

Reference : 1/28/2 (1992)

10 February 1992

TO : All members of the Non-Academic Staff  
other than Senior Officers of the  
Administrative Staff



University of Natal

Office of the Registrar

King George V Avenue Durban 4001 South Africa  
Telephone (031) 8162206 Fax (031) 8162214  
Telegrams University Telex 621231SA

GRADUATION CEREMONIES : APRIL 1992

I have pleasure in inviting you and your wife/husband/companion to attend the graduation ceremonies to be held in Pietermaritzburg and Durban in April 1992 :

<u>Venue, Date and Time</u>	<u>Faculties to be presented</u>	<u>Honorary Graduands</u>
<u>PIETERMARITZBURG - YMCA CENTRE</u>		
(1) Thursday, 2 April 18:00	Arts and Social Science	Honorary Graduand: <i>Wastville</i> Prof G C Oosthuizen <i>862130</i> (Doctor of Literature) <i>will have copy Thesis aw.</i>
(2) Friday, 3 April 18:00	Commerce, Education and Law	Guest Speaker: <i>PROF STANISLAUS</i> (To be announced) <i>SANG WEN</i> <i>Dir of School of Rural Community Res.</i>
(3) Saturday, 4 April 10:00	Agriculture and Science	Honorary Graduand: Colonel J Vincent (Doctor of Science)
<u>DURBAN - OLD MUTUAL SPORTS HALL</u>		
(1) Wednesday, 8 April 18:00	Education, Medicine and Social Science	Honorary Graduand: <i>no speech. piano solo</i> Mr A Ibrahim <i>Present Flowers by himself</i> (Doctor of Music)
		Guest Speaker: (To be announced)
(2) Thursday, 9 April 18:00	Architecture & Allied Disciplines and Economics & Management	Honorary Graduand: Mr B D Nomvete (Doctor of Economics)
(3) Friday, 10 April 18:00	Engineering and Science	Honorary Graduand: Dr W P Venter (Doctor of Science in the Faculty of Engineering)

/(4) Saturday ...

(4) Saturday, 11 April Humanities and Law  
10:00

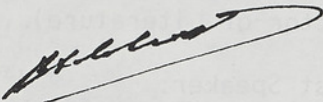
Honorary Graduands:  
Miss S Cussons  
(Doctor of Literature)  
Dr N R Mandela  
(Doctor of Laws)

Completed reply forms should be returned to the following :

PIETERMARITZBURG : Miss D Naude, Room 6, Administration Building,  
(Blue reply form) Pietermaritzburg, by not later than noon on  
12 March 1992.

DURBAN : Mrs L Fortune, Room 449, Level 4, Shepstone  
(Green reply form) Building, Durban, by not later than noon on  
18 March 1992.

Members of staff should return the reply form by folding it in order to reflect the return address.



Prof B X De Wet  
REGISTRAR

SM/bb

Encl.

2 Jameson Drive  
Mosque Pass hotel  
Rhodes Ave. Turn

R613  
Turn left over bridge 100 metres  
up Rhodes Ave. down  
1st str on left Jameson  
Drive.



TO: BUILDING CONTROLLERS

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO HEADS OF DEPT. IN YOUR BUILDING.

DEMONSTRATION AT GRADUATION : 8 APRIL 1992

A group of about 60 medical students protested noisily and held a placard demonstration outside the Old Mutual Sports Hall before the start of the graduation ceremony on Wednesday, 8 April. The protesters, who arrived by bus at about 5:30 pm, did not hold their demonstration in the area demarcated in the Vice Principal's memorandum of 7 April which indicated the limits of permissible protest for the period 7 to 17 April, 1992.

When they were informed by officials of the administration that they were contravening the new regulations, some students replied that they did not know about them and others that they did not regard them as binding upon them as they had not been consulted before they were introduced.

Vice Chancellor, Professor James Leatt, Vice Principal, Professor Christopher Cresswell and Professor H M (Jerry) Coovadia left the robing room to talk to the demonstrators minutes before the ceremony was due to start at 6 pm. In the event the ceremony started 30 minutes late after the students agreed to abandon their noisy demonstration - and drop their threats to invade the hall - in return for an opportunity for a group of 5 students to be allowed to hold placards inside the hall while the President of the MSRC, Mr Maedi Teffo, read a short statement.

