

# WINNIE ACCUSED

## Chilling claims of Mandela soccer club's role in child beatings

SUNDAY TRIBUNE 12/02/89

THE name of Winnie Mandela has been linked to the disappearance of 14-year-old township activist Stompie Moeketsi on the day before the assassination of "people's doctor" Dr Abu Baker Asvat.

According to township sources, a youngster who claims he was with Stompie on the day he vanished, has made chilling allegations to a meeting of church and community organisation workers that the leader of the Under-14s was savagely beaten up by the notorious "Mandela football team".

The youngster is said to have escaped and to have made his way back to the church that had become his home.

The surprise twist came during an investigation to establish events preceding the murder of Dr Asvat two weeks ago.

It has been learned that the day before he was shot, the doctor allegedly treated Stompie and other youngsters who had been beaten up. According to sources, the doctor warned that Stompie might not survive his injuries.

It is understood from township sources that the youngster who gave an account of the assault said he and several other boys, including Stompie, were staying at the Methodist Church in Orlando West, Soweto. On Thursday, January 26, they were playing darts and draughts when members of the Mandela Football Club arrived and accused the boys of "staying with whites and buying food with the racists' money".

Suddenly, there was a commotion and they forced the boys into a kombi. The youngster is claimed to have recognised the vehicle as Mrs Mandela's.

They were driven to a house in Diepkloof Extension, where the kombi was parked in the garage.

The boys were ordered into the house, and allegedly encountered Mrs Mandela standing in the doorway with a glass in her hand.

She allegedly demanded to know why the youngsters were



□ Winnie Mandela

staying at the church and allowing themselves to be "sexually abused" by whites. The boys denied they had been abused.

In response, Mrs Mandela fetched a sjambok, with which she struck out at the group and then allegedly instructed the "team" to deal with them.

The "footballers" beat and kicked the boys, demanding that they admit that they had been sexually abused. The more the youngsters denied this, the more their assailants intensified their assault.

It is said Stompie fought back fiercely and that it took a number of "club" members to subdue him. With his assailants' attention fo-

cused on Stompie, the youngster seized the opportunity to escape.

He made his way back to the church and related his ordeal to the curator, the Reverend Paul Verryn, and a group of church workers he found there.

It is understood that members of a cross-section of community organisations were called together to hear the details.

It was decided immediately to send a small delegation to the Diepkloof Extension house to rescue the boys, and a prominent Soweto doctor was chosen to accompany them.

However, it is alleged that Mrs Mandela den-

ied any knowledge of any boys' being at her home. She is reported to have said the "football" team usually used the kombi to travel to training and gym workouts, and that she had no knowledge of their going anywhere else.

Dr Asvat was asked to check the youngsters' allegations. When he arrived at her home, Mrs Mandela appeared worried but allegedly allowed him to see the boys who had been assaulted.

It is then that he ap-

parently examined Stompie.

It is understood that Dr Asvat returned directly to Orlando West to report his findings to the community workers.

He was assassinated the following day.

SUNDAY  
TRIBUNE

12-02-89



# STOMPPIE,

CITY PRESS

# COME HOME

12-02-89

By SOPHIE TEMA

**JOYCE Manankie Seipei of Tumahole, mother of Stompie, wants her son back – to bury him.**

She made this impassioned plea through *City Press* this week, adding that she had given up all hope that Stompie was still alive.

Her son is one of three youths removed from a Orlando church house by members of the Mandela Football XI last month. But he subsequently disappeared.

She said she was now left with one option: appealing to his "kidnappers" to bring his body back.

She told *City Press* from Tumahole: "I appeal to those people who are alleged to have abducted him (she calls him Stompo) to bring him back to me if he is still alive because I miss him. If he is dead I still want him because I want to bury him."

With tears filling her eyes, Seipei said: "Stompie is epileptic and I fear he is dead. I have very little hope of seeing him alive again."

She said not even the police could convince her that her son was still alive. "I will only believe he is alive once I touch his hands and talk to him."

Seipei said she believed her son was dead because if he was alive he would have tried to communicate with her in some way.

"The Security Police told me to report to them on Friday morning after a weekly newspaper reported that Stompie's body had been found in Soweto.

