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Ballot mix-up pushes SA poll into extra day

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SOUTH AFRICA'S election goes into an unscheduled fourth day in problem areas today, delaying the count and an announcement of the results until tomorrow. However, across the bulk of the country, notably in urban areas, voting was completed efficiently and peacefully in an atmosphere of quiet celebration.

After the extraordinary enthusiasm of voters on the first day, which produced queues up to three miles long, many polling stations were almost deserted yesterday. Once a brief morning rush was over, election officials and observers outnumbered voters at many stations in Soweto and other black townships.

Cyril Ramaphosa, the Secretary-General of the African National Congress, estimated that by noon yesterday 65-70 per cent of those eligible to vote had been to the polls. However, in rural areas, especially in some former black homelands, shortages of ballot papers and other electoral materials meant voting had barely started by yesterday afternoon. In the Northern Transvaal, 120 voting stations did not open until 3pm.

As a result, under pressure from the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Independent Electoral Commission requested a further full day of voting in six areas: Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, Labowa, Gazankulu and KwaZulu. President F W de Klerk agreed last night, saying: "In the final analysis we must be able to say that all South Africans who were eligible to

JOHN LICHFIELD and JOHN CARLIN
in Johannesburg

vote, and took the trouble to vote, were given the opportunity to vote. Otherwise, the election will not be the beginning of real reconciliation, it will be the beginning of trouble and strife."

To prevent abuses, all votes cast today will be counted separately and extra international observers will be deployed where voting will continue.

Earlier yesterday, Nelson Mandela, the ANC president, claimed the failure to supply ballot papers in rural black areas was the result of "massive sabotage". However, ANC officials later played down his outburst, attributing it to frustration.

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Inkatha leader, who had hinted on Wednesday that he might withdraw from the election, continued to raise complaints but appeared mollified by the voting extension in his KwaZulu stronghold.

South African police arrested a thirty-second suspect in connection with the pre-election wave of bombings that killed 21 people in the Johannesburg area. Police confirmed that most of those held belonged to a shadowy unit within the Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

Election reports, page 16

Letters, page 17

Conor Cruise O'Brien, page 18

A good man, page 21