

# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

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

MAY 1990

## Economy: justice AND growth

By Sue Valentine

**POLITICAL** organisations, labour and business should meet regularly to forge an economic policy that delivered both justice and growth.

This was agreed by a group of 25 top businesspeople, academics and ANC delegates to a recent three-day conference at Lake Constance organised by Idasa and the Friederich Naumann Foundation in West Germany.

Missing, unfortunately, were delegates from the trade union movement, who were unable to attend at the last minute.

Nevertheless, debate was honest and enthusiastic, encouraged perhaps by the beauty of the southern German spring and the spectacular backdrop of the lake.

The early stages of the discussion saw some ideological posturing and knee-jerk reactions to the mention of certain "key" concepts. But consensus was reached early on that a non-racial, democratic political system would be meaningless without economic restructuring.

From the outset there was general recognition of the link between economic privilege and political power – and of the fact that in South Africa there has been a large investment in infrastructure while the development of human resources has been largely ignored.

ANC researcher Tito Mboweni emphasised the "gross internal, regional inequalities" which need to be examined.

Thought should be given as to how the

basic needs of the people would be met, how to ensure the South African economy fitted into the international setting and how to deal with trade policies, balance of payments and exchange rates.

"We need an economy that will be productive and that will break down the barrier that exists between the two South Africas," he said.

Stellenbosch University economist Servaas van der Berg described how South Africa had become poorer since the mid-1970s. In the last 15 years, the South African gross domestic product had declined by 15 percent per capita. In real terms, South Africans were back at their 1969 rates of gross domestic product.

In 1988, 44 percent of South Africans were unemployed. This figure was likely to reach 50 percent by the end of the century, he said.

Vast amounts of money were needed for an attempt towards parity in the amounts

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Conference delegates and organisers at Lake Constance.

**THE** unprecedented talks over three days in Cape Town early in May between the government and the ANC, which resulted in the joint Groote Schuur Accord, produced a number of statements from both sides which gave rise to real hope for freedom and democracy in South Africa.

The question now is whether both the ANC and government can deliver the goods in terms of those principled public commitments.

## Can they deliver the goods?

By Barry Streek

There seems little doubt that the South Africa of tolerance is what President F W de Klerk and Mr Nelson Mandela intended by their various statements.

But the aftermath of the Groote Schuur negotiations, with the AWB boasting about its commandos and training camps, the gruesome murder of two black people in

Mamelodi by two white men, the bloody conflict in Welkom, the continuing violence in Natal and the widespread concern in the black press about the use of violence and intimidation against opponents, was not encouraging.

It may have been too soon for the message from the talks to have sunk in among the people, but those developments demonstrated that both the government and the ANC face a serious and difficult challenge

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# 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.

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## EDITORIAL

# Constructing economic justice

**THE** socio-economic conditions under which the majority of South Africans live cast a long shadow over the present talks about talks. They also put the current debate on nationalisation, privatisation and the redistribution of wealth into the correct perspective.

The central issue is how to redress the historic and genuine grievances of those who have been systematically discriminated against and whose position is now desperate.

Some figures illustrating the differences in income, living standards and benefits from government expenditure between black and white tell a grim story.

INDEX	YEAR	BLACK	WHITE
Wage level in non-primary sectors (monthly average)	1987	R593	R1959
Employment in formal economy (% of labour force)	1987	58%	89%
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	58	70
Infant mortality (per 1 000 live births)	1982	90	14
Incidence of TB (per 100 000 people)	1985	206	15
State expenditure per pupil (primary and secondary level)	1986/7	R367	R2746
Matriculated labour force (% of labour force)	1985	2,2%	53%
State social pension (annual average)	1987/8	R900	R2400

Source: Race Relations Survey 1988/89

**IT IS** these and other stark facts which led Sam Mabi, deputy editor of the *Sowetan*, to say in a recent address: "The blacks are angry, I am angry, and no amount of talk is going to satisfy us."

The majority of blacks are illiterate or semi-literate; they have been excluded from political institutions and in large measure from the "free enterprise system". Black perceptions are shaped by chronic homelessness, unemployment, poor education and inadequate health facilities. In the new climate their expectations are high.

Socio-economic pressures have serious

and far-reaching political implications, particularly for the African National Congress, who have entered into discussions with the Nationalist government.

If the ANC cannot deliver, in the *short term*, some measure of relief to those who form the larger part of their constituency, then they will lose support to other organisations which are totally opposed to negotiation politics.

Instability will be the inevitable consequence and nothing frightens away foreign investors faster than a country in the grip of instability.

It follows that a far-reaching debate on restructuring the South African economy is not only necessary but for moral, economic and political reasons, it is inevitable.

A number of seminars, workshops and conferences have taken and are taking place involving the business community, leading economists and members of the ANC. This is all to the good - there can't be enough of them and they must be broadened to include the widest possible representation. But this in itself is not enough.

**THE** ANC has been challenged to put together a much more comprehensive and clear economic policy which goes beyond the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines. Fair enough.

But the onus is not only on the ANC. The business sector in particular has a clear responsibility. If nationalisation is not the answer, if privatisation has merit, if socialism is discredited, then clear alternatives must be offered which address the socio-economic problems which are the legacy of apartheid. We are in this together - but how to reach consensus on this urgent challenge?

One opportunity for innovative and creative proposals would be for the ANC to transform their economic study group (which will be preparing an economic policy document in preparation for their conference on 16 December) into a *commission* which would take evidence from a wide cross-section of interest groups.

If they could be persuaded to take this route it would prevent their findings from being cast in stone and would possibly lead to meaningful action which goes beyond the rhetoric which so often characterises debate on all sides.

Alex Boraine  
Executive Director





## Reprehensible tactic

**IN DEFINING** the state of unrest in Natal in your April issue, Ian Liebenberg and Shauna Westcott quote a joint working committee of Cosatu and the UDF opining that it is "essentially about Inkatha's desire to maintain its support".

To bolster this view, they quote a Natal University academic, John Aitchison. However, in the same article it becomes clear that Aitchison has close ties with Cosatu/UDF, in that he has presented a memorandum on their behalf.

In its hey-day as an apartheid apologist, the SABC used a similar tactic. Their cloth-tongued correspondent, Cliff Saunders, would broadcast government propaganda and then try to lend vindication to their policies by trotting out the opinions of an academic whose views happened to agree with the point being made. The tactic is no less reprehensible from whatever camp it comes.

In the same issue of *Democracy in Action*, Van Zyl Slabbert states that "Idasa must seek to provide a forum for resolution (of differences of competing political organisations) without becoming partisan." Furthermore, my dictionary says that democratic means "insisting on equal rights and privileges for all".

In a recent issue of the *Weekly Mail*, a UDF combatant in the Natal war was described as being happy when the opposition area's houses were ablaze. Surely such actions also lead to loss of property, possibly of life, and are likely to create refugees?

Some observers have suggested that the unrest is about the UDF trying to knock out other political parties. Whatever the truth may be, surely a non-partisan, democratic

publication should allow both sides in any conflict to state their case.

Finally, regarding the question of who gains from continued conflict, it is suggested that the only party to gain (in the short term) is the South African government. Alternatively it could be argued that continued conflict renders it harder to lift the state of emergency.

It has been stated that the emergency and the question of political prisoners are the two criteria yet to be addressed before the United States Senate can lift

sanctions. As sanctions form a bargaining chip held by the ANC, the continuation of violence and the retention of the state of emergency is in the ANC's interests during the negotiation period.

Keith Martin  
Claremont

## Antediluvian ravings

**ALMOST** exclusively the articles in your newsletter air the ravings of antediluvian collectivist sentiment. Blinkered rhetoric unfortunately blurs the debate about real solutions that stand any chance of solving apparently contradictory aspirations in South Africa's future economy. I would like to make a small contribution and refer to your March 1990 edition.

Joe Slovo's mutters in defence of communism ("if it wasn't for that man Stalin") misinterpret *The Economist* to lend credence to the utopian dream. Whatever socialism has produced it has been rejected by those ordinary people subjected to it.

Indeed, as Eastern Europe attempts to pull itself out of its economic quagmire by invoking capitalism, a major hurdle is the

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## JA-NEE

### Jêrn vir so 'n bek!

TOE vat Die Burger (en later ook Rapport) sommer vir Vlokkie aan. Erg ontstig omdat die Minister van Wet en Orde so sagkens met die AWB omgaan, skryf die koerant dat die regering nie die ANC onder druk kan plaas oor geweld nie terwyl hy versuim om hom ondubbelsinnig oor AWB-aktiwiteite uit te spreek.

- Lekker gesonde kritiek uit die binnekring!

### Op soek na die vyand

DIE vroulike vleuel van Blanke Veiligheid het begin leer om te skiet omdat hulle bedreig voel deur die ontbanning van die ANC, PAC en andere. Miemie Steyl, hulle leier, som hul dilemma só op: "Die ANC was ons vyand, nou praat ons leiers met hulle en ons weet nie wat aangaan nie."

- Kan iemand verantwoordelijkheid neem vir die Babelse verwarring, asseblief?

### Rands and sense

CONDITIONS under which certain ANC exiles will return to South Africa are not governed entirely by the political climate. Discussing the matter over tea recently, one London-based comrade said he'd wait until the rand declined further and then bring his money in at a good exchange rate. He'd probably hang on to his London home, though!

- So much for trying to plan the economy.

### When in Germany . . .

German beerhalls may never be the same after a recent visit by an Idasa group. Unable to sit still to the rousing sounds of an oompah band, one delegate leapt to his feet and toyi-toyed to the delight of all.

- Now that's putting some oomph into the big brass.





Aubrey Dickman (Anglo American), Ronnie Bethlehem (JCI) and Tito Mboweni (ANC).

Sampie Terreblanche (University of Stellenbosch) and Vella Pillay (ANC).

## Growth AND justice

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spent on black and white social pensions, education and health services.

Expectations were generally too high, he said. Blacks expected to receive amounts set for whites and whites expected to receive grants that were not commensurate with South Africa's resources.

"We have to talk about restructuring the whole thing. We cannot talk about duplicating any of the existing white services," he said.

The conference agreed that foreign capital was important, for the simple reason that South Africa did not have sufficient gross domestic savings to finance a quantum growth in jobs. There was also concern over the decline in South Africa's industrial base and the general lack of skills.

"South Africa is the only de-industrialising industrialised country," said Stellenbosch University academic Colin McCarthy.

Although there was agreement that both economic equity and efficiency were needed, there was a difference in opinion

on the need for a "trade-off" between the two.

This notion, introduced by Sampie Terreblanche of Stellenbosch University, holds that a choice has to be made between, on the one hand, equity and access to opportunities, and on the other, efficiency and economic growth.

Not all delegates shared the optimism of ANC economist and planner Vella Pillay, who suggested that additional funds would become available once the apartheid system - with its duplication of structures and facilities - had been abolished.

The centrepiece of ANC policy should be the mobilisation of South African labour power and energy, he said. "There is no reason why we should not have the transformation that makes South Africa the powerhouse of Africa."

Pillay also raised the issue of land and the need to address the question of achieving a balance between the urban and rural areas. He said the abolition of the Group Areas Act and the Land Act would do nothing

until prices were brought down.

University of Cape Town academics Francis Wilson and Dennis Davis stressed the enormous land hunger that existed. One possible solution was for the state to allow small holdings to be established outside the major urban areas.

**DRAWING** the conference's attention to some of the more practical aspects of politics and economics, Tongaat-Hulett chief Chris Saunders said, somewhat provocatively, that politics was about power and economics about profits.

In the light of figures which showed South Africa has the highest Gini co-efficient (the sharpest contrast between rich and poor) in the world, it was natural that black leaders should set a high priority on narrowing the gap.

Saunders said that any government was faced with two problems: the re-distribution of wealth and the need to consider the time scale - what was relevant for the short, medium and long term.

# Cosatu: Searching for a product

By Gary Cullen

**COSATU** is considering a policy package to transform South Africa's economy from a high cost, low wage, low employment economy to a low cost, high wage, high employment economy.

So said Alec Erwin, a member of the Cosatu economic trends group, in his address to the second "Future Forum" hosted by Idasa in Durban in April.

He said there was increasing agreement from all quarters that the South African economy is in need of restructuring. The economy is beset by serious structural problems which are reflected in low growth levels, serious problems of unemployment, a housing shortage, a poor educational system and excessive wealth inequalities.

