

FOUNDED IN 1878

Wrong medicine

JUST whose cause will the Mass Democratic Movement be serving if it goes ahead with its planned peaceful swamping of white hospitals this week?

It would be extremely naive to believe that such action would meet with a peaceful response from the authorities, especially in the run-up to an election in which the Government is being strongly challenged by the Conservative Party. The Nationalists will be only too eager to demonstrate

that they have not lost their

touch in firm handling of disaffection.

It requires just as much naivete to believe that those marching on the hospitals would behave with the restraint predicted by MDM leaders. Such occasions are volatile and - the history in this country of this type of protest shows that,

all-too-easily, they degenerate into violence and tragedy. There can be no doubt that there are discriminatory practices and unacceptable inequalities in health services. This has been so for generations. But the situation is changing, however slowly, and is more likely to undergo further change if the forces of renewal in white politics establish themselves at this election. ,

Campaigning to highlight the injustices of the South African system is one thing; a mass demonstration that could disrupt hospital services is a risky exercise. It could lead to confrontation and public disorder with all the ugly trappings of quirts, teargas and Casspirs and would be to the electoral advantage of white conservatism. And that is the wrong political medicine. 1T

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OTH the National

Party and Mass Demo-

cratic Movement

(under whatever name) claim they are the only real movers in the power game in South Africa and both claim they are ready to negotiate but only if...

The NP is attempting to convince the voters that it not only has the will to negotiate but also the ability to do so.

The MDM retorts that predictions of an imminent breakthrough is a total and dangerous illusion, saying it sees no fundamental change of heart from the NP.

The MDM does, however, acknowledge that internal and international pressures are building up and the NP may soon be forced to start taking steps which could lead to real negotiations.

The National Party, in major newspaper advertisements at the weekend, claimed it was the only party that could get the country out of its current financial and political mess. It carefully avoided explaining how the mess was created in the first place; nor has it spelled out in detail how it proposed achieving the recovery.

In its action plan for the next five years, the NP commits itself to negotiation but then sets a list of conditions of not only

with whom it would be prepared to negotiate but also on what terms it would negotiate.

The NP would only talk with those people who were committed to peace and rejected violence as a means to achieve po-

litical objectives.

It believed it could not only decide on its negotiating partners but also that it could negotiate an acceptance of the pro-

tection of white exclusivity and privilege (called â\200\234apartheidâ\200\235 by many and called â\200\234own affairsâ\200\235 by the NP).

A contradiction in National Party outlook is that it attempts to dismiss the importance of the

Mass Democratic Movement

News -

becoming ju

{Each party has different solution to political logjam
st talk?

All the current talk about

breaking the political logjam

and getting negotiations on the future of South Africa going, increasingly looks like nothing more than talk. Politi-

cal correspondent BRUCE CAMERON reports. :
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and the African National Con--

gress while at the same time elevating them to the position of prime enemy.

At a conference organised by the Institute for a Democratic

Alternative for South Africa (Idasa) MDM spokesmen gave the flip side of the National

Party conditions. ;

r Firstly, it was made clear that, when negotiations came, there would be two main players, the MDM (and by that they, meant the ANC, the UDF, Cosa tu, etc.) and the National Party. Everyone else would have to decide on which of these two sid

to place their allegiances.

MDM executive member Pro-

fessor Jerry Coovadia said the Movement was the main engine for change. It had earned this position. Many of its members were dead, in jail or in hiding.

He emphasised the movement was intent on increasing pressure (â\200\234isolate the apartheid regimeâ\200\235) and would not enter any negotiations that were aimed at entrenching any type of racial exclusivity.

The various MDM spokesmen repeatedly stated they could not.

be expected to enter initial talks, let alone substantive negotiations, before the National Party made the first move towards lifting restrictions such as those on political organisations and various individuals to allow free political activity.

Dr F van Zyl Slabbert, who established Idasa to find a way to bridge the chasm, says the ball to get negotiations under way was firmly in the National Partyâ\200\231s court. He sympathises with the attitude of the MDM

and sees the National Party as

lence are still being f'nâ\200\231aihtaing@.;;,

the blocking mechanism in the way to talks.

