

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INSTITUTE FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

MARCH 1990

Unity a worthless goal?

By Barry Streek

THE never-ending appeals for unity within the anti-apartheid movement and the black press are beginning to sound awfully like the United Party caucus pledging in its dying days its unanimous support for its then leader, Sir De Villiers Graaff.

Everyone in the party liked "Div" and they felt loyalty to him, but the party itself was hopelessly divided. Motions of confidence in the leader were used to cover up the divisions and portray unity.

The calls for unity, which range from a merger of all anti-apartheid forces including the DP, Inkatha, the ANC, the PAC and other groupings to unity between the ANC and PAC, often reflect similar muddled thinking.

These calls seem to be premised on the rationale that the democratic movement should be unified against the apartheid system or the "enemy" and that those in power will exploit divisions in the movement to perpetuate white minority rule.

There should, of course, be unity about some things, such as the ending of all apartheid, the establishment of a non-racial universal suffrage in which every South African has an equal vote, the redistribution of resources including land, and a different economy.

On many issues, there may well be consensus between the different groupings. There may also be alliances over particular campaigns or between groups. Common and joint strategies may be developed.

But that is very different from unity into a single structure and single leadership.

The real question now should be whether that sort of unity is either practical or desirable.

There is much evidence to suggest that unity is not really a practical option: the violence and murder in Natal; the long history of conflict between the ANC and PAC; the existence of two trade union federations

To Page 6



Recently-returned exile Jack Simons and ANC researcher Tessa Marcus received a special welcome from Alex Borraine at Idasa's rural land workshop

Rural land: ploughing a political minefield

Land workshop exposes conflicting concerns

By Sue Valentine

THE complex, controversial and long ignored issue of rural land was the subject of an Idasa workshop in March when academics, researchers and fieldworkers came together near Grabouw for two and a half days to tackle some of the questions.

It soon became clear just how broad the subject is and the papers represented a range of topics emphasising agriculture, access to the land itself, ecology and agrarian relations.

The first paper had no sooner been delivered than the debate started about where exactly priorities should lie. Errol Moorcroft, farmer and Democratic Party MP for Albany, asked delegates whether it was agreed that the primary need was to feed and clothe the nation and suggested that, given the constraints under which South African farmers laboured, they were doing a good job and the system was working well. He said that this efficient system should not lightly be tampered with in the interests of change.

UCT historian Colin Bundy was quick to reply, saying one should not just measure the output of a system. In those terms the cotton plantations of the United States which used slave labour and the potato barons in South Africa in the 1950s who exploited prison labour could be lauded as efficient, productive systems. "We must be sensitive to the way in which economic issues are bound up in social issues," he said.

Anninka Claassens of the Transvaal Rural Action Committee also responded strongly. She said such a question set a prescriptive starting point. It equated the present (white-run) system of agriculture with productivity and implied that a changed agricultural system in which black farmers played an active part would be inefficient. She said it was more constructive to look at the hard facts of South African agricultural production and to see exactly what portion is productive, given the vast subsidies paid to farmers and the huge

To Page 4

inside

Whites scramble to keep up

- PAGE 7 -

Slovo on socialism

- PAGE 10 -

Crossing swords over nationalisation

- PAGE 12 -

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

IDASA's goals are:

- To encourage South Africans of all races to reject apartheid and discover an alternative that is non-racial and democratic in the true sense of the word.
- To assist people to accept and work for a post-apartheid society as a way of allaying their fears.
- To mobilise the skills, knowledge and experience of all those who can assist the communities in the crisis areas of South Africa.
- To provide forums and opportunities on a nationwide basis to find democratic solutions to South Africa's problems.
- To assist in creating a climate for genuine negotiation towards a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

IDASA Offices

HEAD OFFICE:

Hill House, 1 Penzance Road, Mowbray, Cape Town, 7700 (Tel 021-473127; Telefax 477458)

WESTERN CAPE: 6 Faircape House, Orange Street, Gardens, Cape Town, 8001 (Tel 021-222150; Telefax 237905)

JOHANNESBURG: Fifth Floor, Norvic House, 93 De Korte Street, Braamfontein, 2107 (Tel 011-4033580/1/2/3; Telefax 3395301)

PRETORIA: 203 Hatfield Forum, 1077 Arcadia Street, Hatfield, 0083 (Tel 012-3422335/6; Telefax 3421926)

DURBAN: 1206 Sangro House, 417 Smith Street, Durban, 4001 (Tel 031-3048893; Telefax 3048891)

PORT ELIZABETH: Fourth Floor, Standard House, 344 Main Street, Port Elizabeth, 6001 (Tel 041-553301/2/3; Telefax 522587)

EAST LONDON: 5a Stephenson Street, East London, 5201 (Tel 0431-430047; Telefax 438682)

EDITORIAL

Strong hearts and cool heads needed

THE SPATE of violence which has followed the historic announcements made by President F W de Klerk on 2 February has brought many of us down from the euphoric heights to the plains of reality. South Africans across the spectrum have come to realise in truth that there is no "easy road" to freedom.

Despite many warnings that the road ahead was going to be bumpy and that there would be many hiccups leading towards the negotiating table, the ferocity of the violence and the accompanying widespread looting and arson have come as a great shock to many. The publicly stated view of officials from the UDF that those who resort to violence should be identified and rejected has certainly brought a measure of relief and calm in many parts of the country. It is a call which should be taken up by all South Africans who are committed to peaceful negotiations.

One of the ways in which some of the violence could be prevented would be for the ANC to move beyond being a liberation movement to becoming a normal political party. In other words, it would be in their own self-interest to establish their headquarters inside South Africa and more especially to open branches in all the major centres of South Africa. This would not only give them a visible face and base which is essential for any successful political party, but it would also enable them to use their quite considerable clout to lead people away from violent confrontation towards discussion, debate and argument.

There can be no doubt that the convulsions experienced in the newly emerging South Africa have become fertile ground for right-wing forces as far as white South Africans are concerned. There has been a backlash and a lot of education is going to be necessary.

Whites have to come to terms with the consequences of the long legacy of apartheid. An example of this is the popular uprisings in the Ciskei and other so-called homelands which were tragically accompanied by widespread arson and looting.

It is inevitable that a society which has been repressed for so long will demonstrate in an exuberant manner. This can so often be capitalised on by a minority who desire to seek material and personal gain from the downfall of dictators and the joy and celebration of the oppressed.

What white South Africans sometimes forget is that the homelands were a direct result of National Party policy of divide and rule. Despite the wishes of the vast majority, blacks were compelled to forsake their South African citizenship. The history of the leadership in the homelands was there for all to see and in particular was experienced as a repression and an impoverishment by the vast majority of those who were forced to live as citizens of that particular homeland. If anyone has to receive blame therefore for what has happened in the homelands in the last few weeks, it is the National Party itself.

What we all have to learn is that political changes and reform have to be reflected in the improvement of the quality of life if they are going to have any impact on the attitudes and mood of the vast majority of black South Africans. This is particularly true of the legitimate black grievances regarding the present economic system. It is unhelpful for the business community to simply denounce nationalisation and redistribution without clearly acknowledging that these genuine grievances exist and that demands made by the black community for a restructuring of the economic system are justified.

JA-NEE

The man has taste

Rumour has it that President F W de Klerk is an avid reader of this humble newsletter.
- *Makes you pink, doesn't it?*

Simply Sash

An eminent member of the Black Sash, invited by a youth organisation to help celebrate the ANC's birthday in January while other Sashers were sensibly on hols by the sea, found herself with a friend in her hus-

band's Porsche bringing up the rear of a green-black-and-gold motorcade through the townships with a yellow van in hot pursuit. The Porsche, with yellow van glued to its tail, got separated from the rest of the procession at a robot. As the duet continued astray the Sashers replaced doubts about their mandate (and their Porsche) with the observation: "We're in the right role - behind the youth and taking off the heat."

- *Not a Porsche show!*

Die onskuld self

Oornag bevaagteken al wat NP-koerant en SAUK-diens is nou die ou wee van hul po-

litieke meesters so doodluiters dat 'n mens net jou kop kan skud. Sommige van die joernaliste verlustig hulle in hul nuwe beweegruimte. Eerste prys gaan aan Rapport se rubriekskrywer, Pollux, wat hoogheilig na die SAUK se pas-afgeskaafte oggend-kommentaar verwys as "daardie daaglikse stukkie blatante radiopropaganda" wat nie in pas is met die "nuwe politiek" nie.

- *'n Geval van die pot wat die ketel verwoyt? Of is die lewe nou maar net 'n bietjie saai met minder propaganda?*

Call for bold action

Adding a small - and rather nude - twist to



If one can find common agreement that the restructuring of the economic system is necessary then the debate can start as to whether nationalisation will bring this about or whether there are any other ways and means of restoring a just economic system in South Africa. The painful reality is that we have a vast chasm between a minority who are well fed and well clothed and have these basic requirements as a result of maximum opportunity, and the vast majority who are not only very often poorly clad, badly housed and unemployed, but in many of the rural areas actually face starvation.

South Africa has certainly scaled the heights and has as often been plunged into gloom and despair over the last weeks and months. There is nothing which suggests that we are not going to continue to have the same amount of fluidity and rapid change of mood in the future. What is required is a great deal of understanding, decisive action, strong hearts and cool heads.

- Alex Boraine
Executive Director

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LETTERS

Address your letters to: The Editor, Democracy in Action, 1 Penzance Road, Mowbray 7700.

Environment neglected

I HAVE read your December newsletter but I am alarmed that there is not even a mention of the environment.

The total obsession with political matters in South Africa shows an immaturity of understanding of some of the real issues that we will have to face in the new South Africa - water, food, air, recreation, nature conservation. These are going to have to be addressed if we are to survive as a reasonably civilised country.

I would strongly recommend that Idasa looks into the multinational company which proposes to rip the guts out of the dunes at Lake St Lucia, just having successfully done so north of Richards Bay.

The international conservation community will eventually turn on us if we do not behave responsibly and the repercussions will be felt for a long time.

Ian Player
Wilderness Leadership School, Natal

Idasa shares your concern about the environment. We have run a number of projects which included such focuses - and there are more to come. The December issue of Democracy in Action had a comprehensive report on a "green" forum hosted by Idasa in Pretoria.

Editor

Uprooted and abandoned

I AM very grateful to Paul Zondo of Idasa for his thoughtfulness and kindness in organising our visit to Winterveld. What we saw was a graphic illustration of the poverty and squalor that results directly from apartheid policies. We witnessed a people who had been uprooted, forcibly moved into a desolate place and given virtually no material assistance. In this environment the work of the Sisters of Mercy is an inspiration and the Australian Embassy is pleased to be able to help them.

It is important that foreign representatives be aware of places like Winterveld and the suffering of the people living there and we are very grateful to you for your very excellent organisation of the visit.

D Sprott
Australian Embassy, Pretoria

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a popular conservation slogan, a bumper sticker articulates the fears and frustrations of some South Africans about their future. "F--k the rhino. Save the whites", it exhorts passing motorists.

- Go along, do your little bit to rescue the white rhino from extinction!

Viva Randburg!

Die ANC sal binne enkele maande in ons midde wees - met kantore, koerante en al - in al die groot sentrums van Johannesburg tot Kaapstad. Daar is blykbaar 'n behoefte om hul ondersteuning in die blanke gemeenskap uit te brei. En dit kan natuurlik vir sommige politici voor 'n moeilike keuse

stel. Soos 'n UDF-leier onlangs opgemerk het: "Dan sal ons sien of Wynand Malan by die ANC gaan aansluit - en of Denis Worral teruggaan na die Nasionale Party toe." - Moeilike tye.

