forces bent on transforming the South African society. How would you reconcile the need of these social forces to implant a research capacity for transformation, and the transitional role you seem to have assigned to the researcher?

ALEC ERWIN: It would seem to me that there are two areas that are important. One is for researchers themselves to attempt to create an ethos that gives them this arms-length relationship, and fight for that ethos. The other, I think, is the broader political and economic process, which is taking place in South Africa: the debate about what sort of socio-economic society we want; what kind of growth do we want; what social institutions we want; what do we mean by democracy and how does participation take place. The debate about civics, unions and communities being involved. The balance of power between state and civil society; the balance of power between researchers and the institutions using them.

MIKE MORRIS: One of the ways of staying on a barbed wire fence is to hold hands with someone else who's also on the fence with you. We have examples of ways of doing that, which is a process whereby some of the socially and politically committed intellectuals in the universities have got together in a grouping which has linked itself at arms length with COSATU, but in that way tries to deal with the problem of individuals sitting on the fence and falling off or tearing themselves to pieces.

EDDIE WEBSTER: I enjoyed very much what you had to say, especially the part about sitting on the fence, having got cut many times over the years. It's a sensitive spot. I can identify with you. I just want to make one observation, and that is about your idea of the university as a linchpin for research. It seems to me that we in South Africa have systematically downplayed the research component of the university and turned them largely into teaching universities, including the established universities like my own university of Wits, where it's not possible to be a permanent member of staff and be a full time researcher. The observation I just wanted to make is in fact our universities haven't played that kind of linchpin role.

ALEC ERWIN: I think that universities are a linchpin. But why they must be the linchpin seems to me in the present situation in South Africa is that they are very heavy concentrations of intellectuals and resources. And they must use that concentration. If they are not capable of defending any interests, or articulating any interests, which I think is even worse, then I think we've got problems.

MAHMOOD MAMDANI: The accent which doesn't seem to be there is the accent on transformation, because in a situation where the market itself cannot be reflective of the long-term needs of the society, the only other factor you seem to put besides the market is the researcher himself, the point of view of the researcher and the moral courage of the researcher. The question I have is, what do you see as the role of other non-economic factors: the role of politics, the role of all those sectors of society who cannot express themselves through the market?

ALEC ERWIN: I think people in institutions like unions, business or political organisations are going to have very instrumental views on what they want done. The balance against that will have to come from the research and intellectual communities themselves. I don't think you can expect the non-instrumental approach to emerge from the organisations that want things done. If I gave the impression that the only counterpose to the market is research, I just want to correct that quickly. It's probably a fairly minor one. More important is the notion of what the research complex looks like. That is not something to be solved by researchers alone. That is something that is going to be solved by a political process in which economic actors, both unions, civics and business, (and rural organisations as they emerge) will play an important role. I was really posing the dilemma of what role the research community can play within that process, without becoming merely a servant of particular actors in that process, of having some distance from them.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

G.G. Garrett and J.B. Clark

Introduction

Transformation might be explained by reference to an example from the field of metallurgy. When a piece of steel is subjected to a changing environment (quenched suddenly in water from red heat), it can undergo a characteristic process (a so-called 'martensitic' transformation), which can be modelled and which results in a changed structure (when viewed under a microscope) and corresponding changed mechanical properties (changed hardness and brittleness) which demonstrate changed behaviour.

There is a further feature that can often play a pivotal role in transformation, namely the presence of some catalyst. From our school days we might recall that a cooling liquid can be 'seeded' by a crystal of the solid form, to bring about rapid transformation (solidification, in this instance). Similarly, to extend our metallurgical example, small quantities of alloying elements can either accelerate or retard, even to the point of inhibition, the process of transformation described above. Although in this case not strictly correct, scientifically speaking, the use of the term 'catalysis' can, as we shall see, be usefully employed to describe this key role in transformation.

The metallurgical paradigm of transformation can be used to describe the organisational change that has occurred in the South African national research, development and implementation organisation, the CSIR, over the past five years.

In 1986 the CSIR embarked on a process of corporate restructuring which effected a dramatic, radical transformation of this, the largest R&D organisation in Africa.

The CSIR - the 'Current Reality' in 1986

With the benefit of hindsight we can say that the 'current reality' of the CSIR in 1986 more closely resembled a 'super university', rather than a market-oriented, contract R&D organisation operating along business lines.

The CSIR was established as a statutory research council in 1945. During the next forty years, the CSIR came to enjoy a high reputation for research excellence. At the same time, however, it grew into a large, relatively bureaucratic organisation with little understanding of the market forces that were increasingly beginning to dominate R&D trends world-wide. The terms that best describe the organisation prior to 1986 are phrases such as 'risk averse', 'lack of urgency', 'lack of communication', and 'bureaucratic'. At the same time, research excellence enjoyed a very high priority, as did pride in publication and individual accountability.

By 1986, the CSIR's original five institutes had increased to 27 structural entities.

The Changing Environment

Both within and outside the organisation, powerful new factors were at work.

Internal facilitators of change included:

- A gradual change in the composition of the CSIR Board to reflect much more closely the concerns and interests of industry;
- The personal style of the President of the organisation at that time, Dr C.F. Garbers. In the final years of his career at the CSIR, Dr Garbers was prepared to venture a great deal by embarking on a high-risk process of organisational change.
- Following the first top management review of the *Government's White Paper on an Industrial Development Strategy for South Africa*, the CSIR Board appointed a new Vice-President, Dr Brian Clark, with specific responsibility for technology transfer in the CSIR.
- A technology transfer task group was appointed in 1986 to evaluate how the CSIR would respond to the challenge of transferring technology. The task group found that, if we were to be successful, what was required was not merely some adaptation of existing ideas, but a fundamentally new approach. The CSIR therefore embarked on a strategic review of itself, starting after the first quarter of 1986, and resulting in the first explicit Corporate Strategy in October of that year.

External, local factors that were also making for a changed environment included:

- South Africa was starting to experience a period of enormous upheaval, and the potential for change was therefore high.
- In 1985 the previously mentioned *Government White Paper on an Industrial Development Strategy for South Africa* highlighted the need to achieve economic growth to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population. This White Paper made specific reference to the CSIR, stating that 'the CSIR in particular has at its disposal a comprehensive organisation for the transfer of technology to industry.' In view of this fact, the report notes, 'the Government has decided that the CSIR, in collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry, should take the lead in devising an appropriate mechanism for the transfer of technology.'
- A new approach to science and technology policy in South Africa was taking shape, involving a move away from a centralised system of decision-making and control. As far as statutory councils were concerned, the trend was towards decentralising decision-making within a framework autonomy system, which meant that the boards of these statutory councils were being granted a great deal more responsibility and autonomy.

The international technological environment, too, was changing, and the CSIR could not afford to ignore global trends which were transforming the international science and technology arena (these trends are discussed in greater detail a little later).

The leadership of the CSIR at that time therefore had as its primary goal the processes which enabled the CSIR to plan for and adapt to the rapidly changing environment in which the organisation found itself. This was the catalytic role necessary to 'seed', lubricate, and indeed (in thermodynamic, or energy, terms) 'drive' the process of transformation. The decision to adopt an aggressive market-oriented strategy in order to become a force in boosting industrial growth was, therefore a visionary one; it implied that the organisation was prepared to change

radically, before circumstances beyond its control forced it to change or to suffer decline and stagnation.

A Changed Structure

Clearly, at the start of this process, we were in need of a radically different management style to lead the organisation through the disruptive period that lay ahead and to sustain the momentum of change over a number of years. Management, or leadership in the organisation, was to be the catalyst that would drive the process. The most essential component of the new approach we sought to implement was participative management within the framework of challenging performance targets with shared-responsibility teams striving to achieve those targets.

Managers had to become agents for the development of people and the organisation as a whole. Specific responsibilities would be delegated to them, but they would have joint responsibility for overall excellence in the organisation. We demanded further of them that they actively develop their subordinates' commitment and capabilities. This meant that they had to be repositioned, no longer as experts who had all the answers, but as facilitators and coaches who would help their subordinates to get the job done.

In this way, it became possible to create high levels of involvement without demanding centrality, and to distribute decision-making power to various levels of the organisation, thereby creating a strong sense of ownership and commitment. Another positive result of these participative approaches was that management as a discipline was held in very much higher regard throughout the organisation than before.

A Change in Behaviour

The results of any transformation or process of change can be measured in terms of changed organisational performance. As the results of a number of extensive internal and external surveys conducted in 1989 showed, both structure and performance had changed radically by that time.

The cultural descriptors used to describe the organisation in surveys in 1989 indicated a commitment to short, medium and long-term projects related to the needs of the marketplace; a high level of risk acceptance; directed research; a management-based culture; zero-based research budgets; high levels of pride in performance; a sense of urgency; performance as the pre-eminent requirement for recognition; a CSIR-wide horizon; high levels of group responsibility; and a business-like approach to R&D. These descriptors indicated that, to a large degree, we had achieved our original goals. That the process had been carried through to all levels was also borne out by the organisational performance in terms of financial parameters, productivity, and external benchmark surveys.

The financial performance can be summarised by saying that the level of external contract income grew significantly during exceptionally difficult economic times, while the per capita contract income experienced almost exponential growth during the same period. When we are compared with national research organisations

world-wide, it can be seen that our ratio of State funding to contract income places us second amongst the top contract income earners (just behind TNO, the Dutch national research organisation).

Productivity also improved, for at the same time as the staff complement declined from approximately 4 300 to approximately 3 600, contract income rose from approximately R28 million to close on R200 million.

South Africa in Transformation

The model of transformation described earlier can potentially be usefully applied to the much bigger macro-economic and socio-political scene in South Africa, with particular reference to the situation around the role of science and technology which we are addressing here.

A key requirement of any attempt to model the transformation of the South African science and technology/R&D situation is that it would have at its core the question of balance. It would have to recognise that in South Africa technology must meet both the needs of a growing population as well as the needs of the industries that will have to provide employment opportunities for that population. Hence the requirement to balance the needs of a largely disadvantaged society against the need to build a strong, export-oriented industrial sector. We shall return to this important point later.

South Africa - the Current Reality

The framework for debate is an economy in trouble. Our rate of unemployment, one of the most important indicators of the state of a country's economy, has grown from about 25% in 1980 to around 40% or even more today. Our real gross domestic product per capita has actually declined (from about R4 150 to just over R4 000 over the last decade). Our share of world exports fell from about 1,3% in 1980 to 0,6% in 1990.

This economic decline is taking place at the same time as the financial needs of our society in transition are growing rapidly. Not only do we have to tackle and redress the past injustices and inequalities of apartheid, but we also have to deal with the complexity of problems that confront all developing nations throughout the world.

Moving to the current situation of research and development in South Africa, the picture is equally discouraging. The developed nations of the world are today typically spending around 2,7% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development. South Africa, in contrast, is currently spending about 0,7%, substantially less as a nation than many individual firms spend in the USA, West Germany, or Japan. And, while the developed countries have steadily been increasing the percentage of GDP which they spend on R&D, our percentage expenditure has been declining.

Another disturbing trend is the disproportionate involvement of government in R&D. In the developed nations of the world, for example America and Japan, some 65 to 70% of total R&D spending is by the private sector. In the developing nations,

on the other hand, the government is the major contributor to R&D spending: South Africa also falls into this category, with government contributing 73% of our country's total R&D expenditure (including substantial indirect funding via university subsidies and funding of government corporations).

In line with our declining investment in R&D, our technology 'balance of payments' also displays some alarming trends. Most of our exports, in technology terms, are low technology. In fact, for some time now, South Africa has been a net importer of both high and medium technology goods. Further, although we have all talked for years about the importance of 'value addition' for our export base, the reality shows the opposite: far from decreasing our dependence on the export of raw and processed materials, this has actually increased in percentage terms.

The current state of our education system is equally depressing. The South African economy must surely be placed on a sound footing, if historical inequalities of wealth are to be redressed in South Africa. However, our ability to create a strong economy depends to a large degree on the availability of an adequate supply of suitably skilled manpower. It is therefore highly disquieting to note that our black education system produces only one child with mathematics and science at matric exemption level for every 10 000 who enter the system.

Similarly, in 1988, for example, a total of 87.7% of graduates in science and engineering came from the white population group, compared with 12.3% from the other population groups combined. This is the principal reason for the current racially skewed composition of the population of practising scientists, engineers and technologists in South Africa. Owing to demographics alone, the demand for advanced and skilled manpower will increasingly have to be met out of the non-white population groups.

Instead of our S&T expenditure steadily increasing, however, the pragmatics of life in South Africa today results in government budget cuts and cuts in financial incentives for private sector technology. Instead of ensuring that scarce S&T manpower is retained and supplemented, there are retrenchments without due consideration being given to national long-term requirements; rationalisation of training facilities, instead of incentives for optimal utilisation of those facilities; inadequate incentives for S&T 'immigration'; inadequate manpower planning (with ensuing over- or undersupply in particular S&T fields), and minimal promotion of science and technology at schools.

Any improvement in attitudes towards technology and the effective management of the S&T system is hampered by, inter alia, internecine squabbles between the various parties concerned, and our inability as a 'community' to get our co-operative act together; minimal promotion of technology by public and private sector leaders; and investment preferences geared to financial rather than physical assets.

Co-operation and co-ordination between the various parties in order to use limited resources optimally are also impeded by a lack of national, general strategies for technology, industry and science. This leads to uncertainty as a result of ad hoc decision-making and increasing competition between organisations in the S&T field for short-term survival.

The current reality sketched above should be viewed against the background of a changing environment which is characterised by increasing competition, locally and abroad, from international competitors who are doing all they can to derive a competitive advantage from technology. It is this changing environment in the local and the international science and technology arena which is challenging current reality in South Africa and necessitating, on a national scale, a process of transformation.

However, it should be noted that not all is gloom and doom in the current South African science and technology scenario - there are certain factors at work which could well facilitate the kind of transformation under discussion. First of all, South Africa's infrastructure, and particularly its scientific and technological infrastructure, has been built up over decades and is unique in African terms. The CSIR, the largest RDI organisation in Africa, and a number of other organisations, too, are proof of this country's R&D strength. The excellence of our local R&D community is also a matter for the record. For example, in terms of the number of scientific articles published, we are significantly ahead of the newly industrialised countries (NICs), Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore. According to the Index of Scientific Power, developed by the Foundation for Research Development, which grades countries in terms of their scientific output, South Africa ranks 21st out of 154 nations. This achievement is less impressive, however, when we consider the fields in which we excel: ornithology, ecology, and medicine. We also currently spend more than 40% of our R&D funds on the social sciences; most western nations spend less than 12%.

The Catalytic Role of Technology in Transformation

All over the world, governments are revising their science and technology policies. Everywhere the realisation is steadily growing that, in the longer term, wealth is generated through the effective use of technology stemming from scientific endeavour. The wealth thus generated allows the needs of society to be met. This, in turn, means that society can afford to invest even more in research and development. This process produces an upward spiral of improvement in the quality of life of a nation. A recent CSIR comparative review of science and technology policies in 17 countries lends support to this view when it notes: 'The most successful economies - as exemplified by Japan and West Germany in the study - are those that use technology best across a broad spread of industries.' A good example of an underdeveloped country which used technology to move from Third- to First-World status is South Korea.

Determining 'Success Criteria' for a Change Process

When the change process is modelled, comparisons can be drawn. This, in turn, makes it possible to isolate key success factors that contribute to successful change and to draw up a strategy based on these factors. In the context of a South Africa in transformation in a changing environment, it is important to consider the experience of other countries and to determine success factors from a review of international

experience. Useful lessons can be learnt, for example, from the 'success stories' - the NICs, or newly industrialised Eastern countries, such as Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea - and from the route they took to transform themselves in the course of a few decades from impoverished Third-World countries into highly productive, wealthy nations. The CSIR's comparative review of science and technology policies in 17 countries, referred to earlier, identified the following key success factors, among others, in the economic performance of the newly industrialised countries as well as countries such as Sweden and West Germany:

- *Technology policy as an instrument of economic policy.* Policy makers need to see technology policy as a key enabling instrument of economic policy.
- *Long-term, flexible government strategy.* Government needs to be willing to formulate and to commit to sound economic and technological development strategies.
- *The role of government.* Government plays a crucial role in exercising overall leadership, in creating a macroeconomic and regulatory framework conducive to technological innovation, and in effecting the appropriate volume and quality of investment in education and training.
- *The need to distinguish between science and technology.* Competence in technology may not be dependent on, or even related to, competence in science. Indeed it is possible in the short term for a country to be competent in utilising and adapting technology developed elsewhere without itself having a strong science base.
- *The strategic capacity to manage technology effectively,* at the level of the overall economy as well as that of the individual firm.
- *An efficiently functioning national innovation system,* properly connected with outside systems and in which the science, technology, market and finance 'poles' interact readily with one another.
- *Market responsiveness and the role of large companies.* Ideally, the strategic role of government should be reinforced by a strong business sector responding both to government stimulation and to international market demand. The private sector should be primarily responsible for adopting and upgrading technology.
- *Government-business rapport and collaboration.* Close ties between the public and private sectors are essential, with both sectors focusing on shared goals and values. Private sector involvement in the policy process should take place at both strategic and operational levels.
- *Investment in development of human resources.* Heavy investment in general education and in vocational training is a characteristic shared by all the 'success story' countries. They recognise that the skills of their people are the fundamental resource, and that literacy and numeracy are prerequisites for these skills to be developed. There is a vigorous commitment to education and training as a means of personal and career development for the individual, and as the key ingredient in long-term development of the whole economy. Within this overall commitment there is a strong emphasis on technological and other applied skills at the tertiary educational level. This emphasis is strongly complemented by investment in more narrowly-based technical skills at below-tertiary levels.

- *Investment in physical infrastructure.* Investment in physical infrastructure has played a vital part in the development of the NICs.

When one considers international experience, it is clear that one cannot strive for the perfect policy, and that the emphasis should in fact fall on an evolutionary policy development which is at all times directed at rapidly achieving success in those areas which are important at that specific stage. For example, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, followed a roughly similar evolutionary path based on the acquisition and adaptation of foreign technology. Japan is typical of this process. Following the Second World War, the Japanese government followed a strategy involving the acquisition, initially from abroad, of technologies with significant long-term world market potential, and of progressively adapting and improving them to meet new market conditions. Acquisition and modest adaptation of foreign technology in these countries are followed by the development of their own technological capabilities which stimulates investment in the sciences that underpin them.

Transforming South Africa will undoubtedly be a learning experience, just as much as the restructuring of the CSIR was a learning experience for all involved. In addition, our model of successful transformation clearly shows that we do need a science and technology strategy, based on the key success factors, as identified by a review of international experience, and linked closely with South Africa's industrial strategy.

Determining a Strategy for Transformation

In response to the challenge posed by a changing environment, it is necessary to draw up a strategy for a process of change. This process should result in a changed organisational structure and changed behaviour, which will make it possible for the organisation or country concerned to cope in the new environment.

The success factors discussed in the previous section clearly play a key role in any science and technology strategy. At the same time, they have to be adapted to our specific circumstances. In South Africa, this means that we should strike the correct balance in our R&D endeavours. One of the questions we need to ask ourselves in this regard is: how much money, if any, should we spend on the so-called 'leading-edge' technologies? These are hi-tech interdisciplinary technologies which have become the driving force in technological advances in the industrialised nations, and they include microelectronics, materials technology, biotechnology, information technology, and advanced production technology. Although research in these fields lends prestige to a country's R&D efforts, such research is often prohibitively expensive for a country to undertake on its own, while also sometimes being inappropriate to the specific needs of a country, especially a developing country. On the other hand, to fall behind in some of these fields would undermine our technological base in other vital fields. For example, information technology is a crucial, interdisciplinary technology, and for us to fall behind developments in this field could jeopardise our efforts in a dozen other areas. The ability to make full use of, and exchange information on these technologies is therefore critical.

Experience has shown that the technology aimed specifically at addressing the

needs of the community can be either high, medium or low technology - the nature of the technological solution depends on the nature of the problem being addressed. A mistake which has often been made in Africa, especially by outside development agencies, is to assume that the more complex the technology used to solve a problem, the better the solution. When breakdowns then shut down expensive projects, it is often found that the local community has not been properly involved, or given the necessary training or even equipment to keep the technology operational. It is now widely recognised that technology aimed at the needs of developing communities must be planned in consultation with the community; that it must be aimed at meeting specific needs; that it must involve the community in all stages, from the needs determination stage to the commissioning, operational and maintenance phases; and that such technology should be affordable, feasible, and appropriate to the project.

Some Aspects of 'Structure'

While not wishing to preempt the old adage 'structure follows strategy', it would be instructive at this stage to consider the role of national research councils as enablers of industrial and economic development. They can make a vital contribution towards facilitating change and promoting a balanced spectrum of R&D, appropriate to the country's needs.

National research councils are a world-wide phenomenon. They are found in industrialised countries and in developing countries. They have different forms and very different purposes in each country, but their usefulness as a mechanism of establishing a critical mass of scientists and technologists to achieve specific purposes has been proved many times. Special mention should be made in this regard of the CSIR, which is South Africa's foremost scientific and technological asset. The CSIR is the biggest research and development organisation in Africa. More than 1 500 CSIR scientists and researchers and their support staff in many parts of South Africa undertake broadly-based, market-driven research and development to meet the needs of the South African public and private sector and to improve the quality of life of all South Africans.

Given the fact that more than 99% of the world's development of technology and R&D is done outside the RSA, organisations such as the CSIR serve a vital role as a 'funnel and bridge' - a funnel through which international scientific and technological advances are channelled into South Africa from abroad; and a technology bridge for the transfer of scientific and technological advances to South Africa, the Southern African region and, ultimately, to Africa as a whole. The CSIR is part of the global scientific and technological development community, and its experts are at the forefront of research and implementation across a broad range of technologies. The blend of the organisation's Africa expertise and the financial and technological capability of the First World constitutes a valuable mechanism for sustained development in collaboration with African countries.

The existing CSIR infrastructure is therefore an important enabling mechanism for the ongoing development of South Africa. It might not be perfect, but in the African context it is unique and a major potential force for change. In terms of our

paradigm, the role of statutory research councils such as the CSIR is to drive technology as the catalyst for implementing the transformation of our current reality. There is a need for R&D aimed both at enhancing competitiveness within the private sector and at improving the quality of life in our developing communities. These aims can best be served by mission-oriented, focused research, and a market-oriented approach based on a balanced mix of short-, medium- and long-term programmes.

Transforming South Africa - Time is Running Out

South Africa currently finds itself preoccupied with the process of constitutional negotiation. An important lesson from the world community is that no country has been able to democratise its political structures at a time of negative economic growth. The goal of sustainable economic growth is, therefore, vital to long-term success in the socio-political arena.

Like the piece of steel referred to in our introduction, our strategy and policies relating to science and technology need to undergo a transformation. The challenge facing us is to incorporate lessons learnt from international experience into a model for structural change which is appropriate to our own very specific circumstances. In the face of technology-driven global competition, a solid technological base must surely be critical for our longer-term survival. At the same time it is important to address urgently the needs of South Africa's rural and developing communities, as well as those of the informal sector and the small business sector, where technology can and must play a special role.

It is precisely because we have so little time that we cannot afford to repeat the mistakes other countries have made. International experience in this field has been meticulously recorded and evaluated. The lessons are there, if only we are prepared to heed them; the criteria for success are there, if only we care to consider them; the road has been prepared for us, if only we would take it.

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CAN THE HSRC JOIN IN THE FUTURE?

Caroline White

Introduction

This paper is written in the context of an assumption that no existing institutions have an automatic right to continue in existence. Their actual performance and likely contribution to the future of the country will need to be evaluated, and this applies to universities as much as it does to parastatal research institutions like the HSRC. I offer some very general criteria according to which such an evaluation might be conducted, and apply it to the HSRC as a test case.

I am not unmindful that there will be strong opposition to the conclusion spelt out here, that the HSRC ought to be so thoroughly restructured that the outcome I propose would amount to its abolition. Opposition to this view will be articulated not only by those with an immediate interest in the continuing existence of the HSRC in its present form - mainly HSRC employees - but also from those on the left who feel that if a body with resources exists 'we ought to capture it'. The paper is written to provoke serious consideration of how research ought to be organised on a national basis in the future, and is not intended as an attack on the HSRC per se.

Previous assessments of the HSRC

Cloete, Muller and Orkin (1986) construct the recent history of the institution as consisting of changes designed to legitimate the reform initiatives of PW Botha, by 'providing scientific knowledge or evidence in support of the social programme' (1986). They argue that this process also entailed the HSRC establishing its own legitimacy within the liberal, English-medium universities. This second objective was largely achieved, so that highly respected academics (who would not previously have done so) now serve on the disciplinary committees through which peer review is used to allocate funds to university-based researchers from the A (Agency) Budget.

As for legitimating the government's reform programme, Cloete et al argue that the HSRC did this using its own operating funds (the I (Internal) Budget) by: supplying 'scientific evidence' to 'prove' that the government's programme is 'better' than any alternatives; withholding its own results when these run counter to government policy; and aiding government in postponing policy decisions 'until the evidence (from HSRC research programmes) is in' (Cloete et al, 1986).

Cloete and Muller recently added to their earlier position the contention that the HSRC's new market orientation has not only had a negative effect on the quality of research done at the HSRC, but, because of the cost of large research programmes, it has driven researchers back into the arms of their traditional users, the government departments, who are now also their funders. Because the private sector cannot afford expensive research, instead of being 'privatised', the HSRC is once again confined to serving its old masters: 'the HSRC becomes a "super consultancy" to

the corporate state.'

In this paper I shall not rehearse the history of the HSRC, that has been done more than adequately by Cloete et al. However, I shall be asking whether the HSRC can contribute to a future, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa, and what is its ability to adapt to a changed environment for research. In order to answer these questions one will have to make considered judgements on the basis of its existing record of adaptability and sensitivity to the needs of the people of South Africa.

The paper is divided into three sections: the first asks what ought to characterise social research in South Africa; the second argues that the history of the HSRC's response to changing demands suggests that it is unlikely to adapt; in the third part I make a series of proposals for the future conduct of social research.

Desiderata for social research in South Africa

Requirement A:

Those who conduct social research will need to be responsive, participatory and consultative both with those who want the research done and with those who are the subjects of research inquiries. Indeed, good research will bring these parties together in the formulation of research priorities and of actual projects. The dissemination of findings will need to be accessible in style of presentation and available to all who have an interest in them.

Requirement B:

In their selection and promotion of research, administrative and supporting staff, any institution conducting social research will have to be an equal opportunity employer. In order to provide all citizens with equal employment opportunities, it will need to have meaningful affirmative action policies for both black people and women of all races.

Requirement C:

Because of economic exigencies and the enormous demands that will be placed on government and private resources to provide equitable educational and social services and fair wages, there will be little money available for the comparative luxury of social research. Nonetheless, it will be necessary for social policy to be founded on adequate research. Research will have to be useful for policy makers and be cost-effective.

The record of the HSRC

Responsiveness to all 'stakeholders'

The HSRC was created by Act of Parliament in 1968, bringing together a number of advisory and research bodies that had previously been attached to the departments of education and manpower.

The moneys voted by Parliament are divided in two. The A Budget contains the funds which are disseminated to university researchers, and allocated through the process of peer review, using the expertise of university academics sitting on Disciplinary Committees to make judgements on the grounds of quality alone.

'Applications for such grants are evaluated strictly on the basis of scientific merit' (HSRC, 1989a). The criteria do not include catering to the needs of stakeholders. For this we have to refer to the I Budget.

The I Budget provides the funds for the internal running of the HSRC and for the research conducted by its own full-time employees. The following table shows the division of moneys between the two budgets:

YEAR	TOTAL GRANT R million	A BUDGET R million	A BUDGET Percent	I BUDGET R million	I BUDGET Percent
1977	4.1	0.7	17	3.6	83
1978	5.5	0.7	12.7	4.8	87.3
1980	7.5	0.8	10.6	6.7	89.4
1981	9.6	1.5	15.6	8.1	84.4
1982	13.4	1.8	13.4	11.6	86.6
1983	17.9	2.5	13.9	15.4	86.1
1984	24.4	3.6	14.7	20.8	85.3
1985	35.2	5.6	15.9	29.6	84.1
1986	38.7	6.4	16.5	32.3	83.5
1987	48.1	6.9	14.3	41.2	85.7
1988	52.2	8.4	16	43.8	84
1989	54.1	8.9	17	45.2	83
1990	64.2	9.5	14.8	54.7	85.2

Source: HSRC Annual Reports

Although the percentage allocated to the I Budget has fluctuated over the years, it has always been the lion's share. Even the administration of the grants to university researchers is paid for out of the A Budget. Moneys expended in the I Budget do, however, include grants made to academic researchers participating in what are called Cooperative Research Programmes for studies deemed to be 'in the national interest'. It is the expenditure on these programmes and other work undertaken by HSRC staff which is not covered by client payments that one can reasonably expect to be publicly accountable in some way.

How accountable is the HSRC for the expenditure of this public money? Can the HSRC become accountable and accessible?

Let us start with how its official documents understand these concepts. It claims that its 'major strength is that it conducts its research within an accountable scientific framework' (HSRC, 1988 : 10). Since there is nowhere in this or other documents in the public domain that a wider accountability is envisaged, what the writers have in mind is the judgement of social scientists using the 'scientific' criteria of 'objectivity, neutrality and independence'. The notion of 'accessibility' is similarly limited, it is elaborated as 'dealing with its clients and the public in a friendly, helpful and businesslike manner' (HSRC, 1988 : 9). It does not include involving the subjects of research in the formulation and conduct of research, nor devising innovative methods for the writing and dissemination of research findings to a wider

audience than the research community and clients.

In 1988 it produced a Strategic Plan which is contained in a document outlining its vision for *'The HSRC 1993'*. Amongst other things it states that it 'will strive to ensure that through its research and service, it will contribute towards the improvement of the quality of life of all the inhabitants of the country' (HSRC, 1988a:3). This is to be achieved by 'function[ing] in a pro-active and relevant manner as far as social problems are concerned, and will contribute towards the amelioration of the problems that are experienced'. It proposes to achieve this by 'promot[ing] "literacy in the social sciences"' and being 'a builder of bridges between the research community, government, private enterprise, and each individual ...' (HSRC, 1988a:4-5). These are fine sentiments as far as they go, but they fail to recognise any of the components of civil society other than private enterprise - where is the trade union movement, for example? By 1988 it was a key contributor to society itself and a major 'consumer' of social research. Nor does this document clarify *how* it is proposed to access 'the problems that are experienced' or to 'build bridges'. The fate of the First Strategic Plan does not give grounds for optimism nor does the fact that there has been almost no change in the leadership of the HSRC.

One way that these tasks it set itself could be achieved would be by representation of a broad constituency on its policy-making bodies and in the setting of research priorities. This would go some way to making the HSRC accountable and accessible to those it aims to serve, namely 'all the inhabitants of the country' (HSRC, 1988a:3).

The Council is the overriding policy-making body and its members are appointed by the Minister of National Education. Until 1986 the Council consisted entirely of white men, mainly but not exclusively Afrikaans-speaking. In 1984 the Minister of National Education appointed the first African, Prof AC Nkabinde (Vice Chancellor of the University of Zululand), who remained until 1987. Two appointments were made during 1986 (Prof WL Nkhulu and Dr RL Van der Ross) of men who remain the only members of the council who are not white. For the last three years Adv FJ Bosman, a white woman, has been a member of the Council. This year, I am reliably informed, the executive of the HSRC plans to advise the Minister of names from a wider constituency, including well-known figures from ANC circles. It remains to be seen whether the Minister will invite them and whether they will agree to serve.

Another place where the public could be represented is where research priorities for the HSRC are decided, for example, what studies merit the status of Co-operative Research Programmes. In earlier times this was done by the Research Advisory Committee of the Department of National Education. A wider constituency than this was created by Johan Garbers. During his term of office there was a Research Priorities Committee consisting of: 7 HSRC employees, 7 members nominated by universities, 1 CSIR person, 2 people from the public sector and 2 from the private sector plus 3 Heads of Planning from government departments.

Since the most recent changes in funding and the creation of what is known as 'framework autonomy', the Research Advisory Committee has been abolished and mechanisms for decisions in this area have turned inwards rather than broadening the base of consultation on research priorities. Decisions about the expenditure of

the I Budget on 'basic' and 'contract-generating' research (i.e. not contract research which is paid for externally) are made by the seven executive managers of Groups plus the President in consultation with the 28 managers of Divisions, without any outside advice.

'The HSRC 1993' Strategic Plan was an attempt to orient the HSRC to different objectives and different ways of operating. It has not succeeded in its desire, articulated in that document, to engage new constituencies and become responsible to new stakeholders. At the last Council meeting of 1991 a second Strategic Plan for 1992 - 1994 was approved.

The Executive, which will devise and approve the details of the Strategic Plan, is led by the President of the HSRC, Tjaart van der Walt. In a speech to the HSRC staff association (1990) he described how, in the first phase of its existence (up to about 1984), the HSRC received all of its funding from the state and was 'almost an extension of the state'. This was a good thing, he felt, because it meant that 'government decisions were made on the basis of proper information'. Of course it is a good thing that policy decisions be made on the basis of sound information. Given the framework of white domination in which the government operated, the HSRC may well have provided sound information which was not always acted on by the government.

For van der Walt the 'shadow side' of this connectedness to the state was that it entailed a corresponding connectedness to the status quo and this is not, he felt, good for research, which requires 'innovation, creativity, originality, risk-taking and not maintenance of the existing order.' In other words, being tied to the state was bad only because it was bad for the quality of HSRC research. There was no recognition here of the widely held view that social science is inherently political and that being tied to the state might have had effects on the findings of research.

In its second, increasingly academic phase, the HSRC moved away from support for the status quo and even 'criticised the state if its statements rested on scientific grounds' (van der Walt, 1990). The South African Plan for Research in the Human Sciences (SAPRHS), formulated with the input of academics in all the universities, established the HSRC as 'objective, neutral, independent' (idem). There is no doubt that the SAPRHS was a path-breaking document for the HSRC in terms of consultation. But the 'objectivity, neutrality and independence' of the HSRC, on economic matters at least, must remain in question when its *Annual Report* for the same year noted that: 'South African society is crying out for research into a structurally deficient economy within which the free market system must be optimally propagated [sic]' (1988:6).

In addition, its neutrality and independence have never brought the HSRC into confrontation with the state nor has its executive, even since February 1990, condemned the state policy of apartheid, despite worldwide condemnation over many years - years during which the HSRC was providing the state with 'proper information.'

Its record and the views of its president on that record suggest that, even if they wish to change in line with new developments in the country, the executive of the

HSRC does not know how to lead it in that direction. If this is so, could a new government not have the HSRC do appropriate research by replacing its top management? In the next section I shall argue that the malaise goes deeper than that. The methods of recruitment and promotion and the constituencies from which the personnel are drawn has resulted in a staff who, with a few notable exceptions, are commonly committed to the status quo rather than to a transformed future.

Equal opportunity employer?

The HSRC has no black people or women amongst its executive (the president and the seven executive managers) and, until very recently, all but two¹ were from Afrikaans backgrounds. Of the 30 people at manager level, five are women and none are black. The last occasion on which their degrees were detailed in the *Annual Report* was in 1988 when the Management Council, consisting of the President, Vice Presidents, managers, group heads, regional directors and directors of institutes, 30 in all, were all men. Of these men, one was a Wits graduate (head of the NIPR), one from Rhodes, four from UNISA and one from Amsterdam. All the rest were graduates of Afrikaans medium universities.

Of the 863 staff in January 1992, 146 (17%) are 'non-white' (123 or 14% African). All the Managers are white. Of the 316 Researchers 21 (7%) are African, none in the top 3 grades (out of 7 grades), and more than half (11) in the bottom grade of Assistant Researcher. Of the 124 Research Support Staff 18 (15%) are African, and they are clustered at the 3rd and 4th grades (out of 10 grades). Of the 389 members of the Administration, 84 (22%) are African, and they are to be found only in the bottom four grades, with the majority (57) at Grades 1 and 2, where there are almost no whites.²

In addition to being a predominantly white organisation, it is also predominantly Afrikaans. Afrikaans is the lingua franca at the headquarters in Pretoria, and the majority of white employees show a preference for being addressed in Afrikaans in the March 1991 internal directory. Out of 928 staff listed, (by name with title, group and divisional affiliation) 102 (11%) had African surnames. Of the remainder, 124 (12%) were listed in English and 713 (76%) in Afrikaans.

There are two possible explanations for this preponderance of Afrikaans speakers: one is that English speakers and black people have not wanted to work at the HSRC and have not applied. This is a serious possibility since it had, for many years, an image of being an organisation exclusively serving the interests of the government. An alternative explanation is that the HSRC, like the Post Office and Railways, was an affirmative action employer for Afrikaners, that is, that Afrikaans speakers were given preference over English speakers with similar qualifications.

Whichever of these two explanations is the real one, and both factors are probably at work, one can state with certainty from observation of the present employee profile, that no serious attempt has been made to recruit from under-represented groups. Nor does the profile of the incumbents of high positions suggest that promotions have been dealt with any differently from recruitment. Indeed, English speakers (let alone blacks and women) are rare at manager level and higher.

Does the HSRC have the ability to become an equal opportunity employer? Will it embrace the only means for pious statements of intent to become reality, namely meaningful affirmative action? For this we need to look at its most recent statement of intent on staffing policy which is contained in the Objectives of the Strategic Plan 1992 - 1994:

3. To ensure that the staff composition of the HSRC will by 1994 reflect the population composition of the country to a significantly greater extent than it does at present. (HSRC, 1991)

Like the other components of the Strategic Plan, the details of how to implement this objective remain to be spelled out by a working group that is due to report by March. The wording was, it seems, left deliberately vague, but January 1994 is a mere 21 months from March 1992, not long for such an enormous task. It is not only that women and blacks will have to be recruited for and promoted into positions that they have never before occupied, but the existing senior staff will have to be trained in equal opportunity selection and promotion procedures. The rest of the staff will have to be prepared well and there will have to be a real threat of disciplinary procedures against those who continue to act in an antagonistic fashion towards the unfamiliar recruits.

One's confidence in the likelihood of this happening is not enhanced by recent events when a fairly senior new 'coloured' recruit resigned after only a fortnight. To its credit, the HSRC is taking disciplinary action against those who made his work environment untenable but it is also clear that its 'corporate culture' will have to undergo some profound modification if it is to hold onto staff from outside the familiar constituency of white, conservative, Afrikaners.

Useful and cost effective?

Judgements of usefulness are hard to make objectively, but taking the HSRC's own mission, to be useful 'to all the inhabitants of South Africa', it is not hard to be critical of the Afrikaner-centric nature of a number of its projects, for example the genealogies of Afrikaans families, and research into Afrikaans language and dialects, Afrikaans literature and Afrikaans theatre.

Cost-effectiveness is also not easy to gauge, particularly as there are no direct comparisons to be drawn between the costs of the HSRC and other institutions performing research functions. The nearest comparison we have is with researchers in universities, but given the additional functions, and other funding sources, from fees for example, the comparison can only be a very rough one, based entirely on the amount of public money each consumes. What are costs to the public purse of having researchers in an institute which does nothing but research - rather than in a university where researchers also teach students? Looked at according to this measure, the HSRC in 1989 had about 350 researchers and a Parliamentary Grant of R54 million or a cost of roughly R154,000 per researcher in public money. The University of Stellenbosch in 1989 had 778 academic staff and a state subsidy of R108 million³ or R137,388 per researcher cum lecturer.

Despite absorbing more government funds per head, the HSRC researchers are

less productive, according to *publication* criteria, than the Stellenbosch ones:

Investigations have been conducted from which it transpires that, should one measure research in terms of publications in reputable international professional journals, the HSRC has not been performing spectacularly in comparison with some of our universities. (van der Walt, 1990)

An academic at Stellenbosch is thus more cost-effective as a researcher by 'international' standards, and does a full load of undergraduate teaching as well! To be fair, of course, much of an HSRC researcher's output appears as reports to clients rather than journal publications.

One of the differences between academics and HSRC researchers is that most academics have to raise money to do research from outside funding bodies. If they fail to raise the money they cannot do research. Only a small proportion of research funds used by academics is made available to them from their university's state subsidy. Academics wishing to do research (which they must do successfully to earn promotion) have to apply for funds in a competitive market, even from the university's own research fund. HSRC researchers, because of poor management, were mostly not answerable for how they spent their time. Not a few seem to have spent their time pursuing their own interests. There is pressure now to give up 'hobby' research and seek out lucrative contracts, but if a researcher does not raise contract funds there appear to be no sanctions.

Although research staff complain about the pressure they are under to find contracts, plans to become self-financing are relatively modest:

4b. To endeavour to ensure that a minimum of 30% of the HSRC's research income will by 1994 be derived from sources other than those in the public sector. (TEMPO 1991)

Some steps towards cost-effectiveness have nonetheless been made. A few of the less obviously social scientific enterprises which had found a home at the HSRC over many decades have been 'decentralised' to other institutions: SA Sport Information, the South African Centre for Arts Information, SA Literature Reviews and Contree, the journal on regional history. (TEMPO 1991) In addition, all posts which become vacant are frozen and have to be motivated for, and the imbalance between research and non-research staff (342 to 614 in 1990) is to be corrected through natural wastage of non-research staff. Overall, 'staff is to be reduced by 5% a year over the next three years (mainly through utilizing vacancies and the staff turnover).' (TEMPO 1991)

Can the HSRC become cost-effective in the future? We have seen that HSRC researchers are expensive in comparison with university ones even though they do not use expensive scientific equipment, other than computers. Those who are not good researchers are not retrained or redeployed, nor do they have some other useful task to get on with, as academics who are not good researchers do, namely undergraduate teaching. The HSRC has not utilized its recent restructuring to rid itself of 'dead wood' research staff nor superfluous administration and support staff through a fair and sensible redundancy programme. This does not bode well for its future responsiveness to demands that it be more cost-effective.

What is to be done?

Research institutions have a general tendency to ossify through lack of contact with the outside world. They do not even have the stimulus of having to teach sceptical and curious young students. Unlike universities which experience constant pressure from students and junior staff to change with the times and even to pre-empt the future, the staff of research institutes tend to be politically apathetic and supportive of the status quo. There is something to be said for scientific research institutions which do the expensive research at the public expense which no particular farmer or capitalist firm can afford to do for itself. Such institutes carry out particular research projects that will benefit the economy of the country as a whole, and they may do both basic and applied research. However, there are few parallels to be drawn between institutions which do research on mining, farming or factory production and those which do social scientific research.

South Africa cannot afford a pure research institution like the HSRC, especially once government monies are distributed more favourably towards the disadvantaged. Some other way must therefore be found to perform the *essential* functions of the HSRC, and the over-staffing must be dealt with as humanely as possible. The most radical way - and it is not the only way - in which this might be done is outlined below.

The original rationale for setting up a research institution outside of any government department was, according to the Minister of Education in his speech proposing the foundation of the HSRC, that 'research can only be conducted with difficulty as part of a government department' (Hansard, 21/2/68 cols 946 - 951). The Minister provided no supporting evidence for this assertion, and it is not self-evidently true. Indeed the contrary could arguably be the case. Having a research institute at its disposal which did not have to be paid for its services out of its own budget, might well have encouraged a department to run off a string of interesting research questions and have them attended to by the HSRC. The only case in which departments used to have to pay for research done by the HSRC was if they failed to submit the proposal in time for the HSRC to include it in its annual budget submission to the government. If the matter was urgent the department had to pay for it. This cannot have been conducive to a sense that research findings are costly and ought to be requested only when they are likely to be implemented.

The fact that departments now have to pay for HSRC research out of their own budgets probably makes for greater efficiency, but it still does not ensure that the results of research will be used. Indeed it is arguable that research will correspond more precisely to departmental requirements if the researchers are located within each department, and are thus in constant exchange with the policy makers. Being able to have the research brief adjusted on a weekly basis is more likely to ensure that policy makers get exactly what they want and that they will use the results.

HSRC research staff who work more or less directly supplying information to government departments, for example, on human resources requirements, should be re-employed in the relevant department. Where a department requires expertise that it does not have for a one-off project, there is no reason why this should not be

obtained by farming it out to academics or university-based research centres. These researchers are clearly in general just as good as HSRC ones, and they have the virtue of having to be employed by a department for only as long as their expertise is required. Of course the HSRC has some outstanding research workers who would readily find a place in the best of universities.

At present the HSRC budget is in two parts, the Agency budget ostensibly for 'basic' research and the Internal budget for 'applied'. There is no inherent rationale for this division. Both basic and applied research could be done by, say, doubling the present A budget and removing the remainder of the HSRC budget. The A budget could then be distributed according to new national criteria appropriate to the country's needs. This could include a defined proportion for basic research. Decisions about the distribution of the budget would be made by appropriate committees drawn from academics, the public and private sectors, trade unions and the wider community. The money could be used for a mix of national projects, which combine research skills country-wide, and the projects of individual academics.

The remaining role for the HSRC would be as a small and efficient secretariat servicing the committees.

Summary of future proposals:

- The HSRC to be scaled down to become a small secretariat servicing committees that make decisions about the distribution of the present A Budget.
- The A Budget to be increased, perhaps doubled, in size. The I Budget to be abolished.
- The committees distributing the budget to consist of social scientists plus representatives of all interested parties in the community. Moneys to be distributed according to a nationally agreed set of criteria.
- Those members of the HSRC staff whose skills are needed, to be transferred to relevant government departments to perform their research functions.
- Remaining HSRC staff to be offered fair and reasonable redundancy packages.

NOTES

1. A recent addition to the executive is Lawrence Schlemmer.
2. Information kindly supplied by Richard Dawson of the Personnel Dept of the HSRC.
3. Calculated as follows:

<i>expenditure on -</i>	academic activities.....143 million#
<i>less income from -</i>	tuition fees.....29 million
	other non-state sources.....6 million#

Source: University of Stellenbosch, Rector's Report, 1989

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DISCUSSION

LAURIE SCHLEMMER: I am a senior executive of the HSRC. It appears to be a different organisation to the one that Caroline White works for. I believe that I can speak with some authority about changes taking place in the HSRC because I am in some measure responsible for those changes.

I think that it is very important for parastatal organisations like the HSRC to be supportive of research in universities and operate to the benefit of the community. This applies particularly to activities undertaken with funds derived from the state subsidy - the parliamentary grants. There is absolutely no sense in having the bureaucratic research function for its own self. The way one has to view this is to understand some of the difficulties of research. One has to realise that universities are to some degree atomised, in the sense that there are all sorts of struggling lecturers all over the place, teaching loads that are too heavy, who also want to do research. They're trying but very often it's difficult to acquire the money.

