

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

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Not black or white ... but green

By Sue Valentine

ALTHOUGH the ANC does not have an environmental policy at this stage, a clean environment must be an important issue on the political agenda, according to returned exile Prof Albie Sachs.

Speaking at an Idasa/Earthlife Africa forum on the ecology in Cape Town in August, Sachs said it was a priority to put the "green" issue in a South African context. No one wanted a polluted environment, but an anti-industrial thrust was not necessarily desirable either.

"Nature can be cruel and terrible in parts

of our country. We need piped clean water in every house, we need electricity, we need antibiotics and vaccines . . . the real problem is to do something that gets down to our people living in the townships, the rural areas - and those in the beautiful areas as well," said Sachs.

"You don't have to be white to be green," he added, stressing the point that the envi-

'The ANC depends on those in the field to advise it on environmental issues'



Albie Sachs



Ursula Eid

ronment should be the concern of all South Africans. "The poor people are often very much in touch with the environment because it presses in on them."

Sachs, who is a member of the ANC's constitutional committee and teaches at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London, candidly acknowledged his lack of ecological expertise, and stressed that the ANC was open to - and depended on - those in the field to advise it on the issue.

He said disagreement and criticism did not mean one was necessarily anti-ANC. It was more positive for the organisation to get

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Not a great day for women

By Shauna Westcott

IT WAS "a great day", ANC national executive committee member Gertrude Shope told the crowd of about 8 000 gathered at Curries Fountain in Durban to relaunch the ANC Women's League.

(It was a Sunday afternoon in August with a mean wind blowing and half the press succumbing to flu.)

It was a great day, Shope said, "because it has united all the women of South Africa".

Such is the delirium of rallies, the realm of the slogan, and there was lots of sloganeering at the launch. Most of it came from

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'In this hour of exasperation and exhaustion, let us stand up and be counted like our sisters of the Bible'

Left: The ANC Women's League is launched in Durban.

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Idasa's goals are:

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

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Violence – will leaders meet test?

NOTHING exposes the bankruptcy of politicians more brutally than violence; nothing betrays the fragility of social order easier than its consequences; nothing challenges the quality of a country's leadership as unrelentingly as its continuation.

Violence makes nonsense of civility, of "talks about talks", of negotiating democracy. There can be no democracy without a democratic culture. And any culture that depends on, or draws its inspiration from violence and brutality negates culture and democracy.

Show commitment

When simple peasant folk die, or kill each other in an anxious frenzy of indiscriminate aggression; when township youth wander about in a normative void of burning people; when grown men believe that only through wanton destruction can they satisfy a quest for relevance; when armed thugs parade as patriots in order to intimidate, cajole and inflame, then leadership with any pretence of a commitment to peace and democracy should either confess its impotence or get off its ass and do something.

Doing something

"DOING something" does not mean absolving your own responsibility by blaming the other; nor does it mean romanticising the rhetoric of struggle with war talk and militant exclamations; or giving "official protection" to over zealous agents of "law and order". Doing something means facing up to our history, not pretending it does not exist or isn't alive in our daily interaction with each other.

It is futile for leaders to negotiate democracy if they do not first normalise security.

Our history has left us with a highly unresolved security situation. Who is a cop? And who is a soldier? What is law and what is order? There is the SADF, MK, Aquilla, SAP, KwaZulu Police, "Greenflies", kitskonstabels, ANC intelligence, NIS, APLA, Ciskei

army, Transkei army, Venda army, Warlords, Witdoeke, vigilantes, neighbourhood watches, security firms, people's courts, Makgothlas, gangs, criminals, impis and secret agents.

In such a situation, for leaders to posture and strut about – proclaiming progress, "Minutes" and the extraordinary solidarity of encounters promoting "peace, prosperity and democracy" – and not to explain to ordinary folk how their lives are going to be more secure and what their own responsibility is to make it so, is obscene.

Obscene and dishonest

The price of progress cannot be anarchy and the benefits of "agreements" cannot be social disintegration. Not if leaders are leaders and agreements mean anything.

And confusion becomes worse when leaders do not act against sabre-rattling, war talk, indiscipline, provocation and inflammatory tub-thumping amongst those over whom they have authority. When people die, families flee in terror and children suffer, it is not only obscene, but dishonest for leaders to walk away from accountability.

Tolerance and respect

OUR country hovers on the threshold of hope for a new beginning. As transition deepens so genuine security must stabilise. All leaders who profess a commitment to a democratic future have to come together and address the problems of violence because it remains the single most important indictment and threat to their leadership. Only once they have addressed it – sanitising our security from partisan abuse – can we realistically look forward to negotiating democracy during transition.

The hallmark of democratic negotiation is tolerance for difference and respect for diversity. Violence is its unholy antithesis.

— Van Zyl Slabbert
Director of Policy and Planning

WE MUST GET THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE GOING. AFTER ALL, A SOCIETY IS ONLY LIBERATED WHEN THE WOMEN ARE FREE!

RIGHT! WE ALSO NEED THEM TO ORGANISE THE CATERING AT OUR CONFERENCES!



MAYBE YOU COULD "ACCIDENTALLY" DROP THE TEAPOT ON HIS HEAD?

LETTERS

The best and the worst

PEOPLE who desperately want power are almost invariably morally unfit to wield it. This is the lesson of history, both in conquests and in revolutions to undo the injustices of such conquests. Empire-builders are to be found on all sides and in all walks of life. One great value of real democracy is that the electorate can throw out such people (whom they once expected to be saviours) and remove them from power.

But it is even better when the electorate learns never to give power to the demagogue who wants it, but rather to thrust it on the humble, conscientious, compassionate and honest people of ability who hate the responsibility of office — but who accept it as an unpleasant duty.

Don't accuse me of pipe dreaming. I have seen this happen in a social club and in a university department. But I admit that it is rare, even in such humble institutions and even more rare in politics.

However, this is the only way by which we will find real democracy with real peace and justice. Probably few, if any, of the present noisy contenders for power on all sides have the combination of humility, conscientiousness, honesty and compassion with the ability that will be needed. Chief Luthuli came near to having them all.

I believe that Nelson Mandela would like to show such qualities, but is under great

pressure to hide them. My choice among the more prominent names would be Archie Gumede and F W de Klerk, but the best people are probably not public names at all.

People who react with fury to what I have written here, would be among the worst.

C K Hill
Durban

Divided by 'rightness'

I HAVE just been reading the article in the July/August issue of *Democracy in Action* on "Ten days that shook my world". I want to congratulate Nic Borain on the thoroughgoing honesty and openness of this article.

If we can get the kind of honesty and intellectual integrity across the board which I see in this article, then there will be hope indeed for South Africa.

I have long maintained that part of our problem here is the extraordinary degree to which we are all divided by our "rightness" on everything.

The result is that everybody has every last detail of all their views set in concrete and this is what has created so much inflexibility, intransigence and alienation. Your article has given me fresh courage and hope about the honesty and integrity of the up and coming generation in our country.

Michael Cassidy
Africa Enterprise, Pietermaritzburg

JA-NEE

The trickle down effect

ALTHOUGH often not taken seriously enough, democratic consultation sometimes goes too far. At a community meeting recently, an Idasa staffer got up to go to the loo. "Where are you off to, Comrade?" the chair inquired and insisted on putting the matter to the meeting. After several moments of earnest (and for our staffer, excruciating) debate, she was excused.

— So goes the passage of democracy

Waar daar 'n rokie trek . . .

DAAR is baie gepraat oor die "nuwe" Suid-Afrika by die onlangse SAAK-konferensie op Stellenbosch. Toe die voorsitter op 'n stadium aankondig dat rokers nie hul ding mag doen in die saal nie, het 'n wysneus blitsvinnig opgemerk: "In die nuwe Suid-Afrika rook ons nie."

— Al die ou plesiertjies word ingekort

Daar's nog werk

TERWYL sommige in Stellenbosch brand vir 'n nuwe bedeling, moes 'n mens in dieselfde week van die SAAK-konferensie aanskou hoe die eienaar van 'n gewilde eetplek op die dorp probeer om 'n swart jongeling uit sy restaurant te hou.

— Eet elders

Sisters do it for themselves?

SO MUCH for the launch of the ANC Women's League. Rumour has it that the speech of one of the main woman speakers at the rally was written by a (male) member of the ANC executive committee.

— Behind every great woman a man?

Not a great day . . .

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men. Not much of it had anything to do with the struggle of women.

Natal ANC leader Harry Gwala kicked off with a bellicose message no different in substance from what Winnie Mandela got rapped over the knuckles for two days earlier: "If we don't get liberation through negotiations, we will take it by force."

He began by introducing himself as one known for talking about war and guns most of the time, adding: "Today I know is not my day. It is the women's day. Secondly, today is Sunday, when most of our discussion is related to church and the bible."

He then proceeded with a "war and guns" speech, tossing in two remarks presumably aimed at accommodating aspects of the day that were not his.

One was a reference to the biblical injunction to "turn the other cheek", which fitted smoothly into the war talk.

"That time of slapping cheeks has passed," said Gwala. "Now we fight with AK-47s.

So much for Sunday.

As for the women, he deemed it sufficient to characterise us as the "lionesses" that remain behind to protect the young when the "lions" run away, or alternatively, as those whose bowels do not betray them when the "diarrhoea" of panic seizes the males.

THE NEXT message from the men in the movement came from president Oliver Tambo. It was read by his wife Adelaide and offered little beyond statements of intent that are beginning to look a little tattered.

Tambo recalled observing at a 1981 conference of ANC women that: "If we are to engage our full potential in pursuit of revolutionary goals, then, as revolutionaries, we should stop pretending that women in our movement have the same opportunities as men."

He also recalled a joint pledge made in 1985 by himself and Namibian president Sam Nujoma that they "would not consider our objectives achieved, our task completed, or our struggle at an end until the women of South Africa and Namibia are fully liber-

ated."

Finally, he observed that in May this year the national executive committee of the ANC "re-emphasised the fact that women are not present in sufficient numbers in the structures of our organisations, especially at decision-making levels, and that as a consequence we have not yet fully integrated women's concerns and the emancipation of women into the practice of our liberation struggle".

While some would argue that we should be grateful for such pledges and observations, many others have run out of patience with formulations that beg the issue.

Far from being "not yet fully integrated", women's concerns have barely made the

'Far from being "not yet fully integrated", women's concerns have barely made the agenda of the ANC or other organisations in the MDM.'

agenda of the ANC or other organisations in the Mass Democratic Movement. Sexism is rife, sexual harassment all but unchecked, leadership all but entirely in male hands.

Sincerity must be proved in practice, as the ANC leadership is fond of telling the National Party. Where then is the evidence of the commitment to non-sexism of the ANC and the MDM?

Certainly not to be discerned at Sunday's rally, which featured a squad of drum majorettes in ANC colours who, horrible to relate, were a welcome distraction from the male ANC leaders who periodically commanded the microphone.

As for the women who spoke, Albertina Sisulu did make the point that "we are in the



Mrs Adelaide Tambo at the launch of the ANC's Women's League in Durban in August.

struggle not for one man, one vote but for one person, one vote", one that still needs to be impressed upon at least half the staff of the SABC, the press and a large number of the people whose views they foist upon us so relentlessly.

But the only person who conveyed any real sense of the rally as one dedicated to the struggle of women was an unnamed speaker from Natal who led the assembly in a prayer "in this hour of exasperation and exhaustion".

"Let us stand up and be counted like our sisters of the Bible," she said, invoking the examples of Deborah and Esther as women who rose above the strictures of the patriarchy.

