

Anticipating the Future

KEITH J. WATTRUS

A fascinating array of prominent speakers gathered in the Port Elizabeth City Hall on 22 September 1988 at an IDASA conference arranged to explore constitutional and economic options for a future South Africa. IDASA hoped that, by sharing their research and experiences, these speakers would open up a new vision for the future; a vision which could reintroduce hope and confidence into long-term planning. Panel discussions were structured in such a way as to encourage debate about practical steps which could be taken along the path from the present situation, constrained as it is by current policies, towards that better future.

The conference was opened by the Ambassador of Switzerland, Jean Quinche, who delivered the keynote address in which he traced the establishment of the Swiss political system and led the audience

through the steps which culminated in the constitution of 1874, which constitution is adhered to (in adapted form) to this day. He warned against believing that the canton system could easily be adapted to the South African situation by dividing South Africa into many cantons. "Switzerland has not been divided into cantons but it was the cantons who joined and created the confederation", he said.

The supreme and governing authority of the Confederation is a Federal Council composed of seven members. There is no separate Head of State, no president, no prime minister and of course no king. "Swiss people have always been against giving too much power to a single person", Ambassador Quinche remarked.

At the end of this opening address, the first panel discussion commenced, its subject being:

A FUTURE CONSTITUTION

Prof Dennis Davis

Prof Davis is a graduate of Cambridge University, England, and is currently lecturing at the University of Cape Town where he is Associate Professor of Law.

He opened by saying that specu-

lation over a new constitution is a very dangerous exercise because in South Africa there is a lack of any existing social practice of rights. "A constitution which provides democracy will need to provide for certain rights which 'trump' claims based on social interest. Without a rights tradition this becomes particularly difficult".

Prof Davis referred to Dr Albie Sachs, who has said that, in the process of reconstructing South Africa on the site of the destroyed Apartheid fortress, self-determination for all South Africans will be the essential objective, national liberation the substance of the process, democracy the form and human rights the goal. Sachs goes on to warn that economic imbalances caused by Apartheid will have to be redressed, because any constitution that protects the benefits of Apartheid while purporting to destroy the fortress will never attain legitimacy.

Referring to the Freedom Charter, Prof Davis pointed out that it is precisely because the Charter does not envisage a constitutional model of central planning that a system of law emerging out of the Charter can address itself to the problems of hierarchy and administrative centralisation in enterprises and collective bodies.

Ms Frances Kendall

Ms Kendall co-authored the book *South Africa — The Solution* with her husband, Leon Louw. She is currently involved in publicising "Groundswell, SA", a movement aiming to promote the canton system as a viable constitutional alternative.

She noted that while some aspects of a new dispensation are open to discussion and compromise, both blacks and whites have certain "non-negotiable" demands. For blacks these include the total unambiguous scrapping of apartheid, full citizenship, and equal civil and political rights in an undivided South Africa. White non-negotiable demands include the preservation of Western values and



L—R: Swiss Ambassador Jean Quinche, Keith Wattrus and Prof Douglas Irvine (Chairman).

sufficient protection to allay their fear of black retribution.

Ms Kendall felt that a territorially based federal system, devoid of ethnically based features, is most promising for South Africa. Power could be devolved along federal lines to a large number of units, thereby not only reducing conflict but also accommodating diversity by allowing a greater variety of political, economic and welfare policies to function simultaneously.

Ms Kendall concluded by referring to referenda as the most reliable way of determining what citizens want government to do regarding particular issues. "Ordinary people of all races would be actively involved in the formulation of policies affecting them." This system would automatically provide protection for both minorities and majorities, the latter being no more than groups of individuals having common values, preferences and interests.

Dr Tom Lodge

Dr Lodge, a graduate of the University of York, England, currently lectures in Political Studies at Wits University and is renowned for his research and writings on the African National Congress (ANC).

In this discussion, Dr Lodge outlined the arguments in favour of a unitary majoritarian constitution. "It is conceivable that people could be educated to find merit in such options as consociationalism, cantons, federalism and so on, but I think it is unlikely that such education will have much success — not as long as the chief advocates of such schemes are rich, white and privileged," he said.

Dr Lodge thought that a basic precondition for the existence of democracy is that all citizens should have a uniform set of political rights. He could not believe that according group rights, i.e. rights which are enjoyed by members of particular races, communities, localities or regions, could conform with the principle of uniformity. The provision of political rights to South Africa's blacks would have to be accompanied by a fairly great degree of economic redistribution. "This redistribution could take several forms — from the politically popular but economically damaging option of forced confiscation, through various forms of state take-overs or participation in enterprises



Frances Kendall, joint author of South Africa, the Solution.

with compensation to former owners, to redistribution through the fiscal system and much more ambitious types of public social investment than presently exist. All these would require a government with strong powers — and fairly centralised ones, in order to overcome regional development disparities."

"South Africa's characteristics don't suggest a particularly pressing requirement for federal forms of administration," he continued. "Certainly there is a great cultural and linguistic diversity — but members of different communities inhabit more or less the same geographical space.

"Why do so many people have problems with the notion of majority rule?" Dr Lodge asked. "Whites under majority rule in post-apartheid South Africa are unlikely to be the object of systematic persecution on a racial basis; they are sufficiently numerous and monopolise skills to an extent to make this rather unlikely unless an extremely racist black administration takes over."

"The best guarantor that the post-apartheid administration will respect certain freedoms is the extent to which those freedoms remain alive when it accedes to power. Every time a newspaper is closed down, every time a man, woman or child is held without trial, every

time a policeman goes unpunished for torturing or killing a prisoner, every time a family is arbitrarily evicted from its home, every time a book is banned, and every time an organisation is restricted, permanent damage may be being inflicted on the political culture of this country. For a democratic culture thrives best in a democratic environment — it is difficult to incubate democracy under repression," he concluded.