For this reason, I see that the kind of research that a parastatal organisation should do as being fundamentally supportive of the more specific, more particular kinds of interests that one finds at universities. Until recently the most visible contribution of the HSRC to universities has been the grants and bursaries made from the so-called A budget. The internal budget, however, must also make a substantial contribution to research stakeholders outside the HSRC. Our major co-operative programmes on 'Affordable Social Security' and 'Affordable Personal Safety' are very large. They have been established for some years and virtually all the research is undertaken by university academics or by people in welfare work in communities. From now on, in my own group, all research undertaken with state funds has to involve outside participants, either in universities, NGOs or communities. They may not do all the work but there will be substantial opportunities for joint participation. We have, in addition, defined a specific category of research which, for want of a better label, we call 'social responsibility' projects. All these projects must be addressed to disadvantaged community needs and must involve community participation.

I think that a major role for the HSRC is to emphasise data base activities. It must assemble information and make it available to everyone. It has the capacity in size in order to do it more effectively than isolated or atomised academics can do.

Secondly, the HSRC has started to develop various kinds of information bases on critical problems on a nationwide basis, which is incredibly expensive, and which once again the universities may not have the infrastructure to do. Thirdly, I think these organisations must do the duller, monotonous and time consuming but essential kinds of research that universities would not want to do. Fourthly, I think that we've got to offer platforms for cooperation between academics and ourselves. We already have such co-operative ventures established, at UCT, Natal and Wits, and it is this kind of 'decentralised' activity which is going to expand most rapidly in the future.

Obviously large parastatal organisations which functioned for so long under the past dispensation in South Africa are not likely to be able to change overnight as it were. In the case of the HSRC, however, fairly fundamental changes in goals and organisational commitments have been taking place since the mid eighties.

CAROLINE WHITE: I don't see any conflict between doing the sort of research that Professor Schlemmer thinks needs to be done, and the way which I suggest. That is, having people who are doing the boring research and the data bases in government departments which do that research and have an on-going relationship with people who are doing that. And having academics sort of released - on the money that they get from the HSRC and perhaps working for a year or two years - released from their teaching to do full time research. My problem is with the organisation that I see not adapting to the future. Talking about allocation but actually not doing it.

DAVID LEWIS: I'd like to say something about the CSIR's contribution, and his premise for the notion that says there is a fiscal and policy reality out in the world that forces an institution like the CSIR to orient itself towards the market and towards the private sector. I understand that reality. I must say that I'm a little bit alarmed at the view that makes the market not a constraint but a virtue. And your entire presentation is based on the fact that CSIR is going to really do something effective now; it's going to become an effective institution, because it is oriented towards the market. I think if it does so, it will be in spite of its orientation towards the market, not because of an orientation towards the market.

GEOFF GARRETT: You need to broaden our definition of the market. So if I hear you saying, 'The market is identified with industrial/commercial sector,' then that is a very important part of our market. But our market is much broader than that. What we're saying is that we are driven by needs in our environment, and not just the soccer field analogy of doing our own thing, having a good time, like the old days. Five years ago we were doing very little in developing communities. Now in the building division, we have five separate studies in low-cost housing.

DAVID LEWIS: Your entire presentation seems to me to be entrenched in the notion that out there in the real world are those who actually pay for research, who'll get an effective scientific institution established. And I just think that that's wrong. I don't think that the alternative that I'm counterposing is appropriate technology for local communities. I'm saying that the mainstream industrial science and technology policy and hardware cannot be developed in the context of market relations only.

MOSES NGOASHENG: The question relates to Dr Garrett in relation to the fact

that the CSIR now is required to earn more money in terms of its budget. Looking at development of technology for communities that don't have the money to pay. Because if you are required to earn more money in terms of your projects and policies, you're going to be biased towards customers who can pay. And communities can't pay. How do you in fact come to determine that certain communities need certain technology? How do you go about defining your projects and finding out about the requirements of communities? Is it an internal decision? If it is not internal, if it's an outsider involved, what other forces are involved in determining those priorities?

GEOFF GARRETT: There is a pressure on earning more and more of our money through contracts. However, the name of the game is changing such that down the road, in two to three or five years time, obviously more money will become available for developing communities work. Therefore, it is appropriate in our environment for us to invest components of our parliamentary grants in developing communities work, with no money coming back in.

MIKE MORRIS: There is no particular virtue in the market; there's no particular virtue in the state in itself as an institution funding research; and there's no particular virtue in universities. Putting money into any one of these three institutions as they currently exist could just as much lead to cost ineffectiveness, useless kind of research. I've done research which is straight market-oriented, for example, and it produces a particular kind of telephone which is extremely useful for communities. What blocks it currently is the state's inability to grasp the nettle and actually deal with it in an appropriate kind of a way. Universities are riddled with uselessness and inefficiency as well. There is no particular virtue in deciding to put the money into universities either. The issue is trying to set up a correct kind of relationship between the state research organisations and the markets in the sense of private sector community, trade unions, etc. Setting up the correct kind of relationships with them, and having a particular kind of social vision, a plan, a growth strategy, which will enable us to move forward.

THE URBAN FOUNDATION : Transformation Possibilities

Dan Smit

For many on the left to juxtapose the terms 'Urban Foundation' and 'Transformation' is to construct an oxymoron. Hostility towards the Urban Foundation (UF) by particularly the intelligentsia on the left, has been the rule rather than the exception from the beginning. However, whatever view one wishes to take of the role that the UF has played in the past, the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the dawning of a 'new South Africa', has demanded that actors across the political spectrum reassess their relationships with others. The forging of new alliances and the opening of new cleavages has become the order of the day. Moreover, for many actors on the left, the question of alliances and relationships with others demands an ideologically less dogmatic approach than has been true in the past. Uncertainty at least should be acknowledged.

But it is not only actors on the left that need approach relationships with more flexibility. The Urban Foundation has in the past underemphasised the importance of building very sound relationships with the left and has concentrated instead on achieving 'structural' change by shifting government policy. Power relations have however shifted quite substantially in favour of the democratic movement necessitating a reappraisal of strategy on the part of all those who wish to be significant actors in the political economy, including the UF.

It is against this very fluid background that this paper addresses the relationship between transformation and the Urban Foundation. However pedantic the preceding sentence may sound, it should be noted that the words are carefully chosen. This is because there are a variety of ways in which the question of the Urban Foundation's relation to transformation can be explored. I rather suspect that the primary concern of this conference is to assess the extent to which it is both desirable and feasible to bring the institutions being assessed here under the *control* of the democratic movement. This implies a primary interest in transforming the institutions themselves rather than seeing a role for them as currently constituted.

But there may of course be a very strong case for not attempting to change the constitution of organisations such as the Urban Foundation in order to promote transformation. Such a position would derive from an analysis of what the UF, as currently constituted and serving the constituency that it currently does, could contribute to transformation. This paper will as a consequence attempt to address possibilities for the UF in transformation from both angles. In short it will be argued that there are some components of the Urban Foundation which are amenable to greater democratic control and which should be brought under such control. There are other components which are not only less amenable, but which can play a very important role as currently constituted. Instead of calling for their transformation,

the democratic movement should, it will be argued, develop new and more constructive modes of interaction to ensure that the potential of these components can be realised.

The Urban Foundation was established in mid-December 1976 as a Section 21 (not for gain) company. It is widely accepted that the uprisings in Soweto earlier that year (June 16) and the country-wide tumult that followed had shaken the captains of industry who were fast losing confidence in Pretoria's ability to deal with deteriorating conditions in the townships (Leadership, 1987). With Anglo-American's Harry Oppenheimer as chairperson, and the doyen of Afrikaans business, Anton Rupert, as deputy, the UF began operating early in 1977. By 1978 regional offices and boards had been established in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Its initial finances came almost exclusively from the local business community, the biggest piece coming from Anglo-American itself. Reliance on essentially local sources has continued largely because the UF was politically blocked in attempts to raise funds abroad. In 1991 some R 28,3 million of a total of R 35 million in donations received by the UF came from local sources, a freer fund-raising environment notwithstanding (Urban Foundation, 1991).

While the goals of the Urban Foundation were rather fuzzy, initial emphasis fell on raising the socio-economic circumstances of the black population across a wide spectrum of areas (housing, health, education, welfare, community development and so on). Like many other development agencies in their formative years, the UF spread its resources across far too wide a net of activities (135 projects in the first 2 months) (Leadership, 1987). It also discovered that it was difficult to operate as a development agency in a policy environment that was fundamentally antipathetic to the kind of approach being pursued by the UF. Thus quite early in its existence the UF recognised that it would have to actively seek change in the policy environment if it was to succeed in its development objectives. As a consequence the organisation began to develop a strategic framework which was to remain relatively robust through the first decade and a half of the UF's existence.

The essence of the framework resides in the way in which the UF has theorised its roles. Two major roles were isolated, namely the roles of 'change agent' and 'development agent'. The change agent role has involved promoting changes in the legislative and institutional framework of South Africa necessary to eliminate apartheid and to promote development practices. The development agency role on the other hand has involved 'making things happen' in carefully targeted areas of development activity. Development itself has also been conceptualised as avoiding 'hand-outs' and instead promoting self-sustaining enablement. Of course neither the change agency role nor the development agency role have been pursued in a political and ideological vacuum.

While the UF has steadfastly worked to eliminate apartheid in all of the areas of development in which it has worked, the elimination of apartheid has not been the only thing on its agenda. From the beginning the UF has also systematically attacked the statism and welfarism of the apartheid regime's approach to development. While many on the left share the UF's aversion to paternalism, they have been unhappy

about the monetarist disposition of many of the UF's policy proposals. In short many of the UF's proposals have been perceived as being 'plain mean' and as relieving the state of its responsibility to provide for the poor. Thus the UF's penchant for introducing market relations and bringing the private sector into development has been received with skepticism in many quarters. But, as will be argued later, the UF's work in this regard may, ironically, prove very valuable to the democratic movement in post-apartheid South Africa. For the moment however it is useful to reflect on the UF's achievements and failures in attempting to perform as a change agent on the one hand and a development agent on the other.

As far as structural change is concerned the UF's major impact has been achieved in the fields of urbanisation and housing. The UF would claim credit and responsibility for convincing government to accept the permanence of black urbanites and to abandon the temporary sojourner philosophy. This battle began in the late 1970's with the UF pushing hard for the introduction of 99-year leasehold tenure for blacks in urban areas. Having achieved this goal the UF continued to push for full freehold rights which were granted a few years later. The struggle surrounding the permanence of urban blacks reached its climax in the mid-1980's with the abolition of influx control and the introduction of a 'positive urbanisation' strategy (articulated in a white paper on urbanisation in 1986). Of course many actors have contributed to the impetus leading to the scrapping of influx controls, but it is arguable that the UF's role was particularly significant. This contribution has essentially come in two forms. Firstly, the UF was largely instrumental in mobilising the powerful business constituency into a coherent lobbying group for the abolition of influx control. Secondly, through careful and sustained research they were able to present compelling evidence on the failure of influx control as well as articulate convincing alternate approaches to urban growth management. Both kinds of contribution are worth dwelling on since they provide significant clues as to the role that the UF could play in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Recognising the need to bring political clout to the debate about influx control, the UF initiated the formation, in November 1985, of the Private Sector Council on Urbanisation. The Council is comprised of the six national employer organisations (AHI, NAFSOC, SEIFSA, ASSOCOM, FCI, Chamber of Mines) as well as several prominent business individuals, important members of the black community and the UF. The fact that the UF were successful in winning the support and participation of the umbrella body organising Afrikaans business interests (i.e. the AHI), was particularly significant in unifying the business community's assault on government policy.

In the six or so years since its formation the Private Sector Council has contributed resources (usually money) and time to the development of proposals for a new national urbanisation policy and strategy. A highlight of this effort (apart from the abolition of influx control) has been the publication of several largely progressive and private-sector-supported documents called the *Policies for a New Urban Future Series*. But perhaps more important from the point of view of assessing the UF's future role in transformation is to note that the UF has achieved more than getting

an overall mandate from capital. It has organised and mobilised the private sector into providing active support.

There can be little question that the UF is highly regarded by the private sector and has the capacity to *deliver* this sector in development initiatives. To the extent that the collaboration of the business community is central to the success of such initiatives (and I would argue that in many instances it is), it follows that a critical role of the UF in the future is to continue to deliver the private sector. It is worth noting that such delivery is likely to be anything but straightforward. Given the dramatic 'reform' progress that has been made in the country, it is possible that the business community may now want to retreat back into the business it knows best, making profits. Moreover if a democratic government raises the tax burden, decreased 'social responsibility' spending is likely to be the consequence. An institution which understands the private sector and has their confidence may well be required to sustain business community commitment to change.

The UF's achievements in pursuing structural change are not confined to the reversal of apartheid urbanisation policies. The other area in which it has had a major impact is in the introduction of the legislative and institutional machinery necessary to allow the private sector to become involved in the delivery of low-income housing. For some the entire UF initiative in this regard has been pernicious and largely counter-revolutionary. Bond (1991) for example has argued that the UF's interventions have been designed to facilitate the flow of capital from the primary to the secondary circuit and so ease a crisis of overaccumulation. Rather far-fetched arguments of this sort notwithstanding, the UF has revealed a great deal of ingenuity in attempting to lure the private sector into low-income housing. The introduction of the Loan Guarantee Fund, the Group Credit Company and the Land Investment Trust are all highly creative examples of such ingenuity.

It is also probably fair comment to assert that if there is one area of substantive knowledge and expertise that the UF can claim to have cornered it is precisely in this area of involving the private sector in low-income housing initiatives. Whilst some on the left might be skeptical about the value of such substantive knowledge, I would argue that in many spheres of development (including housing) a democratic government is not going to be able to rely entirely on the fiscus (in order to finance such development). Already high levels of government spending on the one hand and high inflation on the other impose major constraints on what is possible. This is not to say that the democratic alliance's policies will not be more redistributionary, more welfarist or more statist than those proposed by the UF. It is simply to argue the mobilisation of private sector capital and delivery capacity will nonetheless be inevitable and it is the UF who are way ahead of the pack in developing approaches (both technical and political) to achieve this. An important role for the UF into the future then would be to continue to develop instruments which secure the flow of private sector capital into low-income housing and other initiatives. The expertise which has been built up over time must be built on.

Before proceeding to an analysis of the UF's performance as a development agent, it is worth dwelling briefly on an aspect of the UF's capacity which has been

developed largely in relation to its role as a structural change agent, its research capacity. There can be little question that the UF has demonstrated research management capacity. Each of the policy documents which form part of the *Policies for a New Urban Future Series*, have been backed by a major research initiative. Literally hundreds of researchers, practitioners and academics were mobilised into a policy relevant research effort. Given the imperatives to produce policy positions on a range of issues, the democratic alliance would be well advised to learn from the approach adopted by the UF. The possibility of utilising the UF to manage certain democratic alliance initiatives should also be considered.

It should be noted however that the UF has been reluctant to be 'commissioned' to do work for others arguing that it is not a consultant but a development actor in its own right. This stance seems at odds with the UF's strategic shift towards facilitation which will be explored further shortly. It should be noted too that the UF's research capacity is essentially a *management* capacity. The number of 'in-house' researchers that the UF has is very small (perhaps no more than 2 people). In fact the UF is a very 'slim' organisation in staffing terms and in relation to its output. What it has done very successfully is to mobilise, manage and co-ordinate a community of researchers outside the UF. This community is not markedly different from the community of researchers which is, or should be, contributing to the democratic alliance's policy effort. In fact reading through the list of contributors to the UF's research effort is not dissimilar from scanning a listing of 'who's who' on the left. What the UF's lists do reveal however is that they have been more successful in avoiding the introversion and ideological ghettoization of research than is true of the left. The important overall lesson of the UF's success in its policy relevant research effort, by comparison with others, is that appropriate management rather than researchers and resources is the key issue to be addressed if the democratic alliance is to produce policy more effectively.

Turning to the record of the UF as a 'development agent', it should be noted at the outset that the UF, like many NGOs, have constantly been bedeviled by uncertainty, at a strategic level, as to whether they should be innovators tackling a limited number of 'pilot' projects, or whether they should be focusing on delivery at scale. The pioneering of innovation through pilot projects has always been part of the UF's portfolio of activities. A good example is the use of pilot projects to demonstrate the viability of self-help housing. Between 1979 and 1983 the UF implemented a 'managed' self-help scheme in Khutsong near Carletonville. The scheme was successful enough to solicit state collaboration in the second major self-help project, Inanda Newtown which commenced in 1983. These projects threw many of the self-help approach's advantages and many of its deficiencies into stark relief. They certainly contributed to greater acceptance of decentralised approaches to housing delivery even on the left. However having drawn attention to the possibilities through demonstration, the UF essentially withdrew from this area of activity rather than become involved in delivery at scale.

In the late 1980's the UF returned to informal settlements with the focus this time on the upgrading of existing settlement. Failed projects in Crossroads in the Western

Cape, and St Wendolin's near Durban highlighted the high risk nature of this terrain of operation. But in the early 1990's the UF has had a major success at Bester's Camp near Durban. This 8 site project is the biggest single project ever undertaken by the UF. The availability of funds from the Independent Development Trust (IDT) has also led the UF to tackle very large projects at Soweto-on-Sea in Port Elizabeth, and Freedom Square in Bloemfontein. Of course the high risk nature of the activity has again raised the issue of whether or not the UF should be involved in delivery at scale. In fact the risks associated with delivery at scale along with developments in the political economy have led the UF to adopt an altogether new strategic approach. This approach cannot however be appreciated without reference to the UF's boldest delivery at scale initiative - its housing utility companies.

During the 1980's the UF established a number of utility companies registered under Section 21 of the Companies Act. Uticos were set-up in Cape Town (Cape Utility Homes), Durban (Innova), Pietermaritzburg (Azalea), Port Elizabeth (Unifound), Bloemfontein (Bloemanda), Johannesburg (Family Housing Association) and the Ciskei (Masizakhe). While the activities of these companies were geared primarily at the upper end of the black housing market, there can be little doubt that delivery at scale was the intention and achievements in this regard have not been unimpressive. Since their inception the Uticos have produced some 4 467 new homes. This it should be noted, constitutes the biggest contribution in housing delivery by any non-governmental organisation in the country. As should be apparent therefore, the UF's house-building capacity is not to be sniffed at.

The Uticos have however run into serious difficulties in the early 1990's. Economic recession, high interest rates and several other factors contributed to a situation in which they lost R17 million on a turnover of R11,7 million in 1991. In order to keep the Uticos alive the UF has had to rely on support from the IDT and has had to dig deep into its own resources. The crisis in the Uticos has precipitated a crisis in the UF itself since Utico difficulty has placed the entire organisation at risk. The Uticos have as a consequence been dramatically reorganised and rationalised and several operations have been closed down. They have also committed themselves to moving down-market and to an almost exclusive focus on site-and-service schemes. Viewed from the perspective of development and change, such a shift is to be welcomed. Current difficulties notwithstanding, the Uticos still possess substantial housing delivery capacity. A post-apartheid South Africa is going to have to mobilise all of the capacity it has and extend it substantially if houses are to be delivered at the rate and scale required.

As noted earlier the Uticos crisis along with developments in the South African political economy have led to major changes in UF strategy. In my view the shift presents major opportunities for the democratic alliance in advancing its transformation objectives. An important component of the shift, is directly related to the crisis in the Uticos. In order to reduce the vulnerability of an entire development institution that often goes with involvement in implementation at scale, the UF has taken the position that most of its implementation projects will be 'cut loose' from the UF and will operate as separate legal entities. The UF will continue to offer

services to these operating units (accounting, fund-raising, research support etc.), but the latter will be free to establish their own boards of directors and their own direction. As a consequence these operating units offer real transformation possibilities in the sense that it would be both appropriate and feasible to bring these units more directly into the democratic alliance. The Natal Region of the UF's informal settlement's division for example, is an outstanding implementing agency which is moving towards full autonomy. The democratic alliance has an opportunity to shape its future directions through strong participation on the board of the new operation and through entering into direct collaborative arrangements around specific projects. It would in all probability be wise to assess all of the UF's projects which are to become autonomous and to enter into negotiations with those projects and operating units which the alliance would like to be closer to.

The other major shift in UF strategy, i.e. the shift away from an emphasis on structural change agent to that of development and change facilitator, has been precipitated largely by rapid reformist changes that have occurred since de Klerk's February 2 1990 'turning point' speech. In some ways the UF's role as structural change agent has been overtaken by events.

The precise form that a new 'facilitation' role will take is yet to be seen. Apparently what is envisaged is the building of the country's development capacity by extending its development know-how to other agencies. While the UF has substantial development knowledge and management skills, there are reasons for doubting the appropriateness of a facilitation role for it. Liaising sensitively with development agencies close to the democratic movement has not been the UF's strong point. In part this is due to the aggressive and competitive stance taken towards the UF by service organisations and other NGO's operating on the same terrain. But it has also been due to the very arrogant style adopted by the UF in its dealing with others. It is not just about style and competition however. Real political and ideological differences do exist between the UF and the democratic movement's NGOs. In any event it is likely that the UF will in the near future be looking to establish a new relationship with the democratic movement and others. Opportunities for constructive collaborative work may emerge and each possibility should be considered on its merits.

While it is important for the UF *core* to continue delivering the *private sector* as positive participants in development initiatives, thought should also be given to the possibility of dramatically broadening the constituency to which the UF is answerable. Why for example, should the labour movement not become a partner in directing the UF's direction and work? After all it is local capital's 'social responsibility' allocation that funds the UF's work, and workers have in the past had success in gaining greater control over the way in which 'social responsibility' money is used. Unlike many government institutions many of the UF's staff members are progressive people and I would estimate, on the basis of the two years that I worked for the UF, that at least half would vote for the democratic alliance in an election, and the other half for the Democratic Party. Some of the senior executives within the UF are however libertarians in the Thatcherite mould and have

often been responsible for the 'meanness' of some of the UF's policy directions and proposals. The core may as a consequence not be that amenable to change, but the possibility needs to be explored nonetheless.

Whilst it is not possible in a paper of this length to deal comprehensively with the role of the UF and the chances of transforming it, the following general arguments have been made about the desirability and possibility of developing new relationships with the UF. As far as the desirability is concerned, it has been argued that:

- A major attribution of the UF is its ability to deliver the private sector in major development initiatives. To the extent that it is inconceivable to envisage a major development program such as the use of housing as a lead sector without private sector support, it follows that any new relationships with the UF (or any attempts to transform it) should not jeopardise such capacity.
- The one area of substantive capacity that the UF has which is not easily replicated outside of the organisation is its knowledge on how to bring the private sector into low-income development initiatives. This capacity should be encouraged and the left should take the policy work done here seriously.
- The UF, while not an institution filled with researchers, has a demonstrated capacity to manage policy relevant research and to turn it into concrete policy. Much can be learned from the UF, and its management capacity could be used to good effect.
- The UF has substantial development implementation capacity. South Africa will need to mobilise all of the capacity that it has if the development challenge is to be met.
- People in the UF are generally more progressive than is true of many government institutions, which suggests new relationships will be embraced enthusiastically by UF functionaries.

As far as possibilities for bringing the UF under greater democratic control are concerned, it has been argued that :

- The 'cutting-loose' of several UF implementation agencies and operating units as separate legal entities offers real opportunities for substantial democratic movement influence over the future direction and nature of such operations.
- The strategic shift of the 'core' component of the UF towards facilitation offers opportunities for the forging of new relationships since the UF is keen to establish such relationships.
- The possibility of making the UF accountable to a joint 'capital/labour' constituency should not be ruled out. Any move in this direction should not however jeopardise the UF's ability to deliver the private sector.

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RESEARCH AND THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Mike Muller

Introduction

To suggest that social research will be needed to support the transformation of South African society is to state the obvious. What is less obvious is how such research should be structured, in particular by whom it should be commissioned and managed.

The purpose of this paper in reviewing the past, present and future of research in the Development Bank of Southern Africa is to offer a real world case for discussion.

Much of DBSA's research to date has been done in support of the policies of its sponsors. As such policies are abandoned, it might be expected that the work done would be of little value if not downright wasteful. Yet there are examples of research which has been both useful and even potentially 'transformational' emanating from DBSA.

In analysing the reasons for this, an important theoretical point is highlighted. There is a growing consensus, within the physical sciences at least, that research and development generates more benefits to society (or at least to the economy) when it is conducted close to the operational processes¹. The same might be expected of the social sciences. Indeed, the current fashion for Essential National Health Research², which seeks to focus on the operational processes within health systems rather than on biomedical issues, derives from a similar analysis.

In this context, the operational field of the DBSA is a critical one for the transformation debate. The formal objective of the organisation is to promote redistributive development with a parallel emphasis on 'human development'. This is done through the targeted use of development finance which requires an intimate involvement in the operational side of 'development'.

As we move from a focus on conflict through the problematic of transformation to the issues of development, this operational involvement will become more important. It will be argued that, because of its operational base, an institution like DBSA might in future be an important research player. Whether there is a role for DBSA as such will depend on whether a future government decides that an agency for development finance is needed and whether it proves possible to transform the existing institution's ideological base.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa

Some background details about DBSA and the organisation of research within it will, together with two case studies, help to illustrate these points. The DBSA was established in 1983 in response to ideas presented at the Carlton and Good Hope Conferences of government and business. It was an integral part of the regional

development policies of the time and as such was structured as a 'multilateral' regional institution of which South Africa and the four 'independent' TBVC states were members.

Control is placed in the hands of a Council of Governors in which the majority of members are from the South African cabinet or its agencies. Routine control of management is however carried out by a Board of Directors which is representative of business and other interests.

Funding for DBSA came initially exclusively from the SA Treasury (apart from nominal share capital held by the TBVC members). These grants, which currently amount to R500 million per year, were further supported by loan repayments which began in 1986 and by borrowings from the local capital market in 1990.

Loans were initially made almost exclusively to homeland governments and their agencies to finance infrastructure (roads, telecommunications, water resource and energy projects), business development (through Development Corporations) urban development and agricultural development (again through agricultural development corporations). Latterly, urban development projects in Black Local Authority areas have been financed as well as a few relatively small projects involving non governmental organisations.

As a Development Bank, DBSA sees its role as more than simply a lender. Its business is stated as being 'to mobilise and provide loan finance, technical assistance and advice for sustainable development projects' but also, in addition, it 'has become increasingly involved in economic reform issues pertinent to the environment in which it operates'.³

This has included the provision of secretariat services for the 'Joint Financial Advisory Committees' (JFACs) which negotiate South African government budgetary contributions to certain of the TBVC/SGT governments. It has also encompassed facilitation in local government negotiations (particularly in Soweto and later the Central Witwatersrand Metropolitan Chamber) as well as involvement in the land debates as will be described below.

The Role of Research Within DBSA

In this context, it is possible to review the role of research within DBSA. First, the resources available for research can be identified. The use of loans raised in the market to 'gear' the grant income now enables DBSA to lend approximately R1000 million annually at subsidised interest rates. The income received from loan interest and other investments further enables DBSA to pay its staff related costs (over R70 million if travel costs are included) as well as to spend nearly R4 million on technical assistance grants and nearly R6 million on consultants' services annually⁴. It is the staff resources together with the consultants and technical assistance budgets that provide the DBSA with its research capacity.

Research was initially a high profile activity with a separate Institute of Development Research whose director was one of the four members of the 'top management' team. The research done was either that requested by client institutions or identified internally. It was carried out by DBSA staff and external consultants and researchers.

More recently, responsibility for research activity has been brought back into the main structure of the organisation. A Centre for Policy Analysis which is part of the Policy and Strategy Complex of the Bank carries out the day to day administration of the research programme although research can be commissioned from - and executed by - any operational group. With this change, the focus was placed more on policy analysis than on research per se.

The areas which have been highlighted by the organisation as important contributions include:

- Regional Development Policy (DBSA managed the research and policy formulation process, which has led inter alia to the revised approach to industrial development incentives, on behalf of the SATBVC Development Council of Ministers);
- Urban Development and Housing (as part of DBSA's move into the funding of projects in black urban areas in 'white' South Africa, this has been a consistent focus and has included inputs to the 1986 White Paper on Urbanisation and the current de la Ruer Commission on Housing);
- Land Reform (see below);
- 'Poverty Policy' (including submissions to the government's Central Economic Advisory Services on approaches to increasing the labour absorption capacity of the SA economy and to the Calitz 'Poverty Committee' on various aspects of strategies for the reduction in poverty).

In addition, there is the separate area of 'data research'. While the collection and collation of data has been largely for internal use, there has been a specific focus on bringing together data from all participating states on a comparable basis as well as an emphasis on collecting data by economic region rather than by state. Further, because DBSA has a mandate to consider economic development of South Africa as a whole (by virtue of the fact that its 'member states' coincide with '1910 South Africa'), it has been able to collate information on a national basis which the formal agencies of the state were unable to do. This serves a valuable planning purpose to all who need planning data about South Africa as a whole since this is not available through normal statistical channels.

Prioritisation and Allocation of Research Resources

As in most large institutions, two processes run in parallel within DBSA with regard to the prioritisation and allocation of resources. There is a formal 'assignment' process by which research proposals generated from either an operational sector or from an external client are evaluated and the necessary resources assigned. As with the formal development funding process, this can be extremely cumbersome with, in some cases, more resources devoted to the process than to the final research.

This has promoted the second, informal, process. A certain amount of *ad hoc* work is done on individual or departmental initiative without any formal screening or approval. Further senior management frequently calls on staff resources in particular, but also on external resources, when there is a need for urgent work on specific issues.

Even within DBSA, there is in consequence little transparent allocation of research resources or transparency regarding the actual use of resources since much of the activity is globalised under departmental staff budgets. Attempts are being made to introduce a more structured approach. Since this will inevitably entail both a greater control over the use of resources as well as transparency as to their use, there is a natural bureaucratic resistance and the process is proving to be a lengthy one. The case studies presented below do not deal with the allocation issues but rather relate back to the fundamental question of the type of research that is conducted and its potential to contribute to transformation in South Africa.

Setting Apartheid in Concrete? - A Demographic Case Study

Basic demographic data is a key planning tool for social and economic development. So the publication by DBSA last year of a formal projection of the growth of the South African population⁵ was important. The document was, according to the introduction, intended to support government and private institutions 'who have been depending heavily on demographic estimates and projections in planning for social and economic development'.

When the report was launched it was emphasised that it covered the whole of South Africa (i.e. including the TBVC states) although the formal title still refers to 'Southern Africa'. The inclusion of all South Africa's people in such projections is, as noted above, vital for economic planning.

The freedom to address the real South Africa has however been considerably constrained in the past and these constraints are reflected in the document. Its projections make the remarkable assumption that the process of eviction of black South Africans from 'white' South Africa is to continue. The spatial distributions presented have been calculated using a methodology that takes the homeland growth rates experienced during the 'bad years' of forced removals and extrapolates them, albeit at a declining rate, until 2035.

What are we to make of this? Does it suggest that the DBSA, widely recognised as among the more enlightened members of the state's constellation of institutions, is planning to set apartheid in concrete in the 21st Century? The answer is (we hope) more mundane. It is not that DBSA is part of a conspiracy to maintain apartheid nor that forced removals remain on some hidden agenda. This example simply reflects the extent to which social research is guided by institutional ideologies, be these overt or implicit. What this means is that the technical demographer, in applying the formal tools of his trade, may reflect old ideologies until such time as the consequences of change are specifically incorporated in the formal methodologies used. In this case the consequence has been that an initial opportunity to produce projections that will help plan the development, or even the transformation, of South Africa has been missed. More important however, the technical basis that has been laid will make it relatively easy to correct the initial assumptions and to generate a useful product in the future.

Agriculture and Redistribution - A Transformational Input?

If the demographic work can be caricatured as an attempt to set apartheid in concrete, it should be contrasted with DBSA's contribution to the land debate. This received most attention through a paper presented (overseas) under the title 'The Potential for Black Smallholder Farmers Participation in the South African Agriculture Economy'⁶

This paper represented a radical break with the past. It essentially presented a vision of South African agriculture within which black smallholder farmers would play a major role. Points of key importance were that:

- it was assumed that agriculture in South Africa had to be restructured;
- it was argued that black smallholder farmers could be at least as efficient as white commercial farmers;
- it identified nearly 8 000 000 hectares of land that could be made available for black smallholder farmers including controversial categories such as 'indebted land' currently held by white farmers;
- on this basis it was argued that at least 500 000 smallholder farmers could be accommodated.

While the proposals can and have been criticised on a number of grounds (it has been argued for instance that what is on offer is largely more marginal land), the paper was important. It brought together data on land use and productivity that was not generally available. The conclusions it drew from this data represented a major break in approaches to land and agriculture for an agency of the South African state. This can be demonstrated by the extent of criticism that was received from traditional agricultural interest groups, the farmers' unions in particular.

A revised version of the paper⁷ has subsequently been produced in which the focus on land transfer mechanisms was reduced and the numerical data on small farmer productivity and total farmer numbers and land areas involved were omitted.

Among the key factors which produced an environment in which this policy research was produced were:

- the failure of homeland agricultural models based on large farms and settlement schemes and the consequent development and introduction of the 'farmer support programme' model by DBSA in its homeland area of operations which follows closely decades old approaches elsewhere in the Third World⁸;
- an acute awareness of the structural nature of poverty and unemployment and the extent to which it was growing⁹;
- the structural crisis in white agriculture and its relatively small contribution to the national economy coupled with an awareness that current policies were failing to exploit its potential to generate important benefits for the broader society¹⁰;
- the political primacy of the land issue in South Africa;
- the strong sense of exclusion from international practice and experience of small farmer development (which is proving relatively successful elsewhere in the region with notable successes in Zimbabwe and pathbreaking theoretical research in Swaziland) and the related need to make a credible contribution in an international forum.

It might prove interesting to examine in more detail why these particular pieces of research were done at this juncture. For the purposes of this paper however, the intention has simply been to focus attention on an example of useful policy research that has emanated from DBSA.

Comment

It would be easy to dismiss DBSA sponsored research as the increasingly irrelevant product of an apartheid institution. That would however be too simple as the case studies demonstrate. In the current period, South Africans can - and must - begin to look beyond the short term conflictual approaches to the longer term needs of transformation and development.

This does not imply that there is no longer conflict in South African society. On the contrary, there are many clear conflicts of interest that need to be resolved. But these conflicts are becoming increasingly transparent. And as the negotiating fora within which they can be identified and mediated begin to emerge, there is a growing need to provide the technical basis - starting with simple demographic and economic data - on which to negotiate.

The identification, prioritisation, resource allocation to, and management of, the necessary research thus becomes a critical issue. Much energy has gone in to the establishment of independent research capacity, perhaps more than has gone into research itself (hopefully, a useful lesson about the inefficiencies of the aid process). This has been necessary while access to information has been ideologically constrained.

The disadvantage in the present political context of the proliferation of research structures does not simply lie in the wastage of resources. It is often that the products are not accepted as anything more than reflections of the ideological position of their sponsors.

In the field of policy formulation, there will always be a need for each interest group to maintain independent analysts. This does not imply however that there is no scope for cooperation in research to provide the base data on which analysis can be done. It could be argued that too much analysis and policy formulation is currently being done on too small a data base precisely because there are not structures to promote cooperation in conducting the basic research which must underlie the process.

There would seem to be a clear and immediate need to begin to match the information requirements of what is still an extra-parliamentary opposition with the data and research resources of the state institutions. Control of these is after all the long term goal of the democratic movement and establishing the research agenda should be an early part of the process of establishing the policy agenda. In an activity like research which is necessarily formalised and structured, it would surely be possible to devise appropriate mechanisms of management acceptable to all parties.

In the longer term, it will be necessary to review the status of existing institutions of which the DBSA is a case in point. DBSA is a state institution, a member of the family of parastatals (with agencies such as the IDC) through which the state has

historically intervened in the economy. As such, should it be decided in the course of negotiations and after that there is a role for a development finance institution like DBSA, the key issues will be those of setting its new objectives and establishing acceptable systems of priority setting, management and control. That will be the main item on the agenda. But the debate and the decisions need to be informed by the requirements of transformation. In that context, the need for research and the potential 'value-added' of an institution like the DBSA must be recognised. There are few other organisations whose brief is to view the heights of the economy through development oriented glasses while keeping its feet firmly on real-life multi-sectoral ground through financing operations which are guided by social objectives. As indicated in the introduction, it is this combination that has the potential to contribute to the process of transformation and development; it is this that should guide any assessment of the value of an institution like DBSA as a focus for research.

Social research, as in the physical sciences, is likely to be more productive for society if it is organically linked to the operational processes that generate research issues. There is an immediate need in South Africa to establish structures which could promote research that would be useful and acceptable to all parties engaged in the various negotiation processes. In the context of the longer term transformation debate, it is also important to highlight the need for crosscutting intersectoral research driven by social objectives. These conditions suggest that a development finance institution such as the DBSA could play a useful future role in the generation of research issues and the promotion of the research process. Such a role would however depend on prior agreement as to the need for such a multi-sectoral development finance institution and the establishment of acceptable control structures for its overall activities.

NOTES

1. See for instance the discussion in CSIR, 1991 which refers to the work of Rosenberg and Kline in relation to linear 'science-push/market-pull' versus 'chain-linked' models of technological innovation and Jon Turney (1991)
2. See Commission on Health Research for Development (1990)
3. See DBSA (1991a)
4. 1990/91 figures ex DBSA (1991a).
5. See DBSA, (1991b)
6. See Christodoulou NT and Vink N, (1990)
7. See Brand SS, Christodoulou NT, Van Rooyen CJ and Vink N, (forthcoming).
8. Compare, for instance, my article for the *Manchester Guardian* (25.7.1974) which reviewed African experience in helping small farmers and the description of the farmer support programme in van Rooyen, Vink and Christodoulou, (1987)
9. See Ligthelm and van Niekerk, (1990)
10. See van Rooyen J and Matchetche C, (1991)

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DISCUSSION

FIROZ MANJI: Perhaps if I may be permitted to speak to you as somebody inside a development agency, with an uneasy experience that money talks. Development agencies with funds in their hands can not just influence but I suggest set the agenda. And I think this is the issue which I think can be useful to try and look at, saying, 'Where is the agenda being set, by whom, for whom, for what?'

MIKE MULLER: When we achieve a political structure wherein people are relatively happy with the institutions and their objectives, a good way to organise research is in fact to locate it close to the operational processes and not necessarily in some committee, be it in Ottawa or be it in Nairobi or be it in Pretoria.

MALE VOICE: It seems to me the issue that the role of the state and private sector research institutions in the transition period needs to be specifically addressed. Because there's a lot of energy in these agencies going into restructuring these institutions, in some ways in more progressive directions, but in many respects merely aimed at ensuring their own reproduction. It seems critical, from an outsider's standpoint, that in this period, among the issues that should be pushed quite actively are opening these organisations up to external scrutiny. OK. Let's see what you're funding, what you're doing. How willing are you, in fact, to redirect work?

MIKE MULLER: If you just look at ideology at the moment as change without pain, that these institutions can be transformed and somehow we will also manage to reproduce the glitzy people without too much damage to them.

RENE LOEWENSON: I'd just like to take the opportunity to say a little bit about Zimbabwe and the role that was played by the Whitsun Foundation in the mid seventies which undertook research in agriculture, in finance, trade, investments. These statistics became the basis for government policy to transform. Some of the private sector concerns, which are being echoed in here, were also present in the Whitsun Foundation prior to Independence in 1980. If you read some government policy documents two years hence, five years hence, after Independence, word for word they repeat the words of the Whitsun Foundation. I would submit to you that the research that was done by the Whitsun Foundation in that period was wholly on transformation. But in the end, as we know, if anyone knows about Zimbabwe, the land experience and rural development problem has been wholly untransformational.

MALE VOICE: I think we are losing a central point, that there's a role for the state - the heading of this session was the transformation of the state institutions. Who is actually going to fund more general theoretical research. We haven't addressed that question this whole session. Or is it just going to be the universities, and who's going to fund that?

DAN SMIT: I was suggesting that there was a research model which had revealed itself to be actually quite effective. And that was a model in which there was an institution which had a particular set of agendas. Those agendas were agendas related to a constituency on the one hand, and to a development objective on the other. And that when you have an institution which was geared in that kind of way, one often had very positive and productive research input. And that research input would very often be innovative in its own right. I would agree, however, that that's not sufficient, that basic research has to occur some place. That very often the innovation within institutions like the Urban Foundation or any development institution occurs within paradigms. What I would insist, though, is that the kind of model that the Urban Foundation could be, in a particular kind of research, its a model worth trying to repeat in the structures that we set up in a democratic South Africa.

RESEARCH IN AN ESTABLISHED SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

Christopher F Cresswell

The University of Natal was founded in 1910. It is thus 82 years old. Its origins are embedded in the old colonial South Africa, whose aims and objectives at the time of its founding were to perpetuate similar high educational standards found in the mother country. The university had been founded to meet the needs of the white population of the province in the new Union of South Africa.

During the course of its first forty years only slight attention was given to the training of postgraduate students. The emphasis was given to the training of undergraduates leading to bachelor and honours degrees. The majority of the graduates went abroad for any postgraduate training they wished to pursue. At that stage the research undertaken by the staff of the institution tended to be individual research. Prior to the last world war, research centered primarily on a greater understanding of the natural resources of the region and their utilization, e.g. minerals, flora, fauna, indigenous diseases, paleontology, anthropology and mining engineering, to name but a few activities. In those research areas where there were strong economic links, the research was undertaken by the industry concerned, e.g. Chamber of Mines - mining engineering, human physiology : State - agriculture, veterinary research. The staff of the established universities in those early years tended to undertake research on very much an individual basis, which seldom spilled over into postgraduate training. There were many outstanding researchers in this category, who were held in high regard in the international academic community, e.g. Broom and Dart in the field of Physical Anthropology; Schonland and Malan in Geophysics; Bews in Natal, internationally recognised for his work on the grasses of the world; the three Gear brothers for Medical research; and Solly Zuckerman, who later became Scientific Advisor to the British Prime Minister, to name but a few.

It was only after the second world war that the established South African universities developed a stronger research ethos which was associated with postgraduate training. This in part was as a result of the growing political isolation of this country through the implementation and legislation of apartheid laws entrenching this ideology into everyday life within South Africa. This resulted in diminishing numbers of white students going abroad for postgraduate studies and, at the same time, an increase in black students going abroad as they were denied access to the established universities in this country. In many ways this has had a very negative impact on the established universities whose students were at that stage predominantly white. The reason for this was that it led to inbreeding and restricted vision, as a result of the loss of contact with the outside academic community both within Africa as well as in other continents. The black postgraduate students completing their postgraduate degrees at that time were reluctant to return to South

African established universities as the opportunity for employment was minimal, due to the legislation imposed at that time restricting the so-call 'Open universities' as to who may teach and who may be taught - restricting both categories predominantly to whites. With the agreement by government in 1985 to permit the universities to choose who entered the university, either as staff or student, the situation changed considerably, even though at that time black postgraduates with considerable research experience were reluctant for obvious reasons to return. This situation has only been reversed in the past eighteen months.

One may well ask why research activities have featured so prominently in the established universities over the past thirty years. I believe there are a number of reasons. Government, through the Research Statutory Bodies, in the early eighties came to recognise a close correlation between expenditure on research and development and the potential for development within the country. This resulted in more finance becoming available for research in this period. There was a general view, recognised by the State, that South Africa as a nation could only succeed in achieving its goals in matters of health, economic strength and national security if it effectively deployed the available science and technology. There was the view expressed by State that it was only by sustained independent and creative investigation that the necessary knowledge and insight can be acquired for physical survival in a technological world. Further, the continued imposition of economic, scientific, technological and cultural boycotts and sanctions, formed the basis for further incentives for the initiation of essential research. The so-called open established universities, for ideological reasons, refused for the most part to become involved in strategic research, however financially tempting it was at the time.

I will now deal with research in the so-called established universities during the past decade. The responsibility and role of universities in respect of basic research are generally acknowledged worldwide. For example, within the United States of America more than 60% of all basic research is undertaken by universities. The position is much the same for this country. In contrast, there is a very small expenditure on research and development at established South African universities in that the business sector devotes more than 95% of the expenditure on R & D to its own research projects undertaken in-house, and only 2.7% to university research.

The University of Natal believes that the important role of universities in respect of research is emphasised by the fact that teaching, particularly in the advanced undergraduate years, and research are inseparably and symbiotically bound to one another. In this process universities train high-level person-power which is the lifeblood of all sectors of the nation.

The other important reason why universities, irrespective of whether they are traditional or not, give a high priority to research is that they have a unique task of training high-level person-power, and therefore they should be leaders within the country in the field of basic research which leads to training of personpower up to the doctorate level. This responsibility cannot be abdicated by universities. Further, universities should provide the intellectual environment which is an essential prerequisite for creativity and which caters for students with an enquiring mind.

However, universities have the responsibility for creating, preserving and transmitting to the wider community new knowledge derived from research.

Basic research, which forms the majority of university research and is at the frontiers of the discipline, hopefully is likely to lead to valuable new discoveries, which should be evaluated further by the institution as to its potential for application to the wider community. All too often the findings of research during postgraduate training remain in a thesis on a university library shelf, never to be published nor considered in relation to what value it may have to the community outside the university. Recognising the value of the work in training a postgraduate, one must still ask: are we utilizing the overall resources to the best use of the community by not considering the wider relevance of the research and the applicability of the findings? This process may require someone with different skills to either the researcher or the supervisor, as is done today in many universities in both Europe and North America. These specialists play a very key role in technology transfer.

Finally, but very importantly, it is through the research at the universities that we continue to maintain our links with the international academic community. We must recognise that it is only if we have something to offer intellectually that other institutions in the international community would wish to forge links with us. Unless we have skills and original contributions to make to a discipline, there is little reason to have any contact with institutions in this country except for paternalistic reasons, which I am sure we could well do without. Further, without establishing our value to the international community and to our neighbours in Africa, it is unlikely that we will receive the necessary overseas financial support of which we are so in need at present. It is essential to establish that we are not in need of handouts, but rather the necessary support to assist our own peoples, and those in the neighbouring territories. Further, our research achievements greatly assist in boosting the morale of our academic community as a whole.

Within the established universities it is recognised that a high level of research excellence in all disciplines is not affordable nor possible. There is a general acceptance that one places one's limited resources into a limited number of so-called *Centres of Excellence* which are of an interdisciplinary nature. Further, universities are now attempting to rationalise the use of costly research facilities and other resources by undertaking co-operative research within universities, as well as with other tertiary education institutions in the region, including technikons. Cost considerations, and the greater utilisation of skilled human resources are the motivating factors for this rationalisation. I believe I have indicated that my own established institution has up until recently attempted to meet the traditional definition of a university, which is a community of scholars who conserve, disseminate and advance knowledge, and who are united by a love of learning. However, this has had to be balanced against the realities of the closer, more immediate, context in which the university is situated. The institution also has a responsibility to the specific society which makes its existence possible. In that society the university is pre-eminently the institution directed toward change and innovation. The university, in its relation to other tertiary institutions, and its function in society, in broad terms is to act as

the major intellectual resource for supporting the activities of these other institutions. It should work with them in joint projects, take a large part of the responsibility for educating and training their staffs, both initially and through further education programmes, and provide them with new and updated knowledge arising from research in order to revitalise the teaching functions in these institutions.

