

# The people's man of God



MORRIS REDDY

Archbishop Hurley . . . IDASA treats the white survival syndrome.

Also in 1987, Law and Order spokesman Leon Mellet hastily denied Archbishop Hurley's statements that about 25 000 people were being held in detention.

He has indeed come a long way since he first felt the calling during his childhood days on Robben Island, where his Irish father was a lighthouse keeper.

After matriculating at the Marist Brothers College in Pietermaritzburg, Archbishop Hurley entered the Novitiate of Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ireland in 1932. He studied in Rome, obtaining licentiates in philosophy and theology, and was ordained as a priest on July 9, 1939.

On his return to South Africa, he served as curate at Durban's Emmanuel Cathedral until 1943, and at Pietermaritzburg's St Joseph's Scholasticate of Oblates of Mary Immaculate until 1946. He was named Vicar Apostolic of Natal in late 1946, and the next year became one of the youngest men to be ordained as a bishop. From 1951, he served the territory as Archbishop of Durban. He has twice been president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, and is still active in its Justice and Peace Commission. He was appointed a member of the central preparatory commission of the Central Vatican Council in 1961 and has served on several religious commissions.

Archbishop Hurley was appointed as a member of IDASA's board of directors in 1987. He does not hesitate when asked why he chose to become involved with IDASA:

met if the state were to concern itself with black economic empowerment; that is, with raising the share of the black majority in asset ownership and in managerial positions; as well as with guaranteeing equality of access in employment and social services, while nurturing the market as the engine of growth in an efficient, mixed economy.

He proceeded, however, to draw attention to the limits of redistribution and urged "great care and hard-headed, objective analysis in the decision-making process". He then proceeded to outline the mechanisms a future state could employ to redistribute wealth and incomes.

In his closing summary after a lively discussion between the panel and delegates, Professor Maasdorp said, "the seminar had been

"I was impressed by the objectives and purposes of IDASA's two founders, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, and Alex Boraine. I was impressed by the people they are and by their intentions to educate South Africans to accept the changes which will come, hopefully in peace.

"It's a huge undertaking. Tackling the 'social survival syndrome' of white South Africans, their hanging on to power and privilege, is a noble and difficult task."

Although Archbishop Hurley confesses that his brimming schedule leaves him little time to become as fully involved in IDASA as he would like to be, he approves of the "very practical way" in which the institute is carrying out its task — and its results.

"The institute believes strongly in the method of encounter, of exposing people to the realities of Africa and to new social experiences. IDASA is getting people to face the facts and accept change."

The archbishop does not believe that the NP leadership is facing up to facts with their new "reform" package. "I would like to know if these leaders have the real transformation of South African society in sight, or if they are just trying to pull the wool over our eyes by calling marginal change reform."

And he should know. Archbishop Hurley's achievements are many: he has a string of honorary doctorates in law, literature, social sciences, humane letters and sacred theology from both local and international universities.

The city of Durban bestowed upon him civic honours in 1972, and in 1975, France enrolled him in the Legion of Honour.

In Durban in 1976, he founded Diakonia, an ecumenical agency for social concern, and he was president of the South African Institute of Race Relations in the 1960s, "in the days when it was the most active and liberal agency". His hope is that South African churches will become more active in endeavours parallel to IDASA's. "Some churches already have some very helpful and productive programmes, such as the Anglicans' Partners in Mission and the Roman Catholics' Pastoral Planning programme.

For Archbishop Hurley, politics means the ethics of social and working life and of social relations. And in that field, his dedication to his task as a bishop is tireless.

## Meeting welfare goals by economic empowerment

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lised decision-making and resource allocation through a market system.

He concluded by arguing that in the context of moves in the CPE's, "it would be most inadvisable for a post-apartheid government to become preoccupied with issues such as nationalisation of enterprises and land. The welfare goals . . . would be more effectively

grappling with a number of complex issues for which there were no easy answers but that there was an indisputable need to transform the economy to a more just one". To support from the delegates he suggested IDASA host further discussions on specific issues which arose in the discussion, for example share ownership schemes and worker participation on company boards.

• IDASA's Natal office is presently putting together a seminar series entitled, Democracy and the Workplace, which will address topics such as those suggested. This programme begins in September. Further information can be obtained from the Natal office.

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