There was considerable verbal resistance to this decision when it was announced, but the majority of the audience indicated by their applause their approval of the Vice Chancellor's handling of the situation after he had explained the alternatives he faced and emphasised that tolerance of dissent and the willingness to hear unpalatable views was "central to what a University is all about". Professor Leatt indicated that there was only one alternative to defusing the situation by allowing a short statement to be read. That was to call in the SAP riot squad to disperse the demonstrators; and that course of action would probably have led to the disruption and eventual cancellation of the ceremony. He had therefore taken the decision in the interests of all those who had come to receive their degrees and diplomas and of the dignity of the ceremony.

Apart from some booing and slow hand-clapping, the reading of the statement by the MSRC President passed without incident. He accused the medical graduands attending the ceremony of breaking a resolution of the medical students taken last year and accused them of treachery. He went on to demand an end to what he described as racist and sexist practices. The demonstrators then left the hall. There was no further protest and no further incident.



More than one senior member of the business community attending the ceremony as a guest complimented Professor Leatt on his handling of a very difficult situation.

Asked to comment on the events after the ceremony, Professor Leatt roundly condemned the conduct of the demonstrators as "utterly despicable". He said that all the students who had acted in contravention of the University's Rules for Student Discipline, the Code of Conduct and special procedures for student protest promulgated by Professor Cresswell on Tuesday were liable for disciplinary action and that prosecutions would be brought against all those who could be identified.

ISSUED BY

R DIRK KEMP

DIRECTOR : PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Thursday, 9 April, 1992

P R E S S     R E L E A S E

At noon today, I received a telephone call from the President of the ANC, Mr Nelson Mandela, informing me that for reasons of State he is unable to attend the Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, 11 April, at which he was to have received the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.

Mr Mandela asked me if it would be possible to defer his graduation to a later date. In the circumstances I agreed to the deferment, as the University has done in the past. (Most recently, the internationally renowned South African jazz pianist, Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand), last year accepted the University's offer of an honorary degree, but was unable to attend the ceremony because of a clashing engagement. He will in fact receive the honorary degree this evening.)

Mr Mandela has indicated that he will be putting his request in writing and he apologised to me for any inconvenience caused.

**PROFESSOR J V LEATT**  
**VICE CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL**

Wednesday, 8 April, 1992.



Given to Trib.

TO: ALL BUILDING CONTROLLERS

While there have been matters of concern this past week, it is the intention of the University to function normally next week.

The Special Senate Readmissions Committee will be meeting on 7 and 10 April in order to review Mr Knowledge Mdlalose's application to review his exclusion from the Law Faculty.

At this stage there is no substance to the rumours about "trouble on Tuesday".

CAMPUS AFFAIRS

16:00

3 April 1992

- 1 Fix Aid
- 2 Articles
- 3 Talk of disruption of Grad's.
- 4 Visiting SATSOU - this will not accommodate

SA Sp Treasury Iush: Sports  
Chia.



# Subsistence crop research

AFTER 10 years of research into developing crop cultivars suitable for subsistence farmers, a research unit formerly attached to the University of Natal has since privatised – and is set to supply thousands of tons of bean seeds to southern African countries.

Managing director of Pro-Seed, Dr Rob Melis, said the cultivars they had developed were specifically aimed at small farmers who lacked access to pesticides and so battled to control crop disease. Through plant breeding, Pro-Seed sought to breed disease resistance in food crops. "Among others, we are working with dry beans which is a major protein source in southern Africa, and over the past few years we have developed and released 7 cultivars," said Melis.

In South Africa, these varieties have now been widely adopted in KwaZulu and Transkei. Further afield, the Mkuzi bean has found popularity in Mozambique and Angola with about 1 200 tons of seed having been ordered this year by development agencies active in those countries.

Smaller orders have been received from Zimbabwe, with negotiations with Zambia, Malawi and the Ivory Coast having just got under way. Pro-Seed has also researched tomatoes, potatoes and chillies.

Although the programme privatised 2 years ago, Pro-Seed is based at Ukulinga, the University farm in Pietermaritzburg, and staff still enjoy a close working relationship with the University's Faculty of Agriculture.

Since privatising, the programme – which was formerly known as the University's Crop Improvement Research Unit – has managed to maintain a 70% level of self-sufficiency using royalties generated by the programme's cultivars. Additional funding has come from Anglo American and the De Beers Chairman's Fund who have supported the programme from its inception, to the tune of about R1 million.

Pro-Seed's approach to the agricultural community has taken into account both the need for marketing new varieties of seed and the need to

involve the community in selecting these cultivars.

