

Birth of
the new
South Africa

Of the many important dates in the history of South Africa, probably the most momentous was February 2, 1990. It was the day on which the State President, Mr F W de Klerk, took a bold leap towards an entirely new dispensation for the country with all the dangers and opportunities inherent in such a decisive step.

It was a giant step away from the past.

It was a vital step into the future in which, for the first time, it would be official state policy to see the country as a single entity, with a single nation of which every individual member would be entitled to equal treatment.

This could, however, not be accomplished by a single statement.

The road ahead appears simple: Get rid of all discriminatory legislation, give everybody the vote and . . . presto! A new, truly democratic state is born;

It isn't that easy, of course. There's a long road ahead. Yet probably the most difficult step the first has been taken. That was the significance of February 2, 1990, the day on which the ruling National Party formally renounced its sole occupation of the heights of government.

It was on that day that all banned political organisations were legalised. It was also announced then that political prisoners were to be released.

Significant as these steps were, they pale beside the fundamental and final about-turn inherent in February 2.

South African history, going back to well before the advent of Western settlement over 350 years ago, was typically one of a range of tribes competing

C O 1

-sometimes warring over land, grazing rights and living space.

SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The advent of the first Dutch settlers in 1652 did not change that. It rather intensified this competition and from the earliest days it became part of the settlement pattern in South Africa that its people were kept apart from each other.

Soon after landing, Jan van Riebeeck, the leader of the original European settlers, planted a hedgerow around his settlement to keep the indigenous population out.

Just over a century later, river after river on the eastern seaboard became a shifting boundary between White and Black-again an attempt to keep various peoples apart.

Some 50 years later a section of the Dutch-speaking community, fed-up with British rule which had supplanted that of the Dutch East India Company, uprooted themselves and moved north-thereby underlining the division between English- and Dutch-speaking citizens, a factor which was to dominate the country's history for the next 150 years. Division between White and Black, Black and Black and White and White was in fact the basic pattern in early South Africa.

It was a division which found its way into legislation almost 150 years ago, a practice which continued until after World War II. It then became the firm philosophy of the ruling National Party that segregation-which became known as apartheid-was the only way in which the white section of the population would retain political control.

NEW REALITY

In the late 1950s White South Africa began to face a new reality. Europe was decolonising. In Africa, country after country became independent.

At the same time the primary political movement among Black South Africans, the African National Congress (ANC), embarked on its first really confrontational campaign to fight for the equality of all South Africans.

20

The ANC had been formed in 1912 to protest against the exclusion of Blacks from the vote and from landownership. Initially it worked within the prevailing system but, in tune with the rest of Africa, it became more activist from the 1950s onwards.

The Prime Minister at the time was Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, who correctly foresaw that excluding Blacks from the vote was no longer possible; that a new era had begun in which people all over the world would insist on equal treatment.

This would also have to apply to South Africa and all its people.

Dr Verwoerd saw that, fundamentally speaking, there were only two ways of looking at a country like South Africa with its diversity of people, culture, language and religion-partition or unity.

Given his acceptance that the vote would have to be extended to all South Africans, opting for a united, single country would inevitably mean the loss of political control by Whites. '

SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT

This Dr Verwoerd was not prepared to accept. He opted for partition-which became known as separate development. His predecessors had aimed at total control of the country and all its people. Essentially he was scaling that control down to part of the country-albeit the largest part-and only to Whites.

For a variety of reasons the Verwoerdian attempt at grand partition failed.

The main reason was simple: The developed part of South Africa, where the jobs and opportunities were, was White-controlled while the partitioned Black areas were poor, underdeveloped and over-populated.

Inevitably people were drawn to where the opportunities lay and this led to depopulation of the Black rural areas, despite wide-ranging development programmes and stringent control efforts to counteract this tendency.

At the same time, White South Africa had not come to grips with the political problem posed by South

The State
President delivering
his epoch-making
speech in Parliament
on February 2, 1990
Africans of mixed descent_so-called Coloureds
and Indians. Both groups were smaller in number
than the Whites and had no natural homeland which
could simply form part of the general partition plan.
After a great deal of uncertainty about their political ,
future, it was agreed, through a referendum held
among Whites in 1983, to extend the vote to them on
a group basis, and have the groups sit in Parliament
in three separate chambers, one for Whites, one for
Coloureds and one for Indians.