According to Erwin, the question is "how should such a restructuring take place and who should initiate or lead that restructuring". This, he said, was where one began to get considerable disagreement.

Cosatu's view is to concentrate on restructuring

the productive capacity of the economy and to place less emphasis on the role of the state.

He said that the key to this strategy was the manufacturing sector. The task being to turn around from a high cost, low wage, low productivity situation, to a low cost, high wage and high productivity scenario.

This should be done according to a strategic plan where certain industries would be developed jointly by the state, private capital and the trade union movements. This would be designed to improve productivity, reduce relative costs and make, "certain selective industries more competitive on international markets".

The strategies to effect this change needed to include an investment policy, a policy to increase employment levels, a strategy for technological development, a manpower training policy, education policy and patterns of land usage.

Turning to the role of the state in the restructuring process, Erwin said that Cosatu was not preoccupied with nationalisation, but was rather looking at a package of poli-

cies. However, if restructuring was to be effected over the next five to 15 years, nationalisation would have a role to play. He argued that state industries or services should remain nationalised.

Citing the example of electricity supply, he said the particular history of South Africa was such that electricity had been systematically denied to many black areas. Given the present income structure, if the supply of electricity was left to market forces, the vast bulk of those who presently do not have electricity would remain without. There were already townships where the electricity grid had been laid but where residents could not afford the connections.

The road system was cited as a similar case. In the past, the major roads have systematically skirted the black areas. If the provision of roads was privatised, this imbalance would remain or even worsen because only the profitable roads would end up being maintained.

The state, Erwin argued, needs to maintain control over services such as health, education, electricity, water, transport and



# Nationalisation: reaching beyond the rhetoric

By Sue Valentine

**THE** thorny issue of nationalisation was discussed by conference delegates at length in what at first appeared to be a "debate of the deaf".

Although no agreement was reached, progress was made insofar as delegates moved away from the extreme stereotyping that has characterised exchanges between the two "sides" thus far and started listening to each other.

ANC researcher Rob Davies stressed that he was not authorised to make specific pronouncements on ANC policy. However, he said nationalisation was only a small part of what the ANC was looking at.

ANC thinking was not committed to punitive action through nationalisation. Any intervention in the economy would take place through legal and constitutional mechanisms. "We are not motivated by revenge," he said. "Our watchword is affirmative action."

Nationalisation was likely to be embarked on when it contributed to restructuring the economy and meeting the needs of the people, but as yet nothing could be spelt out as to what would be included in the state sector, he said.

"The general view is that the major utilities should remain in state hands. We see the utilities as having a major role in redirecting the economy. We don't believe efficiency is improved by privatisation."

Davies said the ANC opposed recent moves by the South African government to privatise public companies. Such action was unacceptable and any privatised enterprises would be subject to re-nationalisation in the future. However, the ANC's belief in a mixed economy approach implied that whatever sectors were promoted by the state, space should also be left in the economy for private capital.

Anglo American Corporation's Michael Spicer reacted to the "unknown" dimensions of ANC policy, saying that certainty was needed if foreign investment was to be encouraged.

He said the curse for the South African economy would be if foreign investors were left unsure about developments in the country and thus adopted a "wait and see" approach.

Anglo American economist Aubrey Dickman said there was agreement on the problems facing the South African economy, but

the reason the right sort of growth had not occurred was that the market was distorted. He said if business did not meet the needs of the people it would not survive. It could not afford to go in for experimentation.

The all-important first year in a post-apartheid society would be critical for the new government which would be expected to deliver the goods, said Dennis Davis.

To do this a stable, socio-political environment was needed. He said the double bind in which South Africa was caught up - the need not to threaten investment by nationalisation, but the simultaneous need for a just system which would avoid an explosive break-up caused by the socio-political conditions in society - had to be confronted.

JCI economist Ronnie Bethlehem said



Pieter le Roux (UWC) and Dennis Davis (UCT).

business had to acknowledge the "legitimate" concerns of the ANC - that the insistence on privatisation by business could be interpreted as a desire to strip the state of economic leverage, or a strategy by whites to perpetuate apartheid by shifting it to the private domain.

He added, however, that from a liberal/conservative view, there was disillusionment over the role of the state and its ability to intervene beneficially.

"We must persuade people to withdraw from the notion of conflict between the state and the private sector. It is an alliance. Only through the growth of the South African economy do we have any chance of meeting the needs of the country," he said.

Offering a summary of the discussions on nationalisation, academic Colin McCarthy quoted Milton Keynes saying the short-term was important because in the long term we'll all be dead!

Short-term results were important, but how the economy would or should be adjusted in a politically democratic South Africa remained a question. Equally important was the need for the development of skills. Steps and proposals were urgently needed to address this problem, which was the result of long-term neglect.

"The re-distribution of wealth must be given priority. However, there are conflicting opinions on how to do it in a time period that will satisfy people . . . if you have a democratic government with elections every five years, then the government has five years in which to produce sufficient re-distribution of wealth."

Saunders added that business should spend less time telling Nelson Mandela about the pitfalls and more time telling him that five years was enough time to secure re-election and introduce re-distribution.

Offering his summary of the discussion, McCarthy said there was a clear necessity for co-operation between the different groups in South Africa. Labour, the government and business would need to embark on more discussions. Trust and mutual respect needed to be developed. The public good would be served only if the bona fides of each side were accepted.

He added that the cost of experimentation was high. While doctors buried their mistakes, economists tended to get off scot-free when they offered poor professional advice.

"The outcome of bad economic advice is worse than anything one can contemplate. Unemployment, instability and poverty have a high social cost," he said.

Among the practical suggestions offered during the last session of the conference were tax system revisions and the investment of pension funds in social reconstruction.

Dave Geary of Investec/Metboard suggested that if five percent of the pensions industry (currently valued at about R130 billion) was channelled into the development of housing, some R6,5 billion would be released to help meet immediate needs.

Sue Valentine is Publications Assistant with Idasa.

## e solution

telecommunications as instruments of policy to redress the inequality of living standards. Nationalisation beyond this point, such as in regard to the mines, was a point of debate in Cosatu. It may make no sense in that the present levels of state income through taxation may be the maximum that can be demanded. On the other hand, he said that there was a strong feeling that the resources generated by the industry could never be effectively used while the industry remained in the hands of the four or five conglomerates which presently dominate the economy.

Erwin said this view held that the record of these conglomerates showed an inadequate commitment to social need before profit and that the mining conglomerates had been the major exporters of capital over the last 10 to 15 years.

Whichever was the most appropriate approach, Erwin made the point that resources generated in the mining sector would need to be more equitably and efficiently utilised inside the South African



# Can they deliver the goods?

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of transforming the situation which is conducive to a successful negotiation process.

The opening sentence of the Groote Schuur Minute makes this clear: "The government and the ANC agree on a common commitment towards the resolution of the existing climate of violence and intimidation from whatever quarter, as well as a commitment to stability and to a peaceful process of negotiations."

This statement was absolutely clear: Violence and intimidation "from whatever quarter" must stop - and both the government and the ANC have committed themselves to achieving this.

That praiseworthy position is easily stated, particularly after three days of discussions, but can the two parties deliver? Can the government stop right-wing intimidation and transform its methods and structures, particularly if the security forces, so that anti-apartheid groups, including the ANC, are convinced that it is really committed to stability and peace?

Can the ANC control the young braves in the townships? Can it establish an above-ground mass organisation which is able to instil an acceptance of the need for disciplined political action? Will other groups do likewise?

In reality, the replies to these important questions can only be given in the coming months when their public commitments and intentions are put to the test on the ground.

Fortunately, however, various statements during the Groote Schuur talks and the joint press conference afterwards left little doubt about the intentions of both parties.

"Our ultimate goal is a new, democratic dispensation for South Africa and all its

people," Mr De Klerk said at the start of the talks.

Mr Mandela added that the discussions were the first time in 78 years that a truly serious meeting took place between the ANC and a succession of white governments and they indicated "the deadly weight of the terrible tradition of a 'dia-

logue' between master and servant which we have to overcome, in order to establish a culture of peaceful, democratic and genuine debate, discussion and negotiation which should be the hallmark of the political processes of a free, peaceful and stable South Africa".

in this country. "We recognise the fact, which we have stated over and over again, that there are other interested parties in this regard and it would only be proper at some stage to seek their views on the important question which we have been discussing over the last few days."



F W de Klerk and Nelson Mandela address a press conference on the steps of Tuynhuys before the start of the talks

logue' between master and servant which we have to overcome, in order to establish a culture of peaceful, democratic and genuine debate, discussion and negotiation which should be the hallmark of the political processes of a free, peaceful and stable South Africa".

At the end of the discussions, Mr De Klerk stated that it had been the government's goal to improve the climate for negotiation.

Mr Mandela said he believed the ANC and the government were the main players in the search for peace.

"But the ANC has never claimed to be the sole representative of the black people

He also explained: "The ANC has on countless occasions emphasised the importance of tolerance in the course of our political work."

However, the ANC was in a totally different position from the government and other political parties because it had been banned for 30 years, experienced leaders had been forced into exile, others had been thrown into jail and some were dead.

"You must remember that many of the youth who are active today were born during the last 30 years, when the organisation was illegal and when there was nobody to explain the policy of the organisation.

"Now that the organisation has been legalised, we have considered it to be our duty to stress the question of discipline, the question of tolerance and I think we are getting support from our membership," he said.

This spirit of democratic practice and tolerance was present in all statements made during the Groote Schuur talks.

**THE** challenge now for Mandela and De Klerk is translate that spirit into action and show that they are really able to take the majority of South Africa with them.

If they are not able to deliver the goods, it will not only be disastrous for South Africa and the future of democracy in the country, but disastrous for either or both of them.

## Praise for ANC professionalism

By Nic Borain

**THE** early Cape Town winter rains showed an unusual generosity when they lifted briefly for the first African National Congress rally held in South Africa since the unbanning.

After the chaos of the Mandela Release rally and in the unfriendly cold and damp, only 30 000 or so faithful turned out on Sunday April 27 at an open field in Mitchells Plain.

The billing was weighty. Joe Slovo's red socks and Eastern Cape uncle's accent struck terror in some of Cape Town's fainter hearts. Alfred Nzo, the secretary general of the ANC, spoke ponderously. The man of the moment, Nelson Mandela, put in a cameo appearance to distance the ANC from one of the flood of dirty tricks pamphlets purporting to be issued by the ANC and, amongst other things, advising black men that they can be cured of Aids by sleeping with Indian women.

But this rally was more important for how it was run than for what was said.

There was much justifiable anger at the quality of organisation at the Release Rally. There was no adequate crowd control preparation, the sound didn't work, the audience was made to wait for hour upon sweltering hour in the sun, the marshals were poorly

organised. It was sheer luck that this explosive mixture was confined to the small tragedy of limited looting and police shootings.

So at Mitchells Plain a lot of critical observers were waiting to see if the liberation movement had learned any lessons.

I have never been to a more professionally run public gathering. The search at the gate, carried out by an earnest young ANC member, could not have failed to reveal the smallest weapon - even Modesty Blaise and Willy Garvin couldn't have smuggled in a knife.

The speakers were separated from the perfectly behaved crowd by reels of barbed wire, a pre-cast wall and a high platform. The sound would have done a Wembley concert proud and the marshals worked like well-drilled soldiers.

*Democracy in Action* correctly criticised the organisers of the Release Rally. It is only fitting that the ANC should be warmly praised for the professional handling of their first official rally in the country in 30 years.

Of course it is sad that the kind of measures they took are necessary. The long-term solution will have to take the form of a raising of a general democratic consciousness so that the thugs who looted shops at the earlier rally either change their ways or come up against an impenetrable wall of popular condemnation.

Nic Borain is Idasa's Regional Director in the Western Cape.



By Shauna Westcott

# Disarm right wing now, says Carolus

THE South African government should disarm the white right wing immediately, says ANC Western Cape interim committee member Cheryl Carolus.

In the absence of such firm action against violence and intimidation the whole negotiation process could be set back – even wrecked – by situations like the current mayhem in Welkom.

Of equal concern to the ANC is the situation in Natal, where the overlap between Inkatha and the kwaZulu police necessitates similar swift action on arms.

Condemning the government's selective response to violent behaviour, Carolus said it was "very disturbing" that Minister of Law and Order Adriaan Vlok emerged smiling from a meeting with Eugene Terre'Blanche, and saying nothing about active steps to disarm a maniac element.

