

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr Alex Boraine

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REORGANISATION AND STAFFING

BY WAYNE MITCHELL
(National Co-ordinator)

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

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

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

Mr Steve Fourie
— Regional Director

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

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

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

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