

SOUTH AFRICA: STAGE TWO ON THE ROAD TO THE ULTIMATE POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT

Six years ago I supported the idea of a tri-cameral political system for South Africa. I did this not because I believed it had any hope of success but because its obvious defects would ensure its failure. In my view this would compel the government to advance to Stage Two of the series of constitutional developments which will form the road from Oligarchy to Democracy, the Ultimate Political Arrangement for South Africa (UPA). Not to be misunderstood, I define "oligarchy" as "government by the privileged few" and "democracy" as "government by all the people, ignoring hereditary distinctions and tolerating minority views."

My rationale for believing that unpleasant journeys should be undertaken at the pace of a hare rather than that of a tortoise needs no defence. But another way, a quick insolvency is preferable to a slow one.

For the same reason, I now back Mr. F. W. de Klerk's latest plan, undetailed as it is. Whatever it produces must also inevitably fail, facilitating the introduction of Stage Three.

Why should Stage Two not succeed? Simply, I believe, because, so things political are in South Africa, he cannot afford to address the political realities. At least 84% of the Whites are opposed to any change which will weaken their hold on political power. Having governmental control means having the ability to direct the police and the army. That is indispensable to all oligarchal governments. South African Whites, almost to a man, will argue that political power is not negotiable whereas such philosophies as residential and educational separation of the Whites from other race-members are.

History shows that oligarchies always come to an end. They flourish when those who enjoy power also enjoy prosperity. They wither when prolonged depression occurs. Economics will play an enormous rôle in shaping South Africa's future. Civil unrest will also play a part. Regrettably one must hold the view that only an extremely painful happening, the onset of economic and social chaos, can bring about the transposition of governmental power from the hands of the Whites into a newly-constitutionalised body in which they will have only minor input.

Is there no hope at all of an early solution to a problem which appears certain, at this graduation, to threaten tens of millions of human beings with ghastly experiences for many years to come? I believe that there is, even if it is only the merest glimmer. It is one which will call for clear thinking and heroic courage by the leaders of the National Party, by them alone. Remember that they have the power to make constitutional changes by virtue of a considerable parliamentary majority. What they need is the will to recommend a course of action against the short-term interests of their oligarchal supporters but in their long-term ones.

I argue that one can avert the inevitable by anticipating it, by act of will. One does not, by so doing, solve the problem as originally expressed but one can substantially change its nature, which is the next best thing.

To return to my thesis - Stage Three will seek to give the Blacks a more appealing form of parliamentary representation than Stage Two will. Unfortunately, Mr. de Klerk will still be under pressure to create an illusion of "power-sharing" without conceding the Blacks any exercisable strength. Those leaders like Chief Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi and Mr. Oliver Tambo cannot possibly accept any half-hearted proposals. In their circumstances, would you?

I expect Stage Two to have proved unworkable by the mid-1990s. Stage Three will then be announced. Being "more liberal" it will cause a flow, but not a flood, of Nationalists to the Conservative Party. Do not be surprised if, under Stage Three, Blacks, Coloureds and Indians are represented by Whites in the House of Assembly, the repository of power. Some of them, you may remember, were so represented a little over thirty years ago.

I predict that the results of forthcoming elections will be like this:

	<u>1989</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1999</u>
National Party, not less than	110	100	91
Conservative Party, approaching	38	50	62
Democratic Party, approaching	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>13</u>
Seals :	<u>166</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>166</u>

Expect Stage Three to fail early in the 2000's. Stage Four will again be negotiated with some minor black groups. It may well offer the non-Whites increased representation in the House of Assembly and the novelty of representation by their own folk.

Such a nostrum would certainly put the cat among the pigeons. If the conservatives do not win the 2004 election, it is on the cards that some extra-parliamentary clique will then endeavour to seize power. By then, however, Nationalists, conservatives and clique-members will all have "last-ditch" mentalities, although differing in style. There will be no talk of Stage Five, the UPA, until the effects of the inevitable socio-economic crisis compels the Whites to say: "The game is up." When will that be? No one can tell but, having lived the first fifty years of my life in South Africa, I know the Whites well enough to say that the struggle will, in all probability, go on for many years.

This is why I strongly oppose sanctions and disinvestment at this stage. I believe that for the next decade, at least, they will hurt those whom they are intended to help, without influencing governmental policies. Later they will certainly contribute to the bringing of the whole messy affair to an end.

Chief Buthelesi, Mr. Janbo, and others have all declared that they want a universal adult franchise regardless of colour, for Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians, in a unitary, i.e. unbantustanised, completely unracialistic country, possibly on a federal basis with the component states having a large measure of self-government. As surely as the sun will rise tomorrow morning, this will be South Africa's long-term political future. Yes, a democracy in the Western nations sense, well within the life-time of most South Africans.

Every problem has a key element within it. In South Africa it is the relativity of the numbers of Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians and of their differing growth rates. These are 2.8% per annum, compounded, for Blacks, 0.9% for Whites, 2.2% for Coloureds and 2.0% for Indians.