IT MUST be said that the rally was preceded by a workshop attended by about 400 delegates from across the country. The hope remains that this was constructive and that the foundations were laid for an effective programme that will move the patriarchy – and their consorts – past the traditional postures.

But as a fleet of BMWs lined up to bear away the glitterati, and as the stadium emptied of people, hope seemed a small thing against the wasteland of litter left behind. The wind was meaner. Crows circled and settled among the crumbs.

Shauna Westcott works in the media department of Idasa.

Not black or white . . .

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constructive criticism from those who were concerned about where the country was going.

"The question of talking and listening to others is crucial. You have the expertise, advise us," he said.

Sharing the platform with Sachs was an MP of the West German Greens Party, Ursula Eid, who said individuals could not wait for politicians to give the lead. Whether they joined political parties or civic groups, individuals needed to be involved in environmental issues at grass-roots level.

Citing the ecological degradation in East Germany as one example, Eid said the Greens believed the lines of conflict were not between capitalism and socialism, but between the industrial society and nature.

She added that many people on the left blamed industry for every-

thing but did not acknowledge the role of the individual in environmental destruction. The Greens believed the personal was also the political. "If I always blame others, then I will never consider my own role," she said.

Global problems needed joint worldwide action which should start at community level. It was also not enough to repair existing problems, the causes had to be eradicated.

Eid said South Africans had a strong tradition of civil disobedience and consumer boycotts which could be extended to boycott shops and manufacturers who produced ecologically-damaging products.

"Leave the washing powders with phosphates on the shelves," she urged.

An ecologically-orientated society, she said, was necessarily linked to a participatory democracy where people had the right to know, freedom of speech and organisation.

Sue Valentine is Media Assistant with Idasa.

Power to the planet

IT IS difficult to think of one area of South African life that has not been distorted by apartheid.

It has distorted our society, our economy, our education system, and, most obviously, our politics. Less apparent has been the way in which it has degraded our environment.

The most obvious effects can be seen in the degradation and erosion of much of the land in the homelands. These scattered tracts of land have been forced to cope with hundreds of thousands of "surplus people", whose presence in "white" South Africa was unwelcome. Now we face the "future shock" of the environmental effects of rapid urbanisation with all its attendant pollution.

More insidious has been apartheid's invisible effects on the sub-regional environment.

By brokering civil wars in Mozambique and Angola, South Africa has contributed to widespread poaching, and in some cases, the wholesale slaughter of much of the indigenous wildlife in those unhappy countries. And this leaves aside the toll in human suffering.

South Africa is, in environmental terms, richly blessed and doubly cursed. We have a benign climate, rich diversity of flora and fauna, substantial deposits of minerals and a wealth of expertise. On the other hand, we lack some essential resources, notably rainfall distribution and water, while our politics and desire to dominate the sub-region have cut us off from the beneficial effects of co-operation with the sub-region.

This distrust of sub-regional co-operation has had at least two environmental effects. First, it is unnatural: the environment knows no boundaries, and however well South Africa may have conserved its environment, the environment as a whole will be undermined unless problems are addressed holistically. Secondly, it has forced South Africa to think strategically and to plan accordingly.

TO ILLUSTRATE this: South Africa at present produces 60 percent of Africa's electricity, and 80 percent of this is produced on the Eastern Transvaal highveld. If South Africa were an island, this would make perfect sense: we possess enormous reserves of low-grade coal. The point is that the emissions into the atmosphere from those power stations amount to 125 million tonnes per year. Common sense would suggest that we look around for alternatives, particularly as the atmospheric pollution is causing acid rain on a level comparable with that in Europe.

And there is an alternative! Eskom main-

The SA government's strategic need for independent electricity supplies is polluting our world, costing us dearly and keeping millions of South Africans in the dark, writes **JAMES SELFE**.

tains that there is a suitable stretch of the Congo River where without constructing a dam, it would be practical to place turbines capable of generating 100 000 megawatts, equivalent to the total current capacity of Africa. One could then have a plentiful, relatively cheap and non-pollutant source of power, which could supply not only South Africa, but the entire sub-region.

The problem is that up till now South Africa, for strategic reasons, does not want to be dependent on foreign sources of power. And so we continue to keep the coal-fired generators going, with all their attendant pollution while investigating alternative sites for more extremely expensive nuclear power stations.

Obviously we have inherited this situation

to distribute our resources to sections of our population to prevent further degradation and to rehabilitate our environment. To use electricity once more as an example: 70 percent of our own population is excluded from the benefits of electrification and, as a consequence consume wood as fuel. This leads to deforestation, and from there on to desertification and erosion.

It is thus urgently necessary to electrify as widely and as comprehensively as possible, but this requires a conscious political decision to re-allocate resources away from their present patterns.

Finally, it is necessary to make environmental issues relevant to that section of our population which is involved in a battle for survival. At present this section is uninter-



In the absence of electric heat or light, many are forced to use the fuels which destroy the environment.

'A plentiful, relatively cheap and non-pollutant source of power north of South Africa waits to be tapped'

and it will take some time to shed ourselves of the consequences of the "total onslaught" mentality. A new approach should even now be formulated in which each state within the sub-region compiles an inventory of what it needs, and what it can contribute, in order to develop the region while simultaneously husbanding its natural resources.

Simultaneously, political decisions will have to be taken by South Africans in order

ested in environmental issues because of grinding poverty and general alienation.

If the race against environmental collapse is to be won, civic and youth organisations will increasingly have to assert the right of our citizens to live in situations which are not befouled. They will also have to create opportunities for them to articulate demands of this nature.

It is a race which is nearly lost. Political systems come and go. Our planet is the only one we have.

James Selfe is researcher for the Democratic Party and a member of the President's Council.

The road ahead



Dr Boraine

The rapidly changing political environment has made it necessary for Idasa, and many other political groups and organisations, to examine afresh their role and future direction. Idasa executive director DR ALEX BORAINÉ gives an outline of the course the institute intends following.

IT IS wholly appropriate in a rapidly changing environment that Idasa, like so many other organisations, will need to review its role regularly. In doing this, it must avoid becoming so preoccupied with its own identity that it is prevented from doing any good at all.

After much discussion and debate within Idasa itself, as well as wide consultation with other organisations, we have concluded that the institute, in its present form, still has a meaningful role to play and contribution to make in South Africa. Idasa's staff has been engaged in a process of reviewing and revising the goals of the institute, and we recently concluded this process by identifying at least six possible ways in which Idasa could continue to play a significant role.

Critical Ally

In a time of competing loyalties and alliance-building, it is important that Idasa should maintain its independence. This will not be easy and we will have to be careful that this stance is not interpreted by some to mean that Idasa is neutral on the great issues of our time. In addition, there is a downside which should be acknowledged. By maintaining an independent stance, Idasa could lose out in helping to shape the policy and strategy of the major actors in the lead up to negotiations.

On balance the disadvantages of taking sides outweigh the advantages of being actively independent. In particular, it will make any attempt for Idasa to influence those opposing negotiations extremely difficult, if not impossible.

Obviously in seeking to maintain its independence, it does not follow that individual members of staff should not be able to exercise their own choice of political affiliation.

As a critical ally of the transition process, Idasa will be well positioned to encourage those actions and decisions which assist the transition towards genuine negotiations and

to discourage actions and attitudes which stand in the way of the transition process. In other words, Idasa should be seen as a critical ally of the transition process and not simply as a critical ally of any single political party or grouping.

It should also be understood that to be a critical ally of the transition process is not merely to sit on the sidelines and criticise. It means that Idasa will quite deliberately focus on key areas of transition politics. It should emphasise at least the following:

- transition and economic justice
- transition and education
- transition and civil rights
- transition and the media
- transition and grass-roots involvement

In the period of transition, these key issues should inform much of Idasa's planning and its efforts for the foreseeable future.

Interpreter

Against the background of considerable confusion in contemporary South Africa which leads to uncertainty, fear and opposition, it is important that those who are work-

'Idasa should be seen as a critical ally of the transition process and not simply as a critical ally of any single political party or grouping.'

ing directly in the political field, which spans both the government and the ANC, should exercise the role of interpreter. This is not an easy role to fulfil, but a very necessary one.

To interpret does not mean to explain away or to justify. It means rather to help people to understand why the government on the one hand is doing certain things and not others and why, on the other, the ANC or any other group involved in the transition, takes certain actions or remains inactive in certain areas.

To interpret is also to try and put the transition in historical perspective. This will mean at least indicating the costs involved in significant change and also the constraints which flow from the legacy of apartheid.

In seeking to interpret, Idasa's regional

structures come into their own. It is a considerable strength to have access to the grass-roots in most of the major centres of South African society. The importance of the interpreter's role for Idasa is highlighted by the government's inability to educate its own constituency.

Innovator

One of the distinguishing features of Idasa has been its willingness to undertake high-risk projects which most other organisations could not or would not attempt. A classic example of this was the Dakar Conference in 1987. It brought together key members of the African National Congress and leading whites, mainly Afrikaners, in order to begin the process of demystifying an organisation which by the nature of its considerable support inside South Africa was destined to play a major role in negotiations towards a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

A further example of innovation was the conference arranged by Idasa which brought together leading Soviet Union Africanists, members of the ANC and leading white academics in order to clarify the role of the Soviet Union in the Southern African regional conflict and to understand at first hand the meaning and the extent of perestroika.

A more recent example of the role of Idasa as an innovator was the meeting held in Lusaka in May this year between the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and close to 50 participants from inside South Africa.

Idasa has always sought to anticipate the future and to make possible certain events which inevitably would have to take place but were delayed either because of prejudice, history, isolation, fear or basic resistance to the idea itself. There still remains pioneering work to be done in order to assist the transition process.

Facilitator

One of the key roles – and probably one of the most important tasks – undertaken by Idasa at its inception and in its short life has been that of facilitator.

There are those who would argue that this

role is no longer necessary because of the new attitude of the government and in particular the unbanning of political organisations which now allows them to participate fully and freely in the process. However, I do not share this view and believe that there is going to be considerable facilitating required, particularly at local grass-roots level. There remains scepticism, suspicion and distrust which has to be broken down. Idasa is well placed to continue its work as a facilitator in this regard. Indeed, where breakdowns occur, as they will occur, Idasa may well be asked to assume the mediating role between groups and individuals.

In understanding its role as a facilitator, Idasa will have to take account of the shift away from old definitions and emergence of new definitions. One example of this is the division between Parliament, (which was seen as the insider) and extra-parliamentary forces (who were seen as the outsider). As long as the ANC was outside the process and Mr Mandela was locked out of possible negotiations, Idasa's focus was rightly placed on that movement and on that particular individual. But now the old definition no longer holds. The ANC, ironically, is the insider and although the Conservative Party is the official opposition in Parliament, it is very much an outsider as far as the transition process is concerned.

Idasa should take very seriously its commitment to "the outsider", whoever that group might be in one time or another in our history. Although it presents many difficulties, it is my view that Idasa ought to take seriously its responsibilities towards conservative white South Africans in order to encourage them to become participants in the irreversible shift towards a new South Africa.

In the same way the Pan Africanist Congress and the Azanian People's Organisation are also on the outside and it does not augur well for a peaceful and united South Africa in the future if they continue to remain there instead of being involved in the transition process or the negotiations themselves.

Educator

Almost all of Idasa's work, formal or informal, can be seen as fulfilling an educating role. Now more than ever it ought to give flesh to this concept.