"All the police told me was that my son was not dead and could be hiding somewhere. They gave me a different version from what was in the newspaper and told me not to take heed of such reports."

## COACH CONFESSES PAGE 2

Sobbing while she spoke, she said: "I am earnestly appealing to anyone who knows the whereabouts of my child to bring him back to me."

Recalling the turbulent episodes of Stompie's life, his mother said he was born out of wedlock and the man who fathered him died six months after his birth.

She struggled to raise him by herself and when he reached schoolgoing age she sent him to the local primary school in Tumahole township, but he was expelled in 1986.

(Those who were close to him say he was thrown out for radicalising other pupils).

He was arrested early in 1986 – his mother says he was 11 years old at the time – and had been in and out of the cells ever since.

He was acquitted on charges of public violence after he turned 12 on August 20, 1986. She said thereafter she lost count of the number of times he had been arrested.

When he realised he was becoming a threat to the police and the pro-government vigilantes, he decided to move to Soweto.

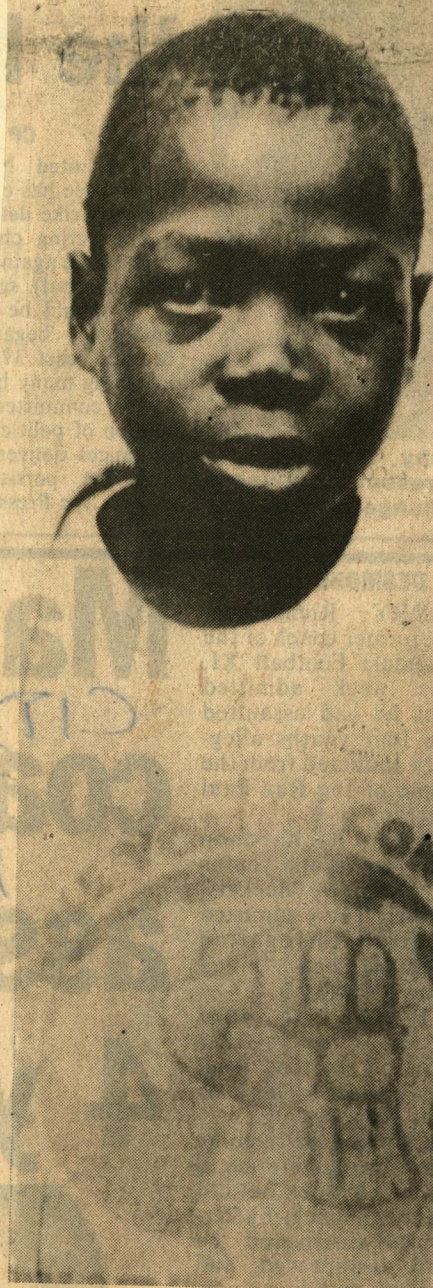
After he had been in Soweto for almost a month he visited his mother – accompanied by Rev Paul Verryn – and introduced him to his mother as the person responsible for his schooling.

"That was the last time I saw him," said his mother.



12 02 01

Distraught  
mother  
wants her  
son back  
– dead  
or alive



**Stompie Seipei, 14 . . . disappeared**





Joyce Seipei has appealed to her son's alleged kidnappers to bring him back. • Pic: BP Setuke



# Winnie CITY PRESS strikes 12-2-89 back

By DESMOND BLOW

WINNIE Mandela yesterday struck back at the growing campaign to discredit her as the "mother of the nation".

Until now, Winnie has chosen to remain silent while the storm caused by the actions of the so-called Mandela XI football team broke over her head.

She said she had been advised to keep quiet by a Crisis Committee who have been investigating the activities of club.

Winnie said Nelson Mandela was aware of the friction in some ranks of community leadership and that his enemies were out to smear him.

"Now there is talk that Nelson must divorce me. Our marriage was not political, we did not need the approval of the ANC to marry, so why should politics decide on a divorce."

She said Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok's appointment of Maj-Gen Jaap Joubert to head an inquiry into the Mandela Football XI was "nicely timed, as was his remark that the police faced special difficulties in such an investigation." Vlok said it was very difficult to find witnesses prepared to testify against Winnie.