"If it were our people running around with guns in paramilitary style they would have been dealt with very differently. Black people have been shot for much less," she said.

Asked whether she was optimistic about the negotiation process itself, she said that she was "hoping" rather than "hopeful".

"I'm hoping that we'll be able to see the process through without losing more lives and suffering more destruction to our country.

"The fact that talks have happened means that politics in South Africa has actually changed. There's often a tendency to say 'nothing's changed'. I think that's foolish. One must make accurate assessments to be able to wage struggle appropriately.

"There has been a significant breakthrough – but the cost! The lives lost, the hatred built up, the suffering – merely to get to the point the ANC has been calling for for decades. We are hoping that before the next move we do not have to go through the same measure of death and destruction."

Among the next "moves" is disclosure of the report of the joint ANC-government working group charged with making recommendations on a definition of political offences, time scales, and the questions of indemnity and the release of political prisoners.

Asked when public consultation could be expected, Carolus noted that both sides had to report back to their executives but added: "We feel it has to be soon."

The ANC had insisted on a deadline for completion of the report (May 21) because they felt the question of political prisoners had to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

"There have been promises from the government since February 2 but little delivered. The few releases there have been have been almost cynical, almost a slap in the face," she said.

Turning to the major political task of building democracy, Carolus said it was a question of "opening up our structures for people to join".

"We are going door to door in all our branches, we are staffing information booths in shopping centres, we are addressing local karate clubs (she laughs), we are bringing out pamphlets – but that's not enough.

"We are looking at the possibility of an ANC daily newspaper. More than that, we want to fight for democratic control of the SABC. It is a national resource, paid for with our taxes. We should



CHERYL CAROLUS: black people have been shot for much less

South Africans don't like apartheid and don't see counter-racism as a solution."

**ON THE** question of the relationship between the ANC and other organisations, Carolus quoted UDF leader Dullah Omar, who observed that "the ANC is clearly the best vehicle for securing the transfer of power; our mass organisations are the best vehicles for safeguarding people's power".

She said a crucial lesson accessible to South Africans from other struggles was "the importance of having structures independent of the government, where people can continue to put their own needs on the agenda".

Women's organisations, for example, have their work cut out for them, and yes, she would describe herself as a feminist (not a bourgeois feminist).

"People are far too defensive, feminism has been given a bad name", she said. "Feminism doesn't mean being anti men. Only sexist men feel threatened by feminists. I am completely undefensive about the fact that sexism pervades all aspects of our lives, including our organisations, and I am committed to opposing it as actively as I oppose racism."

Asked to comment on the "extremism" that certain people are fond of ascribing to the youth of South Africa, Carolus sprang to their defence.

"I think it is very unfair on the youth that they are made out to be this mad rabble when in fact they are the ones who have made the most and bravest sacrifices in bringing this country to its senses. They are the ones who have taken up arms in our defence. Eighty percent of the people detained have been young people.

"They perhaps more than anyone else are conscious of the might of the state and would have a realistic attitude to peace. They've been robbed of so much. We see in them a determination to build a lasting peace, and not to settle for half measures or a quick fix."

Shauna Westcott works in the publications department of Idasa

have access to it. We are determined to engage in that."

She said the ANC was committed to the principle that negotiation could "not happen over the heads of the people".

The process of constructing a non-racial, democratic South Africa had to be understood and owned by all South Africans. This could not occur without proper consultation, and time for this would have to be built into the negotiation process.

It was up to the people, to all South Africans, to engage in this process, to insist on involvement and consultation, so that "when choices and the necessary compromises are made, they will feel them to be their own".

This right to be included obviously extended to opposition groups like the PAC.

"We don't feel threatened by other ideas," she said. "It's important that South Africans are able to make informed choices. That's been the very basis of our struggle. So the PAC has a right to their views and to propagate them. We don't feel we are losing support to the PAC.

"Our commitment to finding a political solution is one shared by ordinary South Africans. If we can minimise losses, we must. This does not mean that we have to compromise on our goal of a just peace. Ordinary



## Women's workshop soars beyond all expectation

**'WOMEN Taking Up The Challenge'** was the title and theme of a workshop for women convened jointly by Idasa and Koinonia in Johannesburg in May.

This theme generated a vigorous life force of its own during the course of the weekend as the 30 participants determined their own priorities and strategies for attaining the type of post-apartheid South Africa they envisaged.

The women participating in the workshop were not the so-called "high-profile" businesswomen, socialites and opinion-makers. In the main they were the strong threads in the tapestry from which the new South Africa will be woven: mothers and homemakers, bank clerks, domestic workers, secretaries, film-makers, church committee members. Among them were South Africans of Italian, Lebanese and Portuguese descent and an "ex-Rhodesian" determined not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

In breaks between workshops and at moments of intense discussion, a range of different languages broke through the communicating language of English - Portuguese, Sotho, Afrikaans, Tswana! Each participant brought her own set of values.



Taking up the challenge: Alina Dikoba, Lisba Vosloo, Olga Chalunda and facilitator Sandra Drower.

cultural and political preferences - ANC, DP, Inkatha supporters, they were all there.

In moments of anxiety preceding the first meeting of all the participants, organisers and facilitators anticipated the worst possible scenario of alienated groups of women refusing to talk, share rooms - or to listen! The outcome couldn't have been more unexpected.

Disagreements about sanctions, education, nationalisation, hospital strikes, Inkatha's role in the Natal violence and the right of domestic workers to organise evolved through a process of open, respectful lis-

tening and discussion to a position of agreement and compromise. Participants who dreaded sharing rooms with one another became friends and committed themselves to maintaining contact after the workshop.

The facilitators - social workers from Wits University, Concerned Social Workers and the SA Black Social Workers' Association - emerged from each session with expressions ranging from disbelief to wonder.

How was it possible that women with such disparate views could reach common ground so willingly, so easily? But this is what the Idasa

Koinonia workshop showed: that South African women, no matter what their roots and in spite of the varying degrees of discrimination to which they have been subjected, desire a common future in which women speak with a common voice.

Individually and collectively, the participants of the workshop recognised that as South African women they have a unique and indispensable contribution to make to the new South Africa.

Melody Emmett  
Regional Co-ordinator



### Bea-ing there!

**BEA ROBERTS**, (above) joined the Border office as regional co-ordinator in April. Bea graduated with a BA Honours from Stellenbosch where she was actively involved in the implementation of a Nusas local committee.

After two years in the audio-visual section at the University of Fort Hare, she feels a strong commitment to working in the Ciskei/Border area. "Living here has been a tremendous education," she said. "I am really looking forward to working for Idasa in an environment so politically charged and so physically beautiful."

## Starting the learning curve

**"MOST** constructive and enlightening" was the repeated comment from 14 white teachers of the SA Teachers Association at the end of a weekend forum on education with nine black colleagues from the National Education Union of South Africa (Neusa) in Port Elizabeth.

The programme for the weekend was divided between discussion of the causes of the education crisis in South Africa and, looking to the future, requirements for reaching the most ideal education system.

Seven areas were identified by the teachers as chiefly responsible for the current crisis in education.

Firstly, it was believed that current emphases in curriculae were incorrect and would have to change. "As we adapt to the future," it was said, "we have to reassess the past."

Current financial appropriations were seen to be a second

contributing factor. Lack of discipline, the third factor, was traced back to the deprived social environments of most scholars. Fourthly, training of black teachers seemed misdirected because when teachers were faced with the practical teaching environment, very few of their acquired skills could be applied, owing to the deplorable lack of facilities and enormous pupil-teacher ratio.

Relationships with educational authorities were seen as a fifth cause of crisis. The sooner these authorities realised that their responsibility was to build the spirit of teachers and pupils, rather than destroy it, the sooner these relations would improve.

Determining the educational needs of the nation was the first area that provoked a great deal of discussion.

While all agreed that a single education system was paramount, there was no consensus as to what this system would

incorporate.

In the end, agreement was reached only on the question that future education was to be for a new nation and one South African culture had to be striven for, without necessarily smothering existing cultures.

The final focus of attention was on the need for affirmative action in order to redress deprivation. "Were whites merely trying to equalise the situation, without giving any attention to the imbalances built in by the apartheid system of education?" someone asked.

One of the discussions which raised this question was that of white schools being opened to all races. While the prospect of making this decision was clearly causing much "angst" in the white community, black teachers felt that such a move would not even scratch the surface in the quest for solving the crisis in black education.

Keith Wattrus  
Co-director



# SOUTH AFRICA IN TRANSITION

A CONFERENCE CONCERNING YOU AT THE  
EASTCAPE TRAINING CENTRE PORT ELIZABETH  
JUNE 21-23

**W**hile government and its political opponents are locked in "talks about talks", Idasa in Port Elizabeth will host a conference that will offer you the chance to examine specific issues about South Africa in the process of transition.

Whether it be education, economic justice, civil liberties, local government, the judicial system or the media which interests you — come along and participate in the debates which affect all South Africans.

International speakers will talk about lessons of transition from Eastern and Southern Europe and Latin America, while speakers from the frontline states will articulate the experiences of Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Newspaper editor Ken Owen will debate with "Terror" Lekota of the ANC on civil liberties and Roland Hunter will cross swords with Brian Kantor over the realisation of economic justice in our society. An ANC national executive member will offer, for the first time in South Africa, the organisation's perspective of future political development. A conference not to be missed? We would agree! To secure your place, register before June 14. Air fares and hotel accommodation are being subsidised, so attendance at this historic conference might cost you less than you anticipate.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, CONTACT MAX MAMASE OR KEITH WATTRUS AT (041) 55-3301.

## THURSDAY JUNE 21

- 18h45** Welcoming Address  
**19h00** Prof Philippe Schmitter (Stanford, USA)  
"Lessons from transition in Eastern and Southern Europe and Latin America"  
**19h45** ANC executive member

Ken Owen (editor, Business Day)  
Workshop 3:  
Transition and Economic Justice  
Prof Brian Kantor (UCT)  
Roland Hunter (Planact)

- 16h00** Tea  
**16h30** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and Education  
**17h00** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and Civil Liberties  
**17h30** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and Economic Justice  
**18h00** Closure  
Evening free

## FRIDAY JUNE 22

- 08h30** Prof Andre du Toit (UCT)  
"The mechanisms of transition and those applicable to the South African situation"  
**09h15** Lessons of Transition — Mozambique (speaker to be announced)  
**10h00** Tea  
**10h30** Lessons of Transition — Zimbabwe  
**11h15** Lessons of Transition — Namibia  
**12h00** Panel Discussion:  
"Transition in neighbouring states — what can South Africa learn?"  
Panelists: —  
Prof Peter Vale (UWC)  
SA government foreign affairs spokesperson (to be announced)  
Internal MDM spokesperson (to be announced)  
**13h00** Lunch  
**14h00** Workshop Session  
Three concurrent workshops will take place; two speakers will deliver 30 minute papers each to serve as foundations for the workshoping that follows.  
Workshop 1:  
Transition and Education  
Ihron Rensburg (National Education Crisis Committee)  
(Other speaker to be announced)  
Workshop 2:  
Transition and Civil Liberties  
Patrick "Terror" Lekota (ANC)

## SATURDAY JUNE 23

- 09h00** The Causes of the Transitional situation in South Africa  
Dr Van Zyl Slabbert  
**09h45** A government response  
(Speaker to be announced)  
**10h30** Tea  
**11h00** Workshop Session  
Workshop 4:  
Transition and the Judicial System  
Advocate Zac Yacoob (Natal Indian Congress, executive member)  
(Other speaker to be announced)  
Workshop 5:  
Transition and the Media  
Zwelakhe Sisulu (editor, New Nation)  
(Other speaker to be announced)  
**13h00** Lunch  
**14h00** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and the Judicial System  
**14h30** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and Local Government  
**15h00** Panel discussion (in plenary session)  
Transition and the Media  
**15h30** Closing address  
Dr Alex Boraine (executive director, Idasa)

## REGIONS

# Education fails both black, white

**A CALL** for more contact between black and white students to discuss education problems in the country was made at a students' conference hosted by Idasa and the Johannesburg Youth Congress (Joyco) in the city in May.

It came from Themba Goba, a leader of the recently unbanned Congress of South African Students (Cosas) who deplored the fact that little or nothing had been done in this regard.