In an interview, he warned that, until people could associate freely, they were going to set tough demands. â\200\234If the Government says it wants to negotiate but refuses to create conditions for negotiation it forces the other side into stating conditions. Only the Government can unban people and organisations and release political prisoners. : Only the Government can lift | the state of emergency. Only the | Government can dismantle | apartheid structures.â\200\235 - AN

The National Party could not | expect people to renounce vio- | lence â\200\234when the very conditions that led them to consider vio

by the Government.â\200\235 |

The longer the National Party L
held out, the more it was going
to be eroded from the Left and |
the Right.

â\200\234It is the old classical squeeze
of the Left saying the NP was
giving too little too late and the
Right saying it is giving too
much too soon.â\200\235

Dr Slabbert said there was a
very significant difference to |
the current election in that it
was being dominated by the |
very people with which the Gov-
ernment would not negotiate. |

â\200\234I have never seen a general |
election where the Mass Demo-
cratic Movement has been as |
dominant as in this one â\200\224 from
Mandela/Botha tea party, to the
MDM defiance campaign, to Mr
de Klerkâ\200\231s visit overseas.â\200\235

Dr Slabbert warned Mr de
Klerk that he had a choice of
maintaining the Conservative
Party as a big fish in a small
pond by dealing only in the
white arena or of reducing the
CP to a small fish in a large
pond by entering negotiations
with the majority of South Aifn-
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â\200\234It all says just one thing: Mr
de Klerk has got a performance
crisis on his hands after the Sep-

tember 6 election.â\200\235 i
News by B Cameron 85 Field Street Durban

PR IERREL T

Zach, Slabbert silenced

_Wits students

CITIZE

By Marguerite
Moody and Sapa

ABOUT 100 singing,
dancing and chanting
students yesterday pre-
vented a lunchtime de-
bate at the University
of the Witwatersrand
at which Democratic
Party co-leader, Dr
Zach de Beer, Idasa
director, Dr Frederik
van Zyl Slabbert, and
Weekly Mail journal-
ist, Mr Steven Fried-
man, were to be the
speakers.

The subject was to be
â\200\234Parliamentary politics: Is
it relevantâ\204ç?

The students, most of
them belonging to the
Black Studentsâ\200\231 Interim
Committee (BSIC), also

, stamped their feet.

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prevent Âç

They chanted â\200\234We
must armâ\200\235 and sang songs
in praise of the banned
African National Con-
gressâ\200\231 military wing,
Umkhonto we Sizwe,
drowning out amplified
requests for them to stop
â\200\234in the interests of free-

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Dr De Beer, Dr Slab-
bert and Mr Friedman sat
passively at a table on
stage while the furore
continued in the universi-
tyâ\200\231s Great Hall, where
about 2 000 students had
gathered to listen to the
debate.

University security officials attempted to push

dom of speech on campus

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ehate-.

the knot of chanting students out of the hall by a side exit and at one stage prevented the throng from advancing down an aisle on to the stage. When it became clear the chanting students

would not stop, the meeting was cancelled.

Dr De Beer said it had been a great pity so many people have wasted their time. Feelings run strong in these situations.

Dr Slabbert said the disruption of the meeting was symptomatic of the absurdity of holding a

FROM PAGE 1

general election for the minority.

Even under the most repressive circumstances, opportunity for debate and discussion should be used, he added.

It would be foolish for people to under-estimate the depth of frustration and anger amongst those in the extra-Parliamentary arena who have had their meetings and organisations banned and their peaceful gatherings disrupted.

South Africa could expect this kind of turbulence until everyone could

â\200\234participate legally and peacefully in the political process in a non-racial democratic South Africaâ\200\235.

At a Press conference held by the BSIC after the meeting was cancelled,

Mr Lloyâ\200\231d Mogotsi. vice-

president of the Black studentsâ\200\231 organisation, said the meeting was disrupted because of the

â\200\234 presence of DP co-leader,

Dr Zach de Beer.
â\200\234We will not allow a

Parliamentarian to speak on Wits campus. Our position on extra-Parliamentary politics is clear: our future does not lie in Parliament, it lies in the extra-Parliamentary movement. We have very strong feelings towards the tricameral Parliament.

â\200\234Dr De Beer is taking part in a racist system, and for this reason we would not allow him to speak. We will not allow any Parliamentarians to speak on campus.â\200\235

When asked whether the organisation was not violating the principle of freedom of speech, Mr Mogotsi said: â\200\234When you talk about freedom of speech, what are you really talking about? It doesnâ\200\231t exist in South Africa today. No person in his right mind can talk about freedom of speech in this country.