BLACKS EXCLUDED

This meant that Blacks were still excluded from the
vote for central government, on the assumption of
the Government of the day that they had been given
the vote in their own separate states and therefore
had no further claims within so-called White South
Africa.

But Blacks felt differently. They formed the major
part of the population in so-called White South
Africa. They were permanently settled and had no
wish to return to the partitioned Black homelands.

4

The extension of the vote to Coloureds and Indians
in 1983 sparked protest among Blacks and, late in
1984, this resulted in violent confrontation with the
State. Protests swept through the country, reaching
a climax in 1986 before the State was again able to
firmly clamp its authority over the whole country.
Early in 1982, the ruling National Party had split
over the very issue of the vote for Coloureds and
Indians.

The newly formed Conservative Party wished to
return to the old apartheid days and refused to go
along with the National Party's gradual reform pro-
cess.

During the 1980s, the National Party also decided to
extend, on a group basis, political rights in line with
those of Coloureds and Indians, to Blacks not living
in the partitioned homelands. This did not get off
the ground because the primary Black political
grouping, the ANC, was a prohibited organisation.
Nobody of any consequence in the Black community
was prepared to negotiate about the future without
it.

INCREASING ISOLATION

From the 1960s onwards South Africa had faced
increasing international isolation and sanctions, cul-
minating in extremely severe steps taken against the
country in the 1980s.

Though the country comfortably managed to beat an
oil embargo and an arms embargo and circumvented
trade sanctions, the lack of access to international
financial markets could, in the long term, have had
an inhibiting effect on economic growth.

With a rapidly expanding population, real and fast
economic growth was essential if serious problems in
the 1990s were to be avoided. Job creation was
lagging far behind population growth.

Developments in the USSR in the 1980s meant that
Moscow no longer looked to expansionism, wished
to avoid confrontation with Washington and was
attempting to solve international problems on a
regional basis all of which helped to make a
settlement in Namibia and Angola possible.
Since the USSR was moving out of the Cold War

5

and beginning to lose interest in long-term hegemony in Southern Africa, it became possible for South Africa to negotiate with the Soviet Union, the US, Cuba and Angola on regional problems. Tough negotiations led to the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola and eventually to the independence of Namibia in March 1990. In these complex and difficult negotiations South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr R F (Pik) Botha had played a major role since the late 1960s.

IMAGE IMPROVES

Namibian independence immediately enhanced South Africa's international standing and when Communism in Eastern Europe collapsed while the Soviet Union was moving towards co-operation rather than confrontation with the West, it was clear that there were new opportunities for South Africa. It was against this background that President F W de Klerk stepped onto the speaker's podium in the House of Assembly in Parliament on February 2. What he said on that day was in essence that the Verwoerd analysis had been correct, but that he was taking the alternative option. Partition in South Africa, as originally conceived, was no longer possible. The way ahead was to regard South Africa as a single nation in a single country, with fair and equal treatment for all its people.

In his epoch-making speech, President de Klerk made clear the direction he had chosen and referred to the growing realisation by an increasing number of South Africans that only a negotiated understanding among the representative leaders of the entire population could ensure lasting peace.

The alternative is escalating violence, tension and conflict. That is unacceptable and in nobody's interest. The well-being of all in this country is linked inextricably to the ability of the leaders to come to terms with one another on a new dispensation.

No-one can escape this simple truth.

On its part, the Government will accord the process of negotiation the highest priority. The aim is a totally new and just constitutional dispensation in which every inhabitant will enjoy equal rights, treat-

6 C

ment and opportunity in every sphere of endeavour constitutional, social and economic", Mr de Klerk said.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

The President was equally clear on the question of individual rights: "The Government accepts the principle of recognition and protection of the fundamental individual rights which form the constitutional basis of most Western democracies. We acknowledge, too, that the most practical way of protecting those rights is vested in a declaration of rights justifiable by an independent judiciary.

However, it is clear that a system for the protection of the rights of individuals, minorities and national entities, has to form a well-rounded and balanced whole. South Africa has its own national composition and our constitutional dispensation

has to take this into account. The formal recognition of individual rights does not mean that the problem of a heterogeneous population will simply disappear. Any new constitution which disregards this reality will be inappropriate and even harmful.