Prof Dawid van Wyk

Prof Van Wyk is Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of South Africa but has been seconded to the KwaZulu Natal Indaba where he is Director.

Prof Van Wyk said he would be surprised if the constitution of the future was not "one big compromise", which, he acknowledged, would be unlikely to satisfy the purists and the ideologues. It will not be worked out and/or introduced by the "sole and authentic representative of the people" of South Africa because political pluralism in South Africa was far too strong for that. A future constitution is likely to develop in a piecemeal fashion with continuous changing and "reforming".

Prof Van Wyk was sceptical of a "national solution" to the "national problem", stating that only ideology and an obsession with power would argue against a high degree of decentralisation in South Africa. The gravest danger of this national approach is that the achievement of the solution will be determined by the slowest "reform" or change factors in South Africa. This means that "right wing", conservative whites in one part of South Africa will dictate the speed of change in the rest of the land.

Referring to the KwaZulu Natal Indaba, he said that it demonstrated that it is possible for people with highly divergent political viewpoints and aspirations to come up with an agreeable compromise, and furthermore showed the viability of regional options without threatening or impairing the search for a "national" solution. Prof Van Wyk suggested that a future constitution would have to succeed, as the Indaba had done, in reconciling the two ostensibly contradictory requirements of universal and group participation, with preservation of freedom of association.

Ms Helen Zille

Ms Zille is an independent researcher and freelance journalist in Cape Town. She was formerly a political correspondent for the *Rand Daily Mail* and now edits the *Black Sash Magazine*.

"Constitutional stability generally results from an alternating and interactive process of conflict and negotiation, until the point is reached where the major antagonists believe compromise to be preferable to ongoing conflict," Ms Zille said. She continued by referring to this stage as the "shared perception of stalemate"; a mutual perception that one can achieve more by reaching a settlement than by continuing the struggle for power.

The only thing that could be predicted with certainty about a future constitution was that no model placed on the bargaining table at the outset would likely emerge intact at the end of the bargaining process, Ms Zille thought. "The model that emerges will be a reflection of the compromise reached."

Ms Zille felt that although there was no shortage of "ideal" models for a future South Africa, the real problem in our society is that we have not done enough work on the process, "on finding a way in which we can get from where we are now to a point where the major actors will be prepared, indeed seriously committed, to discussing the alternatives, and where the shared per-

ception of stalemate is such that a compromise is possible."

Reference was made to a local initiative of the Cape Town City Council which was prematurely interrupted because it was discovered that the climate for negotiations did not exist at the local level. "As things currently stand, the interests, objectives and ideologies of the major actors are too widely divergent, and the sense of trust, understanding and urgency too limited to enable constitutional negotiations to be feasible," Ms Zille remarked.

Zille urges conference to use "every chance that comes up to resolve conflict and problems by negotiation."

She felt that it was necessary that we concentrate on creating the appropriate climate, which meant using every chance that comes up to resolve conflict and problems by negotiation. This would help to establish the credibility and feasibility of the concept of negotiation, "particularly if it led to the empowerment of communities to direct and control their own destiny," Ms Zille concluded.

The second panel discussion had as its theme:

A future economy

Mr Bobby Godsell

Mr Godsell is group industrial relations and public affairs consultant for the Anglo American Corporation and is currently chairman of the SA Employers Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA). He is co-author of the current best-seller *A Future South Africa: Visions, Strategies and Realities*.

Mr Godsell titled his address "Growth, Equity and Participation", the three ideas around which he felt a desired economic future should focus.

The growth imperative ought to be obvious to all, he stated, because of the critical need for development in areas such as housing, schooling and health care. Apartheid has not only exacerbated our poverty but has also disguised its true nature. "Many believe that South Africa is an essentially rich country, but with a gross national product of around R2 000 per head we are far from being able to offer all our people a quality of urban life, housing, schooling and health care to which they legitimately aspire," he said.

"Apartheid has been an enemy of growth and very significantly has made economic progress a divisive instead of a uniting objective for our people," Mr Godsell remarked. "Besides this it has forced a misuse of economic resources and has bedevilled South Africa's economic relations with world markets," he continued.

Mr Godsell pointed out that two types of economic equality can be distinguished — equality of opportunity and equality of entitlement. Equality of opportunity means quite simply that all people should have equal access to the sources of wealth, and some progress has occurred here in the last two decades. However, inequalities in the entitlement and reward of white and black South Africans remain vast. "Economic policies which address opportunity but ignore entitlement are doomed to failure," he said.

The third goal is that of creating a participative economic culture. The socialism/capitalism debate has tended to focus crudely and abstractly on rival systems of owner-



Helen Zille (journalist) and editor of SASH.

ship of economic resources while ignoring the pattern of effective economic control. "In this regard the rise of mass unionism in South Africa is already achieving the most significant shift of power in the country's history," Mr Godsell noted. The existing pattern of hierarchical and authoritarian control is being destroyed and people are being empowered both collectively and individually: "Workplace democracy is not only a vital form of political liberation but also an essential part of economic growth," he concluded.

Mr Charles Meth

Mr Meth is a lecturer in Economics at Natal University in Durban, a position he returned to after spending some eighteen years in industry, mostly internationally.

Mr Meth felt that the oft-cited two reasons for the ills in the economy, viz. that firstly there was too much government intervention which did not allow enough leeway for entrepreneurial skills, and secondly that real wages were too high, needed closer scrutiny.

He argued that the reason why we have an economy in which the majority of workers earn much less than a living wage, but are yet too highly paid to enable South African manufacturers to compete effectively, is to be found in the peculiar growth path caused by "racial capitalism". "Coercive mechanisms in the labour market have not been mere racist aberrations but have served certain interests, notably mining and agriculture, very well," he said.