In particular it ought to plan constructively and regularly to give people at every possible level a greater understanding of what democracy really means, not only in constitutional terms, although this is important, but more especially as to how it affects their daily lives and the institutions of which they have been a part. Essentially there exists a massive task of building a democratic culture in South Africa. Without the foundation of this democratic culture on which to build,

South Africa will be presented with even more difficulties than are inevitable in future developments. Idasa's media department, and in particular in its monthly magazine, *Democracy in Action*, seeks to present a mirror of its activities. In doing so it does far more than recording the projects. In the very act of describing these projects, the magazine raises important questions relating to democracy. It is of the utmost importance that at a regional and national level, Idasa should concentrate a large measure of its resources in encouraging the growth of a democratic culture.

This raises a very important question which Idasa has begun to wrestle with but has nowhere near reached finality on. The question is: who is Idasa's constituency? For obvious reasons Idasa has concentrated very much on white South Africans and in particular on those in influential positions who in turn would be able to influence others to move away from apartheid.

However, the chairman of the board of trustees of Idasa, Dr Nthato Motlana, has raised a very pertinent challenge.

'Idasa must plan constructively and regularly to give people at every possible level a greater understanding of what democracy really means.'

begin to think of joint projects.

Active Participants

Without detracting from the work that Idasa has done in the past, it could be argued that its role up to now could be likened to that of an impresario. In crude terms, Idasa has stage-managed events but has sought to act very much as facilitators. That is to say: its leadership and personnel have not been the prime movers. It has sought to bring together mainly Afrikaans-speaking whites with the leadership of the ANC. At various other levels, and inside South Africa, Idasa has brought white and black South Africans together into a common experience and a common encounter over a wide range of subjects. Inevitably staff members have become involved in the debates and discussions but they have tried to facilitate rather than become active participants in the strict sense of the word.

This is not to suggest that Idasa staff have



Idasa staff at the planning meeting:

(Standing) Van Zyl Slabbert, Melody Emmett, Keith Watrus, Sue Valentine, Alex Boraine, Charles Talbot, Paul Graham, Patrick Banda, Nic Borain, Gary Cullen, Mark Behr, Monde Mtanga, Dave Screen, Bev Haubrich, Hermien Kotzé, Sonia Schoeman, Thaabit Albertus, David Schmidt, Paul Zondo (Kneeling) Noel de Vries, Bea Roberts, Silumko Mayaba, Marianne Hilscher, Kerry Harris, Ian Liebenberg, Paddy Clarke, Max Mamase.

What he has said, in essence, is that while Idasa should continue its work among whites, it should enlarge its vision and therefore its constituency to specifically and concretely seek to include blacks in its normal programmes. This means in effect that Idasa should give careful thought on how it structures its programmes and where those programmes actually take place. In a sensitive climate it would be pure folly for Idasa to attempt to enlarge its scope without considerable prior consultation. This question of constituency and the need for a democratic culture in every area of South Africa has been raised with Mr Nelson Mandela, but the consultation will have to take place far and wide and over a period of time. While Idasa has the ability and the freedom to organise in the white community and has involved blacks in all its projects, it does not have the same freedom to do this within the black community. However, if the need is there – and I have no doubt that the need is there – and if the key leadership in the black community believes that there is work to be done and that Idasa can assist in doing some of it, then we could

stood idly by and allowed things to develop or to deteriorate as the case may be. Nor is it to suggest that its role has been entirely passive. Nevertheless, the focus has been to take the role of midwife rather than of father or mother; seeking to enable something new to be born out of the coming together of participants who have, for reasons of history, ideology and law, been on opposite sides of the debate.

Sooner or later Idasa will have to face the question as to whether or not it will have to go beyond the role of being the impresario and actually begin to participate actively.

This is an extremely difficult and sensitive question, and is probably a remote possibility and even a dangerous one to contemplate. But if it decides to continue its previous role and not go beyond that, it should be a considered view seen against the background of rapid change, and the institute should have reasons why it has decided to act one way or another. Idasa's course of action should not be a matter of default but rather a deliberate consequence of serious analysis, wide consultation and deliberate decision.

Wealth gap challenges business

By Marc le Chat



Christo Nel

AMONG its other socio-political ills, South Africa also has one of the worst cases of wealth distribution in the world, a problem which the business community will have to seriously address if it is to have some say in the "new" South Africa.

This point was stressed by Christo Nel of the Consultative Business Movement in a recent address to an Idasa "Future Forum" in Durban.

He pointed to shocking levels of poverty and inequality hampering a successful outcome: 65 percent of black households are below the poverty line, one in 27 blacks stand a chance of acquiring land (even to rent), there is an average of 14 people per black household, and 45 percent of all blacks are unemployed.

"It does not augur well on a social level," said Nel.

Furthermore, blacks own only two percent of all assets and occupy less than three percent of all managerial positions. Seventy percent of black people have no electricity supply in their homes and more than 70 percent spend over two and a half hours commuting to work daily.

The lowest-earning 40 percent of the South African population earn less than 10 percent of all income.

"Like it or not, as representatives of the affluent society, business is at the bridge-head. In this type of environment we have to respond," Nel said.

South Africa was too busy catering for the top income groups. "Every road and shopping mall built does not create wealth - it takes present wealth and trades with it. The result is that our people do not have the technical skills to take our economy into the next century - Verwoerd's nightmare has come true.

"Right now we need 2 000 more managers. By the year 2000 we will have to fill 200 000 technical skills positions. The current need is for 100 000 new artisans while only 23 000 are being trained".

In practice, the business community tended to hide behind an apolitical stance or acted individualistically, continuing to operate according to an unaltered investment pattern.

"And so we have a situation where the GDP per capita is getting smaller while the JSE is one of the best performing stock exchanges in the world! It's an irreconcilable paradox which cannot exist."

What must business do?

To begin with, they must empower their workforce in both skills and information. "We must fill fresh positions from inside and implement policies of life-long employment, from bottom to top, as well as create dignity in the workplace - saying to a worker: 'you are a name not a number'."

"We'll also have to look at the debilitating problems of homelessness and the way it affects productivity. Our society is like an over-washed, over-ironed old shirt and it is crumbling at the touch."

He said business would have to ask how it can make its infrastructure available to build a new South Africa.

Nel advocates a "creed" whereby the role of business will be to strengthen black political structures, the unions and the community.

He said it was pointless squabbling over a future type of economic system if business was not even prepared to tackle the problems of the present one.

To make it work, business must roll up its sleeves and be prepared to retire from many of its ivory tower misconceptions.

Marc le Chat is a freelance journalist.

TWO days before the August 6 talks in Pretoria, 400 delegates representing the ANC, Cosatu, Sayco, the UDF and various organisations throughout Natal gathered in Durban for a consultative conference on the Natal violence.

Top ANC leaders, including Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo, Thabo Mbeki, Gertrude Shope, Jacob Zuma, Walter Sisulu, Pallo Jordan and other national executive committee members, were present.

The size of the ANC delegation was an indication of how seriously they view the violence and the extent to which they are prepared to commit themselves to solving the problem. The conference, co-chaired by the ANC and Cosatu, lasted a full day and continued late into the evening.

Nelson Mandela briefed the delegates on the national negotiations and gave a report-back on what the joint working group between the ANC and the government had achieved so far.

He reported that the ANC had appointed a special sub-committee of four members of the NEC who would be permanently in place to address the issue of the violence in Natal.

He made it quite clear that the ANC was not prepared to tolerate a situation where the government spoke of peace yet carried out acts of aggression against people in Natal. Later on in the conference Mr Mandela also clarified the fact that the ANC did not intend to negotiate a settlement to the Natal prob-

ANC leaders face up to violence in Natal

By Steve Collins

lem in Pretoria. He said the ANC would support an approach which included people from the affected areas.

A crucial discussion was held on what a suspension of armed struggle would mean for self-defence. It became quite clear that the ANC was not saying that people did not have the right to defend themselves if they were being attacked.

On the question of talks with Inkatha, the conference agreed that a meeting between Mandela and Buthelezi was not the "be-all and end-all" of a peace process in Natal. The feeling came across quite strongly that solutions to the violence required a multi-strategy approach. The democratic movement reaffirmed it was prepared to talk peace and was not afraid or unwilling to talk to Inkatha. However, there was a general feeling of frustration over the extent to which talks or attempts to talk in the past were undermined by Inkatha.

The conference resolved that the government must now accept responsibility for ending the violence in Natal.

It was said that there could be no free political activities in Natal while apartheid structures, in particular the homeland system

around KwaZulu, remained in place.

The following programmes were adopted:

- A delegation led by Mr Mandela and consisting of the NEC

and the ANC leadership in Natal would meet with Pres De Klerk in August to discuss the violence.

- A special working group on Natal should be established urgently and would comprise NEC members, delegates from Natal and government representatives. Its task would be to receive reports on the violence and monitor it.

- There was agreement on initiating a broad based peace conference that should be convened in such a way to ensure the participation of all organisations committed to ending violence. This conference should not be limited to the Natal specifically but should also look at other violence in South Africa.

- Agreement was reached that all avenues possible should be explored to meet the five-person delegation from Inkatha who were involved in the initial peace talks.

The time spent by the ANC negotiating team in Natal before the conference gave them a very clear sense of dynamics in the region.

Just before the conference there had been various incidents in the Transvaal, indicating that the violence was developing a national dimension.

Steve Collins works on the Community Conflict Monitoring Service, an Idasa project.

The poverty of THEORY

In the face of utter disillusionment with socialism in Eastern Europe, certain notions doggedly adhered to on the left in South Africa face serious challenges. Political scientist DARYL GLASER argues for a third way between the mechanical theories of the populists' "two-stage revolution" and the workerists' notion of "permanent revolution". His views are summarised in this report.

South Africa has entered waters poorly charted in revolutionary theory. After years of debate between those who wanted the immediate introduction of socialism in a new South Africa and those who argued that armed insurrection or "national democracy" was a priority, there is a third option developing. That is of negotiations between former enemies of relatively equal strength which might issue in something less than the fully unitary and majority-ruled state that both "workerists" and "populists" took for granted.

Those on the left who are "mired in the categories of debates past", respond in two ways, says Glaser.

One camp says this is what happens to a revolutionary struggle that is not pursued resolutely to its socialist conclusion. The other says this is simply a stage on the long road to socialism.

Glaser says the terms of such disagreements must be rethought.

This does not mean that the socialist project must be abandoned, as "pessimists" and "new realists" argue. But it does mean casting aside all mechanical theories of revolutionary time and historical direction; all notions that revolutions only go forward in linear fashion, and that the only question is whether they proceed fast or slowly, in stages or perpetual motion.

The two-stage theory of revolution (first a struggle for national democracy, then socialism) appears to take democracy seriously, he says. But even a cursory examination of the theory's career in other countries reveals how tenuous is the thread connecting it to any kind of democracy.

The "national democratic stage" does clear the decks of certain obstacles to democratisation – colonial overlordship, military occupation or institutionalised minority rule. But it also provides a cloak for autocratic elites, scornful of the most basic "bourgeois democratic" rights.

The second or "socialist" stage has tended to see the disappearance of such freedoms and rights which survived the first stage.

Glaser raises serious doubts about whether the theory can serve as a base for "the urgently needed recombination of democracy and socialism".

He advances three reasons for his reservations:

- The two-stage theory rests on notions of both "the people" and "the working class" as homogeneous groups whose interests can be represented by a single national liberation movement and its allies. Such movements tend to emphasise the importance of unity, are intolerant of dissent, and are wary of devolving power to local or grassroots bod-

'Both theories run the risk of substituting for democratic practice the supposed strategic wisdom of supposedly far-seeing revolutionary elites'



ies whose activities might contradict the "unifying" role of the leadership.

