

# Batting on a sticky wicket

**Sport and politics was the name of the game, but it was politics that underlined and undermined Idasa's "Sport and Non-racialism" conference in Port Elizabeth at the end of March.**

**Sue Valentine reports.**

The delegates to the conference came largely from the complex (and often intrigue-filled) world of sports administration. They were there to discuss exactly what is meant by non-racialism, what obstacles exist to its implementation in South African sport and how administrative structures can become non-racial and democratic.

However, at the eleventh hour, after months of consultation and initial support, the National Sports Congress (NSC) decided it could not participate – leaving the conference the poorer for its absence. Also missing were Sacos (SA Council of Sport), the SA National Olympic Committee (Sanoc) and the Confederation of SA Sport.

From the outset Sacos had said they would not be there, reiterating their position that: "We will not deviate from our principled stand by engaging in discussions with some of the very people who enjoy the fruits of the present racist regime."

At one stage the Confederation were due to send speakers but later decided that it was inopportune. A similar decision was taken by Sanoc and, finally, despite late-night, last-minute talks, the NSC also withdrew.

However, in spite of the initial disappointment – mirrored in the grey Saturday morning sky – the 60 delegates who did attend ultimately pronounced the conference worthwhile for the range of approaches and ideas aired, compared and discussed.

Delivering the opening address, Idasa director Van Zyl Slabbert said South Africans needed to see themselves in a fundamental process of transition which would affect all the old structures in "rather painful and fundamental ways" and which would affect the traditional sports culture to which whites were accustomed.

Slabbert said South Africans should remember that two thirds of the countries of the world were in a process of fundamental transition. "All the frameworks for under-

standing international politics have gone into a meltdown . . . We must see how we are going to adjust. What kind of sports administration and culture are we beginning to promote?"

Pointing to Namibia, he said that within a week of independence a Namibian 15 had been invited to play rugby against an official Zimbabwean team. He said there was little need to ask what had happened – a fundamental issue of conflict had been resolved, white domination had ended.

"We do not have a midwife like Lord Soames or Resolution 435. In the South African context, for better or for worse, people have decided that negotiation is the way to get rid of white domination and to put a democratic structure in its place. It has

never happened before. We must keep that in mind when we made quick and glib comparisons with Africa or Eastern Europe. We must find unique ways for a solution."

Asking whether a cultural infrastructure existed that could carry and sustain a democratic constitution, Slabbert said: "We cannot impose a democratic constitution and pray for a miracle. Only a strong democratic culture can sustain a democratic constitution. We must promote a democratic culture."

A constitution could not fabricate consensus or unity, it could only reflect it. "The fabric of consensus comes from the everyday community, from transport, telecommunications, schools, religion and sport.

Sport can become an important symbol of unity," he said.

Issuing a challenge to sports administrators, Slabbert said it didn't matter how much they had already tried to promote sporting unity and non-racialism, the challenges were not going to stop. The old structures would either adjust to the new reality or they would become redundant. The major dilemma should not be how South Africa gets back into international sport.

"The central thrust is, how do we become a genuine democratic, non-racial society? If we don't solve this problem then I'm afraid the other issues, including sport, will be pulled into a vortex."

He concluded by saying that, on the sym-



**'The major dilemma should not be how SA gets into international sport. The central thrust is how do we become a genuine, democratic, non-racial society.'**

bolic cultural level, sport could be an important cutting edge for change towards a non-racial democratic society. But it could also reflect the tensions, problems and aggravations of our society in a very emotional way.

The challenge was to undercut the threat and promote the promise.

Speaking as an individual involved in sports administration within the black community, Idasa co-ordinator in Port Elizabeth Max Mamase said he supported the sports moratorium, but added that South Africa was entering a phase in which a non-racial content was being introduced into the structures and processes that were in place.

It was time for groups to begin debating



**DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE:** (from left) Vuyisile Cekisani, Peter Glover and Tex Harris.



**SPEAKERS AT THE CONFERENCE:** The president of the SA Cricket Union, Geoff Dakin, (far left) and Tommy Bedford, a former Springbok rugby captain (left).