The University of Natal is increasingly recognising that, despite its awareness of its obligation to serve the local community as well as at the same time maintaining international standards and contact, it is not being perceived by the local community as being of a great deal of relevance to them. This view would appear to prevail irrespective of their specific role in society, that is whether they come from industry, commerce, the economically disadvantaged community in the city and its environs, or the rural communities of Natal. This may be an unfair judgment. However, I believe there is a strong element of truth in this perception despite the university's commitment in its Mission Statement to address the economic, social and cultural needs of its local community with equal vigour as in its effort to meet its acceptance by the international academic community. In its Mission Statement it has committed itself to a strong emphasis in the area of development programmes where the intellectual demands must equal any other university programme which would require committed and well-qualified staff. This is in line with the commitment of the University of Natal to do well in whatever it undertakes.

It is my personal belief that if the university is to make any significant impact within the society in which it finds itself, it has to make itself a great deal more relevant to the society it serves than it does at the present. This does not necessarily mean it has to abdicate its present objectives - in fact, if it did it would be doing the university a disservice, as well as the people we serve. It is essential that we continue to produce highly skilled graduates and that our research contributes to the international community of scholars. It is through this process we maintain as well as develop new international academic links. It is, however, important that in addition we ensure that we make a valuable and a helpful contribution to the local community. It is through this latter activity that the university will become respected and acknowledged as a valuable asset and to which the whole community will be proud to be linked. In this manner the university will contribute to a better way of life for all the members of the community in its environs. It is in this latter and more important area that we as an institution have failed. The question that arises is how do we correct this situation, and contribute to the so-called New South Africa, or what I would prefer to call the future country, a 'Better South Africa.'

In the University of Natal's Mission Statement in 1989 we made it clear where, as an institution, we wish to be going. However, since then one senses the will to implement the sentiments of the Mission Statement as not being at the level one had hoped for initially. This has in part been due to the deterioration in the financial resources of the university. In an attempt to improve the situation in the case of the research of the established universities, the following strategy will have to be implemented with five key components :

- *Relevance:* There is the general belief within the established institutions that it

is only through 'Blue Sky' research that relevant research can be undertaken. This implies that applied research has its origins in basic research solely. There is the need to appreciate the alternative, namely the undertaking of problem-orientated research.

- *Quality:* All research activities must be monitored to ensure that quality research is being undertaken. There tends to be a lack of end-user evaluation. In the case of research sponsored by the Statutory Bodies, it is evaluated by the quality and, to some extent, by the quantity of publications. In this way the quality is evaluated by peer review, and end-user evaluation is not employed at all. If the research is to be of relevance the end-user evaluation is paramount.
- *Education Development Programmes:* In order to maintain the essential academic standards so necessary to ensure that the research is on a par with comparable studies undertaken by the international community, it is vital that potential postgraduate students coming from the educationally disadvantaged communities are given the necessary educational development that will enable them to become research practitioners on a par with those students coming from a good educational background with excellent skills in mathematics, language usage, lateral thinking and those specific to their discipline requirement for an excellent researcher. Most of these skills can be readily acquired given the necessary educational development.
- *Inter-Disciplinary and Inter-Institutional Interaction:* In serving the best interests of the greater community, inter-disciplinary interaction should be encouraged. For example, in the new university Rural Community Development Programme currently being established, the need for joint research to be undertaken between the Faculties of Agriculture, Medicine, Engineering, Architecture and Social Science is of paramount importance - otherwise good sense will not prevail, particularly if one is attempting to deal with the interactive problems of health, nutrition, housing and social problems, since each one is inseparable from the other. At a time when skilled human resources as well as financial resources have become so limited, it is imperative that there is greater co-operative research between different independent institutions. This positive interaction should have taken place without these pressures. There are thus positive results occurring from these rather stressful financial times facing tertiary educational institutions.
- *International Joint Programmes:* Research projects with direct relevance to the local communities could benefit greatly from the experience gained from research programmes in other countries dealing with similar or related problems. At a time when the cultural and academic boycott has receded into memories of our isolation, we should be networking with other relevant research groups throughout the world in order to draw on available resources for our own research programmes and developing joint programmes enriched by the diversity of such different backgrounds. It is so essential for our institutions to break from their intellectual isolation of the past four and a half decades. We all recognise how much the poorer we have been from the limited and restricted contact we have had with the outside world during that period.

I would call upon our colleagues here today from different parts of the world to assist us in the transformation of our institutions so that our researchers may

contribute to assisting us all achieve our dream of working to build that Better South Africa in the most efficient and effective way. We must see, as part of our vision for the future, that our institutions and their research activities make a very relevant contribution to not only our own society but that of the African continent, particularly in view of the skills and resources that reside in this part of the continent.

I am very optimistic that the university in the very near future will be more relevant, particularly when I see the commitment and vision of the majority of our younger staff to bringing about a Better South Africa.

RESEARCH AND THE ROLE OF THE HISTORICALLY-BLACK UNIVERSITIES¹

Jairam Reddy

Introduction

It is now generally accepted that universities are not just independent institutions of learning. As important organs of civil society they form part of a matrix of key institutions generating ideas and policy options which contribute to shaping social, economic, and scientific development.²

It is with this notion in mind, in the rapidly changing scenario of South Africa, that a vision of transformation of universities has to be developed.³ In the broadest sense, such models need to be concerned with developing a commitment to create, to articulate and to communicate a compelling new vision of the post-apartheid university. Among its tenets are to democratise institutional structures, increase accessibility to universities, re-examine the articulation between different forms of tertiary education, reorient and redefine syllabi and curricula, contribute to human resource development, develop new policy options, become responsive to community aspirations, and address the problem of the many gross inequalities in South African society.

This paper sets out some ideas on the role of research in historically black universities. These ideas are located within the context of the broader changes which are occurring within universities and in South African society.

University Autonomy and Research

The unbanning of political organisations and the beginnings of Codesa creates an immediate and inexhaustible need for research options for the liberation movement and all those constituencies involved in the negotiations process. One question which arises here relates to the autonomy of the academic to conduct such research independently of political direction and control.

In one view social and scientific research is ethically and political neutral, value free and objective. The opposing view is that such research is not value free but should respond to relevant social and political concerns - especially in our case to the struggles over the transformation of South African society.

Extending the latter view, Harold Wolpe argues that structural conditions have a considerable impact on research - the allocation of resources, the structure of ideologies, career patterns of researchers, editorial and book acceptances of research publications etc. can all impinge on the research effort.⁴

In post-independence Mozambique, where these contradictions obtained, the policy of Frelimo became the starting point for research and investigation - not its conclusion; in fact, the Centre for African Studies ended by questioning Frelimo policy on issues such as the collectivism of agriculture and large scale industrial

development. In the South African context, research should be concerned to elaborate, clarify and critique the liberation movement's analysis of the present. Wolpe, for instance, warns of the danger that our rejection of reformist options may lead us away from analysing their effects. John Saul cautions that scholar-activists must be aware that there will always be the danger of shaping one's analyses to fit one's perceptions.⁵

Centres of Excellence

There is emerging a line of thinking within the state bureaucracy and in certain universities that the South African research effort should be located within a limited number of defined centres of excellence viz. the historically White universities. The other universities are to concentrate largely on their teaching capabilities. I wish to argue against this proposition on the following grounds:

Firstly, that the historically Black universities are well-placed and suited to undertake the kinds of research that are relevant to the emerging South Africa particularly in developmental, rural, gender and health issues; but also in certain areas of the sciences.

The history of most of these universities were intimately shaped by anti-apartheid struggles. Black students and staff confronted the reality of apartheid life and these experiences have shaped the world view of such individuals. These anti-apartheid struggles have also drawn the historically Black universities into a more dynamic engagement with the concerns and problems of social forces such as the unions and democratic political organisations.

Secondly, such a thesis will exacerbate existing inequalities - clearly creating two classes of universities - one White and superior and the other Black and inferior. A host of published data starkly reveals the gross inequalities between the two groups of institutions.

Universities such as University of Durban-Westville (UDW), University of Western Cape (UWC) and Fort Hare draw their students from the majority black population, who are severely disadvantaged by the time they arrive on these campuses.

The university students/population ratio for whites is 31 per 1 000 (about the highest in the world) and for blacks it is 2,5 per 1 000; 51 per cent of African students are in historically black universities, 35 per cent are studying through UNISA and only 5 per cent attend the historically White universities; only 5 per cent of Masters and Doctoral students are Africans; 90 per cent of tenured academic staff are White and less than 5 per cent African.

In addition these universities still carry with them, a not insignificant amount of apartheid baggage despite their autonomy. A core of staff in both the administrative and academic sectors of the apartheid era remain obstacles to change, a symbol of mediocrity, a lack of commitment and sensitivity. The state functionaries appointed to senior positions at these universities in the past are often inefficient and unsympathetic to new ideas, and remain obstacles to transformation.

The alumni as a support base is almost non-existent because this constituency

deliberately distanced itself from the 'bush colleges'. Also unlike the open, white universities (or American or British universities) only a few of the alumni of the black universities have entered influential positions in the private and state sector.

Their relatively recent establishment, location, history and ethos are all factors which are not conducive to attracting to the historically black universities significant external funding through bursaries, endowments and other grants. In view of the socio-economic status of the students, their fee income is about half that of the established universities. The vast majority of the students from the Department of Education and Training (DET) are found in these universities - with their academic deficits resulting in high failure rates, and financial and housing problems. The campaign to isolate these universities in earlier times has ensured that progressive academics did not take up appointments there.

All these factors contribute to disadvantaging seriously the historically Black universities. To limit their role even further, by denying to them, a legitimate role as research centres will be to deliver a serious blow to their development and transformation.

Thirdly good teachers are generally also good researchers and the two are mutually reinforcing. The reinforcing relationship between teaching and research is best amplified by Fletcher's observation:⁶

Teaching divorced from the excitement of research soon becomes dull and reactionary. Research that is divorced from teaching is in danger of becoming esoteric and unreal university teaching rises to its highest level when it is shot through with the thread of discovery.

Research also informs curriculum development - an important aspect of transformation at this juncture in the development of the historically black universities.

The Role of the Historically Black Universities

There are several areas in which research in the historically Black universities can make a positive contribution to the reconstruction of South African society in the transition to, and in its post-apartheid period.

Social and economic research

Research in general and development studies in particular have been initiated, formulated and shaped from a Western vantage point eg. in the area of economic policy formulation and research we would need economists who can bring into macro-economic policy, sophisticated mathematical models, who can analyse international monetary and fiscal policy etc. However we also need economists who are sensitive to and committed to the challenges involved in rural development, in small scale agriculture, small business development and the promotion of entrepreneurial skills among the informal sector and the unemployed. These are not mutually exclusive economic skills; it is necessary that the historically black universities develop both elements as an essential part of the academic training necessary to develop human resources in this area.

In September 1991, the ANC's Department of Economic Policy invited some of

the historically Black universities to assist in setting up a macro-economic framework of the South African economy (MERG).

As the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Mission Report, which recommended the creation of MERG, noted 'most policy-oriented academic research has been carried out, hitherto, on behalf of the state and by the Afrikaner universities.'⁸ It was therefore a conscious decision of the ANC to seek assistance in the first instance from the historically Black universities in its national economic research effort. One important secondary objective of the MERG is to assist these universities to develop their research capacities more fully.

At both UDW and UWC there already existed a core of researchers who had for some time been engaged through various forums (such as the Cosatu-linked Economic Trends Research Group) in economic research for the democratic movement.

Through its training dimension, MERG has the potential to contribute concretely to existing efforts to transform these universities and their teaching and research capacities, so that future graduates from these campuses will have the skills to serve the new South Africa.

A similar relationship, involving UDW, COSATU and the ANC, underlies the establishment recently of the Macro-Education Policy Unit at UDW, whose principal objective is to participate in the development of policy research in the field of education, where educational policy will be related to economic strategies for reconstruction.

The Institute for International Education (IIE) has supported the establishment at UDW of a Social Policy MA course work degree, which will also encourage students and staff to undertake policy oriented research relating to the myriad of problems which the rapid urbanisation process in South Africa has brought in its wake. The course aims to attract (as students) decision-makers in the private and public sector, and many of the staff involved in the teaching and research have been intimately involved in struggles around social and urban issues for many years.

Faculty from the Universities of Michigan (Ann Arbor) and California (Berkeley) will interface with local staff in developing and teaching parts of the course. Similar IIE-supported exchange relationships have already been established with the Universities of Fort Hare (in agriculture) and Western Cape (Mathematics Education), and similar relationships will be worked out soon with the remaining historically Black universities.

Technology and Development

The transformation of the world economy in the last two decades has been very significantly led by the major technological revolution in products and processes; the high tech centres are the fastest growing sectors of the world economy; information technology and its development becomes a fundamental factor in the process of development.⁹

Because the adequate use of advanced information technologies is highly dependent upon the general level of education and culture of labour, there is a growing

connection between the intellectual skills of people and their development potential. Yet expertise in science and technology is very unevenly distributed in the world; this is exacerbated by the flow of scientists from the Third to the First World thus creating fundamental inequality in wealth and power.

Amongst other initiatives, a research system is needed to assimilate the discoveries taking place in the advanced countries, adapt them to specific needs of developing countries and to participate in international scientific networks. The historically black universities can play an important role in the development of such research systems.

It is encouraging that the Foundation for Research Development (FRD) had initiated an Affirmative Action Programme - the University Development Programme (UDP) at the historically Black Universities.¹⁰ To quote from the UDP document:

We know that it is easier to fund excellent research at Universities with a critical mass of skilled scientists and advanced facilities. It is very important to maintain this if South Africa wants to be at the forefront of technology, but it is no less important to build up an infrastructure at other institutions for the proper training of enough scientists, technologists and educators, as well as to develop excellent research for the future.

The UDP aims to support staff members and students at the historically Black institutions who in the past did not have opportunities equal to other South Africans, the chance to improve their knowledge and skills in order to excel in a competitive society. Among its objectives, it plans to promote a research culture in both science education and science technology.

While the UDP initiative is most welcome, it is important to point to some of its limitations. The financial resources set aside for the programme remain inadequate in relation to the needs. Only about R1m has been budgeted for the UDP for 1992.

The capacity of researchers at these campuses to match the research efforts of their colleagues at the open White universities is also limited, by the heavy teaching responsibilities that most of them have (UDW in 1991 had 930 first year physics students!) and by the involvement of many of the most able researchers in the urgent task of transforming these universities at all levels.

Summary and Conclusions

An analysis of the research potential at South African universities cannot be made in isolation from wider social forces. One must begin by relating this discourse to the broad social, economic and political forces that are reshaping the present and the future of this country. This follows the realisation that universities are inextricably organs of civil society; that they have a role to play in the social, economic and political reconstruction of a society that has been deeply ravaged by apartheid and economic exploitation.

On the other hand the academic autonomy of the universities must be paramount. It is in this light that Saul's interesting concept of scholar-activists is important. It provides a model that helps understand the role being played and will be played by

historically black universities in the reconstruction of those campuses and of society in general.

The idea that only some universities will be centres of excellence will only lead to further disparity and unequal development.

The research activities of these universities depend fundamentally on a new system for resource allocation. Academics at these universities bear the burden of heavy teaching loads which arise from a commitment to increasing accessibility. This commitment in turn stems from a desire to provide channels to the victims of apartheid schooling to obtain a university education and from a commitment to the development of the human resources potential of the country.

Recent initiatives at UDW, UWC, Fort Hare and other universities, such as the MERG, MEPU, RESA, etc flow directly from links between these universities and larger social and economic forces of transformation.

If South African society is to enter the information age, development policies must include the impulse for the transformation of higher education system as a key element. Historically Black universities must emphasise research (both fundamental and applied) and they must be developed as complete academic centres of learning and research at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, mixing science and technology, humanities, social science and the professional schools.

To overcome economic inequality and political oppression, and the lack of harmony between economic growth and ecological conservation requires multi-lateral tackling of development processes on a global level. Individual faculty members doing research should therefore fit their work into the broad scheme of development and reconstruction. Scattered and unrelated research does little to solve major problems of economic development¹¹.

NOTES

1. I should like to thank Dr Ahmed Bawa and Dr Vishnu Padayachee for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.
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3. Reddy, J (1991).
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DISCUSSION

RENE LOEWENSON: I'm having a problem, because the discussion as it's been going so far has been centred around institutions rather than around issues. If we're talking about transformation, we're talking about change, and we need to identify what change and which of the social and economic forces and organisations are going to produce that change. And how can research contribute to giving initiatives to those social and economic forces and organisations? What has happened (in Zimbabwe) after ten years is two things. One is that the researchers have increasingly watched their own economic bases dwindle as the economy has made it more and more difficult to finance those researchers. And we have a flux of researchers away from the public sector, away from the universities, into UN agencies and so on and so forth, following the devaluation of the dollar and the increasingly difficult conditions. To the point where research has become totally motivated by the economic motive of their own survival, and not by economic transformation. We lost a lot of our national expertise. We've also lost quite a lot of our national sovereignty in planning, because the World Bank and the IMF and so on have taken that over. And the national researchers don't know where their role is.

FRANCIE LUND: In institutional terms, how do we find the appropriate structures on the one hand and the processes to work through them? What system of rewards will that exciting new university find to keep people there, to keep their commitment going? And how do you get organisational processes in place, which reward creativity, because I think the university is an incredibly conservative institution, which continues to reward going and making individualised, personal deals with those at the senior level because that works.

HAROLD WOLPE: It seems to me that the question of resource distribution depends first of all on the conception of the university sector that we develop for South Africa. The decision to transfer resources may be politically very important in terms of equity and equality, but it doesn't actually answer the question about the role of the universities. It seems to me that Christopher Cresswell's review of this university could be applied anywhere in the world. All universities talk about excellence and relevance, for example, and research. And the question that seems to me to arise in relation to the universities is: what substance do we put into the development of excellence and which kind of disciplines, at what levels, for what purposes?

FRENE GINWALA: I think one of the problems is we're taking the universities as given and the problem being of putting more black students into it, putting different types of research into it. The question we always get is how to obtain more black students, more money, more scholarships. But nothing about changing that structure, that whole conception of the university's relationship to society. And I'm not sure that now we have taken that debate much further. It's just incorporating or transferring resources from establishment to non-establishment or whatever the words are. I think there has to be a much more fundamental questioning of the role of universities; about changing that structure, that whole conception of the university's relationship to society.

JAIRAM REDDY: I want to turn to Francie Lund's question which she raised about research rewards. The task in fact is very complex and I have no easy answer. You referred to the University of Natal as an incredibly selfish institution. I'd just like to add mine too. We still have a tremendous amount of apartheid baggage. Many people who have been recruited under the apartheid era for ideological reasons, not for academic reasons, were little connected to teaching or research. And many of these people occupy high positions in our university. I think that's a major factor.

MARC VAN AMERINGEN: No matter how rapidly affirmative action goes, in the context of this society, it will eventually succeed only in transforming the fate of the minority in the white universities. The question for the black universities has to be addressed much more in terms of institutional transformation and in terms of division of resources between white and black universities. My remarks should not be seen as against affirmative action per se, but as a call for something much broader.

MIKE MORRIS: We have to have a certain kind of realism. It is patently ridiculous to talk about the possibility of transforming the Universities into some of the grand conceptions that some of us have had in the past. These are institutions that have contained within them an inherited logic of conservatism. They have no ideology. They just resist change. The issue is how to transform certain spaces within the university to give opportunity for those kinds of positions that have an alternative vision of the society, and can therefore link up to other social movements that can link between universities. If we operate on the basis of transforming the universities into some revolutionary institution, we are going to fall into the trap of lots of ideology and very little substance.

SIPHO PITYANA: I think that the problem at the moment is that the universities, especially the white universities as far as I'm concerned, are ivory towers. I think that the challenge that faces white university structures today is that they have got to change. They are not involving the vast majority of the people of South Africa. They are not acceptable to those communities. If they don't change, they will be forced to change. The black pigeonholes that they are creating today will not be acceptable in future.

INTELLECTUALS AND THE POLITICS OF POLICY RESEARCH

Mala Singh

This presentation deals with the question of intellectuals working in the area of policy research on behalf of certain sections of the liberation movement. I start with a brief glance at the notions of *policy* and *intellectuals* and then suggest how policy research should and should not be viewed within the context of transition in this country. I then go on to examine some of the ambiguities and contradictions surrounding the issue of intellectuals engaged in policy research. My analysis seeks to link three issues, namely,

- how intellectuals and their institutions are affecting and being affected by policy initiatives.
- what the implications are for the democratic process in the country.
- which social interests are or could be advanced by policy research.

'Policy' has its root in the Greek word *politeia*. It refers to a framework or plan devised to address some social need, problem or demand. It encompasses, on the one hand, the values and principles underlying political, organisational and institutional choices, and on the other, the investigation, research and strategic planning required to operationalise those choices. Given the increasing complexity of social systems and the demands of legitimation, policymakers and decisionmakers seek data, analyses and researched options for more effective or persuasive governance. For this purpose, they either train their own cadre of policy researchers or draw in relatively independent sources of expertise. Policy positions could be described as lying at the intersection of power, knowledge and social need.

Some of the key actors and constituencies in the policy arena would be :

- the *client* in the form of a government, political party, social agency or any interest group.
- the *researcher* in the form of the individual 'expert' or a research institution, network or agency.
- the *funder* in the form of a government, the private sector, philanthropic foundation, etc.
- the *beneficiary* in the form of the 'public' or the citizenry (or fractions of them) viewed as passive object and consumer or as active participant in the shaping of policy.

Also important for consideration are the policy structures and mechanisms, both institutionalised and ad hoc, in and through which policy preparation takes place e.g. commissions, think tanks, task forces, policy and planning committees, advisory councils, etc. Such structures often influence policy outcomes through their character, especially with regard to the measure and nature of the interaction they allow among the different participants in the policy process.

The direct and indirect relationships obtaining between and among these players in the policy process raise a number of questions that have a bearing on the construction of democratic institutions and processes. Some of the most central of these concern the link between policy and the vested interests of clients, researchers and funders; the autonomy and accountability of researchers and research institutions; and the extent, modes and mechanisms of beneficiary participation in policy generation or evaluation; Within the present context of political transition in South Africa, a number of ambiguities surround the issue of policy work. Some of the most decisive of these concern the changing identities and interests of the client/s, shifts in the conceptualisation of the beneficiary and its role in the policy process, the relationship between policy research and continuing mass struggle, the tension between the demands of urgent and efficient policy preparation and the slow, messy and unpredictable ways of the democratic process, the entry of new funding interests, the role and responsibilities of established research communities on the new policy terrain and the necessity to engender a more representative research community.

Intellectuals as researchers constitute one agency within the policy generation process. There is no single unambiguous definition of intellectuals because there is no single unambiguous role played by them. In the domain of power, they have been critics as well as advisers to those in power and, sometimes, themselves wielders of power. Within the context of the division between mental and manual labour, their activity has been to articulate, interpret, evaluate and disseminate ideas, concepts, theories and symbols. Through their work they serve, in crude and subtle ways, a variety of interests, not excluding their own. Race, class, gender and ideology are crucial determining factors in how this stratum is constituted and socially located.

Intellectuals have been as much drawn to powerful elites as to the 'wretched of the earth' (Kolakowski, 1986 : 165), a fact well demonstrated by their activity in this country where they have served both in the legitimation and the de-legitimation of existing forms of domination. In the present conjuncture, intellectuals are beginning to play an important role in translating the programmatic ideals and hopes of the liberation movement into policy options. In being able to wield 'the power of the spoken and written word' (Schumpeter in de Huszar, 1960 : 70), they are in a powerfully privileged position to generate new discourses about the shape and direction of reconstruction and transformation. Against the backdrop of the urgent needs of transition politics, progressive intellectuals may be set to play an enlarged political role especially in the area of policy work, a development not without its own problems and contradictions with respect to the search for democratic modes of social reconstruction.

South Africa has become an arena of contestation for the restructuring of policy agendas among contending groups seeking to establish a new hegemonic order. The current phase of negotiation politics and the prospects of a different political order have triggered off several initiatives directed towards the investigation and formulation of new policy options to replace the exhausted and de-legitimated policies associated with apartheid. Whether in the area of the economy, housing, education, health, the land question, taxation; local government, etc., the present government,

oppositional groupings, the private sector and the organisations of civil society are all preparing for the restructuring of the policy agenda. What is the appropriate way to conceptualise policy research within this context so that it could contribute most effectively to broad-based social transformation?

The pursuit of research and the development of research capacity within oppositional circles has become part of the political struggle to seize the policy initiative. Although the focus of such research is tied to the reconstructive needs of the country, it is still a feature of oppositional politics insofar as it is part of the continuing struggle to empower the disenfranchised and their organisations within a negotiations phase. In equipping the forces of resistance with data, analyses, comparative perspectives, modelling, policy scenarios, etc., intellectuals are both continuing a critique of the existing regime and facilitating the development of a new hegemony. Universities, research institutions, journals and magazines, the media, public discussion forums will all be at stake as elements of the new ideological infrastructure needed to build and consolidate such a hegemony. However, despite the seductive promise of the negotiations moment, policy research as part of a reconstructive mind set has to be located within the ambit of a state apparatus whose power to kill, maim, impoverish and control has not been successfully blocked by the liberation movement. This gives to policy work a dimension not usually associated with the conventional production of public policy within a legitimate political order. Such a dimension has to straddle continuing resistance with reconstructive preparation - a reality that therefore imposes more complex obligations on all participants in the pursuit of new policy directions.

I would like to suggest that there are three ways not to view policy research at the present time. It is not to be regarded as a premature activity that must await the seizure of state power. This position underutilises the new political spaces now available through not arming itself also with researched policy options. Policy work is not to be viewed as an activity connected solely with the reconstructive moment rather than with the oppositional. This position underestimates the role of mass struggle in the shaping of reconstruction. And, finally, policy research is not to be seen as an activity that can be pursued as a technical exercise about means rather than ends and in isolation from other political moves. This position simply mystifies the link between ideological preference and policy production through assuming that there is already some measure of national consensus about the social values and goals underlying the policy process. On the other hand, policy research activities as a complex phenomenon of the current political landscape must encompass the following three vital dimensions - the continuing struggle for a political order that does not marginalise majority needs and interests, reconstructive planning for the future, and the facilitation of widespread popular participation in policy decision-making as part of the general pursuit of democratised decisionmaking. These three dimensions have different kinds of implications for policy researchers.

There may be a strong tendency for intellectuals, especially those located within universities and research contexts, to address themselves primarily to the reconstructive dimension since their training and expertise fit most closely into its planning

needs. This is also the area where the concerns of scholarship, disciplinary rigour and professionalism enter most into the picture, especially for career intellectuals. However, political and ethical issues central to democracy can be addressed substantively only through a consideration of the other two dimensions. In this regard, two key concerns need to be addressed. The first pertains to the question of input into policy agendas and policy formulations by mass based organisations and constituencies. Since this issue has been the subject of other debates at this symposium, I will not elaborate on it any further except to underscore the necessity for ongoing consideration of the mechanisms and processes to facilitate such input. The second issue, which has a more direct bearing on the role and responsibilities of intellectuals, concerns the facilitation of access to policy information, debates, and proposals. The dissemination, in accessible forms and forums, of policy discussions will be crucial to a deepening of the democratic process insofar as it could ensure that such knowledge does not remain the 'property' of political decisionmakers and experts.

Intellectuals located at universities who are presently engaged in policy research could urge these institutions to play a central role in availing access to policy debate as part of a broader project of using their infrastructure to democratise public access to knowledge. This could be done, for example, through building a policy education component into the various policy research and training units that are being set up at many universities. A strong commitment to policy education could undercut criticisms that policy preparation is taking place in the interaction between political and intellectual elites, that, in the growing gap between oppositional leadership and the masses, intellectuals, among others, are inserting themselves in ways threatening to the requirements of an encompassing democratic ethos, and that policy issues, on account of their complexity, are being removed from the public domain to the domain of expertise.

In his introductory remarks yesterday, Mike Morris referred to the fact that the resistance period had fostered research but privileged activism. We may be confronting the reverse scenario at present. Preparation for reconstruction may be privileging research (and researchers!) in the face of a retreating mass activism. Clearly, activism has to be conceptualised anew in order to be effective in the present conjuncture but it cannot be theorised off the political agenda without dangerous political repercussions. An activism around policy issues - informed by policy research and strengthened by policy education - could be crucial to the installation of an acceptable political order. This is a point to which the best research (and researchers) cannot, on their own, bring us.

A further point which needs to be raised concerns the issue of the social and political forces and interests which policy research and researchers might serve. One way of representing the present conjuncture would be to argue that a variety of mass based social forces in the form of the liberation movement are utilising all available means, including research, to effect social transformation. However, since February 2 1990, notions like 'the liberation movement', 'the people' and 'the struggle' have lost whatever rhetorical unity and homogeneity they may have possessed before. The

'liberation movement' is now a collection of political organisations and tendencies that have chosen different political options with different interests at stake. Since research production and utilisation is neither a neutral nor a technical issue, researchers will not be able to avoid working within networks of interests that may seek to appropriate research for self-serving purposes. How are policy researchers to negotiate the complexities of and tensions between what represents national interests and a variety of special interests like the advancement of party politics or the facilitation of elite formation?

A great deal of progressive policy research is, at present, being conducted under the auspices of the ANC and COSATU, which clearly represent large social and political interests within the country. It is entirely within reason that there are equally large interests and constituencies not encompassed within the policy research frameworks as presently constituted. How can such interests be accommodated or addressed? Intellectuals engaged in policy research could seek to broaden the social base of policy concerns in a variety of ways - by transcending frameworks specified by commissioning clients (in this way demonstrating a measure of critical independence from the client), by acknowledging ideological choices in policy preparation, by recognising and engaging with opposing options and choices, and by an insistence on encompassing non-sectarian forums for policy debate. Alternatively, one could expect that progressive intellectuals will choose to ally with a variety of different social forces - some with groupings and interests which aspire to state power and others with interests within 'civil society'. The insertion of intellectuals along different points of struggle and transformation will be a useful safeguard against their large-scale absorption into legitimating functions on behalf of the emergent hegemonic order.

There are those who have argued that there is a fundamental disjuncture between the worlds of scholarship and policymaking. Brock (1987), for example, distinguishes between truth as the virtue and goal of scholarship and a focus on consequences as the concern of those involved in policy formation. Smith (1991) attempts to straddle the truth-consequences dichotomy posed by Brock by seeing truth as being not absent from the world of the policy expert but of existing in a qualified way in the form of a 'useful truth'. These distinctions may be somewhat academic since it is clear that ideological subjectivities and interests are as implicated in the constitution of 'truth' in the world of scholarship as they are in the world of public policy. It would be more useful to recognise that, within the policy process itself, different players may have different, contending versions of the 'truth', depending on their agenda of interests. Part of the intellectual and moral challenge facing intellectuals in the world of policy would be the attempt to disaggregate the different interests at stake in the policy process (including their own) and to identify that 'truth' which genuinely advances the interests of those most affected by the policies, especially those least able to influence the policy agenda. In this respect, intellectuals who attempt to link the 'truths' emerging from their own scholarly analyses with strong organisationally based imperatives pertaining to the interests of the mass population are likely to be on stronger ground in addressing the nature of 'truths'

and 'useful truths' within the policy process.

Policy research may end up serving narrow sectarian or elite groupings or it may advance broad national interests. Whether it does either of these does not depend solely on intellectuals since research is only one aspect that feeds into policymaking and intellectuals only one constituency exercising influence in that terrain. There is no doubt that intellectual work could be immensely valuable for the illumination of political choices. But the link between enlightened policy choice and social transformation will ultimately not depend on the quality or quantity of research or the force of the better argument. As pointed out by Max Weber (in Gouldner, 1975-6 : 3, n 2), it will be the material and ideal interests of people rather than ideas which will, in the final instance, govern their conduct. Expert knowledge may be only one aspect of the necessary conditions for a more rational politics. The sufficient conditions depend on the political relations between the state and its citizens and whether the available social, political and economic space is organised in such a way that the will of the citizens for a more rational and humane politics prevails. And to get to that point, mass political struggle for the deepening of democracy is as indispensable as expertise.

In addition to their political commitments, the desire to bring 'rationality' to political thinking and to offer a 'scientific' basis for social reform has, no doubt, motivated many intellectuals engaged in policy research. Debates in the social sciences over challenges to the notion of scientific objectivity have tempered, somewhat, the claims of intellectuals to bring an incontrovertible cognitive authority to the policy process. However, even a weaker thesis about the status of science and rationality allows intellectuals to want to contribute to wiser decisionmaking and governance on the basis of 'good theory and good data.' (Weiss in Lynn, 1978 : 25) Research may have great potential for rational social reform through breaking down obstructive institutions and dogmatic thinking as well as introducing innovative ideas and practices. It may seek to advance the public interest through expertise and professionalism. But, under the guise of scientific authority, intellectual judgements in policy matters should not result in the bypassing of the political process through the weakening or elimination of popular participation. The democratic process requires that the judgements of researchers be debated together with those of other policy actors rather than dominating or displacing them. In the final instance, it is sobering to take note of the sentiment in the following quotation : 'Research does not avoid fighting over policy ; it is a method of fighting.' (Weiss in Lynn, 1987 : 76)

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RESEARCH AND RACIAL DOMINATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Sipho Mila Pityana

The South African research body which includes the entire research activity in social and natural science (both within and outside of the state and corporate sector sponsorship) draws its membership mainly from the dominant social group. In South Africa the dominant group is both economically and racially determined. Consequently the white minority dominate the research body and the intellectual discourse as they do other socio-economic and political spheres of that society. This condition therefore guarantees the constant reproduction and perpetuation of the social relations of racial domination.

As an agent that generates knowledge and new ideas, research as an academic and intellectual tool of enquiry is an instrument of social control - producing new concepts, language, and theoretical abstractions which are not accessible to those outside its multifarious disciplines. In so far as the large proportion of those in these specialised disciplines are drawn from the dominant group, research has itself become a pivotal part of the dominant ideology. Its role is inevitably and inextricably bound with the processes of the systematic reproduction of the relations of domination.

The aim of this essay therefore is to explore various ways by which research bodies and the intellectual discourse in general in South Africa can be deracialised and be made more representative of the social make-up of that society.

Defining the Problem

Does the fact of racial complexion and composition of those who are associated with production of advanced knowledge matter? Should we not pre-occupy our minds with the quality of the knowledge itself rather than the racial or gender or religious or any other social background of those behind its production? These are questions that are so central to the nature of the problem that we need to address. In a society with a long history of struggle against racial discrimination like ours, in which racial domination is institutionally entrenched, the fact of racial domination of the research body and the intellectual discourse can't not be a problem. There can be no doubt that the quality of knowledge produced should be our principal concern. This concern with quality need not be used as a pretext to ignore the chronic ills within the research body especially considering the fact that their redress does not always and inevitably affect quality.

The issue is not so much that the ideas emanating from this white dominated research body are inherently reactionary, wrong or poor in standard, or even unrepresentative. It is not even to suggest that they are representative of some white minority monolithic bloc. The association of the white minority with being the

predominant source of advanced knowledge, inadvertently confirms the '*inferiority*' of blacks while simultaneously conferring '*superior status*' to whites.

It is due to the success of the segregationist and subsequently the apartheid system that this relationship persists. It is not peculiar to the research body and intellectual discourse exclusively, but exists in other spheres of socio-economic life as well. The almost exclusive occupation of the upper echelons of society, especially its professional body, by a racial group on whom superior status is bestowed is always intended to make that social position permanent. There is nothing inevitable about its demise; it has to be systematically challenged as part of the wider engagement of the apartheid system and its legacy thereafter. It becomes imperative therefore, as part of its project, that the research body and all those in the entire intellectual discourse who are interested in the total transformation of South Africa, black and white, should seek to challenge this situation.

General Background

The argument that follows does not result from any systematic study of the subject, but from an observation of its various manifestations which also account for its structural articulation and deliberate perpetuation.

The first point of observation is the development of service organisations with a strong research perspective primarily based or supported (although not exclusively) by a university framework. Secondly the literature and the racial background of the authors - be it in the form of books, articles in journals including those deemed 'progressive', conference papers or guest opinion column articles in various newspapers etc. Thirdly the roles played, or that tend to be played, by various racial groups in conferences where expert knowledge is canvassed both inside and outside South Africa. Finally the funding of the research projects and the racial composition of their leadership.

Systematic reproduction of the relations of racial domination in research

The under representation of blacks in general and Africans in particular in the research body and thereby its domination by whites is as much a legacy of a long history of racial domination as it is the most telling indictment on the enlightened sections of that body whose failure to seriously challenge this, only contributed to its perpetuation. It is an indictment on the (predominantly white) enlightened sections of that community because with all their well intended efforts they have done little to impart enabling skills, but have been content with using their research positions and intellectual prowess to produce and generate ideas and knowledge for blacks. Although this has been a positive contribution, it is by all accounts inadequate.

Education in South Africa has always been a privilege preserved for the limited few, drawn mainly from the middle classes. A few African recruits of missionaries penetrated the system pursuing careers in fields such as ministry, teaching and to a limited extent journalism. Consequently the system of education has always been

and continues to be dominated by whites, producing from that society and in its interests agents who occupied dominant positions in socio-political and economic spheres that guaranteed the systematic reproduction of the social relations of racial domination.

The introduction of segregated education as part of the apartheid grand scheme tightened whatever loopholes there may have been in the exclusion of Africans from research. The idea was not only to provide education sufficient to make blacks hewers of wood and ministers to the white people's needs, but to systematically underdevelop the potential African intelligentsia. The massification of African education coincided with its impoverishment as no adequate resources were made available to meet the increased demand for this service.

African institutions of tertiary education were, and continue to be, isolated from the mainstream of the country's socio-economic and political life and ghettoised to those of the bantustans. Research work on the whole was therefore carried out by white universities and institutions attached to them. White universities enjoyed a comparative advantage over their black counterparts - smaller lecturer : student ratio, more government spending on white tertiary education, favourable relations with industry and access to the international intellectual and academic community even though an academic boycott was in place. In the circumstances a fantastic infrastructure for the constant reproduction of the white intellectual class associated with the reproduction of new and advanced bodies of knowledge was established.

Education has increasingly developed a mechanically functional value in black communities. It is a source of certification to open opportunities to enter the professional structure and enjoy the benefits that go with it. These are often associated with better life style for average people in the townships. Often overlooked is the place and role of both education and in particular research in the ideological and political struggle for liberation. In this instance, I am referring to education and the liberation struggle not so much in an oppositionist form (for instance opposition to bantu education) that it has taken so far, but rather as an instrument of self assertion, self actualisation and discovery of self in the processes of conceptualisation and development of ideas and therefore society itself.

Within the African intellectual body, the research potential was undermined by the tendency to adopt an apologist relationship with the bantustan regimes on account of fear of persecution or in some cases an attempt to buy favour from those in authority to increase promotional prospects. The real fact of the unfavourable conditions outlined above, combined with the repression in the bantustans, became a useful pretext to explain away both this phenomenon and the general lack of motivation to intervene in the research process. The teaching perspective itself is a continuum of the secondary school method which does not encourage the development of independent and innovative mind, but an uncritical consumption of what the system offers.

The other factor has been the fact that the politics of the student movement focussed on equally important issues, which by all accounts were, and perhaps continue to be, pertinent to the prevailing issues e.g democratisation of education, improvement

of provision and wider political settlement. It may well be argued that the concentration on the rejection of the apartheid education system and its autocratic authority and structure, obscured the most fundamental point and essence of these struggles - the demand for fully democratic and egalitarian education of the quality that would help secure the full realisation and development of every member of that society. The racist education system has been calculated to negate these ideals; our opposition to it has been intended to undermine the apartheid barriers in order to make room for the true articulation of these ideals.

The early theme of encouraging educational achievement as part of the liberation struggle has to be rediscovered and given prominence in our campaigns for the transformation of that system. The student movement has got to embrace the black empowerment project by playing its role of encouraging a positive approach to education (even during the phase in which it is undergoing transformation) discipline, assertiveness and unremitting determination to achieve.

The contribution of the liberation movement as a whole in challenging this situation has been abysmal. There has been a general appreciation of the importance of securing educational opportunities for blacks with the view to general skills development to prepare for the post-apartheid administration. Outside of that there has been no systematic cultivation of the organic intellectual body in the Gramscian sense. It substituted this with an extraordinarily heavy reliance on whites (progressive though they may be) whose advantageous location in the upper echelons of the body of knowledge is a consequence of both the discriminatory system of education and unequal access to opportunities. This reliance assumed an unquestioning character and became the norm.

The coincidence of the predominant white occupation of the specialist positions and concentration of blacks in various areas of activism gave the movement a character of a mirror image of the prevailing social relations it is meant to challenge. It negated the essence of the liberation philosophy of developing self-reliance by the most oppressed group. These internal dynamics were sustained by the external and international intervention.

The overwhelmingly white research bodies have been of no concern to the donor agencies. The standing of African researchers in the eyes of these bodies is unfavourable, in that they are often with little experience and few publications; and more often located in universities and institutions which lack a coherent and established research infrastructure. This in essence is a catch-22 situation in that research experience is conditional on there being a research framework within which to conduct it; this in turn is conditional on availability of the necessary financial and other resources to make this possible. Some among these have challenged this white domination of the research body and have often been presented with a list of black trainees who are said to benefit from such projects. More often than not these remain perpetual trainees who never seem to break through the barriers.

What is to Be Done?

The above situation warrants an organised and deliberate response. It is inconceiv-

able that this can be achieved without an organisational framework to give guidance and coherence to the issues at stake. Although researchers tend to be organised into various other professional structures within their own disciplines, this cannot be reason enough against the establishment of an association of research workers. Such an organisation would draw its membership on a non-racial basis and from various disciplines.

The fact that blacks have been excluded from it cannot be sufficient reason for them to organise in a way that enhances that exclusion. For blacks to organise separately, away from the established research infrastructure with all the resources associated with it, would be to ghettoise themselves to their own disadvantage. The strength of non racial organisation would be to isolate and neutralise those forces that have in the past operated to exclude blacks from the research body while simultaneously enlisting the broad support of those who are sensitive to the issue.

An organised formation would among its primary objectives encourage affirmative action within the research body. Whenever affirmative action has been called for in the past, some respondents often decry it as inevitably leading to declining standards. It is imperative that we address the matter. Quite often affirmative action is confused with tokenism. Affirmative action is not about window dressing, but a fundamental correction of the imbalance. An affirmative action programme would seek to address a situation of ill-representation of any social group by reviewing recruitment policy i.e. draw qualified candidates from a particular social stratum. Where no qualified candidates exist, they would recruit potentially able candidates and establish training programmes to assist with their development to the required standard. Affirmative action therefore, unlike tokenism, disregards neither the qualification of the candidate nor the quality of his/her work output.

A data base on research organisations could form the basis for a code of conduct which governs the race relations within the research body. Such a code of conduct could be used by the proposed association of research workers to enlist the support of research institutions that support its ideals and to pressure those that do not to operate within this defined framework to conform. Regardless of the unfavourable conditions for research in black universities especially those which are predominantly African, there has to be a deliberate effort to encourage more research to be conducted from there. The encouraging developments of the proliferation of research institutes at the University of the Western Cape provides an interesting example. The political developments that resulted in the dramatic change of leadership at the University of Fort Hare opens possibilities for the re-establishment of a progressive culture of research given the necessary support.

Black empowerment within the research body and intellectual discourse falls short of development of a group of organic intellectuals in the sense of Gramsci - albeit not always contradictory to that objective. The location and lifetime experience of the black intellectuals in the oppressive conditions of apartheid society should play an important role in shaping their political outlook. It is axiomatic therefore that they should at all times be on the side of the oppressed constituting its organic intellectual core. We know from our experience that this assumption does not always hold. The

fact that this is so is as much due to the failure of the liberation movement to nurture this stratum, as it is a reflection of the ideological limitations and vulnerability of such a group when outside an organised formation that constantly influences its development.

Concluding Remarks

The challenge to racial domination in South Africa has got to be thoroughgoing. All aspects of that society have to undergo a fantastic revolutionary transformation. In the recent past the experiences of other situations have been cited to urge caution on the pace and speed of such changes and transformation. Often cited is the experience of africanisation of the dominant sectors of society in post-colonial Africa and the mistakes around that process. The manipulation of the weaknesses of such progressive projects is often intended to justify white minority domination of the spheres of social life. Our historic task is to take cognisance of these shortcomings and build on the often underplayed positive aspects of these struggles.

The essence of the above discussion is to locate research and the intellectual discourse in the wider project for black empowerment. As in other areas, its success in research will be determined by the extent to which those within it are sufficiently organised to systematically challenge the status quo. Not even a post-apartheid society would inevitably alter the situation in this area unless those involved in the intellectual discourse are organised to utilise the possibilities that such a society would produce to effect changes in their own sector. The condition for such a development is the systematic engagement with the issue in all its manifestations.

WOMEN'S STUDIES AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Shireen Hassim and Cherryl Walker

Introduction

This paper explores the enormously complex debates in South African women's studies about representation - who can speak and for whom.¹ At the outset, it is perhaps necessary to clarify what we are *not* doing in this paper. We are not addressing directly the important issue of what putting women on the research agenda means in practice: what the research gaps and lacunae are. We take as read that both gender and women's concerns are still, despite significant gains in the last few years, peripheral in mainstream academia. Inasmuch as research is becoming more gender-sensitive, it is still largely a matter of 'add gender and stir' to the basic, always potent, race/class mix, with the added irritant of 'women' and 'gender' now being regarded as interchangeable embellishments to the text. Here we are looking rather at the practice of feminist research: the who and the how, rather than the what.

The debate around representation in women's/gender studies is a complex one. It shifts between different levels and emphases and is often shadowed by unspoken political assumptions and positions. Although the issues are clearly all interrelated, in the following account we separate out what we see as the key elements:

The debate has three major strands:

- the under-representation of black women in academe,
- the issue of misrepresentation of black women's position/oppression by white women, this point often accompanied by the allied argument that only black women can properly understand and explain black women's lives and
- the question of who has the right to represent whom in the sense of 'speaking for', which leads to questions of mandates and the accountability of researchers.

These debates are not unique to the women's movement. They are however charged with a particular intensity within what may be loosely defined as the women's movement here. One part of the explanation for this lies in the importance that the struggle against women's oppression attaches to women 'naming their own oppression'. Another part of the explanation is that women's studies is currently faced with the need to redefine its relationship to the broader women's movement. Women activists are now demanding a negotiation of the terms of their relationship not simply with men within the national liberation movement but also with other sectors of the women's movement. Although still very weak in terms of its ability to challenge the deeply entrenched patriarchal structures at all levels of society, this fledgling women's movement off campus is more broad-based, more politically active and, critically, more feminist than anything that has preceded it. It is also more demanding of academics and researchers than before - and now it is marshalling feminist principles in its critical assessment of their practice.