Come home Mr Mandela, all is forgiven

When the hunger strike and homelands crises were assuming alarming proportions in March, Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee made an emergency call to Harare to request Nelson Mandela's early return so he could deal with the deteriorating situation. - We're growing up fast now.

Face to face with MK in Lusaka

By Nic Borain

MAY 1990 will see the first meeting of the two protagonists who perhaps symbolise the conflict in South Africa at its sharpest: the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and a range of SADF-linked South Africans from inside the country.

Idasa will be hosting this four-day conference in Lusaka, providing a unique forum for the parties concerned to examine vital issues that are part and parcel of the negotiation process: the de-escalation and cessation of hostilities. The challenges facing the military forces in a projected post-negotiations phase will also be identified and examined.

A highlight of the conference is bound to be the early session where the delegates introduce themselves and their personal military histories, not least for the tremendous symbolism of weapons being exchanged for words by "enemies" in the most serious sense of the word.

Delegates include former SADF generals and other former senior officers, men who have recently served in the SADF as conscripts, academics, members of the End Conscription Campaign and representatives of the Transkei Defence Force. The SADF has been invited to send formal representatives but it seems more likely that it will, instead, monitor the proceedings closely. Several of the academics attending are expected to do so in consultation with the SADF.

The meat of the agenda will be a good look at the role of the military in transitional societies, in particular in the South Africa of 1990.

The vital question for historically antagonistic military forces is how to build the trust necessary for a positive role in the negotiation process. A further question is how the process is to be monitored. Delegates to the conference will be encouraged to set out their positions - particularly their fears and concerns about the future, and then to explore the options.

A large part of the agenda is devoted to projected post-negotiations military matters. The question here would be how to create a unified army that would earn the respect of all.

Nic Borain is Regional Director of Idasa in the Western Cape.

Ploughing a minefield

From page 1

agricultural debt.

Unfortunately, when it was time for delegates to depart at the end of a very full and demanding weekend, this dilemma still remained and overall, numerous issues raised during the workshop were not conclusively resolved.

Numerous other points of conflict also emerged. These included the nettle of nationalisation and compensation - subjects which were alluded to during the workshop, but never fully confronted - as well as why a rural land policy is needed. Should it address food production, settlement patterns, employment, access to land or stem the flood to the urban areas?

The best use of legal resources, how they should protect and support people struggling to gain access to or maintain



Discussing the issues over

control of their land was also debated. Similarly the questions of how to handle intervention, how to identify paths of change and then support viable strategies, produced conflict among delegates.

Land: A labyrinth of tricks and tales

By Sue Valentine

WHETHER land is nationalised or privately owned is a non-issue for most black South Africans because virtually all land used by them belongs to the South African Development Trust.

So says Geoff Budlender of the Legal Resources Centre in a paper co-written with Johan Platsky that looks at the way in which black people can "own" land and makes the point that in almost every instance this matches the classic understanding of nationalised land.

Budlender identifies quitrent tenure as the dominant form of land use and explains what rights land users enjoy under this system - rights which the relevant minister may cancel. He may also appropriate the land. Ultimately the state has a residual right to the land whenever it chooses.

In the first half of the presentation of the paper, Platsky showed how the different race zones ("homelands" and Group Areas) in which people were forced to live in South Africa "derive from an intricate system of interrelated legal provisions of quite astonishing technical complexity".

Because of this "kind of labyrinthine complexity which cannot and did not arise from a single flash of misguided brilliance", the overturning of the 1913 Land Act and the 1936 Land Reform Act would not suffice to bring about significant change. The Group Areas Act would have to be abolished simultaneously in order to offer black people somewhere to move to, and the mesmerising array of land laws passed by the various homeland authorities would also have to be erased.

Concluding their two deliveries, the lawyers made a strong case for a careful re-

moval of land laws in such a way as to avoid leaving people with fewer rights than before. They warned that unless land reform measures were accompanied by real



Researcher Essy Letsoalo spoke on state land reforms

democracy, disaster - as had occurred elsewhere in such programmes - could be the result.

In an appeal for people involved in the land question to move away from loaded ideological terms and confront the empirical reality of what was happening in the field, Aninka Claassens of Trac (Transvaal Rural Action Committee) set about examining some of the myths regarding private property.

She asserted that the history of freehold title or private ownership in South Africa was contrary to its traditional connota-



Howard Cowling and Errol Moorcroft.

The burning question of ecology and the need for urgent action to avoid catastrophic degradation was raised but not carried through sufficiently. Numerous speakers stressed that South Africa had

tions of free and fair transactions and secured individual rights. It had been established by way of physical conquest, detailed and complicated contracts between governors and illiterate chiefs, and in the context of missionary outreach and mineral acquisitions. Once land was obtained it was granted to loyal European citizens.

Claassens said that time and again in the course of her work she had traced the origins of title deeds at the Deeds Office to find the land had been granted by the state to a white person.

Farmers assaulted their workers as a matter of routine, she said, and were so confident of acquittal that they reported the events to the police themselves. This was the case recently when a farmer who had beaten a crippled worker to death was fined R100. "Such incidents are increasing," she added.

Land was taken from people through force and trickery, not through fair practices. The entire system of private property was bound up in racial terms.

She said it was necessary to dwell on this history because similar practices were being recreated daily. The land laws and Group Areas Act were still in force and the present realities in which communities, identified by the government as black spots and in the process of resettlement, struggled to stay on their land were occurring under the cabinet of the current State President.

"We must move the debates away from the ideologically bound reference points to see who is on the land and what is happening there," she said.

In an eloquent historical overview, UCT historian Colin Bundy offered an understanding of the land question in which he identified certain themes which could explain the present situation and constrain future developments.

Firstly, throughout its evolution, capitalist agriculture in South Africa had been an arena of backward and brutal social relations. Until 1980 agriculture was the largest single employer of black labour and farm-

LAND WORKSHOP

virtually reached a ceiling in terms of available agricultural land and present systems of farming could not be sustained. There were also differences between delegates over what sustainability meant and how to deal with it.

There was consensus, as Mike Savage spelt out during the final session of the conference, on the importance of the rural land issue - whether it be a concern over agriculture, access to land or agrarian relations. Delegates also agreed on the need for concrete actions to effect change, that there was a lack of relevant and detailed information on vital areas (white farming was one such area) and that more case studies were needed which involved people from those specific circumstances.

Sue Valentine is Publications Assistant with Idasa



UCT academic Mike de Klerk who helped organise the conference

workers were the worst paid labour force. In this context, Bundy asked whether it would be possible to retain social relations like these in a different state. Could they be reformed or should they be fundamentally transformed?

Secondly, capitalist agriculture had relied heavily on the state for its development. The supposed "superior efficiency" of capitalist agriculture possibly needed to be revised when considered in the light of state aid and repressive legislation to secure land and labour.

Thirdly, the evolution of capitalist agriculture had taken a long time and non-capitalist methods of farming (such as tenant farmers) had persisted until the early 1960s in some cases. Bundy said the implications of this were that an extremely powerful popular preference for peasant farming remained.

Ultimately, Bundy reduced the situation to two options: can rural social relations be altered significantly enough and the hunger for land addressed if large-scale agriculture is left intact? Or, can the national food supply be sustained and can the countryside feed the cities if things are significantly changed?

To Page 6

Endangered by freehold

By Sue Valentine

THE DANGERS of freehold tenure and the insecurity it ultimately produces for poor people was one of the themes to emerge from a paper on land tenure in black rural areas delivered by Unisa anthropologist Catherine Cross.

She argued for three possible reformed forms of tenure: freehold or individual tenure, which she suggested was safe only for the rich; modified indigenous tenure, the mode for most African forms of tenure; and state leasing, a familiar system under which black people hold land at present, but one which might be difficult to "sell" to the white community.

Cross stressed that it was not necessary to find "THE" tenure system. Most important was to provide security and allow for the creation of flexible and accountable models.

Expanding on her statement about the dangers of freehold tenure, she said people did not realise how easily freehold (in comparison with communal tenure, where security is relatively good) could be lost.

"Freehold land is only secure if people can pay," she said. "All too often freehold land is timebound. People with a low cash flow run high risks of losing their land on a mortgage or because of not being able to pay their taxes . . . An enormous amount of land was lost on mortgages in the late 19th century."

She suggested that in the present situation potential black land owners are attracted by the prospect of freehold tenure because they see whites apparently retaining control of their land on that basis. However, what many aspirant black land owners do not realise is the amount of economic support white landowners receive.

Cross acknowledged that in the present economic climate in South Africa whites too were in danger of losing their properties because of escalating land and housing costs and bond repayments.

Another danger contingent with freehold tenure is the potential erosion of empowerment and equity. Superficially freehold seems to be a fair system, but when land is lost - due to a range of circumstances - it inevitably goes to rich landlords from whom the former landowner then has to seek work as a tenant. The power structures consequently emerging from freehold tenure tend towards the inequitable.

Cross suggested that the violence in Natal was related to the prevailing land tenure system: because much of the land is freehold neither government nor homeland structures can control what happens in such townships. The eruption of physical violence thus emerges from the lack of bureaucratic control the authorities can exert on land owners.

'Simple' system behind Zimbabwe success

HOW TO assist the poverty-stricken peasant system of agriculture while maintaining the highly productive and sophisticated commercial sector was the task that confronted Senator Dennis Norman when he became Zimbabwe's first Minister of Agriculture in 1980.

Speaking to delegates at the Rural Land workshop about the Zimbabwean experience, Senator Norman said agriculture in his country had played "probably the largest single role in bringing political stability after 11 years of sanctions and 14 years of war".

In 1980/81 the value of commodities sold by commercial farmers totalled (Zimbabwe) \$18 million. Five years later the value had risen to \$192 million. Livestock sales had risen in value by 1 400 percent. Maize production in 1980/81 stood at 42 000 tons; by 1985 this had reached 481 000 tons. In 1980/81, 33 000 tons of cotton were produced; it was 132 000 in 1985.

The reason for these dramatic increases, said Norman, was the new agricultural policy which encouraged farmers to grow crops suitable to the area in which they lived.

In central Zimbabwe a population of

LAND WORKSHOP



Dennis Norman

about 25 000 to 30 000 people had been scratching a living trying to grow maize. A programme aimed at weaning them from maize to cotton was introduced and for the first time in the country's history a cotton ginnyery was built in the area and cotton sales exceeded \$34 million. All this happened within four years.

Norman said a "simple system" consisting of three prongs was responsible for the dramatic increases. "The resource base was quite good, but it was not available to everyone, only to whites. We tried to extend services to everybody."

This included an education programme - crash courses through agricultural colleges for farmers and a general effort to stimulate interest. Secondly, the necessary fertilizers, seeds, chemicals and transport were made available to smallscale farmers - usually on a loan basis, with very few grants being handed out.

Thirdly, in an effort to redress the system whereby only white farmers were within easy access of transport or storage

depots, black farmers were assisted to reach the market. New depots for grain and cotton were built throughout the country so that, in areas where it was deemed those crops could be farmed productively, no farmer was more than 60km from the nearest depot.

"For the first three years after independence we were successful in preventing urban drift, in fact we reversed it. However, the position has now changed because of the success of the education programme and people are moving to the urban areas once again," said Norman.