â\200\234We are aware of the consequences of our actions, but we are prepared to accept these consequences.â\200\235

The vice-chancellor

and principal of the uni- -

versity, Professor Robert
Charlton, said in a state-
ment he deplored this
gross violation of one of
the university's most
cherished values, free-

dom of speech. I apol-

ogize on behalf of Wits to

our guests! |

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chixy's disciplinary pro-
taken

students con-

cedures will be

against the

cerned. ;

| The president of the
university's SRC, Miss

Bettina von Lieres, said

the outcome of yester-

day's meeting was so

predictable that the ad-

ministration, the organis-

ers and those that dis-

rupted the meeting bear

responsibility for their

lack of foresight and sen-

sibility |

;Those who disrupted

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meeting failed to ex-

plain their actions to stu-

dents present while their

anger at Dr De Beer for

his party's participation in

the Indian House of Del-

egates and his echoing of

Viola's smears of demo-

cratic organisations over

the last week is under-

standable and shared by

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op debate

many South Africans and

- students.

â\200\234An explanation for their activities in the meeting is the least that could have been expected.â\200\235

She said the Debating Union, which had organised the meeting, had behaved â\200\234provocatively and manipulatively by single-mindedly trying to further their own political agenda by hiding behind the aura of free speech.

â\200\234This included phoning the Press with advance warningâ\200\231 that there would be dxsrupuons q.ven prior to negotiation around the meeting being completed.â\200\235

Mr John Peter, who chaired the meeting, said he â\200\234would like to ask the BSIC whether the ANC would have approved of their disrupting of a meeting at which Dr De Beer was to have spoken.

â\200\234We will try to reconvene the meeting, with the same speakers, at a later stage before the forthcoming general elections.â\200\235 he said.

. Tuesday 1 August 1989

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ing fear among mem-
bers that they will be
forced to become inÂ®
volved in the civil wars
of other countries after

their removal to new
bases in North Africa.

According to informa-
tion given by the Police
public relations division,
based on questioning of
terrorists who recently

handed themselves over -

to the police, this is one of
the major reasons behind
the reluctance of ANC
cadres to shift to the new
basis.

Two of the countries to
which ANC members be-
ing removed from Zam-
bia and Angola are Ugan-
da and Ethiopia, both of
which have internal wars.

Questioning of the ANC
deserters has revealed
that after the experience
of ANC members in An-
gola, where the deserters
claimed to know of more
than 50 ANC members
who had died after being
forced to fight with Fapla
against Unita, they will
again be forced to take
part in the wars of other
countries.

The resistance to leave
Zambia is so great, that
special ANC units, assist-
ed by ANC security and
elements of the Zambian
police, have removed
ANC members at gun-
point to the airport. One
ANC member was shot

_plier â\200\230of food in limited

The deserters outlined
a long list of grievances,
similar â\200\230to those recently
made by 17 former mem-
bers of the ANC in Scan-
dinavia. -

Not least among the
grievances was the short-

- age of food â\200\224 largely be-

cause supplies of rice
from Red China and
foodstuffs from Russia

have dried up, with Scandinavia now being . the only regular outside sup-

quantities. According to the police some of the ANC deserters who listed these grievances were suffering from malnutrition when they surrendered and had to receive medical and dietary care to re-

store their health. , . ! :

The deserters indicated that the food shortages were creating other problems. Clothing for example, had become in pitiful short supply because acres in charge of the clothing allocations were selling it to get money for food.

In recent months, the food situation had become so critical that they had only been receiving a meat ration once every 12 days.

The men also claimed that higher up in the ANC, members were operating big money rackets, such as foreign exchange frauds. One of the

sent to South Africa on terrorist. .missions. Be-

cause of the regular disap--

pearance of members suspected of being South African spies to punishment camps like Quatro, the deserters told the police there was real fear that they would be sold out by agents in their midst. - e R E

Other claims made by the deserters was that tri-

tra â\202-y were family member high up in

Voured with higher posit-

Or.

the ANC, while Xhosas appeared particularly favoured in rising to positions of rank in the organisation. .

Increasing incidences of Aids was causing problems, a fact which the ANC leadership was trying to conceal, according to the deserters. Deaths from malaria and tropical stomach ailments were

. also common.