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**SPEAKERS AT THE CONFERENCE:** The president of the SA Hockey Union, Steve Jaspan, (far left) and Mick Winn, chairman of the SA Road Running Association (left).

with each other about the differences they encountered.

“We are not saying the structures which exist must disappear, but they must merge and integrate; we must have one rugby board. Before we talk of international sport, let’s address ourselves to the practical realities in this country,” he said, urging sports administrators and players to become social forces for change.

**T**HE president of the SA Cricket Union, Geoff Dakin, launched the session on “Our experiences in attempting to introduce non-racialism into our sport” with some sharp words for those organisations which had chosen not to attend the conference.

He said he had opposed the idea of the recent rebel cricket tour last March, but as a loyal member of the SACU he had gone along with the decision of the board.

Referring to the efforts of the SACU to have cricket grounds, change-rooms and bars opened to all races, Dakin said he was not trying to “score points” but added: “We believe we have been the leading, driving force in sport in South Africa. We were the first to take on John Vorster.”

After citing the achievements of the SACU since its inception in 1976, Dakin conceded that although there was some mixing at club level and a little in provincial teams, it had not gone far enough because of the discrepancies in South African society. He said the SACU had failed miserably at school level but said this was because they had been opposed in their efforts by the Department of Education and Training.

He railed against those who accused the SACU of being racist and re-iterated the SACU’s non-racial position. “We want unity. We’re not saying we’re the big white boss.”

Replying to critics from the audience who said the SACU still had a long way to go and who asked where the SACU saw itself heading in the future, Dakin replied that cricket was a vehicle towards brotherhood and a single nation.

SA Hockey Union president Steve Jaspan said the disease of apartheid was the biggest problem facing sport, and the lack of facilities was one of the major tasks ahead for administrators.

He said the SAHU was a non-racial body which administered 95 percent of the game

while the other five percent fell under the SA Hockey Board – a Sacos affiliate. Despite numerous overtures by the SAHU to the SAHB, Sacos had, in consistency with their stance, refused to enter into talks.

“Too many factions are doing their own thing. The fundamentals of unifying South African sport should be foremost in our minds. The time has come for men of integrity and vision to come together.”

Chairman of the SA Road Running Association Mick Winn said road running was a relatively new sport which had emerged in the last two decades and was a sport for the masses.

Giving a brief history, he told of how black runners, denied official entry into races, had nevertheless competed and won and how white winners had handed over their prizes in recognition of the true victors.

In 1975 black runners still had to wear ethnic labels on their running vests and only in 1976 were they allowed to run the Comrades Marathon. Women (of all races) had to wait until 1977 before they were allowed to compete in the Comrades.

"We had to fight for changes," he said, "and had to threaten to break away from the SA Amateur Athletics Union. At long last we have a situation where we can further our own ideas."

SARRA supported the sports moratorium and believed that the tax rebates companies received for supporting international tours could be better spent in South Africa. Winn said SARRA hoped to establish an All Africa Road Running Association – a goal they believed was of "paramount importance".

**NEWLY** elected executive member of the SA Rugby Board Arrie Oberholzer appealed for an acceptance of both the SARB's bona fides and its shortcomings. He said that if other groups were willing, the SARB would happily offer to disband and form a new board.

"We must stop looking at inconsequential barriers and do what we have to do. I don't think we have a moment to lose. Please accept that we have the best intentions in the world, but also accept that we have an obligation to our players and supporters," he added.

Oberholzer said the problem with the SARB was that it had taken them since 1977 to get where they were and they were still a long way from where they should be.

In the concluding address, former Springbok rugby captain Tommy Bedford said the difficulties being experienced by sports people and administrators arose simply because they lived in South Africa.

"This debate today is illustrative of the dilemma apartheid has brought upon us," he said. "The mere fact that not everyone is here is because of this bloody thing called apartheid."