The resettlement programme in which it was hoped to create villages with better agricultural prospects for about 162 000 people in the first four or five years of independence was less successful. It had envisaged four settlement schemes where land could be held as individual land, as a village with communal land, as individual land with communal grazing or as land for livestock farming. Through the willing-buyer-willing-seller scheme (before anyone in Zimbabwe may dispose of land, they must first offer it to the government) land was available for the project.

Senator Norman suggested several reasons why the programme had not worked. Firstly it had been introduced too quickly and not enough planning went into it.

Secondly, not enough value was given to the importance of title deeds, be they freehold or leasehold. Thirdly, co-operatives were not always successful and although Norman said he believed they did work, they needed to be carefully managed within clear guidelines and parameters. Lastly, many of those encouraged to farm knew little about it; training was needed if people were to become successful farmers.

Challenging the poor image most white South Africans seemed to have of prime minister Robert Mugabe, Norman spelt out some facts regarding the Zimbabwean government's record.

"In the 10 years Zanu-PF have been in government, they have not appropriated a single property," he said. "They have not nationalised a single industry, they have honoured every external debt. Every external pension has been paid since 1980 - they have not reneged on a single one - and they have honoured every single clause of the 1979 agreement. We have a government which stands by its word. It could have gone the other way, but it didn't."

Tricks and tales

From Page 5

After offering four possible economic options, Bundy concluded by saying the answer would not arrive as a policy preference but would take shape in the course of struggle.

"What people want, how they will be or-

ganised to express their desires, how the state and capital will respond, will determine the land question," he said.

Sue Valentine is Publications Assistant with Idasa.

Unity worthless?

From Page 1

because of political differences; the development of separate black consciousness-orientated organisations and Charterist bodies - with such rivalry that separate organisations in apparently apolitical fields such as literacy, domestic workers and even pre-schools have been formed; the conflicts over foreign funding and suspicions in some quarters about the DP's commitment to a post-apartheid South Africa.

Indeed, the pettiness and intensity of the tensions that has often existed between these groupings in the past makes the prospects of effective unity look very

remote.

But is it even desirable as a goal? The answer should be an emphatic no.

The essence of democracy is that political organisations go to the electorate to win votes for their policies and strategies. If they win sufficient support from the ordinary people, they gain representation.

There are clearly major differences of approach and personality among the different elements of the anti-apartheid movement. Now is not the time to patch them up in a semblance of unity on the spurious grounds that the system will exploit those differences and tensions.

Now is rather the time the different groupings try to get popular support by campaigning among the soon-to-be voters - and let the people decide.

Trying to create "unity" among these groups in preparation for a popularly elected government in a new and free South Africa will not only avoid the differences and conflicts between them, but it will also create a new United Party with all the attendant problems that Sir De Villiers Graaff and his party faced during the 1970s.

Barry Streek is on the political staff of the Cape Times

Whites scramble to keep up

By Hans Pienaar

SINCE February 2, political and sociological researchers at the Human Sciences Research Council have been encountering a new problem when they canvass people over the telephone - how to stop them talking.

Eagerness to discuss recent developments points to a lively new curiosity, says Dr Nic Rhoodie, head of the HSRC's Centre for Conflict Analysis and Management. But it is also caused by the perception amongst whites that they are under pressure and that they have to keep track of new developments in order to survive.

I spoke to him about the perceptions of the white electorate after the release of Mr Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC. Unfortunately, due to the HSRC's privatisation policy, he could not provide any statistics from his research, as these belonged to "clients".

Dr Rhoodie and his researchers found an eagerness among white voters to learn more about current political developments that had not been there in the past. Generally this seems to be the result of a great deal of anxiety about new developments.

"There is a measure of ignorance amongst whites that is a bit bothering. This leads them to interpret the crisis situation wrongly, and the claims of the ANC, even the pronouncements of President FW de Klerk.

"People who are ignorant do not know what their options are," he adds. There seems to be much miscomprehension of the nature of a society in transition - that the radical restructuring of political, social and economic institutions will always be accompanied by disruption and conflict.

A complicating factor is the failure of the ANC to find a more tactful way of communicating certain key features of its policy for a new South Africa.

The obvious example is that of nationalisation. If the ANC means that society should be changed in such a way to allow equal opportunities for every South African, whites would see this as a logical and natural extension of the kind of society they already have.

But the perception exists of nationalisation as a confiscating type of measure, through which huge tracts of land and resources are to be disowned and distributed amongst blacks who are untrained and unprepared to manage them.

This perception almost shuts out all the positive pronouncements of the ANC, and

has also led to a greatly ambivalent assessment of Mr Nelson Mandela. On the one hand they acknowledge that the ANC displays flexibility in Mr Mandela's call for a return to schools by black scholars, his re-

pared to assist them and that, understandably, "a sort of umbilical chord" has developed.

"Afrikaners understand that, in their own history in times of frustration due to an unpopular war (World War II) and economic problems, many of their leaders - and at least one State President - developed strong Nazi sentiments."

But Dr Rhoodie does not believe that the general view of the ANC - as the last bastion of communism - and perceptions of chaos in the country will lead to a white backlash in the form of a great upsurge in support for the Conservative Party. In three or four years there will exist a corps of very well informed people in society.

But another check to such an eventuality is the fact that the CP has painted itself into a corner with its relatively extreme standpoints. Because its base is still very much an ethnic one, the CP will never be able to match the

flexibility of the NP due to the broadening of the latter's base through the years. He therefore does not share the "optimism about the phenomenal growth awaiting the CP".

"The National Party is not seen as a tribal party anymore. It has a high degree of viability. It can accommodate both younger disillusioned CP supporters as well as people from the Democratic Party."

Dr Rhoodie agrees that big business will throw their weight in en masse with the NP, and that in future businessmen will no longer keep a discreet silence on this support. This is due to De Klerk's image as the creator of a new and fresh management style, an image that owes much to developments in Eastern Europe.

The centre's research indicates that De Klerk enjoys significant support in all population groups, which would make him an excellent candidate for the presidency in a system similar to Nigerian federalism, generally regarded as one of the best systems for a country consisting of a number of minorities.

Nonetheless, De Klerk will have certain obligations. He will not be able to cut himself loose from the fact that he is an Afrikaner and a white. Although it is not explicitly said to him, his supporters certainly do demand that he ensures the protection of the Afrikaner and likewise the interests of whites in general.

Hans Pienaar is a freelance journalist based in Johannesburg.



CP show of strength in Pretoria . . . a great upsurge in their support is not expected

jection of black domination over whites and his statement that the fears of whites should be addressed.

But on the other, many whites firmly believe that nationalisation entails that black troops will march down streets to seize possessions or that destitute blacks will be quartered in with white families.

This ambivalence and the inconsistencies

The ignorance among whites leads them to misinterpret the crisis situation

accompanying it, is also demonstrated by the general view on links between the ANC and the Communist Party.

On the one hand, the person in the street to a fairly large extent still sees the ANC as communism in another guise. On the other, most sophisticated Afrikaners realise that the Mandelas and Sisulus are black nationalists and that they talk the same language as Afrikaner heroes like Christiaan de Wet, JBM Hertzog and the old Boer generals.

These Afrikaners accept that when things were difficult for the ANC, the communist countries were the only ones pre-

Countdown to open schools

By Sue Valentine

WHILE many of South Africa's white schools stand half empty and dismally under-utilised, Department of Education and Training figures show that 159 840 classrooms are needed for black pupils.

These are among the stark realities that have prompted a host of groups such as the Open Schools Movement, the All Schools for All People campaign and the Democratic Party Youth to petition the government to desegregate education.

Thus far nine schools have directly requested the Department of Education and Culture for permission to open their schools to all pupils. These schools are: Glenwood High (Durban), Pretoria Boys High, Johannesburg High School for Girls and in Cape Town: Sacs High and Primary, Rondebosch High and Preparatory, Westerford High, Rustenburg High and Junior, Grove Primary.

Indirect requests to admit pupils of all races have come from Cape Town High School, Rhenish Primary School (Stellenbosch), three King Williams' Town schools - Kaffrarian High School for Girls, Dale College Boys' High and Junior - York High in George, Brebner High in Bloemfontein, Queens College Boys Primary in Queenstown and Maidstone Primary in Tongaat.

Minister Piet Clase has shown some encouraging signs, suggesting that at schools



Open classrooms: soon a familiar sight in government schools?

where parents support desegregation, classrooms may be opened to all. However he has yet to give any clear indication of change, offering only a stock reply to questions about the destiny of "whites only" schools and the possibility of opening such schools and teachers' training colleges to all races.

This reply states: "... the department is at present conducting an internal investigation regarding the provision of education. The investigation is making steady progress and the results will be announced once the investigation has been completed."

Just where the system of education in South Africa is headed has been touched on by Nelson Mandela who stated recently that the ANC would respect the many separate cultures within the country and

would allow each community to run its own schools.

This, he said, was in line with the ANC's policy of fighting all forms of domination. Speaking at a rally in Harare, Zimbabwe, Mandela said: "We have suffered for all these years, many of our children have paid with their lives. We know what hardship is brought by any form of racialism."

Whatever policy is pursued the financial facts of education in South Africa cannot be ignored. According to the executive director

of the Institute for Educational Research at the Human Sciences Research Council, Dr S W H Engelbrecht, South Africa cannot afford its present education system. He said if the per capita expenditure for whites (approx R2 500) was extended to other population groups, school education would cost the country R37 billion this year.

Dr Engelbrecht says desegregating schools and sharing of school facilities would not by themselves be the solution, but such measures would be part of an answer.

He added that by the year 2000, there would be 471 000 white children aged between 6 and 11 and 5,5 million black children in the same age group.

Sue Valentine is Publications Assistant with Idasa.

NAMIBIA: A NATION IN THE MAKING 19 - 21 APRIL WITS UNIVERSITY, JOHANNESBURG

The conference hosted by the Southern Transvaal office of Idasa and the South African Institute for International Affairs, will focus on the issues of transition facing Namibia — and the lessons contained therein for South Africa.

The programme includes:

- Can Namibia's economic policy assure growth and redistribution?
- The role of whites in transition
- Women's role in the independence process
- The land question
- Building a single Namibian nation
- The relationship between the union movement and a Swapo government.

Speakers include:

- Dr Libertina Amathila, Swapo Minister of Local Government and Housing Designate
- Dr Peter Katjavivi, head of Swapo Research Department
- Justice McNally from Zimbabwe
- Mr John Ya Otta, general secretary of the National Union of Namibian Workers
- Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, Idasa director

Costs: ● Members of the public: R75 ● Other categories eg. students, organisations, companies: On application
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THE dramatically changed South African political environment has altered the terrain on which many organisations operate. *Democracy in Action* spoke to Idasa's executive director Dr Alex Boraine on the way ahead for the Institute

Looking to the future

YOU HAVE said recently that Idasa is an organisation working for more than the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Nelson Mandela. What role do you see for the institute?

South Africa is essentially a non-democratic country which is reflected in every area of life. In order to redress this and to bring about a democratic system, an enormous amount of work will have to be done not only now, but over many years to come. There is no doubt that Idasa, because of its focus on democracy as an alternative to apartheid, can play a decisive role in creating a democratic culture from which can flow the possibility of a democratic society.

What does this mean in specific terms?