Mr Meth argued that it was in fact the "relative" freedom of capital to do more or less as it pleased in South Africa that had given rise to a manufacturing sector profoundly unsuited to compete in international markets. He could not agree with the reflex responses of attacking wages and advocating deregulation, and advanced the view that what were in fact ethical disputes could never be resolved by appealing to objective criteria.

"For me no discussion of an economy which 'works' is possible as long as there is agreement between the capitalist class and the state to restrict the terms of the debate," Mr Meth said. He stated that freedom was not synonymous with free enterprise and his own hunch was that a significant amount of restruc-

turing, which the free market cannot do, was going to be necessary.

"In this regard the rise of mass unionism in South Africa is already achieving the most significant shift of power in the country's history."

Bobby Godsell

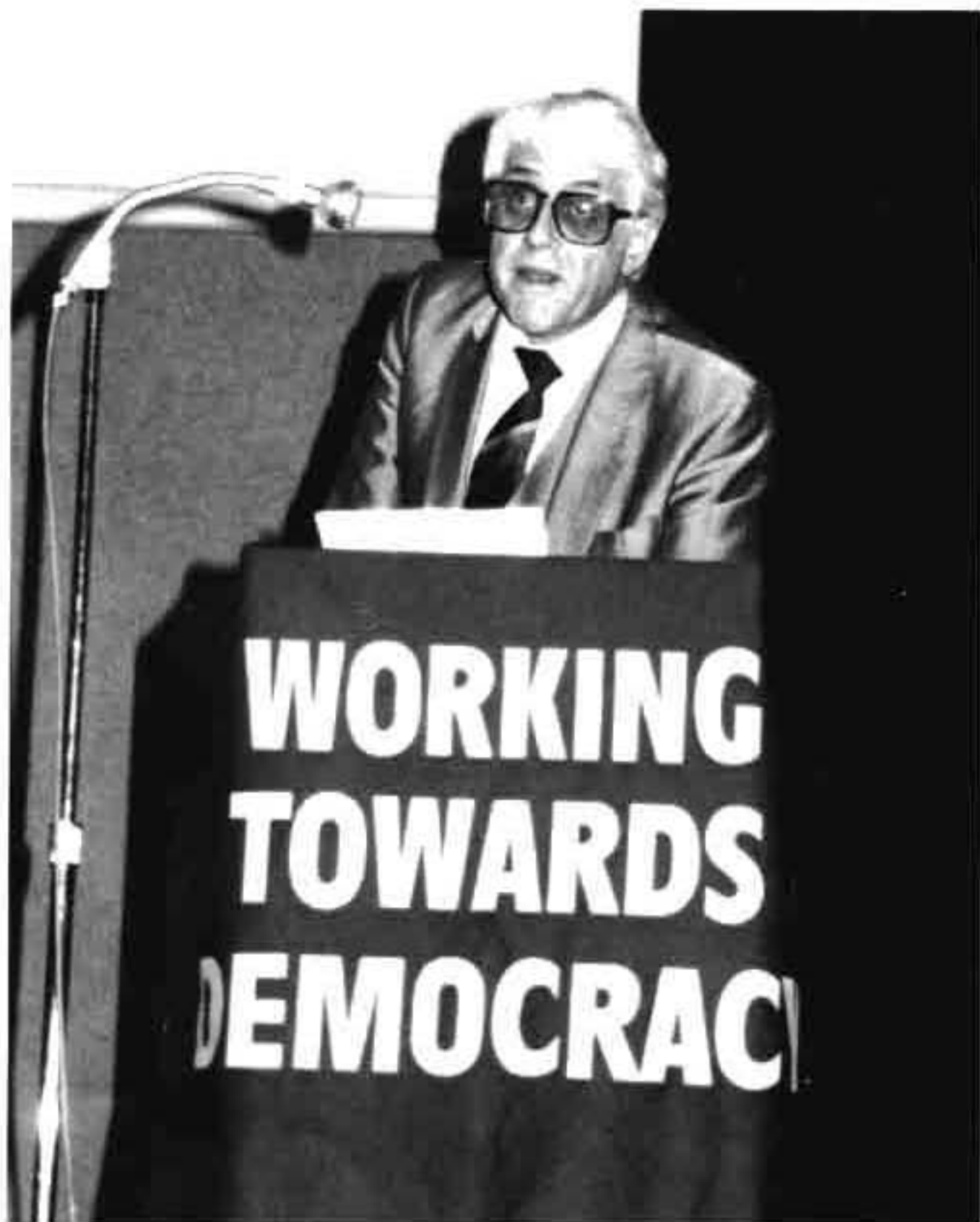
Prof Sampie Terreblanche

Prof Terreblanche is a professor in Economics at the University of Stellenbosch. From 1979 to 1985 he was a member of the Economic Advisory Board of the State President.

Prof Terreblanche saw three stages in the future economy: the

crisis phase, the transitional phase and the post-apartheid phase.

The crisis phase: Prof Terreblanche saw the decline in the South African economy as very much a structural phenomenon, rather than a cyclical phenomenon as some government spokesmen allege. This structural character arose out of the high international dependency of the South African economy and the growing international isolation that is experienced. "Over the last 30 years the economy has become far too capital intensive and consequently every revival in the economy causes a sharp increase in the import of heavy capital equipment," Prof Terreblanche explained. "In accordance with the Verwoerdian dream, labour was made expensive and even unavailable while capital was made artificially cheap by a low interest rate policy, an overvalued Rand and by all kinds of tax concessions on investment," he added.



Prof. Sampie Terreblanche of the University of Stellenbosch.

"There is no reason to expect the situation to improve and every reason to fear that the present decline will continue as long as the present or another apartheid government is in power," he warned.