- The theory licenses the view that democracy is merely a stage to be passed through on the way to socialism. It also sanctions second-stage abandonment of elementary forms of pluralism and basic human rights.

- It sanctions attempts by "national democratic" elites to regulate the timing and direction of the building of socialism from above. The result is "bureaucratic paternalism".

So much for the two-stage theory. Glaser then asks the question whether the theory of permanent revolution offers an escape from these difficulties?

Again, he argues there are grounds for doubt. Like the two-stage theory, the idea of a workers' revolution offers a formula for the

timing and direction of socialist change which could become rigid and prescriptive, neglectful of democratic preparation and intolerant of disagreement.

Both theories, in summary, run the risk of substituting for democratic practice the supposed strategic wisdom of supposedly far-seeing revolutionary elites. The remedy, says Glaser, is "a logic of democratic preparation" – commitment to democracy and socialism must be pursued together, each as a precondition of the other's fullest and richest development.

It would keep alive the ideals of socialism, making every effort to stimulate, rather than silence or defer, discussion of its possibilities and prospects.

He envisages a community "thick with parties, unions, newspapers, new social movements of feminists, ecologists and so on", in which socialists would contend for democratic control of the state.

Glaser spells out (the long-held liberal view) that, if an electorate voted for one socialist party rather than another, the defeated socialists must accept the verdict.

Further, that if an electorate "votes for a pro-capitalist party, the whole socialist camp would have to agree to go into a democratic and legal opposition.

Unlike the two-stage or permanent revolution theories, the logic of "democratic preparation" allows for going backwards too.

He suggests that while negotiations continue, the left should use the time to learn to live with each other as well as political organisations outside the left.

"At the very least socialists must seek the widest possible acceptance of basic democratic ground rules

These rules and their common acceptance are especially vital in South Africa, given its history of violent organisational rivalry and the current civil war in Natal which threatens to spread elsewhere.

Daryl Glaser is a Ph D student at Manchester University.

(With acknowledgement to *Work in Progress*)

Shaping a new future in our cities

There is a growing consensus in favour of single non-racial municipalities in South Africa, with initiatives to this end proliferating throughout the country.

DAVID SCHMIDT reflects on the important implications of this thrust towards democracy at local government level.

THE DEBATE about the future of South Africa's cities is taking on a growing importance and urgency.

It is in the cities where change is happening most dramatically and where South Africa's political, economic and social crises are concentrated and experienced in their most acute form. There is a growing recognition that South Africa's ability to build an effective non-racial democracy depends upon our ability to constructively transform our cities.

In the city/local government debate there has been a growing consensus in favour of single non-racial municipalities that would have been unthinkable even a year ago. The Cape Municipal Association says all races should serve in and vote for a single local authority. Eskom states that electricity supply authorities can only provide electricity to townships in an adequate manner if they are structured across racial boundaries. The Urban Foundation in its recently released policy document titled "Policy Overview — the Urban Challenge" states that "the racial base of the (local government) structures is at odds with the realities of the emerging, economically-integrated and growing cities". Extra-parliamentary civic groupings across the country have mobilised around calls for "one city" and "a single tax base".

Certain key concepts — "open city", "one city" and "democratic city" — have become part of the language of the debate about the future of the city.

"Open city" refers to the abolition of the Group Areas Act and racial discrimination in city government. It does not, however,



Tembisa . . . one of many poor areas that would require a redistribution of resources

address the question of local authority boundaries that have been established by apartheid considerations.

The "one city" concept refers to the redefinition of city boundaries in terms of functional and economic criteria to ensure that all local authorities are viable entities. It recognises that black areas subsidise white areas through their labour and purchasing power, but do not at present receive the benefit of the rates generated in these areas.

The "democratic city" idea concerns the question of how the city is to be structured and managed to ensure effective democratic government and maximum participation.

Talks between white local or provincial

'There is recognition within the ANC/MDM civic movement that the restructuring of local government to create interim alternatives needs to be examined'

authorities and extra-parliamentary civic groups to discuss development issues such as electricity provision, land allocation and new ways of governing cities have been conducted in a number of towns and cities.

The negotiations between the Soweto People's Delegation and the Transvaal Provincial Administration has been a landmark event in this regard and has prompted a range of similar initiatives across the country. Mamelodi, Daveyton and Leandra, for example, have formed similar "People's Delegations".

Meaningful negotiations about the

restructuring of local authorities have not been possible, however due to the absence of any agreed national framework within which such negotiations should take place. For example, the Soweto People's Delegation in its demands for the extension of the tax base specifically refrained from making proposals around one political structure for greater Johannesburg because it considered this to be a constitutional issue for the whole nation.

IN JUNE, the government unveiled its proposals for such a framework when it released the report of its Thornhill Committee for comment. Legislation based on this report is currently being drafted.

The report proposes negotiations by leaders of all races in each city for a new local government system and suggests that they consider five different constitutional options for a new city government. These are:

- Racially Separate Municipalities. These will be allowed only if each municipality within the city is financially viable. If cities opt for separation, the white city will have to transfer some funds to black areas and some business areas will be included in the black municipality. Thus, white cities that opt for segregation will not avoid financial responsibility for black areas.

- Local Service Committees. Separate local authorities but with a joint "services council" administrative body. The option is similar to the present Regional Services Council system.



"white" areas.
respects:

● Neighbourhood Committee System. This will be a common local authority made up of non-racial geographically-based neighbourhood management committees with a single tax base and administration. This would allow local communities some power to control their "own" affairs. Richer, mainly white, areas could use this to dilute the power of a majority local government.

● Majority Rule Municipalities. A single municipality elected on a common voters roll, which could be qualified by "minority protections".

● Other Options. This would allow any combination of the above, or any other locally negotiated model.

The Thornhill Report represents a significant departure from previous government thinking in that it offers the following four

● The idea of "local option" - that local authorities can have a variety of constitutional and institutional forms within a framework of broad national guidelines, as opposed to strict centrally legislated local structures.

● The idea of "negotiating a local option" - that the only acceptable forms of local government are those negotiated by all the people of the city. Thus, white municipalities can only choose to maintain racially separate authorities if they can negotiate this at a "local indaba" involving all residents of the city.

● The idea of "negotiating a local option at a metropolitan level" - that the new system would have to apply to the entire metropolitan area. The report is vague on what constitutes the metropolitan area and suggests that it is limited to the "white" city together with those townships which were part of the municipal area before separate township administrations were established in the 1970s. This is a narrow conception.

● The idea of "economic viability" - that whatever system is negotiated must be economically viable. This necessarily involves a redistribution of resources from the "white" city to poor areas and is related to the demands of various community organisations for "one tax base".

The fundamental problem with the Thornhill proposals is that they suggest a procedure for negotiation that itself has not been negotiated. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that the committee

conducted most of its investigation prior to the developments of February 2.

THERE is a strong perception in ANC and MDM quarters that the proposals are an attempt to remove issues of local government from the national negotiations agenda and provide a variety of mechanisms for entrenching apartheid and "white" interests at a local level. It is likely that any attempt to legislate these proposals and prescribe them as the framework for local government restructuring will be strongly resisted, and will undermine rather than foster the possibilities of constructive negotiations.

The proposals and an acceptable national framework for restructuring local government are, still being discussed in community organisations however and there has not as yet been any official response to Thornhill.

A framework regarding the process and content of local government/city negotiations needs to be negotiated at a national level. Key areas where overall national guidelines need to be established would include:

- The definition of metropolitan and town boundaries.
- The financing options available to cities and towns.
- Representation and procedures for local government.
- The relationship between national, regional and local government.

It is broadly acknowledged, however, that there are significant differences between various regions and that the details of any constitutional arrangement for local government would have to be negotiated at the local level.

Until such a framework is negotiated, the present times offer a range of possibilities for local level negotiations. Talks about development issues and resource allocation will continue and become more widespread.

In addition, there is recognition from within the ANC/MDM civic movement that the restructuring of local government to create interim alternatives needs to be examined. However, an important proviso is that these do not pre-empt national negotiations.

LOCAL negotiations are not one-off events but are part of an on-going process. They do not begin after national negotiations but take place simultaneously in a mutually complementary and parallel way. In this, they have a vital role to play in stabilising, entrenching and giving momentum to national negotiations.

It is further through involvement in the development of democratic government structures at a local level that participation in the transition process by the people can be maximised and where we can most favourably begin to build a democracy in which all South Africans can actively participate.

David Schmidt is a regional coordinator in Idasa's Western Cape Office.

SCHOOLS

—for the—

FUTURE

conference

SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE CONFERENCE

CAPE TOWN SEPT 21-23

IIdasa, in conjunction with a broad range of educational institutions, seeks to draw together all parties in the Western Cape with a direct interest in school education at this conference.

The aim is to examine the demands that the future will make on education and to devise practical strategies to bring about non-racial schooling.

It hopes in this way to complement national initiatives for a unitary education system and to contribute to the development of effective and equitable non-racial schooling in South Africa.

The conference has its origins in the "open schools" issue. Student referenda, school committee deliberations or polls of parents on this topic have been features of the life of many white schools in Cape Town during the past few years. More than 40 schools have indicated their willingness to open to all.

Yet there has been little response to the debate within the black community where it is perceived as a "white issue" that holds no promise of positively affecting the crisis in black education.

Instead, there is concern that the inevitable drift of better scholars to formerly "white" schools will further reinforce the poverty of township education.

Consequently there has been a growing recognition that the concept of "open schools" needs to be deepened. It cannot be isolated from the educational needs and demands of the black community.

The emphasis of the conference will seek to address the issues as part of the creation of a new single non-racial education system capable of meeting the demands of all South Africa's people.

The conference logo embodies many of its concerns:

- the putting together of heads to resolve a common problem.
- the parent-teacher-student triad that is the school community.
- the coming together of people from the various apartheid education departments to work towards a non-racial unitary system.
- the symbol of light and hope - the "sun" - that will be created through the process of working out a common future together.

For further details of the conference, contact David Schmidt at Idasa, Western Cape, (021) 22-2150.

The long road back for Fort Hare

After nearly 30 years of repressive administration, the once highly-respected University of Fort Hare is taking its first tentative steps on the tricky path to democratisation. HERMIEN KOTZÉ reports.



Students on Freedom Square at Fort Hare.

picture: ROB POLLOCK

THE world-wide tide of democratisation has reached the small town of Alice in Ciskei, opening up fresh opportunities for meaningful education at the once esteemed University of Fort Hare.

At one time the academic home of Nelson Mandela, Robert Mugabe, Govan Mbeki, Robert Sobukwe and Oliver Tambo, it has been under Broederbond control for almost 30 years. In 1987, the former president of Ciskei, Lennox Sebe, attempted to mould it into his very own university.

The sad history of this period is well known and needs little elaboration. Anyone who has been connected with this institution over the years – students, academic staff and workers – can weave long tales of woe over the many injustices, the racism, arbitrary dismissals and expulsions, the content of curricula, the general air of authoritarianism, the repression, favouritism and so on.

However, it seems all that is changing rapidly. Soon after the Ciskei coup d'état in March this year, a whole series of events led to the demise of the Fort Hare top management. The autocratic rector, Prof Lamprecht, his equally autocratic deputy, Prof D Moore, and four registrars (one of whom held a matric certificate whilst his black deputy was working on a Ph D) all left. Few people, even from conservative ranks, mourned the rector's departure.