Describing Pro-Seed's modus operandi as "grass-roots development work", Melis said it is important that researchers work with farmers so that the cultivars selected by Pro-Seed are accepted and adopted by the farmers. "We've tried to involve farmers right from the beginning," he said.

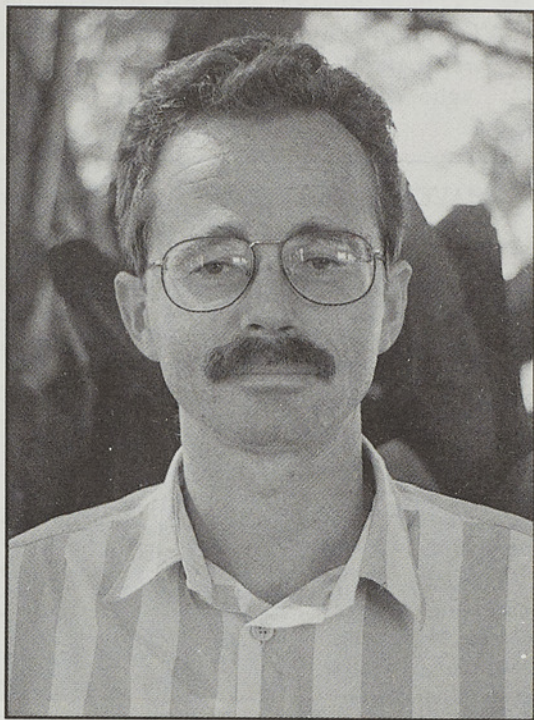
Most plant breeding programmes in South Africa, however, have traditionally targeted the commercial producer rather than the small farmer. Crop cultivars developed by these programmes have been generally poorly adapted to the low-input farming systems of black agriculture. And because many of these small farmers cannot afford agro-chemicals, the use of cultivars which are susceptible to disease has proved a major technical

**"We've tried to involve farmers right from the beginning."**

constraint to agricultural development.

Melis said that while plant breeding is regarded as a cost-effective approach in improving Third World agriculture, the danger has always been that it can lock up highly-trained specialists in their research stations where they develop super cultivars which are later rejected by the recipient farmers for some unexpected reason.

One of the ways Pro-Seed had dealt with this was by introducing a volun-



Managing Director of Pro-Seed, Dr Rob Melis.

teer programme in which farmers are involved in the field trials. A selected group of 40 subsistence farmers from different farmers' associations are invited to participate and are responsible for planting, maintaining and harvesting the trials. Their only compensation is the training and the produce at the end of the season.

"This volunteer programme has helped the research team to become more familiar with the needs of the farmers, while the farmers feel more involved with the research programme. An additional objective has been to make the farmers aware of the need for experimentation and to encourage them to experiment with different techniques and cultivars on their own farms," said Melis.

Citing the example of small farmers in the Vulindlela district in Natal where the cultivar development programme was first introduced, Melis said it had proved so successful that farmers had begun to sell their surplus bean production within the peri-urban community. "These cultivars selected by the farmers of Vulindlela are grown by peasant farmers throughout Africa."



# My view of the future

There must be as many views of the future as there are South Africans looking towards it. *NU Airmail* presents a series of personal columns entitled "My view of the future" in which people write about what they see happening. These are not visionary optimists; rather they are people who, by virtue of their life in the current South Africa, can offer a realistic view of the future South Africa. In this issue, **John Aitchison** looks ahead.

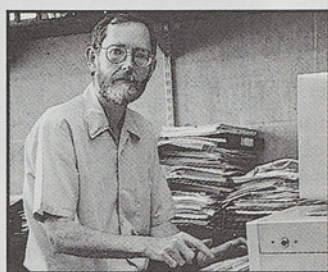
**I** HAVE always thought that prophets are in a rather depressing business (it's the optimists who are always revealed later as the false ones). But one doesn't need to be a prophet to be depressed about almost inevitable tendencies moulding our collective futures in the province of Natal, and South Africa as a whole.

The most obvious tendency and closest to me (as a monitor, documenter and analyst of political violence in the region) is that the violence is not going to stop and is going to ripple out further from its urban and peri-urban origins devouring one rural town and rural area after another. We have already seen this process in Mooi River, Richmond, Estcourt, Port Shepstone and Empangeni. In the already ailing black rural areas the impact of even lightly armed paramilitary conflict will be devastating (as seen so graphically in Mozambique). Though I believe the origins of this conflict (between the Inkatha movement and its opponents) to have been political, it is now increasingly a war between a modern world (represented by the African National Congress and its allies) and an increasingly reactionary tribal remnant and its migrant storm troopers.

