



NELSON MANDELA

Intends to proceed with, or without, other groups



F.W. DE KLERK

Nothing has shifted since his seminal speech

The year of reckoning now upon us

ANC sets course for new deal

ESTHER WAUGH Saturday News Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG: The ANC's top leadership yesterday committed itself to concluding a negotiated agreement that would lead to a government of national unity this year.

Mapping out a conciliatory vision of political progress for the year ahead, the ANC said 1993 should usher the country into a new era — with the first all-in elections ending white minority rule.

It is clear from the optimistic statement that the ANC has decided this year is to be a decisive one in the transition process.

The ANC national executive committee's statement to mark the organisation's 81st anniversary was delivered yesterday in Johannesburg by ANC president Nelson Mandela.

Mr Mandela said that although the ANC wanted the negotiation process to be as inclusive as possible, it would not allow the transition to be held hostage.

"The elections cannot be delayed beyond 1993," Mr Mandela said.

However in reply to a later question he amended that to say elections could be delayed until early next year if "unforeseen circumstances" developed.

Mr Mandela said the ANC would not transform from a liberation movement to a political party before a fully democratic government had been installed. It was premature to talk of the ANC changing from a liberation movement until liberation had taken place, he said.

Observers noted that this statement

was a clear notice that the ANC intended to contest the elections as a front with its allies. It also continued to allow the ANC, as a liberation movement, to receive foreign funding.

The key steps to be undertaken this year were:

- The resumption of multiparty negotiations in Codesa.

- Ensuring a climate of free political activity.

- The establishment of the Transitional Executive Council.

- Elections for a constituent assembly.

- Reincorporation of the homelands.

Speed in the negotiation process was essential because the transition to democracy was the key to resolving the country's economic and social problems he said.

But the ANC was under no illusion that the transition process would be plain sailing, he said.

In a clear reference to the Concerned South Africans Group (Cosag), Mr Mandela said: "There are those political formations which fear change and are totally opposed to democratic elections. They are products of apartheid thinking. They fear the will of the people. They cling to ethnic fiefdoms and racism. Unless they are able to place the national interest above their party political and personal agendas they will confine themselves to the role of spoilers and will be judged accordingly."

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WEEKEND Argus

Editor-in-Chief
A P DRYSDALE

Editor
J C B HOBDA

122 St George's St, Cape Town 8000 488-4911

The lone agony of Angola

THERE is a sad inevitability about most of the basket cases of Africa, a common destiny compounded by recent drought and internal strife. Prime examples are Ethiopia, Liberia, Somalia, Mozambique and Zambia.

Angola might be added to that list but for the fact that most of its woes are inflicted by one person — Jonas Savimbi, the defeated revolutionary who will not lie down.

And Angola possesses an economic potential which, if realised, would make it one of the few successes of the continent. It has oil, it has diamonds and strategic minerals, it has water and arable land which in combination could make it a store-house for the region.

Unfortunately, it also has Dr Savimbi, a man who once had a legitimate cause but who has abused his right to have his Unita party involved in his country's administration because he reneged on an undertaking with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos that the two would form a government of national unity whatever the outcome of last September's elections.

When Dr Savimbi declined to do so — after it became clear that his party had been well beaten at the polls, though the presidential ballot marginally favoured Mr Dos Santos — it confirmed what many observers had long believed: that the Unita leader thirsted for total power, that he wanted it all.

While Dr Savimbi has since made compromising noises and still speaks of a possible ceasefire, it is obvious the MPLA regime is no longer prepared to trust him. The Angolan army is on full-scale alert, with a state of emergency and general mobilisation pending. The army says it will use "all its might against Unita in every corner of the country".

Though Unita has lost the monetary and military support it once had from this country and the United States, the siege could be difficult. Dr Savimbi might start running out of munitions, he could suffer defections as more and more of his troops are captured. But guerrilla conflicts seldom are quickly settled and it seems likely that, in the immediate term at least, there will be a resumption of the 16-year civil war in its past intensity.

What of United Nations intervention? That certainly should be an option. However, the UN these days appears to rotate on the axis of the last remaining super power and the US — apart from being otherwise engaged in Somalia — is about to inherit a new President who probably will see a priority in solving domestic issues.

So Angola almost certainly will be left to its own devices. For the sake of its people, one hopes Dr Savimbi will realise, sooner rather than later, that it is perhaps time he quit the political scene.