'iiNaturally, the protection of collective, minority and national rights may not bring about an imbalance in respect of individual rights. It is neither the Government's policy nor its intention that any group-in whichever way it may be defined_shall be favoured above or in relation to any of the others?

Later in his speech, Presidentde Klerk referred to the overall aims to which he aspired and said he believed they would be acceptable to all South Africans.

Describing these aims, he said they included tla new, democratic constitution; universal franchise; no

0 7

President de Klerk,
the Minister of
Constitutional
Development, Dr
Gerrit Viljoen, and
the Deputy President
of the African
National Congress,
Mr Nelson Mandela,
at the first historic
meeting between the
Government and
the ANC in Cape
Town in May 1990,
from which an
accord known as the
Groote Schuur
Minute stemmed

domination; equality before an independent judiciary; the protection of minorities as well as of individual rights; freedom of religion; a sound economy based on proven economic principles and private enterprise; dynamic programmes directed at better education, health services, housing and social conditions for all."

The President believed that Mr Nelson Mandela, a leading figure in the banned African National Congress and at that time still in prison, could play an important part.

The President also announced that all political organisations in the country would be legalised, including the ANC. Nine days later Mr Mandela was unconditionally released.

REACTION

From all parts of the world there was immediate and positive reaction to the speech. It was welcomed everywhere as breaking new ground and laying the foundation for a possible negotiated and peaceful settlement in South Africa.

Mr Mandela himself, while pointing out the difficulties and obstacles which still lay ahead, praised President de Klerk, stating that he had gone further than any National Party leader towards normalising the situation in the country and referred to him as a titan of integrity.

Clearly, South Africa had undergone a fundamental volte face. So fundamental, in fact, that within the country strong doubts were expressed about the new direction from both left and right.

Dissent came from the Conservative Party (CP), the official Opposition in the South African Parliament, the White grouping which had broken away from the National Party in 1982 over the extension of the vote to Indians and Coloureds.

For the CP the speech contained the seeds of destruction for Whites, as it would mean ceding their exclusive power.

CP leader, Dr Andries Treurnicht, made clear the party's total rejection of the new approach and embarked on a campaign of public rallies to mobilise White support.

80

For some Whites the spectre of universal franchise was so alarming that they resorted to acts of violence, which included bombings of National Party offices and other targets.

But not only those who, less than a decade ago, had belonged to the same political party as the President, dissented.

The ANC itself was faced with pressure from within its own ranks while the possibility of a negotiated settlement was rejected out of hand by the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

The PAC is an offshoot of the ANC, which broke away in 1959 because it felt that the ANC was not sufficiently violent and socialistic. It refuses to be drawn into the negotiation process, as it plans to continue with the armed struggle in an attempt to take power and implement a complete socialist policy. The Government, however, has invited the PAC to the negotiating table. By September 1990 it was at least considering the option.

Aligning itself with the PAC is the Azanian Peoples Organisation (Azapo) which, while also socialist, is less anti-White

than the PAC, and emphasises Black consciousness.

A number of organisations welcomed the announcements of February

2. All parliamentary parties _White, Indian and Coloured-supported the State President's initiative, with the exception of the Conservative Party.

BLACK ORGANISATIONS

Outside Parliament there were local Black organisations in communities and leaders of homeland governments which supported the move in principle.

Most prominent of these is Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi of the Zulus. His cultural organisation, Inkatha, has become a political party, the Inkatha Freedom Party, which will be one of the major

0 9

The leader of the Conservative

Party, Dr Andria?

Treurnichl, (luring

The 1989 election

campaign. '1'th CF is

the present Official

Opposition in Parlia-

ment, after ousting

the Democratic Party

in 1989

President de Klerk
and Dr Mangosuthu
Buthelezi, Chief
Minister of KwaZulu
and leader of the
Inkatha Freedom
Party, addressing the
press on the steps
of Tuynhuys in Cape
Town after talks
participants in the negotiation process. 'Chief
Buthelezi is opposed to violence as a political instru-
ment, he supports the free market system and is
strongly opposed to mandatory sanctions.
Because of intense rivalry between these various
organisations, there has been wide-spread violence
in the country's Black townships and considerable
loss of life as political groupings strive to establish
power bases prior to the start of negotiations.
The new-found freedom has resulted in a number of
strikes, protests, demonstrations and mass rallies as
people celebrate their right to public action. But
increase in unrest and violence have caused many
South Africans to be apprehensive about the future.
The National Party took this possibility into account.
While committing itself to a just dispensation for all
South Africans, it did not hesitate to point out that
its approach was novel and not without its perils.
This was spelt out by a senior Cabinet Minister and
leader of the National Party in the Cape Province,
Dr Dawie de Villiers.