THE CITIZEN

COMMENT

"Deplorable,

WE deplore the fact that singing, dancing and chanting mostly Black students (reports suggest there were around 100 of them, though the university says there were 80) disrupted a debate that was to have involved Dr Zach de Beer, co-leader of the Democratic Party, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, Idasa director, and Mr Steven Friedman, of the Weekly Mail.

The subject was to have been â\200\234Parliamentary politics: Is it relevant?â\200\235

One might have thought that even radicals could have been prepared to listen to this debate.

Furthermore, the participants all had the right credentials â\200\224 Dr De Beer because his party has links with the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement, Dr Siabbert, because Idasa arranges treks to the ANC, and Mr Friedman, because his newspaper is ultra-liberal.

But nothing mattered.

According to a spokesman of the Black Stu-

dentsâ\200\231 Interim Committee, â\200\234â\200\230our future does not lie in Parliament, it lies in the extra-Parliamentary movement. -

â\200\234De Beer is taking part in a racist system, and for this reason we did not allow any Parliamentarian to speak on Wits campus. \

. â\200\234In the name of student unity, we decided the - Â»
2 meetings should not take place on: thxs cam--

. pus.â\200\235
-This is not the first time there has been such
" intolerance at Wits.

. In the run-up to the 1987 election, Mrs Helen â\200\231
Suzman was denied the right to speak at her |

alma mater because of a curb on â\200\234electionâ\200\224
neering speechesâ\200\235. -

She had been invited to take part in a debate on the constitutional issue, organised by Law Society students.

_ It was suggested that the debate be moved to another venue off campus, but Mrs Suzman quite rightly said:-**I'm not interested. I want the right to speak on campus. If I canâ\200\231t have the right, then I wonâ\200\231t speak.â\200\235

The university authorities, reports suggested

.-at the time, were believed to have bowed to pressure from the Black Studentsâ\200\231 Society, some of whose members were involved in

" disturbances on the campus the previous year, when a visiting Unita delegation was howled down when it attempted to address a meeting.

Irish academic, onetime chairman of the Anti-

- Apartheid Movement and academic boycott â\200\230buster, Dr Conor Cruise Oâ\200\231Brien, had to

. cancel a lunchtime meeting -at Wits after demonstrating students declared they would not hear his prepared lecture, but would en-

" ter into debate on the principles of his visit.

Dr Oâ\200\231Brien, whose meetings had also been disrupted at Cape Town Umversny, aban-

- doned his university lecture tour â\200\234to avert serious violenceâ\204ç.

Now comes the refusal of the Black Studentsâ\200\231

" Interim Committee to allow the De Beer--Slabbert-Friedman debate to be held.

And this at a university with a great liberal tradition.

What intolerance! What insolence! What disgusting rejection of free speech and academic freedom. ;

The Vice-Chancellor of the university, Professor R W Charlton, deplores â\200\234this gross violation; 'ondof the universityâ\200\231s most cherished value, -

edom of speechâ\200\235, and â\200\234apolc; on behalf of Wits to our guestsâ\200\235. po o

He says action in terms of the universityâ\200\231s disciplinary procedures will be taken against the - students concerned. ;

We: hope that action will be severe, since the impression outside the university is that its authorities have been far too inclined to lean over backwards to placate the radical students. '

There is a. lesson ln thns for the Democrauc :

In the same wa\ as the Black students denxed

Dr De Beer and the other two speakers the right to be heard, -so-the Mass Democranc Movement, through its defiance campaign, is trying to deny voters their democratic right to vote.

Neither the students nor the MDM are democrats by any standard, and the DP should not - try-to whitewash or excuse them â\200\224 or have - any links with the MDM. i bl

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â\200\230Euesday y 5 August 1988,

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sanoâ\200\231s
more leeway to solve the
countryâ\200\231s chronic prob-
lems.

A week-long c(mgxess
of Frelimo (Mozambique
Liberation Front) that
ended on Sunday voted
overwhelmingly to try to
move the party closer to
the people and put its
policies more in tune with
reality.

That reality since Mo-
zambiqueâ\200\231s independence
from Portugal in 1975 has
been a crippling internal
war that has killed tens of
thousands and left the
economy on the brink of

The shift seeks to cre-
ate a more acceptable,
popular image for a party
that some congress del-

said had become
elitist and out of touch in
its 14 years in power.