This transitional phase: This phase would only commence once a new and truly reform-orientated government makes a creditable commitment about the dismantling of apartheid and starts to take visible measures to that effect. In this phase economic growth would be desperately needed to create maximum job opportunities and to cause a sharp increase in the tax capacity of the economy. "More than just normalising economic relations with the rest of the world will be needed; we will also need a Marshall Aid programme." Prof Terreblanche said.

"During the transitional phase we will be faced with a very difficult and on-going trade-off between economic conditions conducive to a high economic growth rate and political conditions conducive to the closing of the "welfare" spending gap, i.e. for redistribution purposes," he said.

The post-apartheid phase: This phase could only be entered once a fully developed non-racial constitutional system with a concurrent welfare state system was in place. "Although I am not optimistic that the post-apartheid stage will be reached in the foreseeable future, I still hope that the future economy of that stage will have the following characteristics," Prof Terreblanche concluded:

"(a) A market-orientated economy.

(b) A labour-intensive economy based on appropriate technology.

(c) An economy with a well-developed and well-organised welfare state system (including a well-developed educational system).

(d) An economy with a necessary large (but not too large) bureaucracy with a fair degree of efficiency.

(e) A full internationally integrated economy and at least part of a Southern African Economic Confederation.

(f) A fairly stable, prosperous and unitary system of Democratic Capitalism, structured to fit the situation in South Africa that in all probability will still be described as unique."

Exploring Port Elizabeth's forgotten past — first in history workshop series

Janet Cherry

ON the evening of 16 August, a group of 70 students, academics and interested members of the public came together to critically examine the history of Port Elizabeth. This project was the first in a series of "History Workshop" events which IDASA Eastern Cape region is convening. The aim of the project is to promote, debate and stimulate research on the much-neglected history of the Eastern Cape.

The theme of this seminar was the history of resistance — and we were most fortunate to have Joyce Kirk, a lecturer in African History at Ohio State University, present a paper on "African Resistance to Residential Segregation in Port Elizabeth in the early 1900's". Joyce, a black American historian, wrote her Doctoral thesis on the history of Port Elizabeth, and was in South Africa at the time doing further research. Other inputs were given by Gary Baines, lecturer in history at Vista University, who spoke on "The Development of Worker Resistance in Port Elizabeth, 1850 — 1920", and by Janet Cherry, who spoke on "Women's Role in Political Resistance in Korsten in the 1950's". Jeff Peires, lecturer in History at Rhodes University, chaired the meeting.

The papers were followed by questions and discussion among those present — including students from Vista University and the University of Port Elizabeth, high school students and history teachers, members of the Port Elizabeth Historical Society, academics from both universities, and a local museum curator. Hopefully such open discussion will stimulate the creation of a truly non-racial history of Port Elizabeth — one which takes into account the experiences of the majority of residents of the city.

This first seminar, which generated considerable interest in the subject, will be followed by oral history research groups involving students, social history tours of Port Elizabeth, meetings of high school history teachers, and further seminars where research will be presented.

Negotiation Seminar

Max Mamase

THIS seminar was held under the auspices of the UPE Negotiating Unit run by Mark Anstey. The seminar was held between 18-20 August 1988. Community-based organisations and Trade Unions as well as IDASA were represented. The people were taught about negotiation skills and processes.

Participants were given exercises for "practice" purposes. The improvised demonstrations were indicative of internalised ways of negotiations which are a copy-book of the South African situation. This is a positional type of bargaining which always forces people to bottom lines, and sometimes deadlocks. People were taught how to negotiate on the basis of merits or standards. This is called "principled negotiations".

Some of the exercises were too sensitive for political consumption. It was clear that the people who prepared the material relied mostly on what the security department uses to inform the white public. This material met with resistance from the comrades because they were portraying an incorrect image about our organisations. After long deliberations people agreed to do these exercises, having noted their objections.

Township fact finding tours

Max Mamase

ON 1 September IDASA took nineteen scholars and nine teachers from Alexander Road High School on a fact-finding mission. These tours originated in conjunction with the educative role of IDASA. The people were astonished to see the socio-political and economic conditions of Red Location.

This area is internationally known for its slum outlook. Red Location had its origin as occupied barracks (in 1899) by British soldiers. After the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, Red Location was evacuated by the soldiers. In 1903 the Location Act was introduced and non-racial areas like South-End and Korsten were drastically affected by the Act. The Afri-

cans from both those areas were moved to Red Location. Today all the houses are dilapidated. The first 45 blocks are now occupied by 389 disabled people and are in a shocking condition. The people on this trip therefore have vivid images of this situation and its historical background.

They also spoke to residents who shared their experiences of winter rains and cold days with them. They said that they are suffering the consequences of the South African Government's neglect but that they are calling for international comprehensive/mandatory sanctions to be imposed on the Botha Government, so that they can also experience this corrosive poverty. The tour passed on to Soweto (Port Elizabeth).

This is one of the areas that is facing forced removals. The area is occupied by about three hundred thousand people; there are no schools and no crèches. Social conditions are pathetic. Needless to say, this was a most educative experience for all the participants.

People's Education Seminar

Max Mamase

THIS Seminar was held at Rhodes University on 19 September 1988. There were eighty-seven participants including academics. The seminar was addressed by Dr Neil McGurk and Sue Krige.

Dr McGurk said that People's Education is a struggle against the Afrikaner education system which dominates political and economic power in this country. The Afrikaner education system is rejected by the majority of the people in this country. This coherent white culture has resulted in the monopoly of the executive boardrooms of our land. He articulated People's Education as an integrative system, a democratically based social system which will enable the Africans to be free from the bondage of Bantu education. The debate on the subject was outstanding.

History curriculum development was analysed by Sue Krige. She said that as far as she was concerned, no individual can reflect

any particular history alone; therefore history writers have to sit down with people of that historical experience so as to analyse and articulate their history. She criticised authors who have written history books without consulting the relevant people concerned, and cited a number of history books which, in her opinion, were irrelevant.