The recent Winnie uproar centres on the disappearance of Tumahole youth activist Stompie Seipei, 14, who allegedly escaped after a manhandling by Winnie's team.

"There have even been reports that his body had been found, yet the police know nothing," Winnie said.

She admitted that Stompie and three other youths had been taken to her home by former football coach, Jerry Richardson, who hit them, (see report on page 2) but denied being home at the time.

A report in yesterday's *Saturday Star* cited 18 incidents said to have caused a growing rift between Winnie and the ANC. Winnie refuted these claims.

Winnie and daughter Zinzi visited Mandela recently and he instructed attorney Krish Naidoo that affidavits be taken from members of the Mandela family and the youths and be handed to Bishop Peter Storey of the Methodist Church.

Mandela advised that profiles on the youths be done and discussed with editors Khulu Sibiya of *City Press* and Aggrey Klaaste of the *Sowetan*.

Winnie denied the football team still existed, saying about eight youths were staying in the back rooms of her house but denied that they were her bodyguard.

She said Richardson still had some overalls in ANC colours which had been used by the Mandela team.

"At funerals youths from Soweto would request the use of these overalls, and Richardson would lend them to them."

"This led to the confusion that the team still exists," Winnie added.



#### DESMOND BLOW

JERRY Richardson, 41, former coach of the Mandela Football XI, this week admitted that he had assaulted the four youths allegedly abducted from the home of the Rev Paul Verryn.

And, Richardson said, one of the youths - Stompie Moeketsi Seipei, 14 - admitted under interrogation that he had "killed four comrades".

Richardson said about a week later Stompie escaped from the quarters where he had been staying.

"He left the room he was sharing with me to go to the toilet, but did not come back. I afterwards discovered he had disappeared, and haven't seen him since.

"I believe he is either in the hands of the Security Police, or is in hiding."

It was reported on Friday that Stompie's body had been found, but police said they were not aware of this.

Richardson denied that the boys had been abducted or that they had been questioned about being informers.

"I was the only one who assaulted the youths. None of the other people staying in Winnie Mandela's home took part. I hit the youths to tell me the truth about their association with the Rev Paul Verryn." He said Winnie Mandela was not aware of the assaults, and was not aware that the four youths were even in the

# Mandela CITY PRESS coach: 'I 12-2-89 assaulted 4 youths'



Richardson . . . "I gave them a few smacks to make them tell the truth."

house until the day after their arrival.

Richardson said he had kept the youths in back rooms at the Mandela house where he is living temporarily because his own house

was badly damaged last November in a shoot-out between police and two cadres, who were shot to death.

After the shoot-out he was detained by the police for three weeks,

and on his release he had sought sanctuary at the Mandela home.

Richardson said the four youths were kept at the Mandela home because he wanted to confront Verryn with them about their allegations.

"I took them to Verryn's house several times, but he was away out of town."

Richardson said when a woman, Xoliswa Felati, had brought a 20-year-old youth known as Katiza to the Mandela home alleging that he had been indecently assaulted, Winnie Mandela had taken him to the late Dr Abu-Baker Asvat to be examined.

"While she was away, Felati told me what Katiza had told her," Richardson said.

He said he, Felati and two youths who were staying at the Mandela home were driven to Verryn's house by Mandela's chauffeur. "Winnie was not aware of it as she had gone to see Dr Asvat with Katiza.

"Verryn was not home, but four youths were pointed out to me by Felati. I asked them to accompany me back to the Mandela home and they came quite willingly.

"There I interrogated them. I gave them a few smacks to make them tell the truth.

"I was angry when I assaulted them, because such things are contrary to our black culture."



**INSIGHT: The 'Mother of the Nation' gives birth to**

**a monster**

SUNDAY STAR 12-02-89

# Winnie and her club of fear

Mandela bunch of bullies causes deep resentment in the black community

**Sunday Star Reporter**

WHILE family and friends of 14-year-old Stompie Moeketsi were shocked at unconfirmed reports of the discovery of his body this week, a picture emerged of his alleged abductors — the Mandela football team — as a bunch of bullies who struck fear into the community.

