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S. Africa: Need For Indian Presence

By ALLWYN FERNANDES

THE one-million strong Indian community in South Africa is confused and divided over its response to the turmoil sweeping this country as it heads for inevitable majority rule.

Indians have long been in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid, but, as this racist system crumbles, the community is gripped by fear of the results of majority rule. The reason for this is the experience of black rule in the rest of Africa and the current violence between Zulus and the supporters of the African National Congress (ANC).

The irony is that a section of a community, which was unequivocally opposed to the ruling National Party of President F. W. de Klerk during the days of apartheid, is now trying to hedge its bets. It is toying with ideas of backing Mr de Klerk, specially in the Cape province. Others, mainly in Natal, would prefer to throw in their lot with the ANC, but they too are uncertain how to protect their interests best.

Best Bet

Some are of the view that the community's best bet is the maintenance of its separate identity through the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the Cape Indian Congress (CIC) — all part of the former South African Indian Congress — and thereby ensure its bargaining power. Others are of the view that the community should forgo its ethnic identity and hazard its future on the goodwill of the blacks in the ANC.

The strongest feeling all around is that the Indian government should make its presence felt in South Africa at this juncture. India should establish diplomatic relations, even if it prefers to wait for the establishment of an interim government of national unity to establish economic relations. This would give a clear message to the Indian community, strengthen its position vis-a-vis the ANC and ensure its future. It would also ensure a role for India in the development of South Africa. There is a great deal of disappointment that the Pakistani and Malaysian national airlines

began flying into South Africa this month but the Indian government has yet to grant Air-India permission. Yet sources in Air-India insist that they are ready to go ahead.

Elsewhere on the continent, most Indians came as the business and merchant class. Here, in contrast, the vast majority came as indentured labour, with traders being brought in later. No one came here on a British passport but worked in mines and other places where the locals were unwilling or ill-equipped to work.

No Choice

The Indian identification with South Africa, is, therefore, complete. All Indians here are South African passport-holders. Even if the situation becomes intolerable, only about 16-20 per cent of Indians are in a position to leave. The rest have no choice, because they are mostly workers or professionals and would find it difficult to start life elsewhere. Most have no contact whatsoever with India and know little about it. The thought of emigrating to India, or anywhere else, is far from their minds.

In a new South Africa of equal opportunity, only the skilled Indian will have a better chance. Since Indians were placed just above the blacks in the apartheid system, most of them are bound to feel the pressure of the scramble to give blacks their due. This is already happening: over 40 per cent of the students in the Indian university in Durban are black. The job mobility in the new South Africa will result in more competition. In the lower rungs of the job market, Indians may be squeezed to make room for blacks.

Increased freedom of movement is also resulting in more street crime. Slums are mushrooming and social tensions are on the rise. The white regime finds these tensions handy to exploit. It takes an effort for most people to realise that it is the years of apartheid, and not Mr Mandela and the ANC, that are responsible for the sudden eruption of urban problems. This is the kind of awakening that Indian activists in the ANC are trying to create within the community.

VIEWPOINT

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It's time to celebrate
the negotiators' triumph

IN recent months, this and other newspapers have tried to tear apart the interim constitution. Bill of Rights and related legislation being drafted at the World Trade Centre, pointing out every possible problem. We have had a field day and given space to a range of interest groups to ask, demand or plead for changes to every successive draft.

Hopefully, we contributed to improvements in those Bills. Hopefully, we have at least drawn attention to potential problems.

The end result is a series of imperfect documents. The Bill of Rights, for example, still allows for detention without trial in a state of emergency, albeit with a greater level of court scrutiny than required in the past. It appears to outlaw abortion by guaranteeing a right to life. The clause on freedom of expression is inadequate; the one on the right of access to official information wholly so. Unequivocal gender equality has not yet been settled because of the objections of traditionalists who want exceptions allowed for customary law. Nor has the uncertain, but critical, property clause.

The constitution also has its flaws. By ensuring that the ruling party can do almost nothing without the agreement of any other party that gets more than 20 per cent of the vote, it presents a new administration with the bestial choice between lame-duck government and rule by horse-trading. Either the election winners will be harnessed by the losers, or they will have to accept horse-trading as a national way of life for the five-year period of the interim constitution.

The choice of constitutional court judges, the selection of cabinet ministers, the allocation of resources for health and education — all of these things will be decided by bargaining

and influence-mongering, rather than rational or strategic choice.

These are the inevitable faults of a rushed process and tough negotiations in which all sides have made major compromises. And nobody can criticise them for rushing or making deals.

In the end, neither of these are bad documents; they provide a start to democratisation and are incomparably better than anything we have ever had before. We will have a government that is more accountable, more transparent and more representative than ever before.

