

Land issue 'hopeless for whites'

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THE Government's plans for consolidation are a dangerous and costly exercise which could place the white minority in a hopeless bargaining position, Mr Ray Swart, Natal leader of the Progressive Federal Party said at a meeting in Westville last night.

'To say to a majority group "Your political aspirations can only be met within the land area we choose to give you", is totally illogical unless the division of land is pro rata to the population of each group.

'The Government persists with grandiose schemes for consolidation in the hope that the promise of additional land will persuade homelands to take independence over segments of South Africa.

'It should have learnt by now that one of the fundamental lessons of Africa, that to link political aspirations with land ownership and occupation can only place a white minority in a hopeless bargaining position.'

Mr Swart said it was totally wrong to equate the influences among sections in Natal to seek a different dispensation, with the Zionist movement among the rest of South Africa.

'Whites and blacks bring recognise that they are different and that does not mean the abolition of a place in the constitution for a different dispensation for a different province.'

Mr Swart said the people believed the country would inevitably turn into a federation of local autonomous geographical units with the Republic to cater for the diversity of the people.

'The Buthelezi Committee to look into the interdependence of Natal and KwaZulu represents an initiative by the Zulu nation to seek an avenue for peaceful change.'

'The response in the organised commerce and industry has been encouraging and the Lombard Commission is further evidence of desire from an influential sector in this province to seek other alternatives to the status quo and escape from the inevitable conflict situation.'

Mrs Helen Suzman MP for Houghton told the meeting that the announcement of Mr P W Botha's 'reform Cabinet' days before the Simonstown

by-election played an important role in the defeat of the PFP candidate.

She said that apart from newcomers to politics, Dr Gerrit Viljoen and General Magnus Malan, the old party stalwarts were promoted to ministerial rank.

'Still cosily in the Cabinet is Mr Hennie Smit who never did get to understand what all the fuss was about when he made his "blacks are slow thinkers" remark.'

She said the two arch verkrampies, Drs Treurnicht and Hartzenberg were too firmly entrenched to be dislodged as a result of grass root level support with 'die volk daar buite' as well as a number of caucus members.

'Those transferred to the President's Council will sit negotiating with each other, rather like the black States which are recognised only by each other and the Republic.'

'Mr Marais Steyn has been dispatched to the Court of St James and will no doubt find many interested listeners at diplomatic parties as he explains the difference between bulldozers and front-end loaders.'