Defining a New Citizenship for South Africa and the Fundamental Values That Will Shape It

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Introduction

Who and what is a citizen? What is citizenship? What are the values that should underpin and characterise a new citizenship for a country such as South Africa that is going through a process of comprehensive transformation? The Leadership Seminar conducted by St Augustine College of South Africa in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and held in Johannesburg on 14 June 2001, explored these fundamental issues and questions.

The purpose of the seminar – which had as its theme *Defining a New Citizenship for South Africa and the Fundamental Values That Will Shape It* – was to focus on the need to create an awareness in society of the social responsibility of its citizens and to encourage people to participate in community affairs.

Taking into account the recent past of this country and the first years of the experience of being a democracy after 1994, one has to agree that tolerance is not enough. Civility in a post-apartheid era requires an all-round and values-based education in the public and the private sector, in the family and civic associations, in the business world, the political arena and in the churches.

While the speakers provided broad perspectives and in-depth analyses of our complex situation, the lively participation from the floor showed how relevant the topic was and how much needed to be done to educate the citizenry of a new society.

The aim of the seminar was to stimulate an educational discourse that would help responsible leaders and educationists to gain more clarity on a matter of extreme importance and to find ways to implement suitable strategies.

This is one of the aims of St Augustine College of South Africa, the new private higher education institution, which hopes to work in partnership with government, business and the education sector to bring about an ethical awareness as a step towards the shaping of a new society.

Many participants expressed the wish to continue and deepen the discussions on these issues. We hope that the publication of the seminar papers will promote an ongoing intellectual dialogue and the search for practical implementations in order to shape a new citizenship for South Africa.

Professor Edith Raidt
Vice-Chancellor
St Augustine College of South Africa

Welcoming Remarks

Michael Lange

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you all.

It is with great pleasure that we are cooperating for the second time with St Augustine College of South Africa. Today's conference – *Defining a New Citizenship for South Africa and the Fundamental Values That Will Shape It* – will continue to strengthen our working relationship with this new, aspiring institute of learning, especially since the conference theme forms part and parcel of KAF's ongoing effort to contribute in a meaningful way to discussions regarding the ongoing democratic transition of South Africa.

1. KAF

KAF is a German-based political foundation that has been cooperating with partners throughout the world for more than 35 years, in its quest to promote democracy and good governance. We have become convinced that the creation and consolidation of a democratic political framework is one of the essential conditions on which any development process depends.

The strengthening of institutions and structures that guide the development of a constitutional and legal order and that favour the consolidation of the rule of law has been at the forefront of KAF's activities in South Africa – especially since transformation processes all over the world, and particularly in Africa, have been offering greater opportunities for direct involvement.

In South Africa, KAF cooperates not only with political parties and their respective think-tanks but also with reputable education and research institutions. It has wide-ranging programmes in the different provinces of South Africa.

2. CRISIS OF MORALITY

Since the adoption of the new South African Constitution in May 1996 and the subsequent accession of Thabo Mbeki to the South African Presidency, the concept of an "African Renaissance" has taken centre stage.

This African Renaissance seeks the rebirth of spiritual values which are in the depths of all humanity. It recognises that although each of us has personal responsibilities, these are accomplished by cooperating with others. This freedom of association produces common social responsibilities.

I believe it is fair to state that the South Africa of today is facing a crisis of morality, demoralising every aspect of society. The vicious destructive effect of moral delinquency affects all sectors of state and civil society, and demands a united response from all sectors, irrespective of their political, ethnic or religious differences.

The most visible signs of moral degeneration in our society are exemplified by contempt for the law and the state and the virtual collapse of a system of social behaviour informed by the precepts of humanism which, historically, have informed particularly the African culture.

There are many examples of unethical attitudes that contribute to the promotion of immorality as a way of life throughout South African society.

It seems also fair to state that for a long time South Africa suffered under an illegitimate system of governance and therefore a regime of laws and organs of the state, which enjoyed no moral authority in the eyes of the majority of people in South Africa and around the world.

Many have therefore drawn the conclusion that the apartheid era opened the way for moral degradation and spiritual bankruptcy.

When political change finally occurred in 1994 neither black nor white communities in South Africa were experienced in living in freedom, and both were unprepared for it when freedom eventually came.

However, the question of how a nation should go about restoring its moral character needs to be answered. How should a country recovering from an era of repression and undergoing transition and social reconciliation treat severe unemployment, an extremely high crime rate, the AIDS pandemic and a stagnant economy, at the same time ensuring that this is done in an honourable, moral way?

We are all aware of the fact that poverty can inhibit morality, and a society overwhelmed by social problems eats away at ethics. Does an economic environment that makes it impossible for much of the population to obtain a livelihood, compel millions to beg or even steal? Should society be forced to offer such people a viable alternative to crime?

The search for answers to these questions has only just begun. This conference aims at discussing practical ways in which individuals, organisations and different sectors of society can participate in and contribute towards a comprehensive readjustment of the moral fibre of South African society. We are hopeful that it will make a meaningful contribution to finding answers to all questions arising in this regard.

3. CORRUPTION AND GREED

In a recent report on *The State in a Changing World*, the World Bank stated, rightly so, that the very basis of development becomes compromised when rules and practices are not effectively monitored and applied. Development suffers, in particular, where the rules of governance allow arbitrary resource allocation and the diversion of public resources in defiance of the public good and to the exclusive benefit of corrupt officials, politicians and their collaborators.

South Africa has one of the world's most elaborate constitutions, revolving around executive accountability to the legislature. Over and above this, the South African Constitution also provides for special institutions such as the Public Protector, the Constitutional Court and the Auditor General, which jointly aim at assuring accountable government in the best tradition of democracy.

But concerns about corruption have intensified in South Africa in recent months. The current discussions around the arms deal seem to indicate that all is not well in this regard.

Daniel Bell, a renown sociologist from the United States (US), recently suggested that the central political cleavage of the post–Cold War world would not be between left and right, nor between secularists and fundamentalists – as Huntington predicted – but between the *clean* and the *corrupt*. In his opinion, the substance of politics would be stripped down to the simple question of honesty.

Although history is littered with examples of populations that live for years in appalling squalor and never mounted a political challenge or posed a serious electoral threat as long as the identification between the leaders and the led remained strong, it remains likely that poverty combined with the perception that the political class is self-serving, will open spaces for popular opposition.

Countries such as South Korea, the Philippines, Peru and Italy have all seen heads of state fall over revelations of dishonesty. The US and Germany have both experienced political crisis due to irregular or unethical behaviour of leading politicians.

It appears that in decades to come, the most imaginative and successful political parties will be those that link anti-corruption to a broader political agenda.

But corruption is only one element of the moral degradation of South African society; greed is obviously another even more accepted element.

George Soros recently pointed out that people today, unsure of what they stand for, increasingly rely on money as the criterion of value. What is more expensive is considered better. People think they deserve respect and admiration because they are rich. What used to be a medium of exchange has usurped the place of fundamental values, reversing the relation-

ship postulated by economic theory. The cult of success has replaced a belief in principles.

CONCLUSION

In view of the fact that South Africa is affected by all those evils that arise out of great social injustices and vast economic imbalances, we must first of all accept the proposition that only with the transformation of the South African society and economy, can these evils be redeemed.

One of the most important tasks must be to eradicate poverty by reversing economic disparity. Economic growth is a necessary condition for the reduction of poverty and inequality.

Today, South Africa is considered by many observers to be a legally consolidated democracy, in which development towards a constitutional, pluralistic state, ruled by the new law of the land, appears to be irreversible.

Building and maintaining a strong and enduring democracy on these foundations will depend on a continuing commitment by all segments of South Africa's diverse population to reconciliation and far-reaching economic and social transformation: KAF is willing to play its role in this process.

This seminar is designed to stimulate such debate and I wish you enjoyable, interesting and worthwhile deliberations.

Setting the Scene: In Search of a New Citizenship

Edith Raidt

INTRODUCTION

In a briefing paper issued by the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference's (SACBC's) Parliamentary Liaison Office in Cape Town, the researcher Lawrence Matemba writes: "People's participation in politics in South Africa needs to be strengthened."

The recently completed South African section of the Southern African Democracy Barometer – a seven-country survey of citizen's attitudes to democracy, coordinated by Idasa – reveals significant deficiencies in citizenship in South Africa. Citizens of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi fared far better than their South African counterparts in terms of participation in politics in their respective countries. And Matemba concludes: "South Africa's hard won democracy is going through a testing period as increasing numbers of citizens regard political institutions and electoral processes with indifference and even distrust … We need a committed, informed, and involved citizenry to revitalise our political life, to require accountability from our political leaders and governmental institutions, and to achieve the common good."[1]

The problem lies even deeper than participation in elections and active involvement in democratic processes. A democratic society is basically dependent on its citizens, their values and aspirations. As the title of this seminar indicates, we need to define or redefine a new citizenship for South Africa and to identify and nurture the fundamental values that will help our fledgling democracy to reach maturity and create a new society. This is part of the concerted effort to strengthen the moral fibre of our nation. Here we have to ask ourselves some basic questions, such as:

- What is a citizen and what do we understand by citizenship?
- What are the basic values needed in a community of citizens?
- And since these basic values are linked with moral values and therefore public and private morality, we need working definitions of these concepts for our discussions here.

1. "COURAGE TO BE MORAL"

In his recent bestseller, *Auf der Suche nach einer öffentlichen Moral* (*In Search of a Public Morality*) Helmut Schmidt,[2] the former German Chancellor, shocks his readers with the opening sentence: "Have we Germans lost morality?" No, not really, is the reply, since most citizens still lead decent lives, but the "we-feeling" is dwindling. People are self-centred, they are no longer focused on the common good; there is an "inflation of personal demands" (p. 183), self-fulfillment and a one-sided emphasis on rights without considering the corresponding civic duties.

Schmidt challenges his German readers, especially politicians, business and church leaders, to have the "courage to be moral" and to foster again virtues; the so-called cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance) and civic virtues (e.g. solidarity and readiness to help, tolerance and respect, courtesy and punctuality), as well as to practise these starting in the family, the smallest cell of democracy. It is interesting to hear from a seasoned political leader such as Helmut Schmidt that "virtues are non-negotiable".

2. THE MEANING OF CITIZENSHIP

A *citizen* can therefore be defined as:

- a person who is a member (by birth or naturalisation) of a city or state
- a person owing loyalty/allegiance to a nation or state and entitled to the protection of personal rights
- a person within a community of citizens with reciprocal obligations and multiple citizen responsibilities.

And here we are already dealing with the meaning of *citizenship* which, as Professor Goodpaster will point in his paper, amounts to reciprocal rights and duties; a reciprocity that has to do with acknowledging the *dignity* of the citizen in the community and the responsibility of the citizen for the *common good*.

In defining a "new citizenship for South Africa" we have to move away from a one-sided emphasis on the individual, on personal demands, expectations and rights. Instead, as Dr Stofile will point out, "a new citizenship is one inextricably linked to the 'community'".

St Augustine (354–430), the brilliant African scholar after whom our College is named, provides a cogent answer to the questions posed above when he writes in his famous work D*e Civitate Dei* (2,21):

> "What is a community of citizens other than a multitude of people bound to one another by the tie of concord? In the State, what musicians call harmony is concord: civic concord cannot exist without justice."

Augustine's "tie of civic concord" summarises the values and civic virtues that underpin a genuine citizenship.[3] These have to be acquired and practised during a lifetime, starting in the family and the school, and continued in the workplace and especially in the political arena. The loss of the moral fibre of our nation has brought about a growing awareness of the urgent need of these values. During the past year the Minister of Education appointed a task group to research "values in education". The final report was discussed at a conference in February this year. The researchers write:

> "By values we mean desirable qualities of character such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, diligence, responsibility, compassion, altruism, justice, respect, and so on. We would like our young adults to possess these values and therefore for our schooling system to actively promote them. The pro-

motion of values is important not only for the sake of personal development but also for the evolution of a South African character. The definition we give to values today is also an avenue to imagining the future character of the South African nation."

In the Executive Summary, the task group writes:

> "In this report we make an argument for the promotion of equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability and social honour at our schools. We believe that these values are important for the personal development of our school-going population. They also define the moral aspirations of South African democracy as defined in our Constitution and Bill of Rights. The definition we give to values today is an avenue to imagining the future character of the South African people. These values are therefore the moral aspirations which South Africans regard as desirable."

3. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AND RELIGION IN SOCIETY

This "values-in-schools-initiative" is already a big step forward. But does it go far enough? Is it anchored in a clear understanding and acceptance of morality? Cardinal Napier argues that we need "the education and formation of the moral conscience", and here the role of religion in society is of decisive importance. "Where does one get values more clearly expressed than in religious writings and practices?" It is the religions and religious traditions that have to a large extent shaped the moral codes, and in a multi-religion country like ours, an intensive inter-religious dialogue on moral values could make an important contribution. However, morality is different from religion. A morality is not as such linked with an organised institution like a church; it may involve only a set of social or individual rules accompanied by sanctions of praise or blame, and feelings of conscience. It does involve an ethics or value system and a way of life. Morality is a code or view about how we should or should not conduct ourselves. A morality does presuppose some belief about the world and life. In the urgent call to restore the "moral fibre of our nations" all the role players, and especially all the religious communities, can and must make a crucial contribution. After all, it is quite

intriguing that both presidents Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki – and here I am quoting Cardinal Napier – "have repeatedly enlisted the aid of the religious leadership in the struggle to turn around the moral slide that has overtaken our nation in recent years".

Faith-based institutions, e.g. schools or a Catholic university such as St Augustine College, can also be major role-players in shaping the mentality necessary for the development of a new citizenship. The shaping of a new citizenship cannot be achieved through laws, it is basically an educational process and, I would even say, a life-long education of the citizens, involving all sectors of society.

4. LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

In their 1986 statement *Economic Justice for All*,[4] the United States Catholic Bishops made clear reference to this ongoing educational process:

"What the Bible and Christian tradition teach, human wisdom confirms. Centuries before Christ, the Greeks and Romans spoke of the human person as a 'social animal' made for friendship, community, and public life. These insights show that human beings achieve self-realisation not in isolation, but in interaction with others.

The virtues of citizenship are an expression of Christian love more crucial in today's interdependent world than ever before. These virtues grow out of a lively sense of one's dependence on the commonweal and obligations to it. This civic commitment must also guide the economic institutions of society. In the absence of a vital sense of citizenship among the businesses, corporations, labour unions, and other groups that shape economic life, society as a whole is endangered. Solidarity is another name for this social friendship and civic commitment that make human moral and economic life possible" (*Economic Justice for All, nrs*. 65-66).

5. THE VIRTUE OF SOLIDARITY AND THE COMMON GOOD

The need for stronger bonds of social solidarity across cultures and for efforts to attain a greater degree of shared moral vision is increasingly evident in our world today, writes David Hollenbach of Boston College. Clearly, toler-

ance is not enough because it is a live-and-let-live attitude that avoids introducing conceptions of the full human good into political discourse. The "method of avoidance" actually further threatens democracy by deepening alienation and anomie, and this is exactly what we do not need. A functioning democracy requires the virtues of mutual reverent acceptance, of mutual cooperation, mutual responsibility, and what Aristotle called civic friendship and concord.[5]

Pope John Paul calls this "the virtue of solidarity", and he describes it as "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say the good of all and of each individual".[6] And he expresses the hope that all people, "whether or not they are inspired by religious faith, will become fully aware of the urgent need to change *spiritual attitudes* which define each individual's relationship with self, with neighbour, with even the remotest human communities, and with nature itself". Such a change in attitudes arises from a recognition of "higher values such as the *common good*".

Commitment to the common good requires a hard-nosed recognition of the reality of human interdependence, and it requires a promotion of justice. Referring again to the United States Bishops, "basic justice demands the establishment of minimum levels of participation in the life of the human community for all persons".[7]

6. CONSEQUENCES FOR EDUCATION

There are clear consequences for education:

- Education shapes the values that become operative in a republic by helping to shape the virtues and character of its citizenry.
- Worries about the quality of public life in a democracy lead directly to worries about the whole process by which each generation prepares its progeny to assume their responsibilities as citizens.
- Education in virtue is education that guides the development of students in ways that enable them to become good citizens; men and women dedicated to the service of the common good.
- Education in virtue is not a mere civic do-gooderism. Helmut Schmidt certainly does not think so. Tertiary education, in particular, should be aimed at a commitment to *intellec-*

tual solidarity. Here the Catholic tradition of education has some distinctive intellectual resources. *Intellectual solidarity* – David Hollenbach writes – is a willingness to take other persons seriously enough to engage them in conversation and debate that makes life worth living. It includes an appeal to tolerance, but goes beyond it. Tolerance is a strategy of non-interference with the beliefs and ways of life of those who are different. But the spirit of intellectual solidarity differs radically from pure tolerance by seeking positive engagement with the other through both listening and speaking. Here a *community* of freedom begins to exist.

CONCLUSION

This intellectual solidarity must be accompanied by a *social solidarity* which is of special relevance to Catholic universities. A university that aspires both to be Catholic and to serve the common good must translate the importance of social solidarity into its teaching and research priorities.

A "culture of service" should be the hallmark of such universities; they should propagate what Robert Greenleaf calls "servant-leadership".

St Augustine College of South Africa, as the first Catholic university in this country, hopes to make such a contribution with its postgraduate programmes for values-based leadership. Today's leadership seminar will hopefully contribute towards a constructive intellectual debate that can be translated into action in our effort to help shape a new citizenship.

ENDNOTES

1) Briefing paper 41, December 2000. Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference Parliamentary Office, Cape Town.

2) Helmut Schmidt, *Auf der Suche nach einer öffentlichen Moral. Deutschland vor dem neuen Jahrhundert*. Vollständige Taschenbuchausgabe. München: Der Goldmann Verlag, 2000.

3) It is interesting to note that St Augustine deals extensively with the question of citizenship. One of his best-known political teachings is that concerning the tension between the "two cities": the City of God and the City of Man. Citizens of each city are fundamentally marked by the tendency of their wills, towards God or self. He argues "that Christians make the best citizens because of their principled understanding of the human condition and the role of political authority in human communities, and because they obey the law out of a religious duty." See Allan D. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Augustine through the ages. An encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans 1999: 194-196.

4) United States Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*. Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the United States Economy. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C. 1986.

5) Cf. David Hollenbach S.J., Is tolerance enough? The Catholic University and the common good. In: *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*, No. 13, Spring 1998.

6) Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (*On the social concern of the Church*). Encyclical 1987, no. 38.

7) *Economic Justice for All*, no. 77.

Civility in a Post-Apartheid Era: Tolerance is Not Enough

Vincent Maphai

INTRODUCTION

The contention that tolerance is not enough when discussing civility in a post-apartheid era, is true in the most obvious sense. It seldom happens that a single variable constitutes a sufficient condition for the achievement of any national or institutional goal. If anything, it is doubtful that tolerance is even necessary for civility because tolerance is not an absolute value. We should, after all, hardly be tolerant of evil. Under certain circumstances, intolerance becomes a moral imperative. In addition, like non-racialism, the concept of tolerance is ultimately vacuous unless its object is specified. One must always tolerate something.

Alternatively, appeals for tolerance may simply be an avoidance tactic in the face of uncomfortable social issues. One cannot help feeling at times that tolerance is a smokescreen for an anti-transformation agenda. Indeed, a single-minded focus on tolerance may lead to what may be termed "frozen democracies", that is, the consolidation of the substance of the status quo.

1. WHAT TOLERANCE IS NOT

The concept of political tolerance is too elastic to be of value. It may therefore prove helpful to dismiss certain common misconceptions. First, tolerance does not refer to absence of disagreement among rivals. On the contrary it presupposes such disagreements. Second, tolerance does not mean uniformity. If anything, uniformity is the very antithesis of tolerance.