At the end of the conference, attended by some 70 students from 19 black and white private and government schools in the Johannesburg area, an informal interim co-ordinating structure was formed to maintain contact between participants.

A trust-building exercise — "River of Life" — was used during the conference to enable students to freely participate and share their experiences. In fact, the exercise seemed to reveal that, at least among the delegates present, most white students led comfortable lives with relatively few problems while their black counterparts experienced problems with detention, poverty and also suffered the effects of the crisis in black education.

Remarkably, however, these differences did not seem to deter the delegates from seeing themselves as one united group.

**A TALK** on the link between apartheid and education was presented by a speaker from Joyco who argued that formal education is part of the education process but more broadly, education means understanding the world around you. It also means having control over yourself and your environment. Knowledge is power and our whole life is an educational experience. "Is this what our schools are equipping us for?" asked the speaker.

The conference's answer to this question was "No". Delegates found the education system in the country inadequate. Black education was bad in that it was designed to keep a particular racial group inferior. White education was teaching a particular racial group that it was superior to the other.

The conference included a cultural evening which featured plays staged and composed by the students themselves. Perhaps one of the most exciting plays was that of a South African bus in a "liberal" white suburb driven by a racist driver. Although the bus service is open to all races, the driver discriminates against black passengers. The driver greets every white commuter embarking while he will not say a word to black commuters. When there are no white commuters, he gives the passengers a rough, uncomfortable ride.

Patrick Banda  
Regional Co-ordinator



# SADF in townships: PLAYER OR REFEREE?

**THE** South African Defence Force was committed to the Natal townships recently at a time when the rest of the country was continuing the call for their removal as a step in setting the climate for negotiations.

In addition to an extensive call-up of citizen force and commando members, national servicemen, the Cape Corps and 32 Battalion have been deployed under the control of the police to assist in reducing the devastating violence.

This deployment occurred despite the government's reluctance to commit troops to the townships in the face of numerous calls from township residents for the SADF to replace the police as the primary peacekeeping force.

In Natal, after nine years of conflict and more than 3 000 deaths, the role of the SADF as a peacekeeping force seemed to be gaining momentum.

In May 1986, 10 of the more than 200 people killed by political violence were from the areas around Pietermaritzburg. By September 1987 the position had been completely reversed. By December, the deaths around the Pietermaritzburg area accounted for about 90 percent of all deaths caused by political conflict in South Africa.

At the height of the violence in 1987, women from Ashdown marched into the centre of Pietermaritzburg and requested the SADF to enter the townships to protect them.

Their call was for protection from the kwaZulu police and vigilantes who were allegedly responsible for most of the violence and deaths. It was the first of many calls by communities for the SADF to assist in bringing peace to the townships in Natal.

In December 1989, as part of a local peace agreement, the SADF was requested to enter Mpumalanga near Hammarsdale - a township where there had been substantial and continuing violence. Both teams representing Inkatha, the UDF and Cosatu felt that the SADF would be able to play an im-

**Contrary to the general condemnation of troops in the townships, the SADF presence in some of Natal's troubled spots has been condoned and even welcomed. However, complaints about the conduct of the latest consignment of soldiers have been increasing. Staff of the Community Conflict Monitoring Service assess the prospects for the SADF to act as peacekeepers.**

partial role in bringing peace to the embattled township where allegations of collusion by riot units of the SA Police were rife.

The result of the deployment of troops was that for nine consistent weeks the township slept peacefully.

The two main reasons given by residents when asked by monitors why the SADF had brought peace were that the SAP had left the area and that the troops were Zulu-speaking soldiers from 121 Battalion.

This second reason is surprisingly even more contentious. The explanation given by residents of Mpumalanga is that members of 121 Battalion were willing to, and could, communicate with them. This meant that the SADF was able to isolate the troublemakers by getting information from many sources and were given the leeway to act. Chief Minister Dr Buthelezi would later claim that 121 Battalion had been infiltrated by the UDF and the SAP would insist that all patrols were accompanied by a police officer - but in Mpumalanga at least, the presence of the SADF coincided with the most peaceful period of the past year.

**AFTER** nine weeks 121 Battalion left the area, despite community requests for them to remain. Within hours of their departure the war began again and Mpumalanga remains a divided township with areas clearly demarcated as "Inkatha" or "UDF".

Daily calls by residents to Democratic Party and Idasa monitors are another indicator of the communities' perception that the SADF has the ability to be impartial and effective in reducing violence.

The possibility for the SADF to be a refe-

ree rather than a player in the conflict was acknowledged by the End Conscription Campaign, which had always been opposed to their presence in the townships.

The ECC said that if the troops were properly supervised, they would not oppose the deployment in Natal. However they are still concerned that such deployment needs to be monitored.

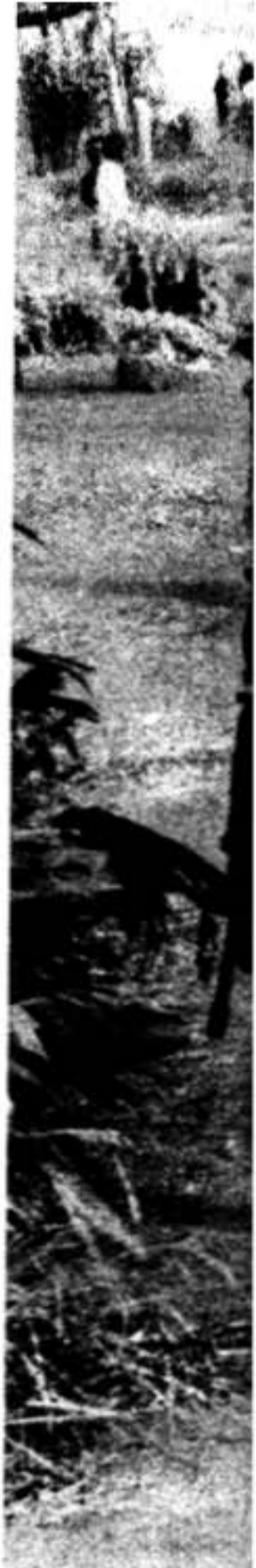
After the March invasion by Inkatha into townships and communities in the Edendale valley, State President FW de Klerk announced a series of measures aimed at bringing a swift halt to the violence in Natal.

Using the already established fund for development, part of which is to go to a Natal marked by drastic rural and urban poverty, a relief package was worked out. With it were to come 3 000 soldiers who were to play an important role in assisting the police in bringing peace to the province.

But the first public signs of concern were already emerging. The Chief Minister of kwaZulu reacted to the presence of troops in the Natal townships. Saying that black soldiers should "voetsak out of the townships", he claimed that their ranks had been infiltrated by the ANC. His call was given weight by the fact that two berets had been found at the scene of a particularly brutal attack on an Inkatha member's kraal.

Within a week of his call, 121 Battalion had left the township.

The deployment of alternative troops has raised problems also on the other side. Most reaction has come from the arrival of two battalions - 32 Battalion and 61



A mem





2 Battalion in the Greytown area near Pietermaritzburg.

picture: CLINT ZASMAN

Mechanised Infantry Battalion – both with reputations from the Namibia/Angolan conflict.

32 Battalion, which is made up of Namibian and Angolan defectors, is known for its effectiveness in the "Border" war, as well as for allegations of excessive brutality in the handling of prisoners.

This reputation has preceded them and made it impossible for local ANC supporters to see them in an impartial role. In addition they are unable to speak any of the local languages, being primarily Portuguese speaking.

**WHEN** organisations heard of plans to bring these troops into Natal they raised their concern with the authorities. In response they got an official denial that this would happen. The denial was publicised widely in the press and on SABC. Less than three days later, 32 Battalion arrived without any explanation.

beatings, theft and the rape of several women by members of 32 Battalion.

Many residents in kwaMashu are now saying that they don't want the SADF if this is how they are going to act. This turn around is a marked one and in sharp contrast to the mood in February when residents gave troops flowers.

The rapid movement of the conflict into the rural areas of Natal – a trend predicted by conflict monitors in 1989 – has been substantially proven. In attempts to either consolidate support for traditional chiefs linked to Inkatha or to ensure that there is no threat to this by dissidents in the area, incidents of violence have been recorded over Natal. At the time of writing, there was festering conflict in the Port Shepstone area, Ndwedwe, Isithebe, and Esikhaweni.

Monitors have heard reports of people being asked to join Inkatha or suffer the consequences. Rural residents explain these "consequences" as including attacks on

**'Senior members of the SADF do recognise the need for them to play an impartial peacekeeping role . . . There appears to be a communication breakdown between the top level and lower echelons.'**

The effects of this SADF presence is being felt in several ways.

In the urban areas, which have seen the heaviest fighting, there has been a decline in the number of incidents. However, it is only a relative decline when compared to March and April this year which produced the highest monthly death tolls of the conflict.

In addition, their presence has returned a measure of outside confidence and enabled people to focus on other things.

However, reports are starting to appear about disorderly conduct by members of the SADF.

In kwaMashu outside Durban, several people were allegedly badly assaulted by members of the Cape Corps. One man had to be hospitalised for seven days after receiving emergency surgery. In Inanda Newtown, there have been reports of

kraals, kidnappings and murders.

Inkatha regularly claims that UDF youth have threatened the authority and safety of some chiefs – and the conflict is complicated by layers of traditional rivalries and power struggles.

Stories circulate of SADF arms raids followed by attacks from the men of the area. Allegations have been made that SADF troops have been allocated to the chiefs for protection. These perceptions are strong and make it difficult for rural people to accept the SADF as impartial.

It is incidents such as these that convince the Democratic Party's Roy Ainsley that the SADF remains an apartheid army.

Warning that there could be a violent response from the community directed towards the SADF if there was not a change in the attitude of troops on the ground, Ainsley feels that "senior members of the SADF do recognise the need for them to play an impartial peacekeeping role. The problem is that there appears to be a communication breakdown between the top level and the lower echelons."

Organisations like the Joint Working Committee (JWC) of the UDF and Cosatu continue to demand that the security forces conduct themselves impartially if they want to be peacekeepers. For them the government is crucial in bringing an end to the violence and therefore the role of the SADF is key in any attempt made by the Nationalist Party.

**IN A** conflict resolution workshop conducted recently and attended by participants with links to both parties, a clear assessment of the expectations of community members towards peacekeeping was made. Among these were the need for impartiality, good communication and negotiating standards and scope of operation.

None of these matters have been subjects of negotiation, although communication has been set up between the security forces and the parties over the last few months.

The ANC would like to see a completely neutral peace-keeping force in place. As an alternative to this, they suggest a combination of security forces and Umkhonto we'Sizwe soldiers.

On the other side, Inkatha has called for greater policing and the removal of local black troops.

The government is committed to using the existing security forces to keep the peace and so the SADF will continue to be a major supplier of resources and expertise. Whether they will survive as referees, or become players as compromised as any other in Natal, will depend on whether they rise above their present practice and perceptions and conduct themselves as peacekeepers rather than auxiliaries to one of the parties.

CCMS is a project of Idasa.



# Explaining current affairs

apart as Canada and Australia, in addition to South Africa, to undertake research. This volume

contains a selection from the very considerable fruits of their labours.

Strangely, no contributions from the black community were included. The compilers explain this anomaly by arguing that the legacy of apartheid has contributed to "a reality where there are few black experts on technical issues, such as urbanisation". Another reason is "the black priority", which is "to work towards bringing about fundamental change rather than speculate on policy options for a future socio-economic order".

I am not sure this is true. The ANC's research department in Lusaka, for one, would disagree strongly, since they host workshops which examine political, economic and social issues addressed in this book.

Nevertheless, this publication would be an excellent choice for those interested in the debate over future state policies. The critical issues identified by this book are grouped into four main areas.

The first is described as expanding the foundations of political participation, while structuring and controlling state power. In this section, Lijphart presents the case for proportional representation, while fellow academics Boule, Olivier, Mathews and Schrire examine methods of controlling state power.

The second and third critical issues are called balancing equalities and inequalities, and managing resources in a context of relative scarcity. In the former area, the major dimensions of income inequality in the South African economy are identified, and policies for redistribution are examined (McGrath).

Other issues include ways of implementing a programme of equal opportunity and affirmative action in the public service (Hugo); language issues (Alexander); the health care system (Savage and Benatar) and post-apartheid education (Hartshorne).