And we should remember that the US constitution — also a result of lengthy haggling, compromising and horse-trading — was a far from-perfect document when it was adopted two centuries ago. But problems were dealt with over time, amendments were made when necessary and court interpretations cleared some of the ambiguities and contradictions.

Now it requires a national determination to make democracy work — by taking part in elections in April and focusing thereafter on reconstruction and development; by finding solutions as well as faults; by accepting imperfection and using the new tools that will be at our disposal (a constitutional court, a land claims court) to deal with it.

This does not mean newspapers such as ours will stop finding fault with the constitution and the Bill of Rights. Or campaigning for changes.

But we will celebrate, with the majority of our countryfolk, the triumph of the negotiators in achieving this extraordinary level of agreement and joining them in driving ahead towards that wonderful moment when we will have what we waited so long for: a one-person, one-vote election in relatively free conditions.

Leader of KZP investigation dismissed

Farouk Chothia

A TOP Natal policeman who was spearheading a major investigation into alleged kwaZulu Police involvement in political violence was unceremoniously sacked from his job a fortnight ago.

The head of a seven-member SAP investigation unit, Captain Jugdesh Koobair, was transferred last week back to his previous routine job as deputy station commander at the Chatsworth police station.

Expressing shock at his dismissal, the African National Congress northern Natal secretary, Senzo Mchunu, said Koobair was making "much headway" in investigations into the alleged involvement of the KZP in violence in Esikhawini township near Empangeni.

"We understand that at least 10 KZP members have been arrested as a result of investigations by his unit," said Mchunu, adding: "There's no doubt in our minds that this transfer will affect the unit's work."

South African Police spokesman Colonel Coert Marais vehemently denied the charge, saying that the unit worked closely with the SAP reporting officer for Natal/kwaZulu, advocate Neville Melville. "Everything is transparent. Advocate Melville has a look into investigations," said Marais.

But Melville was not consulted on Koobair's dismissal and expressed disappointment at the decision.

"I think he (Koobair) had got to a position where he had established good relations not only with political representatives but also with people on the ground," said Melville.

SAP sources claimed that racism was a major reason behind Koobair's dismissal, saying that several white officers were dissatisfied that an Indian was in charge of investigating the police. Replied Marais: "I can definitely rule out racism (as a reason for the transfer). Ninety-nine percent of people in that unit are Indians."

The sources also complained about the manner of Koobair's dismissal. "He is out in the field most of the time. A note was slipped under his office door informing him that he was being transferred," one said.

The unit was formed last August in terms of the National Peace Accord charged with investigating public complaints against both the KZP and SAP.

The new head of the unit is a white officer, Major Piet Nortje. His background is unknown.

Melville said it had been "indicated" to him that Nortje was taking over the unit because he was more experienced than Koobair. Melville added that while he has repeatedly asked the SAP to attach more experienced officers to the unit it was "unfortunate that Koobair has been removed".

Mchunu said the ANC had made numerous appeals to both the Goldstone Commission and the SAP to investigate alleged KZP involvement in a spate of violent incidents in Esikhawini last year. "We were ignored. It was only when Koobair's unit was formed that investigations started," added Mchunu. Marais gave an assurance that the unit's work would not be hampered by the fact that Nortje is the new head. "If he is given a job then it must be done," said Marais.

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He said the outcome of national elections would be determined in the densely populated PWV region and in Natal/kwaZulu which

In response, Gwala resigned from the NEC.

He did not want to be chairman of the regional assembly, however. "I am too old now. It should be left for someone younger."

Brown crowd bravely cheers 'new' NP

Amy Waldman speaks to some of the supporters at last weekend's National Party Rally at Kempton Park

ELDERLY white hands clapped for President FW de Klerk and wrapped up the free sausage rolls to take home for supper. Magriet Cillé and Lindy Robertson, lifelong National Party members, were among the residents of Pretoria's Jubileum Rest Elms who had been bussed to Kenilworth Park for last weekend's NP rally.

Wrapped in NP scarves, waving NP flags, they bravely cheered the "new NP". "It had to happen," Robertson said somewhat ruefully, "and they've done it well." Sandwiched between blacks, coloureds and Indians, Cillie smiled charmingly and said enthusiastically: "The changes are wonderful." Then she leaned forward to whisper, "Stay in South Africa. We need every white we can get."

The World Trade Centre rally, the first stop for the NP Transvaal election train, revealed a discordant coalition of individuals with little affinity for the ANC, but not much more for each other.

But the day's events also showed off a well-financed American-style election machine skillfully pushing multicultural buttons. The 7 000-strong crowd grooved to *Mango Groove* (a video, not the real thing) and Zulu moves, and went berserk over De Klerk. Pk's lips just moved to *Nkosi Sikelele*, while the largely brown crowd sang *Die Stem* with passion. Then they filed out for stew and pap (that's available).