The next step was the disbanding, by Ciskei "military decree", of the Fort Hare council and the election of a new council with Prof Francis Wilson of the University of Cape Town as chairperson.

Other members included Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Bishop Russell of Grahamstown, the Rev Fcinca of the Border Council of Churches, Prof John Dugard of Wits, Mr Govan Mbeki, the Rev Arnold Stofile and Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu of the University of Transkei.

The previous dean of the faculty of economic sciences, Prof Brian Gardner, has been

'We can breathe now, it's like there is oxygen in the air again'

appointed acting rector until June next year to give the council time to find an appropriate person for this very challenging job. A new chancellor still has to be elected and Mr Nelson Mandela is a strong favourite.

There seems to be a widely-held belief at Fort Hare that the democratisation of the top structure will have a "trickle down effect" on the rest of the institution. This is probably correct – already an environment for debate and critical analysis, which was not tolerated under the previous administration, has been created.

The need to democratise all the decision-making forums and committees is generally acknowledged.

The newly formed non-racial Democratic Staff Association (DSA) played a very important role in pressing for all these changes and it provides the central forum for debate on these issues.

The need for a realistic and sensitively applied form of affirmative action is very high on the agenda. DSA spokesperson Msi

Silinga assured me that there will be no crude and rapid policy of Africanisation and that all new appointments will be made on merit alone.

I did, however, pick up some mumbblings of isolated cases where black applicants with uncompleted honours degrees were short-listed while white applicants with doctorates did not make the cut. One hopes that such examples are only teething problems!

SO IT seems that a very different Fort Hare has started emerging, and this was borne out in a recent visit to Alice. The changed atmosphere on the campus is already almost tangible. There was a general feeling of enthusiasm and excitement in the air. Interviews revealed a common initial response – an immense sense of relief. "We can breathe now, it's like there is oxygen in the air again", said many.

The new openness and improved student access to the administration has also meant an almost total disappearance of class boycotts and similar forms of campus protest.

The students' commitment to non-racialism and democracy was amply illustrated when they protested against the appointment of a token black acting rector and insisted that the best person be appointed regardless of colour.

In a moving speech at the first post-coup graduation ceremony in June, Francis Wilson called it "a marvellous moment . . . a gap, an opportunity in our life, which we have not seen for many years". In spite of the atmosphere of hope and careful optimism, it is widely acknowledged that there is a long, long road ahead – or to use Archbishop Tutu's words, "it's a long way to get Fort Hare back to where it should have been".

By Hermien Kotzé

New needs, new universities

MANY questions have been raised about the future direction and role of Fort Hare – and all other universities – in the context of transformation and transition in South Africa.

The regional office of Idasa in the Border therefore felt it could make a contribution by holding a public meeting on the campus, on "The role of a university in a changing society and beyond."

The fact that we were allowed onto campus was an achievement in itself, since the previous administration would never have permitted this.

The meeting took place on August 2. It was co-hosted by the Democratic Staff Association and was attended by an enthusiastic audience of about 500 staff, students and interested persons from the region, reflecting a general desire "to know what is going on".

The speakers were Prof Francis Wilson, in his capacity both as chairperson of the new Fort Hare council and that of "local boy" (he grew up in the district) and Mr George Mashamba of the Education Policy Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Both speakers raised key issues that warrant consideration by all Southern African universities. Similar themes were tackled by the guest speaker at the June graduation ceremony, Dr Ahmed Kathrada.

The first was the fact that universities operate in the wider context of a country undergoing unprecedented social and political upheaval.

In his graduation address, Dr Kathrada remarked that learning could not be an abstract intellectual exercise. The situation today demands that universities go beyond verbal condemnation of racist education and lip service to the cause of freedom and start playing an active role in the process of educational and social transformation.

Both Wilson and Mashamba reiterated this point and urged universities to involve themselves in the process of change, rather than being forced into it later.

The notion of the neutrality of universities and academics was repeatedly rejected by all the speakers. It was plain that this has never been possible, and certainly not so in present-day South Africa. The very concept of so-called "neutrality" is ideologically loaded and it has been misused to justify reactionary policies and practices, especially at Fort Hare.

The notion of preparedness was also highlighted. Wilson observed that the present political restructuring was a crucial, but insufficient, condition for the achievement of a better society.

The role of a university during a period of transition would thus imply the need to prepare people for the challenges posed by major reconstruction and development.

Mashamba stressed the need to inculcate in students a sense of realism regarding the potential and constraints of a new South Africa.

Crucial issues that needed urgent attention included the attainment of a political democracy; the restructuring of the education system — specifically the financing

thereof; massive unemployment; the housing crisis; the land issue and the nature of the post-apartheid economy.

In the light of this, it was only natural for the speakers to call for relevance, in both research and university curricula. This call was also echoed in discussions with Fort Hare academics and senior students. It is especially important at Fort Hare where many academics have not kept up with the latest academic and research trends — a situation that can be attributed either to their outdated ideological preferences, plain laziness, or both.

The development of human resources will remain an important part of the role of a university, but students should not only be prepared for service in commerce and industry, but should also acquire intellectual and creative skills for the development of oppressed communities. They need to "plough back" their skills into the community.

At the June graduation ceremony Dr Kathrada, while recognising students' right to independent student activism and struggle, reminded them of the daunting task ahead. He called on students to take their academic responsibilities seriously and to exercise firm discipline.

"We have a future to prepare for, we have a country to build, we have an economic and social order to reconstruct. We do not want generations of under-qualified, ill-disciplined youth who will be unable to make an effective contribution to tomorrow's society," he said.

Academic standards is a particularly hot topic at Fort Hare at present. The "Broeders" secretly (and sometimes not so secretly) predicted doom — an ironic situation indeed in the light of the dubious standards under Broederbond rule. Fort Hare has not exactly been a centre of excellence during the last 30 years!

But this concept is a minefield at the moment and demands the intense scrutiny of academics. Whose standards are these, who determines them and what do they mean?

Kathrada's thoughts on the subject expressed at the graduation ceremony are

worth repeating: "To say that a university must become a people's university is not to imply that there should be a lowering of academic standards and norms. On the contrary, we should encourage all our students to strive towards academic excellence but, at the same time, take into account the disadvantages that black students suffer as a



The head of the Fort Hare council, Prof Francis Wilson, with students.

result of the deepening crisis in education.

"These conditions require a sensitive, innovative, non-racist approach from universities which would assist our students to excel at the higher institutions of learning."

In the face of all these changes and plans, I

'We do not want generations of under-qualified, ill-disciplined youth who will be unable to make an effective contribution to tomorrow's society'

could not help but wonder aloud about the fate of the people who came to Fort Hare and stayed for 20 years or more to implement "Bantu Education". The general response to my question was that there will be no witch hunts, but that the radical paradigm switch will probably leave people with the old choice of adapt or die.

The "Broeders" had been so utterly successful in making Fort Hare a miserable place. Yet, in the afternoons, when they were back at their homes in Fort Beaufort, one could almost imagine the old days on the campus before their arrival. It was as if those days were patiently and knowingly lurking in the wings. And now they seem to be back.

Hermien Kotzé is Regional Director of Idasa in the Border area and a former lecturer at Fort Hare.

Dhlomo looks into future

The third phase would consist of actual constitutional talks which, all being well,

THOSE interested in a new socio-political order need to

begin working now to entrench the values of multi-party democracy and to promote national reconciliation, according to Dr Oscar Dhlomo, former secretary general of Inkatha and Minister of Education in KwaZulu.

Speaking to Durban business people at an Idasa "Future Forum" lunch in August, Dr Dhlomo outlined the questions that would need answering as South Africa made its way along the path of constitutional restructuring.

Dr Dhlomo, who is soon to launch the Institute for a Multi-Party Democracy, said the conclusion of the Pretoria Minute marked the end of the first phase of the restructuring process: removing obstacles to negotiation. South Africans could now look forward to the next phase - discussions about the negotiation process itself.

would lead to the drawing up of a new constitution. This, said Dr Dhlomo, was likely to be the most difficult of all the phases.

This phase should, among other things, attempt to reconcile the political aspirations of the black majority with the political concerns and fears of the white minority.

A unitary or federal state, proportional representation, the creation of electoral constituencies and debate over economic policy would all fall into this stage.

The final phase would be democratic elections and the installation of a new government which would "hopefully rule in terms of the socio-political structures agreed upon in phase three," said Dr Dhlomo.

New warnings from Eastern Europe

THE European Nuclear Disarmament (END) annual convention opened on July 3 with a clear reminder of the astonishing year the world has just seen. As an Italian delegate, Raffaella Bollini, remarked: "For the first time, there are no empty chairs for our friends from the East."

To reaffirm the extent to which the political landscape of Europe has changed almost beyond recognition in less than 12 months may be superfluous. Yet in many ways it is only when one comes face to face with individuals and groups most touched by the recent revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe that one comprehends to some extent the enormity of these events.

To witness many of the Romanians, Soviets and Hungarians preferring to go shopping in downtown Helsinki rather than attending some of the fascinating discussions or plenary sessions, was to see right-wing propaganda come alive before your eyes.

What's more, there was no shame about such behaviour. "Our people are sick and tired of control by bureaucrats, we need space to breathe," said Mare Arnaas, one of the Estonian delegates and a former member of the Soviet Union's Communist Party.

END was formed in 1982 around the crisis of human rights and nuclear proliferation worldwide. Amid the celebration and general spirit of liberation that characterised this year's convention, newer, albeit different, warning signals were exposed.

Romanian journalist William Totok said: "The aims of the December revolution have already been subverted. Members of the opposition are seen as the enemy and must be annihilated."

In Czechoslovakia and East Germany too, individuals who have played the role of justice and peace activists for decades have now been drawn into mainstream political life, literally overnight. Those who marched and sang during mass action in November and December last year are now themselves seated in the chairs of their former authoritarian masters.

A question that was asked time and time again during the conference was how these movements will cope with the complex responsibilities of national and international politics and economics, security, peace and justice as they become the legislators and

What happens when traditional peace activists or freedom fighters take over the reins of power? This was one of the key issues among a myriad of others raised at the European Nuclear Disarmament convention hosted jointly by Finland and Estonia in July. MARK BEHR attended the events in Finland.

administrators?

Sadly time did not permit the 1 300 delegates to debate the likely scenarios thoroughly.

The conference also scrutinised the changing situation of East European women. Many delegates criticised especially the Western media and politicians for their crude portrayal of changes and the democratisation of Europe as a victory for capitalism. Serious concern exists that millions of women will lose employment and maternity benefits which were guaranteed under some of the socialist systems.

American delegates pointed out that in the US, which touts itself as the world's largest democracy, only five percent of Congress members are women and that US child-care legislation and maternity benefits are way below Western European standards.

QUOTING Esther Kingston-Mann, an American professor of Russian history, one speaker said: "Soviet women possess rights to employment, health care and education which a South Bronx teenage mother or an unemployed steelworker in West Virginia would give much for."

Towards the end of the convention, a women's caucus called for at least one day at the 1991 Convention to be reserved for women's perspectives on democracy and peace. In a statement distributed to delegates, the group called for a plenary session on "World Violence - A Women's Perspective

on the Nuclear, Military and Industrial Complex's Effects on Civil Society and the Environment".

Much focus was placed on issues relating to world armament and the continuation of regional conflicts, especially also on so-called super-toxins and hormone weapons which continue to be produced in lavishly-funded yet unpublicised research laboratories in a number of countries.

Speaking on the future of biological warfare, American author Charles Piller reinforced the warning that "biology has become a dangerous, potentially destabilising wild card in superpower politics and regional conflicts".