The first strand of the debate is to do with numbers and status and is relatively easy to demonstrate. The solutions, too, are relatively easy to propose, if not to implement: affirmative action, training, democratising the research process etc. A recent study by UDUSA (the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations) confirms what we already know - that blacks and women and even more emphatically black women are severely under-represented among university staff (*UDUSA News*, Jan.1992). What is also worth noting is that few of the small number of black women who are academics appear to be engaging publicly with women's/gender studies in their work. They tend to be congregated in gender-specific but not necessarily gender-focussed disciplines such as nursing, library science, education etc. There is a new generation of younger graduate students but little of their work has been published to date.

The second aspect of the representation debate raises far more contentious issues, about the nature of research and of objectivity, the relationship between experience and analysis, and the social identity of both researchers and researched. It is more difficult to define and to resolve. There is no unanimity in the formulation of the criticism. The more moderate position stresses the importance of black women becoming researchers and bringing their particular cultural insights and linguistic skills to their training as researchers, to enrich/challenge/transform existing bodies of scholarship and to empower themselves. The concern is essentially about finding ways to redress current imbalances and include more black women in the research process. The more radical position insists on the impossibility of white women ever being able to represent black women's experience; black women have to speak for themselves. In this view, white women's work forms part of an active process of disempowerment and colonisation of black women.²

The third issue concerns the accountability of academics to political organisations, which tend to present themselves as the 'true' representatives of the women's movement and of ordinary oppressed women, and hence the arbiters of appropriate research. Dealing with this has fundamental implications for the way in which feminist academics do research, and for the nature and role of research in the women's movement.

In attempting to take these debates forward, we see the following as the key tasks for the women's movement.

Confronting Racism

First of all, it is absolutely essential that white intellectuals recognise the legitimate anger of those who have been marginalised in academia on account of their colour, and the validity of a critique of complacency and arrogance among the privileged. White feminists need to confront and acknowledge the power of racism in the construction of social relations in society, including within universities. This may seem an obvious thing to say. Of course, we all know that apartheid South Africa epitomises racism. However, 'the race question' is suppressed in much intellectual debate on the left - partly, it seems, because of the racial make-up of the intellectual community (predominantly white), partly because of the hegemony of the political

tradition of non-racialism, and partly because of the Marxist insistence on class as the fundamental contradiction, with its associated critique of the liberal insistence on 'race'.

This denial of 'race' can become dangerously self-serving for whites. It is too easy for progressive intellectuals who are not black either to blame structural forces ('the under-representation of black/African women in universities is not my fault') or to dismiss race ('a power play by the emergent petit-bourgeoisie') and thereby to put their own practice beyond scrutiny.

However, there are major problems with the way in which 'race' is being used by some black feminists. There is an assumption that black academics will automatically and unproblematically be sensitive to and understand all struggles of all black women. The assumption that there is an automatic sisterhood among black women, based on a common experience of oppression under apartheid, is no less fallacious than the by now discredited notion that sisterhood is global. There are very important cleavages of class, language, ethnicity, and geographical location, to name but some of the most salient, that cannot be brushed aside.

In the claims around a common 'black' experience there is often a confusing sliding between 'black' as a political category embracing all those who have not been classified as white under the apartheid system, and 'black' as a pseudo-ethnic category that embraces those classified as 'African' under the apartheid system. Many of the claims made on behalf of black women in the first sense - that only black women can understand the experience of the majority of women in this society, for instance - in fact assume a linguistic and cultural community that cannot possibly include Indian and 'coloured' women, and is also dubious for African women as a group.

If women's studies are to develop in a dynamic way, it is essential that the reality of significant divisions among black women be acknowledged. Black feminist academics and activists need to display the same degree of self-reflection as they are demanding of white feminist academics.

Whites have spoken for black women

In confronting the power of both racism and racialised identities, it is useful to reflect briefly on the relationship between feminist academics and intellectuals (predominantly white) and women activists (predominantly black). That white women *have* 'spoken for' black women is indisputable. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the writings of white feminists began to give voice to a hidden history of women's political activity, and highlight the oppressive and exploitative conditions under which black women lived. These writings were trying to provide positive examples and inspiration and to 'correct' analyses which treated women's activities as insignificant or non-existent. At this time, some white women working in the trade unions engaged in a 'recovery' exercise, getting women workers to share their experiences in books and pamphlets. Many of these black women were illiterate; books such as *Vukani Makhosikazi*³ gave them a forum in which to be heard. In a context in which male voices were dominant, and in which women's political role

still revolved around 'catering and entertainment', much of this work was empowering for women.

In retrospect, however, this process did not adequately challenge problematic aspects of the relationship between black and white women. The overarching concern was always the struggle against apartheid: for national liberation. There was widespread hostility to feminism within the national liberation movement where empowering women was interpreted primarily as empowering women to join the national struggle. For women 'working together' in the struggle meant that relations of power and privilege between black and white women were rarely openly confronted. The relationship between black and white women was not a negotiated one. At the same time, because 'the struggle' was defined as pre-eminently one against white domination, patriarchal gender relations were not highlighted, and the very areas where black and white women could have found they had certain gendered concerns in common, were overlooked.

One key issue concerned the relevance of feminism to black women. This went hand in hand with the question of political control - the distrust of feminism within the national liberation movement, and the fear that white feminists were attempting to foist on black women an alien theory that was somehow linked to maintaining white dominance. Feminism seemed to many activists to deflect energy away from challenging apartheid and to create disunity in the ranks of the national liberation movements. For black women, this was also an issue of identity - there was a concern that by privileging their gender identity their identity as blacks (and its consequent political implications) would be de-emphasised. The widespread dependence in left analyses on the notion of the triple oppression of black women didn't help, since this treated identity as consisting of a set of discrete phenomena, additive rather than integrated: one was black, one was working class, one was female, with the racial identity being seen as the fundamental one. Despite many examples of women finding common political cause across the racial divisions, the dominance of nationalism weakened the potential for feminism to emerge.

There was also a failure on the part of white women in the national liberation movement to examine critically their own role - to look at the script which history had assigned them. They did not actively use their location in women's organisations to examine their own contradictory position as both privileged (being white) and subordinate (being women). Their subjective experiences became subsumed and subjugated to an essentially black nationalist struggle, rather than informing a larger struggle to transform society.

What was missed was the opportunity to define a more honest and solid political relationship between different groups of women. Ironically, although there were concerns about white women controlling women's groups, the agenda of the struggle was always defined by black women, in the context of national liberation. Many issues which were profiled by white feminists, such as abortion and rape, were sidelined and not made part of the mainstream of the women's movement, despite the fact that they were issues which concerned all women. It is only in the 1990s that this is changing.

Experience is Not the Only Source of Understanding

Feminist academics do need to examine their own practice carefully, to see to what extent, in the pursuit of personal goals of publication and promotion, they are guilty of 'speaking for' those who could and should speak for themselves. There are two aspects that need to be emphasised here. Firstly, it is a key tenet of feminist methodology that conventional sources silence and/or distort women's activities in society and that a major way of challenging this is by giving 'ordinary' women voice. Secondly, the insistence that 'the personal is the political' demands that feminist researchers find ways of uncovering the relationships and experiences that are hidden in the so-called private sphere of the domestic. Thus, a feminist research practice has to integrate women's experiences into its theoretical analysis.

However, we believe that feminist academics have to challenge the claim that only the oppressed can speak about their lives or, alternatively, that only researchers with a shared racial identity can do so. Fundamentally, the first is a claim that there is only one 'true', authentic understanding of social reality/history and that is *the* view from below. While we argue for the need to validate women's experiences, we are concerned with the absolute privileging of experience as the sole arbiter of knowledge. For one thing, if taken to its logical conclusion it invalidates the entire research process, and not only for those researchers who can be defined as 'privileged' or white. It leads to the sort of absurdity that only a white bourgeois male can understand the ruling class; alternatively, if it is only the oppressed that have the right to speak for themselves, that white bourgeois males can never say anything useful about oppression. This position must even call into question the validity of the research that is organically generated by communities as part of political struggles, because such research is also 'mediated' by the interventions of more literate members of communities. Furthermore, the experience of a condition does not guarantee insight into where and how it fits in larger social relations. The emphasis on experience is appropriate for a central task of a women's studies project: that of recovery, not simply of what women have done but of how they have understood what they have done. By itself, however, it cannot provide a theory of gender relations.

It is not simply common experience or language skills which produce good research but a combination of a whole host of attributes, including the ability to think critically and work rigorously. A skilled researcher from outside the researched community/subject may mobilise fresh insights precisely as a result of her outsider status: relationships and processes which are shrouded in familiarity for the insider may be arrestingly transparent to the outsider. Furthermore, 'insiders' are not autonomous subjects. Who is defined as insider, and what the insider view might be, is constantly being shaped and reconstituted in relationships with the outside. 'Insider' and 'outsider' are not fixed categories.

Furthermore, academic training is so infused with concepts and assumptions developed in European languages and European intellectual traditions, that their imprint on analysis is not simply a problem for white researchers. Given the dominance of European intellectual traditions, as well as the linguistic diversity in

South Africa, it affects the analysis of black researchers too. Those who argue that the experience of a condition, and linguistic competence are sufficient qualifications for research are working with an overly naive understanding of the nature of research.

Feminism is a Political Project

Feminist academics do need to examine their own practice carefully. Feminist research must aim to be part of the process of empowering women in their political struggles. A research project that is simply appropriating women's oppression as the 'raw material' for purely intellectual exploration is not feminist. However, and we want to emphasise this point, engaging with the political cannot be understood simply as uncritically reflecting a 'party line' or necessarily subordinating one's academic work to the demands of off-campus political activism and needs. Academics are not the fieldworkers/ research assistants of 'the struggle' although they may well, and often do, want to meet specific commissions from political organisations, and engage in political work as members of/supporters of various political organisations.

Thus, the demand by activists for accountability of academics needs to be carefully examined. A central question which has haunted the women's movement is, to whom should feminist academics be accountable? The diverse grouping of organisations that make up the women's movement? Specific organisations? If so, which ones? Or is it to activists in organisations?

Accountability cannot have the same meaning for academics as it does for political activists, who are bound by the organisations they work in. The demands of political discipline and the need for collective action place special constraints on political activists. Furthermore, there are appropriate democratic constraints where activists are elected and mandated by their constituencies.

Intellectual work, however, depends partly for its success on a different set of principles: rigour and clarity, intellectual honesty and adventurousness. These principles require a context of relative autonomy from the immediate political imperatives, even though they may be informed by broader political projects. Some of the most creative insights into the complex nature of patriarchy and of the contradictions of women's strengths and weaknesses, emerge out of feminist readings of novels and poetry. Where would such work be placed in relation to the narrow demand for accountability to a political line?

Feminist academics must open their work to the scrutiny of the women's movement. But by the same feminist token, the practices and strategies of the women's movement must be open to assessment and critique.

The University is a Site of Struggle

In asserting that feminism is a political project, we believe it is also necessary to affirm the importance of the university as a site of struggle within the broader women's movement, and a legitimate focus of academic feminists' political work. For one thing, challenging the under-representation of black women in academia

requires a political challenge to the university establishment.

But there is more to gender struggles at the university than this. It is true that there are somewhat different conditions of production of knowledge for black and white academics. However, the elision of white with academic, and academic with privilege, obscures the rather different conditions under which all women academics work compared to men (their burdens of child and family responsibilities being the most obvious). As powerful and important as the focus on racism is, it ignores the very real dilemmas that women academics face in their work, and the gendered nature of their struggles in combining an academic career with domestic and political responsibilities. It defines 'struggle' in a one-dimensional way; ironically, the gender struggles of women academics is made 'private' and personal. The failure to confront this will certainly set back the struggle of black women to break into academia.

One important impact that feminist academics have made in challenging the university has been to validate the importance of women's/gender studies. Despite problems associated with the status and funding of women's studies programmes, this is perhaps the most successful outcome to date of feminist engagement in the university. However, feminist academics need to be wary that these programmes do not become an 'alibi', both for the administration as well as for feminists, for not engaging more forcefully and critically with structural issues of gender discrimination. In the same vein, while it is true that the university is a site of gender struggle, it is also true that women academics have until very recently made only feeble attempts to organise and mobilise around their concerns.

Taking the debate forward

Feminists have to recognise and work with difference. 'Difference' is fast becoming the new buzzword of feminist theory, and is possibly in danger of becoming a cliché as drained of meaning as 'triple oppression'. Yet it does represent an important theoretical and political advance, one which the South African women's movement needs to assimilate fully. 'Difference' needs to be understood not simply in racial (and ethnic) terms. Class, too, is a critical aspect of difference and class cleavages correspond less and less to the old, familiar apartheid cleavages of 'race'. At the same time feminists should not overstate difference to the exclusion of an appreciation of how gender oppression provides a common point of reference.

We need to work with this difference in creative ways. While sisterhood is not a useful concept, solidarity on the basis of common goals is. What this means is that the women's movement constructs itself as an alliance, a political alliance between different groupings of women, united around many issues but experiencing different social, economic and political contradictions. However, for the alliance to be politically effective, the terms of the alliance and the processes of working together - the reality of difference - need to be honestly and openly negotiated.

One part of that alliance comprises feminist academics, engaged in feminist research and engaged in the transformation of the university. The women's movement must acknowledge both the legitimacy *and* the limits of academic work. There needs to be a space for academic debate; it is not the driving force behind the

transformation of actual gender roles and relationships.

Finally, academic feminism has to construct itself as a political project: not in the narrow sense of following a party line, but in the broad sense of engaging with the issues of power and of gender struggles in our society. We need to take the challenges this poses us in our work very seriously.

If feminist academics fail to engage with political practice, their theories, however sophisticated, will be largely irrelevant. Theirs will be the reject, if not the abject, script.

NOTES

1. This is a summarised version of the paper that was presented at the symposium.
2. See for instance Dabi Nkululeko (1987).
3. Jane Barrett et al (1985)

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DISCUSSION

BILL FREUND: What do we mean by research? On the one end of the spectrum, we have individuals maybe doing biographies, maybe doing art history. They're not taking any money from anybody. Perhaps they are academics, but they are effectively doing their own research; they are doing it for an intellectual community. Universities have plenty of people doing that kind of work. It's actually very vital.

At the other end of the spectrum you have people maybe getting large amounts of research. They develop it into social science empires - research assistants, training, large budgets. All over the country people say, 'Oh yes, he or she, that's the one who knows all about this.' And then this really becomes power, and then you're talking about resources.

MALA SINGH: In connection with the whole question of experience, the role of experience in the future of research. It's certainly a problem that confronts intellectuals who are engaging in policy research. And that is the question of how to mesh, how to link, the knowledge of resistance, which is the knowledge of the experience of large numbers of people in this country, against the forces of domination, with the knowledge of reconstruction, which is the area where intellectuals find they are really making an input.

BALEKA KGOTSILE: We have found that even with research that has been commissioned by the ANC and COSATU, researchers are not focusing on women. They are not bringing out facts and useful data that can make sure that policies are going to be gender based.

NEVILLE ALEXANDER: It seems to me that the real issue is the relationship between research and power. There arises an obligation to transfer power to the

people, a power which resides in the skills of research. One thing is to place greater emphasis on research techniques, proliferating those as widely as possible. And the universities obviously have to play a big role in that. And the other is an affirmative action programme, where those who now have the skills regardless, incidentally, of their colour, but those who now have the skills, begin to train others as a systematic and deliberate policy. We're asking business to do this, for example; we're asking people in economic spheres to do this; in education and other spheres, health and so on. We have that obligation as academics, people who are working at universities or other institutes.

MALA SINGH: I emphasised the importance of policy education, the role of intellectuals in making policy debates accessible and using university policy research and training units to do that. But to what extent does even this attempt at democratising access to information privilege those who are literate or would have a certain measure of literacy, and who are able to understand English? There is an enormous problem in getting around the whole question of how we address the rural poor, for instance, the illiterate, the people who are unable to have access to this type of information through the medium of English.

HASSAN LORGAT: I think intellectuals don't often look at how they're disempowering their constituencies.

PATHORN: I think it is important to look at the dynamics of power and researchers within that dynamic. What is really awkward is when you confront a power relationship (not in relation to the system or capital or the state) within progressive circles. Siphon talked about the fact that white people involved in research for transformation, do monopolise power in certain ways. I don't agree with the idea that we must raise these issues more gently or more sensitively. I don't think one can raise them sensitively enough. Because people do hold onto the power that they have unconsciously, or with the best of intentions, or whatever it is. You cannot raise sensitively enough to someone that you are working with that they are holding a position of power and not relinquishing. And in holding this position of power they are oppressing a whole group of people that are not able to be involved in a transformation. I think that the problem with saying to researchers or academics, 'You know, you must be terribly sensitive,' is that it can have the effect of people being a bit scared to say something contentious. A bit scared to say something if it's going to anger activists. I think that the people who have to be sensitive are the people who are implementing things. At the level at which you are putting forward research, you are going to hopefully have a debate which is going to lead to something practical, I don't think you have to be so sensitive. But of course when you implement things, then you have to make very, very sure that you're not going to alienate the whole population who suddenly find something imposed upon them.

Siphon said that one of the ways in which researchers can try to deal with this issue is to engage with organisations that have been fighting the resistance struggle. I think in relation to gender domination, it's much more difficult because those organisations are not as well developed, or as aggressive, maybe, about the issue of gender domination as we are on the question of race.

MOSES NGOASHENG: I'd just like to pick up on a point that was made by Mala around the issue of the relationship between intellectuals and other intellectual organisations. I just want to ask in terms of Mala's presentation -- I had hoped that she would not only deal with the issue of intellectuals as located within the universities only but the role of those intellectuals located within organisations and what are the kinds of problems that arise in relation to those intellectuals. Because the issue of autonomy, the issue of the ambiguity and the incompatibility that exists in terms of work and activism, exists within those organisations. On the question of the production of knowledge, is it in fact necessary, or do the people who are in fact the producers of such knowledge have to be the same individuals who engage in the dissemination of that knowledge in a much more accessible way?

Can we say that different roles and therefore different skills are required for those processes? And if there are different roles and different skills required, what are the implications for research that is done outside organisations by people who are outside those organisations? And how do they relate to the disseminators of that information who might be in fact people who run workshops or organisations and so on?

LINDA CHISHOLM: Mala said that it was the responsibility of the intellectuals to make their policy debates accessible. I have a problem with that because it assumes that policy formulation is a specialised task that is the responsibility of intellectuals. In the 1980s all of us as individuals constantly struggled for a certain position [in] our relationship with the mass movements and our work in every single way wasn't an uncontested relationship. At the moment our position is uncontested. We've been privileged in this unbelievable position of being responsible for policy formulation and making it accessible to people. I just feel extraordinarily uncomfortable about it.

MALA SINGH: I had this uncomfortable sense that I was actually depicting a rather unpleasant division of labour between progressive intellectuals who would do the research on account of their expertise and the rest who would benefit from this, who would have this made accessible to them. But the whole question [is] how to mesh the kinds of skills and expertise that intellectuals undoubtedly possess and bring to the policy generation process at the moment, with the kinds of knowledge that come from the experiences of the people, within organisationally driven concepts. How does one feed information that comes, for instance, from the knowledge of resistance? Because it seems to me at the moment that agendas are being set in rather problematic ways, in interactions between leadership and intellectuals. Perhaps the whole question of generating policy agendas is in fact a fairly elitist type of phenomenon. But the issue is: what happens to that agenda, and what happens to the products that flow from that agenda? How can that be democratised? And what context and what organisationally-driven social forces can actually force those agendas to become more democratised? If we get stuck with certain patterns of policy generation that are in fact elitist and are in fact problematic in a variety of ways, those are going to become quite well established. And it's going to be an incredible struggle then to dismantle.

THE IMPACT OF INTELLECTUALS ON THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Eddie Webster

The role of intellectuals in the labour movement in South Africa has, with the exception of an article by Johann Maree, remain unstudied (Maree, 1989). In a much neglected study titled *New Men of Power* the late C Wright Mills identified four different types of intellectuals involved in the American labour movement. Firstly, there were professionally trained intellectuals such as lawyers and economists who were sometimes on the staff of the union. Secondly, there were the 'party' intellectuals who followed the 'line' of the party and sought to promote it among the rank and file leaders within the unions. Thirdly there were the free-lance research intellectuals who had no foothold in the institutions of the labour movement. Fourthly, there were union-made intellectuals. 'They are', Mills said 'union thinkers, with a big job on their hands ...(they) are in themselves a link between ideas and action' (Mills, 1971, 285).

While I think these are useful categories to begin an analysis of intellectuals in the South African labour movement, I would like to add a fifth - what Debbie Bonnin calls the grass-roots intellectual. The traditional Zulu praise poet, the *imbongi* for example, may be seen as a grass-roots intellectual, educating the workers about past struggles and at the same time offering interpretations of how the past can affect the present (Bonnin, 1987).

The third, fourth and fifth type - the party-intellectual, the union-made intellectual and the grass-roots intellectual - come closest to Gramsci's notion of the organic intellectual. The first and second type - the professional and the free-lance researcher are the most visible, partly because they tend to be white, middle class and usually based in an established university. By examining the work of economists in the Economic Trends Group, David Lewis will be focusing on the first type; I intend to focus on the second - the free-lance researcher.

In doing so let me make four points clear: firstly, I do not think free-lance researchers are the most important. Arguably they are the least important and certainly the least influential type of intellectual in the labour movement. Secondly, I do not think Mills meant these categories to be seen as fixed - they are more like ideal types. Thirdly, for the free-lance researcher, worker education and research are closely linked - teaching is the means through which research findings are channelled into the labour movement. Fourthly, I agree with Sipho Pityana that it is problematic that these intellectuals are predominantly white and I am committed to trying to break down this division of labour through affirmative action. I have made a few comments on training of researchers in my own department in a book, recently published by Maskew Miller Longmans titled *Training for Transformation* (Motala, 1991). Maybe we can include a discussion on training after the presentation.

The central question I am concerned with in this paper is the impact of the free-lance research intellectual on the labour movement during the seventies and eighties. I suggest that there was no neat one-to-one linear relationship between the knowledge generated by the free-lance researcher and its application in the labour movement. Furthermore, the free-lance researcher was seldom commissioned to fill a knowledge gap which then provided information for a policy decision in the labour movement. Rather the concepts and theoretical interpretations that the researchers engendered permeated the labour movement in what the Harvard policy analyst Carol Weiss has called *knowledge creep* (Weiss, 1980).

The imagery of knowledge creep is that concepts percolate into the movement and come to shape the way people think about social issues. In terms of this model (which Weiss calls the enlightenment model) concepts, theories and research findings circulate through different channels.

What were these ideas and how did they circulate? Two theories of South African society were dominant in the sixties: liberal modernisation theory and pluralism. Both downplayed the significance of class.

However, in the early seventies these theories came under pressure from a new class paradigm emerging among a group of exiled and expatriate scholars. These 'revisionist' scholars sought to show, through the use of class analysis, that apartheid was conducive to capitalist development (Webster, 1991). This new class paradigm produced a number of powerful moral critiques of employer complicity in apartheid which operated at a rather general level. Their arguments were complemented by two further intellectual projects which came together at the University of Natal in the early seventies. These projects linked theory with the practical struggles taking place at that time in what has been called nostalgically, the 'Durban moment'.

The first of these struggles was Steve Biko's attempt to formulate the political discourse and practical programmes of black consciousness. The emphasis of BC on the need for blacks to mobilise as a group left white liberals with a deep uncertainty about their role in change in South Africa. Marxism, with its bold claims of class as a motor of history, offered a new generation of white academics an intellectually coherent political alternative to BC.

The second intellectual project can best be illustrated by the work of Richard Turner. The main themes of his ideas are set out in that remarkable book published in 1972, the *Eye of the Needle*, in which he stressed the capacity of people to change the world in which they live while at the same time providing them with a vision of a future South Africa based on participatory democracy. Most importantly, Turner placed heavy emphasis on the significance of black workers in the economy. He believed that it was through collective organisation, especially trade unions, that black people could exercise some control over their lives and influence the direction of change in South Africa.

What were the channels through which the ideas of these free-lance researchers percolated? Let me offer four examples of channels drawn from my own experience during the period under review.

Firstly, there was the Institute for Industrial Education (IIE), an off-campus

educational-cum-research body set up in 1973 in Durban largely by academics from the University of Natal. The key ideas were contained in six study-books, published in English and Zulu, that formed part of the IIE correspondence course. Produced largely by Richard Turner, these booklets introduced to union activists the key ideas of accountability and mandate among worker representatives - concepts that were to percolate into the movement and over time were to help shape the political culture of shop floor democracy that was to emerge in the eighties.

A second example was the *South African Labour Bulletin*. This journal began as a project of the IIE, to record the struggles of workers and also to provide workers with a source of ideas. One of the first activities undertaken was the commissioning of articles on the history of the labour movement by academics sympathetic to the labour movement.

These articles had a didactic quality evidenced in their emphasis on demonstrating the relevance of class in the South African past and in the search to establish the historical presence of organised labour traditions. The articles were written with an eye to the present: Jon Lewis, for example, investigated the origins, and argued for the advantages of, industrial unionism; Philip Bonner's article on the ICU of the 1920's castigated that organisation for failing to organise the small nucleus of workers in the towns, and warned about the dangers to organisation of a vague populism (Webster, 1978).

The third example was the Fosatu Labour Studies course which began at the University of the Witwatersrand, and ran from 1980 to 1985. The aim of this course was to encourage advanced worker leaders to analyse South Africa in historical perspective and come to understand the enormous transformation of our society under capitalism. The analysis was based on a combination of theory and practice. That is to say it rested on a Marxist analysis of the situation, rooted in the study of the concrete reality of society, which cannot be grasped purely in the abstract, but only through human praxis.

The final example is the Sociology of Work Programme (SWOP), set up in 1985, as a research programme linked through an advisory committee to the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). SWOP emphasised participatory research defined as a co-operative enquiry by both the researcher and the people who are the focus of the study. This included joint identification of the problem to be studied; sharing of ideas on the best way of conducting the study; and reporting back on the results. This involved making the research accessible. An example is the publication of *A Thousand Ways to Die*, a study on underground mine safety, into a popular pamphlet in Xhosa, Sotho and English for the members of the National Union of Mineworkers (SWOP, 1986).

This research method is not without dangers. It can lead to attempts to suppress uncomfortable research findings, as SWOP experienced when it investigated how the system of migrant labour created a market for prostitution and a potential AIDS epidemic (K Jochelson, M Mothibeli and J Leger, 1991). Careful negotiation was required with our research partners before coming to an agreement to publish this vital research on the devastating social consequences of the migrant labour system.

However, the significance of this research is that it percolated into official consciousness and, with the support of sympathetic individuals in the union, overturned accustomed patterns of thought. It helped clarify and reorder the union agenda leading it to become the first COSATU union to take up AIDS in a systematic way.

I have suggested in this paper that the knowledge of free-lance intellectuals has permeated the labour movement, a process best captured through the concept of knowledge creep. Does this mean, then, that the free-lance intellectual wielded a lot of power in the labour movement?

I believe not. There's an old saying, remarks Carol Weiss, that knowledge is power. Not in policy making, she says. In policy making, power is power. Knowledge is an adjunct; it is not the star of the show, it is only a supporting actor - sometimes only a bit player. The reasons are obvious, she says. People take their policy positions primarily on the basis of their ideological commitments and their interests (usually their self interest). Facts alone can't make such headway (Weiss, 1988).

This does not mean research is powerless. If ideologies and interests are pulling in opposite directions, research has a chance of being heard. The AIDS research is a case in point. Here the ideology of patriarchy and promiscuous sexual practices was in conflict with workers' interests and the research findings made an impact. The important point is that the labour movement has many different interests and their members' ideologies are not fixed. The free-lance researcher can help define these interests and clarify the direction of the union.

Conclusion

Through a process of knowledge creep the ideas of free-lance research intellectuals permeated certain sections of the labour movement. However, by the mid-eighties their influence had begun to decline as *union-made intellectuals* began to increase in power and research became more professionalised, opening up the possibility of research consultancies on both sides of the class divide. Besides, knowledge creep takes time, and when change is urgent, it is hard to wait. For those who want research to influence policy, more efficient routes need to be found.

Have we seen then the end of the free-lance intellectual? I hope not, as the resources enjoyed by this type of intellectual enables them to do research on long term concerns rather than trying to answer immediate and short term questions. They also enjoy a degree of intellectual autonomy that gives them the potential to intervene in a critically engaged way. (Although I agree with David Lewis' remark in his key-note address to UDUSA in 1989 that left intellectuals have tended to adopt a rather obsequious and subordinate attitude towards their work (Lewis, 1989).

Much of the future of the free-lance intellectual depends on what happens in our universities. For the young academic today to write for the labour movement is to risk being thought insufficiently academic. It also places at risk tenure. In a contracting academic market, the old wisdom of 'publish or perish' is uppermost in the minds of most academics.

In his conclusions to *The University Reader*, Immanuel Wallerstein offered some thoughts about radicals in the university. 'There is much hard work to be done on

the left', he stated. 'This intellectual work will never be done well if it is isolated from praxis, from involvement in a political movement and political action. But neither will it be done well if it is isolated from the pressures of competing intellectual ideas in the mainstream of intellectual debate, which in America is still located in the university' (Wallerstein, quoted in Jacoby, 1987).

What Wallerstein says here about the university in America is also true of South Africa. If we are to harness the universities to serve the mass movement, then the transformation of the university remains the central question in any discussion of research and the transformation of South African society.

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HARNESSING UNIVERSITY RESEARCH TO SERVE MASS ORGANISATIONS

David Lewis

I have been asked to reflect on the ET group as an instance of the relationship between the research activities of the university and the requirements of mass organisations, in this particular example, the largest trade union organisation in the country.

Some seven years back COSATU requested a small group of academics to investigate the impact of sanctions on the economy and this soon expanded into a wider ranging study of the underlying causes of economic crisis. Over a three year period, a group of some fifteen researchers, mostly full time university teachers, produced a series of reports presented to COSATU seminars and ultimately published in book form.

The project was very low key and low budget. All the researchers were employed full time in other jobs, mostly university teaching. The papers prepared for the group were essentially spin offs of other academic research, often part of thesis work. Although the output was of a pretty high standard, the process was very slow. In keeping with the times it tended to be critical in its character, oriented more towards revealing the causes of the crisis, than to resolving it.

The relationship of the ET work to the university was very individualised - in part constraining, insofar as teaching requirements forced most ET members to work in their own time; in part enabling, insofar as universities are research oriented and insofar as they do offer a degree of flexibility in work practices.

I should say parenthetically that for the most part the air that pervaded ET was fairly distinct from the normal unpleasant air of the university seminar room. It was a genuinely collaborative effort. I am not sure what made it such - I think that the experience of working in the service of political organisation combined with the participation of COSATU representatives in the ET meeting acted to focus attention to the collective task at hand rather than personal aggrandisement.

In part caused by frustration, a frustration exacerbated by the demands of a rapidly changing political climate that demanded quicker responses around policy related issues, ET began to constitute itself as a more identifiable, better resourced institution. It did this by formally establishing its co-ordinating centre on UCT campus - the place of employment of the ET co-ordinator - and by employing a part-time administrator and by buying out 50% of the teaching time of the co-ordinator. It increased its budget about three fold, although this still left it on a relatively low budget. Output - both quality and quantity - has improved - in part some of the extra budget was used to finance minimal research costs arising from individual projects, something that the ET had not done before. But output was still too low. There were a number of reasons for this:

- The capacity of researchers to devote themselves full-time to ET was still effectively zero. Indeed teaching duties at the various universities have become decidedly more onerous.
- In addition, the researchers having drawn on their thesis and related research in the first round were now often being asked to move into relatively new ground with the high startup costs that this entails. They were also being asked to work in the area of policy research. Indeed - and I will return to this - my experience is that it is frequently undervalued for its alleged lack of academic weightiness.

Partly in an attempt to address these shortcomings, ET has moved into a third phase of its work. What we have done is to identify a substantial - but coherently defined - body of policy research, basically around industrial policy. Twenty three people will work full time on this for a period of fifteen months. Sixteen of these are researchers each with responsibility for one or other sector of manufacturing. Many of the researchers are university staff members and we have bought them out of their university employment for the duration of the project. The trainees - six in all - are mostly union employees and some are nominated by the ANC-DEP. The researchers are all contractually bound to produce reports at workshops scheduled at specific times and to submit a book length monograph at the end of contract period. The project co-directors will then draw on this material and are themselves contractually bound to produce within a specified time period a volume that seeks to identify an industrial strategy for South Africa.

A clear relationship with COSATU and the ANC is worked into the project design. Each researcher will consult with the relevant COSATU affiliate in the sector and results will be made available to COSATU at specified intervals.

In the funding of the ISP I have been struck by the approach of one of the larger funders who have managed to combine a politically progressive approach with a very hard nosed approach to research and accounting. Hence, whilst our relationship with COSATU is clearly a very important part of their decision to support the ISP, alone it will not be sufficient to ensure our funding. Additionally we were required to present a very detailed research outline, one that demonstrated, on our part, a strong prior knowledge of the research issues and methodologies and of the administration structures necessary to control the funds budgeted. Hence in response to our research proposal and budget, we will get back a ten page response querying, inter alia, our lack of attention to gender issues, our willingness to use IDRC criteria in our research, and the budgeted cost of advertising for researchers in the press. This is infinitely preferable to the type of responses that demands the barest of budgets, the modest token listing of research activities, and is only really concerned with the supporting letter from the appropriate general secretary. It is on the other hand equally distinct from the response from two very large funders who sent us perfunctory responses, one saying that it was not prepared to support industrial policy research because it was implicitly critical of market driven solutions whilst the other refused to support industrial policy research undertaken by researchers linked to the trade union movement.

While the ISP proceeds the rest of ET will function pretty much as before - our

work on macro-economic issues, urban development, rural development and agriculture, the services sector, labour market, etcetera, will continue. In general, if the ISP is successful it will point the way forward for ET - this is the establishment of networks of researchers, working full time to detailed contracts, around tightly drawn themes. I have little doubt that this is the appropriate format to generate the required output. I do however think that it is vital that this be cast within a general non-specialised framework - I am struck by a personally observed tendency in the development policy industry to very narrow areas of specialisation and am anxious that, within ET, we develop the specialisation necessary to produce high quality research policy but that it be located within a framework sufficiently eclectic to produce coherent policy.

But the long and short of it is that ET is an organisation that seeks to bring together university based researchers in order to assist mass organisation in the formulation of economic policy. Even though not all ET researchers are not actually employed by a university, ET's location within the university's structures provides it with a very strong university flavour and orientation. At the same time the co-ordinator, the administrator, and several of the researchers have very strong union backgrounds; the COSATU representatives at ET meetings are a powerful presence.

So What Lessons?

In the main I think that the two types of institutions need each other rather badly and I'm rather concerned that if they do not begin to appreciate the politics and sociology of each other a little more the distance may grow rather than narrow in a post-apartheid regime. It's a disturbing possibility that, finally comes the revolution, all the policy oriented university researchers who have been vainly attempting to get the university to understand the importance of policy work, and the mass organisations to appreciate the potential role of the universities, may with initial relief charge off to the Reserve Bank or some deadly establishment for the privilege of doing policy work in institutions that, they will discover, are even more bureaucratic and unresponsive to real world competitive pressures than are the universities.

Why is this Disturbing?

When the Reserve Bank and the DBSA and the IDC and all the other official research capacity is controlled by the people, so to speak, then who needs the universities for research purposes? This is wrong - these organisations rely to a surprising extent on the universities for their research capacity; secondly, whatever happens the universities will remain teaching and research institutions with major resources - intellectual, financial and other - to devote to research and it would be a travesty not to tap these or worse hand it over to others; and thirdly, and more complicated, the universities are relatively autonomous - and whilst I would not wish to exaggerate the actual independence of the university, it is true that their researchers are not absolutely dependent on some minister or union general secretary, as the case may be, and are somewhat more likely to produce objective research than are in-house research organisations.

So What are the Problems?

A qualifier - for the most part I am talking about the large, rich, white, English language universities and though I believe some of the remarks are generalisable, others are clearly not.

There is not a great deal of respect in the social sciences for policy work. Basically there is a notion that this is not bona fide academic work, it's sort of low brow report writing. To some extent this attitude is just reactionary and has to be fought; to some extent it represents an intense struggle over resources which has to be dealt with on those terms. But to some extent it's structurally built into the university system. Hence when one of the members of our group spends a lot of time and energy in writing Namibia's central banking legislation, an intellectual task of far greater dimensions than publishing an article in the *American Economic Review*, let alone the *SAJE*, the university is not credited with this activity. Whilst I understand the importance of peer group review and that sort of thing, this discrimination against policy work has to be confronted. I should say parenthetically that this is often not a problem encountered with people in the hard sciences who are long used to working with government and industry and who have few qualms about relations with the outside world even if our outside world is populated by union and ANC officials. Though usually less politically sensitive and experienced, I have often been silently grateful that the universities tend to be run by medics rather than economists, by scientists rather than sociologists. There is a hard edge to policy work that is remarkably absent in academic work in the social sciences.

Collaborative work - the very essence of policy work particularly in a resource constrained environment - is also devalued by a system that is obsessively individualistic. Hence ET coordinates the work of researchers, many of whom have no affiliation to UCT. UCT will receive no credit for the work of these people despite the fact that the coordination of the project is located here. This reduces the commitment of UCT to the project. The same would apply for any other campus.

I could go on - the universities tend not to appreciate the importance of training, the deadline pressures that are attached to policy research, the intense and often inappropriate requirement on the part of political mass organisations to rationalise and specialise research efforts. In general I think it falls under the rubric of an approach that treats policy work, particularly where it is directed at the liberation movements and trade unions as 'extension work', something we do for the underprivileged out there and to whom we allocate a marginal amount of resources - a bit like the corporate distinction between profit making and social responsibility. More and more resources, financial and intellectual, are going to be directed at policy work - those universities that appreciate this and that place this work at the centre of their resource allocations will reap the benefits. Those that treat it as, at best, part of their conscience will not.

So much for the universities. What are the problems encountered by universities in dealing with the mass based organisation? Again a gamut of issues.

Firstly, research is often viewed as a process of principally information gathering with analysis and particularly policy related conclusions, seen as the province of

organisations themselves. When organisations develop the self confidence and the internal research capacity that is necessary to evaluate research based proposals they will presumably understand that policy proposals from academic researchers are not always tantamount to an arrogant imposition but are merely the logical and appropriate conclusion of a body of research work. You have to conclude a body of policy research with a policy recommendation. There's no way around that. The conclusions don't have to be accepted and presumably one will turn increasingly less to a researcher whose recommendations are consistently unacceptable and in conflict with the trajectory of the organisation.

This is related to a failure on the part of many organisations to understand the notion of academic freedom - sometimes the fear that the unions, for example, will dictate the outcome of a research project does reflect the class structure of a university and is not matched by an equal concern about capital's ability to determine research programs and outcomes. But to an important extent it is based in a real concern that researchers should be able to develop independent conclusions and that research that seeks to rationalise the pre-determined conclusions of powerful interest groups is hagiography. If mass based organisations are to deal with universities then they have to appreciate this and maybe doing so involves seriously challenging the power structures of the universities and those who merely trumpet academic freedom to disguise some narrow self interest.

In the ISP we're treading on some very thin ice - because it's absolutely certain that in some regards we are going to come up with conclusions and policy recommendations that are opposed to the immediate short term interests of some of the unions at some time. I think that there are more or less sensitive ways of presenting difficult recommendations; I think that there is a real legitimacy in giving those in the outside world the right to ponder over the implications of unpalatable findings before they are released on the world; I think that in the event it is appropriate that the researcher should extend her research so as to recommend measures designed to ameliorate the implications of the research findings. But in the end I do believe that the researcher has a general right and duty to reveal her conclusions. I am aware that ET generates some controversy within COSATU - some of these reflect issues that we must address; others are merely competing political interests; but others reflect the degree of tension that is essential in a relationship between a research organisation and a political organisation. I would rather that the ET was the object of persistent disquiet than that it was viewed as some tame instrument for providing intellectual respectability to decisions that intrinsically deny that respectability.

At the risk of expressing banal and self evident conclusions, I think that the mass democratic movement has to develop a coherent policy with respect to the universities. If the universities are viewed as important contributors to policy formation then surely one requires coherent and systematic discussion at the highest levels of the mass democratic movement and the universities. The fruits are considerable, as anyone who attended the UCT technology colloquium will verify. Here was a concerted and self conscious attempt by the MDM to harness the universities to the wider social need. And it succeeded, partly because, in this instance, the MDM

treated the universities as serious and legitimate contributors to policy formation and the general health and welfare of the nation. The response from the university, though in some quarters initially skeptical, was ultimately extremely accommodating, when they recognised the seriousness with which the unions were posing fundamental research questions. The recent MERG initiative may represent the first attempt to construct a fruitful and formal relationship between the universities and the mass organisations.

The trick in constructing a productive relationship between university research and mass organisation involves an understanding of *progressive research*, one that recognises that whilst these two words are legitimately linked they are each possessed of relatively autonomous fields, with their own politics, institutional materiality and constraints - an approach that assumes that one monopolises political rectitude whilst the other represents intellectual rigour will keep these two worlds, worlds apart.

THE CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND THE MASS DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Mike Sutcliffe

Introduction

On June 4 1990, the National Coordinator of the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) informed the various structures of CDS that he was suspending all activities and freezing all bank accounts pending a meeting of the board of trustees, the University of the Western Cape and representatives of the Mass Democratic Movement. In the heat of the moment this seemed to be a rather drastic decision. However, in hindsight it was probably the most effective way to try and rein in a bureaucracy that had become unmanageable, and a process that had become unworkable.

The suspension of the activities of CDS allowed a wide variety of views on CDS to be given publicity: comments, criticism and the like. With the advantage of hindsight, however, it is difficult to understand why CDS actually provoked such heated debate. In fact, the criteria by which we usually judge research organisations indicate that this was a rather minor institution. For example, CDS only employed a handful of full-time personnel (no researchers) and its total expenditure for the previous three years' worth of activities was a relatively small R300,000.00. This contrasts, of course, with press reports at the time which quoted figures of R28 million.

The explanation for the national expression of concern by progressive activists and researchers, is probably quite complex. It would, of course, include:

- subjective reasons: such as the fact that some researchers had failed to receive funding for their projects and they blamed this on CDS, or they had not got their air tickets on time for a workshop; or
- objective reasons: such as the fact that CDS was the only national project which held out hope for a structured and accountable relationship between researchers and the MDM.

However, and possibly most importantly, CDS did touch the lives of the widest variety of individuals and organisations, possibly unheard of before:

Academic staff from the Universities of Western Cape, Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Natal, Rhodes, Durban Westville, Fort Hare, Unitra, Unibo, Unisa and even OFS were involved in one way or another. So too were community based, service and professional organisations: NADEL, NAMDA, CAHAC, NECVC, BESG, DAG, PLANACT, DHAC, SAHWCO, Social Workers' Forum, Civics, etc. COSATU and UDF were also consulted regularly and were involved at both a national and a regional level.

Given the breadth of the organisations represented then, it was clear that an issue

as radical as the suspension of activities without the provision of resources for basic and policy research and training programmes, would lead to frustration and anger. Moreover this anger was exacerbated, given that many researchers and activists had made a substantial investment in developing structures and research proposals, the results of which would not be realised. The suspension effectively closed the first chapter in the life of CDS. My paper tries to understand this history with a view of drawing out some lessons we have learnt from the experience. At the outset it is important to state that this paper reflects my own views, as a participant and observer in the CDS process. It does not deal with two important aspects of the CDS during the period in which the ANC was banned. These are CDS's relationship with organs of the liberation movement and the growth and development of a duplicate research structure outside South Africa (South African Studies Project:SASPRO).

The heightened political consciousness and struggles of the 1980s created the context within which the organs of people's power began to address the possibilities of a transition to a non-racial, democratic, united and non-sexist South Africa. Whilst still operating within a context of the four pillars (mass action, armed struggle, international pressure and building the underground) the African National Congress broadened its realm of operations in order to counter the state and business' new-found notion of a Post-Apartheid South Africa.

One of the important dimensions of this broadening was to begin to engage with researchers around the question of developing the capacity to undertake and do policy research. Recognition was made, of course, of the enormous damage done by Bantu Education: very few African, (male or female) researchers existed in South Africa. Those academics at ethnic institutions were usually forced to be teachers rather than researchers and the result was that the racial composition of the progressive research community was a mirror-image of apartheid.

While some of the origins of CDS began in the early 1980's, it is useful simply to draw on some of the international and local initiatives which helped give rise to the birth of CDS.

The conference held at York University and entitled 'The South African Economy after Apartheid' proved to be something of a watershed. Including only anti-apartheid researchers, academics, consultants and observers of various political persuasions, the conference presentation covered a wide variety of policy formulations and sectors of the economy. Over 70% of the mainly South African participation consisted of white men, underlining the extent to which women and blacks have been oppressed. Moreover, most papers focussed on 'white' South Africa, underlining the extent to which the bantustans and front line countries were regarded as secondary aspects to the formulation of post-apartheid policy. A fairly wide ranging set of papers detailed: (i) the conditions under which the majority of South Africans live, (ii) the complexity of the economy (iii) the nature and form of organisations within South Africa, and (iv) the question of transition in South Africa. While the conference didn't come to grips with any 'solutions' to redress the effects of apartheid, it did allow for reflection on the nature and character of the questions which should be asked.

A second conference, far more focussed but with participation from all over the world, took place in Beijing, People's Republic of China in early September 1986.

The third meeting, which really set the pace was the workshop in Amsterdam (10-13 December 1986) entitled 'Research Priorities for Socio-Economic Planning in Post-Apartheid South Africa'. Organised by SAERT, the workshop made a significant contribution in setting out research areas as a preliminary contribution towards a more comprehensive research and training effort required to facilitate transition. Areas included: Income-distribution/poverty; Alternative industrial strategies; Health and welfare; Development planning; Women; Education; Employment; Environment and planning; SADCC; Agriculture; Labour; Legal issues.

In late 1988, a meeting in Harare, convened by the ANC examined the role of research in a post-apartheid society. The workshop provided the final impetus to move the various regional projects onto a national agenda to create the Centre for Development Studies. The main purpose of CDS was: (i) to create the conditions under which policy research might be enhanced, (ii) to undertake policy research, and (iii) to link the internal policy research with a similar external initiative (later developed and called SASPRO).

Bearing in mind that the ANC was banned and that CDS had to operate under a veil of secrecy as to its real intentions, it would be useful to provide a brief documentation of how the project developed over time. The following section therefore provides a brief synopsis as recorded in official documentation.

Following the workshop in Harare in late 1988, a proposal for a Forum for Development Studies was motivated arguing for the need to establish a joint venture between researchers and communities, to be located at a University. The principles guiding the joint venture were to be: 1) to address ways in which community organisations could be involved in research, 2) to have affirmative action, and 3) to address the skills/manpower needs for a future South Africa. The venture was to be seen as a study, as the word 'research' was considered to be too academic.

