

# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

THE OFFICIAL NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

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**M**ANY hours are being spent each year on discussions on the apartheid system, strategies to fight it and what the political system beyond apartheid should look like. Little time, however, is spent on investigating and discussing the equally crucial issue of the future of South Africa's economy.

IDASA's seminar on "A View of the Economy Beyond Apartheid" held in Cape Town on April 22 went some way to restore that balance, and the debate during the seminar proved that this topic was of such importance that similar seminars should also be organised in other parts of the country.

Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, director of IDASA, thanked the Swiss ambassador whose government had helped finance the seminar. Slabbert pointed out that while the government was accusing IDASA of being an ANC pawn and of trying to "undermine the whites", the seminar was the kind of activity that IDASA spent its foreign funds on.

The seminar was attended by the allowed maximum of 150 people and was addressed by Wayne Mitchell, national co-ordinator of IDASA; Duncan Innes, Professor of Economics at the University of the Witwatersrand; Jan Theron, general secretary of the Food and Allied Workers Union; Christo Nel, a prominent Johannesburg business consultant and director of PG Bison; Bheki Sibiyi, a member of the Board of Directors of the Black Management forum; and Van Zyl Slabbert.

Mitchell posed the question whether blacks could be asked to reject their socialist ideals when over the past 40 years the society had been forged by a unique combination of capitalist exploitation and racial oppression.

He said the foundation of a national democracy would most likely lead to a mixed economy that might gradually make the transition to socialism. The possibility of strengthening the authority of the

## IDASA breaks new ground in seminar on "The Economy Beyond Apartheid"

by Max du Preez

executive would have to be looked at if the question of nationalisation was to be debated.

Innes said there was a growing support for socialist ideas among South Africa's black population,



*Prof Duncan Innes of Wits University speaking on Socialism and Nationalisation.*

because capitalism was seen by many to be linked to apartheid. Socialism was also perceived as providing a mechanism to share in the wealth of the country.

In a socialist system the state gains control over the processes of economic growth and of the distribution of wealth. It implies ownership of the means of production and that basic services such as education, health and housing be free, or very cheap.

According to Marxist socialist theory, Innes said, the working class seizes power. But "working class" is an abstract concept and thus it is in reality not the class that is seizing power, but the organisations representing it. But often, as has to an extent happened in the Soviet Union, the socialist dream is not always fulfilled in modern reality as those organisations did not fully represent the interests of the working class once they gained power.

The nationalisation of the mining industry and the most important industrial concerns is a hallmark of socialism, although it is also called for by social democrats. Innes said there are three areas where a strong case could be made for nationalisation: public utilities on which the rest of the economy depended — utilities such as electricity, water and aspects of transport; companies fulfilling strategic functions such as producers of essential foodstuffs and armaments; and companies which fulfil an important role in society but cannot be profitable, such as large employers and important exporters.

But, Innes insisted, there should still be room for the private sector and for private initiative in a socialist system. This would be possible if there were an overriding national plan devised by the state to reconcile the two fields, to determine national economic priorities, to stipulate how it should be implemented, and to work out a time scale.

Continued on page 8



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dr Alex Boraine**

**I**N recent months, we have been reminded again of the abnormality of the South African situation. To try and work for a non-racial democracy in South Africa presents awesome problems and sometimes almost insuperable obstacles. Two examples will illustrate this point.

Firstly, the state has introduced legislation entitled "The Promotion of Orderly Internal Politics Bill"! Broadly, this Bill has four major objectives: *firstly*, it gives the Minister of Justice wide subjective powers to declare organisations and persons who receive foreign funding and whom, in his opinion, pursue political aims, to be "restricted" organisations or persons. This Act will be retrospective, which means that the moment the Bill becomes law, the total assets of the organisation concerned can be seized. *Secondly*, a major objective of the Bill calls for a complete blanket prohibition on the receipt of foreign funds if, in the Minister's view, these funds are going to be used to further or oppose any political aim or object. *Thirdly*, a number of amendments to the Fund Raising Act are envisaged in order to further control funds collected for educational, spiritual, religious, social and health care related products.