There have been two major responses to State President De Klerk's now famous speech of February 2. On the one hand the ANC has made certain responses, including the decision to send a delegation to South Africa so that the discussion can continue. Hopefully this will ultimately lead to genuine negotiations.

The other response - internally - can best be seen in the collapse of the homeland system. No doubt this will continue until that system becomes no more than a nightmare of the past. The response of the ANC and the people living in the so-called homelands has also not gone unnoticed by a wide variety of people - black and white. There is confusion, misunderstanding and fear among many whites which makes them wide open to the propaganda of the right wing. This must be countered. Idasa, through its regular contacts, can play an interpretive role, an educational role and a facilitating role against the background of these contending aspirations and fears.

So Idasa's role as a facilitating organisation is not over?

Not at all, facilitating contact between whites and the ANC was just one aspect. There are different kinds of facilitation roles. One of the strengths of Idasa is that it has staff and offices at the grassroots level where wide gulfs exist between communities and individuals. Certainly Idasa's facilitating role in this regard must continue.

Do you see Idasa moving into any other definite areas?

Yes. For example we have just concluded a fascinating weekend which focused specifically on land as a food question, an economic question, a residential question, but also fundamentally as a political question. Idasa has always sought to focus on issues



Dr Boraine: facilitating role must continue at grassroots level.

which are going to demand debate and decision. As we move towards a post-apartheid South Africa, Idasa is well positioned to raise some of these issues. Because we are able to link up people from different constituencies, it enhances the facilitating role we have tried to play up till now. This certainly would apply not only to the land question, but to the building of a democratic society as a whole and particularly in addressing the economic question, without which the political question is almost futile.

Does Idasa's independent position create any problems for its credibility?

On the contrary. The fact that we are not linked with any political party or any other institution gives us a credibility with mass-based organisations as well as with South Africans who operate in boardrooms, top management arenas, education institutions and who might have links with other political parties.

For too long South Africans have been isolated from one another and therefore they don't really understand either the aspirations on the one hand, or the fears on the other, and this causes considerable misunderstanding and misinterpretation. If Idasa can bring people together who seldom encounter each other, it can only speed up the process towards meaningful democracy. This does not mean we will not constantly have to deal with the problems of

Idasa has never and will never claim to be vying for leadership in the struggle in any way

suspicion and criticism which flow from being in an independent position.

How is Idasa's re-thinking process taking place?

Two fundamental ways: Firstly, the Idasa staff and those who work closest with us are already involved in this process and will continue to be for months ahead, particularly because we are in a fluid period in our history. But this does not mean we become paralysed and suspend our activities. A whole lot of issues have a direct bearing on the politics of transition.

Secondly, we have always sought to consult widely and are continuing to do so, so that we can receive feedback, criticism, suggestions, ideas and guidance from a wide spectrum of South African thought and opinion.

At Idasa's recent board meeting certain trustees appealed to Idasa to extend its activities to the black communities. What is your response to this?

This is an extremely difficult and sensitive question. We have gone out of our way to show that we are not in competition with mass-based organisations. Idasa has never and will never claim to be vying for leadership in the struggle in any way. On the other hand, in a changing situation it is clear that democracy is not the prerogative of blacks or whites. It is a contradiction in terms to think of either/or when building a common democratic society.

Therefore it makes sense that an institute like Idasa, with its focus on democracy and non-racialism, ought to address the total South Africa rather than black or white South Africans.

Do you have any projects in mind in this regard?

When the Idasa staff met last August to plan the programme for 1990, we tried to anticipate the areas which would be of priority during the course of this year. Interestingly enough, we seem to have been able to project with a certain amount of accuracy the practical issues which need to be addressed.

This year started with a focus on democracy and accountability, we've just completed the land workshop I mentioned earlier and in April in Johannesburg, we will look at the possible lessons we can learn from Namibia. In May we will host a conference on the burning question of economic justice. In June a national conference is planned on the politics of transition . . . and so I could go on.

Nevertheless, as a staff we are giving serious and urgent attention to new demands to meet the new situation.

Slovo gazes into the mirror of history

DESPITE obituaries in the Western press, socialism is not dead - but it is ailing. The cure, says Joe Slovo, is an "unsparing critique" of the "crimes and distortions" of the past, and the restoration of the centrality of socialism's fundamental tenet - democracy.

By Shauna Westcott

IN THE wake of the collapse of most of the communist party governments in Eastern Europe, even supporters of socialism are reeling with doubt at "the mounting chronicle of crimes and distortions in the history of existing socialism, its economic failures and the divide which developed between socialism and democracy".

This frank admission was made by SACP general secretary Joe Slovo in a recent paper titled "Has socialism failed?".

However, while he urges "very necessary self-examination", he also asserts a belief in the future of socialism and its "inherent moral superiority", and dismisses the view that its whole past has been an unmitigated failure.

In support of the last assertion, he cites statistics published recently in *The Economist* which show that the Soviet Union - one of the most backward countries in the capitalist world 70 years ago - now has more graduate engineers than the United States, more graduate research scientists than Japan, and more medical doctors per head than Western Europe. It also produces more steel, fuel and energy than any other country.

"How many capitalist countries can match the achievements of most of the socialist world in the provision of social security, child care, the ending of cultural backwardness, and so on?" Slovo asks.

But he goes on to warn against a "reluctance to look squarely in the mirror of history and to concede that the socialism it reflects has been so distorted that an appeal to its positive achievements sounds hollow".

Isolating Stalinism - "the bureaucratic-authoritarian style of leadership which denuded the party and the practice of socialism of its democratic content and concentrated power in the hands of a tiny, self-perpetuating elite" - as the fundamental problem, he rejects all "pleas in mitigation". The Stalinist distortion of socialism was a hideous mistake that must not be repeated.

"It is not enough merely to engage in the self-pitying cry: 'We were misled!' We should rather ask why so many commu-

nists allowed themselves to become so blinded for so long. And, more importantly, why they behaved like Stalinists towards those of their comrades who raised even the slightest doubt about the 'purity' of Stalin's brand of socialism," he says.

However, he himself makes no attempt to answer this complex and vital question, perhaps because part of socialist "blindness" has been a reluctance to engage with areas, like Jungian analysis, not accessible to a materialist analysis.

Slovo warns against three other pitfalls in the process of self-criticism: the tendency to "blame Gorbachev", a defensive neglect of the "ideological contest", and a loss of faith under attack - the mistaken view that the Stalinist perversion is an inevitable consequence of socialism.

Those who scapegoat Gorbachev, blaming the collapse of communist regimes on the pace of perestroika and glasnost, are, says Slovo, "blaming the diagnosis and prescription for the illness".



Joe Slovo: Defending the inherent moral superiority of socialism



Romanians

"In general, it is our (SACP) view that the fact that the processes of perestroika and glasnost came too slowly, too little and too late in Eastern Europe did more than anything else to endanger the socialist perspective there. It is through these processes - and they must be implemented with all possible speed - that socialism has any hope of showing its essentially human face. When socialism as a world system comes into its own again - as it undoubtedly will - the 'Gorbachev revolution' will have played a seminal role."

On the "ideological contest", Slovo praises crusading pro-perestroika journals but laments a tendency to focus so exclusively on self-criticism that the injustices and excesses of the capitalist world go unchallenged.

He blames "excessive defensiveness" for causing socialists to underplay the evidence of socialism's superior moral potential. For instance, he contrasts the response to popular revolt of the late communist governments in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria with De Gaulle's military crackdown on the Paris protests of 1968, asking: "Is there another example in human history in which those in power have responded to the inevitable with such a civilised and

We should rather ask why so many communists allowed themselves to become so blinded

pacific resignation?"

More importantly, however, he isolates a mistaken analysis in which "the perversion of democracy in socialist experience is falsely contrasted to its practice in the capitalist West as if the latter gives adequate scope for the fulfillment of democratic ideals". The result is that the basic socialist critique of capitalist society - that



in Bucharest

Eastern Europe: Too soon to tell

WHILE F W de Klerk is rapidly earning himself a reputation as the Gorbachev of South Africa and the media are quick to draw analogies with events in Eastern Europe, over-simplified generalisations are misleading. In this article, Prof John Barratt of the SA Institute of International Affairs points out that differences between South Africa and Eastern Europe outweigh the similarities, and stresses it is far too early to make comparisons and draw conclusions from events in Eastern Europe.

THE revolutionary change in Eastern Europe in the past six months took the world, including the "experts", by surprise. That there was change in the wind in 1988/89 was clear, but the extent of the change, and particularly its speed, was not predicted. Once again, the course of history has been affected by the element of the unexpected, which should never be underestimated.

The outcome of these events is by no means clear yet because the break-up of the old order is still going on. Other governments, especially in Western Europe, which have to adjust to new circumstances, are still trying desperately to catch up and to determine the implications for themselves and the world in general.

It is likely that no clear pattern will emerge in Eastern Europe for some time, let alone a new political and economic order to replace the old which has lasted (with only a few disruptions) for the past four decades. The old order provided stability of a sort in Europe, but within the sterile framework of the Cold War. Individual countries were caught in a military and economic stranglehold by the Soviet Union.

It is impossible therefore to draw conclusions and to learn clear lessons at this stage from what is happening. It would be very misleading, for instance, to generalise and over-simplify by treating Eastern Europe as a whole. What has happened, and is still happening, is very different from one country to another.

It would also be dangerous to make comparisons with, and deduce lessons for, South Africa, because the differences are much greater than any similarities. Yet we can at least say that the dominant urge for greater democracy is a common factor, and it would be surprising if this did not affect us and many other countries around the world.

How did the movement towards democratisation start?

The Polish people led the way slowly but surely over the past decade, with the persistence of the Solidarity leadership and the great influence of the church. (The election of a Polish pope was undoubtedly a crucial factor.) The appointment of Mikhail Gorbachev as

It has been the disciplined restraint and tolerance of the process of democratisation which have been impressive

general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party in 1985 and the development of his "new thinking" was the catalyst.

Glasnost and perestroika in the USSR generated a tide of new political thinking, which gathered strength as it swept across Eastern Europe, exposing the weaknesses of societies dominated by authoritarian communism. The weaknesses included mounting economic problems, bloated, inefficient and often corrupt bureaucracies and, most seriously, the general incompetence and mediocrity of political leaders who, in virtually all cases, had become self-perpetuating oligarchies, insensitive and unresponsive to the real needs of the people.

They were maintained in power by their security forces and the military protection of the Soviet Union. It was particularly Gorbachev's removal of this threat of intervention (which had maintained communist systems in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and very nearly in Poland in the early 1980s) which made it possible for opposition political groups to promote radical political and economic reform - and even to consider the overthrow of established regimes.

Communist parties bore the brunt of the criticism over economic hardships and the lack of democracy. But in most cases - Romania being a notable exception - reform movements took root even within these parties and the governments they dominated. It is noteworthy that in most cases change has taken place, or is now doing so, through negotiations between political formations, including governing communist parties - as in Po-

it can be neither humane nor democratic because it is based on profit, entrenches inequality and concentrates power in a few hands - is neglected.

Noting that Marxist ideology sees the future state as a "direct democracy in which the task of governing would not be the preserve of a state bureaucracy" and as "an association in which the free development of each is a condition of the free development of all", Slovo asks what went wrong and isolates four main sources of trouble.

The first, and perhaps most important, is the notion of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", dealt with "rather thinly" by Marx as a "transition to a classless society". The assumption was that a degree of repression would be a necessary interim measure to safeguard revolutionary gains from both civil war and capitalist intervention. Rosa Luxemburg warned against this approach, telling Lenin: "Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party - however numerous they may be - is not freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently . . . its effectiveness vanishes when 'freedom' becomes a special privilege."