Two African teenagers who would identify themselves only as 'Johannes' and 'Johannes' eagerly queued up for lunch. Both were 17, from Bophuthatswana, and decked out in NP paraphernalia. They had donned their visors and scarves on the bus, because they couldn't tell anyone from home where they were going.

As De Klerk was declaring that

"You don't need an election to be liberated," the two Johanneses confessed. "It was so much the NP's platform that attracted throngs, well, after much giggling ... the free bus trip. 'I wanted to see the World Trade Centre', Johannes Number One said. Eyes gleaming with anticipation, Johannes Number Two confided, "Next week we heard they're going to the Eastern Transvaal. Will you be there?"

Mrs Slinger of Bosman needed no such enticements — she is an NP loyalist, and the mother-in-law of Trevor George, MP for Bosman. "I know what I've got today" — a house, a Bosman tax business — "I don't know what I'll have tomorrow," she said. And in Bosman, she has power: "the pensioners ask me how to vote," she said proudly. "They know they can trust Mrs Slinger."

The coloured question is everyday material for her. "Blacks and whites wonder where coloureds come from," she scoffs, "calling us 'so called' — a phrase she utters with vehement distaste. "We come from both of them, but we're not white, we're not black, we're not Indian — we're something different."

She has been canvassing for the NP since 1970, although she occasionally strayed to other parties. "The Bible and God tell me to vote for the Nationalists; I can't vote for someone who doesn't follow Jesus Christ."

She has heard the stories of blacks "pushing ahead" of coloureds who have been on waiting lists for years for homes in Mitchell's Plain. "That's what will happen with the ANC. They'll call us brothers now, and then they'll come for us."

"If Mandela would say, 'Leave the whites in God's hands,' I would go with him. But he doesn't say that," she said. And firmly planted in her head is an image from Idi Amin's Uganda she once saw on television — an image of a white hand cleaning Amin's toilet.



**Last week's rally of the 'new' National Party at Kempton Park attracted
Nal supporters of all races** PHOTOGRAPH: DENIS FARRELL

A hole in one at the 19th?

The 19th — and, with any luck, final — draft of the transitional constitution was presented to the Kempton Park negotiators this week. **Chris Louw** reports on the culmination of three years of talks

THE Pan Africanist Congress' Barney Desai was a lonely voice objecting to the 19th draft of the transitional constitution this week.

"We want to place it on record," he insisted in his measured tone. "that the PAC does not want to be associated with an instruction to the technical committee for a document that provides for power-sharing to 1999."

Desai's objections were duly noted, but his assertion that the technical committee had exceeded its mandate by incorporating private agreements between the African National Congress and the National Party in the draft constitution were vehemently rejected by parties aligned to the ANC and NP.

There were only two small voices of support for Desai, neither of which are taken seriously by their co-negotiators or the media.

Amichand Rajbansi argued that the technical committee was only instructed to "consider" proposals by the NP and ANC, not to base their full report on the powers of a future executive solely on ANC/NP submissions.

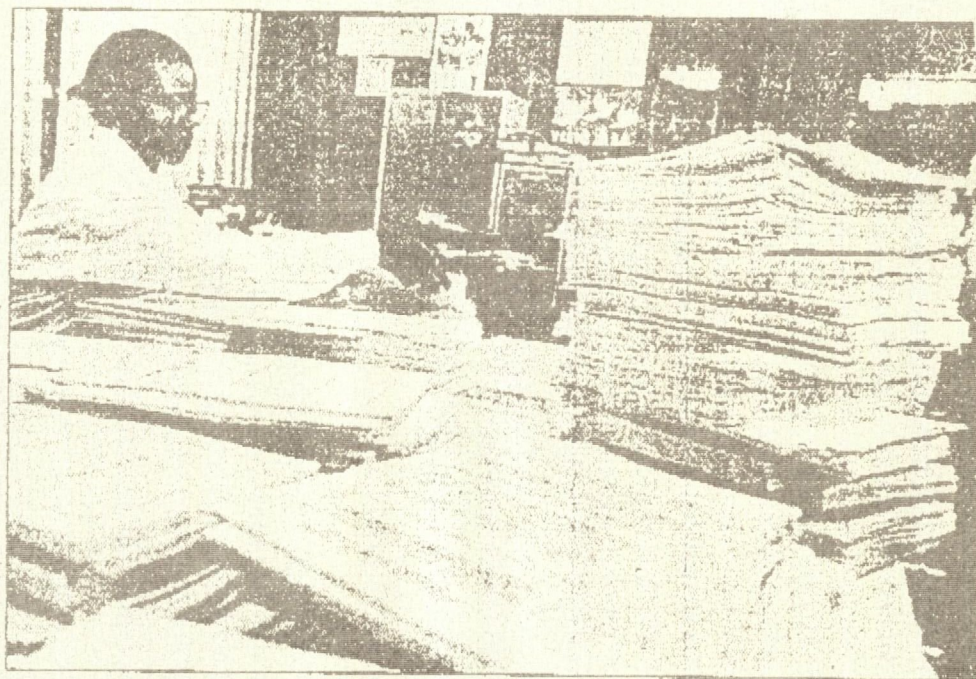
The Afrikaner Volksunie's (AVU) Corlia Kruger added her youthful voice to those of the Raj and Desai, complaining that the technical committee had "only taken the ANC/NP bilaterals and drafted them into legal/technical language".