Debates then began over both the proposed Deed of Trust for the Foundation and the location of the project at a university. The University of the Western Cape had been proposed as the project's location with six regional centres. Much was made of the location of the project at the university. The rationale emerging suggested that projects of the universities led to more control over the research process, and increased the bureaucracy. However, a year later UWC decided they couldn't move on the proposal because they needed clarification on their relationship with CDS. This of course, was one source of problems which later emerged. Complaints began to emerge about the cumbersome structures, the slowness in getting the project established, and the question of what process was to be followed in developing research proposals. Yet by July 1989, some regions were quite strong and most had established Study Commissions.

In August 1989, CDS met with representatives from the MDM given that the earlier formal national meeting had not been able to successfully implement decisions as many leaders were arrested. The meeting formally agreed that the CDS was a programme of the MDM (COSATU and UDF). It then became clear that there was

a need to operationalise the legal instruments so as to effect the responsibility of the various structures. In addition each region was asked to identify their own Programme of Action through identifying how they were to establish regional structures, undertake policy research, involve themselves in training and undertake research projects. It was agreed that once the regional study commissions had met a series of National Study Commission workshops would be held to draw up a list of priorities for funding, and make recommendations for training and policy research. Once this task was completed, it was envisaged that there would be a joint meeting to decide on project proposals.

Divisions between regions had intensified. In addition, without authorisation, Transvaal advertised for full-time posts of Study Commission Coordinators. Calls were made for a Board of Trustees to take control of CDS. In order to develop more effective legal instruments, in March 1990 a new Deed of Trust was discussed. This suggested the formation of a CDS Trust (consisting of community representatives, BoT, Executive Committee and Executive Director). During 10-11 March 1990, a joint workshop between CDS, UWC and SASPRO was held in Lusaka. Debates over the whole question of democratising research continued. In addition it was agreed that UWC should establish a Research Centre and that the whole of CDS should be rationalised along the lines of more centralisation (and less regionalisation) and the encouragement of the Study Commission process. SASPRO would be reintegrated into South Africa.

By May 11, the National Coordinator voiced his concerns that research and training proposals had been developed, but no mechanism existed to ensure the projects get funded.

At a national meeting on 20 May, the National Coordinator once again stressed that he had three proposals for funding (the Local Government and Planning Proposal had been approved in January 1990 and yet no one had signed the contract; there was an Economy and Labour National Report as well as a Land Report). At the same time monies were only available for setting up structures and not for undertaking project work. Structural problems, the need for financial accountability; a sound management policy and effective administration were all raised. The Western Cape then tabled a report on May 25 1990, suggesting that CDS lacked accountability and collective responsibility, etc.

By June 4 tensions, inefficiencies, and concerns about funding led to the National Coordinator suspending operations, freezing accounts and operations; and calling for the ANC, BoT and MDM to meet. He argued the suspension arose out of a number of things; most importantly, it was because of a failure by CDS structures to address the impending crisis. He noted that:

- the crisis had been on its way by February. The Deed of Trust had not been signed, the NCC had not met, and the meeting with SASPRO had not occurred,
- monies were used up by Transvaal leading to acrimonious attacks,
- research proposals had been developed, but there were no defined procedures on strategies,
- rumours of funds greater than R25 million were circulating and,

- there were mounting criticisms of national office.

On June 6 1990, the Transvaal RCC met to discuss the suspension. They argued that the NWC had not been consulted; that only NWC could recommend suspension, and that the Coordinator was only an employee. They felt suspension would affect credibility of CDS with academics and community organisations, viability of study commissions, etc.

Natal also submitted a formal complaint arguing:

One the one hand the organisation was beset with a number of problems. Allegations in some regions of unaccountability, mismanagement, lethargy and the like are common. In addition, structural problems in the way in which various elements of CDS relate to each other (BoT, liberation movement, MCC, National Study Commissions, etc.) and a variety of inefficiencies, have led to a situation where the project will fail to get off the ground unless there is a clear, central, political direction from the ANC leadership. On the other hand, changing circumstances have forced us to reconsider the nature and functioning of CDS. These circumstances require bold decisions which may even mean CDS as we know it disappears to be replaced by a more appropriate (accountable, efficient etc.) structure.

The CDS experience teaches us that you cannot solve political problems through legal situations. This can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. Was CDS to be everything to everyone, solving every problem from basic research to setting up new institutions to undertaking all the policy research of the MDM? An examination of the various Trust documents showed how confused and complex the conception of CDS was. CDS lacked direction and definition in respect of the roles and responsibilities of its various constituent parts.

In December 1988, for example, the first Trust document listed its objects as:

- establishing a coordination centre for development studies at the University of the Western Cape;
- establishing and maintaining institutes (or centres) for development studies in various regions;
- generating and supporting development research;
- supporting research and training projects;
- supporting the development of research skills among disadvantaged communities;
- supporting and promoting participatory development research;
- sponsoring research into continuing community education projects;
- supporting lectures, symposia, seminars, workshops, study tours, internship programmes at home and abroad;
- awarding overseas travel grants to researchers and research students;
- making payments in connection with bureaucracies, scholarships, fellowships, internships and study tours;
- contributing towards any charitable research and educational institutions or any fund having such objects;

- generally supporting in addition to development research and studies any other similar undertaking and to engage in any other related activities which in the opinion of the Trustees are likely to further development research and studies.

A second Trust document dated 12 January 1989 suggested that the objects of the Trust were:

- To generate and support development studies in South Africa;
- To promote and coordinate development research on various subjects, inter alia, the economy, education, legal and constitutional matters, culture and mass media, religion and other subjects, and to liaise and collaborate with relevant training and research centres, persons and institutions in South Africa and elsewhere;
- To serve as an information centre in South Africa;
- To mobilise and provide financial and material resources, research and other related activities;
- To organise and arrange workshops, seminars, conferences and consultations with a view to promoting further research and to train disadvantaged South Africans in and expose them to specific research methodologies and skills;
- To provide disadvantaged South Africans with training and vocation in specific areas with a view to equipping them for future planning organisation and administration in various departments and public services;
- To create a data bank of research materials for the purpose of preservation and use by policy makers in various sectors;
- To provide information to the general public and to emphasise the role of research in society;
- generally to maintain and where possible extend useful working relationships with other persons, bodies or institutions either nationally or internationally...
- To award overseas travel grants to researchers and research students;
- Making payments in connection with bursaries, scholarships, fellowships, internships and study tours;
- Contributing towards any addition to development research and studies... to further development studies.

And then a year later, in January 1990, things seemed to get a lot clearer when the objectives of the Trust became:

- to promote and coordinate research across a wide range of fields such as: the economy, education, legal and constitutional matters, local government and planning, health and social welfare, mass media and culture, the land question, and the rural political economy.
- to liaise and collaborate with existing research and training centres, individuals and institutions in South Africa and elsewhere.
- to organise workshops, seminars and conferences with a view to promoting further research and to train disadvantaged South Africans in, and expose them to, specific research methodologies and skills.
- to create a data bank of research materials and to provide information to researchers, community and service organisations as well as other institutions.

- to generate funding by way of grants or donations in order to provide financial and material resources and other related activities.

Finally, a few weeks before the project was suspended, a new Trust Deed captured the aims and objects of CDS as simply to:

Promote and coordinate research and development studies, in order to facilitate the transformation of South Africa into a nonracial, democratic, unitary society.

The *second* most important lesson to be learnt from the experience of CDS was that you cannot do research when there is too much bureaucracy. In many ways bureaucratisation of the CDS became a substitute for the development of mechanisms of accountability. Instead of making life easy for researchers and the democratic movement, with simple, open, structures, but with mechanisms ensuring accountability, the following layers of bureaucracy emerged:

- Board of Trustees: supposedly to give overall 'political' credibility to the project. However, in the earlier Trust Deeds, no provision was made for Trustees themselves to be elected and hence accountable.
- Regional Research Forums: set up to give local political credibility and provide an opportunity for researchers and community organisations to interact over the setting of research agendas etc. However, they resulted in a form of tokenism, where researchers weren't able to effectively debate their areas of specialisation and the community base could not engage within the discourse of research.
- Regional and National Study Commissions: potentially the life blood of CDS, these structures tended to mirror apartheid given that research and policy skills were located primarily in the hands of white and Indian members of the MDM.
- National Coordinating Committee: what does it mean for a region to elect a representative onto a national research structure? What interests does such a person represent: is it specific political, research, or community based mandates that the person takes forward?

Thirdly you cannot solve political problems through simple geographical solutions. While it was admirable that CDS tried to reach out to all regions of South Africa, the differences between 'metropolitan' regions and rural/peripheral areas were all too obvious. For example, CDS structures were developed in six regions; Border, Western Cape, Natal, Eastern Cape, Orange Free State, Transvaal.

The differences between these regions are stark and in some the progressive research capacity is very limited. The particular problems faced within the regions require a variety of different solutions. The tendency for 'metropolitan' regions to set agendas for workshops became all too apparent. This was most evident when, during the Harare conference on Local Government in November 1989, The Eastern Cape, Border and Orange Free State regions held their own caucus to workshop issues they felt needed to be addressed.

Conclusion

There are a number of lessons that the CDS experience teaches us. Firstly, as we begin to prepare for the CODESA experience, cognisance needs to be taken of the dangers of over-bureaucratising basic and policy research. Effective networks of

researchers, acting responsibly and with direct access to the liberation movement, need to be created.

Secondly, CDS held out very exciting possibilities, unheard of internationally where organs of the MDM and researchers came together with the aim of pursuing joint research programmes. While CDS did not realise this mission, it is nevertheless important that we continue to strive for such ideals. This is particularly important in a context where it will take generations to wipe out particularly the white, male dominance of research in South Africa. And, importantly, progressive researchers and the liberation movement will be forced to work actively in order to replace the establishment research institutions and develop national research frameworks which accord with our goals of national liberation.

Thirdly, the CDS experience helped organisations to debate organically if not solve the question of accountability. The process was not an abstract one, as the very setting up of structures like Research Forums aimed precisely to make researchers more accountable, while recognising the interactive nature of project briefs, setting terms of reference, etc.

Several levels of accountability were debated: i) accountability to the progressive movement; ii) accountability to the clients; iii) accountability within the organisation doing research; and iv) accountability between research organisations. Debates flourished around questions of how to broaden the CDS: should there be a voluntarist approach (anyone can join) or should there be structured accountability allowing only organisational membership from within the democratic movement. Who sets the priorities became a further source of productive debate. Simplistic dichotomies (researcher-researched, leading the struggle versus following the struggle, etc.) were discarded for a more interactive approach around how priorities are set.

In June 1990, CDS activities were suspended and a subcommittee set up to transform CDS UWC into the National Research Centre.

In October 1990, CDS organised an initiative on local government and after regional meetings a National Consultative Conference on Local Government and Planning was held.

Other workshops organised have been on electoral systems, gender, and the constitution; and the Namibian experience; February 1991 Community Law Centre UWC.

In addition, CDS continued with an active publishing programme and commissioned some research projects and is assisting in the initiative to create an Economic Policy Research Institute.

Some of the networks established or concretised in early CDS days remain important policy research vehicles today. The National Local Government and Housing Research Project, the Urban Services Network, the Land Commission, the Constitutional Committee work, the National Language Project, the Children's Rights Project, the MERG initiative, etc. all owe part of their existence to CDS.

Moreover, CDS had the courage to restructure in the post February 2, 1990 period. Many other organisations could well learn from that experience.

Finally, what of the future? The old CDS has made its mark. I don't, for one, believe

we should resurrect it. But when we create the new institutions and research frameworks for a future non racial, non sexist, democratic and united South Africa, the progressive networks founded within CDS will be the flag-bearers for creating that future research agenda.

DISCUSSION

HAROLD WOLPE: The way to develop research in the immediate future is largely through research units within the universities. That can also be done in departments, even under conditions of stress of staff, where people within the departments are bought out.

The other thing that this depends on is the question of governance and finance of the universities. We need to start addressing questions about: Who are the councils of the universities going to be? What is the role of the community? What is the role of the trade unions? I think we're not addressing the relevant issues of how to gear the universities to the kinds of work that we want them to do.

DAVE COOPER: CDS never solved the problem of accountability. The way I would have done it, I would have had some money and quite quickly given the money to academics, and say, 'Do the research, but you must train people; you must be accountable; you must consult; you must involve mass organisations.' And after a year you see how they've done. There is a deep distrust of academics, because they're white and they're male, predominantly. I think there was a deep distrust of academic work, academic research, given the apartheid legacy. I don't think CDS ever confronted that problem properly.

MAHMOOD MAMDANI: As I understood it, basically what you're saying is that intellectuals have been opposed to government when it comes to the issue of policy research. That point of view has been one-sided, short-sighted. Now that the democratic movement is about to come to power, we should come of age, be mature, and be prepared to walk in the corridors of power, and *do research*. The language you employ collapses the mass movement and the political movement into one. There is no exploration of any possible tension or relationships between the two. Now, I grant you, the two may have common interests. But they can't possibly have the same interests. The political movement may become the government of tomorrow; the mass movement remains the mass movement, no matter how many men may step out of it into the corridors of power. So it seems to me that there is a need to articulate specifically the relationship of researchers to the mass movement

DAVE LEWIS: The last point I think is absolutely correct with a number of provisos. It's not the intellectuals necessarily that collapse the mass movement, political power, but some of the mass organisations have collapsed those distinctions. I think that there is within the trade union movement a desire to maintain an independent research capacity. They wish in some sense to maintain a distinction that I think you may be making between opposition movement and government in waiting. I do think

that to the extent that the distinction is not made perhaps, it is the product of the character of the alliance between the political parties, the national liberation movement, the trade union movement, civic associations

One of the points I tried to make is that unions and the ANC and the mass organisations really have to develop a policy of how to deal with the universities. They don't have one. If they did develop a policy and a coordinated response to the universities, you would have seen, I think, a significant change in the approach of those institutions, and of those parts of the university, to policy work for organisations that they were not characteristically given to working with. I think that there has to develop a concerted response to the universities. It doesn't do any good to decry the universities' lack of will to get engaged, to participate in research, all the other stuff that popular organisations throw out.

EDDIE WEBSTER: You know, quite frankly I'm battle-weary of the fight inside the university. The left at Wits, at the university, is weaker now than in 1974. If the mass democratic movement can take the universities seriously, that can help us enormously by developing a strategy with people on how to engage with an extremely difficult institution.

JOHN PAMPALLIS: You said that there was a role for funders to play in getting good research methods, and also in keeping the research *progressive*. Now, these days, for funding research, progressive organisations have been going to places like the Anglo Chairman's Fund, Shell, the Ford Foundation, the World Bank, etc., etc. These aren't exactly friends of the people and they're the kind of organisations that a few years ago we would have stayed away from.

FRENE GINWALA: I think CDS never came to grips with the relationship between universities that do research and participatory research. There is a lot of rhetoric about participatory research. But what is actually meant?

The likely trend, one which we haven't looked at but which is certainly prevalent elsewhere, where political parties set up institutes of policy studies at arms length. To me that seems to be the way, it's very likely, that we may well move.

CAROLINE WHITE: It seems to me that we must look at how we can intervene at the top levels of the universities, in the councils of the universities. At the moment, business and university people themselves run the universities. There's no trade union representation, and that's taken for granted in Australia, for example, that you have trade union representatives on university councils.

DAVID LEWIS: There is a real role for funders in keeping research rigorous, in demanding rigorous standards, both of research quality and accounting. The problem with CDS was that it was political blood money, and nobody asked anybody what they intended doing with the money they gave to CDS. Just as long as the right people asked for it the money was forthcoming. That is bad funding that will promote real corruption. I don't think that demanding rigorous accounting and rigorous research methods is necessarily in conflict with progressive research. We get what I think are actually conflicting messages from our kind of, if you like, clients. One is for participatory research, for constant accountability, for a big training capacity, and they also then demand a high quality research that they want yesterday. There is a

conflict between the speed particularly of output and some of the research methods suggested. I think that maybe the mistake we made was to compromise on the speed, because it's generally not as urgent as it appears to be.

MIKE MORRIS: The thing that we're missing from the discussion in the relationship between researchers and the mass organisations is the capacity of mass organisations to actually absorb the policy that is generated. My experience is that they don't have the capacity to absorb that.

RESEARCH FROM INSIDE MASS ORGANISATION: COSATU/NUMSA

Adrienne Bird

The rapidly expanding role of research within the trade union movement is one important index of the changing role of trade unions in the society as a whole. The trade unions have traditionally made demands and have left to others questions relating to how those demands shall be designed, financed, delivered and controlled. The nature of the demands under this model were relatively simple and related primarily to recognition of the trade union, wages and working conditions. Today the demands are much more complex and the trade unions are no longer abrogating the delivery questions to others.

This change has come about because of the failure of the traditional mechanisms, namely the apartheid state and employer bodies, to deliver the goods. Instead growing unemployment and increasing poverty have characterised South Africa for the majority. It is true that the emergence of a new democratic state is an essential part of new solutions - hence the formal alliance between COSATU and the ANC/SACP. But the trade union movement has publicly stated that it believes that it has an independent role in the future political economy of South Africa.

This change has introduced strains within trade union structures which have to now take on these new challenges in addition to the traditional functions - without having additional human or financial resources. Such internal challenges have had to be met with innovation - the nature of which is the content of this talk.

The first steps in this direction were taken by COSATU in response to the accusations from Inkatha and other conservative groups that our support for sanctions was leading directly to job loss. COSATU commissioned a service organisation to investigate this allegation. Their finding, in brief, was that the South African economy was in such deep structural crisis that it was impossible to isolate a single short-term cause.

This led to COSATU facilitating the establishment of the Economic Trends group of economists - which has been exploring alternative growth path strategies. Whilst the findings of this research were extensively discussed at national leadership level, a problem emerged with the facilitation of debate at regional, local and plant level. The link between research on the one hand and accessibility, consultation, democratic decision making and popularisation on the other hand emerged as a central issue. An associated problem was that of 'experts telling workers what to think' - to which workers reacted either with alienation or anger. The process was disempowering and counter to a union tradition and commitment to democratic decision making based on extensive debate. The processes surrounding research - including the questions of the research focus and who the researchers themselves should be - moved to centre stage.

The areas associated with this debate are:

- Who sets the research agenda? Here there is perceived to be a dialectic between problems emerging from experience, e.g. retrenchments, low wages, illiteracy, etc. and those generated by the research process at macro level, e.g. growth rates, balance of payments etc.
- Who does the research? Here questions of affirmative action have been raised.
- Can the process include a focus on:
 - a. Improving the union movement's human capacity to contribute to and absorb research findings?
 - b. Active and ongoing involvement of the union structures? Building on the 'Gold in Workers' Heads'.
- Can the product itself be broken into meaningful stages - so that comment and discussion can inform subsequent stages - both of decision making and further research?
- How can leadership best take informed decisions at congress and executive level?
- How can popularisation and education on policy to membership best be facilitated once decisions are taken?
- How best can the link between researchers and people with specialist knowledge and the negotiating teams be structured? This is a dialectic - as information gained through negotiation is often of critical importance to the research process.
- How can a body of union people develop the skills for public speaking to outside audiences, e.g. employer groups, academics, etc. to explain the policies at differing levels of complexity.

It is important to note that the independence of the researchers is not an issue. It is accepted that researchers, once working, are absolutely independent in the sense that they are free to produce any product. The organisation of course is not committed to accepting the product - this is up to decision making processes.

The envisaged process is akin to that being employed by Japanese innovators - where innovation is driven as much from suggestions from the workforce as from specialist research centres. The division between workers and experts is being blurred.

This may sound theoretically good, but how does it pan out in practice? I will now outline three different ways in which the above research related questions have been addressed within the union movement. But the debate itself will no doubt continue for a long time.

The First Example is the NUMSA Vocational Training Project

In 1989 NUMSA established a number of Research and Development Groups, consisting of elected worker representatives and co-ordinated by union officials. Each group was charged with the duty of developing proposals in a particular problem area. The areas at that time arose out of collective bargaining issues - pension/provident funds, housing schemes, vocational training and literacy and the

broader political economy group.

The Training Group, as it became known, met three or four times and realized that the task of conceptualising proposals was more complex and required more time than was available within the odd one-day meeting every three months - especially given our total lack of experience in handling these issues. So the Training Project was conceived.

A wider group of 24 workers and 2 officials was elected - representing the union across its regions and sectors. The worker delegates spread from operators to artisans and technicians. One seconded researcher from a service organisation was fully involved in the project from the start.

The Project was conducted in 1990. It was divided into three phases: Phase I was a three week residential phase during which extensive research was done into present training provision in the industries covered by NUMSA. This included presentations by employers and experts from a wide range of fields, visits to company centres and discussions around the experiences of the group members and their constituents. In relation to two specific areas, specific research was initiated - the present provision of literacy in South Africa and legal mechanisms to address race and gender discrimination.

Phase II was a series of overseas study visits. Group members visited a range of countries with training expertise and the ILO facilitated a special seminar on International Standards and the ILO capacity for those group members who went to Zimbabwe. During this period the commissioned research was conducted.

Phase III was a second 3 week residential period where all the above threads were woven together and a set of recommendations prepared for the union.

Although the Project was officially complete after Phase III, in fact the group continued to meet at approximately three monthly intervals. The group members presented the recommendations of the Project back to their regions for debate. The bulk of the proposals were subsequently accepted by the decision making structures of the union. However some were referred back for further discussion. The group members then presented the training proposals as policy to employers and a phase of negotiation around the proposals began.

In 1991 the proposals were presented to employers in national bargaining forums and major breakthroughs were won in the engineering, tyre and auto industries. Ongoing development work is being done by the same group - in association with international trade union allies. The proposals were also referred to COSATU Congress in July and, with some additions, were endorsed there.

At the first meeting of the COSATU Executive in January this year, they adopted a proposal to conduct a Participatory Research Project along the lines of the NUMSA Training Project - with the participation of all affiliates. The motivation was made that such an approach simultaneously addresses policy development, capacity building and education.

The Second Example is the COSATU Industry Restructuring Project

As retrenchments mounted in 1990, the demand for employment security and

growth became central. Traditionally defensive battles seemed to do little more than marginally reduce the numbers to be retrenched and give those affected a bit more money in their pockets. But the structural problem of an economy in crisis continued to grow.

The Economic Trends group - consisting of expert economists - had done its central task. The 'Growth Through Redistribution' economic strategy was greatly informed by their labour. However, the propositions were fairly general.

After extensive consultations between ET (as it was called) and COSATU, it was agreed that more detailed work in the area of sector studies was needed. In the end a number of expert researchers were employed full time for 15 months to work on the Industry Restructuring Project. The Project has just begun, and is not complete. The Project has the following features:

- In consultation with COSATU, key sectors for growth were identified. Researchers were then employed to do specific sectors.
- The Project was formally agreed to by COSATU.
- Each researcher is to build links with the relevant trade union and budgets are drawn to facilitate discussion with stewards and members.
- Trade union nominated research trainees have been seconded to the Project to develop their research skills further. It is the intention of the Project that they should return to their unions after the Project.

The success of this model has yet to be tested - but it does have the active support of the trade unions.

The Third Example is Commissioned Research

This traditional model does not need much explanation. However there are certain specific features of the model as applied in the trade unions.

- The research areas are generated by groups of affiliate representatives through discussion and initial exploration. (If it requires a substantial budget it is referred to senior committees for decisions).
- Criteria for commissioning research have been debated within the federation. These include questions of affirmative action in favour of black and female researchers.
- Research findings often have to be presented in various phases to the commissioning group for comment and discussion. This results in a dialectic between process and product. There is no question that the researchers make a major contribution to the development of proposals. However, it is also true that comments from the group play an important role in ensuring that the work is addressing the problems of the federation.

The third model is the most flexible of all, but is also somewhat limited in relation to wider objectives of the research process in the trade union movement - namely capacity building and education. These have to be addressed after the research is complete. At worst it consists of a burnt out organiser phoning a service organisation with a request to tell him or her about 'x' before yesterday when an urgent negotiation is to take place. But at best it allows for a fruitful combination of resources.

These three models could be characterised as a spectrum from fairly independent trade union research, through fairly equal co-operation between a trade union federation and a research body, to a fairly dependent relationship of the trade union on outside researchers. Of course there is also the kind of research which is completely independent of the trade union movement which ultimately impacts directly or indirectly on the trade union's work. This is extremely important as often trade unions are bound by their negotiating agendas - however broad - and are unable to react at all to a range of important developments in society. Independent research - which is critical of trade union policies for example - can be important in the evolution of policy. Research around alternative technologies can become relevant within negotiations without ever having been commissioned. The list of examples here could be very long indeed.

Another model is continually being proposed by employer groups - namely jointly conducted and/or commissioned research by the trade union and themselves. The trade unions have resisted this model in the belief that the parties to a negotiation need to enter the process independently. However the demand for information from employers to enable the unions to conduct their own research is very common. But the inequality of resources in relation to research is increasingly a problem especially when the negotiations are highly complex.

This raises an important point. Internationally, those trade union movements who have taken up the 'new negotiating agenda' of economic restructuring and active labour market policies - and there are many examples such as Sweden, Canada, Italy, Australia, Germany - have tended to increase massively their own internal research capacity and strengthen their relationship to outside research institutions. This has generally been accompanied by the development of really substantial library and information facilities. And Quality of research has increased with Quantity.

This trend is already apparent in South Africa. No longer will union researchers have job descriptions that include a wide range of office administration and collecting delegates from airports! Nor will their offices be in the basement with the rats. And information officers too will enjoy the status of promotions (whether their pay follows the same trajectory is a moot question).

In conclusion, I hope I have comforted you with the sense that if you as researchers are having headaches trying to adjust to changes in this South Africa of ours - in their honest moments trade unionists will admit to having growing pains too.

POLICY RESEARCH INSIDE THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Moses Ngoasheng

Introduction

Social movements like the African National Congress involved in a struggle to change the socio-political landscape have to constantly collect, analyse data and social trends. Understanding the social reality enables these movements to formulate strategies and embark on appropriate actions. Social researchers and intellectuals, both within and without these movements, are critical in this process. Through analysis, progressive intellectuals expand the movement's strategic understanding about what it is it could do in the struggle for liberation and justice.

Up until the late 1980s progressive intellectuals concentrated on a critique of the apartheid system - a critique which demonstrated the impossibility of reforming the system - and thus the need to radically transform it. As such a substantial percentage of progressive intellectual work before February 2 was oriented towards theorising and/or describing the reasons for, or the path towards, the overthrow of the apartheid regime. The mid-1980s saw the emergence of intellectual endeavours inside the country which were directed at empowering the mass movements in their day-to-day struggles. These tended to focus on technical and strategic issues related to campaigns and/or negotiations (in the case of trade unions and civics).¹ As this process unfolded it soon became clear that it is not enough to provide information necessary for successful negotiations without providing alternative policy options. Soon the research endeavours began to shift towards policy issues.

It must be said that the move towards policy research was not a consciously well-thought out process. The question was thrown up by the need to translate people's demands into concrete alternative policies. It is interesting to note that this shift happened in the aftermath of the 1984/85 uprisings. At that time it appeared that the strategy of ungovernability was succeeding and victory seemed possible. But more important was the evident growth and (I dare say!) strength of the mass democratic movement.

The shift to policy work was not only evident within the country. The process was also happening within the ANC in exile. The ANC established policy departments during that period. The legal and constitutional department and the economic research unit, later to become the department of economic policy, are some of the policy research units established at the time. These departments initiated and established contacts with the internal research community.² The DEP was also instrumental in the formation of Economic Research on South Africa (EROSA), a research consortium of sympathetic economists in London.³

This paper explores the workings and effectiveness of the ANC's research oriented structures, in particular its Department of Economic Policy (DEP). The paper is not

concerned with research in general but reconstructive policy research, that is, research work that informs policy formulation or culminates in policy documents. It is also not concerned with the content of the research undertaken or commissioned by the structures. Rather, the paper attempts to explore the problems and lessons of doing research within the organisation. The paper argues that policy research in the ANC faces, *inter alia*, the following two problems or contradictions. First, in-depth research and analysis of policy issues sits uncomfortably with the organisation's commitment to grass-roots participation in policy formulation. Related to this is the accessibility (to rank and file members and non-specialists) of research outputs. Secondly, the tension between medium to long-term policy research work and immediate strategic (political) questions is not an easy one to resolve. These and other related question are the focus of this paper.

I would like to make it clear from the onset that the following discussion recognises that the DEP, and indeed the whole movement, has had no experience in formulating concrete economic (technical) policy, not to say anything about implementation. This lack of experience places certain constraints on the movement. But the movement has a rich political history and insights as well as close affinity to the problems afflicting the majority of South Africans, all of which serve as an invaluable guide in policy formulation.

February 2 Opens a New Chapter

The unbanning of the ANC and other organisations opened a new path to liberation - negotiations. The effect of this was to highlight more sharply the need for the organisation to develop concrete policy positions for the negotiations and for possible implementation. The research landscape changed overnight. The changed conditions demanded that the intellectual energies of the movement be directed towards generating practical and workable policy options.

The first problem that confronted the ANC was the need to transfer its organisational infrastructure from Lusaka to inside the country. It did not take long to establish and transfer the political structures. The DEP was only transferred to Johannesburg in the second part of 1990, around August. This meant that there was a disjuncture between the political structures and the research departments.

The second problem was the actual capacity of its research structures. It was clear that the structures established in Lusaka could not undertake the project on their own. The problem was resolved differently by different research structures. The legal and constitutional department formalised and extended its relations with the progressive legal fraternity, mainly human rights lawyers. Using the resources of the ANC sponsored Centre for Development Studies at the University of Western Cape, the department was able to mount an intense research agenda and produced documents which increasingly dominated the constitutional debate. The DEP responded by increasing its full-time staff complement as well as establishing links with university-based economists who had just joined the ANC or were sympathetic to it.

The relationship between policy departments of the movement and the intellectuals outside the ANC is a complex and often an uneasy one.⁴ Policy planners in the

departments as employees of the ANC are first and foremost accountable to the organisation and therefore policy documents emanating from these are supposed to reflect the organisation's political bias. But as intellectuals they are also accountable to their discipline (economics or political economy) and their peers. While this dual accountability is not a major problem for full-time functionaries of the ANC, I would imagine it would be a problem for some intellectuals who place greater importance on being 'objective' and accountable to one's discipline and peers.

The nature of the relationship between the research departments and outside intellectuals is often an ambiguous one. In some cases it is more like an internal relationship, that is, one is called upon to provide input in one's area of specialisation on the basis that he/she is a member of the organisation. More often there is no commitment of resources accompanying the request. It is true that most people offer to do the work as a voluntary service to the organisation and the 'liberation struggle'. Accepting that the ANC has very little resources, one cannot but observe that it is difficult to sustain policy work on this basis. More important however is that the unprofessional nature of the relationship limits the organisation's possibility of going back to the researcher if the quality of work is not of the required standard.

The Exciting Critique and the Dryness of Policy

Activists within the mass democratic movement in many cases could easily relate to the intellectual output of pre-February 2. Focussed as it were on critiquing the status quo and theorising the reasons for the overthrow of the apartheid system, this output was a reflection of their daily experiences on the ground. Though the relationship between theory and practice is not an unmediated one, still the activists could relate better to and were excited by intellectual output that project them as social actors, guided them in their daily struggles and helped shape their self-understanding.⁵

The process of economic policy formulation by its very nature combines strategic (political) considerations as well as technical ones. Politics provides the overall context and informs the policy. While in the past it was possible to couch economic demands in broad political terms and slogans, this was no longer possible after February 2, 1990. The ANC had to back up its politico-economic demands with politically and technically sound economic policy alternatives.

If the relationship between theory and practice is complex, that between technical economic formulations and lived experience is doubly so. Technical formulations are usually alienating (but need not be) to non-technical people.

As the DEP entered the terrain of policy, it soon became clear that this was a contested terrain. The terrain of struggle had shifted to the arena of policy. For example, capital and the state tried to pressurise the ANC to concentrate on technical economic issues. The ANC had to say something about the budget, deficits, tax policy, and so on. The state and big business were determined to push the ANC into a position where it will begin to concentrate on technical proposals to what are essentially politico-economic problems. The DEP however resisted this not because it was technically weak (and we were) but because the ANC views the economic

crisis as intricately linked to the political crisis. Instead the DEP tried with difficulty to maintain a balance between the technical and the political. It was important to maintain a balance because a substantial shift towards technicism would have had two effects. Firstly, it would have pushed the ANC into a terrain determined by the state and capital and, secondly, it would have increased the distance between policy formulation and the daily struggles and experiences of ordinary members.

Tension Between Long-term Policy and Strategic Questions

The structural problems afflicting the South African economy call for a fundamental restructuring of the economy. The nature of the crisis is such that marginal tinkering will not solve the problems. Policies required to fundamentally restructure the economy in order to place it on a new growth path by definition will be of a long-term nature. To generate such policies requires in-depth research and analysis and such research tends to take longer. Any attempt to short circuit the research process will result in half-baked and ill-conceived policies.

The experience within the DEP is that it is not always possible to undertake such in-depth research work. Firstly, the resources (material and human) required are not available within the DEP. Secondly, the DEP is expected to respond to a myriad of demands from the organisation's heterogeneous constituencies - political leadership, workers, rural people, the unemployed, squatter communities, black business, etc. These demands, which are not always reconcilable, made it difficult if not impossible for the DEP to develop and sustain a well structured research programme. The point however is that there is no way that a group of five people can undertake research in a whole range of economic issues that needed to be covered. The state for example has a number of departments and utilises specialist commissions to deal with all the issues that the DEP is expected to deal with.

The DEP sought to resolve the capacity issue by farming out work to outside researchers, that is to its associate members and sympathetic economists located in other institutions. The DEP encouraged these researchers to form theme groups focussing on different aspects of economic policy, e.g. fiscal and monetary policy, conglomerate and ownership issues, tax policy and so on. The department also established joint policy commissions with black business groups (i.e. NAFCOC and FABCOS) to explore policies on small and medium enterprises. The DEP increasingly became a research facilitator and manager. But networking and commissioning work from outsiders demands that the DEP be an efficient research co-ordinator and manager. I am afraid this area still leaves much to be desired. It is my view that the situation can only improve through the professionalisation of the relationship.

As an integral part of the ANC the department's work is largely defined by the ebbs and flows of the political situation. This has the effect of engendering short-termism in the DEP's work. This is not surprising given the general thrust of the ANC's work, i.e. consolidating its political position within the country. Its research structures are therefore expected to feed into that process. This means that the DEP has had to produce politico-economic briefings (including speeches) for the political leadership as well as attend to the broad membership. The inter-action between the

DEP and the political leadership has had its problems, particularly the issue of access. For a long time there were no formal and structured information transfer mechanisms from the DEP to the national executive and the other way round. The ad hoc nature of the relationship tended to produce a disjuncture between research outputs and politico-economic pronouncements by the leadership.

An over-emphasis and concentration on strategic questions on policy matters has its own problems. It is not always easy to reconcile long-term economic policy to the immediate questions of poverty, unemployment, homelessness and so on. The economic reality is such that it will not be possible to solve all problems affecting ordinary people at once.⁶ There are trade-offs, and their management is an ongoing problem. This brings me to the question of the role of the rank and file in policy formulation.

The role of the rank and file in policy formulation

The process of policy formulation has to take on board the ANC's commitment to grass-roots participation in its activities. This means that research questions and outputs have to address and reflect the experiences and desires of the general membership and the impoverished majority. This demands that the research process be an inter-active one between the researchers and the members. It means some form of collective activity in the definition of broad research questions as well as the discussion and critical assessment of the initial outputs for final drafting. What is the DEP's experience in this regard?

Initially it was not possible to engage the membership in defining research questions as the movement was in the process of re-establishing itself inside the country. Most structures, that is, branches and regions were in their formative stages for most of 1990. However, after the drafting of the *Discussion Document on Economic Policy* in September 1990, the DEP initiated a process of discussion within the organisation. The DEP organised regional workshops in most of the regions to discuss the document and solicit feedback from the membership. These were attended by two representatives per branch. The DEP also facilitated the establishment of ANC economics associations in most of the ANC regions. In some of the regions DEP associate members in these associations played (and still do) an important role in educating members on economic issues. These associations were meant to bring together people from the branches and to serve as economic forums to discuss and assess economic policy issues. I would like to make three observations in relation to this process.

Firstly, the economic researchers in the department were forced to present and simplify the document to different constituencies of the movement. In the process they were able to develop communication skills necessary to present what is essentially regarded as a technical subject in a non-technical way. Secondly, the process opened space for the membership to enter what is otherwise the preserve of economists and policy makers. That is, it was empowering. The fascinating thing about the workshops was that once people realised that it was actually possible for them to participate in the economic debate and to contribute to shaping their

movement's policy the more forthcoming and critical they became. Thirdly, it began to challenge the notion that policy formulation is the preserve of the specialised departments. I suppose one will be justified to add that it contributed to strengthening the organisation in the sense that the more people feel in control of their organisation the more committed they are.

The workshops did highlight another problem - language. Most policy documents are written in English and the overwhelming majority of ANC members are not highly literate in that language. It became clear that translations were essential in order to enhance the membership's participation.⁷

The disappointing thing was that this process was not sustained. The lack of resources and the pressure of work in other areas gradually marginalised the process from the centre - DEP. The regions, especially the regional economics associations were supposed to continue with the process. For various reasons (which I cannot go into in this paper) this did not happen.

Concluding Remarks

Despite the problems the DEP has managed to be one of the central actors in the South African economic debate. Through its papers, documents, and conference participation the department has managed to place on stage the central questions which concern the impoverished majority of this country.

From the above discussion it is clear that there is no way it could have done this without the input of its fraternal/associate members in other institutions. The lesson from this is that it is possible to tackle complex and varied issues through a process of networking and collaborative research work. It is not always necessary, nor is it desirable, to establish a big research bureaucracy. It is clear however that in order to fully reap the benefits of such networking, the DEP would have to reconsider the character of the relationship with its associate members. This might mean making some resources available as well as establishing some system whereby such work can be given due recognition.

While acknowledging the difficulties involved in participatory policy formation, the DEP's experience does show that it is possible to involve ordinary people in the process. But it also showed that such involvement requires a commitment on the part of the policy planners and the organisation as a whole. The organisation has to make resources available to the DEP and the economics associations for the process to succeed.

Finally, the DEP has accumulated real experience as a research organ within the ANC and as co-ordinator and manager of research inputs emanating from its associate members and sympathetic people. Since its establishment inside the country the DEP has become an important player in the South African economic policy arena. In the past few months communication lines between the department and the political leadership have been improved. These will certainly improve as the negotiations proceed. There is no doubt that the department will become central in the economic forum being established. But in order to play a more meaningful role firstly, the department will have to increase its research capacity⁸ and become a more

efficient co-ordinator and manager. Secondly, the department will have to ensure that the regional economic associations function and can facilitate the participation and inputs of the membership into policy.

NOTES

1. Here I refer to groups such as Trade Union Research Project (TURP), Industrial Health Unit (IHU), Labour and Economic Research Project (LERP), Community Research and Information Centre (CRIC), Labour Research Services (LRS), Education Policy Unit (EPU) and Community Research Unit (CRU), to name a few.
2. These initial contacts culminated in a conference on post-apartheid in Amsterdam in 1986. The discussions on policy formulations for a post-apartheid South Africa finally culminated in the establishment of the Centre for Development Studies, today located at the University of Western Cape.
3. EROSA produced a number of papers on the South African economy. These papers were not just a critique of the apartheid state's economic policies but contained a number of policy recommendations. The EROSA group continues to make a contribution to economic policy formulation.
4. By outside intellectuals I mean all those who are not full-time employees of the ANC, some of whom might be members, others not.
5. Of course activists did not agree with every theoretical formulation emanating from social scientists. At times the tension between intellectuals and activists on the ground were very high. In some instances people were ostracised because they tended to disagree with what the activists thought was the correct formulation.
6. The ANC hopes to attend to the main problems of poverty, unemployment, homelessness through its policy of 'growth through redistribution'. Redistribution is at the centre of the strategy.
7. The DEP's draft economic manifesto for the ANC's July conference was translated into all the languages.
8. The department is in a process of establishing a research institute.

DISCUSSION

NEVILLE ALEXANDER: It's obvious from both presentations, which I must say I enjoyed very much, that this is research for negotiations, essentially. In other words, that the imperatives are the negotiating process. To what extent are people thinking of building in longer-term questions looking at a future, building scenarios, opening up research areas. Because the danger of course is that you get trapped into a purely reactive kind of research and there's no proactive thinking whatsoever going on.

CAROLINE WHITE: I'm involved with a research project where the Hostel Dwellers' Association wanted to be involved in a participative way. The whole thing was designed so that the members of the organisation could be involved in learning how to do the research. But very quickly they started to get pissed off with that and wanted the experts to do the research, and give them the results. That puts the researchers in a difficult position.

ENVER MOTALA: I want to deal with the question of how research is absorbed by mass organisations. I think researchers don't take seriously disseminating their work and participating in that process. They often see their job as limited to producing the research. Unless they actually are forced to participate in the process of disseminating their work, I think they lose out.

MIKE MORRIS: COSATU has been more successful in absorbing research because some of the people who have been involved in interacting with policy research, have an independent base in their own organisations around that research. This impacts

on their ability to absorb and to relate to the work done. The second point is around technicism and fragmentation. If you constantly put forward a growth path (ie a model of social and political vision) within a group of researchers and the organisation, there is a dynamic and a logic which counters the negative effects of fragmentation and technicism. If you don't, then the more powerful intellectual and organisational forces of capital and the state, with their own alternative growth paths, can easily colonise that organisation. Because if you fragment policy research and simply depend upon technical expertise, the state and capital have a much greater ideological and technical system within which you start to get absorbed.

ADRIENNE BIRD: As a person at a recent seminar said, 'If you don't know where you're going, you're likely to end up somewhere else.' Yes, of course, we've got to know where we're going and where those shorter term negotiations are leading us. Our commitment to that proposition can be seen through such initiatives as Economic Trends and Industrial Restructuring.

On Caroline White's point, I would say that the dilemma becomes greatest where the organisation is weakest. Organisations in plural communities need to build the confidence to have a confident relationship with researchers. Where an organisation is weak, it's going to look for direction from outside of itself. Building that organisation is probably not a priority for the researchers but the researcher has a role in insisting that the organisation gives definition to a research area, forcing the key issues back into the organisation, rather than substituting for that weakness.

The combination of participatory research and macro theory is going to be addressed by the 'four Fs'. The first is the need for foresight - we need to know where we're going. But in order to pull the ranks of the trade union movement with us we need a tangible focus. The times when we've reached most people on central policy questions is when we are fighting campaigns. Then there is the forum. There's nothing which concentrates the minds of membership like having a forum where issues are going to be debated. A forum helps to bring people on board, and to bring those big issues and membership participation together. The fourth is force. Many of these issues are not simply an exchange of ideas, they are conflicts of interests which can only ultimately be resolved by some show of force, of organisational strength.

MOSES NGOASHENG: As far as vision is concerned, the discussion document sets the tone for all the research that we do in the DEP. This says, 'We're looking for a new South Africa. Organise us a growth strategy which we call Growth through Redistribution.' Those are the central organising concepts. So if we look at the tax policy, we need to look at it within that framework. The issues of redistribution, the issues of growth have to be central to that policy and then it becomes easier to organise the research. But there's a problem because the DEP can't do that kind of work and we're not sure that the same kind of commitment and questions will be adhered to by the people that are commissioned to do the research. The ANC has a lot of interests within it. So there's a fight and a tension between the growth through redistribution kind of vision that has to inform their research, and the need to provide policy options and solutions which in fact can be tested in a technical sense as an

acceptable policy.

NICO CLOETE: We've got to get away from the fusion of the great researcher and the great teacher. If you look at types of knowledge - critical/analytical, technical and strategical - all of us have to emphasise one of those, although they're all related and they're all varied. You cannot have somebody in the DEP who's a great analytical thinker, who looks at putting together a proposal technically, and who tries to teach political issues. Enver Motala makes the same confusion when he starts talking about intellectuals who are dealing with critical analytical knowledge, who must also now interpret, simplify, popularise that knowledge and get it into the people. It's a total impossibility. There have to be people who deal with the strategic implications of this knowledge, and other people who interpret that knowledge to rank and file. They are very different skills. We can't do the same thing.

DAVE COOPER: Let me recount an example of trying to get economic policy discussed in our ANC area. First you've got to get 80 branches to come to a weekend meeting and only 40 came. When the 40 send two delegates, they may be activists. Those activists themselves have difficulty understanding issues. Even if you popularise economic issues, it's actually really quite complex, because it's always linkages between supply and demand, unemployment, balance of payments, etc. They could understand unemployment, but the linkages were difficult. These were mainly matric people. Then they had to carry it back to their branches. Those branches didn't meet. Those zones weren't functioning. The central issue of the organisational capacity is absolutely critical.

Two things happened which I didn't expect. The one was that activists became extremely alienated from the ANC because they found themselves unable to think laterally economically. There was a powerlessness at the end of Sunday night where people thought, 'I can't actually deal with these debates.' The other problem with the discussions with the ANC in the Western Cape region, was that there was one discussion document, and people had no capacity to think of alternatives. There has to be more than one document for a discussion. The only way that rank and file branch people can appreciate a growth path, is through having an alternative model. In the end they were just saying, 'Yes, yes, yes'.

PAULUS ZULU: Where does the grass root start? From practical experience with communities in the townships and communities in the church, I always find the question of language very intriguing. Firstly, language can either facilitate access or inhibit access to information. By and large what we translate is definitely not the original. It's a version of the original. And our very process of translation puts us in a position of relative power to those we translate for. I maintain that there is a fundamental problem with the vernaculars in South Africa. Vernaculars have a problem with the conceptualisation of the world in which we live, and the processes that we are engaged in. Secondly there is an international movement towards more complex technologies, which puts the vernaculars in a position of relative powerlessness, which I don't think is going to be easily worked out.

HAROLD WOLPE: It seems to me that this whole notion of participation in the research process by the masses is a kind of conception of the renaissance person,

who's a worker in the morning, an intellectual in the afternoon, and something else in the evening. That applies to the masses, but not to the intellectuals and researchers. They are simply researchers, but we can upgrade the masses. Now, I'm not arguing that we should not derive, through consultation, the perceptions of the masses about the problems that they see require investigation. But I want to ask where the masses end? We ought to start considering the institutional arrangements that can be set up within, and between, organisations and intellectuals. And concentrate, as far as the masses are concerned, on the process of education and discussion which will raise their level, not as technical researchers, but people who become increasingly capable of understanding the technical terms which researchers are bound to use.

DAN SMIT: I really think we need to think about the creation of professional absorbers. The success of the Urban Foundation policy work resides precisely in the fact that most of the people who populate it are professional absorbers, professional managers of knowledge which comes in from somewhere else.