Tolerance promotes the coexistence of multiplicity of viewpoints and institutions. Third, tolerance does not imply the absence of political competition or rivalry. It presupposes this rivalry and competition, but merely attempts to specify rules governing such competition. Fourth, tolerance does not collapse political rivals or foes suddenly into friends or allies. It merely converts political enemies into political rivals. Lastly, tolerance is not political license. It is incompatible with anarchy, authoritarianism or dictatorship.

2. WHAT DOES TOLERANCE MEAN?

To understand the concept of tolerance it might be illuminating to draw parallels between politics and a sports competition. Politics, or any social organisation, is a type of contest. Every game is played according to rules. Tolerance essentially means playing a game according to accepted rules. This means, *inter alia*, the willingness to accept defeat under those rules. It also requires preparedness, on the part of the winning party, to be subjected to subsequent elections. Tolerance does not mean there can be no winner. In the same vein, the winner is subject to certain constitutional and moral constraints in the exercise of political mandates.

Democracy, in this context, is used widely to refer to a set of procedures and systems designed to facilitate maximum political participation and representation in decision making. This requires the toleration of as many political actors as are evident in any given community. Sometimes this requirement creates a tension between the contending demands of comprehensiveness on the one hand, and compatibility on the other. The more comprehensive and diverse the participants in government are, the less likely that such a government will be

effective. Democracy may, at best, entail a happy medium between the need for effective government and for the widest possible repre-sentativeness.

3. ASSUMPTIONS UNDERPINNING COMMITMENT TO TOLERANCE

Commitment to political tolerance is based upon certain assumptions regarding human nature and society. First, all humans are pre-sumed to be inherently rational. To be rational, among other things, is to be able to define goals and ends and to adopt the means and strategies that are appropriate for the achievement of those goals and ends. Second, all humans are born equal as moral persons; that no person is more human than the other.

Third, everyone is born free and it is the task of society to protect and enhance that freedom. Fourth, if people are rational, equal and free, it follows that they are likely to cherish different viewpoints – morally, socially, politically and ideologically. A tolerant society is one in which various viewpoints are freely expressed and protected. Fifth, if various viewpoints are possi-ble it follows that no person or group is infalli-ble. This is not to deny that certain beliefs and attitudes can be reasonable or unreasonable, civilised or barbarian, fair or unfair. However, no single person or group reserves the sole right to pronounce on these issues. Last, the alterna-tive to tolerance is violence. Where there are no acceptable methods of conflict resolution, vio-lence is perceived as a legitimate form of self-defence.

To summarise, tolerance features in various spheres of our experience – political, social, cultural and religious, to name obvious exam-ples. Politically, a tolerant society accommo-dates a multiplicity of viewpoints and permits the expression of such viewpoints organisation-ally. A multiplicity of political forums becomes a form. In liberal democracies, this multiplicity is expressed, amongst other things, through a multi-party system.

The political culture in which the multi-party institution thrives manifests an extraordinary degree of trust between political rivals. It assumes that the governing party will allow itself to be voted out of power. Such willing-ness to relinquish power rests on the ruling par-ty's belief that its successful opponents would "in turn", be willing to surrender power if voted out of office. A further precondition to the multi-party system is that the defeated party, while being the parliamentary opposition, need not fear a change of the political rules or the loss of jobs, houses and lives by its members.

4. THE CONTEXT OF TOLERANCE

Tolerance becomes salient against the backdrop of an authoritarian or totalitarian political cul-ture. The apartheid edifice, with its varied package of repressive legislation, was the bedrock of intolerance *par excellence*.

Since February 1990 the concept of tolerance has gained currency in South African political discourse. Initially, the unbanning of organisa-tions did not result, as some had expected, in free and fair political competition. On the con-trary, violence and effective declaration of "own territories" or "no-go" areas became hall-marks of the country's political culture in the early 1990s.

The features of violence, intolerance and authoritarianism were, and to some extent still are, central to South Africa's socio-political culture. Historical state violence against politi-cal rivals, violence against the state and its agents and general criminal violence form part of this legacy. The same applies to corporal punishment in schools, families and community violence.

Until their unbanning, resistance movements themselves operated under impossible condi-tions. Unlike political parties, they could not mobilise in a democratic manner. Democratic behaviour requires a climate of openness, con-sultation, debate, discussion, elections and accountability. Such an environment, by defini-tion, hardly exists in an authoritarian culture. The culture of revolution and resistance is a culture of secrecy, vigilance, suspicion and fear. Consultation becomes impossible, and yet effectiveness depends on the mobilisation of the very broad mass that cannot be consulted. It should be of no surprise that anti-apartheid mobilisation entailed both persuasion and coer-cion of communities.

Resistance politics invariably and impercepti-bly contributes to a culture of intolerance. In addition, a revolutionary political culture tends to produce a spill-over into secondary violence. Just as insurrection against an illegitimate regime becomes normal, physical attacks against rival organisations soon become com-

monplace as well. This too culminates into tertiary coercion, where inter-party intolerance translates ultimately in to intra-party repression.

5. WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?

Several points emerge from the foregoing analysis.

Tolerance as a political value is pronounced at a particular conjuncture in society.
The issue of tolerance is particularly salient at the aftermath of transition from authoritarianism to democracy. For obvious historical reasons, intolerance is deeply rooted in the South African culture. Yet, there are obvious signs of a departure, however slow, from this tradition.

Secondly, South Africa is not tottering on the brink of civil war due to political or any form of social intolerance. There are powerful institutions to underpin the country's democratic fabric. The Constitution protects just about every conceivable right. Even more promising, there is an uncompromising preparedness on the part of citizens to use the courts to protect their rights.

Overall, throughout the 1990s, South Africans have displayed an incredible degree of commitment to political tolerance. This was partly assisted by the growing awareness of the human rights culture.
Thirdly,

Tolerance is generally a necessary but never sufficient condition for a democratic culture.
Strictly speaking tolerance, like non-racialism, is not even a value or a goal. It is an instrument or a possible condition for the promotion of other values, notably freedom and democracy. If it converts into a value or an end in itself, it becomes obstructive to the achievements of other national goals. This leads to the next lesson.

Tolerance is never an absolute value since society has to be intolerant of certain values, attitudes and behaviour.
Finally, tolerance remains central to the creation and consolidation of a democratic culture in South Africa. Yet, its salience recedes with time. A decade since the commencement of the transition process, we now face a new set of challenges and goals. Intolerance features minimally among these.

6. CURRENT KEY CHALLENGES

Commitment to tolerance in a plural society

does not preclude the existence of a dominant culture or set of values in that society. In South Africa, the Anglo-Saxon liberal culture typically dominates every aspect of society. Domestic, regional and international changes in the 1980s and 1990s also served to intensify a strong sense of liberal triumphalism. Internationally it was expressed by Fukuyama's discredited "End of History" thesis. Briefly, according to this thesis, liberal democracy as an ideology was here to stay and there would be no other ideological challenge to it. The South African version of this thesis may be summed up as follows:

Communism has failed;
Apartheid has failed;
therefore, *liberalism has and will triumph*.
This explains partly why it is only liberal institutions which, post-1990, have steadfastly refused to re-evaluate their role and ethos in the new South Africa. This is unsustainable in the long term. The sub-text underpinning the African Renaissance crusade is the claim by the majority that self-respect will not allow them to subject themselves to what amounts to cultural imperialism. Other cultures and values will stake their claim with vengeance in the shaping of the South African national ethos.

One can rightly ask: If not liberalism, then what? Certainly, if the South African Constitution is anything to go by, the South African political culture is, and is likely to remain for a long time, rooted in a strong liberal tradition. The challenge, it would appear, is not how to repudiate the fundamental values of equality and freedom, but how to "indigenise" them, for lack of a better term. Liberalism in contemporary South Africa has to take a cue from what Christianity began to do decades ago.

Christianity has had to adjust to local cultures. Without that, it was increasingly becoming irrelevant. South African liberalism runs a similar risk. Not only is it in danger of becoming irrelevant, worse still, it also has the potential to be the only respectable channel for white supremacist positions. Their language is still rooted in 19th century English and European culture.

The major challenge for contemporary South African liberalism is an unambiguous departure from fundamentalism. Of its nature, fundamentalism – be it political, religious or whatever – is irrational and irrelevant because, by defi-

nition, its context and time is of no consequence to it.

There is one area in which liberal fundamentalism is starkly pronounced. It is its chronic distrust for the state, coupled with an unbridled celebration of the market. This tendency is rooted in history. The South African liberal class is largely English speaking. The point often made by Frene Ginwala is that this political class lost control of the state in 1910 and is unlikely to regain it. If this is so, the cynical anti-state tendency of this class is hardly surprising. There is also an international dimension, with local content, to the liberal distrust of the state.

Liberalism in Europe was born out of a middle class rebellion against monarchy and aristocracy. In South Africa, the black middle class is created largely by the state, although there is – unlike anywhere else on the African continent – a strong private sector. Contemporary South Africa is characterised by a *black state and a white market*. Deliberately or sub-consciously, demands for the unbridled exultation of the market, coupled with demands for a minimalist state ultimately amount to clarion calls for white supremacy. This appears to be the challenge for liberalism if it intends to be relevant in South Africa.

To conclude, in a highly and grossly unequal society such as South Africa, liberal fundamentalism becomes a powerful instrument in the hands of the dominant class. The intellectual roots of liberalism, expressed in the classical consent theory of Locke, Hobbes and Rousseau, makes this point. Individuals in the "state of nature" were assumed to be absolutely free, rational, individualist and, above all, *equal in every respect*. Theoretically at least, liberalism is an ideology of equals.

The remaining section focuses on principal values likely to shape the evolving South Africa. It is tempting to provide a catalogue of such values, because they must surely be countless. That will, however, prove pointless. Instead, for the purpose of this discussion, these will be crystallised to the absolute minimum.

Before dealing with the three main values, it is worth commenting on a fundamentally worrying change that has been witnessed in South Africa since 1994. In general, South Africans are known for their generosity and voluntarism. If social science statistics are anything to go by,

it is quite surprising that a large percentage of black South Africans have not died of malnutrition, exposure to the elements, diseases and mini-wars. Why is this so? Perhaps it is because social scientists often forget that behind institutions and structures, lie ordinary people with tremendous resolve and capacity to survive.

In addition, there has always been a strong culture of civil society and non-governmental organisations that have volunteered their time and resources to intervene in hopeless situations. Family networks have also helped. Post-1994 South Africans have, perhaps quite understandably, become extremely statist. There is a worrying dependency on government to provide almost everything. When the government proposed earlier that young graduates should provide some form of rural voluntary service, this was denounced as a violation of their rights. Yet, a few years earlier when we unleashed our young people upon one another in a mindless war, we called that "national service".

Now back to the key values driving the new South African citizenship.

7. THREE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

The post-1994 national agenda is broadly about transformation of society. In particular, it is about the introduction and reinforcement of three key elements into the national political culture, namely, *democracy*, *rights* and *social justice*. The degree to which South Africa manages to promote these values will ultimately define the form and content of its transition. It is not feasible to undertake a pedantic definition and analysis of these concepts.

The key issue to remember is that, contrary to popular tendency, these three values are not interchangeable. A worrying feature of contemporary South Africa is the almost exclusive focus on first generation negative rights, lip service to democracy and virtual silence on social justice.

Why are these values mutually exclusive at times? Rights claims are typically anti-democratic. To claim a right is like labelling someone racist or sexist. It places one in an unassailable morally pre-eminent position. This tendency is demonstrated in the manner in which three political and moral issues have been dealt with: namely, the death penalty, affirmative action

and abortion. The anti-death penalty lobby appeals, amongst other things, to the right to life. Similarly, affirmative action becomes the right due to the historically disadvantaged. Abortion, in turn, is simply an expression of women's rights.

Rights, by definition, are freedom-limiting. To claim a right is to place a moral obligation on the part of others to refrain from interfering. In fact, a right entitles the holder to employ coercion in the defence of that right. Precisely because these three issues are defined in terms of human rights, they are placed outside the ambit of debate and discussion. Those who dare challenge these positions are, by definition, morally flawed. The issue is not that rights are undesirable or indefensible. I am simply suggesting that rights claims place the objects of such claims consciously outside a democratic framework. There is a definite trade-off between rights and democracy. Ironically, when rights claims are underpinned by a strong demand for tolerance as well, democracy suffers in turn.

The issue is further complicated by the relationship between rights and justice. South Africa's dominant discourse is about first generation rights. This is hardly surprising for a society with a long-established authoritarian culture. Yet, a single-minded focus on first generation rights, to the exclusion of justice, is unsustainable in the long-term. It will have the effect of blocking transformation and social justice. I refer specifically to first generation rights, which often tend to benefit the powerful by limiting the capacity of the state to redirect national assets.

The contending demands for justice on the one hand, and the respect for the first generation rights, will define markedly the difficult trade-offs the country has to manage. The Zimbabwean crisis illuminates this dilemma, although it is by no means solely about redistribution. For the moment let us bracket President Mugabe's machinations and focus on the underlying unresolved land question. The Zimbabwean experience reinforces what is generally know, namely, that neither the state (law) nor religious institutions (morality) can successfully legislate against survival. The key lesson here is that *a single-minded commitment to first generation constitutional rights, to the exclusion of considerations of justice, is a recipe for national disaster*.

CONCLUSION

The triadic cornerstone of South African citizenship comprises democracy, human rights and social justice. All three values are essential but not interchangeable. Sometimes they may be mutually exclusive. They are not simultaneously salient to the same degree. Commitment to democracy remains over-arching at all times. Tolerance and first generation rights were particularly prominent in the 1990s. In the future, justice will increasingly take a central position.

This means that, beyond these values, South Africa will need quality leadership to manage these trade-offs. Discernment, rather than dependence on text book solutions, is what will define such leadership.

All are important. There is no sense of personal dignity in the absence of a human rights culture. Yet, personal dignity is intricately linked to a collective sense of dignity. Middle class blacks and women cannot simply shake off the baggage of historical domination over them.

Finally, there is no sense of collective dignity without a strong culture of social justice. Tolerance is certainly not sufficient for the task of reconstruction facing South Africa.

Good Corporate Governance: A Fundamental Value for New Citizenship in South Africa*

Mervyn King

INTRODUCTION

The governance of corporations is a highly topical issue at present and is a dynamic that has spread throughout the world. It actually began in the 19th century, but in the last two decades of the 20th century, corporate governance has truly come to the foreground of peoples' minds. The reason for that is a growing realisation that corporations in fact impact on all human endeavour.

We drove here this morning in motor vehicles manufactured by corporations. We are wearing clothes manufactured by corporations, and at tea break, the tea bags we will use were no doubt delivered here by a company. The point is that companies today affect all aspects of our lives. They in fact link us to the communities in which we live and create mutual rights and obligations in society to the extent that a company is as much a citizen as an individual.

In the middle of the 19th century, Lord Gladstone developed the concept of limited liability, and this concept was the driving force behind the development of the Industrial Revolution. It is wonderful for an entrepreneur to know that he can take his idea, put some capital into a company and limit his personal liability. The creation of that legal personality is a privilege granted by the state and it creates a citizen.

But that creation of citizenry by way of statute also brings with it certain legal obligations, such as having to keep books and records. As a citizen, however, the company also has to comply with the social norms and mores of the society in which it operates. Companies, like individuals, do not operate in a vacuum. This was not appreciated in the 19th century, nor in the first half of the 20th century. We had then the so-called robber barons. Henry Ford, for example, was a great entrepreneur: we would not be driving mass produced vehicles today if it wasn't for him. But Ford did not care about the exploitation of resources and labour when he began his business. To assuage his social conscience, however, he later created the Ford Foundation. There are many other similar examples.

The question is: Can the great entrepreneurs of today have the privilege of a limited liability corporation and assuage their consciences by creating foundations? Would that open them to severe criticism in the 21st century?

I believe that a corporation must operate within the context of the community in which it carries on its business. For example, if in South Africa a corporation today endeavoured to carry on its business, not in a participative or transparent manner, but in an intolerant, hierarchical manner, it would not succeed. Corporations are therefore closely linked to what society demands.

1. TRANSFORMATION

South Africa has begun its process of transformation, which, I believe, will be on-going. In keeping with this, I was asked in the early 1990s to chair a commission into corporate governance because it was appreciated that South Africa was returning to a normal society of equal opportunity. Most of our citizens who

were disadvantaged under the apartheid laws, were now going to move into the mainstream economy, yet they had not participated actively in corporate life. Could we, for example, blindly follow the Cadbury Report on corporate governance in the United Kingdom (UK)?

Those who had asked me to chair the commission had already concluded we could not, and I agreed with them. Sir Adrian Cadbury had reported on the *financial aspects* of corporate governance; the very matters on which Ford and others had focused, namely the profit bottom line.

The commission concluded that South Africa had to develop an integrated system of governance that dealt with financial, social, ethical and environmental concerns. The report produced in November 1994 embraced those four elements.

When the Commonwealth Heads of Government met in 1997, it was decided that the 56 countries in the Commonwealth should have guidelines to establish governance of corporations in those countries. I was asked to chair that body in the Commonwealth because of the principles laid down in what has now become known as the King Report, and which report went further than dealing with the financial aspects of corporate governance.

2. OWNERSHIP

We in our lives are owners of assets; many of us are fortunate to be owners of a property, a house or an apartment. As the owner of a house, would you allow noxious gases, fumes or noise to pollute your neighbour? Would you consider allowing sewage to escape on to your neighbour's property, or would you regard that as the conduct of a bad citizen?

Why then, one should ask, if one or all of you became agents of another citizen – for that in effect is what one becomes when one is a director of a company – do you permit that company which has no mind, heart or soul of its own to pollute the neighbourhood in which it carries on its business?

That is a strange phenomenon of human behaviour, and yet from the middle of the 19th century when corporations were first registered, we have seen corporations actually destroy communities. As with an individual citizen, a company must therefore be a good neighbour.

3. GLOBAL CLUB MEMBER

The company today – whether it likes it or not – is also a member of the global community. This is because we live in a borderless world – not borderless in the sense of the World Trade Organisation, which tries to break down the artificial borders created for trade, but literally through the ether; information today moves about without consideration of borders.

The great global institutions in the world today are the major shareholders of equities in companies, including those in South Africa. As an example, the Californian Public Service Employment Pension Fund has invested tens of millions of dollars in South Africa. How do these institutions decide to invest in a company in, for instance, South Africa, Malaysia, France or Germany? They rely on information and on the quality of governance of the company issuing that information.

The measurement for investment today by these great institutions has therefore become the quality of how a corporation is governed. From a hard-nosed business point of view, it therefore makes good business sense to be a good governor when one is the director of a company.

4. HISTORY

Before moving on to the international trends in governance, I will briefly discuss the history of the corporation and how governance developed, as there is no better way to understand the present and the future than to know the past.

The corporation developed as follows: hundreds of years ago human beings busied themselves keeping body and soul together – this was our main function. Then we learned that if we worked collectively we could produce goods and services more cheaply. Following that, the concept of limited liability was developed and we moved to another level; with limited corporate liability one could now produce goods and services without one's personal liability being at stake.

From the 19th century until the end of the Second World War, wealthy families were the majority owners of equities in most countries and the members of wealthy families were the directors of those companies. However, when families started listing their companies or issuing rights to garner more capital, they started taking other people's money into the company.

When they realised they did not have the skills to make certain business decisions, they appointed outsiders to the board, and in this way some of the concepts of corporate governance were unwittingly born: the people who invested their money now expected accountability. Also, those outsiders who came in were not involved in the day-to-day running of the business and so the concept of the non-executive director developed.