DP's war of words with ANC

Weekend Argus 9/10.1.93

A WAR of words has erupted between the Democratic Party, determined to press ahead with an election meeting in Guguletu tomorrow, and the ANC which meets today to decide on strategy.

Observers say unless the ANC leadership takes a firm stand to control its members and supporters, the DP will again face a wrecked meeting, which happened to MP Robin Carlisle's Khayelitsha meeting in mid-December.

An undaunted Mr Carlisle said yesterday: "We intend exercising our democratic right to hold a normal public meeting without having to call the police or security organisations.

"We are a peaceful party. We want a peaceful meeting. We are certainly not seeking confrontation with anybody."

He said Monday's meeting was part of the DP's programme of public meetings to be held throughout the Western Cape.

Mr Carlisle, MP for Wynberg, said he was inviting international peace monitors, including Ms Angela King's UN

■ The Democratic Party faces the threat of having another political meeting wrecked by ANC supporters in a black township on Monday — this time in Guguletu.

FRANS ESTERHUYSE and VUYO BAVUMA
Weekend Argus Reporters

group, and local peace monitors to attend the meeting.

"It is very important, in the event of our being denied our democratic rights, that the matter be given maximum exposure. For too long a steady erosion of democratic rights has taken place in the dark."

Mr Tony Yengeni, the ANC's regional secretary, has said the DP "should not cry like a baby" when rigorous questioning by the ANC was unearthing "pro-apartheid" skeletons in the cupboard.

He said the ANC wanted the DP to account for its past record and this was not intimidation or intolerance, but in line with acceptable democratic principles.

Yesterday Mr Yengeni told Weekend Argus the ANC would meet today to strategise a "uniform plan" for the DP meeting but would not disrupt the proceedings.

He said: "We are definitely going to the meeting. We are going to take part, but we won't throw chairs or disrupt it."

"But we aren't going to take responsibility for non-ANC members who may engage in other activities such as heckling or causing havoc by throwing chairs."

At tomorrow's meeting the ANC would ask the DP to account for its pro-apartheid statements such as supporting SADF raids into neighbouring countries in which hundreds of oppressed people were killed.

"We shall also ask the DP to explain what it means by working towards 'one nation' when there are so many social disparities among South Africans."

"We also want them to account for the hostility they showed when their members joined us," Mr Yengeni said.

Two central players are readying themselves

SHAUN JOHNSON, reports from Johannesburg that our year of reckoning is now upon us.

THE signs are scattered and you have to scavenge around for them. But they are unmistakable nevertheless.

The two central players in South Africa's negotiations game are readying themselves for the match to begin. The messy curtain-raiser which has exasperated the watching nation since February 2, 1990, is drawing to a close. This year, 1993, is likely to be South Africa's year of political reckoning.

In terms of real power-politics — control of the levers of State — nothing has shifted since President de Klerk's seminal speech nearly three years ago.

This constitutional stasis has led to an erosion of optimism and confidence, further contraction of the economy and an incremental breakdown of law and order. One thing, and one thing only, can break the deadlock — and that is a Government of many colours that works.

In the short to medium term, it does not matter whether this is a self-appointed and transitory structure, or an elected body: If things are to move forward, the dead grip of exclusive white rule has to be seen to be loosened, once and for all.

As things stand at the beginning of this new year, both the Government and the ANC have recognised this, and have committed themselves to achieving the preliminary goal together.

Mr de Klerk and Mr Mandela have let it be known that they intend to proceed to the next point on the

transitional path with, or without, the participation of other political groups.

Both are making keen efforts to woo recalcitrants back, but the difference is that they have removed from the myriad other parties the effective consensual veto which they enjoyed — and exploited — last year.

This is not to say that the key players intend to cut the cake in half, between themselves, but rather that the taking of the next step is the greatest priority — after which all others can decide whether to include — or exclude — themselves.

The only absolute constraint on the protagonists will be that the structure they agree upon must be manifestly fair to other parties.

What are the signs that suggest 1993 will be different from 1992, that year of grandstanding, filibustering, obfuscation and fruitless tail-chasing? Primarily, of course, the words of De Klerk and Mandela. But these are worth more than mere rhetoric, the fickleness of which has been our curse.

They flow from a clear recognition of three critical factors: the tailspin in which the economy finds itself, the deepening despair of the nation writ large, and the growing frustration of the international community.

This shared Government/ANC world view is the glue which holds South Africa's new political centre together: there are, and will be, vast differences in policy between the Nationalists and the ANC, but there is now almost total convergence on the fundamental rules of the game.