This is how the country's demographic future looks:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BLACKS</u>	<u>WHITES</u>	<u>COLOURED</u>	<u>INDIANS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>WHITES AS % OF TOTAL</u>
1989	28,000,000	4,950,000	3,100,000	940,000	37,990,000	13.05
2000	36,905,120	5,418,852	4,025,058	1,168,770	48,686,570	11.13
2010	45,327,385	5,926,790	5,113,659	1,424,723	59,217,280	10.00
2020	58,116,053	6,482,325	6,496,679	1,736,728	72,831,785	8.90
2030	74,512,916	7,089,831	8,253,744	2,117,061	91,973,552	7.71
2040	95,535,990	7,754,382	10,436,018	2,580,684	116,357,074	6.55

This schedule is based on the S.A. government's own statistics.

Moreover my figures are probably on the conservative side as I have included only 7,500,000 for Kwa Zulu, Biskei, Transkei, Bophuthatwana, Venda, Gazankulu, Qwaqwa, KwaNgwane, Lebowa and KwaNdebele, the so-called "Independent" and "non-independent" states. Incidentally they would fit rather neatly into a federal system.

Don't rush through these population figures. Think of the implications; in stages. South Africa will have almost 11,000,000 more mouths to feed in ten years' time, 22,000,000 in twenty, 35,000,000 in thirty, 54,000,000 in forty, 79,000,000 in fifty. Simultaneously the Whites who are presently 13.05% of the total population will gradually decline to 11.13% of it in ten years' time, 10.00% in twenty, 8.90% in thirty, 7.71% in forty and 6.55% - one in every sixteen - in fifty.

A big tail may wag a small dog but a small tail cannot wag a big dog. In fact it would, plainly, be stupid to try.

My South African readers know that, over the last fifteen years or so, there has been almost complete economic integration of the races, some social assimilation, a weakening of the separatist barriers in a few residential areas and a disregard of the colour bar in a number of educational institutions under church control. But there have been no real political concessions and that is the crux.

Except to those who will not see, the writing is on the wall in letters as tall as Table Mountain. Twenty years, most likely, - thirty years at limit - will see the end of White domination.

If I am right, then what the situation calls for from the Blacks, Coloureds and Indians is patience; and cooperation among themselves. They have waited three centuries, and more, for what is in the course of happening to come to pass. I am appreciative of their feelings against the Whites and the depth of those feelings but I am compelled to say this to them: "To keep as emotion-free as possible the talks which will need to be held before UPA is set up, please desist completely from the use of violence." Of course, I ask Mr. de Klerk to order his police and army forces to do likewise. The sooner the better. Remember you have got to go on living together, like it or not, all of you.

Mr. de Klerk, Chief Buthelegi, Mr. Jambo, other leaders, if white monopoly of government is to cease in what, historically speaking, is the very near future, after and because the country's economy has been reduced to rubble, can you not, now, as intelligent men, accept the inevitable and reach consensus on a constitution, thus preventing both the internecine struggle and the economic debacle?

I plead with you to accept what I have presented as being factual and logical. Why not act together, now, to avoid the eternity of trauma through which South Africa will otherwise have to pass?

Why not accept a constitution with both long-term and short-term provisions?

I propose, for your consideration, one which will guarantee the ending of white control in, say, twenty years' time, one which immediately abandons the tri-cameral system and has a single House of Assembly, with representatives elected on a qualified franchise basis during the intervening twenty-years, whereafter a universal adult franchise shall apply. The qualified franchise would apply to the members of all races.

Mr. de Klerk, I am aware that you would have to allay white fears. That task is not, in my view, impossible, given the strength of leadership within the National Party and the validity of the twin arguments that you are merely anticipating the inevitable and also doing what will be best for the Whites for generations to come.

Chief Buthelegi, Mr. Jambo, and others like you, you

will have to pacify those among your supporters who want equality now. You can logically argue that to ensure, now, the settlement you would gladly accept in twenty years' time would be a huge achievement.

The members of all races will need education in tolerance and understanding. Racism dies hard. I have seen this in many countries at first hand. However long it takes the fight against it must go on.

What is essential is a constitution for South Africa based on the complete and unassailable sanctity of the rights of the individual — no, not under any circumstances, on group representation, so as to be able to identify racial groups one would need a race classification system. I can, however, see no difficulty in having most states, under a federal system, being homogeneously ethnic, *de facto*, provided such states realise that they are parts of and not greater than the whole federal arrangement. I have watched the Australian federal system work for the past dozen years or so, the component states having a wide range of self-governing powers, and am convinced that it would serve as a basic model for South Africa, when the time comes to finalise the UPA.

The future of all South Africans lies in their "togetherness, side by side, with no one above and no one below", with the rights of the individual concretised into the constitution in such a way as to make them impossible to deny and almost impossibly difficult to alter. This can easily be done.

Mr. de Klerk, in the last analysis, the future is in your hands.

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I believe that, if one's long-term thinking is wrong, one's short-term decision-making cannot be right. Thus my long-term view of the problems of South Africa. As if that were not enough, because of the trickling away of the sands of time, my own days of writing are drawing to a close. This is likely to be my last political paper. These are my reasons for having succumbed to the temptation to be prophetic.

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