Shareowner dominance prevailed in the 19th and 20th centuries. The theory was that there should be an exclusive focus on the bottom line of profit. It did not matter if labour or other resources were exploited during the course of business, so long as the bottom line – profit – was met.

We have seen in our lifetimes corporations both destroy and create communities. In the UK, for example, the great textile companies have failed because of competition from the Far East regarding textiles. Other examples are the closing of coal-fields in England and the decay of those communities, as well as the deterioration of health caused by employment in asbestos mines. But we have also seen the creation of communities. There can be no finer example today than Silicon Valley on the west coast of the United States (US).

In the second half of the 20th century we moved into the post-industrial era with its focus on services rather than manufacturing, and the introduction of technology and robotics in manufacturing.

Take, for example, motor vehicle manufacturing plants. As far as the eye can see, robots are busy assembling components. Occasionally, a vehicle will drive in to deposit components to be used in the just-in-time manufacturing process, but there are hardly any people involved, and those who are, are usually overseeing the computer-aided processes driving the robots.

Other characteristics of this modern age are e-commerce companies, where intangible company assets have become more valuable than tangible assets. Outsourcing is popular, management structures are flatter and self- and part-time employment are common.

In short, we are living in a changed world. In this regard we have a shareowner revolution.

I can say with some confidence here that all of you are shareowners. You may not think so,

but if you are a member of a pension fund, own unit trusts or have savings at an institution, indirectly, you are a shareowner.

This is why universities today teach not only that a corporation is a being created by statute and that the directors are the minds, heart and soul of that corporation, but that the corporation is also a link between the various stakeholders that it brings together: the employees, the local community, the customers, the suppliers, etc.
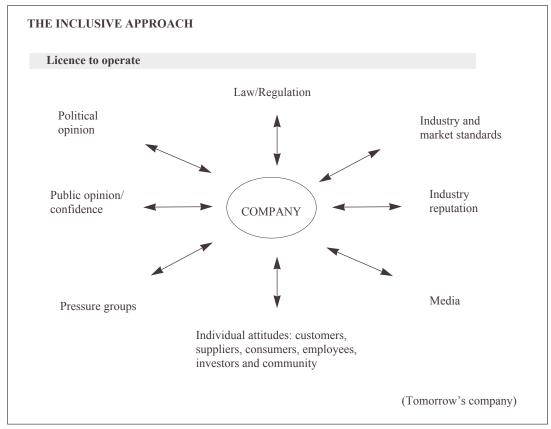
As a result, we have today, for example, the United Nations Human Rights Declaration Against the Exploitation of Labour, as well as environmental groups such as Greenpeace, which monitors what corporations are doing environmentally. Multinational companies now operate, as their name suggests, not only locally but nationally and internationally. General Motors, for example, gives livelihood to million of people worldwide through direct employment and outsourcing. The company's gross turnover is greater than the gross domestic product of a country like Denmark. Figures such as this make one wonder at the power of multinational corporations.

We live in a borderless world that is characterised by globalisation, and the result is what I have called the "Seattle Battle". As the President of the World Bank has said, this is an attack on the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. But the medium that creates this situation today is the corporation. If the corporation does not begin to act as a good citizen, it will be destroyed and capitalism will be destroyed with it!

I therefore pose some questions: Can we as directors and governors of companies in the 21st century continue shareowner dominance to the exclusion of other stakeholders? Can the financial focus ignore this changed world, and continue to use only backward-looking financial measurements? Can a company perform but not conform to some of the constraints that society now demands? Is it possible for a company to decide not to be a responsible corporate citizen?

5. INCLUSIVE TREND
We move now to the trends in corporate governance worldwide. We described earlier the exclusive approach to running a corporation. Today, however, the trend is towards a more inclusive approach (*see graphic*). As the direc-

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THE INCLUSIVE APPROACH

Licence to operate

Law/Regulation

Political
opinion

Industry and
market standards

Public opinion/
confidence

COMPANY

Industry
reputation

Pressure groups

Media

Individual attitudes: customers,
suppliers, consumers, employees,
investors and community

(Tomorrow's company)

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tor of a company today, one does not simply go to a regulator and obtain a licence to do business. Over and above this, there are many other factors one has to take into account as a prudent governor of a corporation. One must consider the individual attitudes of one's customers, one's suppliers, one's industry reputation, the media, etc.

The inclusive approach recognises stakeholders other than shareowners. The relationship between the company and some of these stakeholders is contractual – as with the customer and supplier – while some are non-contractual, such as the community in which it operates.

The inclusive approach has three legs: a corporation should define its purpose; identify its values; and identify the stakeholders relevant to its business. The strategy it develops should combine all three and it should develop reciprocal relationships with its stakeholders.

Take for example a parcel delivery company. Its purpose would be the delivery of parcels. Its values may include the usual values such as respect for the individual, integrity and responsibility. Since we are running a parcel delivery

service, we might agree that reliability and reliable conduct are essential values. We must then identify the stakeholders. Naturally, the employees are important, but so are the airlines and other transport companies in the delivery chain. So we would talk to them and explain that the more parcels we can deliver, the better for their business. In this way, a reciprocal relationship is developed, and this leads on to the development of a business strategy.

That is the modern inclusive approach: *it embraces stakeholders other than the shareowner.*

6. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

There is a difference between accountability and responsibility. If you gave me money to establish a company to manufacture chairs, I would be answerable and accountable to the company in which you had invested. But that does not stop me being responsible also to the various stakeholders that come together as the result of the formation of this statutory citizen. I need to be responsive and responsible to them.

As we have mentioned, ownership creates responsibility. In the course of my study on corporate governance and speaking with various governments throughout the world about their corporate legal situation, one thing has become clear: one cannot have a single corporate governance code that pertains throughout the world. Each country has its own corporate laws and its own culture of doing business that has developed over many years. Each country therefore has to develop its own code of governance.

But in looking at the codes of governance of several countries, four pillars stand out; pillars that directors in the 21st century need to be aware of when making decisions either through act or omission. These are *fairness*, *accountability* – in the sense of accounting to the company – *responsibility* – acting responsibly towards the various stakeholders, and *transparency*. And all this must rest on a base of intellectual honesty, that is, being able to separate fact from assumption, and making good decisions based on all the facts.

7. NON-FINANCIAL ASPECTS

As we have mentioned, the shareholder dominance that pertained certainly until the middle of the 20th century, was characterised by a backward-looking financial focus. But we live in a changed world; investors today want a forward-looking approach or a "score-card" approach – they want information at a glance.

To use an automobile analogy, a financial focus would be like driving a vehicle but only being able to use the fuel gauge to monitor what was happening. Using non-financial aspects, one can have measurements which will allow investors to draw conclusions as to whether a business will or will not have sustained success.

Investors today are looking for measurements that will allow them to view performance through the customers' eyes, not through the manager's eyes. As a result, some companies have now appointed corporate reputation officers. These officers ask the company's third parties – their customers and suppliers – questions such as: What is your opinion of how this company is operating? What do you think of the credibility of its managers? The corporate reputation officer reports to the chief executive officer, who then reacts to these reports.

The report from customers should cover customer satisfaction, perception of key service areas, internal business – i.e., audit, risk management, service standards, productivity – human resources – i.e, morale, skills gaps and training, etc. Other examples of non-financial aspects include innovation, learning and training.

One would, for example, probably not want to invest in an information technology (IT) company where the profile showed that most of the employees were over 50 years of age, since it is known that the age profile for IT companies should be between 19 and 34. One would also want to know:
- What is the age of the senior manager of this company?
- What is the intellectual capacity, i.e., training, innovation, etc.?
- What incentives are used to retain talent?
- How does the company incentavise to attract the right new talent?
- How does the technology in the company compare with its competitors'?
- Check the company's licence to operate.
- What of the company's general conformance aspects?

Investors today want directors to account for their stewardship of the assets of a company. We have been taught and have a language for communicating in financial terms. If, for example, I say I want to reduce my company's working capital ratio to its gross turnover, one would know what I am talking about. However, if I say my company has great intellectual capital, what am I talking about? Intelligence quotient? People who have tertiary education? People who are skilled in the industry in which I am working?

A language to communicate non-financial aspects needs to be developed and this, I think, is going to be one of the challenges of corporate life in the 21st century. Great work is being done internationally by the Global Reporting Initiative to develop such a language.

The general accounting principles cannot, for example, value intellectual property, nor do they account for the cost of equity capital. Social and ethical accounting principles have recently been developed in the UK. The Global Reporting Initiative has introduced reporting on the triple bottom line principle, that is, on the social responsibility of a corporation – its eco-

nomic life, social aspects and its environmental responsibility.

A good example of a modern corporation is the Shell Organisation, which has come a long way from its attempt to explode the Brent Spar platform at sea, and its drilling in the Nigerian Delta. These episodes reinforced Shell to adopt a triple and not a single bottom line.

Today, Shell reports on its social responsibility in the various countries in which it operates, how this is linked internationally and economically and, of course, what it is doing environmentally.

Organisations such as the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds in the UK have now laid down guidelines for institutions to invest in corporations and their duty to gauge the quality of corporate governance in the corporations in which they invest.

To summarise, shareowners today, especially institutional investors, want measurements to judge stewardship, performance, conformance and sustainability.

8. SHAREOWNER ACTIVISM

We have moved from an era of deference to an era of activism, with Warren Buffet perhaps being the best example of that. Shareownership in the world is dispersed, particularly as beneficiaries of institutions. But institutions today are asking themselves: which guard should guard the guardians?

Take, for example, Norwich Union, a well known institution in South Africa and the UK. Norwich Union invested in a company in the UK that was polluting the English countryside. Friends of the Earth approached Norwich, which promptly disinvested from the offending company.

Perhaps the most extreme example is Huntingdon, a company listed on the London Stock Exchange. Six months ago, the UK Animal Anti-Cruelty League discovered that Huntingdon was experimenting on animals at its laboratory outside London. Amid much uproar, Huntingdon was asked to stop, but the directors said they could not, as carrying out such experimentation was in the best interests of its shareowners. The Animal Anti-Cruelty League then went about finding out the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the trustees of the major institutions that had invested in Huntingdon, published their names and invited

their members in the UK to tell these trustees what they thought of their investment. Two weeks later, those institutions disinvested from Huntingdon, which subsequently lost 60% of its market capitalisation and to this day has not recovered. In fact, quite tragically, about three weeks ago, Huntingdon's CEO was physically attacked upon leaving his office. An extreme example, but an example which shows that activism has arrived.

Another example of shareowner activism is the UK National Association of Pension Funds, which has established guidelines for pension fund investment. Trustees' responsibilities now include that they be active in companies to ensure that companies are socially responsible and are also looking after the environment.

9. CONFORM AND PERFORM

As a good corporate citizen in the 21st century, one has to conform to certain good governance standards while one performs.

Following research into institutions in the UK and the US, leading international consultants have found that institutions today will pay up to 27% more for equity in company A competing with company B in the same industry, where company A has good quality governance compared with company B, which does not. Professor Black of Stanford University, only three weeks ago, came out with a similar report.

CONCLUSION

The modern day director has to perform a very difficult balancing act for success and sustainability.

The good new corporate citizen has to:
- adopt an inclusive and not an exclusive approach
- interact with institutional activism
- place greater emphasis on non-financial aspects
- apply the tests of fairness, accountability, responsibility and transparency
- be accountable to the company
- be responsive to other stakeholders and act responsibly towards them
- balance performance with conformance.

The fundamental values of a new corporate citizen in South Africa must be a realisation that the ownership of assets has concomitant responsibilities. It must practise those four mentioned pillars, must be a good neighbour,

and must conduct itself ethically. In short, a director in the 21st century needs the courage and strength of Hercules, the wisdom of Solomon, and when it comes to balancing performance and conformance, the agility of a trapeze artist.

Defining a New Citizenship for South Africa: Culture, Diversity and Recognition

Makhenkesi Stofile

INTRODUCTION

The adoption of a new constitution in the 1993 marked an important paradigm shift in traditional debates on citizenship in South Africa. The new Constitution (1996), as you know, confers an extraordinary array of formal freedoms to our citizens – not only conventional political liberties (vote, free speech, association), but also social and economic conditions that must be created for such citizens to meaningfully exist in our democracy. Today, almost seven years after the birth of South Africa's democracy, these rights encoded in the Constitution may appear self-evident truths as we work our way into the new century. But their inscription in our Constitution was neither recognised by many conventional political theories nor was it an automatic outcome of the discourse of struggle.

In less than a decade, the debate has shifted from the formal attainment of political rights, to finding effective institutions and a political culture for making those rights real and meaningful to our citizens. For the past five years or so, we have been hard at work in trying to expand the frontiers of political participation to include all the people of this country – particularly those who have for centuries been excluded from participation in the political decision-making process.

However, in more recent times, the debate has gone beyond a preoccupation only with political participation, and has begun to touch upon the crucial question of the economic and social (cultural) underpinnings of citizenship. This broader view of citizenship is, I have to submit, something recent to many of our political parties and the traditions of these parties. It is clearly not something new to the democratic movement – after all, as far back as 1955 the Freedom Charter proclaimed a basis for comprehensive citizenship. This document, in my view, remains to be one of the most visionary landmarks in our recent history. Long before the Universal Charter of Human Rights was formulated, the African National Congress (ANC) had been calling for a charter of human rights.

The notion of a comprehensive citizenry is central to the question of democracy. An acceptance of this notion is, after all, not something that was universally acclaimed by political parties in South Africa.

For me, citizenship can only be a meaningful construct if it defines the totality of the human condition in a modern, democratic society. Traditionally, this wider concept of citizenship was hardly recognised in academic disciplines such as political science and political philosophies such as liberalism. It was only very recently, during the post-war period, that conventional notions of citizenship tended to embrace a more wider and inclusive set of doctrines.

In Europe this found expression, for example, in the birth of the "welfare state" and in many African countries, in the establishment of post-colonial nationalist states wherein the state provided for a wider range of social rights than mere political rights. Of course, in many cases these societies failed to provide appropriate conditions for the preservation and exercise of these rights. And, in many cases, the dependency on state intervention tended to erode the

role of civil society and communities in the development of the wider society.

The excesses of this period since the Second World War fuelled a rightwing reaction in many countries during the 1980s and 1990s that sought to swing the pendulum in the complete opposite direction. This "reaction" – led most militantly by Thatcher and Reagan in the north – wanted the emasculation of the state in providing for the needs of citizens, and gave almost exclusive agency to the individual as the "master of his/her destiny". Fortunately, this era too came to an end, and many of the voices of this conservative tradition have been toned down in recent times.

In the past decade or so, there has been an increased appreciation of the need for a balance of state/society, individual/community and unity/diversity. The way in which we approach these equations is still at issue in our young democracy, and I wish, in this paper, to make a few comments on these issues.

1. ISSUES FACING A DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

I think we have grown in significant ways as a political democracy since 1994. We are often not able to see these shifts in our political culture, perhaps because we are so close to the political terrain. An example of this point is the fact that today almost all the major political parties agree on the *principle* that without a major and material redistribution of wealth, our political democracy will be rendered perpetually unstable and unachievable. In other words, there appears to be a widespread acceptance that without complementing formal political rights with substantive conditions of economic and social freedom and well being, our democracy will fail. In fact, without also enjoying economic and social freedom and well being, the very political rights we have achieved will be threatened.

The construction of economic and social citizenship, in my view, is the most crucial challenge facing the present generation. For political rights to work, our citizens must have and enjoy a better quality of social and economic life.

In recognising and embracing the notion of *social and economic citizenship*, we are of course implicitly rejecting and moving beyond traditional liberal and conservative theories of citizenship.

The traditional liberal notion of citizenship is a self-limiting one, focusing almost exclusively on a one-sided emphasis on formal political rights. Rights such as the right of representation, freedom of expression and association are typically stressed in the liberal refrain. These rights, to be sure, are vital to our democracy, and they must be cherished. But they do not represent the totality of freedoms that are necessary for a true democracy to work. They need to be complemented by economic and social freedoms which citizens need if they are to exercise such political rights in the first instance. After all, as the traditional saying goes, "people cannot eat political rights".

Moreover, it is equally difficult to see how disadvantaged sectors of our society – the vast majority of black people – would be able to effectively exercise such political rights if they lack the *means* to do so. Material well being is an essential condition for meaningful political participation. If one is struck with hunger and illiteracy, one would find it difficult, if not impossible, to be engaged creatively in the political sphere. For this reason, the quest for material well being – through the redistribution of wealth – is indispensable to the political process.

A good example of the relationship between material well being and the quality of political participation can be found in the way "public opinion" is both constructed (made) and articulated today. The haves are the "public" and the have-nots are relegated to obscurity and silence.

Take for example, the print media (I am of course generalising here for the purposes of illustration). In the "mainstream press", it is a fact that the editorial boardroom (where stories are finally edited for publication) is still vastly under-represented. Most columnists purporting to represent "public opinion" convey a set of impressions that are, like the ones they critique, subjective. Nonetheless, they are portrayed as "public opinion" or in the "public interest". Who is the "public"?

A cursory reading of "mainstream newspapers" will also probably show that most "letters to the editor" are written by the educated – the majority of whom tend to come from one section of our society. Again, these voices are held out or give the impression of being constitutive of "public opinion" and "public interest". My view is that they form *part of* public opinion.

That these voices belong to the public domain is not in question here. But they form only *a part* of the "public" whose diversity of voices are often not heard, but on whose behalf the privileged few purport to speak. Invariably, opinions of citizens who happen to be "white" are constructed as "public" interests; and those voices who happen to be "black" are not recognised as belonging to the domain of the "public" sphere.

Unless we find the means of ensuring that all citizens of this country have the means and space to exercise that freedom, we will continue the fiction of constructing the views of a segment of our population as if it represents that of all or the majority of people.

A second argument relates to notions of "individual" and "community" in a democratic South Africa. Traditional liberalism tends to abstract the "individual" (with his/her rights) from the social or community context in which they exist. In many of the extreme versions of liberalism, this comes close to a denial of even the fact that a community or society exists. I am reminded of the notoriously bold claim by Margaret Thatcher (a conservative who took this notion from traditional liberalism) that "there is no such thing as society". But if no such a thing as society or community exists, then we are all "free-floating" individuals!

In other cases, there is a one-sided emphasis on the individual as if the individual does not have attachment to, and inter-dependency with, a given community. The problem with this is that it constructs a rarefied and atomised world-view – which is neither historically correct nor theoretically defensible.

In a democratic South Africa, the meaning that we would like to give to a new citizenship is one intimately and inextricably linked to the "community". After all, the individual forms part of a given community, and communities consist of connected networks of inter-dependent individuals. In short, individuals and communities cannot be meaningfully separated in real life.

Why is this important? I think its significance lies in the fact that a democratic political culture that we must construct should reflect both these aspects: the protection and defense of individual rights as well as communities within which such rights are exercised and lived through. It is only through a particular commu-

nity that we can realise the construction of a non-racial democracy.

And herein lies our challenge: to create a new set of human relations founded not on the fiction of "race", but on its antithesis (that is, its denial: non-racialism). Truth is that there is, in science, no such a thing as "races" (in the plural) – only, the human race. We have different cultural and language groups, but only one race lives on planet earth: the human race. Yet it is the power of the mythology of racism that it has defined the contours of our political project – non-racialism.

We must instill a *fundamental and uncompromising* acceptance of the equality of human beings. This, for me, is the starting point. Today, evidence of the continued non-acceptance of this principle can be seen in countless examples of brutality meted out on farms and communities – such as the recent dragging of a black man behind a truck, the painting of a black child by a shopkeeper, or whippings of farm labourers reminiscent of lynchings some hundred years ago. This must simply stop.