*Fourthly*, the Bill seeks to close any loopholes in the Affected Organisations Act and to provide for the declaration of an *individual* to be an "affected person".

The failure to comply with any of these provisions is punishable by a fine of up to R20 000 or twice the amount of money involved, whichever is the greater, or 10 years imprisonment, or both.

This is extremely serious and it is going to create enormous problems for organisations such as IDASA to continue working.

The second illustration is the use of "smear" tactics. Recently, the Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, once again linked IDASA with the aims and objectives of the

ANC/Communist alliance. His argument was that this alliance seeks to divide whites and to reduce the government's power base, namely white electoral support. What he doesn't go on to say is that any normal political party in opposition, whether on the right or the left, does exactly this in order to increase their own support and in order to take over the role of government in the country.

The objective of the Minister of Defence is clear: he first paints the ANC in the toughest colours possible, notes that the ANC is committed to a non-racial democratic future, further notes that IDASA has a similar aim, and therefore concludes that IDASA is deliberately conspiring with the ANC!

We have publicly rejected with contempt this further attempt to undermine the work of IDASA and have gone on record again that IDASA makes its own decisions, has its own agenda and will seek consultation and co-operation with all who are committed to a peaceful resolution of South Africa's growing problems.

Despite all these negative factors, IDASA continues its work and, as can be read elsewhere, has had a number of extremely successful projects in the first months of 1988. Notwithstanding the enormity of our task and despite the attacks by the state, we will continue to pursue the very worthwhile goals of non-racialism and democracy in a future South Africa.

## REORGANISATION AND STAFFING

**BY WAYNE MITCHELL**  
(National Co-ordinator)

**O**VER the past few months considerable thought has gone into ways in which IDASA could capitalise upon the successes gained during its first year of operation. In order to create a greater momentum in working for a non-racial democracy, IDASA has decided to restructure its present resources in a manner best suited to the tasks which lie ahead.

The Transvaal became the prime focus of attention as a result of the vastness of the task facing the region. Our present offices in Johannesburg and Pretoria will be joining forces at new premises in Randjiesfontein, near Midrand as from the 1st June under the directorship of Mr Steve Fourie who is presently the director of IDASA's regional office in East London.

Staff members presently employed in the Transvaal will be taking over specific initiatives which will be requiring special attention. The initial staffing complement in the Transvaal will be as follows:

Mr Steve Fourie  
— Regional Director

Prof Braam Viljoen  
— Educational Initiatives  
Mr George Pepper — Fundraising  
Ms Gamieda Jaffar  
— Regional Secretary  
Ms Marcia Haak — Communications  
Mr Louis Bredenkamp  
— Rural Initiatives

Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert — Director of Policy and Planning will be moving up to Johannesburg to join the Transvaal team in their endeavours to break new ground in the region.

Mr Steve Fourie's transfer leaves Ms Ronel Scheffer at the helm of the Border Region. IDASA would like to wish Steve and Ronel all the best for the new challenges which await them.

IDASA has also been fortunate over the past few months in securing the services of Mr Nic Boraine as co-ordinator in the Western Cape and Mr Laurie Nathan and Ms Janet Cherry in their capacity as consultants in the Eastern Cape.

## IDASA IN NATAL

BY WAYNE MITCHELL  
(National Co-ordinator)

**N**ATAL is fast becoming an added focus of attention for IDASA as we believe that it is a region where IDASA will be able to contribute in working towards a non-racial democracy. Resources and various political sensitivities has made IDASA cautious in its judgement as to how and when we should proceed to establish a presence in the region.

IDASA recently did a considerable amount of consultation with numerous organisations in Natal. The response was overwhelmingly positive to the extent that it was felt that a forum should be convened at a later date whereby organisations and individuals would be able to put questions and suggestions to IDASA in an open workshop.