While the debate was going on, government negotiator Roelf Meyer found it impossible to hide his satisfaction at the culmination of months of negotiations and behind-the-scenes dealings. Grinning like the cat who stole the cream, he walked up and down the negotiations room, pausing to share insights with the ANC's Mohammed Valji Moosa, or a secret with counsel convenor Theuns Eloff, or a joke with the press gallery.

Little effort was made to hide what all negotiators knew all along — that most of the crucial decisions in the present multiparty negotiating process depended on secret deals struck between a party with state power and one enjoying the legitimacy of mass support.

The ruling NP was, in fact, negotiating the conditions of its surrender to its successor. The smaller parties were allowed to haggle over detail, their primary role limited to giving the process legitimacy.

The amused smile on Meyer's face, even before the draft constitution was finally accepted, attested to his confidence that none of the other parties could seriously threaten a power-sharing agreement thrashed out in last week's bossaband between ANC and NP negotiators.



Weighty matters ... The Kempton Park negotiators have got through tons of paper as they table then modify proposals for a new constitution. The 19th draft was tabled this week

PHOTO: GUY ADAMS

After all these months there was no reason for pretence about the nature of the talks. They primarily involved the NP and the ANC.

The Democratic Party's Colin Eglin put it neatly in context. If the draft constitution had been a minor party's proposal, "we would have looked at it differently". But because it came from two major parties — "even though constitutionally inelegant" — it had to be taken seriously.

It provides for a president with considerably less power than FW de Klerk now enjoys, deputy presidents from all minor parties drawing more than 20 percent of the vote in next year's elections, and cabinet representation for all parties proportional to the votes they receive.

In short: power will slip from De Klerk to ANC leader Nelson Mandela without hurting too much.

Although they had settled the principles under which the country will be governed in the five years after elections, the NP and the ANC still had one major disagreement: how the system should be explained. This disagreement, however, was securely based on spirited defences of their common plan.

The NP's Dawie de Villiers said the constitution should be seen in terms of a government of national unity — "a power-sharing formula".

Moosa insisted the ANC had consistently rejected power-sharing. "We wanted a government of national unity without paralysis."

National unity was only possible if all parties with substantial support became part of the government. But the role of the deputy presidents was not to frustrate the work of the president, nor to veto his decisions.

On television afterwards Meyer seemed to back De Villiers, arguing that government had succeeded in its goal of establishing "entrenched coalition government".

The South African Communist Party's Joe Slovo had a different explanation. The transitional constitution, he said, was rooted in "the real situation that we will face after the elections". A new government would inherit a history of conflict and division and even the threat of future conflict by extremists who rejected democracy.

The truth is that a new government will not have immediate full control of all state powers. A government of national unity, Slovo said, was intended to facilitate the process towards democracy with the least conflict possible, and could even accommodate the "spoilers".

In other words: the ANC was strategically retreating for five years. But it was determined to win eventual political supremacy.

Meanwhile, the "spoilers" — in the form of the Freedom Alliance — were preparing for their meeting with the NP at a secret venue in the bush. For months they had accused government and ANC of conniving and not taking other negotiators — including themselves — seriously. Now the moment of reckoning had come.

The test would not be whether negotiations were conducted fairly and democratically. What would count now was whether they could seriously challenge a process that has found international acceptability, is backed by the media and involves the white custodians of state power and their major opponent and heirs, the mass-based ANC.

Government negotiators were adamant they had addressed most of the homeland and rightwing's concerns. Federalism was entrenched in the constitution, as was coalition government.

That these applied only to the transition, and not — as promised in the

referendum campaign — to the final constitution was now of little import. There was no way government could grant any of the more unrealistic demands of the Afrikaner Volksfront or the Inkatha Freedom Party. NP negotiators insisted.

Back at the party offices the hacks were starting to ready themselves for the coming election campaign.

The disagreement between ANC and NP negotiators about the nature of their deal — whether it entailed power-sharing or "national unity without paralysis" — was rooted in their relationships with two very different constituencies.