And for me, it must be stopped at its point of origin: the denial of the fundamental and inalienable right of equality. As long as one person constructs another as something other than human – either in the name of "culture" or "race" – we are creating the seeds of the violence of today. One has only to add the number of farmers that have been killed to the atrocities recounted above. The equation becomes simple: *Mythology of racism = conflicts and violence*.

It begins with, and ends with, communities. If we fail to inculcate a culture of human rights at the level of families, neighbourhoods, cultural clubs, sports associations, churches and other religious institutions, we will condition young people to grow up with feelings of superiority and inferiority based on self-constructed "differences". My deepest concerns today are with the "retreat" of a large segment of our white community behind a new set of invisible frontiers – the homestead, neighbourhood, family, cultural club, sports association and church. Racism, in many ways, has been privatised in our new democracy.

2. CREATING A DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP FOR SOUTH AFRICA
If we are to succeed in breaking the chains of

this social pathology, we must create a more open, diverse and multicultural society. It will require us to create conditions for building greater interaction – unity, compassion and solidarity – at the community and neighbourhood level.

Today, if one takes a Sunday morning drive through many of our cities and towns, one would not be surprised to see how many of our countries' leading churches still function as if they exist in Verwoerdian apartheid. One would be surprised to see how many new "social clubs" have been hastily "privatised" to bar the doors to black people – not in the name of "race", but disguised as class or some other category.

This creates a frontier from which the "other" cannot only be kept "outside", but also because it is kept "outside", it is easier to define, caricature and debase the "other". If one does not really "know" or understand the "other", it is easier to disregard it in one's own world. In professional psychology, this perhaps equates with what is known as "depersonalisation"; what Martin Buber calls the "I–It" relationship. In war, it is often said that the way soldiers deal with an "enemy" is to depersonalise and debase the other side. I suppose a similar process must be at work in the retreat of racism into communities today.

I think our most important bases are still the family and school. These two institutions perform perhaps the primary socialisation functions in any society, and have been the bastions of "racial domination" in apartheid South Africa. These were, after all, the first sites of segregation introduced by the apartheid government after 1948 – with the creation of group areas and separate education legislation. We are still living with the structural legacies of this inheritance. Most communities still remain a world apart – despite the inflow of blacks into white neighbourhoods. To these two we must add religion and sport. Here too attitudes are formed that tend to last for a long time.

To justify this retreat, the notion of "community" is given a new, culturally-inscribed meaning – one that closes the net, draws the laager tighter in order to insulate what is (self) constructed as a "minority" from a (self) constructed "majority". Language is increasingly being used as a means for separate institutions from which the "other" can be excluded.

3. CULTURE AND DIVERSITY FOR A NEW DEMOCRACY

If we are to foster a democratic citizenship, we have to take a closer look at the issue of diversity and different constructions of this notion of diversity. In the first place, it is crucial to relate the notion of diversity closely with that of unity. Both these terms can be seen as two contending sides of the same coin – each pulling in another direction, in a pendular relationship.

"Diversity" – the spectra of cultures, languages, social and political identities and views of our society – is crucial for a vibrant democracy. Without this difference, life would not only be utterly boring, but it would also not be dynamic at all. Without these sources of difference, we would probably cease to have the sense of progression, in search of newer, and hopefully better, ways of living our lives. I think diversity and difference are essential conditions for a progressive culture. After all it is an old principle that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction". From this principle derives action, force and progress instead of stagnation.

But there is another side to this coin. If difference or its emphasis reaches a point where there is nothing that holds a society together – an underlying sense of unity – then the notion of "society" itself dissolves. We would then be rapidly sliding into a nihilistic and arbitrary social universe. But we have a notion of "society" precisely because there are those values and traditions that bind us together in some sort of broader, corporate identity – as a nation.

What constitutes that unity? Our President has consistently called for the need for a deeper-lying sense of patriotism – a basic commitment to the interests, history and future of our country and the wider continent. Some critics quickly jump up and construct this call for patriotism as one which suggests the annihilation of difference or diversity. The call for a new patriotism, in my view, is not at all in contradiction with the principle of diversity and difference. We are not calling for an uncritical sense of patriotism. We are not calling for *Mein land uber alles*!

CONCLUSION

I am struck at the stories of South Africans abroad actively discouraging foreigners to visit our country – sketching out all sorts of horror

stories. The very same people would not have lifted a finger to warn of the horrors of apartheid. They would have been happy to defend the inequities of that system and encouraged people to travel to South Africa because it is "not as bad as others make it out to be".

Something has to be said about the point at which one draws a line. It seems quite possible to be critical of what is happening in our country and yet at the same time also to strongly defend its interests. What explains this inability?

It is quite possible to embrace both principles of unity and diversity in the context of our democracy – if we simultaneously relate them to our everyday lives.

And my view is that we need to take a closer look at the need to create a wider set of non-partisan political and social spaces – in civil society – where these common values can be endorsed and celebrated without scoring a political point. We still need to find these spaces.

The Sources of Citizenship: The Family and Civic Associations

Cyril Harris

INTRODUCTION

Crucial to the successful outcome of South Africa's transformation is the formulation and acceptance of a qualitative definition of citizenship. St Augustine College is once again to be commended on focusing our attention on a most vital component governing our well-being as a nation.

1. THE FAMILY

Whereas in former years it might have been axiomatic that the primary source of citizenship was the family, today one is no longer able to guarantee significant social dividends from it.

While the family is not just one of our social institutions but in a very real sense the one on which all others depend, its stability has been undermined in the past 50 years through the debilitating impact of the steep increase in the rate of divorce and an extraordinary diversity of sexual and social arrangements, many of which are deliberately provisional.

A startling example of the incidence of breakdown in family life chanced my way. In 1965 I was obliged to take a medical examination for insurance purposes. Regarding my marital status, the only question on the form was: Are you single or married?

Twenty years later, I was again obliged to take a similar medical test. There were no fewer than nine spaces for the answer on personal status. Was I a bachelor? Was I married – for the first time? Married – for the second time? Was I separated? Was I a widower? Was I divorced first time or second time? And then I was asked about cohabitation: Was I living with someone of the opposite sex? Was I living with someone of the same sex? Within two decades, the startling variety of social arrangements, the change from the stability of the family to the instability which is all too prevalent nowadays, is clearly displayed.

Given the lack of permanence in family relationships it is too much to expect that correct values will be nurtured in the home, that from infancy the difference between right and wrong, the beneficial and the harmful, as well as the development of an unwavering sense of duty to be a good citizen and to contribute to the betterment of society, will be inculcated. In the world of yesteryear it was usually round the domestic hearth that the basic principles of good behaviour, the sanctity of life, the inviolability of property, and the dignity which should surround every human being, were instilled in all family members.

Our social scientists nowadays are virtually unanimous that neither the home nor the school system – which tends to be quite strictly utilitarian, the aim being to pass examinations and to transmit skills conducive to earning a living, rather than to cultivate virtuous traits of character – are the formative influences at work on the younger generation. The peer group has taken over as the most compelling force, its volatile nature, excessive behaviour and alternative lifestyles creating something of a moral vacuum for the younger generation.

In such an atmosphere the Western-type nuclear family is liable to deconstruct. In the words of Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of Britain:

> "Because at every stage the concept of the family stands counter to the idea of unre-

stricted choice, its ethical foundations are undermined. To be a child is to accept the authority of parents one did not choose. To be a husband or wife is to accept the exclusion of other sexual relationships. To be a parent is to accept responsibility for a future that I may not live to see. Hence families only exist on the basis of choices renounced. And our secular culture has made that voluntary closure of options hard to accept or even understand."

Furthermore, regarding the majority population of our country, it should be noted that the extended family is the norm rather than the exception. Not only the product of tribal custom, this is also due to the vagaries of migrant labour and results from economic restrictions largely unalleviated by the demise of apartheid. The fact is that family relationships, because of size or geographical distance, become attenuated, the saving grace being a strong sense of responsibility among all its members – more effective than that which the average European or American family has displayed – which allows, for example, a grandmother to willingly accept the burden of looking after her grandchildren orphaned by AIDS.

For all these reasons the domestic scene is hardly fertile ground for the creation of a solid body of citizenry to uplift our society – alas, the family in many instances is too busy trying to hold itself together.

2. CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS

Nor, given the complex circumstances and gross inequalities affecting today's multicultural South African scene, are civic associations automatically the generators of positive citizenship.

Our civil society boasts a plethora of public-interest groups, a host of voluntary organisations, multitudinous well-meaning foundations, and a panoply of non-governmental agencies (NGOs). Just beneath the surface, however, there undoubtedly exists an entrenched element of self-preservation and self-interest on the part of groups on all sides, vitiating worthy attempts to create the right atmosphere in which civil society can come together as a collective force towards the achievement of common aims.

An example of these regrettable divisions surfaced last year during the public hearings at provincial government level to assess views on

the constitutionally mandated bill aimed at the Promotion and Protection of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities.

The bill's aim is indeed praiseworthy, seeking in line with our Constitution to establish a non-racial and non-sexist society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights, and boldly and courageously trying to achieve unity in our diversity. Yet an alarming number of self-interest groups deliberately seek to preserve their turf rather than enter the spirit of the proposed legislation, which is to allow our rainbow nation to enjoy the widest cultural range in an atmosphere of non-discrimination and free association.

2.1 Rights and duties

A further drawback is that nowadays we tend to be more interested in our rights than in our duties. In every area of civil society, the justifiable clamour for rights – human rights, gender rights, labour rights – seems to obviate the parallel necessity of fulfilling our obligations. While correcting obvious injustices, and while recognising the indispensable role of the Bill of Rights, it remains true that the well-being of society rests not only on the protection of rights – the individual and the group *taking from* society – but just as much on the individual and group exercise of responsible conduct towards other people and seeking to be of service to them, *giving to* society.

From Jewish sacred sources we learn of the balance struck between one's rights and one's duties. From the earliest periods of Jewish history, popularly elected institutions of local government dealt with the compulsory financing of projects needed for the security and well-being of a given town. All citizens without exception were required to participate. Similarly the support systems for assistance to the weaker and impoverished members of society and for communal health care, were not left to the whims of the voluntary sector but fixed minimum contributions were required from all citizens.

Indeed, because suitable conditions allowing one to derive benefit from one's surroundings and at the same time contribute to progress are deemed essential, the Talmud some 1700 years ago recommended that a sensible person will always live in a town which has a court and charity fund guaranteeing justice and charity; a house of prayer; a bathhouse and sanitary facil-

ities, as well as a doctor, for reasons of health; and a teacher to teach his children. In such conducive circumstances, the citizen is conscious of the benefits accruing to him and of the consequent need to be of help to all around him.

2.2 Individualism

Another inhibiting factor is the emphasis on individualism – a widespread characteristic of our time. Civil society cannot thrive where an ethos of self-realisation and self-fulfilment predominates, the pursuit of personal ambition edging out any concern as to civic duty. In this climate even charitable organisations find it difficult to attract a sufficiency of volunteers, not enough selfless people being around to worry about the general good.

3. MORAL CRISIS AND RENEWAL

But all is not lost. The family may be a wounded institution but it still survives, and retains its potential to be the bedrock of social life. Our civic associations may sometimes be misdirected, but at least we have them, and must endeavour to make the most of them. The challenge is to effect improvement by a concerted effort led from the front by all those who realise the deficiencies and earnestly seek to upgrade our social infrastructure.

In this connection it is worth mentioning the Moral Summit held in October 1998, at which political and religious leadership combined to deal with our country's moral crisis. Clearly in a situation in which the correct values were not coming across, a partnership of religion and politics could possibly encourage a process of moral renewal involving all the citizens of the country. At the summit the *Ubuntu* Pledge was launched. This asks citizens everywhere to strive to be good and do good; to live honestly and positively; to respect all people's rights; and to promote peace, harmony and non-violence. Due to the prevalence of corruption, a Code of Conduct for "persons in positions of responsibility", which concentrates on virtues such as integrity, incorruptibility and accountability, was also signed.

The cynics could scoff that given the monumental levels of crime and misbehaviour, the whole exercise would prove futile. Others believed the call to proper behaviour in society was long overdue and were impressed at the evaluation of the reasons for current moral fail-

ure and at the thrust towards creating an improved society.

Parallel with these efforts, the South African NGO Coalition (Sangoco) also produced a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics, emphasising the necessity of rebuilding the social fabric and of creating an institutional framework to support the shared moral ethos of our society.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

At its liveliest, civil society – according to Sir Ralph Dahrendorf, a former director of the London School of Economics – possesses three critical characteristics. These are plurality, autonomy and civility.

Concerning civil society, "plurality means that there is never just one association without competition in a given field … a single state church, for example, like any other single association or organisation, is incompatible with the notion of civil society, and plurality of associations and organisations is part of the concept itself".

Regarding autonomy, Dahrendorf insists that NGOs can never be the creatures of government. Many civic associations were initially sponsored by the state and subsequently had to fight for a rightful degree of autonomy. In this connection he cites the struggle of universities for autonomy.

Regarding civility, Dahrendorf concentrates on people's attitudes: "An important feature of civil society is civic sense, civic pride; the readiness on the part of people to make use of their opportunities for association …"

In the South African context it is refreshing to note that plurality undoubtedly exists in all key areas, and while much bridge-building still requires to be done, the scene is not dominated by monopolies. Similarly, state interference is rare.

The cultivation of civic pride is another matter. I recall visiting the United States (US) for the first time some 30 years ago. During a six-week stay I hardly met a native American. I met Irish Americans, Italian Americans, African Americans and American Jews. Nevertheless the crucial common denominator of which they were all intensely proud was their loyalty to the US as such; a genuinely overriding allegiance sufficiently strong to dominate any ethnic or sectarian feelings they also espoused.

Hence the key to effective South African citi-

zenship is pronounced South Africanism; that whatever group we spring from, or belong to, we can aspire to an overall national identity. We all live within many circles of involvement and concern, but only when we feel part of the wider circle, which is our whole civil society, can we begin to do justice to the bonds which that allegiance should call forth from us. We can only be proud and positive citizens of South Africa when we feel a sense of belonging to the country as a whole.

5. THE CARING SOCIETY

The fundamental task in the South Africa of today is poverty alleviation. Government structures alone – whether national, provincial or metropolitan – cannot cope with the millions of persons in need, so that the prime challenge to civil society is to encourage and promote a significant range of upliftment projects which can make a meaningful difference to the disadvantaged.

Clearly what is required at the present juncture, and in the foreseeable future, is a degree of kindness commensurate to the colossal need. Civil society has a crucial role in this process in promoting levels of interdependence which can create practical avenues for the expression of good neighbourliness.

A huge educational exercise must also be initiated. It is misdirected to suppose that progress lies solely in the advancement of technology, rather than in the realm of intellectual power being utilised to fulfil the dictates of conscience. Postulating an ideological foundation which would allow collective conscience to bear fruit in social responsibility, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, a German-Jewish teacher, spoke a century ago the following, somewhat prophetic, words:

> "Those who have the welfare of human beings truly at heart, in whose ears the cry of misery which goes up from human souls is not drowned by the songs of praise offered up to the brilliant intellectual achievements of modern times, are often haunted by the thought that the human genius must lower its head in mourning as long as the net result of our culture is not greater and more widely diffused human happiness."

That the net result of our current polyglot culture should be displayed in the alleviation of hardship and misery is the call of the hour. However we choose to define the South African predicament – Bishop Stanley Magoba insists that "while apartheid is dead, its corpse still stinks" – it will not be solved by the privileged living lives sealed off from the underprivileged, nor by the separation of intellectual acumen from social awareness. Any worthwhile solution must depend on the sensitivity of our social conscience, finely honed by our intellectual appreciation of the human condition, and on the wise application of our collective resources.

In making the caring society a reality, we need to take on board all the ideals central to the theme of helping people and aiding them in such a way that they eventually become self-sustaining. In developing character-building among his students, the 19th century moralist, Rabbi Israel Salanter, put forward the powerful notion that "you express your relationship to God in your obligations to your fellow human beings. The other's physical and material well-being is my spiritual and moral responsibility".

Moreover, a successful development paradigm must be holistic in nature. Industrialisation and scientific pressures have together demoted the role of moral values, so that integral development is a rare occurrence.

In a recent report the World Faiths Development Dialogue states that poverty is the "outcome of economic, social and political processes that interact with each other, but until cultural processes, values and beliefs are added to this list, the analysis will never be complete and recommendations for change will lack essential ingredients".

The reluctance on the part of many civic institutions and associations, busy with development work, to address the issue of values may arise because those involved are more at ease when thinking in economic or political, rather than socio-philosophical, terms. The danger is that this leads to a lack of understanding of the need for a holistic view of development, a failure to see that unless the process incorporates all aspects of life it will remain fragmented, incomplete and unlikely to attain adequate success.

In defining a new citizenship for South Africa and the fundamental values that will shape it, we would do well to incorporate a universal outlook. That great thinker Vaclav

Havel, President of the former Czechoslovakia, in a lecture in 1991 defines citizenship in the widest terms:

> "I am in favour of a political system based on the citizen and recognising all his fundamental, civil and human rights in their universal validity and equally applied. In other words, I am in favour of what is called a civil society. A civil society based on the universality of human rights best enables us to realise ourselves as everything we are, not only members of our families, our community, our region, our church, our professional association, our political party, our country, but also our supranational communities. And to be all of this because society treats us chiefly as members of the human race, that is as people, as particular human beings whose individuality finds its primary, most natural and, at the same time, most universal expression in our status as citizens, is citizenship in the broadest and deepest sense of the word."

In a similar vein, Professor I. Mayor of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) has urged us all to think on the following lines:

> "For human beings to be worthy of the name, they must 'belong' to the human species and experience that sense of belonging. If they know and feel themselves to be members of the human family, they will have no difficulty in assisting their fellow beings without ranking people close to them any higher than those who are far away. We must multiply our bonds of allegiance, that is to say, build more bridges between the individual and communities of different kinds and sizes, strengthen 'community citizenship' while at the same time promoting the idea of 'world citizenship', and think globally while acting locally, so that human solidarity may flourish.

> The intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind is a form of solidarity targeted at social disparities, one which strives against intolerance, jolts indifference and builds bridges between haves and have-nots, between Muslim and Jew, between prince and pauper. It is an active kind of solidarity between individuals who may be poles apart in many ways, a sense of community in diversity. And it is that solidarity, which grows up between different languages and cultures, beliefs and customs, ways of being and of thinking, and soon becomes indestructible, that makes people accept the idea of sharing, and indeed want to share."

Hence a South African citizenship which turns inwards and suffers from national tunnel vision is out of keeping with the global sentiments of our day. On the contrary, by bringing people together across cross-cultural lines, by making people more aware of each other, our society can upgrade human consciousness, and at the beginning of the 21st century ennoble the concept of citizenship.

CONCLUSION

Our definition of citizenship can learn much from the African concept of *Ubuntu*, which begins with blood relations, our near and dear ones, continues with one's local community and then extends to include the whole tribe and then the entire nation. This should become a trans-racial and international concept, a caring and sharing that is gloriously expansive, and which in its love to be of help to others crosses over all barriers to affirm our essential oneness and our common humanity.

Competence, Character and Compassion as Values in Education

Emmanuel Ngara

INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT — GLOBAL AND LOCAL

The discussion of competence, character and compassion as values in education should be located in a particular context because the educational experience takes place in a specific context.

The educational experience is influenced by the environment in which the learner learns and the teacher teaches. By this I mean that there are external and internal factors that impact upon the educational process in any country at any particular point in history. In present day South Africa I see several factors that have a decisive impact on higher education and on what goes on in higher education institutions. These are globalisation, the local socio-political environment and higher education legislation and policy.