On Saturday 23rd April Dr Alex Boraine and Mr Mitchell travelled to Durban to participate in these further consultations. The deliberations began with a breakfast — a meeting comprising local people involved in business, local politics, academic work and the church. The intention of the gathering was to inform various opinion leaders about the role of IDASA and its philosophy, and to give them some news of future events and activities.

From 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. we met with 15-20 organisations at the Central Methodist Church. Once again IDASA's goals and activities were outlined and people were able to gain a clearer understanding about IDASA and its future role. Most of the discussion centred around the political issues pertinent to Natal.

General discussion followed and it was noted that several organisations present already had official positions on IDASA. Their input was listened to with a keen ear by the IDASA officials present. It was this crucial conversation during the plenary session which indicated that the majority of those present were enthusiastic about the possibility of IDASA operating in Natal. It is now up to IDASA to make a thorough assessment of the consultations and then to decide upon strategy, financing and staffing prior to any definite commitments.

Dr Beyers Naude in discussion.

## BEYERS NAUDE HONOURED BY IDASA

**T**UESDAY 29 March marked a very special evening for Dr Beyers Naude and IDASA in Cape Town. Dr Naude is the Chairman of IDASA's Board of Trustees (and has recently been awarded with an honorary doctorate by the University of the Western Cape). The occasion was an evening of tribute paid to Dr and Mrs Naude for their unique and enormous contribution to the people of our country and, indeed, to the country itself. It was organised by IDASA in association with the director of the Cape Town Film Festival, Mr James Polley.

The high point of the evening was the South African premier screening of the documentary film made about the life and witness of Beyers and Ilse Naude entitled *The Cry of Reason — Beyers Naude: An Afrikaner Speaks Out*. Recently completed, this powerful and deeply moving film was made by Robert Bilheimer of the USA in co-operation with South African film maker, Kevin Harris of Johannesburg. Mr Harris was present for the premier and briefly introduced the film to the 250 assembled guests.

Speeches of tribute were made by the two directors of IDASA, Drs F van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Boraine. Both speakers emphasised the great influence Dr Naude's life had on them (and countless others both here and abroad), especially at critical points in their own lives and careers. Needless to say, similar

sentiments were expressed by various South Africans interviewed in the film. There is no doubt that God has blessed and used the work and witness of this man amongst tens of thousands of South Africans of all races. In short, the value of his integrity, humility, selfless service and personal courage is inestimable. And special mention was made of the unqualified support given him over all the years by his equally courageous wife, Ilse. Their life has been a life *together*, in every sense of the word.

In his response, during a social function which followed, Dr Naude also paid tribute to his wife, and emphasised that he had merely tried to live a life of obedience to God — to the best of his ability. He went on to comment on the nature of the struggle for a just and free society in this country, re-iterating his belief that the day of liberation from injustice and oppression *would* come! The evening was concluded by a special presentation made to Mrs Naude by Ms Beverley February of IDASA.

By all accounts it was a most memorable and enriching evening. For some participants it was "one of the most moving experiences" of their lives. There is no doubt that the lives of Beyers and Ilse Naude will continue to sustain and inspire those working for a non-racial democracy in the land of their birth. IDASA wishes them a rewarding life ahead!

## TRIP TO MOUTSE (KWANDEBELE)

BY GAMIEDA JAFFAR

**O**N Saturday, 23 April, 1988, a group of students from the University of the Witwatersrand (Faculty of Political Studies), accompanied Ms Gamieda Jaffar and Mr Louis Bredenkamp to Moutse in KwaNdebele. These students wanted to experience, first hand, the practical reality of life in KwaNdebele. The benefits of the trip are expressed in excerpts from letters of appreciation written to the Southern Transvaal office:—

Richard Dickman writes: "At the outset, I should express my gratitude to IDASA for having organised the visit . . . What best sums up my impressions of the trip, and I think this is the view of most of those who went, is to say that I learnt a great deal. I can say without reservation that the opportunity afforded us for interaction on a social basis was very valuable indeed . . . I was moved by the hospitality we were shown, and by the ability of people who have suffered so much to exhibit such warmth towards us . . . In retrospect, I recognise that as much as it was a learning experience for us, it was also a learning experience for the people of Moutse, who saw that there are white people who can associate with their compatriots in an atmosphere where race is not an issue. This, alone, will not solve the problems of this country, but perhaps it will go some of the way towards preparing us for a new society."