Frelimoâ\200\231s
backed bold initiatives by
Pres Chissano to end a
decade-old revolt by the

Right-wing Mozambican
National Resistance
(MNR).

The initiatives involve
the idea of direct peace
talks with the rebels – in-
conceivable a year ago –
and a policy of dialogue
and co-operation with
neighbouring, South Afri-
ca, long accused of sup-
porting the MNR.

Congress |

|

United States and Brit-
ain. –

President Chissano told the
delegates his government
was ready to talk directly
to MNR leader Afonso
Dhlakama provided the
rebels * renounced viol-
ence.

Despite
reflecting

reservations

widespread
abhorrence for

– popular
: MNR – often brutal meth-

.. but urged him not to
– make a gift to terrorism.
It – like talking with

On the economic front,
the Frelimo congress ap-
peared to move even further

ther away from its pre-
vious Marxist concept of

The congress stressed

the importance of a mixed
economic system and in-
dmdual contributions to

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MORE than 100 chanting black stu-

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10 co-leader Zac]
allowed to speak on campus.

They vowed to prevent any MP from
speaking at Wits again and called on the
RNP cto pull out of Parliament and join the

Also billed to take part in the debate
were Idasaâ\200\231s Frederik van Zyl Slabbert
and Steven Friedman of the Institute of
Race Relations. v

_ The disruption of the meeting is likely to
result in a major confrontation between
the Wits administration and the students

. concerned, as they were warned before the debate that they would face disciplinary action if they attempted to prevent a speaker from delivering his address.

University vice-chancellor and principal Robert Charlton said the disruption was a

er being

: @ Picture: Page 3

Â©Â® What De Beer intended to say: Page 4

@ Comment: Page 10

â\200\234gross violation of one of the universityâ\200\231s most cherished values, freedom of speechâ\200\235. He apologised to guests and said action in

terms of the universityâ\200\231s disciplinary pro-.- . .

***** â\200\224

cedures would be taken against the students concerned. ! ; i

Deputy vice-chancellor in charge of student affairs Prof Mervyn Shear said no student was above the universityâ\200\231s disciplinary code.

A spokesman for the Black Studentsâ\200\231 Interim Committee (BSIC) said students knew the consequences of disrupting the meeting and were prepared to face them. They would regard any action taken Â° against them as akin to sentences handed ~

De Beer said it was the â\200\234greatest pityâ\200\235 that students who had come to listen to a

litical debate were prevented from doing so. More than 1 000 students attended.

Shortly before the debate was scheduled to start, some students began chanting ANC slogans and singing songs in praise of the organisationâ\200\231s military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. g

Repeated reminders by meeting chairman John Peter that: 'the students were violating the universityâ\200\231s freedom of speech values failed to have any effect.

SRC president Bettina von Lieres tried to address the meeting but was ignored.

The incident nearly turned violent when

security officials tried to force the demonstrating students out of the hall. " Peter later called on a spokesman for

the protesting students to address the meeting, but was still ignored. After about 25 minutes he called the meeting off and De Beer, Slabbert and Friedman were whisked away by university authorities.

BSIC co-ordinator Nepo Kekana then began speaking, to initial jeers from white students in the hall. .} 4
7" â\200\234The â\200\230battle-lines have â\200\230been drawn, No-National Party nor Democratic iParty leaders will make speeches here for as long as we are on this campus. What you are seeing today is just the beginning,â\200\235 said Kekana.

Those who accused the BSIC of violating the freedom of speech values on campus should remember that the ANC and other student and community organisations were banned, and that leaders like ANC

- [To Page 2

Wits students

President Oliver Tambo and Communist Party chairman Joe Slovo were in exile and â\200\224 in terms of the countryâ\200\231s laws â\200\224 could not come back and-speak on Wits campus.

Parliament in SA represented Nazism and the DP was no different, he said.

â\200\234The DP represents Nazism. Their leadership is no different from the Nazi generals of the past. They are no different from people like Klaus Barbie.â\200\235)

Sapa reports that Slabbert said the disruption was â\200\234symptomatic of the absurdity of holding a general election for the minorityâ\200\235.

"However, even under the most repressive circumstances, opportunity for debate and discussion should be used, he said.