In the latter section – managing resources – economic issues are addressed. Maasdorp provides an overview of the role of the state in the economy. The chapters in this section also cover a wide range of functional policy areas. These include population policy (Simkins); urbanisation (Bernstein); unemployment (Thomas); industrial relations (Godsell); and agriculture and land distribution (Cooper).

In the fourth section, Strategies for Change, Kane-Berman, Frankel, Swilling and Adam look at the strategic options facing the political and socio-economic participants. Unfortunately, no special attention was given to the regional and international context in which South Africa has to operate – an arena, many political scientists would agree, that is of crucial importance to the future South African decision-makers.

It is clear that *Critical Choices* offers a lot to those readers searching for insights into and fresh perspectives on the fast changing South Africa.

Anthoni van Nieuwkerk is research officer for the SA Institute for International Affairs.

By Anthoni van Nieuwkerk

reduced to vague and sometimes almost meaningless abstractions. The brief discussion on the "group" concept offers little insight into the reason why it has become such a controversial issue in South Africa. It also fails to argue the merits and demerits of individual rights.

Thirdly, the volume displays a distinctly Anglo-Saxon philosophical bias. Multi-party democracy, capitalism, a Bill of Rights and other such concepts are used uncritically and approvingly. So are the ideas of Rousseau, Lincoln, Madison, Jefferson, Crick and others.

A much needed wider perspective, which could include the ideas of, say, Marxists and neo-Marxists, Nkrumah, Fanon, Nyerere and others, is sadly lacking. Marxist and Africanist philosophies are still held in high esteem by many South Africans and will undoubtedly play a major role in shaping a future South Africa. To ignore them, as the authors seem to do, is to ignore reality.

**BY CONTRAST**, Steven Friedman's *Options for the Future* offers a tightly argued and thought-provoking analysis of the current stances and strategies of both the government and black opposition. Friedman's analysis revolves around this question: Do negotiations hold not only great promise but a much greater potential for intractable stalemate when the government (and black opposition) discover that compromises are required that they cannot entertain?

In trying to answer the question, Friedman devotes most of his time to an in-depth analysis of National Party strategy. The rest of the essay focuses on the strategies and responses of the extra-parliamentary movements to the politics of negotiation.

In essence, Friedman argues that although the NP's current reformist rhetoric does reflect important shifts in government thinking, many of the fundamentals of NP ideology and strategy remain firmly in place. On the one hand, the NP acknowledges that the present system does not guarantee either equity or long-term stability. On the other hand, the government remains committed to protecting its own constituents' access to power.

According to Friedman, the NP's proposed system of power-sharing would ensure that whites retain the power to veto changes sought by black participants. The aim of reform, he argues, is no longer to ensure that whites can initiate change, but that they can prevent those changes which, they believe, threaten their interests. The importance of the NP's plan, therefore, lies in its acknowledgement that the government will now have to pursue a system which will attract significant black participation.

*Critical Choices* is a serious academic work, requiring attentive reading. The compilers commissioned more than 50 researchers from the scholarly community as far

**OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE:** Government reform strategy and prospects for structural change

by Steven Friedman (SA Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990; 63 pages, R10)

**SHAPING A FUTURE SOUTH AFRICA: A citizens' guide to constitution-making** edited by Bobby Godsell (Tafelberg and Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 1990; 63 pages, R15)

**CRITICAL CHOICES FOR SOUTH AFRICA: An agenda for the 1990s** edited by Robert Shrire (Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1990; 465 pages including index, R35)

**"THE BEST** of times, the worst of times" – or so Van Zyl Slabbert recently argued. For many people, the new fluidity in politics means renewed optimism for a democratic and hopefully less violent future. But for a great many others it means confusion and the rekindling of old fears.

It is true that periods of rapid socio-political change are accompanied by uncertainty and confusion. This is an experience currently shared by the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and South Africa. It is therefore to be expected that many South Africans are looking for someone to explain, interpret and predict current and future events. Although most rely on politicians and the media to stay in touch with the fast flowing current of political change, many find these sources of limited value.

This state of affairs has therefore presented an ideal opportunity for academics to put their theories and models of change and transition on the market. Three current publications, by well-known authors, attempt to address these issues and concerns but despite similar-sounding titles they cater for very different audiences.

One outcome of Anglo American's growing participation in public affairs is the publication of a series of books on issues of general interest to the public, but also of political significance. The latest offering from its think-tank is a slim volume entitled *Shaping a Future South Africa*.

The rationale behind its publication lies in the concern of Anglo's (then) chairman, Gavin Relly, that "most South African citizens are ill-equipped to make judgements on the alternatives they would undoubtedly face in the fairly short term". Anglo American's scenario team (Godsell, O'Dowd, Spicer and others) were then asked to write something "that would make a contribution to the debate".

It is stated that the work is not prescriptive, but endeavours as neutrally as possible to display the range of choices South Africans have in constructing a new constitution. To what extent does it achieve its aims?

Firstly, if the volume is to be used as a quick reference to constitutional and political terms currently in fashion, its six-page glossary is useful. However, only 36 such terms are defined. Political lexicons of a much more comprehensive nature are currently available.

Secondly, in an effort to simplify matters, the discussion of a number of complex constitutional and socio-economic issues were



# Taking Slovo to task

Joe Slovo's paper "Has Socialism Failed?" is the first indication of a democratic renewal within SACP ranks, but it does not go nearly far enough, argues political sociologist Heribert Adam.

By Shauna Westcott

**IT IS** only in the apartheid state that the hammer and sickle emblem still flies proudly at mass rallies. This is among the realities that give a "special importance" to South African Communist Party pronouncements and strategy, Heribert Adam asserts in a paper titled "Eastern Europe and South African Socialism: Engaging Joe Slovo".

In fact, Adam goes so far as to say that SACP members are "the major force that dominates theoretical debates and strategies within the broad anti-apartheid opposition", arguing that the style of the whole liberation movement must therefore be influenced by the SACP's own practice of internal democracy.

Adam is hopeful that pressure for democracy from below, particularly in the unions, may compel a final departure from the relics of Stalinism both in theory and in practice. He hails Slovo's "thoughtful" paper as the first indication of a democratic renewal. But he remains sceptical.

The major reason for doubt, it hardly needs saying, is the Stalinist past of the SACP, and Adam accuses Slovo of not going far enough in his attempt to come to terms with it. Specifically, his failure lies in blaming Stalinist tyranny on human error rather than on fundamental Leninist tenets, for it was Lenin who abolished independent unions and introduced the one-party state.

Noting that the SACP defended the Stalinist show trials of the 1930s and supported the Soviet invasions of Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968) and Afghanistan, Adam asks: "Why do people with such an acute sense of injustice in their homeland become blinded to oppression elsewhere?"

Noting also that Slovo claims to have had personal doubts about Stalinist practices since the mid-1950s, Adam asserts that the only explanation for his 30-year silence on the matter - and for SACP endorsement of Stalinism - is expedience.

He quotes an October 1988 interview in Leverkusen in which Slovo admitted as much, saying: "It became almost risky and counter-productive to battle this issue out in our party. It would have caused an enormous split, and it had less and less bearing on our work."

Adam concedes that SACP reliance on aid from the Soviet Union placed the party in the apparent predicament of having to

choose between "the political goal of opposing apartheid and the ethical necessity of denouncing Stalinism". He concedes also that some members left the party with troubled consciences.

However, not only were other dissenters hunted out of the party, but it spoke with one Stalinist voice. No debate, not the slightest qualm was reflected in party publications about "what developed at the very least into a great taboo".

It is understandable, says Adam, that the SACP opted for organisational clout rather than the moral high ground. But what is not understandable is that they went beyond political necessity in their enthusiastic endorsement of tyranny and terror, romanticising and glorifying the Soviet Union against all criticism. In so doing they also discredited the anti-apartheid cause which was their avowed first priority. "For this



Slovo: guilty of expedience?



Adam: reasons for doubt.

politically foolish but, above all, morally reprehensible position, the party ought to be held responsible," Adam asserts, adding that the choice for expediency "must be difficult to rationalise for a party of self-claimed moral superiority". He also takes Slovo to task for being unable to resist "the usual praise of the Soviet Union and Cuba in terms of material achievements".

The Soviet Union may have more medical doctors per head than Western Europe but it is "the only modern society where life expectancy is declining". It may produce more steel, fuel and energy than any other country but it has to import food and lacks basic consumer goods. Cuba may have the best health system in the world but it also quarantines all Aids carriers.

It is all very well for Slovo to praise the socialist world for "ending cultural backwardness", says Adam, but what does this mean "when after 70 years of socialism in the Soviet Union, the country is wracked by

ethnic riots, religious intolerance and virulent anti-semitism?"

"When Western Europe de-nationalises, the socialist East re-nationalises with the worst kind of 19th century chauvinism. When women finally approach their equal share and spiritual emancipation in the capitalist West, the East has not yet spawned a feminist movement against socialist patriarchy. How is 'cultural backwardness' measured?"

But Adam's harshest criticism turns around Slovo's failure to confront Stalinist tyranny head-on. Slovo hides behind euphemisms like "judicial distortions", says Adam, which is tantamount to "an unwitting rationalisation of the show trials".

Slovo chooses to speak of "damage wrought to the whole Soviet social fabric (including its army) by the authoritarian bureaucracy" when what he means is that many of the Russian officer corps were systematically murdered by a paranoid Stalinist clique before the German invasion.

"Nowhere in Slovo's account does one find proper conceptualisations, let alone some moral outrage about the Stalinist holocaust. The paper amounts to the distancing of the SACP chairman from an embarrassing past without addressing the causes of the crime," Adam says.

It is worth noting that this reluctance to fully acknowledge, mourn and repent past atrocities is not peculiar to the SACP. In fact it might be argued that the SACP has gone further than most in this difficult but profoundly necessary direction.

Athol Fugard commented in the last issue of *Democracy in Action* on the breathtaking ease with which National Party cabinet ministers now declare that the time has come to forget the past. Such glibness speaks more of opportunism than of a change of heart, he observed.

Adam observes that "the victims of Auschwitz, the Gulags and apartheid are not concerned in whose name they were killed and maimed" and cites Canadian sociologist Frederick Johnstone as "almost alone among the voices on the left" in his insistence that "the Gulag is about apartheid, that Auschwitz is about Cambodia".

Again it is worth noting in passing that Adam's view of Johnstone as a solitary voice betrays a lamentable ignorance of the growing body of feminist analysis that draws exactly this connection, among others, in its understanding of domination as one of the key laws of the patriarchy.



## Slovo taken to task

However, the point Adam makes is that the tyranny of Leninism - the almost magical justification of evil under the rubric of "the people's cause" - is worse than any other because of its pretences.

"The Leninists glorified higher productivity as the patriotic duty of selfless brigades. The apartheid labourer at least knows of his exploitation and grudgingly complies because alternatives are lacking. The Leninist/Stalinists betrayed their victims in addition to exploiting them. Hence the magnitude of the fury for revenge when set free.

"Blacks in South Africa, on the other hand, always knew that racial rule was for the benefit of the ruling race. They do not feel cheated as the hardworking party member did when the luxurious corruption of the people's representatives was finally revealed."

Adam also criticises Slovo for his orthodox assertion of the scientific nature of Marxism, an attitude long abandoned by leading historians and critical theorists who stress the interpretative task of analysts.

Reliance on the determinism implicit in Slovo's view of human behaviour denies "the infinitely varied subjectivity through which people perceive, interpret and mediate their world". It also "results in a crude reductionism or economic approach that neglects the fact that people not only have material interests but ideal interests as well".

If a theory is inadequate to the reality of individual human beings, it follows that its conceptualisations involving groups of human beings will also be inadequate. When inadequate concepts are held not only as articles of faith, but exalted beyond doubt as "science", mayhem results. Thus, says Adam, one must ask who are "the people"? Who are "the working class"? Who are "society as a whole" that Slovo sees assuming control?

**QUOTING** Mervyn Frost quoting Robert Michels and Max Weber, he says: "In modern states control by 'society as a whole' means in practice bureaucratic rule. Those who say 'organisation' inevitably say 'oligarchy'. Oligarchic tendencies can only be counteracted by a democratic culture below, not by Leninist 'democratisation from above'."

Looking specifically at Slovo's (and Marx's) conceptualisation of an abstract working class, Adam notes that it "misses the crucial social texture".