Also linked inevitably to the question of the continuing militarisation and testing of nuclear weapons in Europe was the issue of impending German unification and its role amidst the bargaining between Nato and the Warsaw Pact.

AS AN African, amidst the excitement and debate, one could not but notice the extent to which the Third World has slid somewhat lower in the priorities list of the European peace movement. Confronted with the realities of massive social turmoil in their own countries these movements cannot but become more Eurocentric than in the past.

While Eastern Europe dominated the greater part of the convention programme, leaving one with a clear understanding of why perceptions of threat based on bloc confrontation are fast fading away, it also became clear that Europe and the world is facing an even greater challenge that will urge us to common action.

As Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pertti Paasio put it in his greeting to the convention: "Environmental issues have become crucial and it is clear that these cannot be solved without intensified co-operation between East and West as well as between North and South. When discussing security in today's world, we should place the ecology high on the agenda together with disarmament. Ecological problems are so severe that we cannot rely solely on international cooperation between states: we need to work for an overall change in our way of thinking."

Mark Behr is a regional co-ordinator in the Western Cape office of Idasa.

Who will shape our society?

THE director of policy and planning at Idasa, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, addressed two meetings during a whistle-stop visit to East London recently.

The first was a luncheon held for business people which marked the launch of Idasa's new business forum. Fifty people from the East London business community (and further afield) attended.

Dr Slabbert emphasised that although the country was in a process of transition and therefore in a state of uncertainty, this was far preferable to the deadlock situation that existed last year.

He said however, that the political strides had not yet been matched by developments in the economy.

Acknowledging that the unstable conditions of the transition process made it impossible to establish a thriving economy, Dr Slabbert said the business sector could and should play a far more active role in changing the present economic system.

To create stability, the social and economic injustices and inequalities of many years needed to be redressed. But this can only be done if more money becomes available.

He challenged the business community to be innovative and creative, to find ways to promote economic growth. Interaction between management and work-

ers was vital, especially to debate the shape of a future economy.

The healthy discussion which followed resumed later that day among a broader spectrum of East Londoners when about 150 people attended a public meeting about the dilemmas of the transition process.

Dr Slabbert began by looking at the history of Idasa. He explained how he and Idasa's

1987 Dakar meeting between more than 50 white (mostly Afrikaner) South Africans and the ANC.

This meeting, which Dr Slabbert described as "10 days of the toughest talks I've ever had", firmly established Idasa in its role of assisting people to find a democratic alternative.

Today, Idasa still hopes to engage people in discussion, but the situation has changed considerably.

We can now reasonably expect a negotiated transition, but before real negotiations can start, the political climate must be normalised.

DR SLABBERT said negotiations could not take place on one level only - everybody should get involved in the debate. There could be no democratic constitution without a democratic culture among all South Africans. It was essential that people's minds be "seasoned"

on what it means to be part of a democracy.

He added that the climate for a democratic constitution could not be fabricated by De Klerk and Mandela. Ordinary people would shape the kind of society they get and deserve, he said, adding that all South Africans deserved to live in a non-racial democracy.

Bea Roberts
Regional Co-ordinator



Dr Van Zyl Slabbert

executive director, Dr Alex Boraine, had looked to break the deadlock in white parliamentary debate and address the polarisation between black and white. The formation of Idasa in 1986 was an attempt to do this and get people talking to one another.

In the first couple of years, many meetings were organised between groups who had never imagined anything of the kind. The most prominent was the

from a pupil of Ebenezer who presented a very convincing case for AWB representation in parliament!

Judging by some of the comments - "I learnt to have an open mind and not to just go along with what everyone says about other race groups", and "I look forward to future contact with the people I have met" - everybody certainly seemed to have learnt a lot on both a social and political level during the weekend.

Bea Roberts
Regional Co-ordinator

Pukke kyk na geweld in Natal

Deur Marlize Horn

GEWELD het baie oorsake maar dat dit in Natal slegs deur politieke verskille aangeblaas word, is net deels waar.

As gaste van Idasa het 'n groep studente van die Potchefstroomse Universiteit in Julie gaan ondersoek instel na die oorsake van die onrusituasie in die suid-Natal area. Die toerprogram is so saamgestel dat die probleem vanuit verskeie perspektiewe bekyk kon word.

Samesprekings is onder andere gevoer met Gavin Woods van die Inkatha-instituut en met 'n groep afgevaardigdes van Inkatha Youth onder leiding van Musa Zandi.

Verder is die ander kant van die saak ondersoek deur gesprekke met lede van Sayco (die Suid Afrikaanse Jeugkongres) en met ANC-vertegenwoordigers gelei deur Patrick Lekota.

Die groep het ook besoek gebring aan die Administrateur van Natal en lede van die Durbanse Stadsraad en sosio-ekonomiese probleme in die omgewing is tydens die ontmoetings bespreek. Dit was veral Paddy Kearney van Diakonia en 'n verteenwoordiger van die Urban Foundation wat die groep 'n goeie insig in die sake gebied het.

NA afloop van die toer het ons tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat die geweld ook deur sosio-ekonomiese faktore sowel as die optrede van die sogenaamde "warlords" veroorsaak word, en dat algemene meningsverskille en argumente in die gemeenskappe soms ontwikkel in gevegte.

Dit is dus belangrik om te besef dat die geweld slegs 'n manifestasie van die krisis in Natal is en nie 'n aparte aspek nie. Slegs as al die breë faktore suksesvol aangespreek word, sal geweld verminder kan word.

Gesprekvoering tussen al die betrokke partye, instansies en persone is van die uiterste belang. 'n Mens moet hul wantroue en vyandigheidsindheid opsy skuif en saamwerk vir 'n beter en vreedsame toekoms.

Marlize Horn is voorsitter van Kontak Politiek by PU vir CHO en was 'n lid van die toergroep

Having fun with politics

THE first pupils weekend encounter arranged by Idasa in East London was held at the lovely coastal resort of Cintsa East.

The group consisted of Selborne College boys, girls of Clarendon High, and pupils from Ebenezer Majombozi High School. Several of the pupils had met before on the schools' exchange programme, although there were quite a few new faces.

As Cintsa has much to offer, the emphasis was on outdoor activity, the highlight of the weekend for many being the

organised games on Saturday afternoon during which they developed a sense of trust in one another.

The weekend was not all fun and games, although the two sessions of formal discussions were also regarded by many as "fun". These included presentations on the history of the ANC and white political groupings.

Both sessions were presented in such a way that there was maximum participation - group discussion and report-backs as well as role play.

One of the highlights came

A REMARKABLE aspect of the conference on the future of security and defence in South Africa, hosted jointly by Idasa and the ANC in Lusaka in May, was the consensus achieved among former enemies.

This was one of the impressions of Democratic Party researcher and conference delegate James Selfe who recently addressed a report-back meeting in Johannesburg.

Selfe told the 200-strong audience, mainly black people, that the two broad aims of the conference were to bring soldiers together to share their experiences and breakdown hostility, and to discuss practical means by which conflict in South Africa could be ended and debate post-apartheid defence and police force structures.

The absence of the SADF, despite having been invited, meant that former defence force members had to bear the brunt of the feelings of hostility and suspicion which many MK members understandably harboured.

The conference agreed that:

- Without political settlement, South Africa would

Consensus among former enemies

become a wasteland. The transition process itself was fraught with security concerns.

- A different formula, as opposed to the State of Emergency and deployment of troops in the townships, will have to be found to secure peace while simultaneously allowing negotiations to proceed.

- Negotiations would not be meaningful if they took place against the background of violence. Accordingly, various options which would lead to a "comprehensive cessation of hostilities" were considered.

- In terms of the ceasefire, MK specifically would undertake to refrain from guerrilla activities or sabotage. For its part, the SADF should withdraw from the town-

ships (except where otherwise directed by the joint monitoring commissions) and cease operations against MK outside South Africa. Other groups such as the AWB and Inkatha should similarly cease hostilities against their enemies.

The conference accepted that the new security forces would be subject to the political authority of a democratic parliament, to which they would report regularly. The defence force would be non-partisan and apolitical.

There was wide support for the suggestion that members be required to resign from political parties.

Selfe said the amount of consensus reached was a testimony to the flexibility of MK and Chris



James Selfe

Hani's leadership.

However, he sharply criticised Hani for his recent statements that the negotiations did not mean a relaxation in the armed struggle.

"Those of us who travelled to Lusaka did so in good faith and in the belief that it is better to seek political solutions than military ones to a problem that is political by nature," he said.

"We travelled to Lusaka because we believe that the ANC is a major political force in South Africa now and will continue to be in the future. Some of the 'home' delegation took substantial risks to do so."

Patrick Banda
Regional Co-ordinator

Learning to live together

BY ACQUIRING democratic skills and developing an awareness of the "humanity" of others, young people can help to break down fears, misunderstanding and ignorance in our country.

These were among a range of suggestions offered at an enriching pupils' encounter hosted by Idasa's Pretoria office in July.

Comments such as "Why isn't life always like this?", "I'm very confused, can we chat?" and "I'm learning a lot and having fun" characterised the weekend encounter at Broederstroom which was attended by 34 pupils and three facilitators.

The programme was drawn up by the Idasa schools group in Pretoria, Sayfft (South African Youth for Tomorrow Today), and their objectives were to gain an overall perspective on important issues for the youth in South Africa today, to build relationships and recruit new members.

Sayfft was able to recruit pupils from the Eersterust "coloured" areas in Pretoria for the first time, as well as to bring together new and old members from the suburbs and townships.

on the first afternoon led into supper after which Mark Phillips from the Centre for Policy Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand gave a "state of the nation" address.

He looked at the possibilities for negotiations and the major

South Africa - he offered suggestions which recurred throughout the weekend: be actively involved in acquiring democratic skills; break down fears, misunderstanding and ignorance by becoming sensitised to the "humanity" of others; use educa-

ing and evaluation.

In the afternoon, Keith Peacock of Khanya College in Johannesburg led a workshop on the South African economic crisis and priorities for the future.

Free time and supper gave rise to a concert in which we laughed, sang and toyi-toyed, listened to heart-wrenching soliloquies on township experiences and were whisked along in moving poetry performances. The evening ended with our learning and singing Nkosi Sikel' iAfrika together.

Sunday found us focusing on the environment. George Ellison from Earthlife Africa joined us for a walk up the mountain and his humour and practical suggestions made this a highlight for many.

In our brief evaluation session after lunch, we recognised the need to continue to build a climate where self-confidence and respect for one another's culture are vital and where democratic procedures are implemented. We headed back to the bastion of conservatism in the knowledge that it is good - and possible - to live, laugh and cry together.

Kerry Harris
Regional Co-ordinator



Sayfft my mate! Kerry Harris with Pretoria pupils.

political actors, pointing out some interesting ironies in the current situation such as ANC military commander Chris Hani freely walking the streets of Johannesburg and right-winger Piet Rudolf going into hiding.

In speaking of the role of the youth - now and in a future

tion to move from a resistance to a creative mode.

Saturday morning was spent in a workshop dealing with democratic skills. Here the focus was on "what is democracy", the kind of group behaviour conducive to cultivating a democratic culture and decision-mak-

Gcina gets more fans

THE contribution of multi-talented artist Gcina Mhlope at a South African Youth for Tomorrow Today (Sayftt) project in Pretoria in August was best summed up by projects co-ordinator Phakamile Nkomo who proclaimed the meeting as "the best we've ever held!"

All 50 participants were impressed with Gcina who has made a name for herself locally and abroad as actor, playwright, director and poet.