Derek Keys has done an effective job in scaring the pants off key politicians in the matter of the economic vortex. The HSRC and other re-

search bodies have testified chillingly to the depths of the national slough of despond. The normally mild-mannered Hank Cohen has left no doubt about the levels of impatience in foreign capitals.

Thus we see the signs: to a signifi-

cant extent, Government and ANC leaders have refrained from slugging each other off in recent weeks. The ANC has quietly decided it will not hold its now-traditional mass protest at the opening of Parliament this year, saying — and this is deeply significant — it will "instead work harder at building up its election machinery and resources".

The fact that practically all significant parties have now endured major scandals has had an additional, cathartic effect.

In a curious way, the sully of reputations — the Government through corruption scandals and SADF dirty tricks, the ANC through its camp atrocities — has provided for a negotiating equilibrium.

Also, radical activities at the political extremes — from Apla to the Wit Wolwe — has forced the centre together.

Working groups have given way to "bosberaads" and the transitional timetables of Government and ANC have converged to within a matter of months of each other.

So long as this fundamental meeting of minds between De Klerk and Mandela holds firm, there is very little that can block the path to a resumption of multiparty talks, a form of interim government, and beyond.

That there might be delays is of course not only possible, but probable. The past three years have been characterised by timetable "slippage" as a result of which hardly any agreed deadlines have been met. But even if that slippage persists (and it can result from factors outside the control of leaders, like massacres), its parameters are drawn in months, not years. South Africans are likely to be surprised by the speed with which the process moves forward, once the correct button is pressed.

The Government and ANC should be in a position to press it by the end of next month, when the current flurry of bilateral meetings ends.

These bilateral meetings, it should

be stressed, do not have to achieve full agreement between the various political interlocutors in each and every case. As I have argued, it is the broad consensus about the way forward between the Government and the ANC which will provide the momentum for the rest of the year.

But they are crucial negotiating building blocks: all significant parties will have been consulted and will have had the opportunity to present their views before multiparty talks resume.

In that context, if they choose to stay out they will struggle to convince the public that they have been unjustly excluded.

Once those round-table talks resume (probably in the second quarter of this year and not necessarily under the rubric "Codesa 3"), their aim will be clear: the establishment of a "transitional executive council", or nascent interim government by another name. And once the tricameral Parliament legislates for this interim government, South Africa will have reached a golden moment.

Power, and responsibility, will begin to be shared for the first time, and this will in itself be a catalyst for progress in all spheres, including economic growth, investment, and the first fully-representative attempt to contain the violence.

Elections will then follow when "all" the participants in the interim structures agree that the time is ripe.

Interim government is not a panacea, and none of its putative participants are so naive as to suggest it might be.

Most ordinary South Africans long ago recognised that a smooth transition in this polyglot, history-scarred country is an impossible dream.

But interim government will mark the first truly irrevocable step towards a workable political accom-

modation. The rollers have still to work hard to "level the playing field", but this year they are getting there. Last year it was simply unplayable.

THE SATURDAY NEWS

9-01-93

CAPE TOWN: The South African Government has turned down Transkei leader Major-General Bantu Holomisa's request that Mr Justice Richard Goldstone be seconded to conduct an independent inquiry into Apla.

"Since Mr Justice Goldstone has an ultimate interest and responsibility in regard to his South African assignment, he cannot possibly divorce himself from his own commission to take on another assignment elsewhere, especially as he and the commission are already in-

involved in the matter," Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee said in a statement this week.

A Goldstone Commission committee, headed by Mr Gert Steyn, is presently conducting a preliminary hearing into the Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla) which is believed to have bases in the Transkei.

Mr Coetsee said, however, his Government had proposed to the Transkei authorities that a

Transkeian judge or any available South African judge should be seconded for the Transkei independent inquiry.

Mr Justice Goldstone said he had a possible conflict of interest as chairman of a South African commission which had a committee already probing the same issue.

He said he had assumed General Holomisa's approach was made to him in his capacity as

chairman of the commission.

"On that assumption I informed Major-General Holomisa that, in principle, I would be happy to support his proposals.

"But as I pointed out, the constitutional relationship between South Africa and Transkei is such that an approach would be required to be made through appropriate Governmental channels."