â\200\234It would be foolish for people to underestimate the depth of frustration and anger among those in the extra-parliamentary arena who have had their meetings and organisations banned and their peaceful

gatherings disrupted.â\200\235

Slabbert added that SA could â\200\234expect this kind of turbulenceâ\200\235 until everyone could â\200\234participate legally and peacefully in the political process in a non-racial, democratic South Africaâ\200\235.

Meanwhile, the SRC blamed the university administration, the organisers and the BSIC for lack of foresight and sensitivity in holding a meeting they knew would divide the students on campus.

Veteran DP MP Helen Suzman, who was prevented from speaking at Wits in 1987, said principles of democracy demanded that everybody should be allowed to put their point of view. Although she could appreciate the depth of frustration felt by those who did not have the vote, it was counter-productive to prevent those people who were advancing the cause of non-racialism from putting their views.

Report by Sipho Ngcobo and Mike Robertson, 11 Diagonal St, Johannesburg.

â\200\224-â\200\224

- Slabbert, De Beer not allowed to speak -

. By EsmarÅ© van der Merwe,

b g A

Political Reporter

Tension between the Mass Democrat-
ic Movement and the Democratic
Party flared yesterday when about
200 University of the Witwatersrand
students disrupted a meeting on the
campus .at which DP co-leader Dr
Zach de Beer was to speak on the rel-
evance of parliamentary politics.
About 2000 students who packed the
Great Hall to listen to a debate between
Dr de Beer, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, co-
director of Idasa (Institute for a Demo-
cratic Alternative for South Africa) and
Weekly Mail columnist Steven Fried-
man, looked on as the group, mostly
blacks, sang freedom songs and chanted
anti-apartheid slogans.

Their cries of â\200\234Parliament downâ\200\235 and
â\200\234donâ\200\231t voteâ\200\235 were followed by songs praising
the ANC and Umkhonto we Stzwe, its military
wing.

The students, representing the Black Stu-
dentsâ\200\231 Interim Committee, ignored repeated
requests by the organisers to address â\200\224 rath-
er than disrupt â\200\224 the meeting, â\200\234in the inter-
ests of free speechâ\200\235.

A scuffle broke out when Wits security per-
sonnel tried to push some chanting students
out of the hall by a side exit.

In an attempt to restore order, Mr John
Peter of the Wits Debating Union called Dr

Slabbert to the rostrum. But he was also not able to speak.

No police present

The meeting was cancelled after 45 minutes. A

No-one was injured and police were not called. o

Dr Slabbert told scores of local and foreign pressmen: "Unless a situation is reached where people can effectively channel their political aspirations, this kind of thing is bound to happen. We are trapped in a very tragic situation."

Dr de Beer, who left the stage hastily after the meeting was called off, said it was a great pity that nearly 2000 people had been

robbed of the chance to listen to the speakers.

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"The infringement of free speech involved a serious one and cannot be condoned in any way. Having said that, we have to realise that we are plucking some of the bitter fruits

of the policy of racial division deliberately pursued by the Government for more than 40 years. - I ;
This episode further strengthens the case for a DP government at the earliest possible time. The QP will continue its agenda of seeking interaction with all political participants."
Wits Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor RW Qharityton deplored the disruption as a gross violation of one of the university's most cherished values - freedom of speech, and stated that action would be taken against the Students under the university's disciplinary
At a gathering in the Great Hall for the first time, Mr Nepo Kekana called upon the Students to join the MDM's defiance, which starts this week. TSt

Protest stayaway

He told white students: "Join the democratic masses, or it is going to be difficult for us

to tolerate you.â\200\235

Reluctant the MDMâ\200\231s stand that the defiance campaign against the election in September: _er would be peaceful, he said: â\200\234This meeting is the beginning. It lays Â¢ i the defiance campaign."g : e

He said students refused to allow me;

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of â\200\234this racist Parliamentâ\200\235 on campus, l;::';
;â\200\230_e;l)sated extâ\200\230)lticism of the DPâ\200\231s decision to
held a number of candidates f;
ettt s for the House of

im Committee was not violating the principle
of freedom of speech â\200\224 g the principle

Responding to a Wits Debating Union i

n cla
that Transvaal Indian Congress leader It'Inx!
Saloojee had been invited to share
thgdpï¬\201tfgrln, but later withdrew, Mr Kekana
said Saloojee had done so in
th% p;'esence of Dr de Beer. Ore, ver
Â® Before the 1987 general election, fo, |
Progressive Federal Party MP Mrs I;g;:: I
Suzman was barred from speaking at Wits