SIPHO PITYANA: I think that it's naive for us to pretend as though we're talking about the movement which has had a long culture of research. Researchers who are in the ANC are fighting for a position. There isn't a recognition of research and the role of research. To what extent is it a good idea to have a research formation, fully fledged, within the ANC? And to what extent does that take away the autonomy of research and research work?

RESEARCH IN SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Imraan Valodia

The trade union movement in South Africa is without doubt the most organised force for real transformation in the political and economic arena. The union movement has with time developed a capacity for directing and absorbing research.

Much of the research used within the trade union movement has been carried out by service organisations. The research being conducted in these service organisations is interesting for a number of reasons. In particular, this paper addresses the special, if at times ambiguous, relationship that has developed between unions and the service organisations and the type of research that service organisations are engaged in.

It should be pointed out right at the outset that this paper has been prepared in the spirit of this conference i.e. discussing research and transformation. In attempting to explore the relationships between service organisations and trade unions, some contentious issues cannot be avoided. This paper must, however, not be seen as an attempt to influence changes in this relationship through the use of this platform. While some aspects of the relationships between unions and service organisations do need rethinking, the many years of close contact have engendered a mutually respectful and open relationship. Service organisations and trade unions can and are discussing and debating aspects of their association.

This paper has been prepared by staff of the Trade Union Research Project, and draws to a large extent on the experiences of TURP, the work that TURP does and the problems that we face. Other service organisations may have different experiences and perhaps even a marginally different relationship with the union movement. We believe however, that the issues discussed in this paper are broadly applicable to all service organisations connected to the trade union movement.

The Work that Service Organisations Do

TURP works on request from the progressive trade union movement. Broadly, we service unions in the field of economics and collective bargaining. TURP's activities range from teaching unionists how to use calculators to conducting in-depth research on sectors of the economy. Our work covers the following areas :

- The preparation of company reports setting out profitability, ability to pay and the financial structure of particular companies. These reports are used in collective bargaining.
- The preparation of sectoral reports investigating the state of particular sectors of the economy. These are also used for collective bargaining purposes.
- The designing and running of education programmes which are relevant to the trade union movement. In this regard, we have run seminars and education

programmes on the economy, VAT, productivity, UIF, job grading and basic numeracy amongst others.

- The production and publishing of books and pamphlets on contemporary issues facing workers. TURP has published inter alia books and pamphlets on the conglomeration of the economy, unemployment insurance, deregulation, pension fund investment, income tax and medical schemes. These are used mainly as educational materials.
- The preparation of accessible materials aimed at equipping union rank and file to participate actively in policy formulation. To this end, TURP acts as a link between academic researchers and unions. This area of TURP's activities is aimed at 'translating' academic research thus making it accessible to large sections of the trade union movement.
- The conducting of in-depth research on request from unions. TURP has done research on issues like casualisation, sub-contracting, the effect that decentralisation has had on employment levels, investment levels in the metal and allied industries, international experiences in job creation and a host of other questions facing the trade union movement.

The Relationship to the Union Movement

As has been mentioned earlier, the special relationship that service organisations have with the trade union movement raises interesting research questions.

The problems of accountability have dominated discussions among service organisations themselves and between service organisations and the trade union movement. Service organisations have set up a range of controlling and managing structures that have no formal connection to the trade union movement. At the same time, however, service organisations are able to influence, and in some cases have influenced, union policies. This ambiguity has led to a number of problems and tensions in the relationship between service organisations and the union movement.

Service organisations could only be truly accountable if they (service organisations) were to be absorbed into the trade union movement. This would allow unions to regulate and supervise the activities of service organisations.

In the absence of this formal accountability an ambiguous relationship between unions and service organisations has developed. This ambiguity has led to a host of difficulties and tensions. Most important among these are:

- *Who do we do research for?* - Are service organisations to conduct research for all disadvantaged communities, working class organisations only, or certain working class organisations only, and on what basis can we make these decisions?

While these might seem to be trivial matters, some of our practical experiences might highlight the difficulties that service organisations face in this regard.

On a number of occasions, TURP has been pressurised to work exclusively for an affiliate of one of the large union federations, or for one faction of a union that has split. In fact, on one occasion two affiliates of the same federation demanded exclusive access to TURP research as they were competing for membership in one factory. These can become extremely contentious and difficult issues to deal with when no formal structures of accountability exist.

• *Who in the union movement do we relate to?* Having no formal accountability to any union structures has forced service organisations to relate to particular individuals in the unions. Unions consist of a variety of personalities, needs and levels of expertise. The union movement in South Africa ranges from fairly well resourced unions with a developed capacity to absorb research, to emerging unions still attempting to consolidate membership in their industry. Attempting to relate to this diverse grouping, and attempting to service the research needs of such a wide ranging audience is an extremely difficult task. This task is made easier when research is directed at federation level where a more co-ordinated approach to research is possible.

The union movement is not an homogenous group. Different unions and at times different persons in one union may have opposing needs. Attempting to match the needs of a varied group with limited resources and no formal accountability arrangements is no mean feat.

Having no structured relationship with unions leads to the unions not co-ordinating their research needs. We have had individuals from one union requesting research that has already been commissioned and completed for the same union. In addition, unions have on occasion commissioned more than one service organisation to conduct the same piece of research. This leads to duplication between service organisations. Unions and service organisations will have to develop a systematic approach to commissioning research to overcome this.

• *What do we research?* Without any formal accountability to our constituency, the question of what research we conduct is particularly difficult. Do service organisations decide on a research agenda based on qualifications of its staff, their interests or academic ambitions, or can the research carried out in service organisations be matched with the needs of unions?

Informal Accountability

To overcome the difficulties mentioned above, service organisations have had to develop informal accountability to the union movement in order to regulate their activities. This has been achieved in a number of ways. Some service organisations have for example drawn trade unionists onto their controlling structures. Others have asked unions to affiliate to their organisations.

While these measures have engendered some vague form of accountability, service organisations still do not have any formal or constitutional relationship with unions as organisations. The difficulties of what to research, who the recipients of research are and so on still confront service organisations.

In particular, some service organisations have attempted to conduct policy oriented research aimed at 'pushing' unions to address and confront issues which the particular service organisation might honestly believe to be correct. While this might be acceptable to some unions, having no formal structures of accountability makes this form of policy intervention open to abuse by service organisations and persons with 'hidden political agendas'. Most unions have been able to stem this development. Nevertheless, this is an area that is still open to abuse.

'Demand Driven' Research

In order to ensure that unions direct our research, TURP has a policy of conducting research specifically at the request of the progressive trade union movement. While this does not solve the problems of accountability, it does ensure that the research conducted by TURP is relevant to the needs of the organisations that we claim to be working for. This decision does however, raise a number of other difficult issues.

The decision to work on request has resulted in service organisation being 'demand driven'. We are thus constantly reacting to unions' needs rather than anticipating and preparing for these needs. While this does ensure some form of accountability, it seriously impedes the nature and content of research in service organisations. Being viewed as the 'researchers of the union movement' creates pressure from within some unions to present solutions and conduct proactive research.

The nature of research in service organisations is such that units or personnel are unable to develop to any level of genuine specialisation. Responding to at most times short-term needs restricts the capacity to develop expertise in any one or selected number of areas. In TURP for example, we have conducted research in pensions, subcontracted labour and deregulation. Being located in service organisations has, however, restricted our ability to develop further expertise in any of these areas.

Being demand driven also has implications for the pace at which research is done. We have developed the reputation of 'not saying no' and accommodating our clients. Thus, research in TURP is carried out at a pace that would astonish most academics. This does however impact on the nature, expertise and at times depth of the research.

Of course, being demand driven has also been of immense benefit to TURP and the union movement. Notwithstanding the problems alluded to, this mode of conducting research has ensured that the research is relevant to the unions' needs. It has also ensured that TURP has kept abreast with developments in the union movement. Being demand driven has also allowed TURP to develop an extremely close working relationship with the trade union movement, and ensured that TURP has not been used to negatively influence union policy.

The Research Carried Out in Service Organisations

We identified the research that is carried out in service organisations as the second major point to be addressed in this paper.

The research that TURP conducts is tied to union needs because we only conduct commissioned research. Of particular interest is the level at which research conducted by TURP is pitched.

In general, TURP's research reports are aimed at union shop-stewards and organisers. This has meant that our reports are pitched at a level that is accessible to the target groups. The union movement is, however, not a homogenous group. Thus, we have had to develop the ability to pitch research reports at a range of different levels. Further, operating within a university environment has pressurised us to conduct research and make research findings available to a university community. This tension is one which we find difficult to overcome.

Being demand driven has also had far reaching implications on the research

conducted in TURP. This process has led to TURP addressing all research on a short term basis without having the space to develop specialisation. In addition, we have been unable to satisfactorily make our research findings available to other academic researchers who we interact with daily. This is one area which service organisations need to develop.

Being dependent on a unionist requesting research has led to the research that service organisations undertake being of an extremely micro nature tied to a unionist's immediate and personal needs. This has surely impeded the generation of valuable research at a macro level.

In addition to the above, being demand driven has meant that TURP is unable to follow up and delve deeper into important areas of research that arise out of research that we have conducted unless unions commission further research. Since the research commissioned in the first place is tied closely to an immediate need, unions rarely follow up relevant research questions that stem from research that they have commissioned.

The ambiguous relations between unions and service organisations have made it difficult for service organisations to question the relevance of research requested by unions. As has been pointed out earlier, unions are not an homogenous group, and have different capacities to absorb research. However, because service organisations are located outside formal union structures, we are unable to question the need of and relevance of research sometimes commissioned by unions, even though we may suspect that the research will not be used.

Conclusion

The research experiences of service organisations like TURP raise a number of interesting issues in the context of research and transformation - in particular, the importance of conducting research that is accessible and making academic research accessible to a large section of mass organisations. The research and servicing function of organisations like TURP has allowed workers and other non-specialists to participate in and influence research and the policy discussions that follow. In addition, the close relationship between service organisations and unions has ensured that research conducted within service organisations is relevant and tied to the needs of mass organisation.

The experience of service organisations also raises questions about accountability and the difficulties of attempting to address accountability.

The problems related to service organisations responding to immediate and short term research needs have been discussed. This together with the problems of accountability discussed above makes it extremely difficult for service organisations to have a long term vision of their work.

Events in the political and collective bargaining arena have shifted unions' focus into areas of development and restructuring of industry. Unions' research needs in this context have changed. The unions now need sophisticated and in-depth research which can and sometimes cannot be provided by service organisations. The role of service organisations in this context needs to be examined.

The long-term role of service organisations, particularly in the context of research for transformation, has not been addressed by service organisations themselves, by the union movement or by other researchers. In TURP for example, we do not have a vision of our role beyond the very immediate needs of the trade union movement. The future role of service organisations needs to be urgently addressed.

BETWEEN TWO CATASTROPHES

NGOs and research for transformation

David Hallowes

Introduction

I was asked to speak on the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and service organisations (SOs) in the transition from research supporting resistance to research supporting transformation. What I have to say is largely based on a report which I completed about a year ago for the Career Information Centre. (CIC)

The report came out of a research project initiated jointly by CIC and CRIC, its sister organisation in Cape Town. At the Natal end the process involved intense collaboration between myself and CIC. If what I have to say carries any weight, much of the credit must go to CIC. The brickbats can safely be reserved for me, however, since I was left to come to my own conclusions and I shall, in this paper, try to take some thoughts one step beyond.

Before starting I would like to make a distinction between those organisations which are set up to service a particular mass based organisation, and those that are constitutionally independent. The Trade Union Research Project (TURP) is an example of the first kind, while CIC is an example of the second.

As a matter of convenience I will refer to the first kind as SOs and to the second as NGOs.

SOs, in this sense, do not make their own policies but are directly tied to the agendas of the organisations to whom they provide a service. NGOs, whatever their links with mass based organisations, must take their own policy decisions.

Since this paper is mostly about research policy, or perhaps rather the factors which I think frame research policy options, it may be taken as directed more at NGOs than at SOs.

Theory and Strategic Planning

Transformation will not be the work of a day, and NGOs committed to transformation will have to engage, as a matter of urgency in long term strategic planning. That implies that they develop a theory of how development is worked in the world we inherit, and that they have some sort of vision of how they work their place in it.

They will of course, choose the theoretical framework they find most credible. That choice will affect the research they do and how they interpret it; the constituents they chose to work with; the other organisations they work with and how they do that; the programmes and projects they initiate; the kind of information that is generated by all these choices, and how it is interpreted and what further research is initiated in consequence.

I would argue that the transition initiated on February 2, 1990, is essentially about

the recomposition and deracialisation of the establishment necessary to maintain the formal economy. The racist line of exclusion will be displaced and fragmented but the new line of exclusion will nevertheless mark the new lines of power which are already in play.

If NGOs believe it possible that an establishment able and willing to deliver to all South Africans on a sustainable basis can be created, they will devote their energies to process its recomposition. That would be about increasing formal provision of services in an incremental way; gearing education to the needs of the formal economic and development sector; opening up career paths in such a way as to facilitate individuals in their personal transitions into the condition of modernity.

In this case, the short and long term strategies of NGOs would be the same:

- The theory is growth.
- The economy is urban-centred.
- The state embodies the national interest.
- The name of the game is access (and the demand will be formidable).
- And the consequence of failing is catastrophe.

In contrast, underdevelopment theory predicts that the growth strategy will actually result in the further immiseration of those who the metropolitan interests constitute as peripheral.

It is not too difficult to imagine how that would happen with the further stratification of labour, the creation of a large pool of marginalised casual labour, growing unemployment and further pressure on people's access to independent productive resources such as land. Catastrophe here, is the grinding reality of everyday life for millions of people.

Alternatively, the growth strategy would end up in the peripheries being pushed beyond the boundaries of South Africa and we can already see some of the ways that works in terms of the PWV region's thirst for water or the progressive exclusion of foreign migrants from the South African labour markets.

The ecological catastrophe which threatens to derail the global development agenda is also most acute at the peripheries. The logical consequence is that the metropolitan chain will eventually collapse its own resource base. The urban sector will turn its hinterland into a desert precisely as the consequence of its need to control resources in order to sustain itself. (For a description of the global urban hierarchy, see Armstrong and McGee, p41ff.)

As their resource base shrinks, the metropolitan interests are likely to become increasingly aggressive and competitive in their assertion of control. I do not envisage a single grand apocalypse but a process which will be as uneven and contradictory as that of development, indeed, a process which is precisely the continuation of uneven development. As Tom Nairn reminds us, 'uneven development' is a polite academic phrase meaning 'war' (1977:345) It's not always evident who or what is on what side at what time or even how many sides there are. It's not a neat war which is one reason why we must admit the partiality of theory.

Nevertheless, the threat of economic collapse consequent on the failure of growth remains. The catastrophe is, in this view, the implication of dependency which is

precisely the coin of underdevelopment.

NGOs which find this theoretical frame a more credible way of describing the processes they find confronting them must, I think, consider empowerment as a process of reducing people's dependence on the urban-centred economy, rather one of increasing their access to it.

And the urgency of this decision lies not only in the manifest incapacity of the formal economy to provide for everyone, nor just in that peripheralisation of catastrophe to which we give the name underdevelopment, but as a strategy for survival.

So, then:

- The theory is underdevelopment.
- The economy is defined by metropolitan interests.
- The state is located by a disjunction between the international system of states and its own internal history. It creates a force field in which major actors contest to construct the national in their own interests.
- The name of the game for NGOs is helping people develop a productive capacity autonomous of the global economy.
- And we are placed between twin peaks of catastrophe.

In placing us between two catastrophes, the critique does not of itself yield any self-evident policy. Rather, it produces a problematic of policy, because the objective must be to produce counter-flows to the most powerful forces shaping society; to work, as it were, against history. It does not leave NGOs with a simple either/or choice between access on the one hand, and helping people to act and produce for themselves on the other. Rather, it requires a different kind of access to metropolitan resources. And it requires engagement in the struggle within the establishment (remembering always that NGO staff are themselves part of the establishment) in ways which are, hopefully, now becoming possible.

Tensions in Development

In practical terms this problematic is characterised by a number of tensions which I will try to spell out below.

The tension between long and short term strategies

Reducing people's dependence on the urban-centred economy can only be a long term strategy. Most commentators emphasise the necessity for peripheralised people to organise themselves if their needs and priorities are to become part of the national agenda. I will argue below that such organisation should aim to articulate production rather than demand. That is the long term strategy. More immediately, NGOs will only be able to facilitate autonomous development if the recomposed establishment allows them the space to do so and if NGOs themselves create that space using the opportunities presented in the fluidity of transition.

NGOs will be minor actors within the recomposed establishment. While the major actors will want to construct the national in their own interests, the NGOs will want to promote a construction of the national which accommodates their interests. They

will therefore be concerned to promote the multiplication and devolution of the sites of decision making.

They will also have an interest in the greatest possible freedom of information in all sectors of political and economic life. Tight control of information is a sensible option only for those that have the ambition and power to dominate a particular terrain. Being one of the weaker parties to the establishment, NGO capacity to contest the agendas of more powerful actors will relate to their ability to research those agendas and demonstrate their consequences.

The tensions between NGO strategies and their resources and capacities

Without funds, of course, there will be no capacity and it is already evident that funding is becoming much tighter. To get funds, NGOs have to make promises, otherwise known as proposals. They also have to make promises to their constituents. They need to be sure they can deliver on their promises and that they are clearly defined so that people don't expect what was never promised although there are difficulties here to which I will return below.

Part of the NGO interest in the recomposition of the establishment is to amplify NGO capacity by engaging established institutions in their work.

Some initiatives, for example the location of various NGOs and SOs within the liberal universities, indicate one way in which this can be done. Universities, of course, are large and baggy institutions and many organisations are barely noticed. NGOs should be concerned to engage the partner institution as a whole and inform its practices and culture beyond the extent of its participation in a particular project or programme.

To stay with the example of the universities, NGO research should be used to pose problems that create the pressures to transform university research agendas as well as the content and methods of its teaching.

At the same time NGOs must ensure that their research is effectively networked within the NGO community itself, both within development sectors and across sectoral lines. Given that different NGOs have different histories and cultures - that is, different imaginative points of reference - this will not necessarily be any easier than the relations between NGOs and partner institutions.

NGOs have an interest here in promoting mobility of staff within the NGO network so as to broaden the range of people's experience. This is particularly important for research. Training programmes should also attempt to take account of the needs of the broader NGO network.

Mediating the tension between metropolitan resources and peripheral needs

Obviously this is the tension which lies at the heart of the transformational development project.

Ensuring that resources really do facilitate and production really does benefit the peripheries, rather than circulating back to the metropolitan advantage, will be a profoundly difficult task. This is particularly so since social stratification in the peripheries is substantially produced within the terms of the metropolitan/periphery

relationship. People who gain power in the peripheries are generally those who have the best access to metropolitan resources; political connections, access to capital, control of access to markets and goods, access to education.

The aid syndrome is, of course, precisely about the creation of dependency on development agencies. But the pressure for dependence is not one-sided. Since NGOs are metropolitan agencies, people are likely to want to use them simply for access so there is likely to be a tension between the NGO's strategy in relation to the people and the people's strategy in relation to the NGO.

But that response is partly conditioned by the unconscious promises of development workers. As one of the participants in the CIC project put it, aid tends to be directed at those who will look good in the city and it certainly helps if they speak English. Their achievements, often the result of considerable struggle, become the means by which we confirm our own identities. In doing that, we replay that missionary scene in which 'the progressive' is costumed after our own image as the aspiration to the life styles of urban modernity.

Peripheralised people, however, do have other strategies for survival, some of which are marked by their history of resistance to incorporation within the colonising economy. One function of NGOs would be to help people locate that resistance within the context of global development. Beyond that, NGOs need to put much more effort into understanding the productive knowledge and skills which fall outside the formal economy; in seeking to expand the resource base relevant to those skills as well as introducing and developing new skills and technologies appropriate to sustainable development.

It is in this area that I think research has the greatest potential to transform the imaginative co-ordinates of the NGOs themselves, but to do this NGOs will need to talk to people who won't necessarily look good in the cities. They will need to talk to people in the local language, not just as a means of communication, but to speak to the imagination put into play in that part of the people's lives which relates a different set of aspirations to those played in the Ohlsson's ad.

That would involve paying closer attention to the position of women in development, since it is they who retain and have continued to develop skills in cultivation and food preparation, and it is they who are most disadvantaged in terms of access to formal education and the formal economy.

Perhaps less comfortably for us, it would also involve a better understanding of such figures as the Sangoma or the traditional leader and their potential to play a positive role in development.

The promotion of democratic forms of social organisation is, of course, an essential part of the development process but the underlying ethos of social movements will have a profound affect on what they actually achieve. In my view there are therefore three things which should inform the way researchers think about organisation:

- Organisation for production.
- Production for local consumption.
- Demand to enable, rather than displace, control of resources.

Resources will not in fact be locally defined if production does not have as its

primary goal the satisfaction of local needs. If the aim is to supply distant markets, it is not the producer who in fact defines resources, but the upstream and downstream of a production pipeline dominated by capital and the metropolitan market (Armstrong and McGee, 1985:64).

A priority on production would not preclude demand. A production-based rural social movement would, for example, seek to ensure that state land policy and legislation opened as wide a space as possible for it to achieve its own policy goals, such as redistribution of land. The difference then, is between demand which is designed to enable people to act in their own interest and demand which insists that government act for them.

This relates to the fourth tension which will characterise the development problematic for NGOs.

The relation between welfare and development

People who are debilitated by malnutrition and related diseases aren't in a position to do much until their basic welfare needs are met. The research problematic here will be how to make a crisis response the first step in a development response.

This raises another question of profound moral difficulty: how do NGOs identify sites of intervention which have a development potential? The scale of need in South Africa is overwhelming and resources are limited. If NGO resources are directed to areas without productive potential, they will sustain an insatiable demand and the cycle of deprivation will not be broken. NGOs will have to accept the limitations of their own resources and calculate the productivity of their interventions.

But they must also look for ways in which those currently excluded from all capacity can be drawn into the development of an appropriate resource base in the long term.

The relation between politics and development

While development is profoundly political, its politicisation on party lines will institute political patronage and the use of development as a political weapon. Leadership within the oppositional movements are aware of the necessity for development to be impartial. Many of those who experience violence on a daily basis are less generous. They respond to a logic of war rather than development and NGOs are frequently challenged as to the ideological identity of their clients. The political movements themselves therefore regard political education as an urgent priority.

Moreover, most of the movements whose future lies within civil society and which NGOs will need and want to work with, have very clear political identities.

In short, one can't go very far in South Africa without bumping into a political affiliation and many NGOs themselves have strong political sympathies.

While political education as such is also about maintaining political loyalty and should be left to the movements concerned, NGOs have to decide how to respond to requests for assistance in training and other programmes. They will need to consider a number of issues:

- Engagement in programs as part of their relationship to political movements

which can be expected to form part of the recomposed establishment.

- The relation between that engagement and their long term strategies.
- Their credibility and how that affects their ability to engage with particular communities.
- The extent to which they will be identified through association with a particular political alignment and what that implies about their ability to engage in non-partisan development.
- The development role that political or affiliated movements actually do play as the process of transition works itself through.

Conclusion

It is now a fairly common perception that NGO and other development workers need to mediate the relation between local needs and national imperatives. In my report for CIC I too espoused that position and it remains implicit in much of what I have said here concerning NGOs and the recomposed establishment.

I think, however, that the emphasis on the national as the other pole of development needs to be qualified. Perhaps because of its particular history, progressive South Africans have thought of the taking of national power as the singular goal of liberation and have, since 1991, thought of the international dimension as qualifying, however radically, the effectiveness of national power.

I would suggest that the national is but one moment, a key moment to be sure, in the international system. So I think it is the international and the local which should form the two poles of the NGO imagination while the weight due to the national derives from its strategic location in the global systematic. It is already an old slogan: Think globally, act locally.

Obviously the international connection which is most immediately and urgently felt is that with funding NGOs. There has been considerable emphasis recently, on the fact that the agendas of funding NGOs are often formed by the metropolitan context and that they are liable to overlook or ignore the peculiarities of local circumstances. The point should not be forgotten and the best international development workers (I am thinking of those who are themselves committed to transformation) are acutely aware of it. At the same time, they often have considerably more experience of the kind of development problematic that South Africans are only now beginning to face.

It should also be recognised that the agendas of funding organisations are not simply formed by the politics of their countries of origin, but are also influenced by their partner organisations. Local NGOs are never going to be short of arguments to have with international partner organisations but I do think the latter have much more than money to offer and I think local NGOs have much more than the position of recipient to offer in return.

Following that, and I hope the point is obvious, South African NGOs need to be actively making contact with other third world NGOs, so as to develop a more global imagination; to network information, ideas, technologies and strategies; and to be able to respond in solidarity to events elsewhere.

It has recently been suggested that the old slogan should now read; 'Think globally, act locally and think locally, act globally'. We need to become participants in what I hope it is not too optimistic to call the global counter-movement for transformation.

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EXTENSION SERVICE WORK AT UNIVERSITY

UCT in the 1980s

Dave Cooper*

Introduction

What is special about service organisations at a university? The notion that university-based extension services are little different from those off campus was fairly representative of thinking amongst many on the left during the 1980s in South Africa. In contrast, in this paper I want to argue that there *should be* important differences in philosophy and practice of service organisations if they base themselves at universities rather than locating off campus. I shall use the term *university-based extension work* to describe the form of service or 'outreach' work appropriate to university-based projects whether undertaken by an individual or a group. University-based extension work will be distinguished from 'service organisation work in general', a broader and more diffuse category for groups off-campus.

The main discussion of this paper centres on the 'guidelines' ratified in 1990 by UCT Senate and Council as appropriate for university extension work. The UCT document includes a 'working definition of extension service at UCT'.¹ While I feel this definition needs to be further debated and fine-tuned, I believe it is essentially pointing in the right direction.

While these developments, including a working definition and a series of guidelines for encouraging support for such extension work on this campus (such as use of university library and other material and financial resources, possibilities of taking sabbatical leave in part to do extension work etc. etc.) have been in place at UCT for a few years, they are little known. A range of groups and individuals are directly and indirectly affected by the guidelines, yet few at universities or in off-campus service and mass-based organisations are aware of them or their implications. The purpose of this paper will be to begin to explore some of these issues.

Working Definition

I shall begin by outlining briefly how the UCT document emerged, and flesh out some of the central aspects of this working definition of university extension work.

In the early '80s in Cape Town and elsewhere, on and off campus, a range of progressive service organisations emerged, providing resources to trade unions and other mass organisations in a variety of fields such as health and safety, literacy, labour law and labour statistics, economic issues, etc. The groups that emerged at UCT were part of this wider movement, and were regulated on campus by ad hoc arrangements and vague guidelines within the different faculties and departments. In 1985-6, when the waves of civil unrest spread onto campuses, a loose ad hoc

organisation of academics formed at UCT - PEG (Progressive Education Group). At one point nearly 200 academic staff were involved in PEG, which took as its central task the need to discuss and gain greater clarity on what a progressive university would look like in a post-apartheid South Africa. The issue of what would be relevant socialist practices and institutions/structures within a Third World university were explicitly debated. Different subgroups were formed to consider and formulate guideline documents on a range of issues - democratising of the university structures, new teaching syllabi, university admissions criteria etc.

One subgroup of PEG formed to discuss issues in relation to what was called 'extending university professional services to off-campus groups'. It is significant that the starting point was never the idea of general service/ resource provision on campus. Rather, the focus was on how existing academic staff on campus could make their 'professional services', i.e. 'expertise', more available to off-campus communities, particularly working class groups and organisations. Since some were uncomfortable with the concept of 'professional expertise', the term 'extension work/service' was agreed upon. Whatever the term used however, the key issue was always that of the extension of university-based 'scholarly expertise' to the wider community. This was contentious then, and now. And the dominant views in PEG in the mid-80s are reflected in the subsequent UCT guidelines.

After discussions lasting over a year, the professional services subgroup of PEG produced a 'Policy Statement on Extension Service Work at UCT'. This was taken to a meeting of the full PEG group which agreed to the document after some brief debate. With some small though important revisions (see below), this provided the basic content of the Senate/ Council document which was eventually ratified in 1990.

Compared with the practices of most elitist universities in Europe and the USA, the guidelines at UCT are quite advanced in terms of commitment of university resources and finances to working class communities. These UCT commitments include official support for use of university rooms, telephones, library, audio-visual equipment etc. for extension services directed at off-campus communities and organisations. Staff members are encouraged to spend some of their working time on extension work, in addition to 'traditional' research and teaching duties. Departments are requested to produce annual reports of this work in addition to their routine research reports. Advertisements for academic posts 'may where appropriate' mention that *normal* academic responsibilities include extension work in addition to traditional research and student teaching and that a 'record of excellence in extension work, linked to research and teaching achievements, will be a recommendation' in the selection for academic jobs; and, very importantly in terms of how UCT currently operates, extension work will be included in the criteria for promotion. Thus,

Extension work should, together with teaching, research, administration, and other professional activity, be taken into consideration when *ad hominem* promotion decisions are made, or when a study and research (i.e. sabbatical) leave application is considered. In this context due credit should be given for publications aimed at non-academic readers which complement and are based on peer-reviewed research publications.

Moreover, an ad hoc UCT Extension Service Committee which in 1987 replaced an older Development Projects Advisory Committee, had by 1990 become a fully recognised Senate subcommittee with budgetary spending powers. This encompassed a small initial budget of around R50000 from the university (in addition to external donations/ grants to extension groups in terms of their own funding). One of the main functions of the Extension Service Committee, similar to the UCT Research Committee, is to receive requests for funds for extension service projects from groups or units or individuals within UCT, and to allocate its small UCT budget on a priority basis.² The committee has elected representatives from each faculty, a student representative, as well as provision for some representatives from off-campus groups/communities. Administratively, the Extension Service Committee is located under the umbrella of the Research Administration, as a third committee alongside the existing Research Committee (which deals with 'peer-review' research applications and issues) and the Organisation for Applied Research (OAR, which deals with matters pertaining to paid consultancy work).

The current potential overlap and ambiguity between these three committees is part of the ambiguous nature of the new concept of Extension Work itself at UCT. This ambiguity was present at the time of the drafting of the original PEG document, and it is relevant to elaborate on this and to link the issue to the 'working definition' of extension service at UCT which became part of the final guideline document.

While the components of the definition derive essentially from the original PEG subcommittee discussions and policy statement, when this subcommittee approached the UCT administration with the aim of establishing extension work activities on a better and more coherent basis within the university, there was some support but also reservations. Although it might be thought that the reservations were based on a general reticence and even suspicion towards progressive extension work, I do not believe this was fundamental. If anything, during 1986-87 the UCT administration was extremely concerned about its non-racial image in the wider community in Cape Town. It was aware that progressive extension service work was contributing positively in this regard.

So why the reticence? I feel the main reason was that the PEG subcommittee was treading on issues that had long been an area of contention and debate in much more conservative circles and in a quite different context. This revolved around the question: what can be considered legitimate university work to be done during university time and utilising university resources?' To be more specific, this had long been an issue in academic fields such as medicine and accountancy and engineering. For example, an academic specialist in paediatrics potentially faces endless requests to fill up his/her time with *routine* work undertaken by paediatricians not based at a university; an accountancy lecturer faces daily (very remunerative) requests from commercial companies to do routine work of accountancy performed by the average non-academic accountant, so does every engineering lecturer. Thus PEG 'progressives' were stumbling unintentionally onto a minefield of fundamental questions, of the nature of a university, the legitimate boundaries of work paid for effectively from the university academic budget, as well as the nature of scholarship

and its associated practices.

It became clear that the UCT administration would support the broad thrust of extension work towards 'disadvantaged communities', as long as it conformed to two criteria which had previously emerged in the context of medicine, accountancy etc.³ The criteria were:

- that extension work is 'made possible by the expertise and knowledge of the academic discipline of the staff members who are providing such service and is rooted in rigorous academic work of the staff members concerned'. In other words, university-based extension services embody 'best practice' and 'state of the art' knowledge which is available because the academic is keeping up with the most advanced knowledge in that specific field or subfield (internationally and in the context of the South African situation). This would mean that a university accountant could advise companies (or mass organisations) concerning recent 'state of the art' (i.e. academic in the true sense) accountancy theories/practices. But it would not be legitimate to use university time and resources to undertake services which simply involved routine practices (i.e. to transfer 'information' or routine knowledge rather than new knowledge). This raises problems for university-based service work which merely provides a resource or informational service.
- that extension work 'enhances the teaching and/ or research done within the university'. I would interpret this as something to strive for rather than an absolute rule. For example at times extension work might involve very little feedback into research or teaching eg. an extension project of writing a new history text book for matrics might not feed back in any immediate way into undergraduate teaching or new research. But in general, university extension work should seek ways to create an interconnectedness between (i) the extension side and (ii) undergraduate teaching (iii) and peer-review research publications. For example a *research* project into the history of Cape Town which generates 'traditional' research articles might interface with *extension* work involving communicating the research findings by means of a popular booklet and a play or video, as well as taking the findings into *teaching* via undergraduate lectures on local history and research methodology. The interconnectedness between these three components of academic work would apply as much to past extension practices in medicine/accountancy/engineering etc. as to recent 'progressive' extension work in the social sciences. Actually when viewed in this light, in many respects the PEG document was simply formalising what medics and engineers have been doing for decades! Perhaps the only significant difference was a new stress on extension for 'disadvantaged communities' rather than university services which have historically been oriented much more towards commerce and the South African elite.

Currents in Opposition to the Existing Definition

Despite the establishment of an Extension Service Committee (ESC) to oversee implementation of the 'guidelines', experience over the past two years has shown that many at UCT, including applicants to the ESC for funding for extension projects, are not clear about the concept of university-based extension work, nor about some

of the implications flowing from the working definition. While most academics have been found to support the guidelines, with one or two reservations about nuances or phraseology, there seem to be two currents of thought which are consistently opposed to the broad thrust of these guidelines. These might be called the 'ultra-right' and 'ultra-left' positions. Both serve to marginalise and peripheralise progressive extension work. These approaches, I believe, could potentially set back the advances that have been made.

The ultra-right position, coming from groupings of more conservative academics, does support extension for 'disadvantaged communities', commonly viewed as 'the poor'. However, this extension work is seen as a side-line, something to do in one's spare time as a form of charity or welfare work. 'Real' academic work is perceived to be generating peer-review publications. It is assumed (incorrectly) that writing a popular text or undertaking consultancy work for a working class community (eg. a health survey) does not require the highest academic standards. There is no conception, for example, that writing up an academically-based piece in simple language requires the most sophisticated grasp of the core theoretical and empirical issues.⁴ If we take the working definition seriously however, it is clear that all good university-based extension work should contain a serious research component - either original research for the project at hand or synthesising and making available recent research findings of others. This derives from the fact of providing a service 'rooted in rigorous academic work of the staff members concerned'. Yet the ultra-right position views the academic component of extension work as 'mickey mouse' stuff, not to be taken seriously.

I believe that it is important for those doing university-based extension work to counter this ultra-right position, by asserting the complex interrelationship between the 'extending' side and the research side of extension projects, and by ensuring that extension work always conforms to high academic standards.⁵

The 'ultra-left' position encompasses individuals both on and off campus. I would argue it derives from a much wider current of 'anti-academicism' which has been particularly prevalent amongst progressive groupings in South Africa throughout the 1980s. This anti-academicism rears its head in many areas such as debates about gender issues, antagonism towards 'academic' critiques of the internal colonialism thesis, questions about progressive art and culture etc. In other words its occurrence within the debates about extension work at universities is simply one aspect of a much larger ideological current.

The essence of the 'ultra-left' position towards extension is the argument that one is simply doing 'service work in general' from a university base, service work/resource provision which is no different from practices followed if one were based off-campus. There are a number of sub-themes to this position. Firstly there is a stress on extension work as demand driven: one must be accountable to mass organisations which know what they need (and academics know very little about these needs) and one must respond to requests as they arise. This raises particular problems when (a) a request doesn't fall clearly within the academic specialism in which the particular academic individual or group is located (eg. a labour history group is asked to do a

study of a contemporary housing problem); or (b) a request is essentially one requiring basic information or resources which many non-specialists or undergraduate students could provide. In both cases the issue revolves around 'the expertise and knowledge of the academic discipline of the staff members'⁶. This leads to the second sub-theme of this position. The 'ultra-left' response to dilemmas (a) and (b) is to argue that the whole idea of academic 'specialism' is a bourgeois university construct which needs to be combatted. Moreover it is asserted that 'specialism/ expertism' is elitist and anti-socialist and needs to be rejected. The practices flowing from this approach result in the extension work undertaken becoming less and less specialist and academically rooted - one fulfils the function of a 'service group in general' or a 'community resource group', though based on campus. This dynamic is reinforced and further justified by a third sub-theme: that the 'struggle' requires meeting immediate needs and addressing current issues, that the time is not right for significant time to be spent on longer term research needs and issues (for example, a two year project on the need for a national health service must yield place to a study of an immediate health problem in a certain factory). Thus one (but not the only) important element of academic research - its longer term questions and perspectives - is subordinated to strong currents of 'immediatism' which blow across the extension projects undertaken. Finally a fourth sub-theme tends to be superimposed on all these aspects. If conflict breaks out over these issues, the 'ultra-left' position often argues that most academics in South Africa are white and thus have little real contact with the needs of the mass of the people in South Africa, and that this is shaping the 'overly-academic' nature of the extension work being pursued.

These sub-themes, when condensed together, form an extremely powerful and beguiling package which can easily paralyse extension work attempting to orientate itself within the working definition outlined earlier. The 'ultra-left' position is powerful for a further reason: while historically, 'anti-academicism' has often been coupled with currents of anti-intellectualism (e.g. Nazi Germany in the 1930s), in South Africa in the 1980s it was not generally anti-intellectual. Rather, it argued that intellectual work was important, but should not (and could not) take place within white, racist and elitist universities. Thus it was asserted, 'either get off campus or use the place expediently to do whatever extension work is most demanded'.

This is not the place to develop a serious analysis of different ideological subcurrents during the 1980s. Suffice to say that elements of immediacy, suspicion of whites and males and academics (all dominant in university extension work), stress on working class consciousness/demands and self-reliance, accountability to mass organisations etc., all played a part in shaping the critique of extension work undertaken at universities. Nor do I wish to argue that the 'ultra-left' position does not have some important points to make. It raises complex issues that have no easy solutions. But ultimately I believe its overall effect is to peripheralise and marginalise university-based extension work. By rejecting or not taking seriously the need to root university extension work in academic scholarship, the effect is to play into the hands of the ultra-right position which tolerates progressive extension work

on the margins, as a mickey mouse affair not to be taken seriously. Like all ultra-left positions, it does the work for the conservatives without intending to do so.

My own position is nearer to that of Ernest Mandel who has written numerous non-specialist books for worker education, and yet asserts strongly:

What a university must offer the young workers is first of all the product of theoretical production, that is, scientific knowledge, nothing so sterile as the masochistic populism of some students who want to 'go to the workers' with empty hands and empty heads to offer them their muscles and vocal cords. What the workers need most of all is knowledge, a radical critique of the existing society, systematic exposure of all the lies and half-truths projected by the mass media. It is not easy to put this knowledge into words that can be understood by the masses. Rhetoric and academic jargon are as sterile as populism. But the job of popularisation comes after that of assimilating real knowledge. And it is in this latter realm that a really critical university can make its prime contribution today to transforming society. It can offer a critique of existing society as a whole and of its parts that is all the more radical and relevant for being serious, scholarly and incorporating a large amount of factual material...

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I draw out the implications of the most contentious issues raised above.

- There is no way of avoiding academic specialisms in a university (though the specialist field might be multidisciplinary in terms of historical boundaries). In many ways the defining issue of a university is precisely that the scholarship of its academics is based on expertise in a particular field, in which the academic keeps abreast internationally with the 'state of the art', 'best practice' knowledge and its applications. Thus if an extension unit is located within an academic department or faculty (as opposed to being located in say, Student Affairs, as one or two resource groups are), by definition it will be required to perform extension work within a certain academic specialist area.
- Flowing from the above point, university-based extension work cannot simply be demand driven i.e. accountable to wider community organisations. This it has to be - but it *also* has to be accountable to the academic/ intellectual community of specialists in the field, in terms of research ethics, validity of theory, rigour of research techniques used, familiarity with the latest findings and debates etc. The implication of the definition of extension 'made possible by the expertise and knowledge of the academic discipline of the staff members...' is that university-based work has to restrict itself to certain specialist tasks, and to ask other service organisations off-campus to meet many demands which are probably more urgent in the immediate sense - but which are not 'rooted in rigorous academic work of the staff concerned...'
- One of the most important battles to win at universities, in terms of extension work, is the explicit recognition that academic work involves three, not two components: teaching (post-graduate and undergraduate), 'traditional' research

whose output takes the form of journal articles, books etc., and extension work which involves making the scholarship available to the non-specialist, in the form of 'popular' booklets and articles, videos, plays, consultancy reports etc.⁸ The UCT guidelines are an important advance in this regard, in their recognition of all three aspects in terms, for example, of academic staff appointments, promotions and sabbatical leave. It is important with respect of extension work that where possible 'it enhances the teaching and/or research done within the university'. All three aspects are integral to good scholarship, they enhance and in general positively reinforce each other. In many ways this seems so 'normal' (engineering and many other applied departments have been doing this all along) that one wonders why there is any fuss about so-called 'new extension'.

NOTES

- * The views/interpretations expressed in the paper are those of the author alone
1. A working definition of extension service is as follows:
 - I - it is a service or function offered by an individual or a group directly to the community or to those whose work would directly benefit the community;
 - II - it is made possible by the expertise and knowledge of the academic discipline of the staff members who are providing such a service and is rooted in rigorous academic work of the staff members concerned;
 - III - it enhances the teaching and/or research done within the University; and
 - IV - it is responsive to expressed or perceived community needs.
 Extension service is *not* work that is normally included in diploma or degree teaching or research prompted solely by developments in a discipline and it is also *not* paid private or contract work. In general, it is natural that much extension service is aimed particularly at the disadvantaged community.
 2. Most extension work at UCT, like most research, is funded by external sources; and just as the UCT Research Committee monitors research practices and funding of research in general across the campus, so the new Extension Service Committee will perform a similar function for university-based extension services.
 3. These two criteria became implicitly embodied within the working definition of extension work, and I believe this was a positive development - a university is an institution based on scholarship, and one cannot have one set of rules for 'extending' one's scholarship to commercial companies or capitalists, and a quite different set of rules for extension work to mass organisations like trade unions.
 4. My own experience has been that it is often easier to write an academic journal article, where some of the blurred areas can be fudged with footnotes and nuances. Writing up something for the non-specialist usually forces one to highlight the essences - and if one is unclear about the core points, the simple style soon reveals this quite starkly.
 5. A problem faced by the UCT Extension Service Committee has been that many projects submitted to it for funding require new research to be undertaken within the parameters of the project itself. One solution has been to refer the 'research' aspects to the UCT Research Committee for funding and for the ESC to fund the 'extending' aspects (eg. the costs of producing a popular booklet for the non-specialist, incorporating the research findings). Yet this solution deliberately segregates out the two components which are generally better seen as part of an integrated whole. The interrelationship of these two committees clearly therefore needs more debate and attention.
 6. See working definition point II above.
 7. See Mandel in C.Bundy, A. Coetzee, A. Kraak, P. le Roux and A. Redelinghuis, (1990)
 8. I use the term 'traditional' research in place of the UCT 'peer-review research' terminology, because in my opinion good 'popular' extension work should also stand up to peer-review. For example, 'popular' booklets on labour movements of Bolivia and Tanzania in which I was involved, had their drafts sent to specialists in the area who suggested important changes in theoretical and empirical details before publication i.e. the booklets underwent a review not dissimilar to the reviews of drafts of journal articles prior to publication in international journals. In other words, extension work for non-specialists should stand up to the most rigorous scrutiny of specialists - the working class has no need for inferior work (see Mandel above).
 9. Obviously, different academics will lay different stresses (in terms of time and commitment) on the three aspects, just as currently there is a variation on the commitment towards teaching in relation to research. The *principle* of recognising all three components is what is important.

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DISCUSSION

EDDIE WEBSTER: David Cooper's interesting presentation captures the naivety of the left. At Wits we also have a document around extension work, which sets down rules as to how much time you can spend consulting with business and industry. The overwhelming pressure there is to get out into the marketplace and sell, to commoditise knowledge. Is not the extension document that you prepared overtaken by this market-driven pressure? Do you get sabbaticals if you spend time doing extension work and don't get paid for it? Do you get promoted for those positions? The 1980s was quite a protected period because we weren't hit by the financial crisis; now people are talking about rationalisation, deteriorating salaries, not keeping up in the marketplace. Are people willing to go out into the community and do things for the disadvantaged and not get paid for them? Aren't they going to say, 'Well, if it's unpayable then I can't get my housing mortgage and so on.'

DAVE COOPER: The paid thing is really important. This is not just about extension. This is about scholarly work in general. If the basis of it is that the universities are doing routine consultancy work which is easily able to be done, then we have to have an academic debate about what is routine and what is state of the art knowledge. I think that there are lots of people within universities doing things which should not be done at universities, and they are being paid for that. We can't argue and win that case if half the left are doing that as well. This is a general definition of work at the universities, and we need to be vigilant about people on both the left and the right who are actually using the resources for inappropriate purposes.

ERNEST WAMBA-DIA WAMBA: In terms of extension, I realise that these are free services. I was thinking of Zaire, where increasingly the professors of the universities are basically accused of being sell-outs, because they teach in the morning; they are at the Presidential Office in the afternoon. They have been basically accused of consolidating the forces that the poor masses are struggling against. So I am wondering whether extension has aimed at particular groups in society or simply the criteria of being free.

DAVE COOPER: Extending is really not whether you are getting paid for it or not paid, because for many decades, a hundred years at UCT or slightly less, people have been extending their work and being paid for it. It also doesn't matter whether you extend into the working class. This discussion involved us having to go back to first principles; that basically everybody who's in an academic department in a university is involved in three activities: teaching, extending, and what I call traditional research.

CAROLINE WHITE: What are going to be national research priorities? How, and by whom, are they going to be set? Where is research funding going to come from? How much is it going to be? Who's going to decide? Who are the researchers going to be? What research bodies are we going to have? Are we going to reform the big national organisations that we already have? What about the little local ones on the university campuses and off the campuses? Should research be based at the universities?

BILL FREUND: People aren't sufficiently strategic. There tends to be a collapse between a very high moral object, what a total transformation would be like, and very concrete, very narrow things of how do we function a little better tomorrow in our present situation?