Tom Mosoko felt that "The smallness of the village makes the whole idea of making Moutse a homeland absurd. People there don't want to be incorporated in KwaNdebele or Lebowa . . . The idea of incorporation is simply not economically viable. It is absurd to say the least."

Mark Devenney explained: "Students of political science, all too often become enmeshed in highly theoretical and abstract concepts, far removed from the practical reality of life and intersocial relations. As politics students at Wits



*Wits students surrounded by the children of the Moutse village.*

then, the opportunity to spend some time with the Moutse community, an opportunity made possible for us by IDASA, and to discover the practical reality of apartheid first hand, was welcomed! The benefits of the trip proved to be far more a 'political learning experience' however, and perhaps the best aspect of the weekend was the interaction between peoples of all race groups — interaction which South Africa's segregated social structures refuse to allow.

"From our moment of arrival in Moutse we were treated as old friends. No holds were barred, a situation which one found a little uncomfortable at times, with the Moutse community laying on a feast for us. As that first evening progressed all facades were slowly stripped away and we mixed with each other as people of South Africa. As evening became morning, the drum beat of Africa lulled the group into sleep, whilst the mothers of the nation danced the dark away. In the space of a few hours, discrimination which had been entrenched in successive generations, became immaterial. The dawning of Sunday morning, with us sleeping peacefully in the homes of the people of Moutse, seemed to present hope for a future democratic dispensation in our land."

Mpho Nang emphasised that "The trip was a real-life experience because I thought that I didn't have anything to learn, because I thought I knew it all, but the trip proved me wrong. Now I know that I can learn new things from an old story. It was amazing for me to see the zeal and the commitment of people in dealing with issues concerning the problems of our country — especially the youth who are prepared to do anything it takes to see the liberation of oppressed people in this country."

Arthur Mosikare commented: "Cheers to IDASA for what it did. We live in a country where the press is under severe attack as a result making us unable to read and know about the realities of our country. Fortunately IDASA found an alternative. We received a very warm welcome from our hosts — the treatment they gave us would make any reasonable man conclude that the people of Moutse are not violent. They did not fight because they like violence but because they resisted being deprived of their South African citizenship — which is their right! . . . It's a pleasure for me to inform IDASA that I subscribe to their ideology and that we shall support it until it has accomplished its wish."

Mathe Sam who lives in the area

## Northern Transvaal (cont.)

wrote: "We were now faced (in Moutse) with a stark silhouette of abject poverty; a distinct pattern of homelessness shrouded in despair. This is to a large extent a consequence of a deliberate effort by the government to make 'homelands' economically unviable. But apart from such experiences, I think the trip was really worth it in the sense that it improved race relations.

"White students actually felt really at home and to a lesser degree comfortable, despite the strangeness of the situation. The social interaction between students and local people there was quite remarkable. I guess I felt more at home than others due to the mere fact that I also live under these conditions.

"All the weird stories and nightmarish accounts about vigilantes attacking people at night and police shooting teargas, were quite common to me. But I believe that since white students are not subjected to such callous experiences, most of them must have been shocked . . . .

"I think that through such visits people of other races will be able to articulate our problems comprehensively and perhaps become sensitive about our plight as the oppressed masses . . . . People back home (in Moutse) were quite inspired and to some degree comforted by these strange visitors."

## TRANSVAAL - EDUCATIONAL TRIP TO SOWETO

**O**N 2 March, 1988 Mr George Peffer took a group of women from the Women for Peace organisation to Soweto. The objective was to provide the women concerned with direct, first-hand information on living conditions in Soweto. It is clear that the trip was most educative as expressed in the following excerpts from letters written to the office by members of the group:—

Mrs Tapper of Parkmore —  
"Thank you very much for taking us around Soweto . . . Before I went I



*Women on the tour in Mshenguville, Mofolo.*

was apprehensive and wondered how safe it was, but once I was in Soweto I found the tour so enlightening. I think it would be tremendous if more whites could see how blacks live . . . It really was a most worthwhile experience."