The White Paper on Higher Education says of globalisation:

> "This refers to the intensification of world-wide social relations and to multiple changes in the economy, culture and communications of advanced economies. The associated 'knowledge society' has particular implications for the higher education system."[1]

Among other things, this means that local institutions will find themselves having no choice but to employ modes of delivery used by institutions located in more advanced countries. Of particular importance are developments in information technology. These developments have created an environment in which local institutions find themselves competing for students with foreign institutions because access to higher education is no longer restricted to national boundaries. Globalisation also means that the way we conduct business, run our governments and provide education is at least in part determined by new computer and information technologies which we can only ignore at the risk of being left behind by the rest of the world. Thus we have to be part of the global village and our higher education system has to keep abreast of international trends in education, such as the use of information technology systems and infrastructure, the introduction of quality assurance measures, the promotion of lifelong learning and the adoption of the programme and outcomes-based approaches to education. On the other hand, we must be cognisant of the tensions that exist between the imperatives of globalisation and the demands of our own local context. Consequently, we must at once aspire to operate as part of the global village and to take full account of local realities.

By local realities I refer to an intricate combination of historical, economic, social, cultural, political and other factors. For example, South Africa is a country in which the First World and the Third World exist side by side. It is in many ways a technologically advanced country, but some sections of its population suffer from economic deprivation of the worst kind. It is for better or for worse a part of the African continent where some of the least developed countries of the world are located, and where some leaders have enriched themselves and entrenched their own power while driving their countries deeper and deeper into a state of economic chaos and underdevelopment.

An important aspect of our current reality in South Africa is that our history has brought about a situation in which the moral fibre of the society has been destroyed and badly needs to be restored. It is not always helpful to blame the ills of society on past history, but it is also true to say that South African society is today reaping the fruits of the oppressive system and discriminatory practices of the apartheid era.

People were dehumanised by apartheid and today people have lost respect for the sanctity of human life. We are daily bombarded with news of gruesome stories about human beings who seem to have no compassion and no feelings for fellow human beings. Men rape three-year-olds; husbands murder their wives after taking insurance policies on them; people kill others for cellphones or for a mere few hundred rands; not to mention how many people lose their lives at the hands of hijackers.

Yes, there is little regard for human life these days, and human existence has in a certain kind of sense been reduced to a dog-eat-dog situation. Consequently, this land is crying out for healing, for the restoration of its moral fibre, its respect for human life and concern for the poor, the wounded, and the hurting. It is crying out for the restoration of its compassion for vulnerable women and children, for AIDS sufferers and for the victims of broken families, among others. In this matter the government has a role to play; the Christian Church and other religions have a role to play; business has a role to play; and higher education certainly has an important role to play.

And so as we strive to be part of the global village, competing with international institutions in the use of the latest technologies and the most innovative methods of delivery, we should always be mindful of this other reality. The danger exists that anxious to be part of the international community after decades of isolation as a result of apartheid policies, higher education institutions in South Africa could respond uncritically to the demands of globalisation and fail to respond meaningfully to the South African and African contexts. This suggests that higher education institutions should consciously seek to mediate between the imperatives of globalisation and international trends on the one hand, and the demands of the South African and African realities on the other. This entails, among other things, designing curricula that speak to African realities and adopting a clear strategy of responsiveness to national and community needs. It also means designing the curriculum on the basis of sound principles of education, which enable higher education institutions to produce rounded and fully developed graduates who are capable of operating effectively in the global village while remaining an integral part of their own society.

At this juncture let me turn to what I have identified as the third of the factors that currently impact on higher education institutions in South Africa: namely, government policy and legislation. Since the present government came to power in 1994, the Ministry of Education has attempted to steer higher education in a certain direction. There was first the report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1996, followed by the Green Paper and the White Paper. In December 1997 the Higher Education Act was promulgated, providing a regulatory framework for both public and private higher education institutions. The latest document is the National Plan for Higher Education, which again provides for both public and private higher education institutions. The introduction states that the primary purpose of the Plan is to ensure that:

- The higher education system achieves the transformation objectives set out in the White Paper and is responsive to societal interests and needs.
- There is coherence with regard to the provision of higher education at the national level.
- Limited resources are used efficiently and effectively and there is accountability for the expenditure of public funds.
- The quality of academic programmes, including teaching and research, is improved across the system.[2]

It is sensible to argue that the National Plan will have a greater impact on public institutions than on private institutions; on the other hand, it is true to say that no institution will be left untouched by the provisions of the Plan. It is also appropriate to state that constructive engagement with higher education policy and legislation is not only beneficial to the institutions concerned but also ensures that government gets the full benefit of its policies by receiving feedback from higher education practitioners.

The point of discussing these three factors

that form a major part of the context in which higher education provision is taking place in South Africa today, is to suggest that if we want to ensure that competence, character and compassion become values that are enshrined in our education system, then the education we provide should speak to these realities. Institutions that wish to foster these values should ask themselves how they can promote such ideals in this kind of context. This has implications for the degree structure, for the content of what is taught and for the approach of the institutions concerned to teaching and learning. Owing to time constraints, I shall not dwell at length on these very important aspects of higher education provision and shall, in the next section, confine the discussion to a consideration of guiding principles for achieving the desired educational outcomes.

1. COMPETENCIES AND VALUES AS EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

If we regard competence, character and compassion as values that a graduate acquires, we are saying that these values are outcomes of the educational experience because the graduate is a product of the educational experience. The question that arises, then, is what kind of educational experience ensures the achievement of these outcomes? What this means is that we should clarify the epistemological or philosophical basis of the programmes or courses we offer and ensure that these programmes or courses are designed to enable the learner to acquire certain predetermined competencies and capabilities to assimilate certain desirable values and to develop certain qualities.

Now competencies and capabilities are measurable in terms of the knowledge and skills acquired during the learning process and in terms of operational competence in the world of work. Values are more difficult to measure, but they can certainly be cultivated as a result of an appropriate curriculum and an appropriate philosophy of education. There are three identifiable levels of skill that higher education develops in learners and many educators are only concerned with these. If we are concerned with values, however, we should go beyond the acquisition of skill and add a fourth outcome, which relates to character formation and values. I therefore see four levels of educational development at university level – three levels of skill

development and one level of value formation. A university programme based on this philosophy will therefore be designed to achieve the following exit outcomes:

- *Mastery of discipline*
  i.e. knowledge of the subject (or subjects), its principles, its methods, etc.
- *Operational competence in the world of work*, e.g.
  – the ability to transfer knowledge to practical situations
  – the capacity to adapt
  – management and leadership skills
  – computer literacy, numeracy and language proficiency
  – research skills
- *Higher order skills*, e.g.
  – an enquiring and critical mind
  – a sense of good judgement
  – the capacity to make meaning of the world
  – the capacity to solve problems through a process of rational disputation
  – the ability to see a relationship between the formal curriculum and co-curricular activities
- *Character formation and the development of values*, e.g.
  – a sense of social responsibility
  – a sense of cultural identity and an appreciation of cultural diversity
  – acceptance and appreciation of the value of ethical behaviour
  – appreciation of democratic principles, including acceptance of different views and opinions
  – a spirit of service and concern for fellow human beings
  – development of spiritual values and acceptance of religious pluralism.[3]

Some of these outcomes, especially those in the fourth category, may be achieved by supplementing formal programmes with co-curricular activities such as community service, and building elements of practical experience into the curriculum. Outcomes relating to management and leadership skills, negotiation skills and character formation require of institutions that they put in place well constructed student development programmes, which seek to integrate students' academic activities with their co-curricular or so-called extra curricular activities. Service learning that involves an element

of community engagement is an important strategy for character formation and the nurturing of values that have to do with showing concern for fellow human beings. It is perhaps appropriate to mention at this juncture that the term *compassion* has a religious and Biblical ring to it and does not seem to be one that sits comfortably as part of professional educational discourse. The closest educational term I would associate with it is that of service. However, compassion would be an extremely desirable outcome of a programme that is designed to promote character formation and the nurturing of values.

2. SKILLS AND VALUES – THE EXAMPLE OF A PUBLIC AND A PRIVATE INSTITUTION

In this section, I refer briefly to the efforts of two institutions that have in some way attempted to address the issues discussed here. My focus will be on character formation and the development of values, though not to the complete exclusion of competence. It is not my intention to describe the curricula of these institutions in terms of the hierarchy of skills and values that I have identified. I will instead refer in very broad terms to mission statements, structures and activities which serve as indicators of each institution's concern with issues of character formation and the development of values. I have chosen the University of Natal and St Augustine College of South Africa as examples – or case studies, if you wish. I am aware that what I have to say about each of these institutions is woefully inadequate, but my choice of the two institutions enables me to comment on the observation I have made about secular institutions and institutions that are based on a religious foundation.

2.1 The University of Natal

The University of Natal is a public university that has demonstrably shown its concern for matters relating to skills development, character formation and the promotion of certain values in students. I cite the following as evidence of this approach to education on the part of the university:

• The University of Natal has a framework document called *Strategic Initiatives for the University of Natal* which articulates the mission and vision of the university and gives a succinct overview of the institution's strate-gic framework for action. It is a living document that is regularly updated to take account of the challenges facing the institution and the changes taking place both at the institution and nationally. The skills and values that students are expected to acquire are referred to in the document.

• The university has a Leadership Centre which, among other things, exists "to promote new, appropriate forms of leadership in the African context".

• It has an Ethics Centre whose particular concern is "to understand the ethical dimension of human existence in relation to the opportunities and challenges of three great contemporary realities: democratic transformation, cultural diversity and economic empowerment". The centre seeks to offer a contribution to the quest for what it calls "the ethical renaissance without which our African Renaissance will be much harder to achieve".[4]

• The university also has a Student Services Division which has initiated a major student development programme. In this regard a Student Development Plan has just been produced with guidelines that focus on ways to build an effective student affairs and services operation that supports students in their academic endeavours and enhances their personal, social, cultural and cognitive development. A Student Leadership Development course for student leaders, which includes a module on the concept of the Alternative to Violence Project (AVP), is part of the student development programme.

• The university is actively supporting AIDS research through the Africa Centre for Population Studies and Reproductive Health. An AIDS policy is in place and the university is developing practices in relation to HIV/AIDS based on principles of human dignity, compassion and non-discrimination.

I hope these examples are able to demonstrate that the University of Natal is one of those institutions that is not just providing higher education without a philosophy, but is concerned about how to engage in human resource development, taking into account the problem of producing citizens for tomorrow.

2.2 St Augustine College

Issues of morality, service and compassion are

given a firm foundation if they are part of one's philosophy of life; if they are not just abstract ideals, but are an integral part of one's ideology and belief system. This is where institutions which have a religious foundation are in some ways better equipped to shape a student's life in terms of character formation and the assimilation of values than secular institutions. The likes of St Augustine College of South Africa is in that respect potentially better placed than public higher education institutions to produce graduates who cherish such values.

Allow me at this point to take a step back to 1993 and 1994 when the Planning Group for what was then called CUSA (the Catholic University for Southern Africa) had a vision of the future St Augustine College of South Africa as an undergraduate university with a three-pronged mission. In terms of that vision the university would be conscious of its commitment to three realities: society; its students; and the Church and the Kingdom of God.

With regard to society, the university was going to be especially sensitive to the problems of development in Southern Africa and would seek to address these problems in its teaching mission. In terms of its commitment to the Church and the Kingdom of God, the university would create a Catholic and ecumenical intellectual ethos, and would, among other things, actively promote a holistic and integrated approach to education whereby, for instance, the search for the material needs of society is harmonised with the cultivation of spiritual, moral and humanitarian values. As far as the university's commitment to its students was concerned, the full statement read as follows:

> "With regard to students, CUSA will design an integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum with the aim of providing an education which produces rounded and fully developed graduates who have a sound mastery of knowledge in their fields of specialisation, an adequate grasp of related disciplines and a sufficient understanding and appreciation of both the natural and social environments of human kind, with special reference to Southern Africa; Christian men and women who are capable of assuming leadership positions in their communities and have a sense of responsibility and commitment to their societies; well-formed agents of evangelisation who are developed

in mind and body, and in social, moral and spiritual awareness; and are aware of the prophetic mission of Christ in the world and seek to proclaim and live it out by the testimony of their daily lives."[5]

With the passage of time it was finally decided that while its long-term aim was to develop into a full university with a Catholic ethos, offering undergraduate and postgraduate studies, St Augustine would initially offer students the opportunity to read towards the Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. In its current mission, St Augustine clearly articulates its commitment to the following values: "Truth in every sphere of life, intellectual freedom in the search for truth, the virtue of critical thinking, individual self-knowledge and responsibility for society, open and reasoned dialogue between different religious and cultural traditions." The Mission Statement states, in part: "As a Catholic educational institution we are committed to moral values, and to making them the foundation and inspiration for all that we teach and study."[6]

This seminar is a clear demonstration of St Augustine's commitment to its mission and to the values that led to its establishment. It is one way in which the college can make a positive contribution to the building of a new South Africa and I hope that these seminars will become a permanent feature of South African intellectual life.

CONCLUSION

I have cited the University of Natal and St Augustine College of South Africa as institutions that are committed to making a contribution to the defining of a new citizenship and to helping their students acquire the fundamental values that will shape that citizenship. It is encouraging to note that the philosophy of these institutions accords in some degree with the vision articulated in the National Plan for Higher Education. The Plan states, in part:

> "It is crucial to equip all graduates with the skills and qualities required for participation as citizens in a democratic society and as workers and professionals in the economy. This should not be seen in a simplistic vocational sense as there is evidence to suggest that narrowly [sic] technical skills are becoming less important than knowledge management and organisation skills. What

evidence there is suggests that employers, in addition to technical skills, want graduates who can 'demonstrate a strong array of analytical skills and a solid grounding in writing, communication, and presentation skills'."[7]

The Plan goes on to quote Michael Gibbons who says the skills that all graduates in the 21st century require are "computer literacy, knowledge reconfiguration skills, information management, problem-solving in the context of application, team building, networking, negotiation/mediation competence and social sensitivity".[8]

These words echo what the Strategic Initiatives document says about graduates of the University of Natal. What the University of Natal and St Augustine College are also saying is that in the context of present-day South Africa, higher education should in addition put more emphasis on what the National Plan calls "social sensitivity". In other words, the two institutions would put more emphasis than the National Plan, on what I have characterised as fourth level outcomes of an effective higher education system, namely, character formation and the development of values. Earlier on I posited that institutions that are built on a firm religious foundation, such as St Augustine College, are potentially better equipped to deliver these kinds of outcomes than secular institutions. What this suggests to me is that there could be a very useful conversation between government, Church-related institutions like St Augustine and public institutions such as the University of Natal, about the kind of graduates that should come out of our universities and technikons. This conversation is necessary as we seek to address the problematic of defining a new citizenship for South Africa in the context of the need for restoring the moral fibre of our society.

I would suggest, in this regard, that St Augustine College of South Africa and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation seriously consider hosting a seminar that focuses on higher education and human resource development for South Africa, with a view to encouraging higher education institutions to engage these issues in a more systematic way.

ENDNOTES

1) Republic of South Africa, Draft White Paper on Higher Education, *Government Gazette* No. 17944, Pretoria, 18 April 1997, p.10.

2) Ministry of Education (South Africa), National Plan for Higher Education, Pretoria, 2001, p.6.

3) The concept of competencies and different levels of skill was first developed in E. Ngara, Africanisation, Transformation and the Curriculum: The Imperatives of Relevance and Quality, Published in the *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Forum of the Southern African Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR)*, UNISA, Pretoria, 26–29 October 1997. The concept was subsequently further developed by the same author in an unpublished paper read at the University of Natal circa 1998 titled, The African Renaissance, Institutional Vision and Outcomes-Based Education: Implications for Curriculum Development.

4) The information summarised in these first two bullets is taken from brochures of the University of Natal Leadership Centre and Ethics Centre respectively.

5) See E. Ngara & C. Lagan (eds) *A Catholic University for Southern Africa (CUSA)*. Report on a symposium held at the Schoenstatt Family Centre, Bedfordview, Johannesburg, 29 January 1994, pp. 42-43.

6) Extracts from the brochure titled *St Augustine College of South Africa*, April 2000.

7) Ministry of Education, National Plan for Higher Education, Pretoria, 2001, p.31.

8) Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.31.

Competence, Character and Compassion as Values in Education

Neil McGurk

INTRODUCTION

This century has seen the attempt to reduce our understanding of language to a purely empirical system and a logical construct. After several efforts to refine this approach to language and meaning, Ludwig Wittgenstein finally aborted the attempt. His final conclusions were that language could not be circumscribed in this way. It emerges from the depths of the person's life world, and meanings are attached to a lived experience with others who share the same day-to-day cultural reality.

1. LANGUAGE AND MEANING

The failure of the attempt to reduce language and meaning to empiricism and logic should come as no surprise. As a cultural creation of the human person its origin is as mysterious as the human personality itself. When we use words such as *competence*, *character*, *compassion*, *values* and *education*, at a certain level they belong to a common discourse in which we engage uncritically, because their meanings seem quite clear. This is so until we begin to bring a deeper reflection to bear on what they really mean to us. If we decide to take a more critical perspective in distancing ourselves from the meanings within the common parlance of experiences largely determined for us through our unthinking participation, we cannot but begin to delve into the mystical and spiritual depths of our own beings.

This place where the human merges with the divine is also where language emanates as a creative achievement of the human person together with its own creative emergence from the divine. It is on occasions such as this, when we are called upon to try to find this pristine place within the spiritual and psychological depths of our own beings, that we also try to originate again the intrinsic meaning of the words we use. I suppose this is what poetry is all about; creating anew the meaning of words with all the mystical and spiritual qualities of their first expression.

The word *competence* relates to the technical order of things; a person's ability to relate to and to act upon his/her society with ability and skill in the interests of the common good. This type of knowledge Aristotle called *techne*. It is certainly a *value* that needs to be developed through *education* in the broadest meaning of the word, but largely limited to the utilitarian or technical order. Nevertheless, it is an important value that should permeate the body politic if the common good is to be realised.

However, when we begin to use such words as *character*, we move to the moral order. *Character* is to be honed by growth in the virtues through an endeavour within a practical order of things. *Character* is what belongs to the virtuous man or woman of action. It describes both an attribute of the human personality as well as a judgement of peers striving together for the common good. If we really want to give full justice to what we understand by the word *character*, then we need an appreciation of both the dignity of the human person and the nature of the communities it forms.

This then leads us to a more philosophical reflection if we really want to explore the deeper meanings and the connectedness of the words, which form the topic of our considerations here today.

2. VALUE

Alasdair Macintyre, perhaps the leading contemporary moral philosopher, has exposed the failure of the Enlightenment rationality as a philosophical basis for moral enquiry. In so doing he has endeavoured to recommit the present generation of moral philosophers to the Thomist tradition. I believe the essential conclusion to be taken from Macintyre's thesis is the failure of our modern liberal democracies, which sprang from the Reformation and the Enlightenment, to provide a sufficiently deep experience of fellowship beyond the individual, which has to be the final meaningful context for human endeavour and the moral order.

Related to this consideration is the notion of *value*, where we are also confronted by a similar breakdown of meaning in our modern liberal mentality. A generation earlier, Max Scheler had turned to a phenomenological approach to try to revitalise the notion of *value* from the relativism into which it had fallen. His protagonist was Kant, the philosopher of Protestantism, which had become the spiritual ideology of the modern secular world. Scheler related moral choice to an order of values deeply ingrained in the spiritual dynamism of the person orientated in its actions and within a community of other persons. This order of values, known as the *ordo amoris*, was hierarchical from the basic utilitarian values and the good of order, to life and health, to aesthetic and spiritual values, and with the final order that of the absolute or the realm where the human meets the divine. The order of the values shared by a community defines its fundamental ethos. This value-intending structure is inherent in the intentionality of the human person, defining the nature of its communities and transcending all its cultural manifestations.