Even if the violence is reduced by the prayed-for effective and impartial policing, it will take decades, if not a century, to remove the legacy of damage and hate spawned by this conflict (the obvious parallel is the continuing bitterness that the second Anglo-Boer war left behind).

Nationally, the violence in Natal and the Transvaal is a sideshow that will not halt the move to a modern deracialised society (the violence is

tolerated by the State because it keeps the African National Congress distracted and unable to capitalise politically on its enormous popular support – something like 75% of the black population).



John Aitchison (left) is Director of the Centre for Adult Education on the Pietermaritzburg campus. The Centre was established at the University of Natal in 1972 to redress the unequal distribution of knowledge and skills in South African society. By encouraging and supplying innovative educational endeavours, the Centre hopes to contribute to the restructuring of education in South Africa.

The second tendency is that this new South Africa will look remarkably like the old in that there will continue to be enormous disparities of wealth and power between the educated urban-housed motorised employed (but now non-racial) middle class, and the excluded – the poor, the squatters, the rural people, and those dumped long ago when apartheid South Africa tore 3,5 million people from their homes and moved them elsewhere to keep the map white. At the moment the African National Congress has the support of the poor but it is likely that the best deal it will be able to get from Codesa et al is a free ticket for its leadership into the middle class enclaves. With the ANC unable to deliver to the poor, ex-President de Klerk, in a new centrist party will plan to win the second general election to be held in the new South Africa (hubris may tempt him to try and win the first but that possibility died with every opinion poll that showed that a National Party alliance with Inkatha would result in a massive loss of black support rather than a gain).

Looking at Natal, we see a province with the largest black to white ratio, the worst black education levels

and system in the country, and an infrastructure that has been cheated of its fair share of national resources for decades. All its systems – roads, hospitals, public transport, etc. are running down. Its lobbyists are ineffective (the Democratic Party is beholden to rand capital, the National Party always considered Natal expendable and Inkatha/KwaZulu is increasingly locked into pseudo ethnic isolation).

Given this scenario, what can possibly save us?

There are some things in our favour. We have people and we have water and fertility (though the fragility of our ecology in the light of global warming, rural underdevelopment and rapacious monoculture by agribusiness should not be underestimated). We have a major port and its appendage, the city of Durban, which actually balances its budget.

If Natalians could really get engaged in politics (real politics as understood in the rest of the world is almost non-existent in South Africa) maybe we could begin to fight for a better deal. The University of Natal has a role to play in this. The university is one of humanity's more enduring institutions. Our society needs re-educating and recivilising. The weaknesses of our civil society can be enormously strengthened by an outgoing, community-involved university. Clear thinking and good information is vital in reconstruction. What a challenge. But don't be over sanguine. Our University may be as prone as others to simply become the handmaiden of our new decoloured masters and abandon its responsibility to all the people of Natal, most of whom are poor and increasingly in misery.





These children, pupils of the Mabibi Primary School in a remote rural area, are among those who will benefit from the electricity generated by the wind turbine project.

# Rural windfall

A PRIMARY school in the remote rural town of Mabibi has become the first institution of its kind to have access to an endless supply of natural power – in the form of the Mabibi Wind Energy System.

Initiated by Professor Roseanne Diab of the University's Department of Geographical and Environmental Sciences on the Durban campus – leader of a team consisting of engineers, scientists and technicians from the University, Eskom and the National Energy Council – the project takes the form of a 5 kilowatt wind turbine, erected at a primary school in Mabibi, on the Maputaland coast. The school was built by the local community with the aid of the Musgrave Rotary Club, and under the leadership of the headmaster, Mr Noel Makhanya, provides schooling for 350 pupils.

Harnessing the wind will provide

electricity for lighting, refrigeration for the clinic housed in the school buildings, a 2-way radio, audiovisual equipment and possibly even a battery-charging facility.

**“Wind energy is a renewable energy resource and does not damage or pollute the environment.”**

“The system is expected to enhance the quality of the town's education and health services and will also enable the school to be used as a community centre in the evenings by the adult population,” Diab said.

Over the past 2 years, the project

team members have been involved in extensive planning, engineering design, modelling of the wind field, environmental and socio-economic impact assessments and community consultation. The wind turbine was finally erected in January this year and commissioned shortly after. Diab: “It is hoped that this project will serve as a model which can be replicated at other remote rural locations, as the advantage of using wind energy for such dispersed, sparsely populated centres are numerous: using wind energy avoids the high cost of erecting transmission lines, it is a renewable energy resource which is being harnessed and, above all, it does not damage or pollute the environment.”