It also foreshadowed their respective approaches to the election.

The deal was hardly struck — and the PAC and AVU's objections to the ANC and NP "convergence" raised — when the first salvoes were fired from the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

Chris Flisner, assistant to the state president, issued a statement vehemently denying that his party had agreed to the "concept and implementation of simple majority rule". Instead, the NP "stood for and succeeded in the creation of a model of participatory democracy through proportional representation".

If anyone still had doubts about the relationship between the ANC and the NP, NP spokesman Brigadier Kobus Rossman tried his best to lay them to rest.

Parties who tried to find favour with the ANC, he warned with reference to the Labour Party, or who had become "part of the ANC's inflated power hunger and striving to dominate", risked being "spat out" when the ANC saw no further role for them.

The message was clear. The rules for the new game have been established. The talking is over. The NP is adamant to a doubting public that it did not bed the ANC.

The fighting has begun.

Why Buthelezi's breakaway talk rings hollow

A careful look at the arithmetic reveals that secession is anything but a realistic option for kwaZulu. By **Ann Eveleth** and **Farouk Chothia**

KWAZULU chief minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi must be well aware that his repeated threat of secession is a hollow one. Military capacity to wage a secessionist war and the apparent absence of solid grassroots support aside, the fragile "third world" economy of the shattered fragments that comprise kwaZulu make it a far less viable candidate for independent statehood than many of the troubled Baltic republics were at their birth.

And, while the former Soviet republics were swiftly awarded the spoils of the West's Cold War victory, the international community has been far more reluctant to "recognise" the sovereignty of potential African breakaways.

In peaceful northern Somaliland, for instance, a pauper government draws circles in the sand while the United Nations dithers about its declaration of secession from the war-torn south. And western Sahara has been waiting nearly two decades for international recognition in its struggle for independence from Morocco.

Considering the effort the global arbiters of peace have already poured into South Africa's reform process, they are highly unlikely to welcome a post-apartheid splinter state. This would make foreign finance even more inaccessible to kwaZulu than sanctions made it to South Africa under apartheid.

The Inkatha Freedom Party is banking on its commitment to an open free-market economy to attract foreign investment to the region.

Certainly, this has seen a promising growth in manufacturing in recent years — primarily in the three kwaZulu Finance Corporation-operated industrial parks at Isithebe, Ezakheni and Madadeni — but even if the region were to experience a growth rate 70 percent higher than the rest of the country over the next five years, it could only improve its relative position by about one percent.

With about 14 percent of the national population (5 378 800 in 1992) producing approximately one percent of the nation's gross domestic product, the second highest debt of the self-governing territories after Lebowa (R645-million) and more than 70 percent of its population dependent upon migratory labour remittances from the metropolitan areas of Natal, the road to self-sufficiency will indeed be a long one.

According to the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA), kwaZulu had the highest number of unemployed workers of all the 10 homelands in 1990, at 271 737. While 4 813 of these were absorbed into a special job-creation programme launched by development corporations and statutory bodies in 1990/91, this only boosted kwaZulu's total employment through such projects to 25 317 by September 1991.

In the late 1980s, the kwaZulu Development Corporation lamented: "KwaZulu cannot feed itself. KwaZulu cannot provide new jobs for each year's crop of new work seekers. KwaZulu does not have the income of its own for the houses, the hospital beds, classrooms and health services the people need. KwaZulu cannot pay the pensions old-age people require to survive. KwaZulu cannot afford adequate preventative medicine, nor can it afford the economic infrastructures which would ensure that it has merit as an investment area."

At the time they were making the point — boosted by the statement that "Chief Buthelezi regards kwaZulu as an integral part of South Africa" — for acceptance of the kwaZulu/Natal Indaba by Pretoria.

Yet, while this statement may have been overtaken in the current political climate, the economic realities have changed little.

In his 1993/94 budget speech, kwaZulu minister of finance Dennis Madide noted that in kwaZulu/Natal the income of as much as 80 percent of black rural households, 18 percent of urban households and 40 percent of those living in informal settlements "falls below the minimum subsistence level".

And the homeland remains dependent upon

central government fiscal transfers and DESA loans for a full R4,9-billion of its total 1993/94 budget allocation of R6,3-billion.

KwaZulu's greatest assets — including new manufacturing enterprises, sugar plantations and mines — are largely owned and operated by "foreigners" to the homeland or by whites living within its borders. And most of the spoils of the homeland's highest income earners' labour never reach kwaZulu. Some 80 percent of migrant worker salaries are spent in Natal.

