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W Botha, faces his last congressional hurdle next week when his constitutional proposals go before the Cape congress of the National Party for approval. ' ,

No one doubts that Mr Botha's proposals will be approved with minimal rumblings and that the congress will offer him their warmest congratulations on his completion of four years as prime minister. t

Mr Botha is held in high regard by his own Cape congress, naturally enough. How does he stand with the rest of the country? ' , .

Leaving aside the black \_ disfranchised communities, who are hardly likely - to be enthusiastic, there is no doubt that Mr 'Botha's public image among non-Nationalists is ' rather better than it was. Although his first rather forbidding appearances as prime minister on television were strongly counter-productive, Mr Botha now comes across much more effectively, as he did in the pleasant Thursday night. For this much of the credit should go to Mrs Botha, who is unaffectedly charming and natural before the cameras and is undoubtedly a great asset to the prime minister.

On the far right of the political spectrum and in the North there is an intense animus against this Cape-based prime minister, it seems, but Mr Botha is held in high regard in the English-speaking business community and he has earned considerable liking and respect among them.

Cheerfully " i "

Paradoxically this holds good even though most of the very worst repressive apartheid legislation still remain on the statute books, stilling the free enterprise system, and even though it seems absolutely clear that Mr Botha has no intention of doing away with the pass

laws, the Group Areas Act, the Immorality Act and so on.

The business community remains cheerfully optimistic that Mr Botha will deliver the goods. We can only hope that they are not going to be disappointed. For there are two sides to Mr Botha as a political leader and it is still by no means clear which is in the ascendancy.

There is Mr Botha the reformer who is seen to be risking his political skin to draw the coloured and asian communities into the mainstream of South African politics, no matter how tentatively - and, as a result, has caused a massive split in the Nationalist monolith.

There is also Mr Botha the long-time Minister of Defence, the man who built up the SADF into a formidable military

The Prime Minister and Mrs Botha soon after assumption of the office of Prime Minister. Mrs Botha's unaffected charm has been a great asset to her husband, whose happiness in his family circle is evident and

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Mr Botha's

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After- four years ---- the tw

' THE Prime Minister, Mr P

Botha - the forceful military leader - flanked by Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan (left) ; - the chief of the South African Defence Force, Gen: Constand Viljoen. Mr Botha made the SADF what i today

the, Botha government machine, well able to de- a political than a military ME fend this country from conventional attack.

it is this Mr P W Botha- who has militarized South Africa and its political climate to an extraordinary extent and who tends to see world events in stark, simplistic terms of iEast-West conflict and the need totcombat lcom- munism and Soviet expansionism. l .-

Under Mr Bothals premiership the military have emerged from their traditional place in the ' wings and have moved to g the centre of thepolitical stage. There is scarcely a government committee of any importance which

does not include a representative of the army or military intelligence; The army is consulted in almost the entire range of political issues. including many that are not remotely connected with the traditional military role of national. defence. The rather shadowy

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There are reports that South Africa matter.

Mr Botha and the SADQ

high command have been

convinced for some years

that the solution is a matter

of 80 percent political

and 20 per cent military

activity.

Political survey

This is a wholly valid

perception. Where the

trouble starts is,when you

seek to apply the lessons

of this insight in practice.

The orthodox and obvious

response, one would

think. would be to commit

most of your resources of

manpower and money to

social and constitutional

reform, education, house-

building, improving the

quality of urban life for

the masses, and so on and

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he has committed substantial  
expenditure on

armaments. Vast re-

sources have been com-

mitted on the develop-

ment of conventional

weaponry, such as long-

distance artillery, which

is hardly likely to be of

decisive value. one would

think. in counteringtur-

ban and rural insurgency.

Winning ,hearts and

minds, one would think, is

rather more important

than the capability to

thrbw a shell or similar

projectile from Cape

Town to Paarl.

Questioning the en-

hanced role of the army

in national affairs may

seem an academic quib-

ble, given the size of the

countryls problems.

Nevertheless, in the West-

ern political tradition,

which is the one we are

supposed to be fighting to

uphold, it is regarded as

imperative that the

armed forces play no po-. -

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of #11 this cgimtry's jeo-j  
plesfis'still on'the ta le.  
There is still a chance for  
the moderates in all  
groups to confound the  
extremists " - -  
There are indications  
that military consider-  
ations are dominating po-  
litical and diplomatic  
thinking in the crucial po-  
litical decisions of the na-  
tion. Take SWA/Namibia  
for instance, where diplo-  
matic, political and teens-  
nomic considerations  
would have suggested'a  
This has not been the  
response of the Botha  
administration. \_Th  
body known as the State  
Security Council appears  
to be as important and ins-  
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speeches of the top buss.  
There are disturbing as-  
pects about this process  
which are seldom can- . . ,  
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rationale of this vastly-en- 1' ture 0n defence, mClUd'  
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tary? I :  
From the sidelines, ano.  
without any inside know ,  
ledge of the operations 0 4  
the military bureaucracy,  
it seems that the single i  
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tion that the maintenance  
of security in circum-  
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