"One could cry, listening to the questions I've heard today. Sport is about winning, about competition, about outwitting the opposition. We've had no winners – not today at this conference and not since 1910 – every single one of us has been a loser."

Bedford said the ultimate goal of sport was to compete at the top levels – at Lords, Twickenham or the Olympics – which had been denied to all South Africans. He said only by examining the history of sport in South Africa would people be able to go forward.

"I believe one of our difficulties has been that we have not created black heroes in South African sport. Sport is not about officials but about participants, about players, about youngsters. In South Africa 60 per cent of the population is under 18."

Bedford told of his experiences in trying to get rugby started in Umlazi and the total lack of support offered by the Natal Rugby Union for the project.

"If the heart of the matter was addressed we could have moved light years ahead; we've kept the international thing going because that is what the white community wants. We won't catch up as long as the black community feels hard done by."

Venturing the opinion that those who had boycotted the conference were the poorer for not having attended, Bedford said that ultimately it was not through meetings that things would change. Rather it was through friendships and trust that South African sport would get anywhere.

Sue Valentine is Publications Assistant with Idasa.

## PERS

# Wie is 'n Afrikaner?

Deur At van Wyk

**GESOEK:** 'n Afrikaner. Drie eue lank is hy al soek, want die naamdraer wil hom nie laat uitken nie. Hy is wit, maar ook bruin en swart, en hy praat Hollands/Afrikaans, maar ook Engels en enige van die swart tale. Wie is 'n Afrikaner?

Kyk éers na die variasies van die naam in die geskiedenis: *Afrikaander*, *Afrikaander*, *Afrikaander*, *Africander*, *Afrikaner*, *Afrikaan*, *Africaander*, *Africane*, *Africanda*. En wéét dat dit óók staan vir 'n soort skaap, bees, geweer en blom, en vroeg aangeneem is as van deur 'n groep gekleurders onder leierskap van Jager Afrikaner.

In September 1683 skryf Olof Bergh oor 'n binnelandse ekspedisie: "Spanden de beesten daar uyt en stuerden 2 man van ons blancken uijt met twee Afrijaenders."

Dit is duidelik dat *Afrikaanders* (met sy wisselspelling) hier gebruik word vir inheemse swartes.

In 1707 mor die koloniste rondom Stellenbosch teen die Hollandse bewind en goeweneur Adriaan van der Stel. Toe die jong witman Hendrik Bibault en ander na Van der Stel se ontslag uit pure vreugde Stellenbosch op horings neem en die landdros hulle met die rottang bykom, roep Bibault uit, "Ik wil niet loopen, 'k ben een *Africaander*."

Daarmee gee hy te kenne dat hy 'n boorling van die Kaap is – 'n *Africaander*, nie 'n Hollander nie. En dit was destyds 'n gangbare betekenis van die woord: 'n witmens wat aan die Kaap gebore is en van Hollandse, Duitse of Franse afkoms kon wees.

Daarnaas, grootliks met dieselfde betekenis, is *Afrikaan* gebruik, of *African* op Engels. Só staan dit in geskryfte sedert die begin van die 18e eeu. Die Voortrekkers het na hulleself verwys as *Afrikaanders*, maar ook as *Emigrant*, volk en *Afrikanen*.

Die verskillende variante was tot in die tweede helfte van die 18e eeu sonder 'n eksklusiewe betekenis of sterk gevoelswaarde, want dit was ook van toepassing op Kaapse gekleurdes, insluitend slawe, en later Engelse.

Om te onderskei kom Dutch *Afrikander* en English *Afrikander* in omloop, en word *Afrikander* soms vir Brits- en dan weer Hollandsegebore Suid-Afrikaners toegeëien. Laasgenoemde maak in toenemende mate aanspraak daarop en stig in 1875 die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaanders – om te "onderskei . . . tussen Afrikaners met Engelse, Hollandse en Afrikaanse harte", met laasgenoemde groep die *Regte Afrikaanders* (Afrikaanse Kultuur Almanak).