The bad image of the team, apparently formed to act as bodyguards to one-time "Mother of the Nation" Mrs Winnie Mandela, is known to have caused deep resentment in some sections of the community.

The recent fall-out between Mrs Mandela and family lawyer Mr Ismail Ayob is believed to have been brought about by the controversy surrounding the team, described as the final straw in a series of embarrassing incidents involving Mrs Mandela.

The rift between Mrs Mandela and Mr Ayob began with her notorious "necklace and matches" speech, and developed further when she built a luxury mansion in Soweto. The house has stood empty for two years because black resentment has prevented her from moving in.

It is further believed that Mr Ayob's feelings regarding Mrs Mandela's actions are shared by her husband, ANC leader Nelson Mandela. Mr Ayob still acts for Mr Mandela, while Mrs Mandela has transferred her legal affairs to another Johannesburg lawyer, Mr Krish Naidoo.

The controversial "football team" came into being at the height of town-

ship unrest and Mrs Mandela argued that she had collected youngsters from the streets to keep them out of trouble.

But she never explained why, even when there were no matches being played, the youths stayed on her property.

She built extra backyard rooms for the many youths, and soon they were living there permanently.

Mrs Mandela is now said to be living in the plush Diepkloof Extension suburb.

She claims the team was disbanded in 1986, yet the members appeared in their club kit sporting ANC colours when newspaper editor Percy Qoboza was buried. They were present two weeks ago, also in club kit, when Dr Abu-Baker Asvat was buried.

The club is widely accused of bullying and imposing unwanted actions on the community.

There are two primary reasons seen by some as being behind the continuance of the club.

The members have made themselves so unpopular in the community that if they were to disband and go their separate ways, harm might well befall them.

Apparently they need their "solidarity" for mutual protection.

The club is one of the most-hated organisations in Soweto and the contempt of the community for the "lawless" youths is well known.

A journalist once accompanied the football club and Mrs Mandela to a Soweto house where a young girl had fallen out with her elderly father, and the journalist described what she had seen and heard. The mannerless way in which the youths addressed the old man left a lot to be desired, the journalist said.

Other claims against the "footballers" include that they molested a young schoolgirl after allegedly beating up her companion. Pupils of Daliwonga Secondary School in Dube, Soweto, decided to retaliate.

When the "footballers" saw the throng of uniformed schoolboys and girls advancing on the Mandela home, they fled. The house was set on fire. Mrs Mandela was not at home.

But, according to witnesses, not a single neighbour threw as much as a cup of water at the flames devouring the house and its contents, such was the bad blood between Mrs Mandela and her neighbours.

Other actions which have allegedly alienated Mrs Mandela from many anti-apartheid activists include:

- Her association with American Robert Brown, who failed to be nominated by former US President Ronald Reagan as Ambassador to SA.

- Her purchase of the R2-million double-storey mansion in Beverly Hills, Orlando West. It has been an embarrassment to its owner and has drawn the ire of the community and criticism from her political adversaries.

- Her "with our necklaces and our boxes of matches, we will liberate this country" speech in 1987 when she addressed a crowd in Krugersdorp — and it was at the height of the "necklace" executions by mobs all over the country.

The statement alienated her from most of the community, including her erstwhile supporters. The "necklace" was a political embarrassment to anti-apartheid forces because it was seen as justifying the continuation of the State of Emergency, and could not be defended for any reason.



Mr Brown claimed to have "sole rights" to the use of the Mandela name, but Mr Mandela summoned him to Pollsmoor Prison to tell him the only people who could protect the use of his name and who had authority to do so were the ANC in exile.

On the occasion of the Pollsmoor visit by Mr Brown, Mrs Mandela was there too. Yet, shortly after leaving the prison, Mr Brown told a group of press men that Mr Mandela had given him power-of-attorney and sole authority over the use of his name.

Mrs Mandela was standing beside Mr Brown as he spoke, but did not dispute what he said.

Mr Mandela was incensed and summoned his attorney, Mr Ayob, to issue a statement strongly repudiating Mr Brown and setting the record straight.



**GROWING RESENTMENT** . . Winnie Mandela's actions have alienated her from anti-apartheid activists, and her football club is a hated organisation in Soweto.



