

The redistribution of wealth would be a key issue to be addressed by this national plan. It should be determined beforehand what portion of the GDP should be spent on wealth and what on growth — in other words, what the balance should be between economic growth and social reform. To be effective, the plan should be decentralised and should be part of a multi-party system where there would be a real choice, Innes said.

In a socialist system the boards of directors of nationalised companies should be replaced with elected management councils. This should not rule out independent trade unions or management associations. These management councils should decide what role the enterprise should play in terms of the national plan and allocate surplus production after deciding on what portion should be spent on upgrading and growth, Innes said.

Theron made the point that apartheid could not be separated from the economic system. He added that in any analysis it should never be forgotten that historically the business community has always benefited from the apartheid system.

Theron dismissed the new phenomenon of share offers to workers as "mere tokenism". It did not address the real problems of the workers and was therefore more of a diversion than a real solution, he said.

Nel said the economic problems of South Africa could not be theorised or solved through any ideology. The only criterion for a new system should be that it worked. This, however, should be a "principled pragmatism" — it should comply with the principles of a non-racial democracy and the redistribution of wealth.

Redistribution of wealth would only be possible if there were economic growth, Nel said. Two barriers hindering economic growth were the paternalistic, unilateral decision making of business management and trade unions that were very reluctant to create a climate of trust and establish positions of inter-dependence. What was needed was a total new way of thinking: workers should be involved in democratic decision making and management should establish a new solidarity with the workforce, Nel said.

Sibiya, who introduced the panel

IDASA breaks new ground ...

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discussion on the desirability and viability of free enterprise in a post-apartheid South Africa, said once the country had rid itself of all apartheid legislation, a whole number of other short-sighted laws would remain which would be stumbling blocks on the road to peace and prosperity. Serious attention should be given to how free enterprise could survive in a fair society after apartheid.

One of the topics discussed from

the floor was that of economic sanctions. Innes conceded that sanctions would limit the country's capacity for growth, but he said instead of appealing to the outside world to stop sanctions — they would not listen anyway — one should tell the government to stop those policies that caused the sanctions campaign.

In his closing address, Slabbert said that of the three scenarios popularly sketched in South Africa — revolution, massive external intervention and negotiation — only the last one was likely, whatever form it was going to take.

He said while it was true that black and white South Africans lived in two vastly different worlds, it has been proved that a meaningful debate could be opened up on all the different levels. Government should not be allowed to take the initiative with negotiation, because they were not serious about it.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR COMMENTS ON THE SEMINAR ON "A VIEW OF THE ECONOMY BEYOND APARTHEID"

DATE: Friday 22 April 1988

VENUE: Holiday Inn, Cape Town

ATTENDANCE: 150 delegates

SPEAKERS: Prof Duncan Innes, Mr Christo Nel, Mr Bheki Sibiya, Mr Jan Theron, Mr Wayne Mitchell, Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert

CHAIRPERSONS: Thaabit Albertus and Nic Borraine

It is one of IDASA's tasks to promote discussion on key issues affecting South Africans both now and in the future. In addition to looking at alternative democratic governmental systems, it is equally important that we focus attention on alternative workable economic systems, as this is an area which will be one of the key factors in determining stability in a post-apartheid South Africa.

The seminar, "A View of the Economy Beyond Apartheid" was thus organised to promote discussion on the economic future of a post-apartheid South Africa and the impact and implication of the various systems. The readiness of business to consider all the economic alternatives now, will pro-

ceed a long way in determining the legacy that the present system will leave behind. The seminar provided a basis and a beginning for business, management and workers to consider some of the alternatives and to exchange and explore perspectives.

The fact that the seminar was over-subscribed, and the positive level of participation indicates that business, management and workers are indeed concerned about the economic future of the country. During discussion periods, there were strong indications that people were wanting to act now in working towards a future acceptable economic system.

In the light of the positive response to the seminar, we are contemplating arranging a forum at which the attendees at the seminar and others may come together and discuss more fully the viability of these economic systems and how best one may work towards attaining a system that is fair and which will promote growth and productivity.

*Thaabit Albertus
Regional Director*