

# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Idasa's goals are:

- To promote the development of a democratic culture in South Africa
- To address fear, prejudice, anger and other obstacles in the transition to a non-racial democracy in South Africa
- To engage influential groups and individuals who may be outsiders to the transition process
- To provide, wherever possible, information on critical issues and to explore ways of addressing these
- To facilitate discussion of constitutional and developmental issues relevant to Southern Africa
- To assist and encourage others to contribute to the attainment of these goals

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EDITORIAL

## Reconciliation: test for lead

**T**he old adage, "a week in politics is a long time" is vividly illustrated by recent developments in South Africa.

Only a few months ago President De Klerk was riding high both internationally and on the national scene. It seemed almost believable that the National Party under his skilled leadership could actually secure a majority in a future election. His success on the international scene and his adroit handling of developments seemed to cast him in the mould of the one politician who could unite the greatest number of people towards a moderate centrist dispensation.

On the other hand, the African National Congress was in considerable disarray as an organisation and was portrayed generally by the media as being a spoiler. Contradictory statements on nationalisation and the stubborn adherence to an outdated sanctions policy seemed to suggest that the transition from a liberation movement to a political party was too much for an organisation being pulled in so many different directions by different sections of their constituency.

### Rattled

However, the scene has changed dramatically. It is true that Mr De Klerk is still looking good on the international scene and will continue to do so for a considerable time. But in domestic politics, where it really has to happen, he is looking decidedly rattled. What has happened?

Firstly, Inkathagate and the petulance of the Inkatha Freedom Party, plus the persistent polls which showed the IFP trailing far behind the ANC, made an alliance between

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