MALE VOICE: Firstly, universities are complex institutions, and within them service organisations are very marginal. They will continue to remain marginal because universities will continue to be an expression of dominant class interests. Secondly, because universities are so deeply hostile to fundamental structural change, we are increasingly being forced to accept the ideology of creeping incremental change. Gone are the days when we were there to talk in bold and visionary terms about radical changes and the institutional reform of the universities. Thirdly transformation does imply incremental change. There's nothing wrong with incremental change whatsoever but it must lead to much more fundamental change. A fundamental issue is access: for whom? to whom? at what level? New curricula, new approaches to the definition of research and research agenda, a new social view of the composition of universities as an institution within society, a new plan and goal. Finally, we're increasingly intimidated by the rational voice of market ideas - cost effectiveness, professionalism. Revolutionary ideas are much too disruptive. But if we make that the end of our engagement, then I'm afraid that the project of transformation of universities goes right out of the window.

JAIRAM REDDY: The universities now are under pressure from the outside, from large number of community organisations who want to locate within the universities. And if I heard Imraan correctly, that this leads to indiscriminate squatting within the universities. How do we cope with this? Who do we try to locate? Simply we do not have the capacity to accommodate everyone.

MOSES NGOASHENG: I think there's a recognition on the part of people that structures like the CSIR and so on in universities, are institutions which are in place and there are certain issues which are needed and which we cannot change overnight. We're not going to rupture those institutions; we're not going to wish them away. They're going to be existing, and we need to be struggling for tactics and strategies of an incremental nature.

DAVE COOPER: The university is about best-practice state-of-the-art knowledge. So a synthesis of existing knowledge will involve new knowledge, state of the art of that field. The extending of scholarship must be about the advanced knowledge in that field. That's what groups and lecturers and people should be mainly doing at universities. Work which is not around that is best placed in another institution outside either a technikon or a university.

IMRAAN VALODIA: The essential role that we are playing is as conduits between academic and mass organisations - to synthesise their ideas and present them in a more accessible way. The challenge that we face is to develop some way of fitting service organisations in more appropriate way. Perhaps we need to develop some journal here which need not necessarily conform to academic standards, but which would allow us to publish the material that we've got and to interact in a much better way with everyone.

POLICY AND CRITIQUE IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Linda Chisholm

What is Education Policy?

To the question, 'What is educational policy?', Stephen J. Ball responds that although policy is clearly a matter of the 'authoritative allocation of values. . . statements of prescriptive intent,' values do not float free of their social context (Ball: 1990, p. 3). While education policy cannot be divorced from interests, conflict, domination or justice, it is also 'not simply a direct response to dominant interests', and is best understood 'as responding to a complex and heterogeneous configuration of elements' (Ibid). In his discussion of struggles around a new national curriculum in the U.K, Ball shows how struggles over school knowledge are shaped by a range of political, industrial and bureaucratic interests, each articulating different educational ideologies. Policy formation and formulation is demonstrated to be no simple, unilinear process. It is the outcome of various complex struggles occurring at different levels: the economic, political and ideological, none of these being reducible to one another.

If Ball distances himself from a perspective which sees policy formulation as the natural expression of uncontested values, his is also not an instrumentalist approach. A critical concept for him, which he uses alongside a structuralist method of analysis, is that of discourse:

Implicit in the question of the restructuring of education, then, is the question of how the state exercises and imposes its power in part through the *production* of 'truth' and 'knowledge' about education....(There is a) need to separate debates about education from policies, from changes in schools. The debate about education is often constructed at some distance from the process it purports to describe. It has, however, through policies, a real effect upon the educational system itself....(Ibid., p. 17).

He goes on:

I am not trying here to present policy as a thing, as something that happens and then is over and fixed. Rather, I am working primarily with the idea of policy as a discourse, a construct of possibilities and impossibilities tied to knowledge and practice. Control of the discourse and thus of its possibilities is essentially in and between arenas of formation and implementation (Ibid, p. 185).

Useful distinctions are made here between the policy debate, policy formulation, implementation and actual change in schools. Each is a complex and conflictual process - an issue that South African educationists, from their study of the formulation and implementation of Bantu Education understand too well.

This understanding has shaped their own response to the present context in

important ways. In order to understand how, it is necessary to look briefly at and periodise different schools of thought amongst educational researchers in the 1970s and 1980s. Approaches to policy are implicit rather than explicit. Making explicit the policy approaches of much earlier work would seem to be a vital task in the current context. Here only a small fraction of the research that has implications for policy formulation can be covered. The purpose is primarily to demonstrate the lessons about policy that have been learnt by educational researchers in the past decade.

More recently, there has been a rapid advancement of writing around policy issues: writing which informs, writing which actively and boldly formulates, writing which critiques. In many cases it predates 1990. The people's education movement itself not only gave birth to education policy research units; it clearly articulated a broad policy framework for education (Sisulu: 1986; Molobi: 1988; Levin: 1991). More recent policy statements include general policy formulations such as those by COSATU (1991), Nkomo (1990, pp. 291-325) and Alexander (1989; 1990) and more specific proposals in areas such as, for example, language, curriculum policy and teachers (see Alexander: 1989; Gardiner: 1990; Jansen: 1990; Walker: 1991; King and van den Bergh: 1991); illiteracy (Matabane: 1990; Learn and Teach/ELP/SACHED: 1991); pre-primary education (Taylor: 1989); science education (Mehl: 1990) and financing of education (Donaldson: 1991; Pillay: 1989), which will not be explored here. A great deal of research generated by NEPI researchers in 1992 will also not be covered here. Here only those works representing major approaches of the 1970s and 1980s will be discussed.

Despite a great deal of writing and thinking in education around policy, there still appears to be a problem, as conceived by this Symposium, of *formulation*. If there does not appear to be a problem of presentation of alternatives in education, whether these be in the form of NECC and ANC education resolutions or in the form of academic writing, then the problem must lie elsewhere. In the sphere of education the problem would seem to lie mainly in the current relations of power: the relationship of democratic structures to state power; and the internal power dynamics within the democratic movement itself. The latter issue raises questions of authorisation and legitimacy. Who or what structures or processes have the power, in the final analysis, to authorise particular policy directions or formulations?

Policy Approaches in South African Educational Research

Since the 1930s there have been three major sources of educational policy research; the government, universities, private sector and agencies associated with the democratic movement. The use of educational research to support national policy was begun by E.G. Malherbe in the 1930s through the South African Council for Educational and Social Research, the forerunner of the HSRC. Initial concern was with devising methods for changing the class location of 'poor whites' through improved access to education of different kinds. Research in the HSRC was first displaced and then restructured with the advent of the National Party to government. Educational research conducted by the HSRC has undergone various shifts since

then. Under the leadership of Johann Garbers in the 1980s, it remained largely positivist, psychological and descriptive in orientation, but in addition became both more bureaucratic and pragmatic.

The HSRC's de Lange report of 1981, using academics from established Afrikaans-speaking universities, influential individuals in the teaching and educational fraternity and HSRC, helped to shift the public discourse of education from Christian National concerns to manpower planning issues. The greater openness of government in very recent years has been reflected in the greater openness by the HSRC to employ, participate in and use the work of progressive researchers (Kallaway: 1991). The research that supported the recent production of the Department of National Education's *Education Renewal Strategy* (1991) was not only extensive, drawing on German, British and American government thinking, policy and planning in areas such as the local management of schools, national curriculum and system of technical and vocational education and training. It was also grounded in research methodologies used by, amongst others, UNESCO.

Different approaches have existed to policy in South African universities. As long as Afrikaans-speaking universities supplied the state apparatus with its bureaucrats, their research has been what Kallaway would describe as 'internal to the policy-making process itself.' (Kallaway: 1984). The now-infamous school of thought in Afrikaans-speaking universities' education departments, Fundamental Pedagogics (Enslin: 1991), did not generate research around very much, including policy issues. Instead, research institutes such as the Research Institute for Education Planning at the University of the Orange Free State arose in the wake of 1976 to provide the demographic and other statistical information required for policy and planning. The Department of National Education was created in 1984 as a consequence of recommendations by the de Lange report to deal with aspects of general policy affecting all departments. Once Garbers had moved there from the HSRC, the DNE also began to generate its own information-gathering procedures. Being poor off-shoots of the dominant Afrikaans-speaking universities, education research at black universities has until the mid-1980s been virtually non-existent.

Policy research in English-speaking universities was a little more developed, possibly because of the closer relationship before the advent of the National Party to power of white English-speaking liberals to state power. As the 1961 *Education Panel Reports* suggest, these universities have tied their educational research interests closer to an economic than a political or nationalist project. Research ties with the private sector and its think-tanks have thus also been closer than those with the state. There is a great deal of traffic, for example, between researchers trained in English-speaking universities, the South African Institute of Race Relations and Urban Foundation. It can be expected that the relationship between erstwhile black universities, established under the 1969 Extension of Universities Act, will also be closer to state and national interests than the Big Four: University of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand, University of Natal and Rhodes University.

Until very recently, the private sector has relied on English-speaking universities, the SAIRR, the Urban Foundation and its own in-house information gathering

networks to provide information for charting their educational programmes and policies. Within the past two years, they have given much greater support to educational policy research agencies relatively autonomous both from themselves as well as from the universities. These include the newly created Urban Foundation Education Systems and Policy Unit (EDUPOL), Education Foundation and Private Sector Education Council. A network of education policy formulation agencies to support private sector interests appears to exist between these bodies, the IDT, Development Bank and World Bank.

The English-speaking universities have, however, dominated educational research both quantitatively and qualitatively. Radical education research, begun in the mid-1970s, developed in two main directions. The first, which found expression through the writings of Morrow, Enslin, and others, sought to challenge the school of thought which dominated educational studies in all Afrikaans-speaking universities including the 'black' universities and UNISA, South Africa's largest institution providing distance education. The claims of Fundamental Pedagogics to being a science, as well as its Christian National Education philosophical underpinnings, were questioned and rejected (see Enslin: 1984; 1990; Morrow: 1990). Alongside of this critique, in tandem with and often emerging directly out of the educational struggles spawned by the students' uprising of 1976, came another. Young scholars, drawing their theoretical inspiration from the work of neo-Marxists such as Louis Althusser and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, began to confront the dominance of both the conservative-nationalist and liberal schools as expressed in the writings critiqueing Fundamental Pedagogics. (Chisholm and Sole: 1981; Chisholm: 1984; Cross: 1986) They did so through research, in the early eighties, into the nature of state policy and reform, the history of education, the conditions necessary for educational change and democratic transformation as well as a critique of the new reformist state strategy in education developed by the de Lange Commission of Inquiry which reported in 1981. In the process, new insights and approaches to policy developed as distinct from those employed by those closer to the process of policy-making.

A division did emerge reflecting wider social divisions, between white intellectuals and black activists. Much of the writing and intellectual work continued to be conducted by whites, while much of the organisational work was undertaken by blacks. (Evans: 1990; see also Gwala: 1988).

In a context where the relationship between means and ends and between theory and practice was constantly discussed and debated, the dominance of white intellectuals in educational research, despite the so-called legacy of Bantu Education, was clearly untenable. As struggles in education themselves began to take on new forms in the mid-1980s, this issue itself began to be taken up more directly both theoretically and practically.

By the late 1980s despite continued obstacles and constraints on the production of black researchers, black scholars and thinkers had re-emerged in the educational terrain. The scholarship and perspectives of Saleem Badat, Michael Cross, Nozipho Diseko, Ivan Evans, Jonathan Godden, Jonathan Jansen, George Mashamba, Bill

Nasson, Mokubung Nkomo, Blade Nzimande and Yusuf Sayed have been central to the revitalisation of educational research in this country. If the gender component of this group is somewhat underrepresented, then the number of women amongst white educational researchers is matched or paralleled by the paucity of research on gender and education issues.

The work of the early 1980s also raised the question of the role of education in reproducing class and social inequality, rather than simply being either the expression of individual intent or a means of individual upward or downward mobility. Such analyses were very much a product of their time: the need, in the context of mass struggles against apartheid in the early eighties, to expose the interrelated nature of class, racial and educational oppression. Their implications for policy in South Africa were the suggestion that education policy was of a piece with wider economic, political and social policy; any reconceptualisation would have to start from the assumption that educational reconstruction needs to be re-thought alongside and not in isolation from, for example, industrial, land, labour, health and housing policies.

The contextual approach, such as that embodied in the above work, thus includes both an instrumentalist and 'complex contextual' face. Despite the criticisms of instrumentalist and 'reproduction' approaches which emerged in the late 1980s (see Hyslop: 1987; Unterhalter et al: 1991), perspectives which see policy as being the direct, unmediated expression of class and/or national interest, also still have popular appeal. A recent critique of the state's Education Renewal Strategy in *Learning Nation* (Nov/Dec 1991), for example, argues that the Education Renewal Strategy is an expression of dominant class interests for social control and reproduction of social inequality.

Two influential concepts, increasingly used in the later 1980s to nuance above discussions, were those of discourse and mediation (Schaffer: 1984; 1991; Cross and Chisholm: 1991). Reconstructive policy formulation and redress cannot be made simple and depends to a large degree on work and cultural contexts of implementation. These, amongst other things, mediate the impact of education policies. Whereas Bundy (1987) and Hyslop (1988/9) have explored the impact of apartheid social policy on youth unemployment, Glaser (1988/9), Bonner (1988) and Cross (1991) have drawn attention to aspects of the social and cultural configuration of unemployed youth, recently rediscovered as the 'lost generation'. Much of this work has been vital in sketching the historical and contemporary dimensions, and character of youth unemployment and culture; it provides a basis and necessary resource for policy formulation to address the conditions of out-of-school youth. Although this work is suggestive of questions concerning the mediation of policy by social and cultural, political and economic institutions, and will surely be built on, much more does also need to be done, particularly in relation to the civil service.

Much of the work of the 1980s consciously drew on comparative models as examples either to be emulated or avoided. The historical and comparative experiences and pitfalls of modernisation, human capital and manpower planning approaches, now naively espoused by many, were carefully documented and revealed.

(For example Nasson: 1990; Muller: 1984; Nkomo and Mokatsi: 1990; Botha: 1991). The experience of education in post-independence Africa was studied and reflected on in courses in all of the English-speaking universities' Faculties of Education. Problems and issues began to be raised which would have to be taken into account in a future process of policy formulation for the real transformation of education.

The concept of development, for example, was problematised in the light of new theoretical approaches attempting to come to grips with the limits of such a problematic naively used. In addition, comparative research was rooted in the understanding that while South Africa did not constitute a unique case, there were specific features which did not allow replicability of particular national 'models'.

The one clear lesson learnt from the evidence of the impact of new educational policy in societies, amongst others, such as Cuba, Tanzania and Zimbabwe was that the reconstruction of education alone cannot carry the full burden of the reconstruction of an economy and society; the unavoidable conclusion remains that educational reform can play a positive redistributive role largely in conditions of cataclysmic social rupture, but is not a crucial independent variable in the transfer of resources of the poorest (Nasson: 1990; Reynolds: 1990; Jansen: 1990; Botha: 1990). While the solution to this conclusion is clearly not to wash one's hands of policy and not strive for educational transformation, since 'that might be to deny the possible fulfilment of human capabilities and human needs' (Nasson: 1990, p. 104), it is also not to see education as an eternally malleable vehicle for the realisation and expression of all social hopes. It is, of course, precisely in education that such hopes are placed in moments of social change. One of the reasons for placing hope in education when solutions are known to lie in the economic sphere is that the educational space is also a symbolic one, at its heart concerned with change and development. The economy, by contrast, is far more intractable.

The lessons that researchers are now required to learn are lessons about how to do it; how to realise hopes and ambitions; how to restructure and reinvent possibility. What is required by the context is a language of possibility, against the language of powerlessness and defeat. The language which has drawled into the discourse, as a compromise against that of limitation, failure and impossibility has been that of 'realism.' The 'new realism', as Ball would suggest, is however 'a construct of possibility and impossibility'; it may well become an ideological mechanism through which dramatic change is averted - to this extent it also creates problems for policy formulation, a rationale for keeping things much the same as they are. Against the injunctions of the 'new realism', powerfully backed up by the international context and sophisticated computer-modelling approaches enabling policy predictions to the nth degree, new registers of hope and possibility alive and sensitive to complexity and nuance, making new sense of difficult terrain, are still urgently sought.

Problems and issues have thus been raised in relation to future policy which must, in part, account for at least some of the judicious caution currently being exercised on the part of educationists in response to the demand for new policy blueprints.

Some of the lessons learnt and residing in the rich 'critical' tradition of the left of the 1980s we will, at our peril, ignore in addressing ourselves, through policy, to the urgent educational needs confronting us. Characterising this rich literature as simply being 'critique' and of no value can be seen as a discursive strategy whose impulse is to misunderstand the particular historical needs that this literature served, as well as to negate that which we have to draw on. This discourse deconstructs and reconstitutes critical social policy research as conducted in South Africa as consensual processes ignorant of the complexity and contradictory constitution and effects of such policy. The new context will surely open up new areas for research, the probing of old questions with new tools. These would include different aspects of policy, some of which would inform policy formulation, some of which would provide the theoretical development necessary for maintaining strong independent intellectual traditions in South Africa.

Highly conscious of current international New Right trends in education, and past failed strategies in education, the reasons for the failure of the 'modernist' impulse in societies undergoing rapid social change, the contradictions between policy intentions and outcomes, and the modest role that intellectuals should claim in the policy formulation process in relation to mass organisations, it is not surprising that education policy researchers clustered around NEPI have insisted that their task is not the formulation of policy, but the clarification of policy options. The task of policy choice, it is argued, is the task of political movements.

Although education, therefore, does not stand empty before history, and the work that has to date been done in the 'critical' tradition offers far more than the rhetorical posturing than is implied, it is also true that investigation into the concrete ways and means of achieving the educational goals spelt out by proponents of People's Education in the late 1980s (see Molobi: 1988; Sisulu: 1986) have not, until very recently, begun to be explored by researchers. In as much as the nature of all research is context bound, education policy research in South Africa has recently undergone something of a renaissance.

New developments in educational research after 1990 were prefigured in the late 1980s but grew in strength in the more open political terrain after February 2 1990. Policy research and analysis came to be seen as an important priority in the context of people's education, in the nexus between the university and the popular education movement. In the latter half of 1987, in response to the slender intellectual frame on which alternatives could be built, universities and the NECC established Education Policy Units at Johannesburg, Durban and the Western Cape. They were preceded slightly earlier by the establishment of Research in Education in South Africa (RESA) under Harold Wolpe at Essex in England. They represented an entirely new movement in South African educational research, finding their parallels in similar structures in Latin America and the United States (Cariola: 1991; McCarthy: 1990). While RESA, with its much longer experience and stable support system was able to train a powerful cadre of young black educationists whose mark is yet to be made on South African education, the Education Policy Units at Durban, UWC and the University of the Witwatersrand, struggled towards a definition of their role. While

RESA's research thrust was overwhelmingly comparative (1991), the EPU's began to produce a slow but steady stream of research. Its chief characteristic was its informational and sociological bent.

In 1990, the NECC, through the EPU's, initiated the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI). This is to date one of the most ambitious national research projects on education yet undertaken outside of the state. Involving researchers across the country and attempting in the process to redress the racial, regional and gender imbalances produced by apartheid education, NEPI has been catalytic in stimulating research on education policy in universities long marginalised from the policy process. If the outcomes of this policy research process are not what its various protagonists intend or desire, there also being many intentions and desires and not one, then that is, as has been shown, within the nature of the policy research process and education itself.

Problems in Formulating Education Policies

Real difficulties, which cannot be wished away, do stand in the way of researchers and the mass movement at this or any other stage drawing up detailed policy plans affecting the nuts and bolts, and rands and cents of the system of education and training at this stage. These occur at two levels. The first is the political, policy-related level, the second more narrowly educational and research-related.

In the face of the discourse of a shift from critique to reconstruction, and politics to policy, there is the already-existent knowledge that production of national policy blueprints à la Verwoerd or the World Bank are vulnerable in profound ways. The experience of imposition of a national blueprint both in South Africa and elsewhere has shown that outcomes are often contradictory to intentions. Blueprints will always, to some extent, be at variance and have to interact with local structures and realities, thus being re-shaped in the process. Recent research by Prinsloo on the implementation of COSATU's education policy in the building industry has, for example, highlighted these issues fairly dramatically (Prinsloo and Watters: 1991).

The work of the 1980s has also demonstrated that generation of micro and macro policies need to be fully integrated with economic and social policy if they are to be successful. Educational solutions cannot be thought through in abstraction from wider economic and social policy. Third, there is a deep reluctance to propagate specific policies in the absence of full knowledge of available resources or the executive and administrative capacity and authority to carry them out.

Most importantly, there is a strong commitment, at least in COSATU and the ANC Education Department, but also amongst a substantial proportion of NEPI researchers as demonstrated in the 'consultative forum' idea, not only to *policy product*, but also to *policy process*. This is not merely because of adherence to what might now be construed as silly leftist ideas, but is linked to a realistic knowledge that abstractly-produced policies have little hope of being carried out without active support and implementation by all parties involved. Transformation of education in South Africa requires not only correct policies, but also the support of those involved both inside of and outside the system. Close observance of attempts in other

revolutionary situations to impose particular policies without support of those involved in having to change it, has in many instances, led to the collapse of the very system that ought to be changed. (Marshall :1985)

The capacity of any movement or party to carry through changes relies on its authority and legitimacy to do so. Without proper attention to process, specific policies are highly likely to be worth little more than the paper they are written on. This perception has given birth to the view that *effective policy* is not produced only by researchers and/or political parties, although that is clearly important, but in multiple processes of negotiation and consultation. It is argued, for example, that there is no use, in advocating a policy of using technical colleges for literacy and numeracy programmes without negotiating this with the institutions concerned. Negotiations, rather than imposed blueprints or researchers outside of the process, are likely to produce the *policy plans* that would make such policies effective. This perspective derives from the lessons learnt by South African educationists of attempts to transform education systems elsewhere, whether these be by Verwoerd or Daniel Ortega. It is a perspective that is as diametrically opposed to the blueprint theory of policy, as to the simple modernist fantasy. It claims not to promote quick-fix solutions which sound good but signify nothing, eventuating in little more than fury. It recognises that policy is not simply 'something that happens, then is over and fixed', but is constantly made and re-made at both macro and micro levels by a variety of contending social forces. It adopts a long-term perspective, the most realistic and feasible approach in the current context of devastation, disempowerment and disaffection.

None of this denies that the outcomes of such policy processes may themselves be contradictory and unintended: that is the nature of the educational endeavour. More importantly, it does not negate the important role that critical researchers do have to play in researching the limits and possibilities, impact and consequences of different policies at different times in different contexts with a view to informing policy and planning at both national and local level.

At the education and research-related level, there are also other objective difficulties in the way of formulating, through research, feasible policies and options for its transformation.

First, there is the conceptual difficulty of formulating policies for a unitary education and training system. At present there are different and separate apparatuses and budgets dealing with education and training or formal and non-formal education - education in schools and education on-the-job or in the informal sector. Whereas the former is perceived as an 'educational' question, the latter is perceived as a 'manpower' or 'human resource' or 'training' matter. An integrated approach to the entire educational question, including literacy, is one that requires conceptual leaps that at present few people are making. Thinking around alternatives occurs, if not in a racially discrete manner, in a way that reinforces these other invidious distinctions.

If policies are to be formulated that would affect the quality of schooling, specifically, then researchers should have access to departmental information and be enabled to conduct research inside schools. There are numerous blocks operating

at this level, however. Indeed, quantitative and qualitative research probing problems at this level with any sophistication is virtually non-existent. What are the problems in this sphere? First, the relevant education departments, who control access to departmental information and schools are still sunk within the defensive postures of the 1970s and 1980s, and are generally hostile to investigation of problems at school and administration level. Extraordinary hurdles have to be cleared before such access is permitted; many postgraduate students, for example, have given up in the face of denial of access to information, misleading information about the existence of material, and other such difficulties being put in their way. It will take more than an intrepid researcher to penetrate beyond these bureaucratic obstacles.

Secondly, and related to this, access to information and schools is still largely dependent on class, race, gender and university-of-origin. Investigation of conditions in black schools controlled by white principals could be made very difficult for black researchers. Women researchers often face problems of sexual harassment. Possibilities for white researchers to enter black schools and black researchers to enter white schools are also circumscribed by material conditions of racism and class prejudice.

Thirdly, where researchers may gain access to schools, information of a documentary kind may be non-existent. The administration sections of many schools have been destroyed in the last decade. With this has gone records for use by researchers.

Other, lesser problems affecting the quality of research include the weakness of information networks about what is being produced amongst educationists, and weakness of quantitative and qualitative research and analytical traditions investigating concrete conditions in the schools, as well as isolation from international debates. It is salutary to note how the theoretical traditions that have shaped South African educational research have echoed those at the metropolitan centre long after they made their appearance there. The new context has, however, imposed a full research agenda to explore and re-evaluate the historical and contemporary contexts, forms and practices of policy formulation and implementation.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that policy formulation has, for reasons of internal organisational weakness combined with a commitment to learning from mistakes made by others, projected researchers into the pivotal role of being responsible for policy formulation. Thus the demand has been made for a shift of emphasis in their work from critique to reconstruction. The paper argues that this is a misrepresentation of both the historical and contemporary value of the critical tradition in education for policy as well as the intellectual approach to be taken towards questions of policy and reconstruction. Reconceptualising the role of educational researchers and intellectuals would need to take this into account.

The paper also argued that explanations for problems in policy formulation in education should not be exaggerated; that policy formulations do exist. Difficulties and weaknesses lie less in this sphere than in relations of power between the democratic forces and the state and within the democratic alliance as a whole.

Problems at policy level reflect the manner in which the 'historic compromise' in South Africa is impacting on all levels of society, as well as the class nature of the transition currently taking place.

In the final analysis, however, this knowledge of either the contradictions of the policy process or the current balance of forces cannot immobilise us: all it can do is arm us with caution and renewed commitment to democratic process as much as product. We have to engage in researching the impact and consequences of particular policies as well as policy options that will lead to a more just educational dispensation in the full knowledge that the impact of our work may have outcomes drastically opposed to our intentions. We should enter into policy formulation and debate fully aware that we make history as much as we operate within its constraints; that social forces larger and more powerful than the individual or conglomeration of researchers will, in the end, determine the form and shape of South Africa's educational history.

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THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY INITIATIVE

Blade Nzimande

It's very difficult to talk about the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI), for two reasons. Firstly because I think that there is quite a lot of information that one would need to put across, and I don't think that should be necessarily my aim here. Secondly, NEPI is still in progress, so to try and reflect on it would be a bit difficult. But I think that we should be reflecting on the process of policy research as it actually evolves. Because if we simply judge it in terms of the end product, I think we would actually miss a whole lot of issues that people have been raising in this symposium.

Basically what I want to raise about NEPI are the problems that I am picking up, as well as the lessons we could draw from the process of policy research. So in that sense it's not an official position by the NEPI structures or the NECC structures; it's my own reflection.

I want to talk very quickly about the origins of NEPI. They are important because, to a large extent, they are shaping the way that the process is going. Basically NEPI was a project that was conceptualised out of a meeting of the Education Policy Units in consultation with RESA (Research on Education in South Africa), which was still underground those days, based in London, to try to map out some form of coordination amongst the EPU's as well as some kind of specialisation. We never planned on NEPI. But we realised at that meeting, for instance, that we do not have the capacity to do that. The moment we started talking about capacity, about how to improve our capacity to deliver, then NEPI was born.

Another related development which is very important is that, already by late 1989, there were signs that the political conjuncture was likely to change. The defiance campaign was very crucial, and the re-emergence of the NECC even though it was still officially banned. These plus the CDS initiative shaped NEPI. I hear it's very nice for people to actually slam CDS left, right and centre, but they don't acknowledge one thing, that in fact CDS was a very important experiment from which we could learn. And in fact we have learnt a lot, by saying, 'Let's not do like the CDS did here and there.'

However the most important thing was that there was a rush at the same time. Some of big business and the state was saying to the NECC, 'If you want us to sort out this problem, what is your view on primary education?' Sectors of capital saying, 'We've got four million rand which we want to invest in primary education. The NECC is an important body. What should we do?' And then the NECC started saying, 'Oh, well. What should we do?' They rushed into the EPU's saying 'Can you come up with something?'

NEPI in fact tries to cover the entire field of education, with about 12 working groups that are looking at different areas. There are some problems that I think it's

important we grapple with in a symposium like this. Firstly is the relationship between NEPI and the NECC structures. How does NEPI as it proceeds actually fit into the NECC and also how does the NECC fit into NEPI? A very critical issue in terms of process is that whilst we are researching we have to take into account what is going on. But how do we take into account what is going on at this point in time - new state strategies, advances by capital - how do we incorporate that without diverting from meeting the deadline that we have set ourselves to produce reports by August this year.

NEPI classically represents the problem of this division of labour, that your experts are your academics, university-based people largely, who are predominantly white; whilst the NECC structures are mass-based, community people who are predominantly black. That has got the potential of creating severe tensions, on the one hand. On the other hand, of course, I think it provides an opportunity - because I don't think we should look at it one way - of actually forging a relationship in practice during the progress of research between university-based intellectuals and mass-based organisations.

An additional problem is the notion that critique equals the period of what is called politics of resistance in South Africa, whilst the period of reconstruction equals policy research. I think it's a severe distortion of our struggle to say that it's only now that we are entering a phase of transformation.

But the big problem arising out of that is that with policy research emerging in South Africa in such a big way, particularly in education, it's the very same people who are doing very important work in education - which some people recall was in a critique mode - that have moved into policy. In fact there is a void, and there is no bridge, no link, between that work that they have been doing and policy. Because now the preoccupation is actually generating policy options at the expense of critical analysis of what is going on.

The third problem arises from NEPI having emerged as an NECC project. This has led to a tendency from some people working in NEPI saying that it must remain an NECC project to strengthen the NECC as a social movement, as an organ of civil society.

There are two issues here. The first one is that there could be a tendency of wanting to hold NEPI away from the ANC. But secondly, there is a tendency now to say that we are the intellectuals that are looking after strengthening organs of civil society. I want to make a very provocative point here, deliberately inviting comment or criticism, that in fact this notion of civil society represents a major theoretical retreat amongst the left. In fact we are actually taking basically a liberal paradigm. I've been struggling to find in Marx and Engels the concept of civil society as is used by people who claim to be Marxists, including Gramsci himself. I would strongly argue that the way civil society is being used in South Africa is a severe distortion of Gramsci. Gramsci never meant what people mean by civil society. I want to put that as a deliberate challenge, because I think that we are becoming liberals unawares, and couching our language in a sort of Marxist discourse.

In conclusion I would like to comment on some of the lessons to be drawn. We are

now just looking at policy options concerning a democratic South Africa but we are not looking at how we get there. How does the policy research process fit into contemporary struggles that have to bring about that democratic South Africa where we'll have to implement these policy options that we are generating?

If we accept that the struggle will be crucial in saying what kind of policy options will be implementable, then policy options cannot be a set of fixed research proposals. They can change as the conjuncture changes.

Jakes Gerwel in a meeting, not so long ago, asked a very crucial question: 'What would we be doing now if the national liberation movement had seized power?' I think that question is important because for me it raises how we measure the implementability of the policy options that that we are coming up with in a democratic South Africa? How effective are they? Particularly because we are not theorising the transition. For instance, I would like to hear more about the array of class forces at this particular conjuncture in South Africa, what kinds of policies they are pushing for, the level of contestation, the nature and form of organisation that we should come up with in order to be able to implement this or that policy.

The other lesson which has been raised here, is that the weaknesses of mass organisations have become the strength of policy researchers and intellectuals. It looks like we are benefitting from the weaknesses of the organisations by the organisations now relying more and more on us to deal with the complex situation that is in front of us.

Finally a comment of what we have not done. We need consciously to insert within policy research an analysis of the link between policy research and political struggle. Because our policy options are as good as they are a reflection of the advances that we have made in struggle. Let me make an example. I think that we would take a different policy direction when, say, students first form an SRC through struggle and force the formation of SRCs in schools rather than to ask someone to go and research how SRCs should be formed and how SRCs should operate. Those are two different moments. To clarify the first route let me take an example concerning where we failed on the question of land in this country. Instead of saying, 'let's form a land court that will actually decide on claims about land', people start physically reoccupying the land that was taken away from them. Policy directions that are likely to emerge out of that, because we could possibly be stronger, are different than waiting for the land or to prepare a position or a submission to the land courts.

In short we have not successfully reflected enough on the policy research process, particularly in relation to political struggle.

DISCUSSION

Editorial Note: This session was energetic but inconclusive, with discussion moving fairly rapidly over some important issues such as civil society and social transformation. Unfortunately the critical issue for this symposium - ie the relation between policy emanating from research and initiatives to transform society emerging from civil society - was lost in the heated debate over the status of civil society. Editorial strictness demanded that we reflect none of the discussion. Instead we have chosen to present a taste of the flavour of the discussion in the interests of political relevancy.

SIPHO PITYANA: The question of relating to the ANC as a legal, formal political organisation is demobilising research activity. People are retreating from political organisation, and saying, 'Our allegiance is with the mass movement'.

MAHMOOD MAMDANI: The concept of civil society, whether understood in the sense of Marx or understood in the sense of Gramsci is still a very specific historical construct. It presumes the existence, the relative separation, of the economy from the polity, state from society, etc. It is a concept entirely inadequate for the analysis of a society which is partly rural, partly urban. It gives us no concepts for the analysis of either the peasantry or relations in the countryside. The spread of this concept of civil society in Africa today is not totally coincidental. It is somehow also connected with the spread of social movements, which appear to be almost wholly urban and appear to have very little basis in the countryside. We need to reflect on this rather than uncritically taking over either the concept of civil society or critiques of that concept.

MIKE MORRIS: Blade's is a dangerous position that in the end leads to the depoliticisation of mass social movements. Because the consequence of it is the incorporation of those mass social movements into political parties and political organisations. The result of that is going to be a form of statism in the last analysis, and the disorganisation of those particular organisations because in the last analysis the whole question of independence of those organisations goes by the board. I think that Mahmood's point is absolutely correct.

ABDOULE BATHILY: In the present political situation in South Africa, can we design a policy which does not take into account the social forces at work in the land? In other parts of Africa, after the euphoria of the first years of independence, the ruling elite have smothered all the social movements in the country - trade unions, students movements, other social organisations - under the pretext that, 'Keep quiet! We are developing the country in the interests of the nation'. Is that what the social movement, the trade unions, fought for? So I think it's important for African social scientists and for the left, to start to think about these things. Are we all defending the same social forces? Can we design a policy which will meet the needs of all the sections of South African society equally?

CHERRYL WALKER: There's a point that you made, Blade, about the difference between policy initiatives coming out of struggle and policy initiatives coming out of research. You say they were different, and you seem to be saying that the former were more correct or more authentic or would somehow more properly embody the will of the people.

BLADE NZIMANDE: It's the masses in struggle that make policies, that also influence those policies, that also make it possible for certain policy options to be implemented.

FRANCIE LUND: Did you say, 'It is the masses in struggle that make policy'? Or did you say, 'that should make policy'?

BLADE NZIMANDE: That do make policy, and also that should make policy.

FRANCIE LUND: Those are completely different.

BLADE NZIMANDE: No, they aren't.

PAULUS ZULU: Isn't there actually a difference between the struggle and the policy that emerges out of the struggle? I think we have to go back and say, 'What were the struggles about?' We probably misinterpreted the nature of the struggle in education. To me the struggle was basically on the issue of access. If the problems of the 1980s were the problems of access and we misinterpreted them to be broader and otherwise than the problem of access, then we reached the problems that we are in today, because we misconstrued the very causes of the struggles within education.

DETERMINING PRIORITIES: THE CASE FOR ESSENTIAL NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH

**C C Jinabhai
H M Coovadia**

Introduction

South Africa stands on the threshold of moving from an era of racial domination and exploitation to one of democracy, peace and social justice. This transition is pregnant with a number of opportunities, contradictions and challenges. Within the social service sector, the health sector is one of the sectors in which these inequities are most gross, and these are analyzed in the first part of the paper. The tremendous challenges and opportunities that exist to facilitate a smooth transition to democracy and the contribution that health research can make is then explored.

The Commission on Health Research for Development has identified health research as the essential link to equity in development. This paper explores the potential contribution of Essential National Health Research (ENHR), in addressing these constraints, establishing priorities for the new government, the progressive health organisations and the mass movement; and enhancing health and development.

ENHR is essentially a set of strategies for harnessing the power of research to accelerate health improvements and to overcome health disparities.

Its particular goal is to improve the overall health and socio-economic status of the people of the developing world.

Key issues in the dialogue among researchers, policy makers and communities are to:

- establish links between researchers, decision - makers and communities with respect to health;
- create mechanisms for turning health research into action and policy;
- develop information systems as tools for use in decision making;
- maximise use of scarce resources;
- evaluate country programmes of health for their effectiveness;
- build local research capability in health and strengthen local institutions with mandates to solve local health problems through epidemiological and social science research.

Through this process ENHR moves towards equitable, effective and sustainable systems of health.

Traditionally the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) prescription for development has focused narrowly on economic growth while leaving the delivery of social services to the market forces with minimal state intervention. This

conventional wisdom is increasingly being challenged as the market has failed to deliver social goods and services, economic growth has failed to trickle down to the masses, and the health status of the masses has deteriorated. Countries which invested in both economic growth and social services perform demonstrably better on social indicators than similar countries which did not.

The 1990 State of the World's Children Report makes a strong plea for developing both health and social indicators to measure progress.

The Human Development Reports of the U N Development Programmes (1990 and 1991) go further and propose the Human Development Index (HDI), based on life expectancy, literacy and real GDP per capita. The UNDP notes that perceptions of development have shifted from economic development to socio-economic development, and now to human development. This emphasises the development of human choices and the centrality of people. It is reflected in measuring development not as the expansion of commodities and wealth but as the widening of human choices.

Health and Development in South Africa

Disparities at the level of health policy, status, services and expenditure clearly indicate the need for a radically new approach to determine priorities for the health and development agenda. A substantial body of evidence exists which documents these disparities.

Table 1 below reflects the extent of disparities in health status by considering basic indicators. The major burden of disease, death and disability falls upon black people.

Policy formulation in South Africa faces a number of constraints - some of which are general while others are specific to an apartheid society.

The first problem is that in an undemocratic society with high levels of repression, significant polarisation occurs between planners and policy makers on the one hand and the oppressed majority. This had reached a state of paranoia where information about health services, status and financing was almost regarded as classified information, and the state went out of its way to distort, misinform and even not collect data, as in the case where malnutrition notification was discontinued.

Currently we do not have basic vital statistics such as the number of children who are born and die. A comprehensive national Health Information System is the cornerstone of any sound planning or policy framework.

A particular feature of democracy is the ability of people to change the government and policy makers through the electoral process, to directly influence policy and to open up the policy making process to public debate and scrutiny. Within South Africa this process is shrouded in secrecy, behind a plethora of laws and regulations, creating a high level of antagonism towards the present policy makers. Current methods of priority setting and policy formulation are based on outmoded and discredited systems and processes.

A further consequence of this is the mystification of the policy making process including the assumption that only highly specialised people and academics can undertake policy formulation. A favourable policy climate will have to be estab-

lished to dispel the notion that only whites, doctors, males and specialists can make policy. In addition a massive education and information campaign will have to be undertaken to empower and skill black people in all aspects of governance.

Transforming Health Policy, Status and Services

A number of problems exist in formulating health policy in the context of social transformation. The following are some of the issues that will have to be addressed.

While a number of racial laws have been repealed, the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act still fragments health, welfare, education and culture in terms of 'own and general affairs' to be administered by different ethnic and racial groups. This basic constitutional framework needs to be replaced, by one based on the Guiding Principles adopted at CODESA and which recognises South Africa as a unitary state, in which democratic principles and practises will be enshrined.

A single health act, encompassing comprehensive health care delivered through a National Health Service, and emphasising inter-sectoral collaboration - will have to be promulgated.

The SA Medical and Dental Council (SAMDC), the S A Nursing Council, the other para-medical bodies, will have to be restructured and focused on promoting a whole new ideology and objectives in health based on the concepts of Primary Health Care. With the adoption of a new constitution, these bodies would be democratised. They would then reflect the aspirations and the needs of the majority, and fundamentally influence the shaping of new policies.

In terms of the Health Act of 1977, and the National Health Policy Act of 1990 the National Health Policy Council (NHPC) and the Health Matters Committee formulates policies in terms of existing norms and guidelines. New policy making structures and Community Health Committees (CHC's) will have to develop a Health Care Delivery System based on Primary Health Care (PHC). Considering all the demands that will be placed on communities, innovative means will have to be found to obtain adequate community participation, to ensure that the more organised and articulate sections do not dominate and that the needs of the marginalised and the most inarticulate are considered.

The organisation and delivery of services through both the public and private sectors, the roles of health auxiliaries, the optimum mix of public and private sector financing, and fundamentally the extent of national or state funding and co-ordination will require major debates. Particular attention will have to be paid to the multi-national pharmaceutical companies, the private medical industry and the academic sector - all of whom have enormous power and the ability to either subvert national health objectives or to blackmail the new government into making major concessions.

Financing of health services will remain a major area of contestation and debate. Internationally the monetarist policies of Reagan and Thatcher still dominate macro-economic debates. Privatisation is still seen as the best means for distributing goods and services. At the macro-economic level, the nature of the growth path, the extent economic growth that will be possible and the prospects of sustainable development

will have a direct and profound bearing on the form and content of the social service sector.

Like the private and academic sectors, - the massive and predominantly white civil service and health administration - has the potential to frustrate and subvert social transformation in all sectors. All the different options - retrenchments, early retirement or their retention has serious economic and political implications. At the same time skills and capacity in the democratic movement to administer the social system is extremely limited. Can sufficient consensus be reached between the two groups to facilitate social transformation in the best interests of all social forces?

The critical factor missing in many development programmes is the human dimension. Education and training is required not only in the management and administration of the health system, but policy and economic sciences, epidemiological and statistical sciences. Fundamentally the task is to establish a whole new ethos, culture and style of civil administration that promotes efficiency, effectiveness and the national interest. All the contradictions of gender, race and class are deeply ingrained in the current human resources distribution. The lag time in training health workers is between 4 to 7 years - hence transforming selection criteria, curricula, teaching methods would require a 10 to 20 year time frame. In the meantime massive pressures to deliver social goods immediately - will put tremendous pressure on the new government either to radically rethink current human resources development models (and introduce health auxiliaries) or to maintain the status quo.

Specifically in South Africa the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), made up of all the major political organisations from the democratic and governmental sectors, is discussing issues such as an Interim Government, a new democratic constitution and major social issues such as poverty, unemployment, economic growth and the provision of social services. The transformation of all the institutions, policies and structures that have shaped the lives of millions of people for centuries, and fundamentally the emergence of a new 'Development Paradigm' to replace the apartheid paradigm is high on the political agenda.

All the intellectual, human, technical, material and institutional resources of, university and academic groups; the MRC, HSRC and CSIR; IDT, Development Bank and other agencies involved with interventions; and the progressive non-governmental organisations, await a democratic political milieu to, make their contribution.

ENHR Relevance for South Africa

ENHR is seen as both a 'set of strategies' to accelerate health improvements and as a unique self-evaluative process of Research, Policy and Action. The process empowers researchers, policy and decision makers and community representatives in setting priorities for planning, promoting and implementing research and action programmes.

It includes participatory research with communities to identify and prioritise community health problems, to rationalise epidemiological data with health needs

defined by communities; policy analysis and economic research to establish appropriate health and research policies; and operational research to improve health systems management and resource allocation to achieve Equity in Health.

ENHR has relevance for South Africa at this particular juncture in our history for a number of reasons.

Currently South Africa is undergoing one of the highest levels of mass mobilisation in its entire history. A key feature of ENHR is community involvement in all facets of life - the high levels of expectations, while perceived by some as a threat, is likely to ensure a direct and sustained input into all aspects of social and health policy.

Furthermore, most sectors of civil society are organised into mass based structures - labour, business, church, sport, professionals (doctors, health workers, lawyers, social workers, teachers) etc. This organised character will ensure that they will not be easily disarmed ideologically or demobilised.

A qualitatively unique feature of this mass mobilisation is its political character. The relationship between legislative and constitutional measures and policy is being sharply debated in numerous forums around the new constitution, the demand for a Constituent Assembly and the CODESA talks.

According to the World Bank South Africa is classified as a middle income country with a per capita income of US\$ 2290 (UNICEF 91). Hence unlike many other developing countries, the material and economic resources for implementing the results of ENHR can be mobilised, and realistically applied.

A reflection of this economic reality is the substantial scientific research capacity. This capacity is highly organised, productive, well connected to the international community and has successfully addressed the technical, scientific and human needs of the white community and the business and industrial sectors. While major problems exist in turning this capacity around to addressing the needs of the majority, the potential nevertheless exists for a new government to transform its research priorities. Thus both the technical, human and material resources for a significant ENHR process, potentially exist.

The last decade has seen the emergence of an organised and articulate progressive health movement. This movement is in the process of restructuring itself as the Unity Health Forum. This organised sector in alliance with other mass based groups and in close collaboration with a democratic government would provide the subjective conditions for transforming the existing research capacity and for promoting the principles and practise of ENHR.

During the period of resistance both the external and the internal movements established an extensive international network, including links with the major UN agencies, foundations, philanthropic agencies and research groups. While links with Africa are still weak, this international collaboration would facilitate a process of learning and sharing ENHR experiences.

In conclusion the critical policy issues for social transformation in the health sector have been identified. In addition the potential contribution that the strategy has to offer in this process of social transformation has been highlighted.

TABLE 1 BASIC INDICATORS FOR HEALTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

	AFRICAN	WHITE	COLOURED	ASIAN
Population (Million)(a)	29.0	5.0	3.2	1.0
Percent of Population(a)	75.5	13.5	8.6	2.6
Total Fertility 1988(a)	3.9	1.8	3.0	2.4
IMR.(1000) 1988(a)	80.0	11.9	46.3	19.0
Percent of Population Under 5 years(c)	15.9	7.9	11.9	10.3
Per Capita Health Expenditure 1987(a)	R95	R596	R339	R356
Per Capita Child Welfare Expenditure 1988(b)	R22	R176	R227	R171
Per Capita Educational Expenditure 1988(a)	R276	R3,080	R1,358	R2,226
Life Expectancy 1985(c)	62	71	61	67
Percent of Death Before 1 year 1987(c)	15.7	1.3	10.8	5.4
Percent of Death Before 5 years 1987(c)	22.5	2.11	6.3	7.3

(a) SAIRR Survey 1989/90

(b) SAIRR Survey 1988/89

(c) Health Trends in South Africa, Department of National Health and Population Development, 1988

SCIENCE POLICY RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

Ania Grobicki

What I'm going to talk about is actually quite difficult to engage with in the general sort of issues that are taking up the time of this conference. There has not been a great deal of policy research done in the area of science and technology. In fact, the whole area of science/technology policy has only been raised since about 1990. But this is not to say that technology hasn't been called in as a black box in the study of various sectoral areas. However to see science and technology in thematic issues that run through society and the economy is actually quite a different approach.