Ending the debate which followed on the President's
speech, Minister de Villiers said in Parliament on
February 8:

Domination of one group by another and a disre-
gard of peoples freedom are avenged in the end,
even though it may take years. That is the message
brought home to us in such a dramatic way by
Eastern Europe these days. Peoples claim to and
insistence on their freedoms and rights is one of the
natural political forces which cannot be resisted in
the long run- neither in Europe nor in South
Africa.

This force manifested itself for the first time in
Africa in the Afrikaners. Therefore the Afrikaners
ought to understand the bitterness and anger caused
by injustice, and even alleged injustice.

The dismantling and eventual decline of the old
Western European colonial empire. within the space
of a few decades, resulted from this urge towards
freedom and self-realisation. Colonialism collapsed
because of peoples fervent passion to be free of
domination. This self-same natural political force,
the same urge toward freedom and justice, made the
sensational, historical revolution in Eastern Europe
possible. The same natural political force also ap-
plies to South Africa."

To stress the point, Dr de Villiers added that the
most difficult lesson which we, the Afrikaners in
particular, had to learn was the fact that South
Africa was not only our promised land but that we
had to share freedom, rights and power with every-
one else."

WARNING

Dr de Villiers warned: We know full well that there
will be many disappointments along this road. There
will be days when we will wonder if peace and
reconciliation in our fatherland will ever be possible.
There will be days like that. There will be days when
the urge and temptation will be to choose the road of
conflict again.

The Minister of
Trade and
Inrluxlrim. Dr I) J
(I(' Villivrx, leader of
l/H' Nulimml Purly
in Ilit' ('upt'
Provimw

ttTimes of great change of necessity bring ferment
and tension. Of course there will also be uprisings. It
is well known that these phenomena manifest them-
selves in times of change."

Dr de Villiers said that
people would want to be
reassured: 9N0, the great-
est certainty about the fu-
ture cannot be found in
human assurances, but in
the conviction that we are
acting justly and fairly to-
wards everyone. Therein
lies certainty."

Despite the awareness
that the change initiated
by the February 2 speech
will bring its own uncer-
tainties and despite pres-
sure the Government has
resolutely stated that it
looks to hastening the
process of change rather
than slowing it down.

The Minister of (ftmstitu-
tional Development. Dr
Gerrit Viljoene made this
Clear when he stated dur-
ing a press conference on
February 5, 1990 that his
view on the day of the general election in September
1989 had been that we will have to act in such a way
that this will prove to have been the last election in
South Africa in which Blacks have not been fully
participating as voters."

It is rare and perhaps unique in history. that a
political party which has just won an election hand-
somely should willingly announce its intention of
ceding its complete hold on power.

So uncommon, indeed. that it has raised in the
minds of many the question of the sincerity of the
National Party's intentions. Yet party leaders have
repeatedly stated that they intend to implement a
system of universal franchise and the ANC accepts
this. as it continues to move closer to real negotia-
tions about the hunt for the t'uiistittittuui Ill xxhteh
equal political rights will be granted. In all
.lls'l S(H'l';

A common theme running through all
speeches by leading government politicians. is the
desire to establish a just society).

Minister de Villiers said in Parliament on 14th April '90 .s
that the State President had reversed the role of the
in South Africa. In the past politics were managed
mainly from a security point of view. Now politics
are being managed from a moral point of view. Now
the determining question is what is right. and that is
what the Minister said,
State President F. W. de Klerk himself states. He has
exerted speech he makes that his political aim is to
create a just society, and he has the President's support
on 23 March 1990 that he has the support of the
single sentence that he has the support of the
be: Hill) that the last and the last of the world

cannot build a sale lttttii'e tm iititistiee It is with
xthen justice is tltme to all seettits tut HUI puptilalmn
that a lasting peace will eume. 'l his is the ehallengee
In our generatinn It is the challenge xxhieh l hat e
accepted?

lllt Vim Premium

'Ilt t'lHIL' u .l: s: :51:le

Hf (lum t'I/m'u m

lllt' l IIIu/J li'tti/i/iltgx

III Ilr't'lmitt lmm

It'll tm' ll; t/z' Isl. Hi

I/ltt litttt'lt'rtul

I'MHIA (/Hkitrlt.