Lenin disagreed, however, assuming that the repression "necessary" in the immediate aftermath of the revolution would be "relatively mild and shortlived". History proved him wrong. Slovo admits this (how could he fail to?) but baulks at what he calls the "utopianism of the anarchists". He concedes that the "choice of the word 'dictatorship' certainly opens the way to ambiguities and distortions", but continues to support Lenin's position against Luxemburg's wisdom: that the "limited retention of repressive apparatus is justified by the exigencies of the earlier phases". For him it is merely "unfortunate" that the repression became a "permanent feature of the new society" and that the gap between socialism and democracy widened. For Luxemburg it was inevitable.

Slovo has more courage over the three other problem areas: "the steady erosion

Into the mirror of history

From Page 11

of people's power both at the level of government and mass social organisations; the perversion of the concept of the party as a vanguard of the working class; and whether at the end of the day socialist democracy can find real expression in a single-party state".

He asserts flatly that "the concept of a single-party state is nowhere to be found in classical socialist theory", describes it as a "short-cut to political tyranny".

Nevertheless, he condemns the undemocratic practice of communist governments and mass organisations, quoting Hegel (truth is usually born as a heresy and dies as a superstition) and noting: "With no real right to dissent by citizens or even by the mass of the party membership, truth became more and more inhibited by a deadening dogma: a sort of catechism took the place of creative thought. And within the confines of a single-party state, the alternative to active conformism was either silence or the risk of punishment as an 'enemy of the people'."

On the economic front, Slovo condemns the failure of socialism to overcome the "sense of economic alienation inherited from the capitalist past". Committees of bureaucrats simply replaced boards of directors, behaving with the same disregard for democratic accountability and leaving the workers in the same state of powerlessness and alienation.

"State property itself has to be transformed into social property," he says. "This involves reorganising social life as a

whole so that the producers, at least as a collective, have a real say not only in the production of social wealth but also in its disposal."

Slovo concludes by repeating the warning that "we dare not underestimate the damage that has been wrought to the cause of socialism by the distortions we have touched upon" and by stating the commitment of his party both to democratic values and to an ultimate "peaceful progression" towards a socialist South Africa.

Lest there be any doubt, he spells out a commitment to a "post-apartheid state which will guarantee all citizens the basic rights and freedoms of organisation, speech, thought, press, movement, residence, conscience and religion; full trade union rights for all workers including the right to strike, and one person one vote in free and democratic elections".

Obviously, this position must be welcomed, as must the unfortunately rare willingness to address errors and failures in public. There is also scope for debate, notably about "anarchist utopianism", and a need for socialists to move from self-criticism (and criticism of capitalism) to spelling out a programme of action.

It has been to the great detriment of this country that we have been denied the right to hear this voice for so long. May he never be responsible for denying us the voices of others.

Shauna Westcott works in Idasa's publications division.

Business against

By Shauna Westcott

THE RESPONSE of the JSE to Nelson Mandela's early and inevitable reiteration of a commitment to nationalisation is stark evidence of what JCI group economics consultant Ronnie Bethlehem calls "the gap between two worlds".

He characterises the two as "27 million people in ferment whose deprivation needs attention" on the one hand, and on the other "a sophisticated global economy represented at its highest by the United States".

The two worlds don't speak the same language, says Bethlehem, citing a recent "honest but rather primitive" breakfast address to businessmen by Walter Sisulu at which the gap between speaker and audience was "amazing". Yet he adds that "in Lusaka, in Paris, in Harare, one does succeed".

Six points of agreement appear to have emerged from these talks in foreign capitals where representatives of the "two worlds" have managed to communicate:

- That there is a need for a fundamental restructuring of the economy to ensure significant redistribution of wealth;

- That the choice is not between ideological orthodoxies but rather "how to get the mix of a mixed economy right", as the ANC's Pallo Jordan puts it;

- That the structural problems (unemployment, mass poverty, critical shortages of housing, health and education facilities, high population growth, poorly educated and consequently unskilled millions) are immense;

- That there is little or no chance of receiving massive foreign aid, particularly with Eastern Europe presenting an attractive alternative to Western investors;

- That rapid economic growth is necessary - cuts in the defence budget and equalisation of welfare expenditure will not be enough to finance even the most pressing needs;

- That solutions should be constructed co-operatively as far as possible.

While these six points are far from forming an adequate bridge between Bethlehem's "two worlds", they nevertheless represent considerable progress beyond the war of slogans that was the order of the day until the collapse of most of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

Progress would be greater were the looming crisis in the capitalist world - real (at least to feminists, ecologists and "Buddhist" economists) despite the scoffing precipitated by its somewhat early anticipation in communist circles - mature enough to force the kind of creative reassessment now current in the socialist world.

For among the problems faced by those

Too soon to tell

From Page 11

land, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. These communist parties have appreciated that their political systems and economies were becoming inoperable and that the status quo could no longer be maintained.

Although in most cases popular demonstrations played a significant role in influencing governments, it has only been in East Germany and Romania that mass popular action - exodus to the West in the German case and a violent uprising in Romania - was decisive. Contrary to the impression created by dramatic TV coverage of the incidents of mass protest action, it has been the discipline, restraint, tolerance and even sophistication of the process of democratisation, which have been impressive in most cases.

This process is by no means over. In no country of Eastern Europe except Albania does a communist party still claim the sole right to govern, and constitutions are everywhere being changed to allow for multi-party systems. Even in the USSR itself a similar change has been promised, as the tide of democratisation sweeps back from a changing Eastern Europe.

Recognising their current unpopularity, most communist parties are splitting into factions or are transforming themselves into socialist parties closer to Western models in the hope of attracting some electoral support. However, in no country except Poland has a government yet been elected. At the time of writing this article, East Germany and Hungary were preparing to go to the polls (in March). Polls are to follow in Romania in May and in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria in June.

The tests for democracy are still to come - in the elections themselves and in the subsequent ability of new governments to handle the problems of reconstruction and of fulfilling adequately the popular expectations. Only then will we know whether the reaction against the authoritarianism of former regimes and against the failure of centrally planned economies has led to a widespread rejection of socialist tenets as a whole. This is unlikely, if popular expressions of opinion so far are anything to go by.

It would thus be premature for observers in the West to conclude that all these people have become convinced of the benefits of capitalism, rather than perhaps a liberalised version of socialism. The debate on the relative advantages of different socio-economic systems is far from over in Eastern Europe. There has been no victory of one particular economic system over another. While democracy appears to be flourishing, it is still a delicate flower which needs to be nourished and which could again be trampled underfoot, as in the past, by authoritarianism of the right or the left.

iddling e flames?

No SINGLE national question is more vital or more opaque to most than the one that recently sent the Johannesburg Stock Exchange into a flat spin - the question of economic restructuring, inadequately subsumed under the catch-all "nationalisation".



Cosatu's aim: a low-cost, high-wage growth path

attempting to move rapidly towards what Cosatu's Alec Erwin calls "researched and mandated debates on policy", is that capitalist businessmen have yet to be compelled to move beyond their cherished articles of faith.

The result, according to trade union veteran Dave Lewis, who prefers to be described as "working in the economic history department at UCT", is "a very naive view" of what is meant by concepts such as nationalisation.

According to Lewis, who is a member of the Cosatu-linked Economic Trends Project, nationalisation is "about contriving a lever for the state to give effect to its policies of redistribution".

University of Cape Town sociologist Dave Cooper agrees. "Nationalisation has become partly symbolic," he says. "Mandela was saying 'We are not a pushover' on redistribution.

"The crucial issue is sophisticated levers of control to facilitate mechanisms for redistribution. Formal legal ownership via nationalisation does not always give the desired control. The issue needs to be debated in depth in the various industries and sectors of the economy."

Erwin takes a similar line when he refers to the need for "social control over production effected through a range of ownership forms, and where the market plays critically important roles".

He supports control through, for example, government intervention in capital investment decisions and cites South Korea as an example of an economy where this has been a successful operating principle. Crucial to its success, however, is government support in the form of research and development and "coherent and active development of manpower (sic) and education".

He also points to "certain potentials" in privatisation and deregulation, the former suggesting ways to develop management accountability, the latter useful in so far as it removes protection of narrow interests.

Pieter le Roux, professor of development studies at the University of the Western Cape, is also a supporter of this kind of eclectic approach. He advocates indirect government control of aspects of the economy through influence on investment decisions, fiscal, monetary and wage policies and through union and government representation on boards of directors.

"For social democrats," says Le Roux, "socialism is today defined in terms of the outcome of the economic process and not in terms of who owns the means of production. The emphasis has shifted away from the ownership issue, to the question of who controls the economic decisions which are of importance to society."

For Le Roux, nationalisation, on a large scale at least, has been shown to be counter-productive. Erwin describes it as a "central question" but argues for "a very much more detailed and disaggregated approach". Lewis is prepared to be more specific.

"Lack of managerial resources are a massive restraint on wide-scale nationalisation," he says. "We're concerned with ownership of corporations that produce basic goods and services like housing, transport, electricity, roads, telephones. Some things have to be owned by the state - railroads, Eskom, hospitals . . .

"Then with banks and huge finance houses like Old Mutual and Anglo we might want to consider regulations governing the extent to which they are entitled to own and manage other production companies and what they do with the profits. Banks are already required to invest a portion of their profits in a particular way. There is no reason why finance houses like Anglo - which are banks of a kind - should not be subject to similar requirements."

But Lewis emphasises a minimalist approach. "I don't see any point in nationalising producers of consumer goods," he says. He argues strongly for a freeze on the process of privatisation currently under way so that economic restructuring can take place by consensus and with minimum trauma. He points out that while the debate on restructuring is taking place, a large portion of the economy that is publicly owned is being privatised and that society as a whole is not benefiting.

All these voices from what may be broadly described as the socialist/social democratic camp emphasise the importance of democratic practice within researched and debated parameters or indicators.

Erwin, for example, insists that planning must be effected by democratic structures at national, regional and local levels, and "more important, within the institutions of the wider civil society and within all processes of production".

Kerkorrel woos them with blues

REBEL Afrikaner rock musician Johannes Kerkorrel (aka Ralph Rabie) delighted over 500 University of Port Elizabeth students with a lunchtime concert in a packed campus auditorium late in February.

Exposure of UPE students to Kerkorrel's mix of blues, rock, Afrikaans folk, and political satire was the result of an approach to Idasa by the university's SRC culture committee.

Kerkorrel came not with the Gereformeerde Blues Band but with his base player Spiros Paxinos to give a concert with a difference to students who did not dance or shout but sat in dim light on plush auditorium chairs.

Interspersing his moving or hilarious songs with cynical comments about the ignorance of UPE students who were not allowed "politics on campus", Kerkorrel drew an extremely appreciative response from the majority of students.

As a young Afrikaner he demonstrated his ability to relate to his audience in a manner both challenging and non-threatening. He successfully mixed a culture of youth, rebellion and rock with strong traditional Afrikaans symbols and styles.

Moreover, the quality of his performance, and that of Spiros, was such that even those who would criticise his politics could not doubt his musical talent.

Hopefully this type of activity at the university will generate enthusiasm and interest among students.

Racism not policy of Pam, PAC

MORE than 280 people, mostly whites, attended a lecture on "democratic opposition" hosted by Idasa in Johannesburg in March.