A rousing debate followed!

Church and Politics Workshop in East London

Steve Fourie

"IN all my travels around the world I have never, ever come across a nation where so many people want to be known as Christians." This observation by Dudley Weeks, an author on conflict management, and the fact of the conflict-ridden nature of our society provided the impetus for a group of approximately forty people to spend a day together exploring the role of the church as an agent of change.

IDASA and Rhodes University jointly facilitated the workshop on the theme: "Hope through the Church; Mission Today". It was held on a Saturday during August. Mr Gerald Hawkes led the workshop, which was built around three presentations: "Two sides of the Frontier" by Dr Margaret Donaldson, "Domination and Love" by Dr Felicity Edwards and "Gospel and Conflict" by Mr Tom Cunningham. All four teach in the Divinity Faculty, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

The first presentation captured the imagination of the participants, who soon found themselves participating fully as they grappled with the dilemmas raised by conflict in society. The unlikely vehicle for this immediate and enthusiastic involvement was a look into the past. Dr Margaret Donaldson presented the participants with two incidents from the time of the Frontier Wars and asked them to rewrite these in such a way that they could be used in a

school in a future non-racial South Africa. Participants soon discovered that their attempts to accurately portray these events from a previous period of conflict in our land without the bias of any segment of our society led to in-depth discussion about the present conflict. Writing for his church newsletter, one of the delegates commented that the discussion "provoked intelligent and incisive comment from both blacks and whites at the seminar". In fact, some suggested that this experience of looking at conflict from other perspectives was a liberating experience. No doubt, many also had a new appreciation of the study of history!

Dr Edward's address on "Domination and Love", in which she suggested the need for a paradigm shift in thinking about relationships — from the paradigm of domination to that of communion, provoked a great deal of discussion. She indicated that the key to the new paradigm is the concept of "mutual indwelling". For most of the delegates these observations offered a very new way of looking at the relevance of the Christian faith, hence the great interest in them. The call for faith which is radical, open and prophetic was particularly well received.

In his presentation, Mr Tom Cunningham argued that the church had authority to proclaim the gospel but could expect to encounter conflict in this process of proclamation. He cited the controversy which followed the World Alliance of Reformed Churches' declaration of apartheid as a heresy as an example of this conflict. Because Christianity is a "conflict-engaging" religion Christians should seek to change structures of injustice rather than expect miraculous change. Delegates were encouraged to examine the ways in which they respond to situations of conflict.

A feature of the workshop was the amount of time spent in small groups so that much of the learning took place through the interaction between participants. In designing the workshop the whole focus was on facilitating an experience rather than merely arranging for addresses to be delivered.

The high level of participation and the numerous positive comments and requests for more such workshops all point to a successful workshop.

WESTERN CAPE

A
A

EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

IDASA, in conjunction with the white schools' organisation PUPA (Pupils United for Peace and Awareness) held a conference at the new education building at the University of Cape Town on 1 & 2 October. The conference brought together pupils from all over the Western Cape. Through panel discussions, videos, workshops, simulation games, cultural activity and personal interaction the delegates explored a myriad aspects of their life in South Africa today.

At the crack of dawn on Saturday the New Education Building received final touches of preparation for the conference. PUPA and IDASA members stood nervously at the registration table awaiting the arrival of the first delegates.

Thirty six hours later the same people leant exhausted against the same tables. The months of hard work had been worth it.

From the opening address, in which Jan van Eck urged the students to respect each other's backgrounds, to the closing ceremony where the conference choir led the singing of Nkosi Sikelele iAfrika the delegates were challenged by new experiences.

The conference was the high-point of a process that was intended to stimulate the growth of student, parent and teacher organisations in the white schools of the Western Cape.

IDASA worked closely with Pupils United for Peace and Awareness in conceptualising, planning and running the conference.

"It was a really good experience for us," said Fiona Sass, Co-ordinator of PUPA. "At the same time as giving us the chance to learn organisational skills, the conference allowed us to reach pupils from schools all over Cape Town."

Nic Borain, the IDASA conference organiser, said: "For me the most exciting thing was to see pupils from such vastly different backgrounds and life experiences confront each other with their prejudices and misconceptions and have these changed through experience.

"At one point on the Saturday afternoon I stood looking into the quad of the Education Building where about 70 white and black school students were learning a traditional dance; somewhere above me another group was learning Nkosi Sikelele, and the notes of new songs being written by several other small groups of participants filtered up to me. We were so clearly in Africa and the laughter and the singing and the stamping feet seemed so optimistic."

However, it was not all plain sailing. There was a constant tension



A group learning the "gumboots" dance.

between the black pupils' political ideas and what the white pupils were prepared to entertain.

"You must remember that many of the WECSCO (Western Cape Students Congress) people are veterans of detention, police repression and beatings," said Fiona Sass. "Some of them have even been shot. We have been very sheltered. But somehow, the more arguments we had the more we came to understand and agree with each other."

A teacher who observed at the conference summed up the feelings of many who attended. "This was a real sign of hope. These pupils reached each other across an incredible gulf. The conference developed a critique of the education pupils receive and at the same time was, itself, a **concrete alternative** — an educational experience that helped redress the failing in both the black and white educational experience."

All in all, a "mind-changing experience" was the unanimous verdict of all pupils!

Understanding conflict in South Africa — an IDASA series

Thaabit Albertus

SOUTH Africa is a conflict-ridden society with a legacy of apartheid stranded upon polarisation and violent conflict. For some, this destructive mode of conflict is determined by ethnicity, whilst for others it is determined by race, laws and/or class. When confronted with the immense impact of conflict people become cynical of the ways and means of enabling fundamental socio-economic change. Alternatively, they are simply incapacitated by the challenge to resolve this violent stalemate.