She told the students of her upbringing in Mpumalanga, Natal, the impression a praise poet made on her in her youth and how she had learned her acting skills through workshoping. She also spoke of her directorship at the Market Theatre

last year and, in response to a question, said she had encountered problems as a black woman wanting to be taken seriously as a director.

Further discussion followed as Gcina commented on aspects of the theatre in South Africa today and the choices facing artists "in the struggle".

Also mentioned were the hardships encountered by young artists - including the concern that the work of first-time writers is often plagiarised when they seek advice from more established colleagues.

Through her ability to bring song, dance and poetry together in a vibrant and moving mixture, she mesmerised us with renditions of two of her poems,

"Sometimes when it rains" and "The Dancer".

Informal discussion, coffee and a braai followed, with further performances by Sayftt members.

This valuable forum is breaking new ground in Pretoria where both black and white participants are learning that one of the ways in which to accept others is to learn to appreciate the cultural mosaic that makes up South African society.

Kerry Harris
Regional Co-ordinator



Gcina Mhlope

Singing up a storm in PE

AS someone remarked to Jennifer Ferguson after her Idasa-sponsored concert at the University of Port Elizabeth last month, "a bomb would have done less damage!"

In her inimitable style, the whirlwind that is Jennifer, blasted away many of UPE's sacred cows - along with a great deal of political cob-webbing.

From the time that she described the ordeal of landing in a 60-knot gale at Port Elizabeth's airport, the audience could sense that this would be no ordinary concert.

Her elaborate preambles to each song brilliantly beguiled her audience who were then jolted back into harsh reality by her subsequent raunchy delivery - and they loved it!

The Johannesburg-based performer produced a subtle mix of politics and reason, earthily held together by strong emotional overtones. By way of well-timed interruptions of her full-stride delivery, she kept searing and scalding until the students might have been forgiven for feeling somewhat musically "nuked".

Whether the topic was conscription or family murders, illicit love or political satire, her songs conveyed a challenge to the long-held beliefs of all who listened.

Keith Watrus
Regional Director

Open schools 'not an issue' to blacks

AS part of ongoing attempts to bring South Africans closer together, Idasa's Western Cape regional office arranged a meeting between headmasters and staff of Queens Park, Muizenberg High School and I D Mkize High School in Guguletu.

Marianne steps in



A NEW face in Idasa's Johannesburg office is that of Marianne Hölscher who took over from regional co-ordinator Lisa Seftel who left to join Cosatu.

Marianne has an honours degree in library science from the University of Pretoria and is completing her thesis for a post-graduate diploma in museology.

Before joining Idasa, she worked as an information scientist at the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria. She is particularly interested in cultural conservation and the role that museums and libraries can play in education and nation-building.

In his address to the meeting, the regional chairperson of the National Education Co-ordinating Committee, Monde Tulwana, made the point that open schools was not yet an issue in the black community, although it was a big debate among whites in South

Africa.

Tulwana had opened the meeting by reporting how he had arrived at his school one morning and found the doors of the domestic science room dangling and six brand-new stoves missing. The school had been robbed. He drew an analogy between that and the "theft" that the school has always had to put up with in the form of inadequate school facilities, overcrowding in the classrooms, an inferior education system and a high failure rate.

"These are the issues that should be top of the agenda, not open schools," he added.

Representing I D Mkize High with Mr Tulwana was Mr Andile Jonas, the publicity secretary of the Democratic Teachers Union (Detu). He gave details of the different teachers' organisations and explained how Detu was working to bring them together under the umbrella of the Teachers' Unity Forum (TUF). Mr Jones appealed to all the teachers present to join TUF and work towards establishing a single education system.

After some questions from the floor it was felt that a follow-up meeting was necessary.

Mr Allan Clarke, headmaster of Queens Park High School, thanked the I D Mkize teachers for their time and the insight they had shown in explaining difficult dynamics in education.

Silumko Mayaba
Regional Co-ordinator.

More than the Behr necessities



NO stranger to Idasa, but new in the Western Cape office, is Mark Behr who replaces Marion Shaer (who is studying overseas) as regional co-ordinator.

Mark studied at Stellenbosch University where he completed an honours degree in political science. In 1987/8 he was chairman of the fledgling Nusas (National Union of South African Students) branch and a year later served on the Students Representative Council.

In September 1987 he led an Idasa-sponsored trip to Mozambique and early last year he co-ordinated a visit of the university's SRC to Lusaka.

Students face to face with history at street-level

STUDENTS involved in the social history project, "Jo'burg City Whose City", came face to face with a sad aspect of the city's history when they were taken on a tour of the Pageview area recently.

The tour was led by the Rev Rob Robertson who has long been involved in the struggles of the people there.

When Actstop was formed in 1978 in response to the eviction of the Naidu family in Mayfair, Robertson played a major role in drawing attention to their plight by pitching a tent on the pavement in solidarity with them.

Vrededorp and Pageview were laid out in 1893, having been proclaimed as compensation to transport workers who lost their livelihoods when the railway line reached the Witwatersrand in 1892.

However, the Vrededorp Stands Act of 1907 forced all coloured, Malay and Indian people out of Vrededorp and into Pageview which was then known as the Malay location. There they had leasehold title to their land with the option of converting it into freehold.

The Pageview community soon included many African and Chinese residents and at different times consisted of between 8 000 to 12 000 people. It became known not only for its diversity, but also its harmony and com-



The Rev Rob Robertson shows students around Pageview

munity spirit. Religious and other festivals were celebrated by all.

In the 1960s the whole area was declared "white" under the Group Areas Act and the Department of Community Development proceeded to resettle all those whose "race" disqualified them from living in the area.

Government strategies to break up the Pageview community became increasingly ruthless. In the face of enormous resistance by the people, massive demolitions were carried out between 1976 and 1977.

There are currently 67 Indian families left in the area, all of them members of the "Save Pageview Association" and all

determined to stay in their homes at all costs.

As Robertson showed us the unused school buildings, the mosques and vast stretches of empty land, one of the students remarked that "it feels like walking through a ghost town", an all too appropriate description.

Melody Emmett
Regional Co-ordinator.

Big demand for video

THE screening of "Children of Apartheid" at the Idasa Women's Forum meeting in Pretoria drew an enthusiastic response in July, prompting a re-screening of the video a week later.

The film, made by the American TV network CBS, probes the attitudes of a variety of young South Africans on their hopes and fears for the future.

Featured in the programme are Rozanne Botha, Zinzi Mandela, Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging members, liberal white school-children, children recently released from detention and comrades - including Sicelo Dhlomo who died in mysterious circumstances just two days after the first showing of the video in the United States.

Kerry Harris
Regional Co-ordinator

SA skrywers byeen op Weskus

VANAF 11 tot 14 Oktober bied Idasa en die Afrikaanse Skrywersgilde 'n gesamentlike skrywersberaad op die Kaapse Weskus aan.

Van die grootste name in die Afrikaanse letterkunde, onder meer, Breyten Breytenbach, André P Brink, Elsa Joubert en Jan Rabie, tree op saam met uitgewekenes soos Albie Sachs, Njabulo Ndebele en die ANC woordvoerder vir kultuur aangeleentheid, Barbara Masekela.

MET die tema, "Die Suid Afrikaanse Skrywer 'n blik van binne en van buite", is die beraad gerig op 'n indringende gesprek met skrywers van sowel binne en buite die landsgrense



Elsa Joubert



Jan Rabie

oor kultuurvraagstukke in die huidige klimaat van oorgang.

Die gilde is vanjaar 15 jaar oud en die beraad is ook die geleentheid van die organisasie se jaarvergadering.

Antjie Krog, wenner van vanjaar se Hertzogprys, asook die skrywers Don Mattera, Kelwyn Sole, Abraham H de Vries en Sandile Dikeni, is enkele van die

deelnemers aan paneelbesprekings wat onderwerpe insluit soos: "Hoe verteenwoordigend is die Suid-Afrikaanse literatuur?"; "Die Suid-Afrikaanse literêre kritiek"; "Die skrywer in 'n demokratiese Suid-Afrika"; "Die skrywer en sy/haar taal in 'n veranderde Suid-Afrika".

Die beraad is oop vir die publiek en vind plaas by Klub Mykonos by Langebaan aan die Kaapse Weskus. Persone wat belangstel om die geleentheid by te woon, kan vir verdere besonderhede in verbinding tree met die Wes-Kaap kantoor van Idasa, telefoon (021) 22-2150.

Mark Behr
Streekskoördineerder.

Will SA accept this compromise?

By Ian Liebenberg

THE MYTH MAKERS: THE ELUSIVE BARGAIN FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S FUTURE, Willie Esterhuysen and Pierre du Toit (editors), Southern Book Publishers (in conjunction with the Centre for South African Politics, University of Stellenbosch), 1990. R35.

THIS newly published work is a worthy attempt at dealing with the theory of bargaining in the South African context. The book looks at the contenders for power, the stakeholders, the (elusive or eroding!) middleground and the outside agents involved. In addition, it highlights some factors which could help along the uncertain processes of bargaining and negotiation.

South Africa is entering the shadowy world of talks about talks, negotiation politics and bargaining – both preliminary and substantive – which will hopefully follow. This is happening amidst endemic violence, an apparent political stalemate and a legitimacy crisis – all telling evidence of the brutal legacy of apartheid and minority domination.

"Myth Makers" is a topical publication on the bargaining process, a concept which is both elusive and subvertible (even subversive). It is also a concept which has been misused, here and elsewhere, because it is so open to manipulation, and it could in the current situation be used, by both the incumbents or the challengers, to legitimise authoritarian rule.

The writers accept this potential weakness and argue for a settlement to be reached through bargaining and negotiation. To create the "new South Africa", they argue, this settlement needs to take the form of "the historic compromise".

HOWEVER, given the nature of political power, the writers argue that such a compromise is not guaranteed. More likely is a technocratic hegemony imposed by the ruling minority through co-optation, or an imposed hegemonic rule by the radical challengers. This imposed hegemony would, in essence, be undemocratic and coercive in nature if not agreed upon through "the historic compromise".

Contributors include Stellenbosch academics Jan Gagiano (contenders) and Hennie Kotze (stakeholders), and Anthoni van Nieuwkerk of the South African Institute for International Affairs.

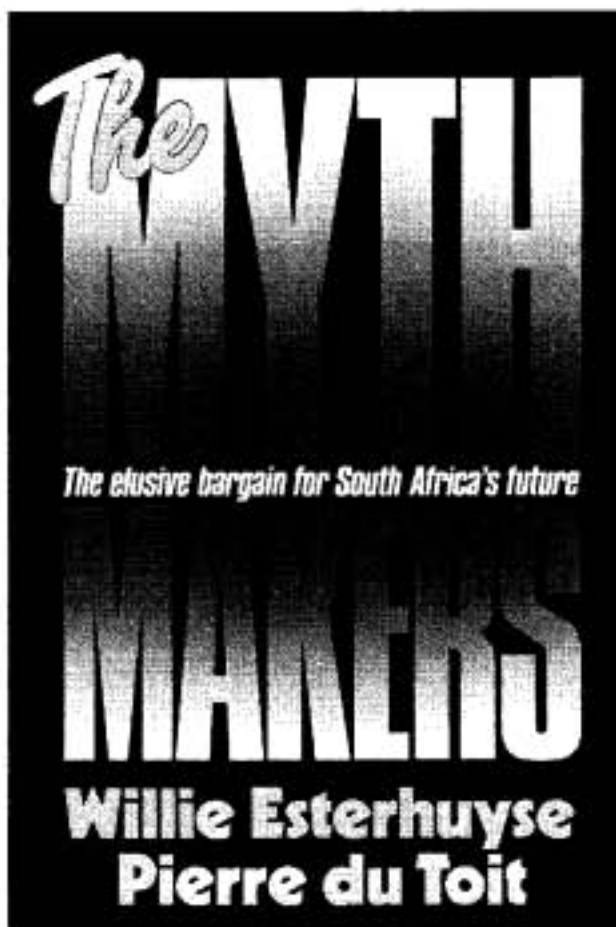
The last two chapters, written by Esterhuysen (the role of "realistic visionary leadership") and Du Toit (the "shadow of the future"), deal with the future and possible solutions to the stalemate.