The lecture was one of a two-part series on "Actors on the Extra-Parliamentary Stage" aimed specifically at a white audience as an educational exercise and to address misconceptions and provide the audience with a clearer understanding of extra-parliamentary politics.

Benny Alexander, the general secretary of the Pan African Movement (or PAC Internal), opened the meeting by stating that when the late Robert Sobukwe and others broke away from the African National Congress to form the Pan African Congress during the 1950s



Mandla Seloane . . . BCM stands for non-racialism

it was because they felt that the ideals of Africanism were no longer catered for in the ANC and therefore there was a need

to seek a new home. It is in this tradition of Pan Africanism that the Pan African Movement (Pam) was formed in December last year.

He said it was deceiving to suggest that Pam stood for racism as it supported a true non-racialism. Pam, said Alexander, believes that there is only one race in the whole world - the human race. Alexander stated that all the other parties who refer to themselves as non-racial were in fact multiracial because they recognised that there were different races in South Africa.

Mandla Seloane, the head of the labour unit of the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), speaking on the Black Consciousness Movement, said when the late Steve Biko and others initially established BCM it was to raise the consciousness of black people and fill the vacuum created by the banning of the ANC and PAC and the imprisonment of their entire leadership.

Seloane said that while BCM stood for non-racialism, it believed that whites should organise their own communities for a democratic Azania where everyone would live in peace. BCM believes that the solutions to the country's problems will be solved by socialism. It was not socialism which failed in Eastern Europe but the bureaucracy which used statist principles of socialism.

Paul Mashatile, the Southern Transvaal regional secretary of the UDF, told the audience that when the UDF was formed in August 1983, it was to be a broad front of democratic organisations which were opposed to the apartheid policies of the state. Invitations were sent to a wide range of democratic organisations (including Azapo), from both the black and white communities. All these organisations today are supporters of the ANC and have adopted the Freedom Charter as their guiding policy document.

The UDF believes in the leadership of the ANC and will continue to give it the necessary support. Like the ANC it believes that if there is sincerity on the part of the regime negotiations could bring about a peaceful resolution of the South African conflict.

Teachers challenged by subject forums

SUBJECT interest groups provide a ready reason for teachers to meet together, according to Fana Zungu, previously an Idasa regional co-ordinator in Natal and now principal of the Phambili High School in Durban.

With small committees working in the areas of English and history teaching, new contacts are being made and challenges to method and content of the subjects are being explored.

With their very different experiences, teachers are able to develop common strategies for teaching their subjects which open them and their classes up to new ways of looking at people and at the subject itself.

Zungu has taken over the principalship of Phambili, a community high school based in the centre of Durban. Although it started originally as a response to the crisis in education it is now beginning to see itself as a forerunner in establishing a learning community in which teachers, community and scholars can operate democratically and achieve a high standard of education.

Paul Graham
Regional Director

Regular video screenings in PE

IDASA Eastern Cape has begun showing videos on contemporary South Africa not usually available to the general public at its office on every second Thursday.

A brief introduction is given to contextualise the video, and after the screening members of the audience are invited to stay for tea and informal discussion.

Videos screened so far have been "The Cry of Reason", about Afrikaans theologian Dr Beyers Naude; "A World Apart", a feature film based on the life of Ruth First and Joe Slovo; and "Four Days in Lusaka", about the Five Freedoms Forum conference in 1989.

Screenings during March included "Breaking the Fetters", Hennie Serfontein's sensitive docu-

mentary on how Afrikaners have responded to meeting the ANC face to face, and a documentary on the Soccer City Rally at which the Rivonia trialists were welcomed in Johannesburg last year. Also rescreened was "Four Days in Lusaka".

We are hoping to create an awareness that this video programme is running on a regular basis, so that people will feel free to "pop in" to Idasa and see what is showing.

We have acquired some interesting new videos from Cape Town, and ordered some more from Johannesburg, and are hoping that this programme gains momentum in the future.

Janet Cherry
Research Consultant

Patrick Banda
Regional Co-ordinator

Broad front of socialist groups?

AZAPO has called on resistance groups to unite before negotiating with the government.

By Cassandra Moodley

THE Azanian People's Organisation has called for a broad front of socialist organisations to unite to "fashion out a socialist agenda for liberation".

This was urged at the organisation's ninth national congress held in March at the Shareworld complex in Johannesburg with the theme, "Reconstruct for a socialist Azania".

Newly elected Azapo president Dr Itumeleng Jerry Mosala said the "200 delegates and about 7 000 observers at the congress" reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to socialism and resolved to initiate a conference of socialist organisations soon.

In his keynote address at the meeting, Mosala called for an "alternative conference of left and socialist formations and organisations - a conference independent of liberation organisations who are comfortable with the status quo - in order to evolve a united programme of action for intensifying the struggle".

Organisations could include the Cape Action League, Action Youth and union groupings and movements committed to socialism.

Azapo sees this as the only way to block a negotiated settlement.

The congress deliberated over participating in negotiations but unanimously rejected the idea.

"Azapo believes President FW de Klerk's negotiation package will not be acceptable to black people once they understand the true nature of his offer, and it cannot be absorbed into our programme for liberation," said Mosala.

"The South African regime still retains political, military and economic power over the liberation forces. Hence the timing for negotiations is premature and therefore cannot deliver the expected revolutionary change."

At present talks would benefit a few elitist groups, the Azapo resolution stated. It would also revitalise the capitalist system which was showing signs of collapse and create confusion and conflict between different organisations.

"Negotiations should take place among resistance organisations of the black people, not with the ruling class," said Mosala.

The incoming central committee was urged at the congress to address unity with other oppressed organisations.

When Pam will talk to the government

THE Pan-Africanist Movement is contemplating nationalisation on a grand scale, affecting all big business in the country, says Mr Benny Alexander, Pam general secretary.

"We are not going to nationalise the boerewors trolley on the street corner. But big industries which go to the heart of the economy and such things will have to be subjected to a planned economy so that everybody is benefited by that."

He said the pillars of Pam policy were African nationalism, scientific socialism and continental unity.

The economic policy was socialism, a planned economy within the context of a political democracy. Pam did not believe totalitarianism was inherent in a planned economy.

On negotiations, Alexander said Pam was prepared to talk to the government on the ownership of resources - of which land was primary - and one person, one vote in a unitary state without checks and balances for groups.

"Unlike the ANC, we do not make a distinction between a climate, preconditions and an agenda. These two items constitute for us our climate, our preconditions, our agenda, our everything."

The land, which had been taken from the African people, had to be returned to its "rightful owners" through decolonisation.

"The land is not confined to a peasant understanding of the land. It implies the means of production, the totality of the resources," Alexander said.

Asked whether this included factories and financial institutions, he replied: "Everything."

Whites were running the economy in the interests of foreign capital. An insignificant part of the economy was in the hands of Afrikaners.

Alexander said Pam was non-racial and was building one nation - "an Afri-

can nation, where everyone who pledges allegiance to Africa, its development and its people will be an African, and the colour of a person's skin will be irrelevant".

"We propose the Africanisation of all institutions - learning and all other things."

"We regard the United Democratic Front and ANC as sister organisations, but their friends are not necessarily our friends."

He described Pam's constitution as "quasi-federal", having both affiliate organisations and card-carrying members.

The most important affiliates were the youth affiliate, Azanian National Youth Unity (Azanyu), the Pan-Africanist Student Organisation (Paso), the African Women's Organisation (Awo) and the African Labour Co-ordinating Committee (Alcoc).

These four national affiliates were represented on the national executive.

Responding to the question whether Pam accepted white members, Alexander said: "We do not accept in Pam any people who regard themselves as white or any people who regard themselves as black."

"We only take those who regard themselves as African in terms of our definition. An African is defined as someone who is indigenous or who pays his daily allegiance to Africa, its people and its development, and accepts straightforward democratic practices."

On Pam's international relations, Alexander says its strongest allies would be in the Non-Aligned Movement.

The organisation would look at smaller, leftist and Pan-Africanist organisations in the West.

Pam would not regard Western governments as allies - although Norway was "quite open".

(With acknowledgment to *South and Work in Progress*.)

In a resolution on internecine violence, the congress decided to plan an all-in consultative conference of resistance organisations to try to find a solution in Natal, Uitenhage and Bekkersdal.

Other important resolutions included a call for the international community to intensify sanctions, an intensification of the struggle for land, the workers' struggle, the women's secretariat, black theology and media relations.

The central committee includes founder members of the Black Consciousness Movement who have spent up to six years on Robben Island after being convicted of terrorism. They are: Azapo deputy president Dr Nchaupe Mokoape, general secretary Pandelani Nefolovhodwe, publicity secretary Strini Moodley, and projects co-ordinator Muntu Myeza.

(With acknowledgement to *Weekly Mail*)

Common ground for new constitution

THERE is a great deal more common ground on a future constitution for South Africa than may be deduced from public statements and political posturing.

This is the view of Dr Fanie Cloete, formerly of the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, who was the speaker at the first of Idasa Eastern Cape's "Future Realities" forums in February.

The aim of the forums is to provide a space for open and critical debate about South Africa's constitutional and economic future, after an input from leading opinion formers or academics in the field.

Cloete gave an extremely insightful paper into current government thinking. Focusing on the views of the African National Congress and the Nationalist Party as the two main protagonists in the negotiation process, he outlined the similarities and differences in their approaches to a future constitution for South Africa.

Concluding that there is a great deal of common ground, he said that this would be the basis for compromise and consensus in the drawing up of a new constitution which was likely to happen within the next two to four years.

Possible stumbling blocks are, from the Nationalist perspective, the ANC's economic policies; from the ANC's side, the question of how the Nationalists define group rights.

Defined in racial terms, this will be unacceptable to the ANC. However, if redefined to include protection of language, religion and culture, a compromise may be reached in line with the Freedom Charter's emphasis.

Cloete's largely optimistic address was followed by intense debate among the audience. The calibre of audience participation was high, with many local opinion formers from different political persuasions present to air their views and listen to the views of others.

We are optimistic that this programme will prove increasingly popular as the constitutional debate "hots up" over the next few months.

Janet Cherry
Research Consultant

REGIONAL FOCUS



Dr Fanie Cloete with Mr Mike Nzotoyi of the PE People's Civic Organisation

Childcare, skills key issues for women

A REPORT-BACK from the historic "Malibongwe" international women's conference held in Amsterdam in January got Idasa Eastern Cape's women's programme off to a good start this year.

Marion Shaer, Idasa's national representative to Malibongwe, gave a concise, insightful and critical report from the conference.

Debate from the floor ensued and two key issues were raised which were felt by everyone to require urgent attention.

The first arose from a comment about lack of discipline among young people. In re-

sponse it was argued that where this occurred, it was because childcare facilities for working women are completely inadequate.

The second issue was poverty and powerlessness. A strong call was made for women to gain access to skills in order to set up their own projects, create income for themselves, and take control of their lives. It was stressed that women must do this themselves, and must acquire the necessary skills in order not to be dependent on others.

To follow on from this productive discussion, the Eastern Cape office plans to host another women's forum where women with skills will be invited to come and address these problems with different women's organisations.

Janet Cherry
Research Consultant

And now for the political lunch

THE Eastern Cape office of Idasa is achieving great success with its interaction programmes, which set out to do no more than introduce prominent members of the white community to leadership of community organisations. In a sense, the "political" lunch has dis-

placed the business lunch as a priority for many Port Elizabeth opinion formers!