3. PERSON AND THE COMMON GOOD

This now leads us to the key concepts of the Thomist moral and social philosophy: the concepts of *person and the common good*. In this tradition, while society needs to be at the service of person and its highest good (*summum bonum*), there is a clear articulation of a reciprocal subordination and a mutual implication of the dignity of the *person* and the demands of the *common good*. As with the Thomist thesis of human knowing as a profound spiritual act of identity of the knower with the known, so

also the fundamental thesis of its social doctrine is based on the nature of the person as spirit, to be able to achieve an identity in communion with other persons, yet remain integral in personhood. As with the triune God, the human person is essentially orientated to communion with other persons. Communion is integral to personhood, and the invitation to be able to share in the community of the triune God is the defining dignity and final destiny of the human person. All else in its life in society is subordinate to this, and all the other forms of community only have value in as much as they help to serve this end.

However, throughout our personal and collective histories we have always had to continually remind ourselves of this astounding tenet of our Christian faith. While we need to strive for the continual emergence of vital new values in our personal and collective lives just to maintain the social orders in which we find ourselves, these new values are soon seen to be in reality old values, which in the course of time had been lost in some form of rationalisation, and have to be discovered and re-discovered ever so often. The final values needed to maintain a social order of justice and peace are fundamentally religious in character, since they are attached to the dignity and destiny of the person, and its innate need for a profound experience of community, that goes beyond any present social expression. These values, however, always remain ineffable and mysterious, therefore, tenuous and so easily lost. Preserving them demands a continual ultra-human commitment and always in a suffering context, in order to nurture what always seems so fragile.

4. COMPASSION AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This consideration immediately relates to the notions of *compassion* and *Christian Education*. *Compassion*, as I understand the etymology of the word, means to "suffer with", which for the Christian goes to the essential heart of his/her faith in identity with the Crucified Christ. Christianity relates suffering as the essential condition of the human person in community – an awful reality, which we find so difficult to accept in our own lives, yet readily acknowledge in the lives of those who after many years of suffering have acquired that wisdom only to be found in identity with the Crucified as the defining meaning of their lives.

5. THE PRESENT SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Before we delve into these considerations and relate them to what we have already reflected upon, we will have to develop what really must be the context of our discussions here today: our present South African situation, and how it confronts us as Christians, especially those involved in the practice of Christian education.

The present South African context in which Christianity finds itself is but one in an already long series of other significant historical thresholds for it, and in which it has again to retrieve its essential nature as a revealed religion in relation to society generally. A fundamental understanding of this question involves psychological and theological considerations of how the Christian should conceive of his/her essential identity in relation to any existing social order. We really need to take a depth psychological perspective, if we are to understand the significance of the ethical and religious dimensions of the type of historical-cultural process in which we currently find ourselves.

I do hope we have all now moved from the appeal to a false Christian classicism as somehow superior and normative in a conjunction of culture, religion and civilisation, as opposed to primitiveness in this contact between peoples. It was used to justify the imperialist expansion of Europe into Africa during the 19th century. This attitude should now be submerged by the new awareness of the complex historical process of the interaction between cultures, and of mutual acculturation. The question for the Christian educator now becomes: "What is the significance of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth for my own life and endeavours in this situation?"

Perhaps, the current historical imperative is to accommodate the *liberation* of peoples within the globalising context of Western secular humanism. This is a major task for any contemporary Christian educational endeavour, to seek genuine cultural alternatives to its secularising dominance. The first essential role of Christian Education would then be to mediate the significance of the life and death of Jesus Christ in the lives of people for the preserving of their personal and cultural integrities in these historical processes. At the personal level, this implies ensuring that people remain dramatic subjects of their own lives, their values refined and strengthened, their own intelligence and reason

self-appropriated and affirmed, and their final, deliberate choices informed by their faith. However, if this injunction is properly understood, then it really becomes an all-embracing objective and final term for Christian education.

6. COMPASSION AND DEATH

What role does *compassion* then play in this Christian education endeavour? Again we need to relate things at the level where they acquire their essential meanings – the challenge we set ourselves at the beginning of this paper.

Compassion has to be connected to suffering, and especially to the role death plays in our personal and collective lives. Death is the final frightening reality we have to confront so that it plays an extraordinary symbolic role in our everyday lives.

The profoundest insights of the philosophical tradition, from Plato through to Freud, locate the origin of all inhibition to human freedom in society to the problematic role death plays in the psyche of the individual person. Fundamental to the human condition is a radical denial of death in the need to invest a personal existence in an identity greater than itself, and then to rationalise that affiliation. Group immortality ideologies of race, class, tribe, nation, or religion, especially in times of social crisis, carry those rationalisations with an investment that is often absolute.

It would be useful here to understand how the powerful symbols of Christian identity help us confront this reality and thereby to define our role as social actor. These symbols have also been fundamental in the development of the democratic ideal. They are archetypal in the psyche of the person, but have become explicit for the Christian through the historical exemplar of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. They mediate the identity and action of the Christian in the world.

In the symbol of the virgin birth and spiritual fatherhood, early Christianity replaced both biological and social fatherhood with a spiritual fatherhood into a timeless and stateless spiritual succession. Thereby, Christianity endeavoured to save the person from being submerged into the socialised cultural self, which had been created in order to escape the fate of individual mortality. It therefore became a continuing life-creating revolutionary movement of a son/

daughter type against a cultural type carrying the burden of the immortality of the father. At the same time, it offered the dispossessed equal participation in a spiritual re-birth of the true self of the person.

The Christian is therefore called upon to live the authentic life of a person in a radical acceptance of death in identification with the symbol of the Crucified. It is also the symbol of self-sacrificing Love through which the Christian is called upon to create a new cultural reality for the succeeding generation, in accepting the death of his/her cultural type which always involves some form of the rationalisation of the denial of death. In the symbol of the Crucified there is death, but that death is in dialectical tension to new life. However, the new life comes from God, neither from the individual nor its social environment. Men and women cannot raise themselves to new life; a power that belongs only to God. Death is the final frightening reality that consummates our present lives. Living in the tension of life and death in the symbol of the Crucified, the Christian helps to re-create human meanings and values within the culture in a self-effacing spiritual succession of the Risen Christ. Therefore, the Christian is called upon to live a universal compassion in a radical identification with the symbol of the Crucified.

For the Christian, his/her religious identity is always distinguishable from all its cultural manifestations, including the cultural form of the Christianity into which he/she is born. The Christian's religion is inherently a missionary religion, since it operates through this ordinary historical interaction between cultures in a reciprocal and critical process, in which it itself is transformed through its ministry of reconciliation. In remaining authentic to its missionary nature, its message becomes reinterpreted and it is vitally renewed. The truth of Christianity as a revealed religion can only be preserved in its unlimited cultural re-expression and its progressive disclosure of God as Love, revitalising the culture which it informs. In this way, it enables that culture to relativise itself, through contact with other cultures, and by inspiring in it a readiness to transcend its limitations.

This is the soul of Christian education. However, as a practical or moral endeavour, Christian education should ensure that these historical-cultural processes play themselves out within the context of the fully autonomous liberties and deliberate choices of the persons involved. In fact, this can only be possible within a value-ethos, in which these persons can be dramatic subjects of their own lives in self-possession of their personal and cultural integrities, while partaking in a communicative interaction with other persons. This process is essentially dynamic, open-ended and dialogical in character, directed by the logic of love, which is the guiding vision: it is not prescriptive, but a lamp of knowledge in a sensitive apprehension and respect for the other; it does not try to abolish the pluralism into a single cultural or religious identity; it cherishes and cultivates what is of value in the other, thus preserving both the pluralism and the freedom in this higher unity; it is a vision incorporating the possibilities of these values and the correlative life-informing community, and is creative of their existence; in the course of its own movement it effects the continuous emergence of these values in the other.

Of course, for the Christian, if the value-ethos of the education community is love, understood in this non-prescriptive, transformative, reconciling, creative and prophetic sense, then his/her endeavour is mediated through the symbols of Christian self-identity, in sharing in the unity of creation restored in the Incarnation of the Word, and in collaboration with the divine Spirit in the creating, healing and growing of the children of God at that precise historical moment.

CONCLUSION

Our conclusion, therefore, is simple – the challenge for Christian education is no less than a historical encounter with Christian orthodoxy's triune God, who is Love, which must always be the goal of a truly Christian Education.

We can take these considerations further to actually formulating the appropriate method for an educational practice. Firstly, we require an analogical understanding of the nature of the dialogue among cultures (again another Thomistic concept). The idea of analogy with respect to culture, as opposed to simplistic, univocal conceptions, expresses the complex realisation that cultures are diverse precisely in the values that unite them. A proper analogical understanding of culture is fundamental to the self-consciousness of a pluralistic society in the

recognition that differences are essential ingredients in the expression of its unity.

An analogical understanding places immediate emphasis on the person as a subject of the educative experience in a process of self-discovery, self-affirmation and self-appropriation. The fundamental challenge for the educational activity is a method for the realisation by the person itself as a subject of culture in a truly analogical experience. This implies that persons are invited to self-discovery as cultural beings in coming to terms with their cultural particularity in relation to other cultures in which there is recognition of an essential similarity in the diversity.

Interculturation is the experience of moving imaginatively into other cultures and faiths, then returning to one's own culture and faith with renewed insight and creativity, in order to share common higher order universal values as a basis for mutual enrichment. It is the process in which the persons themselves become multicultural, so that the term applies to a single cultural experience of a community, and not to a community of different cultures. Inculturation is then simultaneously the affirmation of the culture of the erstwhile dis-empowered in their acquisition of a range of cultural competencies through interculturation.

Given this analogical understanding of culture and the very real process of in- and interculturation, the approach to any education curriculum is then a communicative interaction. It becomes a person-centred, hermeneutical and dialogical exercise carried out by the learning facilitator, in which persons coming from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds are invited to appropriate their histories and cultural and religious backgrounds within the witness-consciousness of the others. The role of witness-consciousness exercised by the group ensures that these new appropriations have

meaning and value affirmed by the group as a whole. This exercise is also diagnostic of distorting historical and social biases, and, through the dialogue, the new affirmations become therapeutic of these same distortions and biases. Therefore, within this analogical experience of culture, extra attention needs to be given to restoring persons from historically oppressed groups as subjects of their own history and culture.

Understanding education as a moral practice within this context requires distinguishing the religious and moral elements within the cultural, political and economic realms at the level of meeting basic social values. In the *ordo amoris*, the communication of higher order religious and moral values are essential, through a complex interaction with the political and economic order, to resolve the problems of distributive justice. These values keep in perspective an authenticity in the cultural transformation, preserving integrity in the process, through addressing the profound mysteries informing the spontaneous need of people to form community. This involves an explicit recognition and freeing of the human values fundamental to all cultures and religions to give practical expression to the civic friendship of a truly democratic order in an embrace of its pluralism within its unity.

This also implies recognition and development of the authentic multiculturalism that emerges as the present cultural forms undergo complex transformations in the process. In turn, this provides the basis for a just society, in which the distribution of persons in the social structure meets the needs of all its communities in the equal deployment of the competencies of language, knowledge, science, skills and technical expertise for the sake of the common good, and the elimination of racial and religious oppression and exploitation.

Economics and Redistribution – the Role of Business: Can a Corporation be a Citizen?

Kenneth Goodpaster

INTRODUCTION – USEFUL QUESTIONS

We all are aware of the artistry of Socrates as he used questions to foster learning – and of course we all know that it got him into difficulties with the authorities in Athens. About 2500 years later, American movie producer Sam Goldwyn is reputed to have said: "For your information, let me ask you a question!"[1] Now Goldwyn may have misspoken – he was certainly no Socrates — but it does seem to be true that certain questions are useful, so much so that the asking of them invites a new level of understanding for questioner and respondent alike. I believe that for us "Can a corporation be a citizen?" is such a question.

Our paradigm for a "citizen" is a natural human person. Thus the idea of "a new citizenship" – the theme for this seminar – naturally suggests a new social contract in which the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are extended to persons who have hitherto been disenfranchised or treated as less than full citizens (on the basis of race or gender, for example).

But the idea of "new citizenship" might also have an *institutional* interpretation. It might signify new ways of regarding the basic *institutions* of a society:

- the family
- non-profit organisations such as schools, churches, hospitals, etc.
- private sector business organisations, and even
- the public sector institutions of government at all levels.

It is this latter sense of "new citizenship", particularly as it applies to private sector business organisations, that I propose to examine. As Goldwyn might say, for your information, let me ask you this question: "Can a corporation, a *company*, be a *citizen* – or take on a 'new citizenship' in a society?" I believe the answer to the question is "Yes", particularly in an environment (such as South Africa) in which citizenship in its more conventional sense has taken on new meaning and significance. The importance of business organisations, especially in developing economies, can hardly be overstated – to employment, to infrastructure, to public revenues, to the attraction and growth of new talent. I further believe that the *institutionalisation* of corporate citizenship calls for substantial commitments by business leaders,[2] so after attempting to clarify the idea of corporate citizenship, I will expand on the practical implications of such an idea.

1. WHAT IS A CITIZEN?

Consulting a dictionary for the meaning of the word "citizen" reveals an interesting common thread. Its central referent is "a person owing allegiance to a nation or state and entitled to its protection".[3] Essentially, citizenship is a reciprocal relationship between a natural or juristic person and that person's nation or community, a relationship with normative expectations. The reciprocity calls for loyalty or allegiance on the part of the person – and for protection and respect on the part of the community.

Taken in a strictly legal sense, citizenship amounts to reciprocal rights and duties that may be enforced in a court of law. But if we look at the idea of "citizenship" not so much legally as morally, the essential reciprocity has

to do with acknowledging the dignity of the citizen in the community and the responsibility of the citizen for the common good.
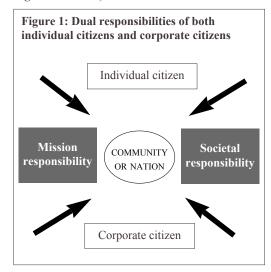
2. RECIPROCITY AND DUALITY

The citizen owes something to the nation or community – loyalty, support, avoidance of destructive behaviour, compliance with legitimate authority. At the same time, the nation or community owes something to the citizen – due process of law and equal protection from domestic and foreign threats. So a characteristic of citizenship is a basic reciprocity of responsibility between citizen and community or nation. Each has obligations to the other.

Another characteristic of citizenship is that the responsibility of the citizen to the community or nation has a certain duality to it. A citizen contributes to the community or nation in a functional way by participating in various institutional arrangements such as the family, the education of children, and private or public sector work. This represents the first aspect of a citizen's dual responsibility. Basically, the citizen lives out his or her calling and serves the community or nation in the process of doing so.

But there is a second aspect of the citizen's dual responsibility. A citizen contributes to the community or nation as a whole by respecting national offices, contributing a fair share of taxes, civic involvement and coming to the community's or the nation's defence in the event of external aggression.[4] If we imagine our field of moral responsibility by analogy with our field of vision, we focus on the obligations at the centre of the field, but we must also attend to the boundaries of the field with our peripheral vision. From the point of view of the citizen, the duality is that a community or nation is served indirectly through service to subordinate institutions (parts) at more local levels, but the community or nation also needs to be served as a whole – with a measure of loyalty and devotion. We can call the first aspect the "mission responsibility" of the citizen, and the second aspect the "societal responsibility" of the citizen.[5]

We are now in a position to discern the two characteristics of citizenship – reciprocity and duality – as they apply to corporate citizenship as well. For corporations, the same reciprocity of obligation obtains in relation to the community or the nation, and even more importantly,

the same duality obtains between functional mission responsibility and societal responsibility to the community or nation as a whole. (*See Figure 1, below.*)

Figure 1: Dual responsibilities of both individual citizens and corporate citizens

3. WHAT IS CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP?[6]

I mentioned earlier that citizenship is a relationship between "a natural or juristic person" and a community or nation. It is the concept of a "juristic person" that provides a platform for the idea of corporate or institutional citizenship.[7]

In its most robust moral sense, a citizen is a member of a community or a nation who, while contributing functionally by fulfilling a role or a mission, nevertheless accepts responsibility for the whole as well – beyond his or her functional role. Can (and should) an organisation be a citizen in this sense? Yes, very much so. Moreover and reciprocally, like an individual citizen, an organisation can be valued by the community or nation not only functionally, but also as having a certain worth in itself.[8] As sociologist Philip Selznick wrote over 40 years ago in his classic book, *Leadership in Administration* (1957):

> "From the standpoint of social systems rather than persons, organisations become infused with value as they come to symbolise the community's aspirations, its sense of identity. Some organisations perform this function more readily and fully than others. An organisation that does take on this symbolic meaning has some claim on the community to avoid liquidation or transformation on purely technical or economic grounds."

The impact and (so potentially) the value of businesses on society can extend beyond the functional roles as providers of employment and sources of tax revenue. They can become models of civic involvement and catalysts for individual citizens (e.g., management and employees) to fulfill their civic responsibilities. Through corporate foundations, civic problem identification and problem solving can be brought to the attention of both public sector and private sector institutions. An example of this modelling activity in the United States (US) is the Target Corporation, formerly the Dayton Hudson Corporation, with its track record of extraordinary corporate leadership and community involvement in both the arts and social services. This kind of corporate activity, by both multinationals and local companies, can be especially important in newly developing democracies like South Africa.

Management guru Peter Drucker, in a 1994 *Atlantic Monthly* article entitled "The Age of Social Transformation", argued that at the end of the 20th century, we had passed through the agricultural and industrial ages and had entered the information age, the age of knowledge workers and knowledge organisations. In this new age of specialisation, Drucker said, companies are inevitably concerned with their own purposes and missions, claiming power over nothing else in a society with clear divisions of labour. But then he asked "who, then, is concerned with the common good?". His answer was interesting:

> "We have to think through how to balance two apparently contradictory requirements. Organisations must competently perform the one social function for the sake of which they exist – the school to teach, the hospital to cure the sick, and the business to produce goods, services, or the capital to provide for the risks of the future. They can do so only if they single-mindedly concentrate on their specialised mission. But there is also society's need for these organisations to take social responsibility – to work on the problems and challenges of the community. Together these organisations <u>are</u> the community. The emergence of a strong, independent, capable social sector – neither public nor private sector – is thus a central need of the society of organisations. *But by itself it is not enough – the organisations of*

> *both the public and the private sector must share the work.*"[9] [Emphasis mine.]

In other words, even when individuals and organisations are clear about their roles and missions as citizens, they cannot remain single-minded about those responsibilities, for there remain social needs that the division of labour leaves unmet. Families and communities cannot flourish when individuals and organisations focus effort narrowly on their specific missions. A community or nation needs some assets that are greater than the sum of its citizens' individual assets, such as a culture of civility, health, and environmental protection.

This perspective, as articulated by Drucker, echoes the duality in what I am calling corporate citizenship. For Drucker insists that there are two requirements that must guide private sector organisations, not just one. First, companies must perform their "specialised missions" with intensity, mobilising capital to produce goods and to provide services in the new knowledge economy. But this requirement must be balanced with another critical requirement, the need to share the responsibility of the "social sector," the responsibility for the common good. Despite the challenge of duality, the corporation, like any other citizen, must perform its specific functional role while at the very same time sharing responsibility for the community or the nation as a whole. The cultivation of the mindset of a citizen is not the cultivation of a single-purpose mindset, and is for that reason more challenging.