Request for Goldstone denied

The Goldstone committee, which will continue its hearing in Port Elizabeth on Monday, was established after Apla, the armed wing of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), claimed responsibility for last year's two attacks in King William's Town and Queenstown which left five people dead and 34 injured.

General Holomisa has refused to participate in the Goldstone hearing into Apla because the commission was a structure of the National Peace Accord to which Transkei was not a signatory.—Sapa

Hopes up as IFP, CP join conference

PETER DE IONNO
Weekend Argus Correspondent

9/10 Jan 93
JOHANNESBURG. — The government won a small but vital victory yesterday when the Concerned South Africans Group (Cosag) agreed to join a multi-party planning conference to prepare for a new round of multi-party negotiations before the end of February.

The backing of the 12-member group for a revival of the Codesa process helps keep alive hopes of an interim government by the middle of the year.

Implicit in the two-sentence joint statement issued after the two-day meeting at the Presidensie in Pretoria is an undertaking by the Conservative Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party to join talks with the ANC and the SA Communist Party.

The CP delegates, Mr Tom Langley and deputy CP leader Dr Ferdi Hartzenberg, would not say whether the agreement to talk about talks meant the party would now do a U-turn on its long-standing refusal to

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participate in talks with the ANC. The party's decision would be announced soon, they said.

Cosag spokesman Dr Frank Mdlalose, of the IFP, and Boputhatswana delegate Mr Rowan Cronje were adamant that they were "totally and completely opposed" to proposals for transitional government and fundamentally committed to a "federal-type" constitution.

Both said that although Codesa was "dead", agreements made there would be a "valuable input".

Dr Mdlalose and constitutional development minister Mr Roelf Meyer shook hands for the cameras to demonstrate that they had smoothed over the rift caused by a report that Mr Meyer had said the government was prepared to "go it alone" with the ANC if other parties refused to join the negotiation process.

"We can smile again," Mr Meyer said.

Mr Mdlalose said he was pleased that Mr Meyer had denied making the remark.

'No deals' says Nelson

Winnie lashes out at ANC leadership

JOHANNESBURG—Nelson Mandela yesterday brushed aside comments by his estranged wife who accused ANC leaders of cutting deals to share power with the white minority Government.

"ANC policies are not going to be judged by the expression of individuals no matter who they are," Mr Mandela told reporters without mentioning his wife by name.

"The ANC leadership takes decisions collectively following the wishes of its disciplined members. We are not cutting deals with the Government," he said in reply to a question at a news conference marking the 81st anniversary of the ANC.

Speaking on Thursday at the burial of 87-year-old anti-apar-

theid campaigner Helen Joseph, Mrs Mandela said current negotiations would not bring democracy to South Africa as they were being conducted between the "the elite of the oppressed and the oppressors".

"Death may have favoured Mama (Joseph) by sparing her from the looming disaster in this country which will result from the distortion of a noble goal in favour of a short cut route to Parliament by a handful of individuals," she said.

Mr Mandela said his movement was not conceding any of its principles it had stood for over the years as suggested by his estranged wife.

The Mandelas formally separated last year after Mrs Mandela was sentenced to six years in prison for kidnapping

young black activists and being an accessory to assault.

She was forced to resign all her ANC positions and is currently free on bail awaiting an appeal hearing in March.

Criticising the ANC leadership, Mrs Mandela said some were in leadership positions because they suffered under apartheid or spent decades in jail.

"A leader is a person who has leadership qualities. These qualities unfortunately have nothing to do with how many times you were detained, how many decades you spent in prison or how many years you spent in exile," she said.

In spite of her problems, Mrs Mandela still retains a large following among radical youths in the black townships. — (Sapa-Reuter)

16/1/11

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Goniwe killers 'unlikely to be brought to trial'

GRAHAMSTOWN: Hopes are fading that the killers of Matthew Goniwe will be brought to trial.

Acting Eastern Cape Attorney General Mike Hodgen yesterday said nobody had come forward with substantial evidence that could lead to the arrest of the killers of Mr Goniwe and three other Cradock activists.

This is despite a police reward of R200 000, the largest ever to be offered. The reward still stands.

Mr Hodgen has now recommended to Minister of Justice Kobie Coetzee that the inquest be reopened.

"It is up to the minister to de-

cide when the inquest will be held," he said.

In reaching his decision, the Minister would have to look at the available evidence and consult with the judge president.

The four activists, Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkhonto and Sicelo Mhlawuli, were brutally murdered near Port Elizabeth in 1985.