In order to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon, IDASA is currently hosting a series of seminars entitled, "Understanding Conflict in South Africa". The following topics will be addressed:

1. Framework for the Study of Conflict 21 September 1988
2. Justice, Freedom and Peace 28 September 1988
3. Ideological Conflict in Modern Society: A South African Context-



Group discussion in session.



Free group activity . . . after the serious work was done

ualisation 5 October 1988

4. Prejudice in Human Society: The South African Case 12 October 1988

5. Interpersonal Conflict: A Social Psychologist's View 19 October 1988

6. Strategies and Tactics for Peaceful Change 2 November 1988

Speakers who have participated in the series thus far and who will be participating in the forthcoming seminars include Prof Ampie Muller (University of the Western Cape), Prof H.W. van der Merwe (Centre for Intergroup Studies, University of Cape Town), Prof Jannie Malan (University of the Western Cape), Prof Peter du Preez (University of Cape Town) and Mr Jannie Gagiano (University of Stellenbosch).

The two seminars held thus far have been attended by 30 and 40 participants respectively. The series will hopefully contribute to a better understanding amongst an ever-growing number of attendees.

Second objective of the series is to motivate people not only to become informed about the nature of conflict as a social phenomenon, but also to encourage people to transform potentially destructive conflict into positive transformative conflict. It is said that conflict is not inherently negative, but that it has a positive side too.

Further, it is an important aim of the series to highlight the fact that it is necessary to manage conflict by tackling the root-causes. These objectives are thus an integral part of this series and co-determines the parameters of the chosen subjects.

It is envisaged that a weekend seminar will be arranged in conjunction with academic staff involved in conflict studies at UWC and the Centre for Intergroup Studies at UCT for participants in this programme. Practical skills in the management of conflict will be taught at this seminar. This will take place in November 1988. Those who would like to enrol are urged to attend the remaining midweek seminars held at IDASA's offices in Mowbray.

It is in this way that IDASA hopes to contribute to the understanding of our conflict-ridden society. It further hopes to assist people to become informed and involved in the transformative process. We trust that people will begin to define themselves as part of the solution and act accordingly, rather than remain observers of the problem.

Die Vryheidsideaal in Suid-Afrika

IAN LIEBENBERG

OP Saterdag 10 September het die seminaar getiteld, "Die Vryheidsideaal in Suid-Afrika" in Stellenbosch plaasgevind. Dit is aangebied deur die Stellenbosche Aktuele Aangeleentheds Kring (SAAK) met 'n borgskap van IDASA.

Die seminaar het gefokus op die verskillende maniere waarop die vryheidsideaal tot uiting gekom het in Suid-Afrika. Daar is ook gekyk na 'n vergelyking tussen die Afrikaner se vryheidsstryd en die huidige vryheidsstryd in Suid-Afrika.

In sy openingsrede het Prof. Colin Bundy van die Universiteit van Kaapstad daarop gewys dat Suid-Afrika vinnig besig is om een van die mees repressiewe samelewings in die huidige era te word. Binne dié konteks moet daar gekyk word na bevryding.

*"Die parlement
het eerder 'n
struikelblok
geword op die
pad na vryheid."*

Adv. Johnny de Lange

Mnr. André van Deventer van die Instituut vir Sowjetstudies het gefokus op die parallelle tussen die Afrikaner en die huidige bevrydingsstryd. Sy referaat was getiteld "Comrades in Combat — African and Afrikaner nationalism". Nie net is daar duidelik aantoonbare parallelle nie; ook die strategieë om bevryding vertoon ooreenkomste. Albei het hulp van buitelandse moont-hede ontvang en het swaar geleun op guerilla-oorlogsvoering. Ten slotte was sy konklusie "dat die Vryheidsideaal in albei van die groeperinge 'n instrument kan wees om hulle bymekaar te bring".

Die rol van die parlement in die strewe na geregtigheid en as middel tot verset, is deur mnr. Wynand Malan van die Nasionale Demokratiese Beweging uitgelig. Hy was van mening dat die parlement 'n belangrike rol kan speel in die stryd teen onreg. In reaksie op dié stelling het Advokaat Johnny de Lange geargumenteer dat die parlement eerder 'n struikelblok geword het op die pad na vryheid.

Die rol van onderwys het ook onder die soeklig gekom tydens die seminaar. Dit is jammer dat die spreker van die Demokratiese Onderwysersunie nie teenwoordig was nie. Dr. Japie Coetzee van die Stellenbosch Departement van Opvoedkunde het aangetoon dat 'n "goeie vertrekpunt" sou wees om minstens ruimte te laat vir skole van "eie keuse" en "oop" skole. Dit het aanleiding gegee tot 'n warm vloerbespreking. 'n Groot deel van die seminaargangers het onomwonde aangetoon dat die tyd vir een unitêre en 'n nie-rassige onderwysstelsel in Suid-Afrika lankal aangebreek het.

Na middagete is die video "Cry of Reason", 'n profiel van dr. Beyers Naudé, vertoon. Die video het klem gelê op dr. Naudé se bewuswording van onreg in Suid-Afrika en hoe sy betrokkenheid by die bevrydingsproses gelei het tot sy inperking deur die regering. Dit het egter ook aangetoon dat hy onder 'n groot deel van Suid-Afrikaners hoë agting geniet.

Die rol van nasionalisme het ook onder die loep gekom. Mnr. Phathekile van CAWU het aangetoon dat nasionalisme 'n inklusiewe begrip is en dat almal in Suid-Afrika een nasie is, of behoort te wees.

Prof. Willie Breytenbach het in respons hierop aangetoon dat nasionalisme as 'n "invented myth" wel so 'n funksie kan vervul. Hy wys egter ook daarop dat nasionalisme in Suid-Afrika verdelend opgetree het in die verlede.