Winnie Mandela linked to beating of activist

SUNDAY STAR

# Stompie's

SUNDAY STAR

12-02-89

# story of

12-02-89

# horror



MRS MANDELA  
... fetched sjambck.



STOMPIE MOEKETSI  
... disappeared.

CLUB  
OF  
FEAR

**MRS WINNIE MANDELA** has been linked to the beating up of 14-year-old township activist Stompie Moeketsi, whose subsequent disappearance has itself been linked to the murder of Dr Abu-Baker Asvat, the "people's doctor".

A Sunday Star investigation has revealed details of a drama involving the "Mother of the Nation" and the controversial "Mandela football team", Mrs Mandela's unofficial bodyguards.

In attempting to establish the answer to the question, "What happened during the last 24 hours of Dr Abu-Baker Asvat's life?" the Sunday Star obtained from reliable sources a chilling account of how young Stompie was savagely beaten up by the controversy-dogged "team" and how this may be linked to the cold-blooded killing of Dr Asvat in his Soweto surgery.

Last night Mrs Mandela refused to comment until she had heard the full extent of the allegations.

According to sources,

it is widely believed that the following sequence of events took place on January 26, the day before Dr Asvat was shot down in his Soweto surgery.

One of a small group of boys forcibly removed from the Methodist Church in Orlando West escaped from a R75 000 house in plush Diepkloof Extension and made his way back to the church.

There he found a group of people, including the curator, the Rev Paul Verryn, and he told them about the ordeal suffered by the group in the house.

According to the Sunday Star's information, a small group of adults from a cross-section of organisations campaigning in the black community were immediately summoned to the Methodist Church to listen to the escaper's story.

The boy said a group, which he named as the Mandela Football Club, had earlier arrived at the Methodist Church and found youngsters at the church playing darts and draughts.

The "football club" members accused the boys of "staying with whites and having bought food with the racists' money". There was a commotion as the boys were forcibly removed from the Methodist Church and put into a kombi, which the escaper recognised as belonging to Mrs Mandela, wife of ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

The boy said on the way from Orlando West to Diepkloof he and the other youngsters — one of whom was Stompie Moeketsi — were not beaten or molested.

When the kombi arrived in Diepkloof Extension they were driven

into the yard and into the garage, and a side-door in the garage was opened. The door led straight into the main house.

The boys were ordered out of the kombi and into the house, and they found Mrs Mandela in the doorway. She had a glass in one hand and was very unfriendly to Stompie and his friends.

She wanted to know why they were staying at the church and allowing themselves to be "sexually abused" by whites. The boys denied they had been abused.

At their denial Mrs Mandela went to her bedroom and fetched a sjambok with which she



lashed Stompie's group. After this she told the "football" team to work on the group.

The team then went to work, beating and kicking Stompie's group at will.

The small group was told to admit they had been sexually abused. The more they denied this the harder the punishment became.

Stompie, tough as nails and very stubborn, fought back valiantly and it took a number of "footballers" to subdue him. By then the other boys, according to the escaper, had admitted to being sexually abused in order to escape more punishment.

But Stompie resisted, and in the end he was beaten into an unrecognisable state. Even as his physical strength wilted he still refused to admit to the allegations the "footballers" and their founder made against the Methodist preachers.

As more attention was focused on Stompie, the escaper managed to make his getaway.

It is widely believed that he told the members of the various organisations assembled at the Methodist Church in Orlando West about the beatings. He also told them of the condition in which he had left Stompie, whose head was swollen, full of wounds and bleeding profusely. His body was also wounded and bleeding, and swollen.

According to the escaper, Stompie was passing blood in his urine. He told the group he felt sure Stompie would not sur-

vive.

The group at the Methodist Church decided to immediately send a small delegation to Diepkloof Extension to rescue the boys, and it is widely believed that a prominent Soweto medical doctor was chosen to accompany the delegation.

When the group arrived in Diepkloof Extension Mrs Mandela denied knowledge of any kidnapping as well as knowledge of any boys having recently arrived at her home. She said the "football" team usually used the kombi to travel to training and gym workouts, but she had no knowledge of the "footballers" going anywhere else.