The Mabibi Wind Energy System was officially launched at the Eskom Visitors Centre auditorium at BP Centre in Durban on 5 March 1992.



# Honorary graduates 1992

*The University of Natal has honoured at its graduation ceremonies this year outstanding South Africans who are achievers in a variety of fields.*

BAX NOMVETE has had an outstanding career in promoting economic development and co-operation among the sub-regions of Africa. The holder of a BA and 2 MA degrees, he began in 1962 what would be a lifetime's work with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). From 1983 until his retirement at the end of 1990, he was First Secretary General of the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA). He was acting President of the PTA Bank from 1986-7 and the First Executive Director of the PTA Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry from 1985-90. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Economics degree.

...

PROF. GERHARDUS OOSTHUIZEN, an authority in the area of religious studies, has an outstanding record of pioneering research on independent churches in South Africa and holds 6 academic degrees from universities around the world. Since 1984 he has held the post of Director of the Research Unit on New Religious Movements and Independent Churches (Nermic), administered by the University of Zululand. Stemming from his research into the interface of traditional African religions and Christianity is a list of 30 scholarly works which he has authored/edited, in addition to publishing over 40 papers in local and international journals. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature degree.

...

NELSON MANDELA embarked on a career of resistance and protest against the apartheid regime early on in his life. A founding member of the ANC Youth League, he was instrumental in developing the ANC's Freedom Charter as the basis for a new South African constitution. Despite imprisonment and a banning order during the 1950s, Mandela qualified as an attorney. In the early 1960s, after Sharpeville and

the banning of the ANC, he went into exile but was arrested upon his return to South Africa; at the Rivonia trial he was sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island, but was released after 26 years. The award of an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Natal is a tribute to the sacrifices and contribution made by him. Mandela, however, was unable to be present to receive the honour and has requested the University to defer it until a later date.

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SHEILA CUSSENS is regarded as the doyenne of Afrikaans literature with a reputation equal to that of DJ Opperman and N P van Wyk Louw. After completing a BA in Fine Art at the University of Natal, Cussons undertook extensive travels, living for many years in London and Amsterdam and 25 years in Barcelona. Her first book of poetry, published in 1971, was widely regarded as the best first work ever to appear in Afrikaans and was awarded numerous prizes in South Africa. A few years later she suffered major burns in an accident, with most of her fingers being amputated. In the 12 years following this, however, she produced 10 volumes of poetry. Many of her poems have been translated into other languages, she has received all the major literary awards for Afrikaans, and has now been honoured with a Doctor of Literature degree.

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COL. JACK VINCENT, MBE, is one of the pioneers of wildlife conservation in South Africa and the man responsible for establishing the Natal Parks Board as the organisation of uniform excellence that it is today. As its director from 1949 until 1963, Vincent gained official approval for a number of landmark conservation ordinances, trained staff at all levels and established a trend of ecology-conscious thought among the farming community. As the first liaison officer for the world conservation of

bird species of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Switzerland, Vincent was instrumental in the international publication of the Red Data Books which list endangered species. At 87, Vincent is still active in areas of conservation, serving as a member of the Museum Service Advisory Board for Natal. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science.

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DR WILLIAM VENTER is considered one of the foremost figures in the development of an independent electronics industry in South Africa. After obtaining 2 diplomas from the Witwatersrand Technikon and qualifying as a Chartered Engineer in London, Venter had risen to group marketing manager of Standard Telephones and Cables SA Ltd by the age of 31. In 1965 he formed the Allied Electric (Pty) Ltd company, today the giant Altron Group. Venter serves on the Economic Advisory Council of the State President and the Industry Advisory Committee of the Minister of Economic Affairs and Technology. He has received numerous awards and is involved in many social projects for underprivileged communities, most notably in the area of education. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science in Engineering.

...

ABDULLAH IBRAHIM (Dollar Brand) is regarded by many as the most creative jazz musician to have emerged from South Africa. His career spans more than 30 years of innovative composition and recording, much of that time having been spent in the United States. He has toured extensively and appeared in most of the major jazz festivals around the world. In 1990 he returned to South Africa for the first time since going into permanent exile in 1975. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Music degree by the University in 1991 but as he was unable to attend the presentation, the degree was conferred on him this year.