Die laaste sessie het die ekonomiese debat aangeroer. Die Vryheidshandves is deur een spreker voorgehou as 'n belangrike model vir ekonomiese bevryding en geregtigheid. Francis Kendall van die Groundswell-beweging het minder staatsinmenging en meer vrye/informele markgeleenthede bepleit as middel tot bevryding. Kritiese vrae is gevra en 'n goeie vloerbespreking het gevolg.

Ten slotte: Heelwat minder mense (± 70) het opgedaag as wat verwag is en daar was veel ruimte vir ko-ordinerende en organisatoriese verbetering. Tog was dié eerste oefenloopie nuttig. Dit het daarin geslaag om die riep om konflik in ons sameleving uit te lig. Daar is ook aangetoon dat 'n nie-rassige bena-

dering kan bydra om die noodsaaklike, nodige veranderinge teweeg te bring. Die blote feit dat so 'n seminar plaasgevind het op Stellenbosch, is 'n bewys van die behoefte by Suid-Afrikaners om saam na so 'n nie-rassige oplossing te soek.

NATAL

NATAL REPORTS ON THIS PAGE
BY PAUL GRAHAM

Natal Regional Office opening

DR Van Zyl Slabbert recently opened the Natal regional office at a reception held in the new office in Durban.

Introducing IDASA to a gathering of community and church leaders, academics, politicians, and consular staff he explained that the Institute was committed to the concept of free association and would be working towards a non-racial democracy.

Mr Paul Graham, regional director, introduced some of the plans of the local region and announced that IDASA was organising a conference on "The Right to Speak" in November. This would be the first large-scale public education event in Natal organised by IDASA.

The reception was followed by a public meeting attended by about 800 people (report below).

Peace in Angola/Namibia

SWAPO was confident that Namibia would become independent as a result of the latest peace talks — 800 people heard this view outlined recently at a public meeting organised by a Durban coalition in the City Hall.

Advocate Anton Lubowsky, a prominent trade union lawyer and SWAPO member from Windhoek, explained the conditions which made it unlikely that the present peace talks would fail.

These were the financial position of South Africa, the setbacks of the

war, the resolve of the international community, and the growing internal resistance to South African occupation within Namibia itself.

He was talking, after a reception by IDASA director Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, of the history of SADF and government involvement in Angola and Namibia.

The meeting was organised by a coalition which included IDASA, the Durban Democratic Association, Black Sash, NUSAS, Diakonia — a church-based social action agency, and, prior to its restriction, the End Conscription Campaign.

Providing people with an opportunity to receive first-hand information about the situation in Angola and Namibia, the meeting was attended by a broad cross-section of people from the city.

It was the first large-scale meeting on the peace talks and the regional war to be held in Durban.

Swapo speaker confident that Namibia will become independent as result of latest peace talks.

SHAPING OUR FUTURE — a pioneering workshop series takes off

A SERIES of workshops for people interested in shaping their future is being run by the Natal region.

The workshops, which take place once a month, grew out of a University conference *Shaping our Future* held earlier this year. This conference identified the fact that many white South Africans felt overwhelmed by events and became isolated and passive.

The monthly meetings under the general title *Shaping our Future* provide people with a way out of their passivity. They provide a meeting place where information not easily found in the media is given and

where people can be put in touch with organisations working for a non-racial democracy.

The first meeting focused on the street children of Durban, the second on the municipal elections.

Twenty-two participants discussed whether they should vote, whether not voting allowed those of other political persuasions to take over, and the manner in which the State of Emergency restricted information and debate.

After these initial discussions, during which participants got to know one another and express their own responses to issues, Durban City Councillor Crispin Hemson spoke of his experience in the Council.

Explaining that he had stood for Council in 1978 to try to promote some change in City Council structures, he told of working with a group of PFP-related Councillors on various city projects.

He also discussed the Regional Service Councils and the manner in which the National Security Management System was taking power away from local authorities.

Ian Mkhize of the township-based Joint Rent Action Committee (JO-RAC) traced the history of the organisation, explaining that blacks had frequently tried to work within the system without success.

To have really democratic elections, he said, three conditions needed to be met.

These were the freedom to openly espouse any cause, freely available information, and the elimination of factors that inhibited democracy such as racial classification.

In the absence of these conditions, township people questioned the motives behind the elections, seeing them as "a public relations exercise for the state".

Conditions which made the present municipal elections unsatisfactory were the State of Emergency, restrictions on information, racial classification, detentions and "rampant vigilante activity".

Mr Mkhize's talk led to a lengthy and animated debate on the question of participation.

Shaping our Future is an ongoing series and participants are invited to suggest topics and participate in the planning of meetings. The next meeting will deal with questions of democracy and what this means for white politics.

As others see us

DOROTHY KNIGHT

"The time has come," the walrus said, "for yuppies and trade unionists to meet." So armed with open minds and smiling faces we set off

into dark Mamelodi with Louis Brendenkamp from IDASA as our guide.

We were welcomed into Donsie's home as if we were the long-lost son. After having met his family and some friends — Jerry, Joe and Morris from NUMSA — we were invited to sit down for a discussion on South Africa's problems.

As the evening went on, in between snacks and tea, we started questioning them on all aspects of the trade unions. Delicate subjects (to us it seemed) like foreign financing, viewpoints on violence and ANC support were answered without hesitation. We were surprised

to hear that they had the same sad feeling we had about the banning of the ECC.

Time was also spent talking, discussing, arguing and complaining about the forthcoming municipal elections and the role of the Conservative Party in South Africa. Many conclusions were made, thought of or discarded.

We questioned each other about what we can do to make a better place to live in. Morris wants to be my neighbour, Donsie and his stop-street/robots has his own way of showing democracy. Mildred (Louis' wife) wants a house in Mamelodi Gardens and Louis is a part-time gardener in the townships.