(I't'llttltl/ Xt t It'i'ill t :I/

the qul/i lIr/t (HI

(utmt l/" :r' (mm Mm

iii! Ma l-.r

tr. ligfvux/l. i/' l: 'tlty'i'it I/Itt'

Itu'ii m' 5/7, luv it m3

(Him H in

nuttlwisrm tr H'Hi l.l!

ll: /v:/w: i'tt

lfiiilitll /.l'vtt

Hilllttlt . 'lvlt

Kri . r: m;

ll/iI/i Hm s 4- Hit 'l

l/Iltilt lei'IN " I'llt

/)lH(lfI/cl'tl'/7zyttll

ll/u/m! (natuh

The State President also stressed the fact that this could only be achieved through a peaceful, negotiated settlement acceptable to all political groupings in the country.

This has to be achieved despite difficulties the Government itself has foreseen. Although complicated by rising expectations which constantly result in protests, demonstrations, strikes and violence, initial steps have proved to be positive.

A major advantage thus far has been the trust which has been established between President De Klerk of the National Party Government and Mr Mandela of the ANC.

Each has repeatedly stated in public that he respects the integrity of the other. This mutual feeling has taken root among other members of the two parties.

TALKS

It has consequently been possible to move surprisingly fast in the talks between the Government and the ANC, both during on-going informal contact and in their two formal meetings in Cape Town and Pretoria, which resulted in the publication of the Groote Schuur and Pretoria Minutes respectively. These talks-not yet constitutional negotiations _have resulted in the removal of obstacles in the path of a settlement including the lifting of the state of emergency; changes in the Internal Security Act; an agreement on the release of political prisoners; the return of exiles and cessation of the armed struggle.

This has helped to create a climate in which real negotiations about a future-and drastically different-constitution can begin.

It is a process which goes beyond merely the Government and the ANC and one which aims to include all political groupings in South Africa, both within and outside Parliament, and the leaders of the homelands.

Both the Government and the ANC are already talking separately to almost all these groupings, with the exception of the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Conservative Party.

There is already considerable agreement on'the 14 .

broad outlines of an approach to a new constitution. The Government and the ANC-supported by several other smaller political groupings-agree on many issues, despite the fact that proper negotiations have as yet not begun. '

Although there may be disagreement on the detail and interpretation of major questions, the following are the areas of agreement which already exist:

- _ There will be universal franchise.
- There will be a bill of rights, justifiable in the courts.
- There will be a multi-party democracy.
- All will be equal before the law.
- The diversity of the country's people will be recognised but will not be used as a basis for preferential treatment of any group.
- 'Black aspirations will have to be met and White fears accommodated.
- There will be freedom of religion, speech and association.
- _ There will be schools run by communities.
- Racial discrimination, in whatever form, will disappear.
- There will be free trade unions.

FRANCHISE

One of the major areas of disagreement was the ANC's fear that the National Party was somehow

trying to protect White privilege by attempting to extend the vote to all people on a racially defined group basis.

Change within the National Party is undercutting this fear, as the party has opened its membership to all races. It is to become a non-racial organisation, thereby effectively abandoning any previous doubts about group rights as part of the electoral process. Clearly universal franchise is now its aim.

With such a broad area of agreement already existing between the leadership of the African National Congress and the National Party, it is clear that the

President de Klerk
and Mr Mandela at a
press conference
in the Union
Buildings where the
contents of the
Pretoria Minute was
made known to
the press on August 6,
1990. In the minute
the ANC pledged a
suspension of the
armed struggle
negotiations have a greater chance of success than
failure.

The problem for both groupings will lie in their
ability to take their various followers along with
them. _

A great deal will depend on this.

President de Klerk has taken great risks to free the
country from the impasse forced upon it by the
policy of apartheid. But there are certain parameters
he simply cannot ignore. As head of state he is
accountable to the nation and cannot simply forge
ahead without considering his support base.

While the Government continues to pursue its ob-
jectives and is adhering to its promises so far, it
cannot simply ignore the unambiguous warning of
some White voters.