According to an earlier inquest, the four were murdered by "unknown people". But State President F.W. de Klerk last year ordered the investigation reopened after the publication of a signal message which apparently implicated military intelligence. — ECNA

SA leaders in the US dogbox

THEY might not say so on the record, but most of the influential African specialists in the United States generally had a low opinion of the political talents and negotiating skills shown by the major parties in South Africa in 1992.

Surprisingly, since he is known for his bland and cautious statements, probably the most candid remark encapsulating this widely held view came from the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Mr Herman Cohen, when he said at a media briefing last month: "I am not satisfied with the performance of any of the parties in South Africa."

By way of a jocular aside, he added: "How's that for even-handedness?" But he went no further, and there was no need for him to. In the Senate, in the House of Representatives, in the State Department, the US Treasury and, who knows, in the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency, there appears to be a consensus that the South African government and the ANC are engaged in some bizarre competition to see who can outdo the other in ill-vised statements and inept decision-making, with both emerging triumphant.

The year started well for the government when President De Klerk announced a white referendum to determine whether or not whites wanted the government to proceed with negotiations aimed at full democracy. The ANC's criticism of the referendum was lost in a deluge of praise from the US media and US officials.

But to many Africanists in the US, Mr De Klerk failed to capitalise on his win. The day after the result was announced, some of them say, should have been the day he tackled white opponents in the military and security establishment.

Mr De Klerk's long and unexplained failure to take action against manifest wrongdoing in the military and police, wrongdoing exposed more than two years ago in official inquiries into the CCB and certain police shootings, have puzzled many Americans who are otherwise sympathetic. Indeed, disciplinary steps strongly recommended by judges who investigated various actions by the police as far back as 1990 still have not been taken.

Thus it was not surprising to Americans that Mr Justice Goldstone should have rebuked the government in the wake of the Boipatong massacre for having failed to act on his recommendations aimed at preventing such atrocities, and the perception — actively promoted by the ANC — gained credence that Mr De Klerk had some interest in allowing the military and the police an unfettered hand.

The fact that long after all the judicial recommendations, long after the inquiries, and long after the tragedies at Boipatong, Bisho and elsewhere, Mr De Klerk should have ordered an investigation into the role of the military in South Africa's violence and, as a result of police work undertaken

partly by the Goldstone Commission, should have dismissed generals and others of high rank for their alleged role in the violence, was reported on extensively — but the praise that might have come Mr De Klerk's way if he had acted far earlier was missing.

Probably the biggest complaint against the ANC in 1992 was the rashness of many of its decisions and actions. The shooting at Bisho, for instance, was widely covered but so was the role of radicals who were accused of having provoked the incident. There was also much questioning of the wisdom of the campaign of mass action, which some in Washington saw as a bid by ANC radicals to wreck negotiations and attempt to force a settlement on the other parties.

ANC radicals also were seen to be behind the collapse of Codesa 2. When the deadlock over a so-called white constitutional veto was reached, the ANC's official position was that it would consider withdrawing from further negotiations. In Washington the impetus for that threat was seen to be the radicals who are viewed with great scepticism, the more so because they are suspected of being unenthusiastic about negotiations anyway.

There is a pervasive belief in Washington, enunciated as much by the State Department as by Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill, that the only forces who would gain from a breakdown in negotiations would be those irra-

tional extremists on the left and the right who refuse to negotiate and who apparently believe their interests can be served by violence and confusion. That is why Washington was so aghast when Codesa 2 collapsed, the campaign of mass action began, and the Bisho tragedy ensued.

What supported American fears was the convenient way in which the horror of the Boipatong massacre was seized upon as a reason for breaking off talks with the government. Where previously a simple deadlock in negotiations was cited implausibly as a reason why the ANC might pull out, suddenly that rationale was abandoned and Boipatong was held up, in almost indecent relief, as a more persuasive reason for ending the talks.

Few in Washington were convinced, and the resulting UN Security Council meeting on the massacre, at which the ANC failed to provide the evidence which it claimed to have of government collusion in the massacre, produced a strictly neutral resolution which did not apportion blame.

But the UN meeting had some unsung benefits for South Africa. Aside from the ANC learning that the UN was no longer the plaything of the liberation movements, the ANC was also left in no doubt that the UN was determined to ensure a negotiated settlement in South Africa, and it was demonstrated conclusively to the government that the process towards democracy had become internationalised.