Towards the end of the evening Donsie gave a blow to our fragile yuppie egos when he said that he would like to meet more influential people next time. I mean really — one engineer, one doctor, one vet, one English lecturer from Tukkies and myself, a journalist — what more could he want? Kobus Neethling?

We did somehow feel like the old farmer in Morris's joke, astounded by Donsie's, Jerry's, Joe's and Morris's knowledge about world affairs.

So you don't know the joke?

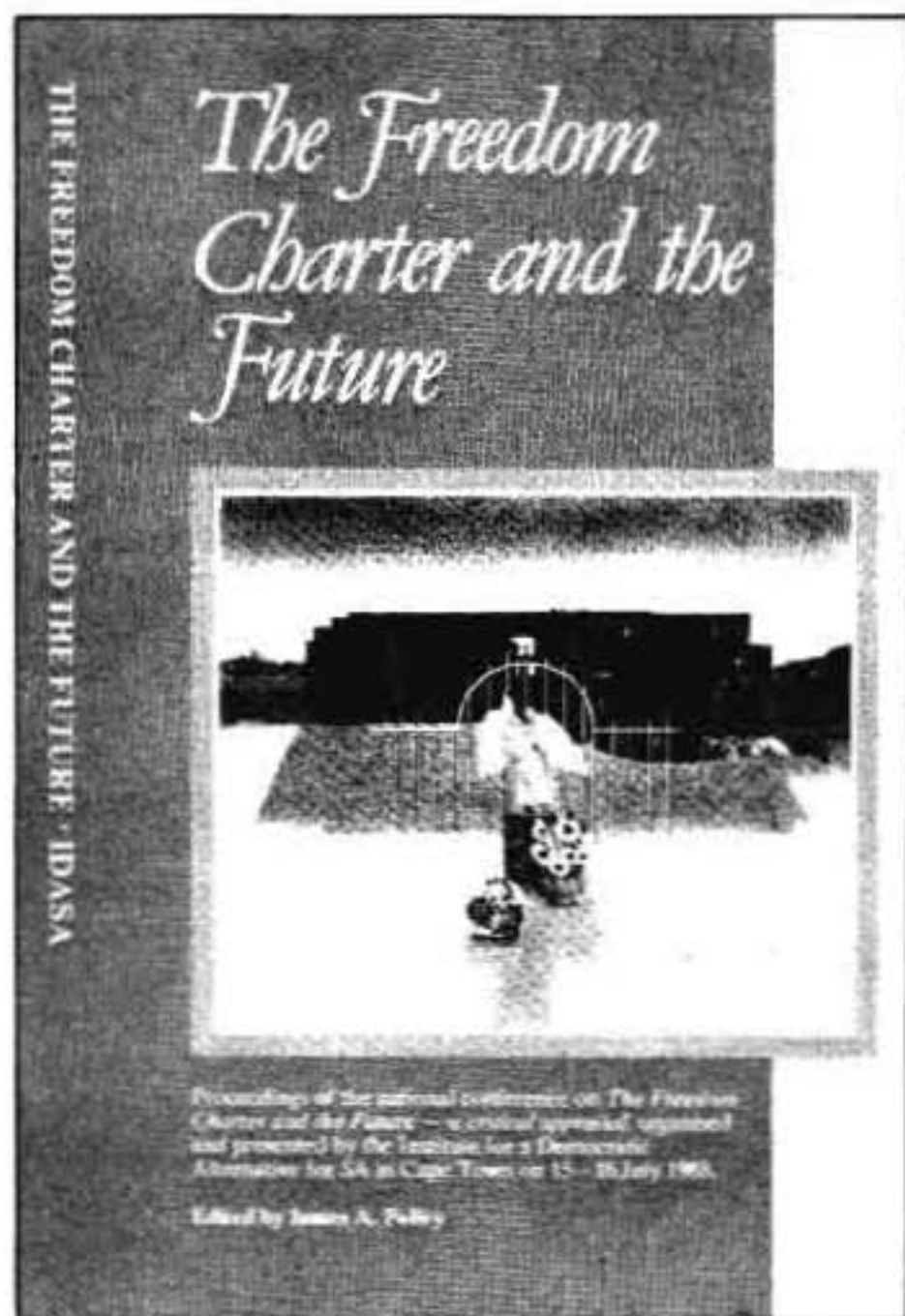
The schoolteacher wanting to educate some delinquents about South African literature said to his class: "We are all sad about the death of the great writer, Alan Paton. Now, class, someone please tell me who wrote the book, 'Cry the Beloved Country'?"

Accompanied by the "glazed doughnut" look the answer came: "Ons weetie."

Very upset with the happenings of the day, the teacher went to the old farmer on whose property he stays.

"You know," he said to the farmer, "the children of today know nothing. Today I am standing in front of my class and I ask them who wrote the book, 'Cry the Beloved Country' and they all answered 'ons weetie.'"

"Dis nog niks," said the farmer puffing his pipe, "gisteraand het iemand my mielies gesteel. Vanoggend roep ek toe al jou skoliere bymekaar en vra of hulle weet wat het my mielies gesteel. Hulle antwoord toe ook, 'ons weetie.' Ek sê jou nou dis hulle wat die boek geskryf het."



IDASA has just published the book displayed above, **THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND THE FUTURE.**

It contains the proceedings of the Freedom Charter Conference held in Cape Town in July 1988, comprising 20 lecture presentations, the Freedom Charter itself and some photographs.

The book can be ordered from:

THE MEDIA CONSULTANT, IDASA,
1 PENZANCE ROAD, MOWBRAY 7700.

ENQUIRIES (021) 47-3127.

The book sells at R8,00 per copy (postage included) and cheques/postal orders must be made out to IDASA when ordering.