Dit kry stukrag met die stigting van die Afrikander Bond in 1879 en die gevoelsopbruising na die Eerste Vryheidsoorlog van 1881. So kom dit dat *Afrikander/Afrikaner* in die tagtigerjare staan vir 'n politieke ideologie, met die kreet "Afrika vir die Afrikaanders" – dus Hollandsegeborenes. Dit is steeds nie eksklusief nie, want vóór en ná die eeuwending word dit ook op Engelse van toepassing gemaak, en in geringer mate op Kaapse gekleurdes.

Vóór die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog sê generaal JBM Hertzog dat Afrikaner Hol-

landse- en Engelssprekendes insluit wat hul belange met Suid-Afrika verbind. Dis in 1899 ook die standpunt van Ons Land en later van Di Patriot (JC Steyn, *Trouwe Afrikaners*.)

James Molteno skryf dat hy op 4 Oktober 1899 die woord *Afrikanderdom* in sy breë wit betekenis die eerste keer uit die mond van die imperialis Alfred Milner gehoor het. In 1906 kies AR Colquhoun *Africander* met opset in sy *The Africander Land*, omdat dit vir hom albei wit taalgroepe insluit. In 1910 gebruik Abraham Fischer dit ook só, en in dié jaar verwys 'n briëfskrywer in *The Natal Mercury* (3 Mei 1910) na *British Africanderism*.

Maar toe Hertzog hom in 1912 teen "vreemde fortuinzoekers" uitspreek en sê die Afrikaner is baas en sal baas bly, bars 'n bom. Hoe hy ook al verduidelik het dat hy met *Afrikaner* Hollands en Engelssprekende bedoel wat Suid-Afrika eerste stel, is hy nie geglo nie.

Midde-in die krisis skryf generaal Louis Botha daarvoor aan president MT Steyn en verwys na Engelse *Afrikaners* en Hollandse *Afrikaners*, terwyl De Volkstem (3 Des 1912) die Engelse Ralph Tatham "'n gebore Afrikaner" noem en terme gebruik soos *de Hollandse Afrikaner* en *de Engelse Afrikaner*.

Dit klink na baie lawaai en min wol, maar destyds was die betekenis wat geheg is aan Hertzog se gebruik van *Afrikaner* as "baas" van die land naas "de vreemde – voornamelijk Engelssprekende fortuinzoekers", 'n gewigtige saak wat as hefboom gebruik is om hom in 1912 uit die kabinet te lig.

Vir Hertzog en ander het die benaming *Afrikaner* sy betekenis as Suid-Afrikaner behou, maar met die ontwaking van Afrikaner-nasionalisme sedert 1912, en veral ná 1934, het dit die eng betekenis verkry wat dit vandag nog plek-plek het: 'n wit Afrikaanssprekende Christen-kerkklidmaat van die "volk".

Enkeles het nie die eng betekenis van *Afrikaner* aanvaar nie. In 1960 pleit NP van Wyk Louw om die voortbestaan van "my volk, blank en bruin, en die taal wat ons praat". In 1921 het Hertzog al die swart vakbondleier Clements Kadalie gevra om vertroue "between the white and black *Afrikander*".

**NOU** sê die ANC in die jongste tyd *African* beteken vir hom nie net swart nie, maar almal wat saamstrewende om 'n toekomstige Suid-Afrika. Dalk is dit sommermaar woorde, maar as die strewende sou eindig in 'n eenheidstaat met vryheid vir almal, sal *Afrikaner* of *Afrikaan* as gemeenskaplike noemnaam sekerlik van pas wees. Dan het die naam 'n volle sirkelgang geloop sedert 1683.

Tot dan bly die vraag wat ook die einde vorm van MDW Jeffreys se grondige artikel in *Africana Notes & News*, Sept 1971, 19/7, waarvan grootliks in hierdie artikel gebruik gemaak is:

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(Met erkenning aan Rapport)