Some very useful insights are offered. For example:

- The process of negotiation can be subverted into the Trojan Horse phenomenon which could mask authoritarian technocratic control by a minority. The other side of the "Trojan Horse" coin could be a radical

authoritarian takeover by the challengers. Thus the process of negotiation would be perverted into sham negotiations without fundamentally changing the political and economic structure.

- Regarding the position of South Africa within the global economic and political structure, the writers aptly argue that South Africa is a (potential) victim of imperialism (thereby realistically accepting that it is an economically oppressed Third World country, vulnerable to the machinations of out-



side forces).

- Tactful and well-planned initiatives and action by the leading elite can be conducive to the historic compromise, thereby averting the imposition of dangerous hegemonic models.

- Mythmaking is an essential part of politics. The authors identify three types of "verligte" mythmakers – "tolerant" radicals, "tolerant" technocratic authoritarians and "liberal" constitution builders. All these mythmakers coat the bitter pill of their authoritarian constitutional models with the chocolate of tolerance and rationality.

Some criticisms against the conclusions of the writers:

- The implicit assumption that "realistic visionary leadership" can effect the historic compromise rests on the theory that the political elite could, as active agents, enact the (ideal of) the "historic compromise". The idea that such a consensus can be reached among the leaders is, for the contributors, a real possibility. However, leaders are leaders by virtue of their followers and in a highly polarised and deeply divided society it does not automatically follow that the people (the

masses, if you like) will follow their leaders into the great historical compromise.

Experience in Lebanon and its South African counterpart, Natal, confirm this. Although Esterhuysen notes that there are no political messiahs, he strongly prescribes the remedy of "realistic visionary leadership". To him this is one of the viable ways in which to solve the South African conflict.

This amounts to what Willem van Vuuren of the University of the Western Cape calls the myth of "eternal hope". In a certain sense, then, the chapter on "realistic visionary leadership" becomes a contradiction in itself – the writer ends up representing what he seeks to unmask.

- By highlighting the role of the elite leadership in this process, the writer neglects the potential of what is known as "collective leadership" – as an interactive process between leaders and the masses. In this way, it neglects the results of the interaction between political leaders and grassroots participation.

IN SHORT, in reading the book, one is struck by the apparent rigidity of contending models and the relative pessimistic/fatalistic assumption that any future hegemony incorporating all parties would necessarily be imposed, and therefore be undemocratic. This may be a possibility, but it is not a logical and inevitable conclusion of politicking in South Africa.

By doing this, the writers underestimate what Van Zyl Slabbert calls the "logic of negotiation".

Once you start the ball game called "negotiation", new rules apply and eventually the mutually dependent actors are moderated – and "slide" into a compromise. Such an imposed (historic) compromise could be more likely than imposed hegemonies of some sort.

This "logic of negotiation" is conducive to compromise, and is also created by the fact that there is very little support left for a continuation of the status quo of civil war and minority domination. The major international actors, the USA and USSR, have reached consensus that regional settlements should be encouraged, and, if necessary, parties should even be pressurised in this direction. The Soviet Union's apparent intention to withdraw logistical and military support from the ANC is an example of this.

- The potential role and influence of the military/securocrats and the state bureaucrats does not receive a lot of attention in "Myth Makers". In my view, this creates problems. The process of bargaining will be or could potentially be undermined/inhibited by the role of these agents.

All this said, however, the book is a topical and well researched contribution to an important and highly relevant dialogue/debate. It is unfortunate that it was not written in more popular and accessible language.

Ian Liebenberg is Director of Research at Idasa.

Luister weer na stemme uit die verlede

Die weerstand teen die sogenaamde Eurosentriese kultuur in sommige kringe in Suid-Afrika is verstaanbaar, maar nie noodwendig wys nie. COENIE SLABBER durf die netelige aspek van die kultuurdebat aan.

VROEER was daar Afrikaanssprekendes wat uitgesien het na die ontwikkeling van hul eie taal en letterkunde. Hulle het ongeduldig geraak met Nederlands en Engels wat, so het hulle gedink, hul taal oorheers en vertraag.

Nou is daar weer opgevoede swart jongmense wat glo dat hul eie tale deur Engels en selfs Afrikaans oorheers en die groei van hul eie letterkunde gekeer word. Maar dit is belangrik om te onthou dat Engels en Afrikaans op hul beurt self ontwikkel het onder die stimulus van vreemde tale en letterkundes.

Die grote Engelse letterkunde, byvoorbeeld, het na vore gekom in die tyd van die Renaissance deur die imitasie en vertaling van Italiaanse, Franse, Griekse en Latynse skrywers. Woorde en literêre vorme is vrylik uit die vreemde geleen. Shakespeare self het sy dramas gehaal uit die Italiaanse en die klassieke verhale.

Baie stories in Afrika ontwikkel uit die mondelinge tradisie. Hulle sal die stimulus van idees en die vorme van die Westerse tale nodig hê om suksesvol tot eie geskrewe literatuur te ontwikkel. Met die geskiedenis van die Engelse in Afrika, om van die Afrikaner in Suid-Afrika nie eens te praat nie, kan daar haat vir die wit beskawing en kultuur en letterkunde in Afrika en Suid-Afrika wees.

Die Engelse kan maar dink hoe daar tye in hul eie geskiedenis was dat hulle alles wat Frans of Duits was, verafsku het. Maar dit is nie iets waarop die Engelse vandag trots is nie, en dit sou jammer wees as die nuwe Suid-Afrika om dié soort rede Shakespeare of Van Wyk Louw of Opperman of wie ook al verwerp.

Daar kan ook 'n houding by jong opgevoede Afrikaner wees dat daar nie nog tyd is om letterkunde te lees terwyl Rome brand nie. Jongmense neig om te vergeet hoe stadig die mars van die geskiedenis is. Daar is soms vroeë hoekom word Shakespeare en Dickens en Jane Austen in Suid-Afrika of Afrika bestudeer. Dit is die vroeë wat die bekende letterkundige van Cambridge en Wits, Alan Warner, reeds in die vyftigerjare gestel het toe hy sy intrede by die Universiteit van Kampala gelewer het.

Dis vroeë wat vandag nog net so geldig is as destyds. Ook in Suid-Afrika, waar die debat oor die sogenaamde Eurosentriese kultuur tans hewig woed.

Shakespeare en Dickens en Austen is nie langer net Engelse skrywers nie. Hulle het deel geword van 'n wêreldtradisie.

Shakespeare se dramas is in baie tale vertaal en hulle word oral in die wêreld gelees.

As Afrika of Suid-Afrika wil tel in die wêreld se toekoms, moet opgevoede Afrikaner buite die grense van Afrika kyk en burgers van die wêreld word.

Een van die belangrikste dinge wat die studie van die letterkunde vir ons kan doen, is om die wurggreep van die hede op die gees te verbreek en ons in verbinding te stel met die 2 000 jaar lange reis van die mens.

SOMMIGE vind dit moeilik om te verstaan. Die hede is tog wat vir ons saak maak. Hoekom sou ons ons ophou met Homeros, Plato, Shakespeare of Milton? Hulle het nie ons wêreld en ons probleme geken nie.

As ons alles uit vandag se oogpunt sien, sien ons dit nie in perspektief nie. Tensy ons iets van die verlede weet, het ons geen basis vir vergelyking en oordeel nie. Wanneer ons kontemporêre probleme bespreek, is ons so betrokke dat dit moeilik is om ons gedagtes vry te hou van irritasie, kontroversie, partygebondenheid, eiebelang, vrees, hoop. Maar dit verdwyn alles wanneer die stemme na ons toe kom uit die verre verlede.

'Die studie van die letterkunde kan die wurggreep van die hede op die gees verbreek en ons in verbinding stel met die 2 000 jaar lange reis van die mens'

Ons kan na hulle luister met belangstelling en onpartydigheid en afstand. Dieselfde dinge sou ons net kwaad gemaak het by 'n moderne skrywer.

Ons verstand begin suiwer en skoon werk, en ons oorweeg die waarheid of die foute van 'n leerstelling in 'n droë lig eerder as in die klam sweterige grysheid van omstredenheid. Om dit te doen, is opvoeding.

Die uitwerking is soos dié van komedie waar ons onpartydig na ons eie situasie kyk en tog vir onself kan lag.

Hierdie afstand-kry, hierdie losmaking, is een van die baie dinge wat die kunste bereik; en daar is min dinge wat só goed is om die venyn en die bitterheid uit omstredenheid te neem. Om daardie geestestoestand te bereik, is 'n hoofmerk van opvoeding.

'n Beswaar wat soms teen die studie van Engelse letterkunde in Afrika ingebring word, is dat dit nie verstaan kan word nie, omdat dit 'n uitheemse letterkunde is. Hoe kan 'n leerling of student in Johannesburg of Middelburg, Bethlehem, Cradock of Kampala reageer op Keats se "Ode to a Nightingale" as hy nog nooit 'n nagtegaal gesien of gehoor het nie?

Maar min kinders in Engeland het al die ondervinding gehad.

Die waarheid is dat alle letterkunde in mindere of meerdere mate te doen het met primêre menslike emosies. Alle groot letterkunde het 'n universele aantrekkingskrag. Die menslike belangstellings is gerig op eenderse dinge in verskillende tye en op verskillende plekke. Liefde, dood, en oorlog; vreugde, hartseer, moed, gekskerdery met die dwase . . . almal temas van gedigte oral ter wêreld.

Deur letterkunde word ons meer bewus van gemeenskaplike menslikheid. Ons word geroer deur die vreugde of die lyding van 'n karakter in 'n boek of 'n drama, en word vir 'n oomblik een met 'n groter wêreld.

WARNER sluit uiteindelik sy intrede só af:

"Deur Homeros, Shakespeare en Donne na die trope te bring, sê ons nie aan die studente van Afrika: vergeet Afrika en die probleme van die hede en dompel juis in die verlede van vreemde lande ver van die trope nie.

"Ons sê eerder: verdiep jul bewus-wees van die lewe en van die aard van manne en vroue. Vermeerder jul oop-wees vir en reaksie op die kuns van die gedig en die drama en die roman; voel die mag van woorde om die subtiliteite van menslike denke en gevoelens uit te druk.

"Oorweeg die beste wat gedink en gesê is in die wêreld, voordat julle dit navolg wat miskien minder as die beste is.

"Die groot skrywers skryf oor hulself en oor hul eie tye maar hulle kan julle help om jul eie self en jul eie wêreld beter te verstaan. Hulle sal vir julle 'n dieper bewus-wees bring van die glorie en die terreur van menslike bestaan. Deur hulle sal julle meer ten volle die gees erf, nie van die wit man of die bruin man of die swart man nie, maar die gees wat geen kleur het nie, die gees van die mensheid."

Coenie Slabber is die kunsredakteur by Rapport.

(Met erkenning aan Rapport)