Even if free movement of people and goods could be maintained after a hostile secession, the potential for income tax and the multiplier effects on sales and other taxes to supplement government revenues would remain limited by this disparity. Thus, to supplant the heavy losses to government income wrought by secession, an independent kwaZulu government might find itself hard-pressed to avoid the high corporate taxes so scorned by its own free-market approach.

An electoral Wonderland where politicians are silent

The draft Electoral Bill lays down stringent conditions for next year's election.

Chris Louw looks at some of its peculiar facets

A STRANGE silence will descend on South Africa on April 25 and 26 next year. Pik Botha's sonorous voice will die down. Tokyo Sexwale will stop charming the ladies from Sandton. Mangosuthu Buthelezi will disappear into the labyrinths of Ulundi, his Guinness Book of Records speech just a distant memory.

In fact, not a single political speech will be heard in the two days before the country's first democratic elections.

That, in any event, is what the latest draft of the Electoral Bill expects of South Africa's politicians.

The Bill solicited emotional debate at negotiations this week, before being sent back for redrafting.

Under the heading "Prohibition on political activities during 48 hours prior to voting day", the current draft of the Bill stipulates that "no person shall ... engage in political activity".

Exactly what "political activity" entails is not specified. How the electoral commission will ensure that the ruling is enforced is also not known.

What is specified is the penalties that may be meted out in cases where stipulations of the Bill are not adhered to. These range from a formal written warning to the "cancellation of the registration of a party to participate in the election, and the forfeiture of its right to contest the election".

Apart from the gentlemanly silence that will mark South Africa's entrance to the world of democracy, the country's leaders will also not tell any lies.

Paragraph 2.12 of the Electoral Code of Conduct stipulates that parties will ensure that no false allegations will knowingly or negligently be propagated or used at political meetings, or in any campaign literature, or otherwise.

If the notoriously male chauvinist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging does decide to accept the non-racial character of the elections, it will find that there is another, unforeseen hurdle to overcome: "the full participation of women in political meetings, party structures and electoral activities"



Silent knights ... We'll miss Pk Botha and Tokyo Sexwale's dulcet tones

must be facilitated, by decree of the electoral commission.

Orange Farm and Ventersdorp will be forgotten in the distant past when the competing parties find themselves bound to promote democratic values, "including the right to express divergent political opinions; to debate and contest the policies and programmes of other parties, to canvass freely for membership and support from voters; ... to attend meetings convened by other parties..."

In this electoral Wonderland, the AWB and the Pan Africanist Congress will both adhere to the facilitation of the right of all political parties, their candidates, officials and members to have full and unrestricted access to potential voters for the purpose of canvassing membership and support. They will not prevent, or attempt to prevent, the conduct of legitimate electoral meetings, rallies or marches.

And, equally important, they will not plagiarise, disfigure or destroy the political or campaign materials of other parties.

How this will affect the National Party's annexation of the symbols and policies of the Democratic Party is not yet known.

What is known is that if the electoral legislation is applied literally, newspapers may find themselves lost in a quagmire of vagueness, with the word "advertisement" replacing the infamous little scissors and the blank spaces of the State of Emergency of the Eighties.

Paragraph 54 (3) of the Electoral Bill reads: "The proprietor and publisher of every newspaper shall cause the word 'advertisement' to be printed as a headline to each article or paragraph

in his or her newspaper, which originated from a registered party or its agents or supporters, the insertion of which is, or is to be, paid for, or for which any reward or compensation, or promise of reward or compensation is to be made."

If this is not enough to make life difficult for party hacks, the next paragraph stipulates that the word "advertisement" must be printed as a headline above all text "as may prima facie appear to be intended or calculated to affect the result of an election".

Cartoons which "on the face of it" are intended to affect the result of an election "shall bear at the foot thereof the full name and address" of the person responsible.

Candidates who die before the elections will have their names struck off their party's list and shall "cease to be eligible as a candidate for the election".

And politicians who want to ensure they are elected by having their names appear on more than one party's election list may find that it is not such a clever idea. The chief (electoral) director "shall delete the name of the candidate from all the lists on which such candidate's name appears", states paragraph 23 (5) (a) of the Bill.

Liberation movements may also find it difficult to ride the elections on the wave crest of their military successes. The electoral commission may disallow a proposed name, abbreviated name, distinguishing mark, symbols and even colours of a party if they contain "a portrayal of arms, ammunition, uniform or other object normally used in or associated with military operations, whether in times of war or peace".

No chance for the NP to capitalise on the Umtatata raid, unfortunately.

If such a move were to succeed, it would need the full support of the region's businesses. But the reality is that Buthelezi's secessionist rhetoric is losing him support in this sector, as its economic survival is interwoven with the rest of South Africa.

The first strike — against young children who dared to stay away from school

THE first Inkatha action against popular opposition took place in 1979, when the kwaMuthu High School was closed after a class boycott and Inkatha tried to exclude activists from reapplying.