"The working class is comprised of blacks and whites, women and men, religious adherents and agnostics, homosexuals and heterosexuals, skilled and unskilled workers who live in urban and rural settings. Above all there are employed and unemployed.

"To expect solidarity because of common exploitation lingers as a long-standing illusion. Yet it is precisely such a self-deception on which the ANC and SACP bases its strategy. Working-class unity and solidarity has failed throughout the history of the left around the world," Adam says. Beyond this false assumption about working-class solidarity, there is also a neglect of the split in the labour movement between the employed and the unemployed.

Adam notes: "Neither the ANC nor Cosatu has devised a strategy for coping with the one third of the workforce who are unemployed. The unions are increasingly representative of the employed only. Mere employment in South Africa almost qualifies one for membership in a labour aristocracy... Those millions outside the formal economy - in the backyards of townships, in the ring of shacks around the cities and in desolate huts in the barren countryside - form a permanent underclass."

Adam records the sombre fact that it is from the desperate ranks of the unemployed that the state recruits *kitskonstabels* and warlord vigilantes. He accuses orthodox Marxism of "traditionally writing off this lumpenproletariat", abandoning them to the fundamentalist church cults, drug peddlers and petty criminals who "vie for the souls and the pockets of the downtrodden".

On the positive side of Adam's engagement with Slovo, is approval for the SACP chairperson's "sensible, pragmatic assessment that the South African economy cannot be transformed by edict without risking economic collapse". Adam hails Slovo's backing for a mixed economy and public control through effective democratic participation by "producers at all levels".

However, he does not give Slovo credit for a courageous attempt at theoretical accommodation of the chaos exposed by the collapse of Eastern European state socialism. Rather he chooses to note with an almost audible sneer that "not much of economic orthodoxy is left among former Leninists".

It seems necessary to observe, therefore, that the people of South Africa could only benefit if those adhering to other fixed positions took a leaf out of the SACP book. It was Lenin who remarked that the mark of a serious party was its willingness to acknowledge error.

More justly, Adam concludes his paper by noting that SACP recognition of union independence, a multi-party system and traditional liberal freedom "bodes well for South African democracy".

He notes that at present, security reasons can be invoked legitimately for the SACP's secret membership and strategic infiltration of unions and other political organisations. But he asks whether this will change when "a more democratic climate allows and requires less clandestine behaviour".

He is nervous about the fact that Slovo was authorised by the party to circulate his discussion paper, saying this procedure makes the SACP look more like "an authoritarian Jesuit order for the organic intelligentsia" than "an open, broad-based vehicle for the self-critical exploration of feasible socialism".

Nevertheless, he construes Slovo's self-critical paper as a hopeful first sign of "democratic renewal" that "may lay to rest Pierre van den Berghe's sceptical comment that 'South Africa, which has already spawned the world's last official racists, may also see its last Stalinists'."

**Shauna Westcott works in Idasa's publications division.**

*(Heribert Adam's full text will be published shortly by Idasa as an occasional paper.)*

## Research a waste of time, money?

By Ian Liebenberg

**MOST** research findings are either never implemented or are implemented without planning, resulting in an enormous waste of money, time and energy.

This was the problem addressed by an interdisciplinary conference of the Human Sciences Research Council held in Pretoria at the end of April and attended by over 400 people.

One of the main obstacles to the implementation of research was found to be an organisational style lacking in planning for implementation, long-term strategies, flexibility and responsiveness to change.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation in terms of carefully formulated objectives would obviously be a vital part of the process of implementation.

While most participants found the conference informative and useful, there were some weaknesses. The international isolation of South Africa was evident in the fact that there were very few foreign participants (mostly British and Taiwanese).

Also, while the interdisciplinary approach was valuable, the attempt to include both natural and social sciences on the same panel or platform demanded an unrealistic level of dual expertise from participants.

More importantly, perhaps, the conference gave no attention to research as an instrument of liberation, or to the uses and abuses of science in the interests of ideology and the state.

However, the understanding reached at the conference, that research and its implementation should be planned as a single process, with continuous evaluation as an integral part, is clearly of value.

Ian Liebenberg is Idasa's Director of Research

## Harms should inquire further

**THE** brief of the Harms Commission of Inquiry should be extended to include all political murders, not only those committed in South Africa.

This was the unanimous view of a May meeting of 500 people organised by the Stellenbosch branch of Lawyers for Human Rights and the Northern suburbs' Veldtog vir 'n Geregtelike Ondersoek na Moordbendes (Campaign for a Judicial Inquiry into Hit Squads).

Unless this was done, the Harms Commission could be seen as a mere whitewash job.

One of the speakers, End Conscription Campaign chairperson Laurie Nathan, pointed out that more than 300 people were involved in the Civil Co-operation bureau (CCB), which had not been disbanded. It had merely been suspended.

Vrye Weekblad editor Max du Preez accused the government of playing host to terrorists and stressed the need for action against the "free-for-all paranoia" that had led to political murder.



# Tuning in to today's teenagers

**THE** Western Cape region of Idasa continues with its tradition of placing a strong emphasis on work with school pupils.

Thirty pupils from Fezeka High School in Guguletu, Langa High, Sizamile High in Nyanga and Guguletu Comprehensive joined 40 Milnerton High School pupils at the University of Cape Town for a day of discussion, sport and culture.

The morning session was taken up with introductions. Each pupil was asked to speak to someone they didn't know and then introduce that person and say a little bit about them to the whole group.

The exercise produced some funny incidents and helped break the ice. It was clear that,

no matter which side of the railway line you live on, teenagers are teenagers. Everyone liked to talk on the phone; the question of whether people had boy-friends and girlfriends was a prominent one; a surprising amount of people liked ice-skating and music, sport and TV received a high rating.

After sharing a meal and playing some soccer, the pupils watched an audio-visual presentation by Clyde Broster, a prominent Cape Town educationist, on interpreting the me-

dia.

Having learned how many preconceptions are established, the pupils were able to move on to an afternoon of South African culture.

Capab producer Johann Esterhuysen ran a drama workshop, the black pupils taught gumboot dancing and Amajingqi, a marimba band, taught and played marimbas.

The day ended with the pupils presenting what they had learned and then with an assessment of the proceedings.

Follow-up has included an invitation to all of the township pupils to the Milnerton school play - which they thoroughly enjoyed - and a morning assembly gumboot demonstration at Milnerton by the participants.

The assessment is best illustrated by the words of one of the Milnerton pupils in a letter to Idasa: "I thoroughly enjoyed being with the other black children. I also made a lot of friends. That day I sure won't forget. It was a new experience for me. Whenever there is another function or getting together like that one, call Mr Young and he will inform us ... Hope to see you soon."

Nic Borain  
Regional Director

# Feminist addresses Pretoria women

**FEMINIST** author, Professor Diana Russell addressed a group of 120 Pretoria women (and a few men) in May on her new book, *Lives of Courage: Women For a New South Africa*.

This meeting was part of Idasa's on-going women's project which aims to get people, especially women, engaged in current political debates and to consider the contribution they can (and possibly should) make now towards the kind of democratic future we want to secure for all who live here.

Underlying this project is the belief that we should be concerned not only with national liberation, but also with the liberation of women, if we are to be part of a democratic society.

Diana Russell, a South African by birth, returned to this country from the US in 1987 to undertake the research which culminated in *Lives of Courage*. She interviewed 60 women political activists in the South African anti-apartheid movement - women from all racial and ethnic groups who ranged in age from 18 to 82. Twenty four of these interviews were selected for inclusion in the book and represent many different organisations.

Russell looked at how women's experience of struggle differed from the experience of men; how women often had to work against sexism before their contribution could be effective. In particular, women face the emotional trauma of trying to hold together families, jobs and political activity.

Among those who have com-

mented on the book is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who said of these women: "They are not prepared to wait for matters to be decided for them. Their stories utterly refute those who believe an individual cannot make a difference."

Dr Mamphela Ramphele, co-author of *Uprooting Poverty* had this to say about the book: "By focusing on women as individuals rather than as mothers,

as wives, and as daughters, *Lives of Courage* makes a valuable contribution. In doing so, it differs from the usual way that women are perceived in South Africa and puts the issue of women as people on the national agenda."

Russell concluded her talk with a quote from her interview with Helen Joseph: "Out of my participation in the struggle, I have received so many incred-

ible riches in the way of friendships and sharing. It is all these experiences that have made me so convinced that we are walking toward the light at the end of the tunnel."

Jennifer Ferguson began and concluded the formal part of the evening in song, closing with her very moving and beautiful tribute to Irene Mkwai.

Kerry Harris  
Regional Co-ordinator



The Pretoria team: Newcomer Kerry Harris (second from left) with Paul Zondo, Andre Zaيمان, Elizabeth Mahlangu and Ethel Ranamane



## On course

**THE** Pretoria office is back to full strength with the recent appointment of Kerry Harris as regional co-ordinator.

Kerry replaces Lou-Marie Kruger who has received a Fulbright scholarship for study in the United States.

A former teacher and currently chairperson of the Black Sash in the Northern Transvaal, Kerry is a welcome addition to the Pretoria team.

## Cholo better

**IDASA'S** Pretoria regional co-ordinators, Paul Zondo and Kerry Harris, recently visited Soshanguve community leader Theo Cholo at his home where he is recovering from a spell in hospital (See picture bottom left).

Mr Cholo, a leading ANC figure in Pretoria, spent 17 years on Robben Island. Idasa was pleased to hear that he was progressing well after receiving treatment for his leg - and we wish him a speedy recovery.



# A German encounter

By David Screen

**A PARTY** of 12 South Africans recently spent 10 days in West Germany as guests of the Naumann-Stiftung, a Liberal Party foundation in that country.

The group, led by Idasa national director David Screen, was based in Königswinter, a lovely resort town a few kilometres from Bonn. The composition of the group ensured a lively and vigorous debate throughout the trip.

The essential objective of the visit was to provide the group with an understanding of how and why Germany works. To that end, the visit began with a two-day seminar on the social, political and economic institutions of West Germany.

The next few days were spent visiting various federal, state and non-governmental organisations. Among these were environmental agencies, Amnesty International and a youth organisation.

Two highlights – one on the day of arrival and the other on the day of departure – made the trip more than worthwhile for many of the group. Shortly after arriving in West Germany a fascinating three hours was spent with Sankie Nkondo, the ANC representative in Bonn. Sankie's frustration with the West German government's reluctance to engage the ANC and her obvious longing for home were apparent to all. She obviously enjoyed discussing the future with the group.

**ON OUR** day of departure we spent a few hours at the annual meeting of the West German Anti-Apartheid Movement. Idris Naidoo of the ANC, who is stationed in East Germany, addressed some 100 delegates at the gathering. A member of the Idasa delegation, Paul Zondo, thanked the AAM committee for their invitation and for the work they had done and are doing for the disenfranchised majority in South Africa.

The group also had its chance to relax. A wonderful afternoon was spent on a Rhine cruiser after a visit to one of the area's magnificent castles. May Day saw us in Cologne with its stunning cathedral, exciting streets and an outstanding Impressionist exhibition.

An overall impression of West Germany during a fairly hectic programme? Wealthy, industrious, materialistic, efficient and very sophisticated.

The group itself formed a cohesive unit while retaining its individuality and political agendas. We returned with a strengthened commitment to establishing a non-racial democracy in South Africa! Participants included Idasa staff members Paddy Clark, Paul Zondo and Liesel Naude, Mthetheleli Pobana (Black Sash, East London), Mandla Nkomfe (Soweto Youth Congress treasurer), Christine Burger (Cape Town attorney), Rochelle Kapp (UCT cultural projects co-ordinator), Siphon Ngwenya (UDF publicity officer), Baba Dlamini (UDF organiser), John Yeld (Argus journalist) and Chris Giffard (UCT lecturer).

# Communication clears the way in Cathcart

**For nearly a decade the white community in the Eastern Cape village of Cathcart stubbornly ignored the pleas of black residents. A crippling consumer boycott has now forced them to reconsider. HERMIEN KOTZÉ reports.**

**CATHCART** is a quaint little town near Queenstown in the Eastern Cape. The beautiful old buildings and tranquil tree-lined streets belie a very different reality: that of a very divided community plagued by racial tension, unemployment, appallingly low wages, untenable living conditions, forced removals and, more recently, a consumer boycott.

