

**"I see my appointment as chairman of the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation as a further opportunity to serve communities."**

# Policy of serving

*As a commissioner of ACLA you are faced with a very difficult task, not one which many people would envy. Why have you agreed to serve on ACLA? What are the main challenges for you as an ACLA commissioner?*

Land and title to land is and will always be a difficult and emotional issue - it involves the whole community. I have, during my career, adopted a policy of serving the community. I see my appointment as chairman of the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation as a further opportunity to serve communities. In doing so I will endeavour, within the framework of the statutory objectives of the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation, and with the help of my colleagues, to make sound recommendations in an effort to solve the various land issues before the Commission within reasonable time.

*At the end of 1992, ACLA made announcements on its work to date. The Deputy Minister of Regional and Land Affairs, also said that eight more land claims were being finalised, six reports were with the state president and 27 claims were under investigation. Is this currently the case and when can we expect further announcements about the Commission's work?*

Although the Commission can only make

recommendations to the state president and it is for him to decide, I think it is safe to say that further announcements in this regard can be expected soon. The Commission is presently in the process of forwarding eight reports to the state president and is currently busy with a further 41 cases.

*Although dispossessed communities have cooperated with ACLA, they levelled criticisms about the Commission when it was first established. More recently, the Farmer's Weekly, in an editorial on January 8 1993, said that the main problems with the current process of land claims was that ACLA is politically appointed, that it cannot make decisions and that its recommendations are not made public. What is your response to these criticisms?*

I have taken note of the criticism levelled at the Commission. Nevertheless, I have up to now experienced a willingness by all to work together in solving problems. I must stress that the facts of a matter are always the determining factor which leads to a sound decision.

*A range of groups, among them the South African Agricultural Union and the ANC, have called for a land claims court to be established to resolve land*

# the community

*claims. What is your view of this?*

Although I cannot elaborate on the question of a land claims court and the challenges facing South Africa in terms of land issues, I think it is of paramount importance that everyone should have access to land. I am of the opinion that the Commission can, within the framework of its statutory objectives, make a contribution in this regard.

*What do you see as the main challenges facing South Africa in terms of land issues?*

For the Commission, the main challenge is to deal with and resolve the cases that come before it in as short a time as possible. On January 15 and 22 1993 the Commission advertised in newspapers that it was considering some 300 000 hectares of state land, among others, adjacent to and outside Lebowa and Qwa Qwa.

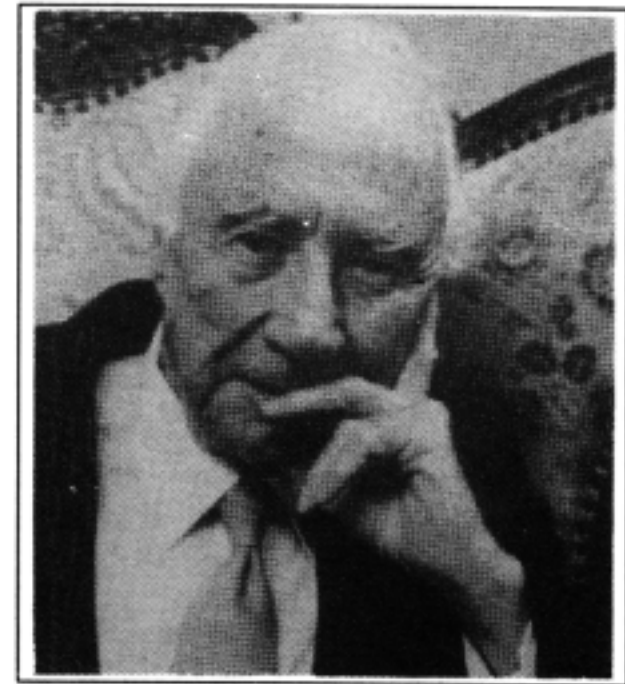
*At the public hearings held so far, the commission has expressed deep concern about the development of land that is restored/allocated to communities. What is your view of future rural development in South Africa - how can rural development needs best be met?*

The question of planning and development of land which is under consideration

by the Commission should be seen within the contents of its objectives, namely, that planning and development are necessary in order to offer the greatest number of people, in the case of agriculture a decent living, and in the case of residential land, adequate living space. It is to my mind obvious that in creating opportunities in order that people can be settled on land involves money. It is for this reason that the Commission must, in terms of its objectives, exploit ways and means to involve the private sector in developing land.

*The recent plan by the government to transfer state land to homeland administration has put ACLA in a potentially uncomfortable position. How will ACLA approach the whole matter?*

I am not in a position to comment on the land issue pertaining to self-governing territories, save to say that the Commission has considered approximately 500 000 hectares of state land in Natal, apart from land already advertised in the cases of Lebowa and Qwa Qwa referred to above, and identified which land has not yet been developed or allocated. Advertisements concerning this land will be forthcoming soon.



***"...I cannot elaborate on the question of a land claims court and the challenges facing South Africa in terms of land issues..."***