Towards the end of 1989, Idasa invited Port Elizabeth's highly regarded town clerk, P K Botha, to sit down to lunch with the then vice-president of the restricted UDF, Henry Fazzie, who, as a long-time member of Pebco (Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation), was historically at the forefront of the call for "One City, One Municipality". An exchange of views and proposals between two of the most experienced civic affairs leaders in Port Elizabeth was destined to have positive spin-offs - and indeed it since has.

This year has seen the president and vice-president of the Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce, Arthur Invernizzi and Ron Pepler, lunching with that "scourge" of the Port Elizabeth business community in 1986, Mkhuseleli Jack, now publicity secretary of the UDF in the Eastern Cape. In 1986, it will be remembered, Jack was at the helm of organising the telling consumer boycott of white businesses in Port Elizabeth.

Also seen lunching recently were UPE SRC leaders and their Vista University counterparts

These are but some of the many introductory meetings being arranged by the Idasa staff in the Eastern Cape in order to promote interaction and co-operation rather than confrontation.

Keith Wattrus
Co-director

Pretoria reading groups launched

THE idea for Idasa women's reading groups in Pretoria originated in two meetings on the role of women in the struggle against apartheid in August and September last year.

The need for serious ongoing discussion was expressed at informal chats after these meetings.

Having consulted with academics and women on finding a common denominator for the range of interests, from those who had expressed the need to gain knowledge to those who felt they were well informed, the idea of reading groups was mooted, with the underlying theme of "preparing for a democratic South Africa".

The reading group was formally launched on February 21 with about 70 people. Jeanette Ferreira, a University of Zululand lecturer who is also a poet and novelist, spoke on Miriam Tlali's "Footprints in the Quag". The meeting was chaired by Wits literary academic Gerrit Olivier and the discussion focused on a range of issues raised by Tlali's work.

These included the relationship between a literary text and "reality", a look at how white women react to Tlali's negative, unsympathetic

view of whites and to what extent Tlali is influenced by black consciousness thinking, and whether readers need an academic literary background to evaluate a book.

It was agreed that we would have another two or three meetings with high profile speakers in 1990, with groups meeting independently in between. The larger meetings would attempt to ensure continuity in terms of providing opportunity for groups to report back on progress; it would create a forum for discussion; and would ease the process of assimilation of new members into groups.

The meeting brought together the most disparate group of women (and men) yet seen under Idasa's auspices in Pretoria - thanks to the diligent planning of Lou-Marie Kruger, former Idasa regional director. Some felt excluded by the "intellectual" level of debate/discussion, while others found it stimulating. This resulted in lively argument which is always good for discussion, and augurs well for the future.

Kerry Harris
Regional Co-ordinator

Taking stock in Stellenbosch

By Sue Valentine

WHILE world attention was focused firmly on Nelson Mandela in his first few weeks of freedom, shooting for a British television programme featuring the views of 10 white Afrikaners, including Van Zyl Slabbert, began here.

Flanked on either side by five of his countrymen, Slabbert launched the discussion for the cameras in the hallowed halls of Afrikanerdom at Stellenbosch University. Sitting somewhat uneasily in front of a large painting of the university's chancellor, former state president P W Botha, Slabbert was at pains to ensure there was no hidden ideological agenda in the television producers' minds and that there would be no ironic intrusion of his old adversary into the picture.

The rest of the group comprised Breyten Breytenbach, Sampie Terblanche, Wynand Malan, Jannie Gagiano, Jannie Engelbrecht, Tertius Delport, Nikki Koornhof, Laurie Ackermann, Magiel de Roux and Louwrens du Plessis.

The discussion ranged around the events between February 2 and 12.

The need for restructuring the economic as well as the political system was emphasised by Sampie Terblanche, who was dismissive of protestations by free marketeers and farmers that capitalism was the only path to follow. "If nationalisation is theft, what then is apart-



Under the watchful eye of PW: Van Zyl Slabbert, Breyten Breytenbach and Sampie Terblanche

heid?" he retorted.

Asked by Slabbert what the National Party saw as the bottom line in terms of negotiating with the ANC, National Party MP Tertius Delport denied there was a bottom line, adding that negotiations were a joint commitment to finding the best solution. It was on that basis that they would debate matters with the ANC.

On the subject of many Afrikaners' sense of betrayal, Slabbert asked whether Afrikaner identity depended on apartheid. Breyten Breytenbach said there was a need to encourage the development of a "South Africaness".

Giving his impressions of the move De Klerk had made, Slabbert said the State President had to sacrifice control over certain aspects of the agenda. It had taken "enormous courage" to take the decision which implied the end of Afrikaner domination.

Students go to townships en masse

A RECORD-SIZED township interaction took place in Cape Town in March when 250 first-year sociology students at UCT were taken to the townships by Idasa and the projects committee of Nusas.

The social history of the area was explained with the aid of a video dealing with the forced removals that resulted from vigilante activity in the greater Crossroads area. The students had the opportunity to meet the leaders who had dealt with the "Witdoek" war in 1986, and also visited the refugee area in Khayelitsha.

The harsh daily routines of impoverished KTC residents, struggling with rudimentary water supplies, sanitation and

inadequate health and communication services, made a great impact on the students who were clearly astonished by the fact that the squatters were house proud about their meagre structures. They learnt that the squatters clung to these dwellings because of their close proximity to jobs in Cape Town and because they cannot afford homes in Khayelitsha.

The tour ties in with the students' study programme on poverty, housing and development, and this was partly the reason why the sociology department requested the trip. The experience also conscientised the students and gave them insight into some urgent problems. Many remarked that they could for the first time relate to the problems of people in the townships.

Nusas projects officer Richard Smith felt the trip had increased his committee's understanding of the Western Cape. He also expressed the hope that more sociology students would consequently become actively involved in student politics.

The large number of participants - almost four times the normal tour size - was also a challenge to Pro Jack, the chief tour guide. The success of the project, however, was clear when the group broke into a spontaneous toyi-toyi in Khayelitsha and, after a delicious supper, decided to go on to a nightclub in Guguletu.

Hopefully more university departments will participate in similar tours in the future.

Marion Shaer
Regional Co-ordinator

Lessons from a visit to Inanda

WHITE faces are still infrequent enough in the townships to attract attention. Residents of KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda were that much more puzzled by the sight of whole busloads travelling through their streets on three consecutive days at the end of February.

Two trips were organised for new students at the University of Natal as part of their orientation week programme. The response was good, with 128 students in total going on the journey. This was followed a day later by a somewhat different group of 40 staff members of a local community development organisation.

The community development workers' trip involved looking at the massively crowded shacklands with a different point in mind. They work in an area of the Umgeni Valley which is still relatively sparsely populated, but which might well experience the urbanisation pressures of Inanda in the near future. Their aim is to prepare their area in advance to avoid "another Inanda".

Inanda is an area released by Pretoria for homeland incorporation but which has hung in limbo for decades. The effect is that neither central nor homeland government has taken adequate responsibility for planning and development in the area. The effect has been uncon-

trolled settlement on land which was not adequately planned or serviced in advance.

The problems which now exist appear almost insurmountable. For example, according to architect Rodney Harber who conducted the tour, 146 new primary schools are needed in the Inanda area. However, apart from the financial constraints, there is now nowhere to put the schools.

Interestingly for the community development workers, many of whom are African, the exposure to Inanda was as stunning as the experience proved to be for the white students.

Gary Cullen
Regional Co-ordinator

IMPORTANT DIARY DATES

23-24 JUNE 1990

"South Africa in Transition"

A national conference to answer the questions:

- Where are we going, and
- How do we get there?

To be presented by Idasa in Port Elizabeth

Meeting the people's expectations

Sisulu's challenge to business community

By Lisa Seftel

IT WAS literally a "Who's Who" of the business community that gathered at the joint Idasa/Wits Business School Graduate Association breakfast in March to hear ANC leader Walter Sisulu speak on "Meaningful Political Change: The Role of Business".

Outgoing Anglo American chairman Gavin Reilly, Reserve Bank Governor Chris Stals and JSE president Tony Norton were among the crowd of 550. A TV screen beamed Sisulu to a part of the audience in an adjoining room.

But a hectic schedule (he had returned only three days earlier from an African trip and had gone the previous day to Cape Town) had taken its toll on 77-year-old Sisulu. He did not appear to be the same person we heard at the FNB Stadium in October and had difficulty hearing questions posed to him.

Nevertheless, Sisulu's speech was not without content. He explained why he felt present government and business economic policies were not in the interest of the majority of South Africans and thus why the ANC is seeking new and original approaches and solutions.

"The history of our country has been marked by a grotesque sense of social irresponsibility on the part of the business sector towards the black people. This experi-



More than 500 business people came to hear Sisulu

ence leads us to believe that the remedies we seek will not be met by a post-apartheid state whose government refrains from intervening in the economy.

"We need to employ the powers of the resulting democratic state to bring about a planned redistribution of income and wealth in favour of the people as a whole," said Sisulu.

"Old ways of resolving the crisis have ceased to exist," he said, citing the fact that black people are no longer willing to be forces of labour as determined by government edict.

A new approach needed to begin with a recognition by the business sector that the people had unquenchable expectations that needed to be satisfied. These included a living wage, the basic requirements of social security and free and equal education.

"Whatever the rate of growth of the economy, there must be a flow of the nation's output towards meeting these expectations," said Sisulu.

This might result in a loss of profits and even a lowering of white incomes. But if we were to secure the conditions for peace, renewed economic stability and growth, we had to be prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

A future state would require an "activist

economic programme" which could involve:

- The use of resources released by the abolition of duplicate apartheid institutions and structures;
- A movement towards the redistribution of income in favour of the people as a whole. To achieve this, business would have to play a part in funding the state's requirements, and
- A revision of the structure of relations between labour and capital in industry and business to ensure a good working relationship between trade unions and management.

Sisulu said that a mixed economy, which is what the ANC advocates, would come about through:

- The curbing of monopoly power through legislation;
- Greater diffusion of power within industry through the spread of ownership;
- The nationalisation of the privatised parastatals to maintain the industrial and service infrastructure and to move towards a redistribution of wealth, and
- Legislation to steer the economy in directions which develop adequate infrastructures for a growing population with respect to health, welfare etc. and with appropriate controlling mechanisms for preserving ecological balance.

Sisulu was at pains to stress the ANC's desire to establish a good working relationship with the business sector - aimed at a serious and productive dialogue about the policies required to secure the future of South Africa and the economy.

In conclusion, he called on the meeting "to put aside your fears and preconceived notions and join us in finding ways of addressing the very real and pressing needs of all our people".

Lisa Seftel is a Regional Co-ordinator in the Johannesburg office of Idasa.

Fiddling against the flames

From page 13

Lewis rejects the myth that "big private bureaucracies are more efficient than big public ones" and argues for decentralisation. "Lack of democracy is also a consequence of size," he says, adding: "No one in their right mind would want to own Anglo in its present form. It is an inefficient private bureaucracy."

On the vital question of economic growth, no one has gone further than the enunciation of a few broad principles.

Erwin has delineated key areas in which research and discussion on parametric planning is taking place: investment policy, a science and technology programme, a manpower (sic) programme related to education, health and welfare, the environment, and recreation and tourism. He has also stated that Cosatu's aim is a low-cost, high-wage growth path (dismissed as "gobbledegook" by Bethlehem) but has not spelt

out any details.