The town is situated in the so-called "white corridor" between the Ciskei and Transkei. Since Cathcart, along with Stutterheim and Komga, have been excluded from the industrial incentives granted to other towns like Queenstown and King Williamstown, it has no industry whatsoever. It is therefore heavily dependent on the local farming community for economic survival.

Cathcart has a black population of about 10 000 for whom severely limited employment opportunities are available in the small business and public sectors. A majority of workers are employed as domestic workers and gardeners at wages of between R30 and R50 a month.

An estimated 75-90 percent of the people in the township live below the poverty datum line. There is a heavy reliance on migrant labour remittances and the pensions of senior citizens. Unemployment is rife. Exceptions to this dismal situation are those few employed as teachers, nurses and policemen.

In 1982 the East Cape Development board (ECDB) announced plans for the development of a new township in Cathcart. In spite of widespread opposition to the idea, ECDB officials went ahead. The town has since been the site of an ongoing confrontation over the "forced" removal of residents from the 100-year-old township, Daliwe, to the new site, Kati-Kati, three kilometres away. The importance of this confrontation lies in the fact that Cathcart is a very good case study in the government's new "reformed" version of forced removal.

In spite of Dr Gerrit Viljoen's announcement in 1985 that there would be no more forced removals, this hated policy continued – but in a more sophisticated guise.

According to Laureen Platzky (Surplus People's Project), the crude bulldozer version has been replaced by "... a fairly set pattern involving an escalating use of force to deal with communities under threat of removal".

It seems that this pattern generally consists of a three-pronged strategy: the first stage is to undermine resistance by creating or exacerbating divisions in the community, by destroying organisational coher-

ence via harassment and detention of individuals involved in resistance, and also by the banning and restriction of meetings. This strategy was obviously enhanced under the consecutive states of emergency since 1986.

The second stage involves a process of "persuasion", a fairly ironic term taking into account that this process involves deliberate neglect of the area under threat of removal, the withdrawal of services from that area and the prohibition on the erection of any new building structures.

The objective of this strategy is the creation of slum conditions which would eventually make it impossible for people to live there.

The third and final stage is using the threat of force. People are threatened with being loaded up and forcibly moved or are threatened with loss of compensation (for their houses). The ghost of the bulldozer is always looming.

While all of the above strategies have been employed in Cathcart since 1982, the authorities insisted throughout that no forced removal was taking place. They insisted that those who moved to Kati-Kati did so voluntarily. According to Rhodes University researcher Fiona Adams, the combination of legislative manoeuvring, repression and the refusal to allocate resources to the maintenance and upgrading of the township ultimately had the same effect as the more crude form of bulldozer removals but allowed the state and its agents to paint the removal process as a "voluntary" one.

**DESPITE** widespread opposition in the black community to the announcement of plans for Kati-Kati in 1982, ECDB officials embarked on evaluation of houses in the old township for compensation purposes. In the confusion that followed they had everybody, save one family, sign what appear to have been agreements to sell their houses.

In 1983 the present "town committee" was "elected" in an election that drew a meagre 11 percent poll. By 1984 the development of infrastructure was completed in Kati-Kati. In the same year rents were arbitrarily increased from R15,59 to R21 and a rent boycott ensued that lasted for 18 months.

The combined issues of rent and removal led to the formation of the Cathcart Residents Association (Cara) and the Cathcart Youth Organisation (Cayo).

The councillors were asked to resign. Some did and others were driven out of the



# FORCED REMOVALS



People who eventually agreed to move were required to demolish their own homes .

township. 1985 saw the start of a consumer boycott in protest against the removal and the deteriorating living conditions in the old township of Daliwe.

The consumer boycott lasted almost 18 months and must have hurt enough because the white municipality eventually agreed to meet Cara. It is, however, very clear from their ignorant and insensitive response to the very reasonable political and economic demands, that they had very little insight into the seriousness of the situation. They assessed it in terms of racial criteria and seemingly understood very little about the inter-related nature of the demands. They chose to deal with every demand separately and projected the blame for things on the black community themselves.

The demand for a minimum wage of R50 was met with the following response: "The people of Cathcart don't want to work, that is why their wages are so low." It is obvious that this level of logic could never solve the problems of Cathcart. A stalemate was reached and no further communication took place between Cara and the municipality.

In the meantime, the first houses were being built for state employees in Kati-Kati. Teachers and nurses were allegedly threatened with the loss of their jobs if they did not move. The residents' attitudes hardened towards the town committee which was by then all geared up for the development of the new township.

It was, however, clear that neither the town committee under its infamous mayor, Mr Sili, nor the government, were prepared to accede to the demand to stop the removal and to upgrade and maintain the old township.

The declaration of the State of Emergency in June 1986 finally brought Cathcart to the third phase in the process of "voluntary removal" described earlier. The community leaders were detained, amongst them Mr T Nkwenshe (a state prosecutor) and Mr K Sigidi who runs the Cathcart Advice Office. The detentions and general repression un-

der the State of Emergency made organised resistance just about impossible. The rent and consumer boycotts collapsed and the residents' and youth organisations and street committees were unable to operate.

This was obviously ideal ground for the removal process. The mayor of Kati-Kati was well-connected in government structures and managed to obtain a staggering amount of R10 million for the development of the new township.

Conditions deteriorated in the old township and more and more pressure was exerted on residents to move. No attention was paid to residents' very legitimate reasons for not wanting to move.

The central reasons being that they could not afford the new houses, were not happy with the compensation originally offered, nor with the size of the plots and that they have a right to stay where they choose - a place they have occupied for over a 100 years.

Structures that people erected on vacant plots were demolished - in winter. People who eventually agreed to move were required to demolish their old houses. Many instances are quoted by the Advice Office in Cathcart of people who demolished their solid brick or stone houses to be offered accommodation in tents, or, even worse, in plastic, cardboard and tin shelters in the new township. The official reason given: "to get rid of illegal squatting".

The reasons for developing a new township are very vague.

One can only speculate that the real, unspoken reason is that Daliwe is less than a kilometre away from the white town, and that for political reasons it was decided that any expansion in black housing should not take place on their doorstep.

This situation has been going on unabated until earlier this year when the Cathcart community, especially in the light of the new political climate in the country, decided they had had enough. They marched in their thousands to the offices of the Kati-Kati Town Committee and de-

manded members' immediate resignation and the investigation of their financial affairs. Other demands included the administration by a single municipality (the white municipality as an interim measure), the immediate suspension of forced removals, scrapping the Group Areas Act and the upgrading of Daliwe (roads, facilities, etc).

A consumer boycott was called again to pressurise the white community to pay attention to the demands. The white community started to react as before.

The municipality said there was no forced removal in Cathcart, that most of the demands should be directed to central government, not to them and insisted that the Kati-Kati Town Committee was the "elected" representatives of the black population of Cathcart and that demands should therefore be directed to them.

The business community originally responded by sending the following communique to the town's white residents: "The business people of Cathcart are appealing for your support in trying to counter the current boycott. We would like to prevent as much money as possible from going into the black townships and thus force the black people to stop boycotting. This can be effected by either paying your servant(s) off or if not, putting them onto short time and reducing their salaries appropriately. This can be done with the understanding that these people will be re-employed once the boycott is over."

They added that the demands could only be solved by central government.

Fortunately this hardline did not get them anywhere: the economic situation in the country has worsened considerably since 1985 and the new political climate prevented them from calling on the state's repressive machinery to solve the problem.

**EVENTUALLY** talk of outside mediation was heard from both sides and Idasa's director in the Border region was asked to come and assess the situation and possibly act as a mediator. Many hours of discussion followed and many documents were read in order to understand the history and context of this confrontation.

Eventually Mr Andre de Wet, DP MP was also involved, and after one wondrous day of talks with all parties concerned, people were shaking hands, saying the usual "we did not know" and planning future meetings.

The mayor of Cathcart, Mr Rossouw, said he first had to get a mandate (people learn fast) from the white ratepayers before entering into negotiations. This mandate was given and a meeting took place between Cara and the white municipality. Although there is still a long way to go, the consumer boycott has now been suspended and hopefully more goodwill will be created in a process of ongoing dialogue.

Idasa in the Border was once again amazed at the power of information. The overall reaction from white councillors was one of "we never thought of it like that". This has motivated us to concentrate on "information spill", as the Americans say.

**Hermien Kotzé is the regional director of Idasa in the Border area.**



# Lessons from Namibia

**Namibia is not a model for change inside South Africa, but it holds important lessons for understanding the process of change, nation-building and approaches to conflict resolution, says Antony Goldman, research fellow at the SA Institute for International Affairs.**



Prof John Barratt and Ms Nora Chase.

**AN ATTEMPT** to draw elusive (irreconcilable?) parallels between what has passed in Namibia and what awaits the Republic failed at a conference at Wits University in April, organised by Idasa and the SAIRR.

That the task was impossible should have been clear after the opening speech of Idasa director Van Zyl Slabbert, who pointed out 11 fundamental differences between the two scenarios.

In so many ways, of course, the experience of transition in Namibia has been entirely unique. As Slabbert explained, the international community had a legitimate role to play in fostering change in the former South African colony. This manifested itself in the independence settlement, UN resolution 435, which was the result of prolonged international mediation.

The birth of independent Namibia was not, as State President F W de Klerk asserted in the last few minutes of colonial rule, "an African solution to an African problem" but the result of painstaking negotiations which involved not only African states and the UN, but a good deal of bilateral diplomacy on the part of the major Western powers, the Soviet Union and its Cuban allies.

The international community will clearly play a far less prominent role in bringing about change in South Africa. No solution will be found without the active involvement of at least the major (if not all) internal political movements.

The fact that there exist in Namibia no parties to the left of Swapo, comprises another fundamental contrast between the process of change in Namibia and that in South Africa.

Nevertheless, an understanding of the process of change and an awareness of the approaches adopted to conflict resolution in Namibia is instructive in general terms. Therefore, the process of nation-building in Namibia, examined on its own merits rather than by way of developing an insight into future changes in South Africa, holds important lessons.

Perhaps the conference's identity crisis became inevitable when only a handful of the 14 invited speakers elected to stick to their given topics.

Gerson Kajimune, a lecturer in economics at the University of Namibia, provided an erudite analysis of the nature of the Namibian economy and the distortions it inherits from its colonial past. But he failed to address the truly fundamental issue of whether the new nation's economic policy can ensure both the redistribution of wealth and economic growth.

Even in the workshop which followed, debate on this critical issue was hijacked by sterile and predictable abstracted arguments on the merits of the free-market, and little insight was forthcoming.

Mr John Ya Otto, general secretary of the National Union of Namibian Workers, speaking on the subject "How are union rights compatible with independence?", clumsily side-stepped the apparent contradictions between his stated position that his movement was truly independent, while at the same time being heavily involved in the organisation of Swapo, and identifying unequivocally with its political agenda.

Wolfgang Werner from the University of Cape Town, addressing the land question, provided a neat and keenly argued analysis of the pattern of land alienation during the colonial period.

But he admitted, with a commendable degree of frankness, that it was not yet possible to look seriously at the prospects for land reform, since Swapo did not yet have an explicit land policy or a clearly articulated statement of intention. Nor indeed were any reliable statistics available.

Andre du Pisani of the SA Institute for International Affairs provided a thoughtful paper on how the achievement of Namibian independence may alter the political landscape of Southern Africa.

He highlighted Namibia's potential role in mediating the conflict in Angola and the new dimension that would be added to regional bodies - the SADCC and the Frontline states on the one hand, and the South African Customs Union on the other.

He recalled the Namibian president's offer on independence day to assist the process of change in South Africa itself, but did not shy away from the tensions which could still arise in the region as a consequence of South Africa's stubborn occupation of Walvis Bay.

Du Pisani was followed by Jackson

Mthembu of the United Democratic Front. Speaking as "an activist", Mthembu distorted (as he later conceded during questions) the nature of Swapo's difficulties in organising its election campaign after the return of its exiled leadership, last year.

He chose to overlook entirely what was described by Namibia National Front vice-president Nora Chase as the valiant struggle waged by Swapo's internal wing and the active support of the labour movement under South African rule.

**IT WAS** not until the opening session of the second day, when Chase addressed the conference, that any speaker had been prepared to admit that with Namibia's independence only a month old, it was far too early to judge the new government's performance.

New governments, she argued, are usually given a 100-day period of grace. Perhaps, though, it was more difficult for some of the key speakers to talk freely about the process of nation-building when so many clearly had their eyes on desirable jobs under the new administration.

