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THE EROSION OF WHITE POLITICAL COHESION IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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In September 1985, a number of prominent personalities of monopoly capital travelled to Zambia to meet members of the leadership of the ANC. In July 1987, a group of largely Afrikaans-speaking intellectuals and professionals, some with previous associations with Afrikaner nationalism, met a delegation from our movement in Dakar. There have also been a number of similar meetings with representatives of other constituencies of the white community. These events are among the most visible and positive indications that the political and ideological cohesion of the white power bloc in South Africa is eroding. At the same time, however, the same process of fragmentation has led the far right to increase its support among other strata of the white population. In the May 1987 whites only elections, for example, the **Konserwatiewe Party** increased its representation in parliament from 18 to 22 seats and displaced the Progressive Federal Party as the official opposition in the white House of Assembly.

The aim of the present paper is to analyse some of the major contradictions and divisions which have emerged within the white community in the contemporary period. A fundamental point of departure has to be a recognition that racist minority rule is in chronic and irreversible decline. This situation has, of course, been brought about by the advances of our people's struggle in the period since the early 1970s. These fundamentally altered the strategic balance of forces between oppressor and oppressed and created a profound organic crisis for the apartheid system and state. Not only is it now almost universally recognised that the Botha regime's "reformed apartheid" programme has failed, it is also becoming increasingly evident that there is no new guise racist minority rule can assume which is capable of guaranteeing it a stable future.

It is more than two years since our movement concluded that the Botha regime had lost the strategic initiative (1). With its "reformed apartheid" programme in tatters, the regime has been forced to fall back on the only means available to it to prolong its rule - a reign of state terror. However, notwithstanding certain tactical gains which it has without doubt made since the declaration of the nation-wide State of Emergency in June 1986, it has not succeeded in regaining the strategic initiative. As this year's January 8 message from the NEC put it, "...in the strategic sense the enemy has been defeated in its intentions. Whatever the reverses we have suffered [through the enemy's campaign of repression], we have, in the main, successfully defended our organisational formations. In certain instances...[notably, trade unions and youth] we have actually expanded the organised formations of the mass democratic movement" (2). The regime thus remains as far away as ever from its quest of producing a viable political solution to the continuing, and indeed deepening, crisis of the apartheid system and state.

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The present paper is divided into two main sections. The first presents an overview of the impact of the evolving people's struggle over the past 15 years and of the Botha regime's strategy in the face of the challenge posed by it. The second section examines some of the major contradictions between different class forces in the white community, which have been revealed, heightened or have emerged in this context. It focuses on the growth of far right reaction and on some of the major tendencies moving towards acceptance of solutions which reach beyond the parameters of racist minority rule. With respect to the latter, the paper argues that the distinction made by our movement between "forces for change" and "democratic forces" is a useful and valid one, but suggests that it is also increasingly necessary to discriminate carefully between different "forces for change". Some of the latter (notably monopoly capital) have some disagreements with the regime, but also have sharp and deeply rooted differences with the democratic movement. Their movement towards searching for solutions reaching beyond racist minority rule has been extremely cautious and vacillating and they retain strong ties with the regime in a number of areas. At the same time, however, the paper argues that there are other forces - various strata of intellectuals, professionals and strata of white labour - which can be mobilised, and eventually, possibly even be drawn into the ranks of the democratic movement. Finally, the paper argues that some account has to be taken of contradictions which have emerged within the regime itself - differences over strategic objectives, differences over instruments of strategy and differences over specific tactics.

I. THE CONTEXT

1. The Changing Balance of Forces and "Reformed Apartheid"

The deep seated multiple crisis in which the apartheid system and state have been enmeshed in the past fifteen years followed a ten year period of boom and apparent stability, which ran from about 1963 to 1973. This decade of stability and "prosperity" was, of course, made possible only by the brutal application of repression against the nationally oppressed and exploited people. This "golden age" of apartheid followed the defeats inflicted on the democratic movement in the early 1960s. In the ten years which followed Rivonia, the strategic initiative rested with the oppressors and exploiters, who used their class power and control over the state to stifle any form of popular struggle. The real wages of black workers stagnated or declined and the national oppression of all classes of the oppressed majority was intensified by the more ruthless and effective application of a growing range of apartheid laws. At the same time, and of course dependent on the increased exploitation and oppression of the black majority, the decade was one of growing prosperity for all classes in the oppressor white community. Monopoly capital consolidated itself as the economically dominant force in all

sectors of the economy and, through extensive state intervention and support, such Afrikaner corporations as Sanlam, Rembrandt and Volkskas emerged as monopoly conglomerates. With profit rates among the highest in the world, foreign capital continued to pour into the country. With state coffers full, the military apparatus was rapidly expanded and modernised. The overwhelming majority of white wage earners continued to be rapidly promoted from the ranks of the manual working class posts to clerical, administrative and technical positions and the gap between white and black wage rates widened (3).