In the first parliamentary

by-election held since

February 2, 1990 the mes-

sage was clear-the

Whites are discontented.

In this by-election, held in

the Natal constituency of

Umlazi, a 23 per cent

swing from the Govern-

ment to the right was re-

corded-high for a South

African by-election. Yet

the signs are there for all

to see and under certain conditions the Conservative

PartyMas the parliamentary representative of_ the

right, could prove to be a real threat to. National

Party power in the White community-which is Vital

to a future negotiated settlement.

The swing to the right may have been contained, but

unless the international community provides some

signal for Whites that the risks being taken are worth

it, this trend could well increase.

The same applies to economic growth. Should real

economic decline set in, it could have the same

effect, as would continuing violence.

This places a particular burden on the ANC as the

body which is still insisting on sanctions, although

there has been a softening in its attitude and a

16 .

promise of a review of its position.

The ANC, as a major grouping presently engaged in

talks with the Government, is rightly or wrongly

held responsible for violence, protests and demon-

strations in the country, despite having formally

abandoned the armed struggle.

As an underground organisation, the ANC was

surrounded by a number of organisations which

supported its aims. Now the South African Com-

munist Party, the Congress of South African Trade

Unions and the United Democratic Front_the ma-

major organisations in and around the ANC_have a

rather different approach to ANC leadership, and

this is causing confusion and a hardening of attitudes.

While having to assert its position in respect of these organisations and to sort out the power relationships between them, the ANC is mindful of increased responsibility as it moves to centre stage.

Add to this equation all the other political groupings which will have seats at the negotiating table. While generally agreeing with one or other of the major groupings, each of these has its own agenda.

And their supporters have also to be taken along. Undoubtedly the basis of agreement on a political settlement is there, even given the potential for divisions and problems.

ROLE OF ECONOMY

Underlying this debate, however, is another: What will the future economy look like?

Will a relatively free market approach survive? Will it be replaced by a form of social democracy? Or will it be Socialism?

All three possibilities have their supporters.

Addressing the question of the economy in his speech on February 2, President de Klerk said: "The Government's basic point of departure is to reduce the role of the public sector in the economy and to give the private sector maximum opportunity for optimal performance. In this process, preference has to be given to allowing market forces and a sound competitive structure to bring about the necessary adjustments.

uNaturally, those who make and implement economic policy have a major responsibility at the same time to provide an environment optimally conducive to investment, job creation and economic growth by means of appropriate and properly co-ordinated fiscal and monetary policy. The Government remains committed to this balanced and practical approach.

CURBING EXPENDITURE

uBy means of restricting capital expenditure. in parastatal institutions, privatisation, deregulation and curtailing government expenditure, substantial progress has already been made towards reducing the role of the authorities in the economy. We shall persist with this in a well-considered way.

ttThis does not mean that the State will forsake its indispensable development role, especially. in our particular circumstances. On the contrary, it is the precise intention of the Government to concentrate an equitable portion of its capacity on these aims by means of the meticulous determination of priorities?

The Government is endeavouring to reduce security-related expenditure in the national Budget in favour of social welfare expenditure. A sum of R3-billion for social upliftment has been made available to a privately controlled group representing the whole political spectrum.

There are few supporters of social democracy and they are not too vocal. Yet they are contributing to the on-going economic debate, trying to rewrite the need for rapid economic growth with equally rapid upliftment of the people.

Further to the left are very outspoken supporters of Socialism, ranging from the Communist Party, the trade unions, and the African National Congress to the African National Congress.

The latter denies it: socialist, yet initiated the economic argument in media days after the release of Mr Mandela, by insisting on nationalisation of mines and banks and on breaking up the monopolies and conglomerates which dominate the South African economy.

While there is still no clarity as to what precisely all 18 .

of these organisations want, all have started shifting positions. They all speak of a mixed economy, without saying how mixed it will be. The general tendency is to remark that nationalisation is simply an instrument replaceable if better ones are proposed or found.

But all agree on one point-the need for direct state intervention of some sort in the economy to address the imbalance between rich and poor.

PRESSURE

Severe pressure is being exerted on the ANC to clarify its position. From within its own ranks and from those close to it, there is pressure that it should be more clearly socialist than it appears.

Mr Mandela has moved quite substantially since his release, as evidenced by a speech he made in New York on June 21, 1990 to a group of businessmen.