Police were called in and a violent confrontation occurred.

By May that year, Inkatha impis were breaking up student meetings in

order to smash the schools revolt.

Inkatha general secretary Oscar Dhlomo, regarded as the organisation's political guru, was reported as saying at the time that there was very little wrong with bantu education. He also warned that Inkatha "must not be blamed for any action taken against those who are not in school".

Armed impis attacked boycotting students. Many were beaten, abducted

and had their homes destroyed by members of Inkatha.

In 1980 the organisation continued its attack on students. The Azanian Students' Organisation (Azaso) was banned from Ngoye campus, the SRC disbanded and in October of that year the impis invaded the hostel and left a trail of death and destruction. Four students were killed and 113 injured.

That same year, Inkatha members

broke up a meeting organised by activists in Hammarsdale to welcome former Robben Islanders.

Inkatha activity intensified in 1985, when the first rumblings of mass resistance on a national scale were felt and township revolt spread.

There was the Empangeni bus boycott, and the mobilisation of youth around the International Year of the Youth programme. For the first time,

democratic structures were being established around the youth groups. In Durban, bakery workers had gone on strike and generated considerable joint action from the youth and community organisations.

And near Pietermaritzburg, communities were rallying behind the BTR-Sarmcol strike. There a virtual total stayaway in July that year in solidarity with the BTR workers.

Then came the assassination of civil rights lawyer Victoria Mxenge. The townships were tense and democratic organisations were set to make a major push forward.

Inkatha's attacks must be viewed in this context of trying to halt the growth of democratic organisation.

The first signs of mass protest following the assassination came in the form of call to boycott classes from

August 5 to 11.

The call was made by the then-legal Congress of SA Students.

Inkatha moved carloads of "amabutho" into Umlazi and house to house searches were conducted, ostensibly to search for stolen goods and looters. While the "amabutho" were praised for their crime prevention drive, members of the UDF and Cosas were picked out and killed.

INKATHA



Are they really all advocates of 'non-violence'?

INKATHA'S claimed policy of non-violence has never come under more intense scrutiny than in the last few months. In fact it has now become almost impossible for the friends of the tribal movement to shrug off allegations of its supporters' involvement in acts of violence.

So far a number of explanations have been offered for the violence in Natal over the past two years.

The government and its Bureau for Information has readily labelled the violence as "black on black". The hypotheses offered by the liberals have failed hopelessly to move away from the simple tribal and racial analysis.

Gatsha Buthelezi, Inkatha leader and kwaZulu tribal chief, has blamed the violence on the African National Congress (ANC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF).

All these explanations tend to relegate the most important basis of the conflict — namely that between the forces of apartheid and the vast masses of people ranged against this policy of

racial exploitation.

This conflict manifests itself at all levels of South African society.

But to understand the role of Inkatha in this context, it is important to look at the historical development of the organisation.

It all started with the military defeat of the indigenous African tribes and the establishment of the racially exclusive Union of South Africa. This led to the formation in 1912 of the ANC and heralded a change in the way the indigenous population would resist colonial oppression. For the first time, Africans from every region, class and tribal group were united under a single organisation.

But after five decades of legal struggle, the ANC was banned and driven underground.

This era of intense repression in the early 60s was followed by the implementation of the bantustan system and an attempt to fragment the oppressed and revert to the pre-ANC era.

It was in this climate of repression and the rise of the homeland system that Buthelezi and the Inkatha movement, which was formed in 1922, were to

come into prominence.

The movement is highly centralised and authoritarian — members are, for example, forbidden to publically criticise Inkatha. At both constitutional level and informally in the day to day workings of the organisation, power is entrenched in the hands of Buthelezi.

This derives directly from Inkatha's almost feudal character, where chiefs inherit power by virtue of their royal links.

Inkatha's ideological position at best can only be described as ambiguous — although there has been a more definite shift to the right since its revival in 1975.

On the one hand it draws heavily on the narrow interpretation of Zulu cultural traditions while at the same time projecting itself as a broad liberation movement.

In fact Buthelezi projected Inkatha as the internal wing of the liberation movement. Inkatha adopted the colours, uniforms and rhetoric used by the ANC during the Defiance Campaign and also tried to recruit as many former leaders of the exiled organisation as possible.

He also posed as an outspo-

ken critic of the government and in particular its homeland consolidation policy and forced removals.

But Buthelezi and his movement shifted more and more to the right. His public position on a number of events is the best indication of this. The organisation's refusal to mobilise members around grassroot campaigns and the absence of grassroot representation at the kwaNatal Indaba all militated against the character of popular politics and resistance.