Her denial of any knowledge of the incident left the delegation and the doctor speechless. They went away empty-handed, it is believed.

The Sunday Star's information is that when the delegation arrived back at the Methodist Church it was decided that someone more used to Mrs Mandela be sent to her house to check on the youths. Dr Asvat was called to the church and told of the situation.

Dr Asvat apparently said he was used to Mrs Mandela, and she to him, and if there was any truth in what the escaper alleged, he would find it.

Dr Asvat then drove to Mrs Mandela's home and found the escaper's story to be true.

When he arrived at Mrs Mandela's home he apparently noticed that she appeared to be very worried. She allowed him

to see the boys who had been assaulted, and apparently Stompie was fading fast.

According to the sources Dr Asvat was very shocked at what he saw when he examined Stompie and warned that Stompie had been so badly assaulted he would not live. He treated the others.

It is widely believed that Dr Asvat left Diepkloof Extension and headed straight back to Orlando West. There, in a state of shock, he related what he had seen to the group representing the various organisations.

The next day Dr Asvat was shot dead inside his surgery in Rockville, Soweto, by two young men, one of whom pretended to be a patient.

A day after Dr Asvat was killed, Mrs Mandela was the first person to attribute a possible motive for his death. She said he was the "only professional witness" she had who could give evidence in a case involving the alleged abuse of children at the Methodist home of the Rev Paul Verryn.

The Methodist Church has since cleared Mr Verryn of all allegations. Two of the boys apparently admitted they had been instructed to make the claims.

Mrs Mandela's close association with the "Mandela football team" has caused a deep rift between her, anti-apartheid campaigners and township residents, and has led to calls from, among others, her jailed husband Nelson Mandela, for the team to be disbanded immediately.



# DON'T WORRY BE HAPPY!

SARAH  
SUSSENS  
talks to the  
other half of  
the political  
duo

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# Stars augur well for the 'president-in-waiting'



■ Astro-psychologist  
Maureen Demot

SENSITIVE, compassionate, good-natured, logical and pragmatic — these are some of the qualities the stars attribute to the new leader of the National Party, Frederik Willem de Klerk.

The Sunday Tribune asked an internationally-recognised astro-psychologist, Maureen Demot, to compile a birth chart of Mr De Klerk. (Mrs Demot is currently conducting extensive personality research on top political and military leaders in South Africa, Angola and Namibia.)

Mapping the chart according to Mr De Klerk's birth date of March 18, 1936, she has disclosed the following character traits and motivations:

■ THE new leader of the NP, "the president-in-waiting", has many qualities that augur well for South Africa.

Although the Press cites "conservatism" as his main trait, Mr De Klerk is very much a man of sensitive, compassionate proclivities.

He has been labelled "verkrampt", but I don't agree with this, as he has

## SARA MARTIN looks at what the stars foretell

the ability to be flexible, to genuinely understand the feelings, dreams and aspirations of other sectors of our population. This means that he is capable of leading our nation into a better future, guiding it into a new era of positive change.

He does have an inclination to accept tradition and convention and to follow the path that has been trodden by others. Yet his pragmatism, his ability to compromise and his negotiating skills will allow him to respond positively to the exciting changes and development needed to make South Africa a truly great country.

Mr De Klerk has unfathomable depths to his nature, an intuitive intellect, strong instincts and a receptive and logical mind.

His devotion to an ideal, to a cause, is not fixed and stubborn. He is capable of bending, of adapting to circumstances.

Rather unworldly, he does not have a great ego to feed; therefore, self-interest is not a priority. He will work for the country in service to the folk and the state with the highest integrity.

He is a man who is satisfied with who he is, has confidence and is objective about goals, and co-operative without hidden self-serving motivations.

He has the ability to understand differing points of view and is amenable to changes as well as having little self-doubt about following his own instincts.

A man with an unassuming manner, he is open, good-natured and has an optimistic outlook.

In him we have a magnanimous individual with good moral qualities.

He also has effective persuasive qualities and can inspire others.

Honest and sincere, he is open, unafraid of expressing what he feels, and capable of acting quickly on his

instincts. Highly energetic, he is self-sufficient and purposeful.