But the conference did have its rewarding moments. The session on "The challenges of building a single nation" was easily the most successful and inspiring of the two days. Both Chase and Keith Vermeulen of the Namibia Council of Churches spoke well, provoking some excellent questions and a lively debate.

Chase argued that the government appeared far too complacent in addressing the aspirations of those who had voted it into office last November. Many in Namibia were beginning to feel that the concept of national reconciliation was merely a euphemism for appeasing the interests of the white community, commercial farmers and international capital. The difference between "pragmatic policies" and "selling-out" was becoming increasingly difficult to recognise.

A question from the floor raised an issue relating to the constitution which had unfortunately been overlooked during Gerard Erasmus's paper the previous day: How could Swapo deliver the perceived fruits of independence when the constitution, commendable though it may be, had been superimposed on the existing colonial bu-



reaucacy?

The new government does not have full access to the state, nor its resources. As Chase agreed, a whole package of legislation will have to be passed by the National Assembly (affecting for example, military, police and intelligence services) before the fundamental changes needed to satisfy popular aspirations can be achieved.

In the meantime, much of the old status quo will have to be preserved if the government is to function at all effectively.

Vermeulen explained that the role of the churches is likely to be of critical importance, given the intensity of religious feeling, especially in the north of the country.

Nor did he shy away from the contradictions inherent in this role: the church is to play a key role in English language training, but will at the same time adopt a less hierarchical structure and will employ indigenous languages more energetically so that it may reach out to the needs of the people of the new nation.

The women of Namibia, too, must be involved actively in the process of nation-building, as was explained to the conference by Nasilongo Elago, logistics officer of the Repatriation, Resettlement and Reconstruction Committee of the Council of Churches.

Black women in Namibia had been triply oppressed under South African rule: by race, by sex and by class. They had fought side by side with their male colleagues during the guerilla war. Those who had not gone into exile had suffered greatly both physically and psychologically as a result of the fighting.

If national reconciliation was to be at all successful, the process had to begin with and actively involve the women of the new nation.

**UNFORTUNATELY**, the conference seemed less interested in the precise role that women will play in reconstructing Namibia than in indulging in a dreary abstract debate on the liberation of women in general terms, a debate which lagged some way behind current and more sophisticated trends of feminist thinking.

Perhaps the most well-received paper of the conference was delivered by Appeal Court Judge Nick McNally from Zimbabwe, who had been asked to speak about whites in transition.

Ten years of majority rule in Zimbabwe led McNally to the conclusion that there really had been no need for soul-searching or identity crises on the part of the whites in that country. It was necessary only to abandon exclusivity and racist attitudes.

Antony Goldman is visiting research fellow at the SA Institute for International Affairs.

## LETTERS

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measurement of performance. Available statistics have proved unreliable and no form of accounting exists to conduct any sensible analysis of profitability. This of course has led to a misallocation of resources on a catastrophic scale.

I was fortunate to be in central and Eastern Europe during the last three months of 1989 and witnessed the dramatic collapse of socialism. Never shall I allow myself to be duped into believing the moral and economic claims of socialism. The Berlin Wall failed to blinker millions of people in East Germany, only an awesome security apparatus managed to suppress them. The Wall is down now and the big lie is out.

The leader article of *The Economist* (18 - 24 November 1989) entitled "The Soviet Economy" is explicit and not amenable to misinterpretation. It states: "Even if Stalin never existed, communism stands condemned as a historically unnecessary stage on the road from capitalism to capitalism. It promised the moon. It cannot even deliver a pair of jeans."

Many South Africans have chosen to insulate themselves against the significance of these events. With a perverse sort of inverse racism they say: "But African socialism is different."

There is perhaps light at the end of the tunnel. Professor Terreblanche is quoted as asking: "If nationalisation is theft, then what is apartheid?" *Touche*, Sampie, you're warm.

Keith Saffy  
Johannesburg

### Searching for a solution

From Page 5

it were to be employed, must be to make the manufacturing sector more efficient within the objectives set by the state and not to supply the state with a bundle of resources.

Erwin also had some strong words about the present privatisation and regulation policies of the government. He said the privatisation drive was merely handing over profitable state corporations to big conglomerates. His speculation was that the resultant profits would be invested in the financial sector or overseas rather than in factories which employ people.

Deregulation was "a disaster . . . which is purportedly designed to increase employment and lower costs. The evidence that it is increasing employment is contradictory to say the least. What we do know . . . is that it is creating a wide range of dangerous and exploitative employment conditions".

In his conclusion, he addressed the issue of who should lead the change in the economy. He said that the majority of people, rightly or wrongly, would be unwilling to see this role entrusted to business which was not perceived to represent their interests. He said Cosatu definitely saw itself playing a role in shaping economic policies, "through research, consultation and propositions which we are prepared to discuss with anybody."

Gary Cullen  
Regional co-ordinator

## Building bridges

**SOUTH AFRICA** is a country of racial tension where organisations are formed on an ongoing basis to address the question of reconciliation.

We in Pretoria are thankful for structures such as Idasa, where Paul Zondo has done wonderful work in bringing us closer to the white community. Other structures which assist in building bridges have meant that representatives from our organisations have had access to formerly alienated audiences. For example, *Studente vir 'n Demokratiese Samelewing* (SDS) has enabled us to take the platform at the University of Pretoria.

Experience has taught us that any effective campaign must focus on specific issues, which is why we took on the "buses for all in Pretoria" campaign. This became meaningful and workable through the assistance and mutual support of our comrades in the white suburbs.

The release of the African National Congress leadership, the unbanning of the ANC and the SACP, the South African withdrawal from Namibia, the growing economic crisis and the growing rejection of the bantustan regimes have all been momentous events. In the light of these, the UDF wishes to call for Idasa and other white structures to consolidate their contact with other whites in Pretoria, noting that this is important work for them.

The UDF will always stand on the side of the exploited and together we need to move away from the notion that freedom is a privilege. It is our right.

Siphitwe Ngwenya  
UDF Publicity Secretary, Pretoria

## Censorship rests on collaboration

**HANS** Pienaar's article on censorship in your March issue ends by asking how "to push the censorship barriers back further". The answer does not lie in articles which examine at length, along a conservative-liberal spectrum, the decisions of Directorate of Publications bureaucrats.

Publications Act censorship exists on the strength of long-term collaboration and professional failure from librarians, booksellers and those who employ them. When they adopt independent, professional standards, the system will collapse.

More important, and rarely discussed, is statutory censorship enforced by legislation which prohibits the disclosure and publication of official information covering vital aspects of South African life: the security forces and the armaments and nuclear industries, for instance.

If South Africa is to become a democracy there will have to be a constitutionally entrenched democratic right to freedom of information which underpins meaningful participative government. The debate needs to consider not the latest fashion among obscure Cape Town functionaries; but to concentrate on broad issues concerning the relationship between information and society.

Christopher Merrett  
Pietermaritzburg



# NP hopes depend on alliance politics — but with whom?

By David Shandler

tutional system before the party could open its membership. A key drawback to open membership at this stage was the continued "emphasis on ethnicity in the social and constitutional set up". Instead the emphasis needed to go into forging alliances.

A different angle on the alliance idea has been put by Cape NP leader Dawie de Villiers. For him the opening up of party membership at this stage would create competition between groups who could otherwise be allies. In South Africa with its diversities, alliances would be of greater effect.

"In such alliances, leaders can through structures which already exist, act as a stronger force in South African politics," said De Villiers.

The continued presence of the National Party as an effective force within South African politics is seen by party leaders as best being ensured through engaging in an alliance.

But with whom is the National Party going to get together?

Constitution Minister Gerrit Viljoen has stated that alliances must be made on the basis of principle.

"If you share most or effectively all values," says Viljoen, "you should merge into one political organisation. If there are also issues over which you differ, then an alliance or co-operative relationship is preferable."

In terms of this principle, the field remains open.

One option being widely spoken about is an NP/ANC "grand coalition" government

**'The impression should not be created that the NP is only seeking allies against the ANC'**

of some kind. Some hold that this is a very real current within government thinking. Hinting at this possibility, Deputy Minister Marais said: "The impression should not be created that the NP is only seeking allies against the ANC".

Observers reason that government thinking is primarily informed at this stage by the needs of the business community. Business requires a stable environment over a period of five to 10 years to facilitate economic growth of around five percent annually. Under such circumstances the general standard of living of the population would

be significantly raised. This would lessen the pressure for scarce resources and allow for the democratisation of the society without leading to a radical or socialist outcome.

In order to ensure such conditions, it is necessary to have a firm state which is co-optive

of the major elements of the opposition — in our case the ANC. Such a government would not necessarily be democratic but would be ensured of popular support, it is argued, due to the participation of the liberation movement leadership.

Some argue that the liberation movement would be susceptible to such a strategy as it is alleged not to have a democratic leadership style. They conclude that the ANC/MDM leadership is an elite with the self-serving interest of maintaining itself in power. Such an elite would be very susceptible to entering into the "grand coalition".

It is interesting that the ANC is talking about an interim government. While the exact form of this is not clear, it would no doubt imply a link-up between the NP and the ANC.

**THE** ANC can, however, never move without taking its base along with it. Its position of authority within the country is premised on its mass support. A coalition or an interim arrangement which does not have the support of the people in the townships and workers in the trade unions is destined to fail.

Despite this we may already be seeing the seeds of a government attempt at such an alliance through the joint working groups established to clear the way for constitutional negotiations. Government may perceive in these working groups the building blocks of a more comprehensive future coalition.

Another NP option is an alliance of moderates designed to engage in a straight fight with the ANC. This widely discussed idea entails the NP creating around itself an alliance similar to that of the DTA in Namibia. It could include various black moderate groups, the Democratic Party, and have the support of key sectors of the business community. It is claimed that in a straight fight with an ANC alliance, a coalition of moderates would stand a good chance of success.

The association of half of the homeland leaders with the ANC and the possibility of others linking up with it at a later point could make such a grouping still-born, or at best an arrangement between the NP, Inkatha and elements from the three Houses of Parliament. A coalition of such a nature is unlikely to have the popular credibility to upset the ANC's prominence.

At this stage the possibilities remain open with much depending on government's reading of events. What is clear is that it no longer sees itself as a single dominant force within politics. Its future depends very much on getting together with other groups. Just as this could be its strength, it could also be its major vulnerability.

David Shandler is a research consultant for Idasa.

Now that the government and ANC have started formal talks the question of the National Party's intentions comes to the fore.

It is clear that in its policy prescriptions government is departing from apartheid to a system which plays down race. Even the need to protect white group rights, while still clearly stated, is increasingly being played down or rephrased to a vague point far removed from apartheid.

F W de Klerk's new designer-style administration is a far cry from the bull-in-a-china-shop adventures of the P W Botha regime.

A very interesting distinction in the approach of the two governments can be seen when comparing the handling of future plans. Under Botha, plans were stated in clear blueprints, albeit often quite unintelligible. With De Klerk a new moment of subtlety has entered the corridors of power. Now, the emphasis is placed on formulating broad principles, stating broad objectives which allow for multiple interpretations. It is clear that government is approaching the future with a great deal of flexibility. Keeping their cards close to their chests, De Klerk and his administration will watch the situation unfold and play the appropriate hand at the right time.

The difficulty of government watchers is that they can do little more than outline the major possibilities being considered by those in power.

Various government strategic options can be discerned. None are exclusive of each other; all are possible options depending on how things develop.

Government spokespeople have put forward a range of future constitutional options all incorporating the key aspect of minority protection. It is unlikely, however, that the De Klerk administration sees these as probable in the short to medium term.

Commenting on this point, the president told Parliament that it was his belief that the government was "called to build consensus on the basis of those fundamental points of departure and principles which we have in common, rather than now discussing the details of possible models".

Government's emphasis appears to be moving away from models to some form of interim solution built around an alliance of political forces. According to De Klerk, there is sufficient common ground to form alliances. "The National Party will actively pursue such a process and actively participate in it."

The decision to seek alliances comes out of an assessment by the National Party that it is in no position at this stage to transform itself into a leading non-racial political party capable of winning majority support. The second prize, then, would be to forge an alliance within which the party can remain a central force.

In an address to student members of the National Party, Deputy Minister of Education and Training Piet Marais said that there needed to be finality on a new consti-