So I'm not going to talk about policy research. I'm also not going to talk a lot about the ANC Science and Technology Group and about how it's structured, how it functions, its relationships, etc. I'd be very happy to open that up in discussion with people afterwards. What I do want to talk about is the actual field itself, and to see if that can engage with people here in some way and raise some questions afterwards.

My main argument is that state policy around science and technology at the moment is one of decentralisation / fragmentation. There have been very radical shifts in state policy and one of the problems that we have within the ANC Science and Technology Group is that a lot of the time we're aiming at a moving target.

The vast majority of science research in South Africa is state controlled. In financial terms, over 80% was ultimately state controlled. With the current policy of privatisation and autonomy for the research councils, that is decreasing.

I think it's important to bear in mind that state control has been a fundamental basis of the whole system of science and technology in this country. White South Africa is quite a curious anomaly in being a highly technocratic culture, with very clearly defined technical goals which have resulted in spawning all these parastatals such as SASOL, MOSSGAS, ESCOM, ISCOR and what have you. The very pure base strategies were articulated, because there was an assumption of a unified task and a unified group to carry it out.

I think things have shifted very rapidly, and given this sort of radical policy-making that the government is capable of, in the 1980s the policies in science involved (in intellectual terms) incredibly radical shifts in the scene. So, for instance, the CSIR as we saw yesterday has now got the second highest proportion of private research contracts in the world, second only to Holland. The FRD, in 1984, shifted to funding in terms of individual excellence rather than funding on the basis of research areas and research priorities. That is the most radical system of funding allocation in the world in terms of science and technology.

For universities as well, although I haven't had time to check the figures because I only received the information quite recently, it seems that South African universities are currently second only to Japan and the United States in the proportion of

non-state funding that they have to live on. This was an FRD statement; it may not be true; it's something that I'm quite keen to check out.

I want to stress the point that research policy has been a field that has been taken up in science and technology perhaps more than in the social sciences, perhaps because research underpins science and technology to a much greater extent. It fundamentally underpins the whole area. There are much larger resources required for that type of research in terms of equipment, instrumentation and expertise. As a result, it's quite a well-developed area, so there is actually a journal called *Research Policy* which deals with science and technology issues.

As a result, there has been quite a well-developed system of research foresight internationally which has generated a lot of debate. I won't have time to go into detail about it here, but I think we can take it on very usefully in South Africa as a way of setting national priorities involved in this area. In this sense, we're not talking about technological forecasting or research forecasting, but really research foresight, which needs its own mechanisms and institutions to bring about. I think, in the past in South Africa, we really have moved from one extreme to another, where for instance the establishment of the Atomic Energy Board was decided in conversation between two people - Roux and John Vorster.

Democratising that decision-making process is going to be an enormous leap. It's quite difficult even to get people to take on these issues and to take them up.

My problem is that there is really no conceptual map of the scope of research that is being done in South Africa. I think it would be very important to establish, at least as a basis, a directory of the research that is being done in various areas, with an estimate of the amount of resources that are being spent on each area. That information at the moment is not available.

Because the whole system has been so fragmented in terms of focusing on individual excellence in the last few years; we have a huge gap in terms of the individuality and the conservatism of the research community. I think this is important because I'm not saying that scientists and engineers are the only people who determine science and technology policy; far from it. But scientists and engineers are a very essential community to the society and the country, and their attitude and their concerns have to be taken on board.

So there is a need for people to understand the process of policy formulation and to come to some type of strategic understanding of science. There are both internal and external reasons for this. Internal reasons, such as increasing levels of technical and intellectual complexity within science and technology. There are many new disciplines arising all the time as well as multidisciplinary areas arising. The external causes are the political and budgetary constraints on the science system. None of this has been explicitly formulated yet in South Africa.

I think there are enormous possibilities which are opened up in this process, particularly in terms of the whole debate around gender and expertise, the role of technology in women's lives. There is now really an opportunity for the science and technology system to be impacted upon by ideas which are formulated in other sectors of research. There is a curious anomaly that, in terms of education of students,

science and engineering education is undervalued compared to the social sciences, if one takes an international cross-cut of the proportion of university funds that are spent on social sciences, professional and vocational training, and science and engineering.

So I think the problems of the science community in this country have been isolation, insularity, and an enormous lack of vision. There is now a process of reorientation taking place which I think does provide a lot of possibilities. There is a motivation to change, and at the same time an extreme wariness. I think that the recognition of the importance of policy making processes and of participation in policy making processes gives us enormous hope, that there will be some basis for establishing national priorities in a democratic South Africa.

LANGUAGE POLICY RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

Neville Alexander

I want to make a few general points first about the language question, then deal with the National Language Project very briefly, and finally with the agenda for language policy research in South Africa. The original paper on which my presentation is based was prepared for a seminar at Yale University.

The first point is that the language question derives from, in the first place, the national question - the question of national unity - because of the function of language as a medium of communication and a transmitter of culture. It arises technically from the social question because of the function of language as an instrument of production. In other words from the unequal and discriminatory distribution of economic, political and cultural power.

I'd like to quote from Beer and Jacobs' book on language policy and national unity just to demonstrate this point more clearly. They say;

A number of questions arise concerning the translation of linguistic heterogeneity into a political issue addressed by public policy. First, how do language demands come to be posed in the first place? Is language policy a result of grass roots mobilisation, or a pre-emptive government policy designed to forestall or alter otherwise less palatable unrest? Second, what is the social and political context in which language becomes a salient political issue? If the crucial variable in this discussion were the extent of the linguistic cleavage alone, then one would expect intense language conflict in Papua New Guinea or within the Soviet Union and so forth.

The conclusion to this volume, argues that language difference alone do not necessarily lead to challenges to national unity. It is the trends of the perceived inequality of social status and unequal access to economic rewards or political power due to language use which is crucial for the politicisation of language use and its degeneration into conflict. Einar Hangan, the Norwegian social linguist makes the point very crudely and simply. He says, in the final analysis the language conflict in places like Belgium, Yugoslavia and so on boils down to the unequal distribution of jobs.

I think that particular perspective is becoming more and more understood in the liberation movement. But I think we must say very clearly right from the outset that actually this is a sorely neglected area of research and of policy in the liberation movement. Broadly speaking, in fact, we've adopted an extremely laissez faire attitude which has boiled down to entrenching a petty bourgeois practice in the question of language policy.

It goes to the point where reputable South African social scientists - I don't want to mention names here - oppose language planning on the grounds that you must

leave your languages alone. Don't touch them. If they're going to change, they'll change in some sort of magical organic way. I want to make the point very strongly that language planning is part and parcel, integrally, of social planning, and that the moment you are faced with a situation of social inequality where language is a marker of that inequality, as it is in South Africa, you have got to do something by means of intervention, which means that you have got to start planning the use, the status, the function of language.

It is only recently that major political organisations, particularly the ANC, have begun to look at the language question more seriously. The ANC, in fact, in the report of the Harare workshop, say that they have rejoined the debate because in the 1950s there was in fact a very dramatic debate inside the ANC which was very unfortunately phased out. Other political organisations haven't really come up with any specific language policy. In fact, I had the singular honour - although I'm not sure if it was an honour - the other day when somebody asked somebody in another organisation (not the ANC by the way), 'What is your language policy?' This person said, 'Ask Neville' even though I don't belong to this person's organisation.

The point I want to make then is that language policy and research in the recent history of this country arose out of struggle. We began language policy research in a serious scientific manner only round about 1983 as a result of our experience in organisations like SACHED, the Council Black Education and Research Trust, and I can go on naming a whole string of organisations, South African Council of Churches and so on, as a result of our experiences of the ravages of Bantu Education. That is why we started. In other words, out of the experience of mass struggle, we had to confront the language question.

You will find the details in the Yale paper of the background to the coming into being of the National Language Project which I submit has played a catalytic role in getting people sensitised to the political and economic importance of the language question. Most people haven't understood that. And we must be honest about it. People haven't understood how language reinforces class division, class distinction, class privilege. They might have understood it somehow in their heads but they have never understood it in practice. Otherwise they would never have perpetuated the practices inside the liberation movement which they did in the past.

I was originally going to go into some detail on the history of the National Language Project, but I think we haven't got the time, I just want to make the point that we have put forward very clear proposals about language policy towards the democratisation of South Africa, reinforcing obviously other social forces, other social movements, that are working towards the democratisation of this country.

Those proposals in a nutshell are firstly, that we accept that English in the very near future is going to be the lingua franca of this country; that we however ensure that all the people and not only the middle class as is now the case have proficiency in English. Otherwise, it once again becomes a divisive social marker which will simply shift the divisions from race to class.

Secondly, that the African languages, the indigenous languages, specifically be promoted, be given priority; that resources be put into the development of those

languages on a scale that this country has never seen before; that they be encouraged, people be taught, be given incentives to learn the African languages because these are the languages that in the future will determine what happens in this country. As the relations of power shift in favour of the oppressed and exploited people, there is no doubt that the indigenous languages are going to become languages of employment, languages of higher education, and so on and so forth. We've got to do something about that now. We have many detailed proposals in regard to this, which we've worked out at workshops and so on, and which if there is time in the discussion we could look at.

Thirdly, the whole question of standard languages must be looked at from a class point of view. Standard languages are a class instrument of oppression and exploitation. The kinds of languages which are accepted for purposes of social interaction generally are not necessarily and should not be the so-called standard languages. That is a very big question and discussion, and I'm not able here to go into it.

In September last year the NLP called an international conference, with very strong African participation incidentally because we thought we could learn a lot, which we in fact did from some of the experiences of those countries. Participation included government agencies, semi-government agencies like the HSRC, across the spectrum of language-related projects and institutions in this country. That conference, looked particularly at democratisation; what we call language planning from below, on the one hand and standardisation on the other hand.

This led to a very important unanimous conference decision being taken to explore the possibility of what they called a democratic language board or a national language academy. To do away with the formal existence of the English Academy, the Afrikaans Akademie, the so-called Language Boards for the different African languages, and to subsume those functions under a national language academy or a democratic language board, with a view to conceptualising language policy research in the context of a nation-building project.

Again, although I cannot develop it, I just want to say that at present the steering committee that was elected by the conference is consulting with organisations - political, labour, community, and of course language organisations, educational organisations and so on - with a view to bringing about the most representative possible conference on this issue so that such a body can take over the whole question of co-ordinating language policy research in this country.

To move, lastly, to an agenda, what I say is *the* agenda - this is my personal view of course - for language policy research. There is a very important chapter by Gerhard Schuring of the HSRC in the report of the Languages in Conflict and Contact in Africa organisation, at the conference which they had in April last year. It's called 'Language Planning for a New South Africa.' He puts forward what I call a conservative liberal agenda for language policy research in this country. It is an important one because it touches on all the fundamental questions.

There are, however, some questions which are not raised there, which I believe from a radical point of view, should be asked. Firstly, the most important is quantitative research on the question of existing language policy impacting on the

political economy of the country. For example, how does the rate of illiteracy among rural workers affect productivity in agriculture?

Secondly, how does lack of proficiency in the standard varieties of the so-called official languages tend to reinforce the racial classification of the labour force? A basic question once again. It's not asked. How does lack of proficiency in English or Afrikaans affect industrial safety? And so on. You can simply spell them out; they virtually come by themselves once you adopt the correct stance to these things.

There's a host of related questions that ought to be investigated. The effect of such research would be to enhance the understanding of the entire population, specifically of the workers, of the reality and the crucial importance of language policy. People take language for granted. Unless you both problematise it and demonstrate to them the economic effect of language policy, they don't take it seriously.

Secondly, updated large-scale language-attitude surveys which would serve as a sound base from which to project language policy into the future. This is especially important in the educational sphere, needless to say. These points on the agenda should however not be mistaken for a commitment to a mechanically implied empiricist methodology. I'm not suggesting at all that until we have these figures we can't do anything. Not at all. But I do want to stress that if we do adopt an empiricist methodology we are simply going to entrench the status quo. After all, we all know that statistical surveys and opinion polls tend simply to mirror the dominant ideology, and therefore we have to be extremely sensitive in our interpretation of the findings of such surveys.

People, for example say that all the black workers want English. English is the preferred language. That is true, because English is the key to economic advancement. It is also the key to social status. That is why they want it. That will change when the power relations change.

Then, on my second last point, how can the urban and the rural poor be drawn into the determination of language policy? The National Language Project's demands for language planning for below, we continue to believe is completely feasible. That is why this idea of a national language academy is such an important idea. It has come from our own experience, from the experience of the people in struggle, particularly during the '80s. The Conference of the NLP was an attempt to address this question, and to show that in fact we must go ahead along those lines, involving ordinary people, people who are involved in literacy work, people who are involved in second language English, or conversational Xhosa or Zulu or whatever projects, in the determination of language policy. The fundamental democratic principle is that those who have to execute the policy have to have a vital say in the making of the policy. That is a fundamental principle. You can't get away from that.

Finally, there is an urgent need to go back to first principles, to clarify what we call the nation-building project of the national liberation movement, as well as our understanding of the relationship between language and culture. I have a lot to say on this but I haven't got the time to do that now. However, I believe, as we said earlier, that unless you ask these prior questions you are simply being reactive. You cannot be proactive. You cannot in fact generate policy options that are both feasible

in that transformatory sense of the chameleon moving very, very slowly on the one hand, but preparing to change colour, preparing for a revolutionary rupture. You can only do that if you have a proactive vision towards which you are actually working, and, of course, the flexibility to adapt to the realities as they manifest themselves.

DISCUSSION

FRANCIE LUND: We cannot formulate reasonable policies for the future until we've got uniform budgeting procedures, until we've got the most basic information system. And we have not got the most basic information system on which to plan social policy. This means we have to start addressing what we're going to do with the present civil service which is administering the policies which we're about to move to. If we want a chance of a better policy in the future, we have to make those bureaucracies more uniform now and start building up an information system now at a national level.

MIKE MULLER: The fact is that if we go to communities and ask them what their priorities are, they will say some form of health care provision is very important. If that is so, we have to start our policy formulation from the mass base that everyone is talking about, with what the masses are demanding. Let's start to transform that into a useful product. Part of that is indeed to use precisely all the service research foci of essential national health research, so that you take the resources that people want to see, the clinic that they want to see rather than some abstruse campaign. You take those resources and you start trying to deliver something that is useful. You really don't want to divorce this debate about research and health from the very large expectations and misunderstandings that sit out there in the community.

JERRY COOVADIA: I think that what South African society does is creates a milieu. It creates a milieu where individuals react in certain predictable ways. So that if you look at agricultural research, if you look at medical research, if you look at technological research, it's not just the state which says that you must do work in that. It leaves it to the individuals, but because it suits my career to do esoteric research I do that, and in fact that's where the majority of universities have done their research. It's not simply state control. It is often the individual, the institutions and the group which determine the priorities in which the money is spent. There's a suggestion that the state at the moment is decentralising and that it's paid particular attention to individual excellence and that it's drawing in a lot of private funding for research. I would say that many of those things are laudable and probably worth aiming for. Was it your intention to suggest that those things are all bad?

ANIA GROBICKI: Previously there was a really coherent project. There was an immense amount of defence funding and so on, for national areas. What's been happening more recently is there's been a shift to try and fragment these institutions and the system as much as possible. Where individual excellence fits into this is that there's been a buying out of scientists and people with technical backgrounds, high

skills, technical training, to defend their individual interests. That is why the emphasis on individual excellence as a sole criterion for allocating research funding now is dangerous. Because it's then difficult to create any sort of process, or research foresight, of drawing those individuals out into the community, back into the process of looking at what are national sector economic priorities and what research should actually be funded to focus on those priorities.

ABDOULE BATHILY: I would like to just draw your attention to the importance of language policy. Because wherever you go to the other parts of Africa, you will find that there is a crisis of the education system. One of the sources of this crisis, is linked to the problem of language. What kind of language should be used, not only for cultural activities but also for the school system? But we must not forget that the educational language is the best channel for country-wide expression for a people or for a nation. Beyond that, a number of studies have been made in our part of Africa to prove that school performance - not only at primary school and secondary school, but also at university level - is very much linked to the use of the national language or the lack of it. I think we have to start to respect our own languages. These languages have the same capacity as the English or the Turkish language. The experience is that French and English cannot be the national languages now. The African people are not Francophone; they are not Anglophone.

PAULUS ZULU: If we are going to spend some time and resources and energy in the development of English as the lingua franca in the near future, and then at the same time spend as much on resources to develop local languages or vernaculars as I put it to become the languages of employment, I find that a bit difficult in terms of expending resources. I am also concerned with the capacity of the local languages to actually sustain a technology.

The second aspect lies with the position of international communications. I am finding it here both necessary and expedient to stress that when a language has already been developed and is familiar to a very large sector of the population it can be used to address other people internationally. You then tamper with that process at the expense of, one, international communications and, two, production at a local and international level.

NEVILLE ALEXANDER: I just want to make the fundamental point that any language is capable of development to the highest possible degree. There is nothing to prevent any language from going to the highest possible degree. It's a matter of resources; it's a matter of policy priorities; and so on.

MOSES NGOASHENG: In relation to the national technology system; is it changing? Is it changing from being a military, big projects, culture into something else? Is the national technology system focused enough or directed enough so that it will be able to produce the kind of technology that is appropriate to meeting the basic needs of our people?

ANIA GROBICKI: There has been a major shift from research and technical support for the defence sector to actually pulling the money out of science and technology research - for instance ARMSCOR is being run down - and a lot of these places are really suffering under a shortage of research funding. I feel that it's very important

that we maintain the technological capability for the future of this country.

The answer to the second part of your question is that of course it can. But the ship has to be turned around. People's training and their attitudes have to change so that they're prepared to research those kinds of problems rather than to focus on the high technology areas that have been popular up till now. I think those are the sorts of debates which really have to come out in public. The fact that the nuclear accelerator is still running at an annual operating cost of R43,000,000, which is say half of the budget of the HSRC: do you want that nuclear accelerator or not? Who decides whether it's closed down? In a lot of these areas the decisions have already been made, generally by individuals. The processes are absolutely not open. That's why we're trying to open up those processes for public scrutiny.

CONCLUDING PERSPECTIVES EMERGING FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

Marcel Golding (NUM)

There's an interesting quote by E.H. Carr that says, 'How much of the mountain you see depends on where you stand.' I suppose how much of the mountain I see will no doubt be reflective of the types of issues which I believe were interesting and important at this particular conference.

I've been asked to provide some concluding perspectives, which I think is really inappropriate, because what I can really offer you are some observations as a practitioner in the labour movement, someone engaged with research generated internal to the union movement, and also someone who has experienced interaction with outside researchers.

I've essentially three observations, three points that I want to look at, and which arose out of the discussions over the last two days.

The first one was about the debate about the transformation of institutions - universities, parastatals and so forth. The second issue I want to look at is about the question of participatory research and the whole question and the limitations of participatory research, notwithstanding that I work in a mass organisation. And thirdly, what I call the intellectual or researcher angst that seems to have pervaded this particular conference. I think that may have to be looked at a bit carefully.

The first thing about the parastatals, universities, and those organisations that have generated research over a long period. I think the discussion is very interesting, but I think it seems to have been obsessive with the idea that one either has to get rid of those institutions and/or build something new. It seems to me that this dichotomy of trying to say that either this organisation is totally useless and we need to get something else in its place, or the idea that we should capture them and hope that they will change, is far too simplistic a notion. I think the whole process depends on capacity; the process depends on what our objectives are; and I think it also depends on the specific focus and demands that we do have.

But more importantly, I think, given the history of such organisations, both universities and organisations such as the CSIR and so on, there has been a history of patronage that's been built up over a long period of time, and I think the prospect of changing that is going to be extremely difficult.

Nevertheless, I think there is space that does exist that needs to be challenged and changed. I suppose that that can be done in a number of ways. One could I suppose, be legislative reform when you have a democratic government. Or changes even now; there could be personnel changes, etc. But I think it is itself a terrain of ongoing struggle, and I think the idea that we should leave those organisations or smash them is, I think, utopian. We've got to think about how we can achieve our objectives that we have identified in those organisations as necessary, and at the same time be

making research agendas and research priorities which will not be able to be reflected in those organisations. And then we'll have to consider building something else. And once again, those new institutions or agencies or research projects will have to be directly linked to our own research agenda.

I think the whole process of change itself and the question of transformation is about organisation. It is about capacity. It is about will. It is about a purpose and a possibility. I think that all those elements - Adrienne called them the big four - certainly in mass organisations are the elements which direct our work and our organisation's attention.

But no doubt when we are trying to change those organisations - we are not acting independently. We are acting against other competing interests that may have their own agendas. I think one mustn't get the impression that whilst we are struggling on one track, other organisations also wish to change them for their particular purposes and are operating on other tracks.

And no doubt the transformation will at least be on three levels, I think. In universities, by changing composition of students - both gender and racial - and teaching staff - again gender and racial - and no doubt the research agendas and priorities. And I think the same thing will apply to these established organisations: personnel, the gender composition, the research priorities.

But I think the important thing in fashioning transformation, it's got to be linked to the perspective that we are having, in particular the socio-economic growth path and the socio-political transformation that you wish to effect. I think we've got to learn from the experience of Africa in directing our research priorities to our particular needs (the Zimbabwean example where the emphasis was placed on social sciences, where we are now trying to break into a very competitive economic world). I think the emphasis should be seen, both at the primary and tertiary level, on how we can begin to direct our activity at our technical skills, both at the workplace and research organisations.

The interesting thing that I think was also raised, was the whole question of the relation between research organisations, and the ANC and other political parties or unions. I think there's a constructive relationship, and I think that constructive and creative relationship has to continue. But I think political changes are inevitable. And today we have a situation where the ANC is in opposition; tomorrow the ANC may be in power. The dynamics may change. The dynamics would be different, and today's solutions and answers may have to be reconsidered tomorrow. But certainly our priority must be to achieve our main political objective, building organisation, and certainly to try to facilitate that process as researchers and people operating in areas of policy making.

But I think my attitude as a pragmatist is that I don't build bridges where there are no rivers. If there are problems that we have, we have to identify those problems. We have to build the bridges where there are rivers so that we know exactly where we are going. It's part of a vision. I think in the beginning the vision may be very narrow but I think there is a long term perspective. But it has to be linked to what we are doing today, because what we do today will no doubt fashion how tomorrow

will look.

The second aspect was participatory research. I think it was Ari Sitas who said something, 'Who speaks for the silent?' Now, that was an interesting observation. Today, many of the silent are organised. They have leadership that they have elected to represent them. And even those that are silent today do have organisations. They may not be very strong organisations, but they do have organisations to represent their interests.

But I think there is a romanticism about the whole question of participatory research. It's important to be clear as to what extent one can engage in participatory research. The other idea and perspective that was put yesterday about developing education technology to facilitate this transmission of ideas, evaluation of research policy, is really critical.

But at each level of one's organisation, it gets mediated in different ways. For example with leadership, you can discuss it in all its complexity. Maybe with shop stewards you can discuss it with less of its nuances. With the mass of workers you may have to discuss it in the form of slogans that capture all the complexity that you are arguing about. That is not to be condescending; it is not to be taking the masses for granted; but involve them in a coordinated programme of action around specific goals and specific objectives. But it's because there are objective limitations. In some industries literacy levels prohibit one from circulating material. You might use other forms to convey your particular message.

The last question, about the researcher's angst... It seems to me that - (I may have a debate with some of my colleagues here about this whole question) - what I got was the impression that there is an absolute unconfidence on the part of researchers, of not quite knowing where they want to go, of constantly seeking the support and/or recognition from mass organisations. Maybe that is good in some ways. I think the angst is important. But I think it shouldn't lead to paranoia and paralysis. If it does lead to paralysis we have a problem.

The tension of how intellectuals, how researchers, interact with democratic organisations, mass organisations - again, the mass organisations are internally differentiated; there are competing interests there. But the way they interact has to be one which is constructive.

I suppose the angst which exists is generated largely by the manner in which researchers and intellectuals work: they work as individuals or in small groups; where in mass organisations there are usually big numbers, different priorities, different pressures. The process of activity that researchers engage in must be to enhance and empower working people. No doubt some of them make the struggles we are engaged in - whilst they are very materialistic struggles, they are also struggles about making people more confident about their ability, restoring their dignity, as an on-going struggle to change conditions.

The discussion that we had late this afternoon about the politics of power and the politics of resistance is also incorrect, because the politics of power contains the politics of resistance. And the politics of resistance builds up a capacity to take hold of power. And who is in power today may be resisting tomorrow. Not resisting in a

destructive sense but resisting in a constructive and vigilant sense.

I suppose throughout the conference there was always this either/or type of mentality, either/or type of vision. I was perturbed by that, and I think we have to begin to develop a more integrative perspective.

So what do researchers do? I think the type of discussion which Dave Cooper mentioned and is an interesting area. The terrain in which academics and researchers operate are particular areas of struggle that have to be changed. The type of change they can expect will depend on their capacity as organised researchers. It's going to be limited but I think it opens up space. Where they need that assistance, it's there where I think one begins to feed into democratic organisations, to see to what extent the type of struggle you're waging in those things can be assisted by organisations.

Togbah nah Tipoteh

In examining social change in Africa, particularly post-war Africa, the dominant theme continues to be the struggle for democracy. This theme can well be seen in the popular statement by the Kenyan leader, Odinga Oginga, when he said, 'There is not yet Uhuru.' Or the taxi driver in Accra, Ghana, who said, 'We have a new driver but the same engine.'

This tells us that the very base, the very fundamental situation with social change continues to be the masses of the people, particularly the student segment of the mass of the people. Our working class, by and large, remains relatively small, fragile and weak. And so the student movement, in relative terms, continues to have primacy within the context of this struggle.

In more recent times, particularly against the background of the events in eastern Europe, analysts have come out, as a general case, to say that what's happening in eastern Europe is producing a second wave over Africa. That's why we are seeing all these national conferences taking place in Africa.

What I would like to suggest here is that this is part of the continuously wrong analysis with respect to political involvement in Africa. It forms the intellectual basis fully justifying the neo-colonial reality which we have in Africa as a general case. Because against this background we find a push for multi-party democracy. These analysts would not recognise, or refuse to recognise, the long historical struggle of various segments of masses, especially during the colonial period. Even before then, there are instances before the colonial period; people have been struggling for democracy. So it's not just the situation in eastern Europe that has all of a sudden got African people interested in democracy.

And by democracy we mean here, from the level of the people, the building of power of the people to take decisions that affect them. It's not just going and putting some paper in the ballot box. Because as many of you will recall, the elections of 1985 held in Liberia were considered by Chester Crocker to be free and fair in a multi-party democratic setting. But the evidence will show that the regime at that

time turned out to be one of the worst dictatorships that is known in the post-war period. So it's quite possible to have a multi-party situation and still have a dictatorial regime.

So the crucial question, then, which certain analysts want to detract from, is the question of power, building up the power of the people. In this regard, we found in our experience, research to be absolutely indispensable, primarily because through scientific research mass organisations continue to acquire the kind of knowledge that will give them the sort of independence that they want.

Certainly we don't want to get in a situation where some political leader comes and says to some student leader or leader of some workers' organisation, 'Well. Did you see this? This is a bag of rice.' And because the student or worker wants to get something from that leader, he says, 'Oh yes, it is a bag of rice.' I think what scientific research has to do then, to give the mass organisation a kind of independence is to say, 'With all due respect to you, but this is a drinking glass, not a bag of rice.' I think when you reach that stage, then we are talking about institutions that protect the building of democracy in a country.

The former president of the United States of America, Jimmy Carter, happened to go to Liberia recently, as part of the contribution of the International Negotiation Network in pushing free and fair elections in Liberia. We had an opportunity to interact with him, and we made this point, that while his network did some work in Haiti and they had elections there that were considered to be free and fair, we must bear in mind that a few weeks after that, the military took over. What went wrong? What went wrong essentially is that the mass organisations in Haiti had not developed the capacity to protect what they had set up. We find essentially that scientific research is absolutely important for building up that capacity, given the need to organise and strengthen their organisational capacity.

So in this regard, the implication then is that, one, in our role as intellectuals working for democracy we have to do what we can to build up, within the mass organisations, a research capacity. I don't think we need to continue the paternalistic situation that has obtained in so many countries and reinforced by fellow intellectuals from other parts of the world. We need to strengthen the capacity within these mass organisations to improve their ability to do research.

Now, there are intellectuals who will be on the outside and stay at the university and do whatever they are doing there, and there are others who will want to work as part of the organisations. Once one commits oneself to work as part of the organisation, as some will do - you have to remember of course that there are certain organisational constraints. But what I am saying in essence is that the building up of a scientific research capacity within a mass organisation turns out to be indispensable to the building and protection of democratic institutions in Africa.

In Liberia as we were struggling to reconstruct the economy after the civil war, there was essentially the work of mass organisations which set up their first policy research seminar, which happened to have been funded in large measure by IDRC, the first and so far only policy research seminar on reconstruction and development in the national economy. So without having the minimal research capacity we would

not have been in a position to provide a leading role in this crucial period of reconstruction.

Let me conclude by saying that in this phase of our development in post-colonial Africa, in the face of much work being done by various scholars around, we tend to fall short - particularly those of us who call ourselves progressive scholars - in coming up with practical measures. For instance, one of the things that one tends to find is that, 'Well, we can do without the World Bank' or 'We can do without the IMF'. I would like to suggest that concrete experience shows that is an anarchistic position; that's really not on.

What is on is that one deals with the World Bank and IMF, but it's a question of how one deals with them. Now, I don't want to put titles around, but I am saying this... having worked with some inside knowledge, having served as Minister for National Economy Reform. I happen to have been spokesperson for the African governments in the Bank and Fund at the board of directors level. I know only too well that the leadership in most African countries - it's a general case - will take the funds from the Bank and Fund and put them in largely non-productive activities so that you cannot begin to see some trend towards improving the productive capacity of the economy. I think this is the key to it. If you have the type of leadership that if given a choice between non-productive and productive activities, will move into non-productive activities - such that in a small country like Liberia, at the end of 1984 we had some 2 billion dollars private bank accounts in Switzerland when the national debt was 1.1 billion dollars. You see. You can have these kinds of situations.

I think it's important for us to come up with very realistic positions and it will tend then to erode the positions coming from the right and also strengthen our own role as far as scientific research is concerned in mass organisations.

I'd just like to stop there. Thank you very much.

Abdoule Bathily

I'll start to say first of all that I was particularly pleased to come in to this study tour. I taught some ten years about South African history at Dakar University to make our students aware of what apartheid is, about the atrocities that apartheid represents. I was far from realising really what it meant when I came here to Johannesburg, Cape Town and here in Durban, I would like to thank the organisers for having given me the opportunity.

What struck me most is the similarity between the problems we are dealing with in our part of Africa and the problems you have addressed throughout this symposium. I think that this can be surprising at first glance, but when we think what apartheid is, the specific modality of capitalist deployment just as neocolonialism is, we would realise that our problems might be different in kind, but in content they are identical. When we listen to you talking about the transition process, the education crisis, the problem of economic crises, the social injustices, the problem

of urbanisation, the problem of language: all these problems are ours today and we are dealing with them in our context, our thirty years of experience, thirty years of African independence (so-called independence).

This is why it is important to us to make the link between scholars throughout the African continent. To bridge the gap between the African scholars because outsiders tend to look at us as Francophone, Anglophone, Southern Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa. Although these distinctions might be convenient for the sake of identification purposes, in reality they need to represent the identity of our problems, our situation, our conditions. And also the identity of the aspirations of the African masses at this historical conjuncture.

I think today there are a number of professional organisations in Africa with which it is important for our colleagues here to meet and link. I would speak for the African Association of Political Science which I represent. The African Association of Political Science has been launched in 1972 in Dar es Salaam. It is a grouping not only of political scientists in the Anglo Saxon sense of the term, but also historians, economists, dealing with some contemporary issues. It holds general conferences every two years, in different African countries, in different regions, to focus on the problems of that specific region. For instance the last general conference was held in Cairo, in Egypt. The next one will be in Dar es Salaam to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Association. But in between there have been a number of other conferences, seminars, workshops. In March 1989 we organised a workshop on Southern Africa. Lastly, in May we organised a conference in Windhoek on '30 Years of Independence in Africa: Results and Prospects.'

So these are the kinds of activities that we organise, but we have also a research programme. Presently we have three main research projects. One is on urbanisation in Africa, governing African cities. The other one is on the democratisation process in Africa.

This question of democratisation is extremely important today. You have experienced oppression, but in our part of Africa also, not the same sort of oppression, not the same dimension in terms of oppression. You will be surprised when I tell you that from 1966 to 1985 I myself went into prison eight times. I experienced torture by electricity. In August 1985 I went in prison for ten days because we demonstrated against the State of Emergency in South Africa. President Diouf was then the chairman of the OAU. It was his action, because then I was the chairman of the Alliance or the opposition party. When we organised this demonstration in August 1985 against the State of Emergency in South Africa, the chairman of the OAU threw us in jail. It created such an uproar that he was obliged to try to offset this situation to tour the frontline states.

This is just to give you an idea of not yet Uhuru, as he said; freedom is not yet won in our country. Therefore we are still struggling, and it is important, this question of democratisation.

It is important also to make the link between the colonial legacy and now. In many African countries they think even democratisation reached a higher level during the colonial days than now. The nationalist coalition, the group or present regime in

power, has been able to create a balance of forces that the colonial regime was no longer able to engage in a certain type of repression. And that is why in the '40s and the '50s somebody like Sekou Toure' was considered and was labelled the Lenin of French West Africa. And now, would he seize power like many other leaders? They establish one party rule, and crushing... Instead of giving bread and employment to the people they give liquor. At the same time the same government is advocating cuts in the workers' salaries because of the economic and financial crisis of the state.

So all these inconsistencies are important to study and analyse. Not only to fight against them at production level, in the streets, but also to understand how they came about. I think it's important for us as intellectuals to commit ourselves to support the forces of the masses and to do this in solidarity throughout the continent.

I think this trip perhaps will help very much, and I call upon you to join us in our professional organisation which already exists, and then we will think about CODESA which is also an organisation which needs to be watched. And I think from now on, South Africans will link with us in this daunting task of rehabilitating Africa and making Africa a better place to live. Thank you.

Akilagpa Sawyerr

I would like to begin by commenting on the historic occasion which this represents to all of us. I won't say any more than to simply emphasise that the very idea of our being here with you, talking in this open manner, is for many of us an emotional but also an extremely important occasion in our lives and I hope in the lives of our countries.

How can I use my ten minutes most efficiently? I have sat through the last two days very quietly, and have a range of matters to discuss with you. But I will not do that; I will leave that to others to follow up. I will just take one small issue and I hope by discussing that issue I will be able to indicate my comments on your seminar as I've heard in the last two days.

This relates to the whole question of how you propose to deal with the question of the universities in this country. There hasn't been much discussion of this at this session, and I suppose the theme of the symposium doesn't invite discussion of it. But I believe it is a central question which has to be addressed at some point.

I am discussing it now because we have for the past week been in the country discussing with various segments of the society, and it has come across very clearly that none of these groups appear to have a coherent position on the question of the university of the future. That emerged in the discussion on the role of research on the role of research in the universities where again we were dealing with the university as a given, and seeing what can be done with the institution.

So I would like to raise that question as a matter which calls for some discussion, and soon: the question of the university system and its role in the transformation process. Let me first mention very quickly the role of our universities in our part of

Africa. Universities in black Africa are a fairly novel institution. They were created largely as part of the independence project. They were seen, therefore, as part of the institutional arrangement which Africa will make in order to ensure its development and success in the economy, and culture, and other ways. It must be said that, as a matter of record, the African universities have performed the basic functions very effectively indeed, of training, teaching and researching.

But what I want to talk about this evening is the negative effect of our experience. In sum, what are the drawbacks in our university system of being the origin of it as part of another project? What it has meant has been that the universities have not been venues of struggle. They have therefore not been driven to take part in the transformation of our society. In sum, therefore, this failure of the universities to take part in transformation accounts for the phenomenon which Bathily mentioned, that is the continuation of the colonial system into independence.

So, it is quite clear that because our universities were not appropriated by any mass movement, did not form part of any social reform process, they have a very weak, fragile social base.

Against this observation, one must assess the recent onslaught on the higher education system by interests led by the World Bank and IMF. I won't spend a lot of time discussing this matter. Let me just say that the central effect of this onslaught has been to divert the attention of African governments from sustaining and supporting the universities to the pre-university level, under the guise of pushing a more efficient system of education. It is said that the pre-university level is more cost-effective than a higher level.

Now this argument, we have shown to be technically spurious. But unfortunately effective. Because it comes with a number of things. One is money from the Bank to support governments which do as they are told. And secondly it uses the idea of equity: if we can get education at a lower level, why spend money at a higher level? A very attractive combination of money and equity. And therefore many governments have been sold on this.

But the effect has been to move towards decimating, or indeed more accurately, decapitating our societies by removing the heads of the education system.

Now let me move quickly to this country. Question: what is the lesson that you control from this experience that we have had, because as South Africans here you are still somewhat safe from this particular onslaught. But it is coming. And I think you should address the question of how to handle it when it comes.

Clearly, events here are different in important aspects from those up north. First of all, the pre-eminent issue here seems to be the restoration of the pre-university system which collapsed since Soweto. And I believe that that is a justifiable focus of attention. Secondly, the role of colour in the way which the universities are regarded. Thirdly, the history of mass struggle around a number of things, including education. Fourthly, the existence of a militant left linked to mass movements. I think these are important factors which exist here which did not exist when we began the struggle for university education in our country.

Therefore, I would like to caution about the danger of leaving until too late

fundamental thinking about the handling of your tertiary system in the post-apartheid period.

It is the case that the social and political role of the white universities will continue. They will still continue to dominate culture, education, finance and economics in this country. The role they have played in apartheid and the role they are likely to play in class society post-apartheid, I think, has to be addressed: their role and how they relate to the so-called black universities and black students generally, how they socialise those blacks who do go to the black universities. These are very important questions which need to be addressed now.

In sum, therefore, I am saying that it will be important for this country not to leave till tomorrow, but to pick up now, the question of defining, working towards, and defending your perception of the university system against attack from within and from without. And to do so before the debate is distorted by the intrusion of external interests.

In this connection, I would like to add to the point by Abdoule about the existence of institutions in Africa north of the Limpopo which have been engaged in some of these matters. Apart from the AAPS which he mentioned and CODESRIA which Mahmood will talk about, there is the Association of African Universities, which is the body which brings together all African universities in a regular meeting session; it organises studies; it organises workshops and seminars; and has been very actively engaged in combatting the World Bank onslaught on higher education. I am sure that if you were to pick up this matter of how to handle this problem, you would find very willing allies in other universities in Africa through this association. We have done studies on university financing, university management, all of these, in order to enable us to prepare positions which can be then used to counterpose against the World Bank positions. Because the problem is that, when the World Bank brings their blueprints, you say they are no good. Unless you have got your alternative worked out and ready, the debate seems to get lost by default.

So I would urge that you, through your universities, pick up this matter of linking with us very actively, in order to have foresight in defining positions and defending them before it is too late.

Thank you very much.

Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba

I would like also to start by saying that I am very glad to be here, and unlike my colleagues who spent a few days touring the country, the only South African experience I have had was to follow very carefully this symposium.

This country has always represented something very important for us. By the way, I come from Tanzania, but I am a native of Zaire. People are saying that Mobutu is buying maybe a villa here, which means that we increasingly seem to be becoming closer.

The relationships from above have always been close, but relationships from below

and from research cadres have not necessarily been so close. So I really appreciate participating in this symposium. I was particularly pleased to notice that some of our worries, maybe even difficulties, seem to be here. You may have richer experience to address those problems. Maybe even better facilities to address those problems. Nevertheless, we do share some of the same problems.

I spent two months recently in Zaire, around the national conference. The national conference has been one of the forms of organisation for the democratisation process in the rest of the continent. Now here, in Zaire in particular, we were faced with a paradox. A democratic organisation struggling for democratisation. This is an extremely serious matter. A lot of parties, a lot of organisations, but in the main these organisations are undemocratic. And there is fighting, principally for access to state apparatuses, and not necessarily to democratise the power relationship based in such a way that people can finally control their own government, their own leadership. So it found that the knowledge question becomes very crucial indeed. Clever people who can have some information may end up becoming the leaders.

Issues about what I call political intellectuality used to clarify the options, the aspirations within the democratisation process, become very difficult. The tendency is to rely on external experts. So politics becomes a technical matter instead of essentially a people's political forum.

I remember having been asked to be a historian of one of the mass organisations. You find that the very notion of what history to activate in the process, what documents to look for and where to find them, what network to put in place... These are extremely serious problems, and I found that some of the issues dealt with in terms of research in organisations seemed to reflect some of the difficulties we had. But you probably have a much better chance here, because there you find that, in many organisations like the one I was in, there is no real historical basis of the necessity of archives for example in the organisation, the necessity of keeping records. So that very soon the democratisation process within the organisation sees knowledge as only linked to particular individuals sought from the outside. It does not help advance the democratisation process. I felt interested in those questions discussed here.

I have also been involved in university discussions. There's this question of the structure of the university. We have been working on what we call academic freedom and some kind of autonomy from the university, and how that could be organised. When you're dealing with the universities which are linked to the state, then such freedom and such autonomy are indispensable for researchers to advance and proceed along the basis of what was described here as academic excellence. Otherwise there is a lot of tampering, not only the question of resources per se, but also the question of how the goals of research can be set.

This is just to emphasise that indeed it is indispensable that the sort of linkages which we can build may prove to very important in our exchange of information, of data, and maybe of experiences insofar as these can be of use to all of us.

Thank you very much.

Mahmood Mamdani

I also want to join my colleagues in thanking you and thanking the organisers of this conference for bringing us here. I have been dying to come here for months. When Linda sent me a fax saying would I like to come, I said of course. When she sent a fax saying would I like to come four days before and go to Johannesburg and Cape Town I said, but of course!

I speak with humility because I feel that nowhere else in Africa have I witnessed intellectual culture like what I have seen here. So what I have to say should be interpreted in context. Because while I have sat over the last two days, I have been asking myself, what useful contribution can one make in a situation that is more advanced than ours? You have much more to teach us. But there is never an experience which doesn't have some lessons. Maybe ours can teach you by negative example.

I would like to just discuss a few issues. You are going through a period which most of the world describes as a democratic transition. Maybe it's interesting to look back at what was supposed to be our democratic transition. Not even the period of independence, but the period after the Second World War, the period of the great colonial reforms, which was in response to mass movements. And from, which was important, no less than a decade, a single party state, a state party with their own mass organisation, no autonomy for any mass organisation, no ideological pluralism. It's perhaps interesting to revisit that period somehow.

I would underline two significant issues in explaining the abortion that took place. What was the very nature of the transition? The transition was dubbed as a liberation, and it was in part, because it introduced political pluralism, it introduced multi parties. But the same reform which introduced multi parties also undermined the autonomy of social movements, political movements. Whilst multi parties were introduced, trade unions, cooperative societies, friendly societies were being asked to register themselves and were coming under the supervision of the state. Sedition laws were being introduced. Newspapers were asked to register themselves. The wilting of social movements and the flowering of political parties took us to the period after independence, where national movements which had been broad umbrella movements under which workers, peasants, various groups had marched, turned into political machines.

Fanon says that the militants of yesterday have become the informers of today. They informed on popular movements, whereas yesterday they were comrades.

Now that's one. But the second issue: I think the intelligentsia has to take blame, responsibility, for what happened, because we were intoxicated. We celebrated. We had arrived. We read off the social history of the national movement, as a national history of the social movement. We reduced social history to political history and political history sometimes to political biography of national leaders. We articulated a state nationalism.

Even in our moments of opposition we were eager in the camp of dependency theory. We wrote the political economy of education, the political economy of

industry, political economy of agriculture, political economy of imperialism - everything but popular struggle. We did not touch the question of popular struggle.

We were Marxists. We believed in Marxism and we understood Marxism as a technique for growth and development, for the development of productive forces, Marxism without class struggle. Marxism where democracy became a reactionary project.

Of course popular struggles took place, even if intellectuals couldn't see them. But we were not there to underline their common meaning. The regimes in power could point struggles in one place as a threat to people in another place. We were not there to weave together as intellectuals sometimes do. We wrote about these struggles but we caricatured them as tribalism, as fundamentalism, as whatever. We couldn't see.

Well, there are echoes of this today in Africa. The pro-democracy movement today, by and large, understands democracy as political pluralism. That's all. Not social pluralism, not ideological pluralism. Democracy is multi-partyism, full stop. And sometimes I felt maybe there were echoes of this here. I sense a great celebration. You have reason to celebrate, of course. You can hope for the best, but you shouldn't prepare for the best. You have to prepare for the worst.

I have never been in an assembly where so many people denounced technicism, and yet technicism was so widespread. Such a widespread feeling that the great social issues have been solved and what has come to the fore are technical issues. That suddenly policy-making has ceased to be an act of choice and now it's an accumulation of facts by experts. That's all.

Of course, as a visitor, I have the liberty to be wrong.

There are many other things I want to say: Let me introduce CODESRIA: Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa. It's one of the longest existing pan-African social science organisations, 17-18 years, based in Dakar. It is funded mainly by donors from outside but partly by contributions from some African governments, two or three; partly by contributions of social science faculties and research institutes which are members of CODESRIA, membership fees.

About five, six years ago, there was a demand in CODESRIA by a number of intellectual researchers that existing heads of faculties and research institutes, which tend to be bureaucratic in many parts of Africa, were actually a block to creative work. And so CODESRIA decided to add to its membership something they called national working groups, which was a forum where any number of researchers - three, five, seven, ten - in any African country could come together, put together a research project, send it to CODESRIA, which if it found it coherent and competent and relevant would finance it. Something like US\$10,000 for the group to work and publish its results.

CODESRIA functions through the national working groups and through multinational working groups which are coordinated, usually by one coordinator working with the French and another working with the English.

The general assembly which meets every three years sets the scene, and then begins the process of selecting coordinators and constituting the groups. I am saying this

for the following reasons: The next general assembly is in ten days from the 11th to the 14th of February. 150 African researchers will come. African and Africa has a different meaning there from African here. I am African there. Here I'm not African.

150 people will come together and research teams will be agreed upon. Our executive secretary is going to come to South Africa in March. I am sure he will come here, but I'm sure unlike us he will go to black universities also. We didn't go to any black universities, unfortunately, but I am sure he will go to the University of the North, Fort Hare, different places. But he will come and speak to you himself, but I would simply like people to be encouraged to join our work, to join various multinational working groups, and to set up national working groups around issues that you find relevant.

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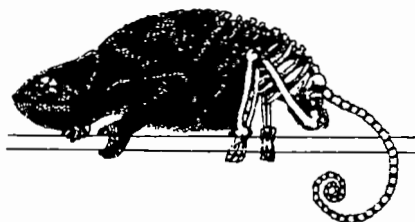
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