He is fair-minded and tries to maintain peace and harmony in all his interactions with others. Mentally receptive, he will be in touch with what others think.

He has marvelous intuition as well as perfect ease and naturalness of expression which will be an asset in his dealing with others, private or public.

His mind is also logical and pragmatic with a sense of responsibility and self-control. Practical and industrious, his efforts yield respect.

There is a part of Mr De Klerk which is poetic, spiritual, philosophical with strong imagination, insight and vision.

Can he deliver the reformist goods? Can he lead South Africa into the 21st Century to peace and prosperity? The stars believe he can.

If he can constructively use his sense of mission and dream of a new South Africa, together with his genuine caring for humanity and his fighting spirit, much can be achieved.



# This week: the backseat driver takes over the wheel and gets the motor running

**T**HE speech by new National Party leader FW de Klerk in Parliament this week confided not a single line on the detail of fresh policy. Nobody really expected it would, either. But what he did do was provide the broad statement of intent which everybody has been demanding of President Botha for several years. And that was a total surprise.

Now pundits are having to revise opinions of a man who has been catalogued, for want of better evidence, as a core verkrampste more concerned with rightist inroads than the big problems facing the country — not just the Afrikaner ruling party.

It is fair to say that his speech was statesmanlike and stunning.

If one is to believe what he said, then we are in for an exciting new period as the Government moves to confront and grapple with the obstacles which lie in the way of a fair and peaceful tomorrow.

This was probably the most difficult speech of his life. He couldn't say anything of real import because he still has a back-seat driver. Yet he still had to put his stamp on the party.

He did. The Progressive Federal Party congratulated him, and he received what amounts to a backhanded compliment from the Conservative Party when it blasted him for moving "left".

*Don't worry, be happy...*

He did what PW Botha, the ageing and finger-wagging patriarch of politics, has never achieved... provided a message of hope to South Africans who are thoroughly sick of being stalled at the red light.

His broad-brush statement of intent will also provide optimism among reluctant friends abroad who study the Government's policy directions in the hope that this country might yet emerge as a worthwhile ally in the view of honourable governments.

In making his speech he also displayed considerable common-sense. Except for the CP, nobody basically disagreed with what he had to say. The Great Chamber even echoed to the "hoor hoor's" of the Labour Party. The National Party and the Labour Party are so far apart that this is more



■ Not like finger-wagging PW Botha

**Political Correspondent JOHN MacLENNAN reflects on the day FW de Klerk edged across the Rubicon**

or less equivalent to an African National Congress audience's cheering a CP speaker.

Nothing new... except good intentions — but the real test is to come

*Take it easy...*

This is basically what he said. Everything is under control. Give me a chance. We are on course.

But he also said things, without providing any detail, which will elicit huge expectations of a new deal. The problem for Mr De Klerk and his party will be to provide the flesh for this change.

In many ways it was an historic speech in that he finally crossed Mr Botha's Rubicon for him.

It was the sort of speech made by a national leader when a country needs healing.

He wants a "totally changed South Africa", a country "which has rid itself of the antagonism of the past", a

country "free of domination or oppression in any form".

*He ain't heavy, he's my brother...*

Here, and I don't believe President Botha has ever addressed the South African blacks similarly, he spoke of the "silent majority" which is anxiously awaiting a "message of hope".

Fail in that task, he said — and this sounds like something straight out of a PFP tract — then the country is heading for chaos.

He made it plain he had taken the flickering reform torch from PW Botha and intended to run with it.

He also provided Parliament with an appeal to reason which has not been heard from President Botha for a long time.

He slammed sterile aggression and bitter recrimination in the process which will lead to a better future.

His enemies have long said that FW de Klerk is a closet conservative, a technocrat with no particular vision and no particular views, someone hard to typify.

This speech doesn't prove the contrary, but it's the clearest direction this country has had in many years of NP rule of where the Government is headed.

Critics will say there is nothing in the address except good intentions.

But then, no leader of the NP has ever appeared so committed to good intentions before.

In the end, the test for FW de Klerk's statements will occur when the party has to go back to the hustings in order to sell its policy.

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

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