

From the Executive Director

A perspective from abroad

DR ALEX BORAINÉ

crackdown is disturbing and depressing. In particular, I was distressed to hear about the further detention of Janet Cherry, who has already spent eleven months in a previous detention, as well as other members of our staff who have been forced to curtail their activities because of the possibility of being picked up by the police.

Nevertheless, despite these enormous odds and continuing restraints by the state, progress continues to be made by IDASA. Elsewhere you

will read of encouraging encounters which have taken place in many parts of the country through workshops, seminars and conferences.

Looking ahead, we have the historic and exciting conference involving Soviet Africanists, ANC leaders and a number of leading academics from South Africa. Hopefully this conference will neutralise the constant propaganda by the state which makes it difficult for white South Africans in particular to move from their support of apartheid towards the hazardous journey in the direction of a non-racial democratic South Africa.

Whilst several other interesting and worthwhile projects still await us during 1988, we have already completed our planning session and have drawn up an even more innovative and interesting programme for 1989.

I AM writing from Geneva where I am giving a series of lectures at the Graduate Institute of International Studies. The lectures are under the general heading, "1948-1988: Repression and Resistance".

Whilst I am here, I am taking the opportunity of visiting a number of European countries in connection with the programme of IDASA. I have already visited Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and West Germany. This has given me an opportunity not only to present the work of IDASA and its own needs for further funding, but also to have in-depth discussions with politicians, trade unionists and representatives from the churches.

Like so many other concerned South Africans, the news which continues to come from South Africa regarding additional detentions, harassments and a general

Responses to Janet Cherry's Detention

IT was with great shock and anger that news was received of Janet Cherry's detention on 23 September 1988. Janet was on her way to Harare, Zimbabwe to consult about a women's conference that IDASA is arranging, when she was detained at Port Elizabeth airport.

As was reported in the August 1988 edition of *Democracy in Action*, Janet was released from detention only on 30 July 1987 after spending more than 11 months in detention. This further detention has confused those who know her and who can vouch for her having complied with her restriction orders in the period between her detentions.

Janet is sorely missed from the Port Elizabeth office of IDASA, where she is employed as a research consultant. The Eastern Cape Region is indeed the poorer for the absence of her skills, deep commitment and unassuming manner. We trust she will be released in the very near future.

Keith J. Wattrus
Regional Director
Eastern Cape

THE reprehensible detention of Janet Cherry yet again, one of our valued colleagues in IDASA, must be seen in the broader context of national repression. The State appears determined to force its "solu-

tion" and its unilateral concept of imposed racial "group democracy" on our country. It continues to believe that it can buy political legitimacy through patronage and economic upgrading. That is why it is so intolerant of any attempt to broaden democracy on a voluntary and individual basis.

In the short term, this intolerance will disrupt and affect many (young) lives, and our thoughts are with Janet at this time. But if we are to



Janet Cherry

have a genuine non-racial democracy in South Africa, IDASA and many others who believe in this goal for our country must continue to use whatever peaceful means are at our disposal to promote this ideal. We must claim the future for this goal despite the repression and disruption of the present!

Dr F. van Zyl Slabbert
Director, IDASA

THIS is not a new experience. She was released in the middle of last year after eleven months in detention. She was, needless to say, not charged with any offence. She is currently employed by IDASA, the organisation which aims to find a democratic solution to South Africa's problems by discussion and negotiation.

"While I realise that in an uncivilised police state such as ours terms like democracy, rational discussion and negotiation are anathema to those in authority, I insist on my right to protest against the latest outrage.

"It is important that South Africans and the rest of the world appreciate that our rulers are experts in moral as well as financial bankruptcy.

Janet's father,
Prof Robin Cherry
of UCT