The duality of corporate citizenship is echoed again by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical on market economies in the wake of the fall of communism in the Soviet Union. One of his principal messages was that corporations must avoid single-minded fixation on goals and purposes that can blind them to their broader social responsibilities. To quote *Centesimus Annus* (1991):

> "The purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as a *community of persons* who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society. Profit is a regulator of the life of a business, but it is not the only one; *other human and moral factors* must also be considered which, in the long term, are at least

equally important for the life of a business."[10]

John Paul II's observations, like Drucker's, suggest that if we are to avoid the social risks associated with a highly-specialised, knowledge-based society, organisations need to achieve societal awareness, a holistic concern with the common good that goes beyond the narrower purposes and strategies of economic competition.

4. CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP: FROM IDEA TO ACTION

At this point, a business leader might step back from these observations with mild impatience. "Yes, I understand conceptually the idea of corporate citizenship being described here, but this does not tell me what such an idea might look like in practice, particularly if I want to make a difference in my country."

In the remainder of this paper, I will sketch some practical ways for leaders to "institutionalise" the idea of corporate citizenship, with its built-in dual responsibilities. And I shall identify some key areas in which we might expect to find policies and practices distinctive of true corporate citizens, such as workplace safety, equal opportunity, community involvement, and environmental protection.

Often the mindset that I am attributing to the corporate "citizen" has been elusive or hard to find – not necessarily because of selfishness or greed on the part of business executives, nor because of some deep flaw in market economies. The absence of corporate citizenship (when it is absent), I believe, comes from a belief that such citizenship is ultimately unnecessary. Many prefer to believe that there are more reliable forces in the world of business than invoking corporate citizenship as a moral imperative. There are surrogates, as it were, for a citizenship mindset in guiding decision making.

Adam Smith and his modern-day disciples have found one such a surrogate in the "invisible hand" of the free market system. Corporate citizenship is unnecessary when corporate economic competition keeps companies honest. Others have found surrogates in the various "visible hands" of the government – whether in its executive, legislative, or judicial branches. What these perennial viewpoints have in common is reliance upon external forces, economic

and political, instead of principled decision making from within corporations. They insist that corporations are not up to accepting a place as responsible citizens in the community; they are at best second-class citizens. The market and the law provide the needed discipline.

In my opinion, it is a serious mistake to believe that surrogates such as the market and the law are sufficient. Market externalities are widespread and legal requirements are often too late, even when they do not serve special interests. Corporations need to claim their citizenship and communities and nations need to call them to this responsibility.

What, we must now ask, can a company do to *institutionalise* a citizenship mindset? There are seven key steps that business leaders must take in order to implement corporate citizenship.[11]

- *Articulate a corporate citizenship philosophy*, including basic principles of conduct, and share it with employees, suppliers, customers, and the wider community. This step establishes the "talk" with which the "walk" can then be compared. What is the corporate mission – and what responsibilities as a corporate citizen do we have that extend beyond our mission? Perhaps no company in the US exhibits this step more thoroughly than medical device manufacturer Medtronic, Inc. The "Medtronic Mission" to restore patients to a fuller life is encultured deeply in the organisation.

- *Assign executive responsibility* for transforming these basic principles into action. This step takes general "talk" and translates it into specific operational "talk." Who in the company is charged with stewardship over the company's citizenship practices? Beware if the answer is nobody or everybody. General Motors is one corporation among many that has institutionalised this kind of stewardship.

- *Educate managers and employees* about the meaning of such principles. This step, especially in medium to large organisations, helps ensure that those who work for the company understand, through training, how to "walk" the "talk" in circumstances related to their own work responsibilities. What is their training on appropriate behaviour among co-workers, workplace safety, questionable gifts and payments, environmental protection? A growing number of global companies make this kind of education a central part of their

employee development programmes. In addition to Medtronic, Cargill, H.B. Fuller, IBM, General Dynamics, 3M, and General Electric are just a few of the companies with which I have had direct experience in this regard.

- *Audit operations at home and abroad with regularity* and with attention to conflicts between the corporate principles and other organisational incentives that might undermine it. This step helps to identify and remove unintended hypocrisies – practices that are leading to gaps between the "walk" and the "talk" due to unnoticed pressures from inside or outside the organisation. Does the company leadership conduct "hypocrisy exercises" in connection with topics such as hiring and promotions, financial reporting, sales commissions and agents' fees? One of the first US companies to develop an ethical audit system was Dow Corning Corporation in the late 1970s.[12] Many others, such as Medtronic mentioned above, have followed suit – sometimes using employee surveys as a preliminary tool.

- *Report on difficult cases to the corporate leadership*. The results of the audits need to be brought to the attention of those in the company who are in a position to do something about any discovered conflicts. Do senior management and the board of directors maintain awareness of the company's citizenship responsibilities as clearly as they maintain awareness of its fiduciary responsibilities to stockholders? It is not uncommon for companies to have "ethics committees" of the board, or to assign such a role to existing audit committees.

- *Learn and continuously improve* upon corporate policies and practices. This step helps to ensure that a corporate citizen develops a healthy self-awareness from the earlier steps and the humility to change when change is called for. Do changes, and particularly the *reasons* for the changes, get communicated when citizenship problems are addressed?

- Last, but not least, *provide a leadership model of citizenship*. The top company leader, president or CEO, must himself or herself become a model to the community and to company employees of civic engagement. Company leaders must participate in (even champion) civic initiatives to enrich the community and to solve social problems.

They must serve on not-for-profit boards and share their executive expertise with the less advantaged. Moreover, these leaders must, through their example and their explicit permission, empower managers and lower level employees to play similar citizenship roles (e.g., through released time and/or matching donation programmes). Again, Medtronic's recent CEO, William George, serves as an example, as do numerous other corporate leaders who encourage employee civic involvement.

These seven steps generate an organisational analogue of individual citizenship responsibility: a feedback loop of ethical awareness. Many global companies have embraced the Caux Round Table Principles of Business Conduct as a starting point or a checking point in their efforts to articulate principles of citizenship. The Caux Principles are the product of cross-cultural dialogue among corporate leaders from around the world and are available in 12 different languages (www.cauxroundtable.org).

CONCLUSION

Anthony DeMello, S.J. was a Jesuit priest-psychologist who was born in India and was raised as a Buddhist before becoming a Catholic in his early adulthood. For this reason, his work exhibited a pleasing blend of Eastern and Western values. DeMello tells a charming story about an eager young disciple who went to his master and said, "Could you give me a word of wisdom? Could you tell me something that would guide me through my days?" Since it was the master's day of silence, he picked up a pad and wrote on it. He wrote, "Awareness." When the disciple saw it, he said, "This is too brief. Can you expand on it a bit?" So the master took back the pad and wrote, "Awareness, awareness, awareness." The disciple said, "Yes, but what does it mean?" The master took back the pad and wrote, "Awareness, awareness, awareness means — awareness."[13]

DeMello's story offers us a fitting way to end our own story about corporate citizenship. I asked at the outset, "Can a corporation be a citizen?" hoping that it would be a useful question. We have seen that the idea of citizenship includes reciprocal awareness between citizen and community. And we have noticed an important duality called for in the mindset of the citizen: awareness of one's station or mis-

sion and its duties, and awareness of one's broader societal obligations – awareness of the whole that is more than the sum of its parts. *Institutionalising* this awareness for corporate citizens, we have seen, calls for a number of practical steps on the part of business leaders.

It also calls, we should add, for the participation of what Drucker would call the "social sector" (business schools, universities, technikons) in educating future business leaders. The responsibilities of corporate citizenship, like those of individual citizenship, must be learned by the next generation in the relevant learning environments.

Like the disciple in DeMello's story, we might wish for more complex, mechanical answers – surrogates for citizenship. But the moral of the story remains: awareness, awareness, awareness.

US President John F. Kennedy, in his inaugural address to the American people over 40 years ago raised our awareness when he said: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Kennedy was not forgetting or denying the responsibilities of a nation to its citizens, but he was emphasising that they were in fact reciprocal, and that citizens – let us add, *corporate* citizens – must remember their responsibilities as well.

In this spirit, let us hope that corporations in South Africa – multinational and local, large and small, wealthy and struggling – like corporations throughout our global economy, will embrace their full calling as citizens.

ENDNOTES

1) American movie producer. Malapropos but expressive "Goldwynisms" – such as "Include me out" – were widely quoted and attributed to Samuel Goldwyn, often apocryphally.

2) Not only by business leaders, however, since government and the general public must also play a role.

3) cit·i·zen 1. A person owing loyalty to and entitled by birth or naturalisation to the protection of a state or nation; 2. A resident of a city or town, especially one entitled to vote and enjoy other privileges there; 3. A civilian; 4. A native, inhabitant, or denizen of a particular place: "We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community" (Franklin D. Roosevelt).

[Middle English *citisein*, from Anglo-Norman *citesein*, probably alteration of Old French *citeain*, from *cite*, city; see city.] The central meaning shared by these nouns is "a person owing allegiance to a nation or state and entitled to its protection": an American citizen; a British national; a French subject.

Source: *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Third Edition. Copyright © 1996, 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

4) Reciprocally, the nation or community must protect the citizen not just in a *socially functional* way, e.g., in relation to the citizen's employment or utility, but also (a second "pole") in relation to the citizen as a *whole person*, with full rights of participation and equal protection under the law. From the point of view of the nation or community, the citizen must be more than a functional contributor; the citizen must be seen as having intrinsic worth or value.

5) Actually, the duality alluded to here is an oversimplification. In fact, persons belong to an indefinite number of nested and overlapping social units, each of which carries reciprocal obligations. What I am calling "mission responsibility" is really shorthand for living honourably in the mediating institutions between the individual and the most embracing societal institution, the community or nation. So while my focus in this paper is on a *duality* within citizen responsibilities, a full treatment of this subject would include a *plurality* of citizen responsibilities.

6) The newly-formed *Journal of Corporate Citizenship* www.greenleaf-publishing.com is a multidisciplinary publication devoted to reflection on the growth of global business and the global and local impact of business operations. As defined on this new journal's web site: "*Corporate citizenship* is a broad term that is being increasingly used by business, governments and academic researchers to develop an understanding of the changing relationship of business and society, or indeed, business in society."

7) The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (October 11, 1996) says that "(1) There is a common South African citizenship. (2) All citizens are equally entitled to the rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship; and equally subject to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship." It goes on to say that "A provision of the Bill of Rights binds a natural or a juristic person if, and to the extent that, it is applicable, taking into account the nature of the right and the nature of any duty imposed by the right." And the constitution makes clear that "Notwithstanding the repeal of the laws mentioned in Schedule 2 by section 3, any existing company shall continue to exist as a juristic person. The Companies Act shall apply to all existing companies…"

8) See Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957). Selznick goes on to say: "In what is perhaps its most significant meaning, 'to institutionalise' is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand. The prizing of social machinery beyond its technical role is largely a reflection of the unique way in which it fulfills personal and group needs." To the same point, one might argue that just as the participation of employees in an enterprise cannot and should not be reduced merely to their functional roles, ignoring their humanity (and therefore the community of the workforce), so too the participation of companies in a society should not be reduced to a mere functional role without recognising the citizenship involved. Citizenship is about responsibilities to the community, but it is also about respect from the community.

9) Peter Drucker, The Age of Social Transformation, *The Atlantic Monthly* (November 1994), p. 80.

10) *Centesimus Annus* (1991), paragraph 35.

11) These steps are based loosely on the US Federal Sentencing Guidelines promulgated in November 1991. Informally, they represent a schema for identifying commitment on an institutional level about values that individuals in a company may or may not live up to.

12) Dow Corning's entanglement with breast implant litigation in the US during the past decade, notwithstanding. In fact, the business unit involved may not have been audited in the same way as other units were audited.

13) Anthony DeMello, S.J., *Awareness,* (NY: Doubleday, 1990), p. 56.

The Fight Against Poverty: Social Security, Job Creation and Responsibility

Anthony Asher

ABSTRACT

Poverty is a reality for millions of people in South Africa. These notes provide something of an overview of its nature and causes, and consider how it might be addressed. Consideration is also given to our joint responsibility to act.

INTRODUCTION

I am currently serving on a committee of inquiry into a comprehensive social security system for South Africa. This set of notes was written to provide me with a coherent framework to address the numerous questions at stake, and to give some sense of priority and responsibility. It does not necessarily represent the views of other members of the committee. It is offered here as it argues the need for publicly held moral values as part of the fight against poverty.

1. THE REALITY OF POVERTY

1.1 Poverty is an objective reality

- People have insufficient income to feed themselves. Some 20% of people report going hungry from time to time and a similar percentage of children display physical symptoms of malnutrition.
- They have limited access to health care. They are disabled and die of preventable diseases – of which AIDS is a crisis.
- Housing is inadequate:
    - It does not offer protection against the elements.
    - There is limited access to water for drinking or washing.
    - Sewerage and rubbish removal is inadequate.

1.2 Poverty is subjectively degrading

- People live in degrading circumstances.
    - Housing and infrastructure is degraded.
    - Personal hygiene is difficult.
    - Cheap and worn clothing may be humiliating.
- Interactions with the rich(er) and with bureaucrats are degrading.
- Their cultural experiences can be stultified.

1.3 The accumulation of physical and social capital to escape poverty is difficult

- Few jobs are available. There are many causes:
    - Apartheid education has left many people inappropriately skilled.
    - Apartheid limits on urbanisation prevented earlier generations from moving to industrial sector jobs.
    - Overpopulation has rendered subsistence farming impossible.
    - The exhaustion of the gold mines has cost jobs.
    - Technological change has made many unskilled jobs redundant.
    - A reduction in barriers to international trade has made previously protected South African industries uncompetitive.
    - South African entrepreneurial energy has focused on growth internationally rather than locally.
    - Changes in the international business culture have encouraged greater inequality, and over-emphasised financial issues at the expense of people.
    - The bitterness of labour relations (partly as a result of the political pressures that pre-

viously had no other outlet) means that many managers aim to reduce labour as an end in itself.
– There are increasing numbers of women in the workforce.

- Physical capital is exposed to fire, flood, accident and crime particularly. Rampant crime is likely to destroy what assets are accumulated. This also has a number of causes:
– There is limited respect for the rule of law both as a relic of apartheid and to the extent that it has been largely un-enforced.
– The justice system (this includes the police, the courts and the chiefs) is under-staffed and ineffective.
– People frequently observe unjustifiable inequalities in wealth.
– Young men are inadequately socialised as they have been brought up without role models or discipline – in their families, schools or at work.

- Income is at risk of job losses and drought. People therefore try and spread their sources of income. This means that they do not develop real expertise in any area, and incomes remain low.

- Many children are brought up without adequate adult care and education is therefore compromised.

- Even well-intentioned attempts by the non-poor to intervene can create greater obstacles:
– Means tested government grants and supports create "poverty traps", which penalise formal job efforts.
– Aid can undermine production – food aid and subsidies being particularly harmful.
– Support for the informal sector and marginally viable production (such as vegetables and crafts) means that effort is directed into risky jobs that will never pay much.
– Support for rural living likewise discourages urbanisation and formal employment.

1.4 Poverty can lead to a cycle of despair and self-destructive behaviour
- Alcohol abuse is rampant – leading probably to over 25 000 deaths annually through murder and road accidents, many more assaults, and physical abuse of wives and children.
- Family breakdown leads to the inadequate care and socialisation of children (particularly boys).
- Education and other "investment" for the

future are not pursued in a sustained manner. Attendance is often sporadic, while much is of limited value.

- Spare resources are invested or spent inappropriately (further defeating the accumulation of capital).
– Fly-by-night and poorly designed and managed education.
– Low interest deposit accounts with high charges, and insurance saving schemes with very high lapse rates.
– Borrowing for consumption at excessive interest rates.
– Wasteful consumption – flashy clothes, cars, etc.
– Excessively expensive funerals and weddings.
– Multiple households (urban and rural) are maintained.

- Sexual promiscuity leads to teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS, which lead on to further poverty.

1.5 Poverty undermines ambition and vision
- People expect that they will always be poor.
- They wait for others to help and to lead them.
- They make little effort to escape poverty.

1.6 Poverty affects both sexes
- Women suffer. They:
– have lower incomes from employment
– are more likely to be left to look after children
– inevitably carry a higher proportion of domestic work
– are more likely to be victims of physical abuse.

- Men can fare worse. They are more likely to:
– be excluded from the family (living alone)
– be malnourished (Carnegie figures from the mid-1980s found 20% of rural men to be malnourished as against almost no women.)
– be mentally disabled – twice as likely – often because of substance abuse
– be hospitalised or murdered
– be in jail (20 times more likely)
– die early (their mortality rates are two to three times higher than women's).

2. INITIATING CHANGE
2.1 Poverty can be created and perpetuated by dysfunctional institutions

- Laws (in South Africa both formal and customary) can create additional burdens for the poor in the form of taxes, red tape and outright harassment.
- Private contracts can be unfair in that they take advantage of the lack of knowledge, gullibility or desperate conditions of the poor.
    – The laws and organisational structure of government, markets and firms can be unfamiliar and inaccessible to the poor, who are thereby excluded from participation.
    – Pay scales in excess of market rates can undermine otherwise viable enterprises. This has many forms:
        – Aid organisations, both domestic and international, attract the ablest and most energetic.
        – Failure to make regional allowances price some firms out of those regional markets (e.g., the closing of bank branches in rural areas).
        – High minimum wages can encourage automation and high "reservation" wages, where people would rather wait for good jobs than accept less well paid ones.

2.2 Destructive behaviour can also be "institutionalised"
- Abusive treatment of the poor by bureaucrats, private firms and employers undermines their self-esteem and excludes them.
- Spending patterns of both rich and poor can be orientated to capital and import intensive goods and services that displace expenditure on local jobs. (This category would include hi-tech defence equipment and other luxuries. The point is that this consumption appears to owe as much to general opinion and marketing hype as to its real benefits.)
- Within poor communities, the self-destructive behaviour listed in 1.4 above, is reinforced by poor role models. (Many boast of their own abuse of alcohol, of promiscuous behaviour and of their violence towards women.)

2.3 The absence of appropriate institutions is another element of poverty
- The poorest communities have no functioning local government to provide infrastructure and services.
- Jobs would be available if there were more firms.

- Existing institutions are not subject to the monitoring of social society: such as ratepayers' associations, consumer or parent bodies.

2.4 Institutions can be changed and developed
- The laws and contracts governing formal organisations can be changed.
- The organisations can be made more accessible by changing the behaviour of their members, which may require education, persuasion or merely encouragement.
- Institutionalised destructive behaviour can be reduced by incentives and appropriate regulation. It can also be influenced by opinion formers – politicians, managers, the media, religious leaders, academics and teachers.

2.5 Institutional change is a social function that requires individuals to initiate
- Change requires the agreement of a significant number of participants in an institution.
- Specific changes have to be discussed and sufficient consensus found. They then need to be energetically pursued if they are to be implemented.
- Someone must start the discussions, and others must energetically pursue agreements and implementation.

2.6 Individual initiatives will depend on peoples' moral beliefs
- Institutions affect the lives of people, and it is wrong to interfere in people's lives. To allow dysfunctional interference to persist is also wrong. To do one thing may be wrong, but it may be better to do it and not a greater wrong. Compromise as such is not immoral.
- Institutional change is creative. We have a moral obligation to ourselves to exercise our creative powers.
- Membership of a community creates a moral obligation to seek the general welfare of the community. When the community is a formal organisation that pays salaries to its members, the obligation is clearly stronger.
- Compassion is a moral obligation. The suffering of poor people ought to lead us into compassionate actions.
- Some people resist change in order to protect their vested interests. Facing them requires courage, which is a moral virtue.
- People behaving maliciously may have to be

restrained or punished. Morality should govern the use of compulsion, and provide mechanisms for forgiveness and reintegration.
- Self-destructive behaviour is the result of moral failure. Prudence and self-control are basic moral virtues.