In it he gave a view of the ANC's economic thinking, the furthest yet away from the pure socialist orientation which for so many in South Africa is still the answer- despite the abject failure of command economies in Eastern Europe and attempts by the Soviet Union to rapidly restructure its economy to adhere more closely to precepts held dear in the West.

Mr Mandela told his American audience: itThe private sector, both domestic and international, will

have a vital contribution to make to the economic and social reconstruction of South Africa after apartheid. It will be critical that the economy grows rapidly and at rates that supersede population growth. This cannot happen without a large inflow of foreign capital, including US capital.

tlWe will also have to ensure that we achieve levels of productivity which will enable us to compete on the international markets successfully. As you know, an important requirement to enable us to achieve this, is that we must have access to the management skills, the body of technology and the risk capital which make for the success of your own corporations in both the domestic and international markets.

"We are sensitive to the fact that as investors in a post-apartheid South Africa, you will need to be confident about the security of your investments, an

O 19

In August 1989
Mr de Klerk, then
acting State Presi-
dent, met President
Kenneth Kaunda of
Zambia at Living-
stone near the
Victoria Falls.
At left is the South
African Minister of
Foreign Affairs,
Mr R F (Pik) Botha

adequate and equitable return on your capital. and a
general climate of peace and stability. That 15 why
we share the common objectives of the total aboli-
tion of the apartheid system and the institution of a
genuinely democratic system in an open souety.
11Further to this, it is also in our interest that all
investors, like our own people as a whole, should
have confidence in the stability of the society we will
seek to build. They should know it as a matter of fact
that the investment they make todayewhether in
the house they build, the child they educate or the
savings they put into the bank-is not likely to
vanish tomorrow because of some arbitrary govern-
ment action or a social upheaval generated by
continuing social injustice.n

PROBLEMS

The simple fact is that the present Government, as
well as successive ones, will face serious problems
brought about by an economy of which the growth
has consistently been outstripped by population
increase over the last decade, bringing with it prob-
lems of rapid urbanisation, such .as shortage of
housing, lack of job opportunities, madequatehedu-
cational and health services, and other associated
problems.

The debate on South Africals political future is now
in full swing, while that on the economy has Just
started. It will not be easy to resolve both, yet the
opening up of the political scene has already gener-
ated enormous energy.

20

Notwithstanding the measure of initial uncertainty
that followed the massive steps taken on February 2,
there is now a growing undercurrent of hope and
confidence which says: We CAN solve our prob-
lems, we CAN move ahead politically, economically
and socially towards a more just society.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

Flowing from this is a growing realisation that South
Africa can now play its rightful role in the Southern
African region, and through it, in Africa. It can do
so, not only as a trading partner, but also as a
partner in manufacturing, agriculture and technol-
ogy.

There is broad agreement on the issue of the coun-
trys role in Southern Africa.

In his speech on February 2, President F W de Klerk
addressed this question: 11The countries of Southern
Africa are faced with a particular challenge: South-
ern Africa now has an historical opportunity to set
aside its conflicts and ideological differences and
draw up a joint programme of reconstruction. It
should be sufficiently attractive to ensure that the
Southern African region obtains adequate invest-
ment and loan capital from the industrial countries
of the world. Unless the countries of Southern
Africa achieve stability and a common approach to
economic development rapidly, they will be faced by
further decline and ruin.

ltThe Government is prepared to enter into discussions with other Southern African countries with the aim of formulating a realistic development plan. The Government believes that the obstacles in the way of a conference of Southern African states have now been removed sufficiently."

In his New York speech, Mr Mandela touched on the same issue: ltWe foresee the South African economy playing an important part in the regeneration and expansion of the economy of Southern Africa as a whole, of which it is an integral part. the see this regional economy, so well endowed with human and natural resources, as an outstanding growth point in the world economy. Its good health would help to focus international opinion on the need for the rest of the world to join hands with the

21

African continent as a whole, to address the urgent needs facing the millions of people on our continent."