Mr Kekana said the Black Studentsâ\200\231 Inter- |

after a ban on â\200\234electioneering activitiesâ\200\235 by

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allowed to air their views.| i[!
(Report by E van der Merwe, 47 Sauer MJ :
@ See Page 3 and Page â\202ˆ

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Professor Mervyn Shear, deput /4
vice-chancellor, is on the left in the grey suit. Â® Picture by Ken Oosterbroek.

yesterday afterrioon when stu- the relevance of parliamentary politics.

Tension runs High . . . a scuffle
dents at the University of the Witwate

d prevented a public debate on

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In any political analysis of the South.

African situation, there is a juxtaposition of white fear and black aspirations and anger. | :

Let it be said immediately that

what often takes the form of expressed fear by some whites is simply an excuse for greed, the maintenance of the status quo and the holding on to white privilege.

This attitude must be exposed for what it is and must be challenged as strongly as possible.

However, there can be no doubt that many whites have genuine fears which cannot be ignored and must be respected. The causes of these deep-seated fears are legion.

They include ignorance of their black countrymen and here apartheid has succeeded in its rigid policy of separation. Whites and blacks for the most part live in different worlds and isolation breeds ignorance and ignorance brings with it fear. Â¥

Secondly, it should be admitted openly that the independence trail in Africa has often been accompanied by economic chaos and infrastructure breakdown. While there are many reasons for this, it is perceived by the majority of whites in South Africa that when blacks enter the corridors of power, it brings with it dire consequences.

Thirdly, many whites are consumed with guilt and believe that if blacks share power, they will use this leverage to wreak revenge for past injustices. The propaganda machine of the State has become highly sophisticated and through its electronic media as well as the majority

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Spekl on -

DR ALEX BORAINÉ, executive director of the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa and DR WELI MAZAMISA, lecturer in religion at the University of Cape Town (below), write in the Idasa

* publication on white fears and black aspirations.

of newspapers, the myth is propa-

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gated that any desertion from the National Party will bring disastrous consequences, especially for whites.

Many whites worry about the lowering of standards particularly in the fields of health services and education. The fact that blacks have had inferior health services and pathetic education facilities for so long escapes most of us.

In particular, it is our experience that many quite decent and fair-minded whites are concerned about their personal safety, if there should be a settlement in South Africa bringing about the end of white minority control. In our workshops and seminars, when whites are freed to '

talk openly and freely, they use ' "

phrases like: 'Will I be able to walk on the streets safely? Will I still be able to keep my own home, my own job?'

Real fears

It simply does not help to condemn these fears out of hand because tragically they are very real for the people concerned. We have to take these fears seriously and try to deal with them. :

If we accept that we cannot ignore these fears, how can we address this central problem? It is a problem which is filled with urgen-

ey because unless we do this, the majority of whites will cling to their prejudices, to their fears and to the

established order which they see as

unworkable and even undesirable, but which gives them a measure of protection. :

The loud beating of the drum of law and order has whites in its spell.

One way of trying to deal honestly

and seriously with this phenomenon is to expose the basic ignorance which feeds fear. We have tried to do this by encouraging and enabling whites to move into black townships so that they can experi-

ence for themselves something of, the conditions under which the vast

majority of South Africans live.

We have tried also to break down stereotypes and myths so as to provide an atmosphere of trust where whites, with blacks, can discuss and acknowledge these fears.

In all our workshops, our seminars and our conferences, in large gatherings and small, people have been encouraged to express these fears so that we can look at them together and build up the beginnings of a common commitment to a new South Africa free from fear. We

have been enormously encouraged

by the changing attitudes of so many of those who have participated in these events, whether they have been inside or outside of the Country.

One overwhelming conviction is

Dr Alex Boraine . . . 'many whites have genuine fears'

that you cannot deal with white fear

in a vacuum, but that you can deal

effectively with these fears when

whites and blacks meet together.

It would appear that white leadership on its own cannot convince whites that their fears are largely without foundation; but when they meet their black counterparts and listen to something of their aspirations, their anger and their readiness to include all South Africans who are committed to non-racism and a future democracy, then the miracle can and does take place.