Insofar as ANC radicals may have spurred the decision to abandon Codesa, the UN meeting must have been a disaster for them. Nothing last year more reinforced the pressure for a resumption of negotiations than the talks behind-the-scenes which took place quietly during that debate. So forceful were the African countries in their support of resumed talks that the PAC itself made discreet overtures in a lobby off the Security Council chamber to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, about the possibility of it joining the negotiating process.

Earlier, the PAC, as much as the ANC, were given unambiguous warnings by African countries, again behind closed doors, that the world would not accept a settlement in South Africa that was not reached by negotiation.

As the negotiations deadlock went on, alarm in Washington grew. At the height of the crisis, the US offered the services of its Secretary of State, Mr James Baker, as a mediator to get talks resumed. Mr Baker's interest in Africa was known to be faint, but with klaxons sounding at the National Security Council and the White House, his prestige and influence were made available to the government and the ANC, separately. Incredibly, both sides rejected the US overture.

Washington continued to agonise as it saw both the government and the ANC feed the fires of the far right and far left, and questions flew about the city. Why did the ANC set out such radical demands as a precondition to resuming negotiations, demands which the government probably could not meet? Was this a move by radicals to ensure talks did not resume? Why all the gratuitous hate rhetoric?

What political leadership could fail to see that the only way to end the violence would be through rapid progress towards a truly democratic society?

But there were also some shrewd insights which gave hope to the stalwart. If the ANC was playing so hard to get, it must have believed absolutely that the government was genuine in wanting negotiations to succeed. After all, it would have been absurdly pointless for the ANC to have drawn up a long list of preconditions if it felt the government wasn't interested in successful negotiations.

And so the faint flickers of hope were kept alive. But will they survive the inevitable tempest of change which comes when a new administration takes over at the White House? Few are willing to say, since so little is known about the foreign policy which President Bill Clinton will apply anywhere, let alone to South Africa. There are some hints, however.

South Africa-watchers in the United States found the behaviour of both the government and the ANC frustrating in 1992. HUGH ROBERTSON of the Argus Foreign Service reports from Washington.



US Secretary of State James Baker ... his offer to mediate was rejected.

Most of those who will have the final say on South Africa policy are veterans of the Carter administration, though they have matured and grown wiser in the interim. They are honourable, principled people who remain imbued with the Carterian passion for spreading democracy and human rights around the world. They also believe as avidly as their predecessors that economic freedom is an indivisible part of true democracy. So, while they might be a little tougher on the government, they are unlikely to embrace the ANC's radicals with much enthusiasm.

In an article under Mr Carter's name, but written by an advisor, support is given for a continuation of local sanctions until an interim government is in place in South Africa. That, more or less, is the status quo and it should have little impact on anyone. But if the Bush administration could impose new sanctions, specifically aimed at Armscor, there should be no surprise if a Clinton administration decided on some selective sanctions of its own, though few, if any, believe there is any prospect of a resumption of general sanctions.

An area of major disagreement with the government — and feasibility with a future government — will be Armscor's programme for the development and sale of advanced weapons of mass destruction. Mr Clinton himself has said that an end to the proliferation of such weapons will be a cornerstone of his foreign policy — and he does not mean only nuclear weapons. As Armscor is aware, the new sanctions imposed last year by the Bush administration related to the production of certain missiles and missile systems, among other things which South African newspapers are not free to report.

In trying to assess Mr Clinton's style, his friends in Arkansas say one thing that should never be forgotten is his capacity to strike deals. And here they sound a word of caution for South Africa. The whole of Africa is fading from public and political attention in the US except, perhaps, among black Americans. Watch out for South Africa becoming a bargaining chip as Bill the Deal-maker seeks to lubricate some fairly drastic legislation through Congress, where he will need the support of the Congressional Black Caucus.

And watch out, too, they say, for a White House obsessively focused on domestic issues, to the extent that Africa — already a stepchild of US foreign policy — will become more of a nuisance than an area of major concern.

WORLD BRIEFS

Mandela is warming to election timetable

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Nelson Mandela started the political New Year with a conciliatory gesture Friday by virtually accepting the government's timetable for elections in 1994.

The president of the African National Congress told report-



Mandela

ers his group wanted an end to white rule in South Africa this year, but it was "not dogmatic" about the timing of the country's first democratic elections.

Under a schedule presented by South African President F.W. de Klerk in November, elections would be held in the first half of 1994. The ANC had initially blasted the timetable, accusing the government of trying to forestall the day when white-minority rule would give way to free elections.