

IDASA IN NATAL

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NATAL is fast becoming an added focus of attention for IDASA as we believe that it is a region where IDASA will be able to contribute in working towards a non-racial democracy. Resources and various political sensitivities has made IDASA cautious in its judgement as to how and when we should proceed to establish a presence in the region.

IDASA recently did a considerable amount of consultation with numerous organisations in Natal. The response was overwhelmingly positive to the extent that it was felt that a forum should be convened at a later date whereby organisations and individuals would be able to put questions and suggestions to IDASA in an open workshop.

On Saturday 23rd April Dr Alex Boraine and Mr Mitchell travelled to Durban to participate in these further consultations. The deliberations began with a breakfast — a meeting comprising local people involved in business, local politics, academic work and the church. The intention of the gathering was to inform various opinion leaders about the role of IDASA and its philosophy, and to give them some news of future events and activities.

From 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. we met with 15-20 organisations at the Central Methodist Church. Once again IDASA's goals and activities were outlined and people were able to gain a clearer understanding about IDASA and its future role. Most of the discussion centred around the political issues pertinent to Natal.

General discussion followed and it was noted that several organisations present already had official positions on IDASA. Their input was listened to with a keen ear by the IDASA officials present. It was this crucial conversation during the plenary session which indicated that the majority of those present were enthusiastic about the possibility of IDASA operating in Natal. It is now up to IDASA to make a thorough assessment of the consultations and then to decide upon strategy, financing and staffing prior to any definite commitments.



Dr Beyers Naude in discussion.

BEYERS NAUDE HONOURED BY IDASA

TUESDAY 29 March marked a very special evening for Dr Beyers Naude and IDASA in Cape Town. Dr Naude is the Chairman of IDASA's Board of Trustees (and has recently been awarded with an honorary doctorate by the University of the Western Cape). The occasion was an evening of tribute paid to Dr and Mrs Naude for their unique and enormous contribution to the people of our country and, indeed, to the country itself. It was organised by IDASA in association with the director of the Cape Town Film Festival, Mr James Polley.

The high point of the evening was the South African premier screening of the documentary film made about the life and witness of Beyers and Ilse Naude entitled *The Cry of Reason — Beyers Naude. An Afrikaner Speaks Out*. Recently completed, this powerful and deeply moving film was made by Robert Bilheimer of the USA in co-operation with South African film maker, Kevin Harris of Johannesburg. Mr Harris was present for the premier and briefly introduced the film to the 250 assembled guests.

Speeches of tribute were made by the two directors of IDASA, Drs F van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Boraine. Both speakers emphasised the great influence Dr Naude's life had on them (and countless others both here and abroad), especially at critical points in their own lives and careers. Needless to say, similar

sentiments were expressed by various South Africans interviewed in the film. There is no doubt that God has blessed and used the work and witness of this man amongst tens of thousands of South Africans of all races. In short, the value of his integrity, humility, selfless service and personal courage is inestimable. And special mention was made of the unqualified support given him over all the years by his equally courageous wife, Ilse. Their life has been a life *together*, in every sense of the word.

In his response, during a social function which followed, Dr Naude also paid tribute to his wife, and emphasised that he had merely tried to live a life of obedience to God — to the best of his ability. He went on to comment on the nature of the struggle for a just and free society in this country, re-iterating his belief that the day of liberation from injustice and oppression *would* come! The evening was concluded by a special presentation made to Mrs Naude by Ms Beverley February of IDASA.

By all accounts it was a most memorable and enriching evening. For some participants it was "one of the most moving experiences" of their lives. There is no doubt that the lives of Beyers and Ilse Naude will continue to sustain and inspire those working for a non-racial democracy in the land of their birth. IDASA wishes them a rewarding life ahead!