But if the liberation movement has still to come up with a detailed programme that can be debated in democratic structures, it has clearly moved a great deal further than the business community.

Bethlehem admits that "things are moving too slowly", that most of the business community is "flapping all over the place" at the thought that the next government might be formed by the ANC, and that most are "still stuck in the starting position".

As one who has pleaded for business to come up with a programme for redistribution that will pre-empt the need for state action, he welcomes the open and honest raising of the nationalisation question by Mandela.

"It's very important," he says. "It's good that it's generating anxiety. There are parts of the business community for

whom the penny has dropped and they have started to put on their thinking caps."

Significantly, difficult though it may be to credit, the issue of the gross inequality that exists in South Africa is still "beyond the thinking of most business people", according to Bethlehem. "They haven't had to bother," he says.

He warns that "one has to be careful not to lead people to solutions before they recognise the problems" but it may be asking too much of the liberation movement to exercise any more patience with a wilful disregard that summons up the image of Nero fiddling against the flames.

A further consideration crying out for recognition in debates about restructuring the economy is the question of the environmental cost of endless growth. Business hasn't "had to bother" about this either.

Shauna Westcott works in the publications division of Idasa.

Open (and democratic) cities drive

SIXTY-FIVE participants in an "open city" forum held recently in Durban pledged themselves to encourage their organisations to discuss the form and content of a campaign focusing on the democratisation of Greater Durban.

Providing background information on the "open city" programme in Cape Town, Helen Zille spoke of the long period of consultation and the development of a limited focus manifesto in order to bring together a wide range of people committed to an open city.

In a panel discussion, representatives from a township civic organisation, the Durban Housing Action Committee and from the Westville Resident's Support Group identified the need to concentrate on local township issues such as rent and water supplies, living conditions and violence as well as more overarching planning and legislative changes.

Any campaign focusing on Durban will need to take into account political, economic and spatial issues, according to Pravin Gordhan of DHAC. "We need to talk not only about an open city but about a democratic Durban."

From group discussion a consensus began to evolve around the development of a single city consciousness and of the manner in which decisions about the distribution of resources and the development of priorities might be set.

A number of groups suggested models which would enhance democratic processes in the city. They defined the city in terms of the "Durban functional area" - a metropolitan region which stretches across homeland and municipal and borough boundaries and includes some 3,5 million people, almost half of whom live in shacks.

"Three matters must be addressed - resource allocation, opening the city to all its inhabitants, and the administration of the city," Durban MP Peter Gastrow reported on behalf of his group.

There was a strong commitment to developing a process to bring together people with different priorities and opinions about the future of the city so that they could discuss and negotiate these together.

"It is ironic," according to one speaker, "that at a national level attempts are being made to enter into negotiations about the future constitutional development of the country while the same is not being tried at a city level."

A steering committee has been established to reconvene the forum together with any other interested organisations, ratepayers' associations or individuals. It will have as members representatives of the Democratic Party, extra-parliamentary groups working in white areas, and the Durban Civic Movement.

Paul Graham
Regional Director

BOOK REVIEW

Useful guide on conflict

By Bobby Nel

CONFLICT AND THE QUEST FOR JUSTICE (NIR READER NO 2, 1989) edited by Klaus Nurnberger, John Tooke and William Domeris: Encounter Publications, Pietermaritzburg, 1989.

THIS is the second book by the National Initiative for Reconciliation (NIR), a follow-up to NIR Reader No 1, "The Cost of Reconciliation in South Africa". Its purpose is to discuss the basis of the conflict in South Africa which demands reconciliation. The editors make it clear in the preface that the contributors follow different approaches and that the book contains different viewpoints, but the central aim is to discuss conflict and possible ways of resolving it "on the basis of a common commitment to justice".

The first part of the book forms a good introduction, dealing with justice in legal terms as well as within the Christian tradition. It also discusses concepts like "the struggle", "negotiation", and "conflict" in clear and articulate terms. However, some of the chapters are too long and academic for use in group discussions and while the "questions for discussion" at the end of each chapter could be useful, they tend to be complicated and/or abstract.

The second part of the book gives an overview of justice, conflict and violence in the Christian tradition. Nurnberger looks into the question of God as a violent God. The just war theory and the understanding of Romans 13 are relevant and well discussed in this section.

The contribution of Wittenberg is very technical and academic, but worth reading. His conclusion, that the violence of resistance and the violence of the state are evaluated differently in the Old Testament, is of importance for the debate in South Africa and will certainly evoke differences of opinion from Old Testament scholars.

The third part of the book deals with the understanding of violence under a broad spectrum of topics - including theological questions about "who is the enemy", a contextualisation of the spiral of violence in South Africa, justification of violence, the use of evangelism and Christianity to justify violence (good articles by Mitchell and Nicol), "militarised theology" and the use of spirituality as legitimation for war (status quo or struggle).

The chapter by Graham Cyster on the socio-psychological roots of violence and the role which a Christian community, like the Broken Wall Community in Cape Town, can play in the healing of the wounds of violence, is of much practical importance for the mainline churches in South Africa.

Chapters in this section tend to be shorter, which makes for easier reading, but the structure seems a bit loose. For instance the chapter on squatting (confined to Cape Town, although the problem is national and immense) does not fit in well with the rest. The practical suggestions at the end of each chapter are valuable, if a little vague.

The discussion in parts four and five on the non-violent option and its cost is of the utmost importance and demands serious reflection and debate, particularly the so-called "third way" theology of Adriaan Blom. These two sections are practical and highlight organisations working for a peaceful and just society.

They contain a number of case studies of non-violent options and are useful for those more concerned with a practical course than with academic and theological debates. They provide an overview of what has been done and can be done in the South African situation to reduce the violence. At the same time they serve as a reminder of the cost of reconciliation.

The last part of the book, valuable for both its content and its suggestions, deals with "prerequisites for a non-violent society". It points to the fact that different traditions exist within the Christian belief system: consistent pacifism, holy war, just war and a non-violent struggle for justice. The writer argues convincingly for the latter.

The book's mix of academic and practical material is valuable for reading, group discussions, group work and conference study material. Although some articles tend to simplify the problem somewhat, all are a result of serious reflection on the problem of conflict and justice in South Africa.

The material is amenable to use by people with different approaches and to both theologians and laypeople. The guidelines for use in the preface are worth taking seriously.

Bobby Nel is a theologian and attached to the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in Cape Town.

Censorship slowdown

But no rust on the scissors yet

By Hans Pienaar

THE NEW mood in South Africa has been accompanied by much frankness and, with a little prodding, an almost eager airing of dirty linen. But what is the position regarding formal censorship itself, now that the bulk of the media regulations have been relaxed and the ANC has been unbanned?

During the successive States of Emergency of the past few years, formal censorship was all but forgotten. The cumbersome three-tier system only made the headlines when the Publications Appeal Board, chaired by "verligte" law professor Kobus van Rooyen, gave the green light for "Cry Freedom" - only for copies of the film to be confiscated by the police after its first showing.

Indeed, talking to Dr Braam Coetzee, head of the Directorate of Publications (the administrative arm of the system), is quite the opposite of talking to, say, tight-lipped morose police spokesmen, or the Bureau of Information. So frank is he, and so ready to help, that one only has to sit back - he will anticipate your questions and suggest criticisms you haven't even thought of yet.

On the surface, there are convincing pointers that the activities of our censors have actually slowed down. For example, before January 1989 Coetzee had to put together a committee (at the bottom level of the system) from a panel of 130 members to adjudicate a complaint from a member of the public at least once every week. That only happens once a month now.

As the system depends on the public for input, it is obvious that these "new times" (Coetzee insists that the term be placed in quotation marks) have also affected the man in the street. Even more important - the bulk of objections in the past have come from the police, and the marked decrease in the past year also reflects new thinking there.

It is also clear that there is some new thinking as regards the inner workings of the system. The media monitoring group of the Department of Home Affairs has been disbanded, and although the directorate only shares the same government building, this should have a strong effect on the approach of members of publications committees.

The system prides itself on keeping its ear to the ground as far as the acceptability or not of publications goes. Already the "future ban" ("toekomsverbod") on periodicals like the ANC's *Sechaba* have been

rescinded. This means every issue of *Sechaba* is not automatically banned anymore, but will have to be judged issue by issue by a publications committee.

Even more decisive is a change that seems very subtle. For the past three years, the panel of 130 from which committees are formed has consisted of applicants attracted by press advertisements. The minister makes the appointments, but he is advised by the directorate on as representative a cross-section as possible from all professions and levels in society.

Before this change, the minister himself selected the 130 panelists. These applicants

should not be allowed to possess books others may not. In fact, Coetzee says, the directorate itself has to turn to Jacobson's Index of banned publications, which is widely used by critics to attack the system!

For the rest, the directorate relies on those libraries exempted from bannings to re-submit books they feel should be readjudicated.

But even more alarming is Coetzee's revelation of the existence of what he calls a "written agreement" between the directorate and the Book Trade Association of Southern Africa (BTASA), in which the mainstream book industry is organised.

The society even appointed a legal adviser specialising in negotiation as its director, in order to ensure a smooth relationship.

According to this agreement, Coetzee says the directorate and the authorities undertake to allow the direct importation of foreign publications, without customs embargoes. In exchange,

book distributors and publishers undertake to apply the censorship guidelines in their selection of books to be imported and manuscripts to be published locally.

Coetzee calls this "self-discipline". The man who helped him negotiate the relationship, Mr M Landman, director of BTASA, calls it by its name: "This is censorship, out and out."

Doubtless there were practical reasons too for the "gentlemen's agreement", "recorded in correspondence" as Landman qualifies it, such as the fact that books are imported from many centres nowadays, and not only from Cape Town as in the past.

But the fact that distributors have agreed to apply the guidelines themselves is a significant addition to a grey area of similar agreements in other industries.

The big film distributors have for quite a few years now had a similar relationship with the Publications Appeal Board which allows them to suggest their own excisions.

In addition, the new film subsidy system, while minimising state control, ensures that power in the film industry remains in the hands of companies with close links to the SABC, which is still riddled with censorship.

How to push the censorship barricades back further is a challenge that must be taken up by all involved.

A huge snag will continue to ensure that hundreds of books will stay banned

usually responded to Broederbond circulars. These particular "Broeders" tended to come from its conservative ranks, and more importantly, have entrenched a powerful channel for the dissemination of Afrikaner ideology.

Whether this will actually result in more conservative decisions or more enlightened ones, remains to be seen. Every member is expected to be totally conversant with the 40-odd pages of Appeal Board decisions and Van Rooyen's guidelines. This ensures at least a legalistically correct approach to censorship, but it also perpetuates a basically suppressive attitude - that there is a "correct" way to produce works of art.

But this is as far as the good news goes. Other developments should lead to some concern in literary and artistic circles.

Even if the system is becoming more liberal, a huge snag will continue to ensure that hundreds of books will stay banned. This is because the ban on a publication never expires - only when a member of the public resubmits the item, can the "liberal" approach lead to its unbanning.

This runs against the logic of the system, because a provision for unbanning also implies the recognition that the system may err - but the onus for rectifying the mistake is placed squarely on the shoulders of the public, and of those harmed by the decision.

Coetzee denies responsibility for rectifying past mistakes. Actually, the directorate has until recently kept no records of bannings through the years, reasoning that it

Hans Pienaar is a freelance journalist based in Johannesburg.