2.7 Moral responsibilities must be taught and supported
- The value of the moral virtues mentioned above is self-evident to those who have considered them. Like physical and intellectual skills, however, they have to be acquired and practiced.
- Family, school and religious organisations have the most important roles in the early formation of all the virtues. The workplace and the media appear to play roles that are more important in later years. Marches, petitions and other expressions of indignation and solidarity can also be important.
- Institutional change therefore ultimately depends on people's moral beliefs and commitments. Moral beliefs need continuing mutual support and encouragement.

3. WAYS OUT OF POVERTY
This section addresses the problems of section 1, mindful of the methods of section 2.

3.1 Physical deprivation can be addressed by grants and direct services
- Old age assistance, disability and children's grants can provide for those who cannot do so themselves.
- Nutrition programmes can address the question of malnutrition directly.
- Public hospitals and clinics address the question of health directly.
- The provision of minimum water requirements and sewerage and waste removal can address other basic needs.

3.2 The humiliation of poverty can be addressed by the provision of infrastructure and the development of a culture of mutual respect
- Urban housing and infrastructure, where comparisons with the wealthy are more acute, need to permit the development of self-sufficiency and respect.
- Respect for the dignity of others, and courtesy in interactions, needs to be enforced in

the civil service and other places of work and encouraged in all social interactions.
- Public institutions, school, religious organisations and media, need to be conscious of the cultural sensibilities of the poor, and work to enrich them.

3.3 The accumulation of physical and social capital to escape poverty needs to be made easier
- The creation of jobs needs to be a priority:
  – Education needs ongoing reform, in particular the development of numeracy, which will require the importation of maths and science teachers.
  – Urbanisation needs to be encouraged by the development of appropriate infrastructure, and the formalisation of rights in communal areas (which will allow people to migrate to urban areas and then return to rural areas when they retire).
  – Ways of influencing corporate governance in the private sector, and reducing conflict in labour relations, in order to encourage the development of local employment, need to be developed.
  – Recognition needs to be given to different patterns of household earning. The traditional pattern – of husband fulltime in the workforce and wife either at home or in part time employment – is sufficiently widespread to be recognised in employment equity quotas. The newer pattern, of equal participation in the workforce and at home, requires development and encouragement in both settings.
  – Government must adopt labour-intensive methods in all its operations.
  – Labour-intensive methods should be encouraged in the private sector by shifting taxes to capital (company tax rates and perhaps VAT) from labour (RSC and training levies). This could include making domestic wages deductible.
- Crime has to be reduced.
  – Respect for the law requires a much closer match between laws and enforcement. Until the justice system can be expanded and made more efficient, some offences should be decriminalised, and punishments adapted until they are practically enforceable. (Most of those who have dealt in drugs, stolen, beaten their wives and infected others with

HIV need to be given opportunity for contrition, restitution and re-acceptance into society. The argument here is that these groups number together well over a million, so they cannot be accommodated in the 100 000 places available in our jails.)
– The formal and traditional justice systems must be reconciled.
– Unjustifiable inequalities in wealth have to be addressed. This includes the recovery of stolen money (from both blue and white collar crime), the refocus of black empowerment from the creation of millionaires to the creation of jobs, and ongoing redistribution of wealth using a reasonable and progressive tax system.
– The socialisation of young men has to be a particular priority. Migrant labour, which sees the majority of poor boys brought up without a father, needs to be actively discouraged by pro-urbanisation policies. Schools have to consider the particular needs of boys in the design of the curriculum. Service organisations for teenagers and young adults need to be supported and developed. Employment equity also requires that poorly trained and unruly young men be incorporated into the workforce.

- Social and private insurance need to be developed to encourage specialisation in labour markets. This includes cover against death, disability, retirement and physical loss. Benefits for the unemployed need development to allow those made redundant by structural change to redeploy their skills elsewhere. Some non-contributory benefits are essential for the poor and those in the informal sector.
- It is clear that children are best brought up by their natural parents. Family life needs strengthening: the improvement of urban life is critical.
- State means tests should be abolished. The pressing need for formal urban jobs needs clearer recognition in the development agenda.

3.4 The cycle of despair and self-destructive behaviour needs to be addressed directly
- Alcohol abuse can be limited by the appropriate control of its distribution. Restrictions on advertising and education in media and schools are necessary. Closing times need to be introduced and enforced.

- Family breakdown can also be addressed by education and greater enforcement of parental maintenance obligations. The impact of the role of bride price on family formation needs investigation, and consideration given to developing a culturally acceptable method that contributes to the security of children.
- School truancy (by pupils and teachers) needs to be policed.
- Consumer protection regulations need to consider the needs of the poor particularly.
    – Education providers need to be licensed and monitored.
    – Financial instruments sold directly to the public need to be standardised. The United Kingdom approach of CAT (charges, access and terms) standards need to be applied to all products available to the lower income market.
    – Wasteful consumption (including that on funerals) can perhaps be addressed by opinion formers. Of critical importance is a health regime to treat AIDS that does not lead to people wasting their assets in an attempt to find a cure.
    – The keeping of two households will be addressed by the urbanisation strategies suggested above.

3.5 Ambition and vision need encouragement
- Success stories need to be told.
- Government, charitable and development agencies need to work at not creating dependency.
- Schooling should not only encourage active citizenship, but also traditional family values and entrepreneurial aspirations.

4. ADAPTING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Social assistance grants currently cover pensioners, the disabled and children. Other support to the poor applies to health care, housing benefits, subsidies for schooling, transport and local rates, and the recently introduced free minimum water provision. Free water provision would appear to offer the ideal pattern for redistributive grants providing a minimum package. It is targeted by means of its limited size rather than by any means test.

4.1 Some reforms could be effected without a significant increase in tax
- The means test for pensions and existing chil-

dren's grants could be removed and the amounts largely recovered by adjusting the tax bands and tax rebates.

- Public hospitals and clinics already effectively offer an almost free public health service to anyone prepared to queue. Means tests should be abolished and additional costs funded by reducing the tax subsidy on medical aid contributions.

- The charging structure for electricity charges and local taxes could be patterned on the water charges: minimum first tiers free, with rising charges thereafter.

4.2 More support for children will require additional money (costs are annual and are very rough guesses)

- The growing number of AIDS orphans will cause increased costs regardless of the approach taken.
    – More money could be allocated to social welfare and foster grants. If this is set at some R8000 per orphan a year, this will come to R16 billion by 2010, in addition to its administrative costs.
    – Simpler administratively, would be a reduced grant of say R3000 annually to those whose natural mother has died. Total costs would be R6 billion by 2010.

- The cash child support grant for those under six years of age addresses the most acute malnutrition problems.
    – It needs the continuation and extension of nutrition programmes (R1 billion).
    – Stronger systems to extract maintenance from fathers and grandparents are also needed. (R500 million for maintenance officers?)

- Extending the child grant to older ages has to be considered. Grants for their primary caregivers could also be considered. There are a number of issues that make this an unlikely solution.
    – Costs are significant – at over R1 billion a year it is extended.
    – As children get older they get more expensive, but require less care so their caregivers are able to earn more.
    – Young and abandoned single mothers are particularly vulnerable because their own youth and disrupted schooling makes income earning more difficult.
    – Targeting benefits at poorly treated or

abandoned children creates perverse incentives.

4.3 Support given to the disabled has to be rethought

- Many of the disabled are willing and able to work, but are unable to do so because of the lack of jobs. Their problems are similar to those of the unemployed, but they have special needs for access.

- Many others have needs that are not addressed by cash grants.
    – Grants to caregivers and community support networks can be more effective than institutionalisation.
    – Mental health and crime are often related and need to be addressed interdepartmentally.
    – Problems of access are not limited to finding work.

4.4 The needs of the structurally unemployed have to be addressed

- There are three basic alternatives:
    – The first is a basic income grant (BIG) payable to everyone (R50 billion although most could be recovered through adapting VAT and income tax).
    – The second is a limited unemployment grant payable (R10 billion).
    – The third is a massive job creation programme paying low wages and focused on the construction of urban houses and infrastructure (R10 billion plus R20 billion for three years).

- Unemployment benefits suffer from moral hazards, some regard as insuperable. A BIG would avoid this, and in addition would incorporate support to caregivers, but the affordable benefits are small. A job creation programme has the benefit of socialising those who participate, and actually creating useful goods and services. It is probably to be preferred.

4.5 Other urgent priorities relate to the management of government

- Proper systems of feedback are essential to effective governance. They must include means to judge the effectiveness of all programmes and staff. This requires regular internal reports and external performance audits. Money must be re-directed in all

departments for this purpose. The allocation of budgets at national level must be governed by external performance audits as to the effectiveness of programmes.

- Limitations in government's institutional capacity must be recognised. This requires the ruthless pruning of programmes offering marginal benefits, and a thorough simplification of procedures and staffing structures. Of particular importance are the restructuring of the disability grant and its administration and the child foster grant system.

- Customary law needs to be made consistent with the Constitution and formal laws:
  – Rights to farm on communal land need to be formalised in a way that encourages utilisation and improvements. If necessary, some monetary compensation could be paid to facilitate the process.
  – Rights to housing need to be formalised.
  – In the normal course of events, wives must inherit from their husbands.

5. DEVELOPING A CREATIVE VISION

Some vision of a future without poverty is needed to mobilise the resources and to encourage necessary behavioural changes.

5.1 The vision must be positive; job creation alone is inadequate

- Job creation is both necessary and sufficient to eliminate most material need.
- It will not have much power to inspire if it involves digging and filling holes.
- The inspiration will come from challenges to create something worthwhile.

5.2 It must include transformation of the major metropoles

- If jobs are to be created in sufficient numbers, they will be in the cities.
- If families are to live together, they must be where the jobs are.
- To live in cities, they will require houses and infrastructure, and building these will create many of the necessary jobs.

5.3 The transformation must be multifaceted

- The new African Renaissance metros should take local culture and conditions – such as weather, plentiful labour and scantier finances - into account.
- They should be seen as providing restitution for apartheid, and be focused on reversing the consequences of migrant labour by reuniting families.
- They would provide a focus for all levels of government, business and civil society.
- They will also create opportunities to address crime from a new vantage point, and to introduce the community service necessary to reintegrate social misfits.

5.4 The vision must be supported by most leaders

- Government must act. In order to create a real impact, additional amounts should be budgeted from the state's relatively under-utilised borrowing capacity to build houses and infrastructure in the major cities. The proceeds of privatisation (of about R50 billion) would be of the right order if spent over the next five years. Savings on unnecessary armament expenditure could be usefully redirected.
- Business must also act.
  – The first business of business is business. Managers ought to be more actively on the look out for expansion. Boards should insist on being provided with regular reports on the most attractive growth prospects available. New projects will usually be in urban areas and should expand jobs and build infrastructure, which in turn creates new markets.
  – The greatest asset of a business is its people. Human resources and social spending should begin with the housing and urban environment of staff.
  – Firms can collaborate in the renewal of the urban environment with each other and with all levels of government. Chambers of business can play a role here.

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Role of the Church in a Country of Religious Pluralism

Wilfrid Napier

INTRODUCTION

When South Africa emerged relatively unscathed from its historic first democratic election in April 1994, many people were convinced that they had lived through a miracle. As many again ascribed that miracle to sustained prayer and sacrifice rather than political maturity.

The truth is that for more than 11 years a campaign of prayer for Peace and Justice had been the daily practice of thousands of Christians throughout Southern Africa. The months and weeks preceding the election witnessed an intensification of that campaign by ordinary men and women of faith whose life experience had left them with little else to believe in or trust. What they prayed for with yearning was an end to the conflict and violence that for years had disrupted peace and harmony in family as well as community life.

The miracle did not consist solely or even primarily in the amazing respite from violence during the elections, but rather in the incredible spirit of fellowship that pervaded entire groups of voters, as they stood together in queues for long hours on end. Total strangers were seen doing acts of kindness and consideration (*ubuntu*). Given our long and bitter history of racial and social separation and estrangement this *ubuntu* could be ascribed to a change of heart that only God's grace can bring about. Surely, this was the answer to those long years of prayer!

1. POWER OF CONSCIENCE

A central aspect of evangelisation is the education and formation of the moral conscience.

This is achieved by proclaiming moral truth and helping those being evangelised to apply it on a daily basis to real life situations including their personal life and life in community with others.

What happened on election day is an inspiring example of what can and does happen when conscience is freed from the usual personal and societal constraints (in other words "prejudice") and is allowed to direct our lives and interpersonal relations. Then we are capable of extraordinary deeds.

Indeed when conscience is infused with grace it can become an irresistible force for good, enabling us to act not simply out of decency (because it is the right thing to do) but out of charity, i.e. the love that comes from God (because it is what we want to do).

Whenever the word *love* (meaning *caritas*) occurs we have to understand respect and esteem that go beyond our normal moral options. This is because we have to add that quality that stands out in the life, the teaching and the spirit of Jesus. Love (*caritas*) in the life and mission of Jesus was a force that could not be contained, let alone restrained. When that love (*caritas Christi*) is in us it will impel us to go beyond our natural condition.

That, I believe, is in essence what happened on those fateful days surrounding the miracle election. We experienced the meaning of the words – *caritas Christi urget nos*.

Sad to say since then as a nation we have been showing less and less evidence of that miracle, and more and more of the harsh reality of the world today.

Mention of the word *conscience* is a reminder

that the harsh realities of life are none other than the impact of sin and evil on us and our world.

Be that as it may, the fact that in April 1994 nearly the entire adult population of our country was able to release the power of the Spirit over our social and political reality, must serve as a perennial sign of hope – hope that together we can build a happy, harmonious and prosperous future.

2. CONDITIONS FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

If we are to have real prospects of a bright future, then we have to apply the lessons learned in that crucial period in our history 1990–1994. That was when we moved from the liberation struggle, through the negotiations and the miracle election to democracy.

Now as a lively but fledgling democracy we need to apply the following lessons:

- *Lesson One.* When political leaders leave it to the people, the outcome can be outstandingly positive.
- *Lesson Two*. When the people know it is up to them to make it work they will use every resource available including their own personal gifts both material and spiritual.
- *Lesson Three*. While politicians may thrive by aggravating ideological differences, as a rule people thrive when given the space and freedom to come together to do what is necessary for their progress in life.

3. THE ROLE OF RELIGION

The above is just another description of the role of religion in society. It is there to free people from all that inhibits them from being fully themselves. Foremost among these is the influence of people and the "in" ideas that they propagate.

Why? Because these shape and form our values and attitudes which in turn determine our behaviour towards others, whether we regard them as there for us to be used and exploited, or there to be valued and respected; to be part of us or to be ignored, shunned or even rejected from our vision of life.

The situation in Zimbabwe is a case in point. It is a timely warning of what happens when one person or group puts personal or group self-interest above the common good.

4. WHAT RELIGION DOES

By definition religion is there to regulate rela-

tionships, those that ought to exist between us and our Creator, between us and those near and dear to us, between us and others out there. It is therefore difficult to understand how political leaders (almost all of whom were educated in Church-based institutions) could espouse policies and programmes that exclude religion and religious values. Since policies and programmes are by their nature about values, how will these succeed when they exclude religion – the very source of the values needed to make life together possible? And where are these more clearly expressed than in the teachings and practices of religion?

Does anyone really imagine that political ideologies will transform society? Ideologies are not equipped to address the question of evil, least of all sin, which is the conscious and deliberate submission to or embracing of evil!

Equally hard to understand is how we will resolve the relational and societal problems of our nation without addressing the fact that we have a plurality of religions, each with something to contribute. This makes inter-religious dialogue an urgent necessity. No one should underestimate the difficulty of doing this. Ecumenical dialogue is difficult enough, and it occurs among spiritual brothers and sisters who profess faith in the same Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Both these points – ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue – emerged as concerns during the recent extraordinary Consistory. The Consistory agreed that the best way of ensuring fruitful dialogue is for each participant to be fully informed about, fully formed in and fully convinced of the truths of his religion, and consequently fully committed to it. Anything less leads to either indifference (settling for the lowest common denominator) or syncretism (matching and mixing truth and fallacy). Open and honest dialogue is the only way to a better understanding, more meaningful cooperation and peaceful coexistence among the different religions.

5. INTER-RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING

During his presidency Nelson Mandela often called together the religious leaders to discuss with them the major problems facing the country. President Mbeki has done the same and is asking them to help turn around the moral slide that has overtaken us in recent years.

On the one hand this call for help is a very positive sign because it acknowledges that religion has a role to play in all areas of life, even in politics. It is even an admission that ideological indoctrination, vigorous policies of transformation and even an aggressive legislative programme to remove all traces of apartheid's pervasive philosophy and practice, have not been successful.

On the other hand this approach by the presidents reveals a general weakness among African leaders. They have tended to put their faith too easily in political and social systems whose foundations do not seem to go much deeper than political slogans. When these fail to produce results, they resort to legislation. The reasoning seems to be: "We got rid of apartheid/colonialism through legislation, surely we can do the same with injustice, racism, inequality, sexism, etc."

It is sad that they do not just acknowledge the fallacy of side-lining religion and replacing it with a plethora of laws. Inevitably these will prove to be as fruitless as the slogans, for neither addresses the cause of the malaise.

6. BACK TO GOD

Why? Well, as we know from the history of God's people, whenever the people failed to live godly and moral lives; whenever they turned their backs on God and his commandments, they came to grief.

Has our nation not also abandoned God and sought its salvation in, among other things, free enterprise, globalisation, a bill of rights, an ultra-liberal constitution, and a multiplicity of laws to implement these? As in the past there is only one way back: to recognise and acknowledge that only the grace of God can bring the human heart back into communion with Him, its source and purpose. But this requires a faith-filled life with God.

What a pity our leaders did not learn the lesson long ago that evil cannot be legislated out of the human heart. Then they would have accepted that for a nation to survive and prosper after liberation it needs to put the fundamentals firmly in place. And the most basic of these is submission to God and his ways.

By turning to the religious leaders to help at this stage is in a sense asking them to close the stable door which government opened by legislation and that has utterly undermined good morals and ethical behaviour. Meanwhile the whole herd of horses has bolted.

7. THE WAY BACK

The way back is for us all to return to basics. In the first place let us give God His rightful place in our personal, political, economic and social lives, as a nation without God in its life, is a nation without hope or future.

Second, let us respect his commandments, especially that concerning respect for life – his greatest gift to us – from conception to natural death. Are we really serious when we decry the unacceptably high incidence of murder, rape and abuse of women and children and yet continue to keep on the statute book laws that undermine and devalue life!

Let us be honest and admit that these evils are a logical consequence of a philosophy and practice that is extremely anti-life, the nadir of which is the Termination of Pregnancy Act. Is it any wonder that we have lost all sense of respect for life?

Third, we cannot continue to allow corrupt and corrupting films, shows, publications and broadcasts to whittle away the weak remnant of moral norms and standards of behaviour that have survived the ill-considered policy of creating a valueless society. Even in its campaign to stave off the HIV/AIDS pandemic, government is making safe sex the prime, if not the only, value. The consequence is a total disregard for the moral imperative that sexual intercourse is to be reserved for marriage alone.

Fourth, when it is drafting legislation necessary in terms of the constitution, government must have due regard for the welfare of marriage and family life. We cannot have a sound and healthy society without sound and healthy marriages and families.

CONCLUSION

In short, to ensure a healthy and sound nation we must review and, where necessary, restore those moral and ethical norms and standards which were swept away together with all the dross that had accumulated during the apartheid era.

It was a grave mistake to throw out the baby together with the bath water. That is something that our government is doing repeatedly and we, the religious leaders, are letting them get away with murder – literally, at times.