Mrs Wood of Bryanston wrote —  
"A word of thanks for taking a group into Soweto on 2 March. I was very pleased that some members who live in Soweto were able to join us . . . I certainly think that many of us were made more aware of how some of our fellow South Africans live."

## News from the regions — EAST CAPE

### LECTURE SERIES ON CONTENDING IDEOLOGIES

**H**OW much do you know about the ideologies around which a future South Africa may be shaped? This is the question put to Port Elizabethans as they are invited to the latest series of lectures conducted by the Eastern Cape Office.

Called "Contending Ideologies on Trial", IDASA arranges for one speaker to speak in support of an ideology and for another to oppose it. This is very instructive to the audience because their attention is drawn not only to the positive aspects of an ideology, but also to any negative aspects. This is why the Series is entitled "on trial".

It has also proved very provocative to have speakers opposing each other and the audience participating in the debate far more readily as a result. We have attempted to keep these discussions away from an academic level so that they have more appeal for the "man in the street". Speakers also keep their talks as relevant as possible to the current South African situation.

At the time of writing, lectures and debates have been held on Marxism, Socialism, Communism and Liberalism. Still to come are Nationalism, Capitalism and Fascism. They are held weekly and in view of the success of the concept the entire series will probably be re-run in the second half of the year.

## IDASA CONSULTS WITH DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATIONS

BY BRAAM VILJOEN

**I**N the Transvaal during the last weekend of March 1988 a special weekend workshop took place. IDASA, Five Freedoms Forum, JODAC, Nusas, Jews for Social Justice, ECC, Women for Peace, Black Sash etc. sent delegates to analyse, assess and discuss the current political situation and to review programmes, strategies and co-ordination of efforts by the various organisations working towards fundamental change.

Dr Van Zyl Slabbert spoke on his perceptions of developments in white politics and a paper was read from a people's organisation.

An in-depth discussion took place on the proposed legislation on foreign funding of extra-parliamentary political organisations. The effect this could have on participating bodies and various

means of opposing the proposed bill were also discussed.

In the workshops the issues of human rights, the municipal elections later this year, group areas and education received particular attention. A very valuable session was held on the co-ordination of programmes for the months to come.

The regional office in Pretoria had a "feast" for once. They could rejoice with the people from Moutse on the ruling of the Appeal Court in Bloemfontein which ruled the action of the State President to incorporate the 3 Moutse areas into KwaNdebele as illegal. IDASA, in this part of the world has been particularly active in conscientising the public on the fallacies of homeland-development as applied in the specific case of KwaNdebele. So at least this was good news — while it lasts . . . .

## EDUCATIONIST FORUM ON PEOPLES EDUCATION

This is a forum where Port Elizabeth teachers of all persuasions meet and discuss issues which are important to them. The ultimate goal of the exercise is for the educationists to resolve differences instilled by different Teachers Unions and by different teaching environments and to concentrate on commonality of purpose. For all of them this should be to give relevant education, to the best of their abilities, in a non-racial educational system.

On 10 March 1988, Prof Shirley Walters of the University of the Western Cape, addressed such a group of educationists. Her presentation on "Peoples Education" was quite outstanding and certainly demystified the concept for a lot of teachers in the audience. Once one understands the glaring simplicity of the demands for a relevant educational system it is not difficult to see why Peoples Education holds

such an appeal for the great majority of South African school-going children.

As a result of this inspiring address there was an immediate call from some in the audience for more "contact" between teachers from

different racially segregated schools. Subsequently such meetings have been held at the homes of some of the teachers and this has been most gratifying.