SEASON OF REALISM

In an address delivered to the Africa Institute on October 30, 1990 Foreign Minister Botha said: "The season of political and economic pragmatism and realism in Southern Africa has dawned. We are now partners in the interest of the development needs of our sub-continent. South Africa has nothing to gain from weak and disintegrated states with poor investment risks. We have nothing to gain from the cycle of violence in our own country. As democracy is being broadened in South Africa, and as apartheid is finally disappearing we are saying to Africa that the future of our sub-continent lies not abroad, but lies in our hands, here in Southern Africa . . . join our forces of economic development in creating not only a new South Africa but a new Southern Africa.

What is now needed is a concerted effort to initiate, co-ordinate and execute a Southern African development programme?

Mr Botha referred to the contribution that the European Community could make in respect of this programme:

- _ Acknowledge that South Africa has an essential contribution to make if Western efforts to uplift countries in the region economically are to have a chance of succeeding.
- Pursue policies supportive of South African efforts to evolve a domestic social and political order acceptable to the majority of South Africans.
- Grant and/or mobilise funds and expertise for extending and modernising the physical infrastructures of the region.
- Provide assistance for measures aimed at raising human productivity through education and training as well as for public health and family planning programmes and housing.
- _ Urge and assist Southern African governments to create economic and legal conditions conducive to attracting local and foreign private investments in processing and manufacturing, and other productive ventures.
- Consider other appropriate measures to promote the development of the region, such as steps to facilitate the importation of Southern African products into the European Community.

Some response to the above-mentioned is already beginning to materialise, Mr Botha said in his address.

New opportunities come at a time when the African continent is engaged in painful efforts to move away from previous disastrous economic policies and is struggling to accept the concept of multi-party democracies.

A new and restructured South Africa can, and will, have a vital role to play in enhancing this process through leading by example. Political stability and economic growth can begin to flow northwards through South Africa.

February 2 was an epoch-making date which seemingly opened the floodgates of uncertainty and violent confrontation.

Yet beneath it all is the expectation, gradually and visibly firming into reality, that South Africa may yet become the one beacon of hope in a continent beset by many troubles.

ONGOING DEBATE

On the home front February 2 generated energy which is at present finding expression not only in vigorous open debate but also in protest and demonstration. But there is also a striving towards the possibility that South Africa may yet become a visible example of racial co-operation and tolerance to which the world can turn.

The wide gap between the major protagonists is already narrowing, as realism begins to supplant rhetoric.

Certainly an understanding of each others fears and hopes has begun to grow. It is most apparent in the mutual respect of President de Klerk and Mr Mandela. Small wonder that opinion polls have shown the two to be the country's most popular leaders.

A series of international accords and agreements entered into in 1988 put SWA/Namibia firmly on the road to independence. The final step was reached with the signing of the Trilateral Agreement for peace in South-western Africa between South Africa, Cuba and Angola, and a separate bilateral agreement reached between Angola and Cuba, on December 22, 1988 in New York.

Seen here after the signing are, front, General Magnus Malan, South African Minister of Defence, Mr R F Botha, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Javier Perez de Quellar, Secretary General of the United Nations, and Mr George Shultz, American Secretary of State at the time.

Behind Mr Botha stands Mr Martti Ahtisaari, the UN% Special Representative for SWA/Namibia

(UN picture 173880)

Despite the deep divisions brought about by decades -even centuries- of suspicion and distrust, there is already sufficient evidence of an understanding between groups of people who, until very recently, regarded each other mainly as threats, and often as enemies. This augurs well for the future.

The months following February 2 have unsettled many people, bringing with them rising expectations which were soon dashed. Yet there is a firm tendency on all sides to commit themselves to a rapid solution for the political and economic problems facing the country.

In the heat of the debate, and because of the strength of feeling on all sides, there is often' apparent deviation from the central concept of a lasting solution reached by means of a peaceful, negotiated settlement. Yet, the vast majority of South Africans remain committed to such a solution.

The initial talks have been successful. Now the leaders have to take their supporters with them into the next stage - a stage of serious negotiations about a democratic constitution which will be fair and just to all.

Drafting a constitution and laying the foundation for a more just dispensation is, however, only the beginning of a long and arduous task.

The first' steps have been taken and South Africa is now looking to a future in which the equal dignity of

all men and women is the ultimate goal to which all
political groupings aspire. .

24

Photographs: Eckley Dykman, Bureau for Information,
The Citizen

Issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Private Bag
. X152, Pretoria 0001.

Printed in the Republic of South Africa for the Government
Printer by CTP Book Printers, Parow.

ISBN 0 7970 2192 2