Inkatha's reformist politics and pro-capital/anti-worker stance is best demonstrated in the structure of the kwaNatal Indaba. Organisations like Cosatu and the UDF, which refused to participate in the Indaba, pointed out that the venture was essentially worked through a bantustan structure and was fundamentally undemocratic because it failed to allow for report-back opportunities and accountability to members.

The most overt shift to the right came just three years after Inkatha's revival, when Buthelezi urged the organisation's members to participate in the community council elections. This was seen

as a significant turning point in Inkatha's political stance, especially since it coincided with the mass rejection of the community council structures by popular democratic organisations.

A year later Buthelezi told his followers: "I say to you bluntly: Do not be ashamed to enter the fray at the level of community councils, they are not vehicles of individual enrichment. They must be turned into chariots which take us into battle."

The movement also shifted its position on consumer boycotts and other non-violent methods which it had advocated as useful weapons in the campaign for peaceful change during the 70s. This was demonstrated in Inkatha's refusal to participate in the BTR-Sarmcol support committee and back consumer boycotts when invited to do so.

Inkatha members among the strikers and thousands of others were immediately exposed to the movement's sterile politics and its reluctance to take up issues through mass democratic struggle. Inkatha's ambivalence on the question of sanctions has also turned into vocal support for foreign investment.

The organisation did not hesitate to act against students who boycotted schools in kwaMashu.

Buthelezi went as far as congratulating kwaZulu children for the refusal to become involved in the school boycotts of 1976, sparked off by the protest against bantu education.

These events made it clear that Inkatha had opted to defend the institutions and policies of apartheid — and brought it into direct conflict with democratic forces in the country. Any opposition to Inkatha or apartheid would be met with the strongest response.

Inkatha Central Committee member Thomas Tshabalala was quoted as saying that he "longed for the day when there will be open war between the UDF and Inkatha — it will prove who is who in the political battle."

Tshabalala disclosed in an interview that a decision to train imps was taken at a meeting of all Inkatha branch chairmen and kwaZulu councillors under Code 26. (Code 26 is an electoral district and includes townships to the north and west of Durban.)

Attacks on the democratic movement increased in the 80s,

especially with the formation of the UDF in 1983. This resulted in popular politics distancing itself from Inkatha, which had by now clearly been characterised as an ethnic, conservative and pro-capitalist base.

Popular politics increasingly came to focus around the Freedom Charter. This implied the politics of national unity rather than regional and tribal exclusivity.

Inkatha and apartheid's very premise was being threatened.

The launch of Cosatu meant opposition for Inkatha on its weakest front. Given its tribal and ethnic identity, the reactionary basis for Buthelezi's power, he was in no position to challenge Cosatu. Besides, Inkatha's narrow tribal politics allowed no room for the democratic decision-making Cosatu had so carefully nurtured through years of struggle.

Given earlier attempts by Buthelezi to project himself as a focus of non-violent opposition to apartheid, the attacks on the democratic movement immediately raised questions about Inkatha's avowed policy of non-violence — and who it was meant for.



World status is on the line

INKATHA could soon face a crisis on the international front because of questions

about whether its supporters adhere to its stated position of being non-violent.

The tribal movement has repeatedly projected itself as the non-violent alternative to the African National Congress (ANC).

However, hundreds of activists and supporters of the democratic movement have been attacked and butchered since August 1985, when a wave of violence swept through Natal townships.

More than 80 people have been killed in the last seven weeks alone, most of them members and supporters of the United

Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu).

According to Natal-based academics, 95 percent of those killed were either members or supporters of Cosatu and the UDF.

While the conflict has been passed off as another case of inter-tribal and "black-on-black violence", the attacks are increasingly being seen as an attempt by Inkatha supporters to defend the interests of apartheid and monopoly capital to which its long term existence is integrally linked.

AGENDA

But Inkatha's agenda goes further than just ensuring its own survival by keeping the apartheid infrastructure intact.

For Inkatha, the ultimate objective must be national control in an alternate South Africa.

This cannot be more clearly demonstrated than in Inkatha's attempt to relegate the ANC to the equivalent of an organisation of a few exiled individuals, and replace it as a national liberation movement. Inkatha general secretary Oscar Dhlomo claimed there were no genuine political differ-

ences between the ANC and Inkatha. "However, there are clear differences of strategy between the two movements ... The ANC has chosen violence as a strategy, whereas Inkatha has chosen non-violence."

He added that Inkatha's "uncompromising stand on non-violence is a source of great political frustration for the ANC".

ATTACKS

These beliefs are obviously based on Inkatha claims that it is in fact a non-violent organisation — a claim that will be seriously challenged in view of the latest round of attacks in the Pietermaritzburg area and the significant number of court interdicts obtained against Inkatha supporters following attacks on members of the church and democratic movement in the last decade.