*By Keith Wattrus  
Regional Director*

## News from the regions — WESTERN CAPE

### UCT MBA STUDENTS GO ON IDASA TOWNSHIP TOUR

BY THAABIT ALBERTUS  
(Regional Director)

**O**N Tuesday 22 March, IDASA-Western Cape co-ordinated a township tour for 58 MBA students from the University of Cape Town. The tour was conducted in the same manner as our "open" tours i.e. an interactive visit during which the participants have the opportunity of speaking with people from the township. It was very important for the participants, some of whom have already entered the business world, to be

exposed to the conditions under which the majority of their workforce live in the hope of them better understanding the legitimate demands of workers, and when they themselves join their respective managements and face the worker on the other side fighting for survival.

We believe that the system thrives on misinforming and imparting fear and suspicion amongst South Africans. When arranging tours of this nature we always expect different impressions from the participants. One of the feedbacks received from participants this time is that the political, social and economic realities faced by our people in the township are nothing unique but a Third World problem. The participant went further by mentioning places like Nairobi as an example. This is to me forgivable because people are always bombarded by a justification of legitimacy of starvation, lack of houses, monopolisation and exploitation. These are always justified by saying they have nothing to do with the policies and the mode of production but with the traditions of some people.

The experiences that the people from the township shared with the students were really eye-opening. Most of the participants did not understand the reason for the presence of the army in the township because the borders are up in the Northern Transvaal? One of their highlights were the survival strategies that people were employing, especially in the informal sector.

The appalling conditions of living in health hazard areas cannot be disassociated from the policies that are producing third world and first world economic inequalities. They are a direct result of the system. Moving through KTC, Old Crossroads, Lusaka and Khayelitsha whilst being a person from a privileged community does make a difference. The impact that the tour had can be summed up by

## HISTORIC CONFERENCE ON THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND THE FUTURE 15th AND 16th JULY, 1988

IDASA is presenting a national conference on the Freedom Charter and the Future in Cape Town over 15-16 July this year. The conference will accommodate 350 persons and will be held in the Robert Leslie Building at UCT. Registration for the conference is now open and prospective participants are advised to book well in advance. Registration forms are available from the national office (see details below).

The conference will attempt to expose white South Africans to the Freedom Charter, a document around which the non-racial democratic philosophy has been based since 1955. Prominent speakers will debate the contents of the charter with a view to gaining a clearer picture as to how the document will affect a post-apartheid South Africa in social, political and economic terms.

**The topics to be dealt with are:—**

- 1. The Congress of the People Campaign and the overall view of the Freedom Charter**
- 2. The Freedom Charter and the Future towards a non-racial democracy**
- 3. The Freedom Charter and the economy**

- 4. The Freedom Charter and Equality before the law**
- 5. The Freedom Charter and Equality in education**
- 6. The Freedom Charter and religion**
- 7. Freedom, Peace, Friendship and Sovereignty: What needs to be done towards a non-racial democratic future?**

The topics will be dealt with by structured panel discussions consisting of 4-5 members each. Amongst the prominent list of speakers are:—

**Mr Wynand Malan, Dr Farouk Meer, Dr Nthato Motlana, Prof Hermann Giliomee, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, Mr Bheki Sibiyi, Prof Lourens du Plessis, Prof Dennis Davis, Fr Neil McGurck, Prof Colin Bundy, Dr Beyers Naude, Mr Faried Essack, Prof Johan Kinghorn, Mr Wesley Mabuza, Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert.**

Registration for the conference is R50,00 (including all meals, teas and a social function). A limited number of scholarships are available. Participants can register by obtaining a registration form from any of the regional offices, or from the national office at: Hill House, 1 Penzance Rd, Mowbray 7700. Tel: 47-3127.

quoting the Class President of the MBA programme: "For all of us it was a sobering experience to come face to face with the economic and physical realities being faced by fellow South Africans no more than 10 km from where we live and study.

"It is a cause for the greatest concern to see people living in conditions that at best can be described as make-shift: no electricity, no sanitary systems as we know them, no running water, children who do not even have the opportunity of going to school. The resilience, dignity and goodwill of the areas we visited left an indelible mark, one that clashes sharply with the images that we see and hear in our national media."

The above is an extract from a letter received from the Class President of the MBA programme. The commitment of the students to do something about what they saw, is the challenge left with each of them.

## News from the regions — BORDER

### THE CHURCH AND POLITICS

BY STEVE FOURIE  
(Regional Director)

**T**HERE is no questioning the fact that IDASA's primary task is that of creating a climate for democracy. The impression many have is that this task is commenced when they listen to words of welcome at the beginning of one of our projects and ended with the thanks at the end of the meeting. The projects, however, represent just the tip of the iceberg. The Church and Politics seminar — a project of the Border region held since the last issue of *Democracy in Action* was published — demonstrates this.

The goal of the project was to get Christians in East London thinking about the role of the Church in furthering a truly non-racial democracy in South Africa. The question of the Church's involvement in

politics is a contentious one in South Africa so we assumed that the project would draw a significant number of people and possibly lead to a lively debate continuing well after the initial meeting.

As it turned out, the evening meeting was a good one in that the debate was attended by a broad spectrum of church goers, including supporters of the more conservative churches. The speakers were an Anglican priest, the Rev Mike McCoy, and a Gereformeerde Kerk minister, Ds Johan Myburgh, whose participation added an interesting dimension to the discussion. To the surprise of most he was in favour of the church's participation in politics. Mr McCoy delivered an outstanding paper in which he demonstrated that political involvement is not just possible for Christians but necessary too.

A speaker from the floor, who aligned himself with a politically conservative church, was very vocal in his opposition to pulpit politics, thereby greatly enriching the debate as his view is probably that of the majority of white South African Christians.

So far so good: debates like this which raise important issues are part of the process of creating a climate for democracy. What is also good is that these debates often lead to greater things. In this instance the support of the 51 participants and their expressed interest in exploring the topic further has led to the planning of a very large project on reconciliation and justice for Christians in East London which is to be held during June. But the real point of this account is that the projects themselves are only part of the process of creating a climate for democracy.

Most of the work related to this project went into making the meeting possible. This took the form of meeting ministers and discussing with them the need for such a project and the possibility of their participation and help in advertising the meeting among their congregants. The problems attached to an apparently simple activity like this illustrate how immense a task the creation of a climate for democracy in South Africa is.

A lively debate demands at least two speakers who are in opposite camps, so our first task was to find a speaker who would argue against the notion that the church should

be involved in politics. Much time was spent with a minister in East London who was an obvious choice for this task. He ultimately refused to address the meeting, indicating that he felt the meeting itself was an unnecessary intrusion on the church's agenda. However, one hopes that the time spent with him — during which the argument for the importance of discussing the topic was put — was worthwhile. Whatever the outcome of such meetings, they are part of the task of creating a climate for democracy.

The preparations for the Church and Politics project illustrate a second aspect of IDASA's task: that of enabling people to move forward in their thinking. One minister who was asked to advertise the project responded affirmatively but went on to say something to the effect that his church — a white congregation — is actively involved in politics because they frequently meet with black people. The perception which gives rise to such comments is a fairly common one among whites in this country and is that "if we just get rid of overt racism all will be well". It is the same perception which confuses "reform" with a real solution to the country's problems. In such discussions it is our task to get people to begin to think about what a truly non-racial democracy is.

The response of another minister to the advertising request further illustrates our work. This man said that if he did not advertise only events which are organised by his own denomination he would spend so much time making announcements that there would be no time for worship. Notwithstanding the fact that he was asked to distribute handbills, that he was compelled to make such a ludicrous statement as the only defence for his refusal must surely lead him to examine, however superficially, his own morally and intellectually bankrupt view on the nature of the relationship between the Church and politics.

Creating a climate for democracy includes the need for a multitude of conversations and meetings like the ones alluded to above. Involvement in the projects is much more stimulating and satisfying but it is these little encounters which may well count for a lot when IDASA's contribution to the struggle for a non-racial democracy is evaluated.

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 ...

Continued from page 1

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**

**I**t 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*