The white minority never has been, and did not become during the 1963-73 boom, an undifferentiated monolith. Important contradictions continued to exist between different social forces. The governing Nationalist Party was not the direct political representative of non-Afrikaner monopoly capital, the economically dominant class force. The growth of Afrikaner monopolies led to widening differences with other class forces within the Afrikaner nationalist alliance. There were important rivalries between branches of the security apparatuses - the military and the Bureau of State Security (BOSS) in particular. Nevertheless, under the overall conditions of struggle of the period, these remained largely latent and what may be described as the "white power bloc" was characterised by a relatively high level of overall cohesion. This was reflected at the party political level by the fact that the governing Nationalist Party continued to consolidate its position at the expense of the official United Party opposition. Liberal and far right opposition was largely confined to the fringes.

There is no need to describe in detail the process of people's struggle which began in the early 1970s and fundamentally altered the strategic balance of forces between oppressor and oppressed. It is sufficient for our present purposes merely to note that in the wave of struggle, which began with the Durban strikes of 1972/3, passed through the 1976 Soweto uprising, and has seen the resurgence of armed struggle as well as a growing unity of mass action around the basic programme and perspectives of our movement, the oppressed have gradually assumed the offensive and forced the oppressor onto the defensive. This change in the strategic balance of forces has produced a profound, continuing crisis of the apartheid system and state, which has been characterised as "organic" in the sense that it has revealed deep seated fundamental contradictions and a chronic inability of the system to maintain itself in the old way. It should, moreover, be noted that at the same time as the apartheid system was coming under pressure from the growing challenge inside the country, the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in the mid-1970s also changed the balance of forces within the Southern African region. The apartheid state found itself no longer surrounded by a ring of colonised "buffer states", but by independent states committed to achieving liberation in the sub-continent.

The Botha regime, which came to power in September 1978, represented a new alignment of forces within the dominant

classes - an alliance between Afrikaner monopoly capital (which dominated the Cape Nationalist Party and was behind the emergence of the *verligte* tendency within Afrikaner nationalism) and the top military commanders. The new regime also received a degree of support from non-Afrikaner monopoly capital, unprecedented for a Nationalist Party administration. The point of unity between these forces which coalesced in varying degrees behind the Botha regime was a recognition that the crisis had deepened to the point where it was impossible to maintain racist minority rule through established classical Verwoerdian apartheid. In Botha's famous slogan, apartheid had to "adapt or die".

The details of the Botha regime's "total strategy" launched in a bid to "adapt" racist minority rule to the new conditions of struggle need not concern us here. In essence the "total strategy" sought to combine repression with various measures designed to restructure the apartheid system in a number of specific respects. Presented ideologically as a programme of "reform", changes were initially introduced in the economic and social spheres. These sought to relax certain restrictions on the "horizontal and vertical" mobility of the more skilled strata of the black labour force. At the same time measures were introduced to provide more openings for a "black middle class" in the hope of widening the regime's miniscule support base among certain strata of the nationally oppressed majority. The overall strategic objective was to create a more secure base for racist minority rule. Black allies were to be drawn into "power sharing" structures, but in such a way that ultimate political power remained in the hands of the present racist minority regime. The regime's "reformed apartheid" programme aimed, in short, not at initiating a process of gradually abolishing racist minority rule, but on the contrary at creating a new more secure basis for the existing power holders to maintain their monopoly of political and economic power under the new conditions of struggle.

As an integral part of the attempt to implement its "total strategy", the Botha regime also sought to reorganise the entire decision-making structure of the apartheid state. This has resulted in the emergence of an extra-parliamentary, military-dominated, parallel government system existing alongside, but effectively controlling, the institutions of civilian administration.

At the head of the "National Security Management System" (NSMS) as it is known, stands the State Security Council (SSC). This has become the most important decision-making body in the apartheid state. The SSC is chaired by the State President himself, and includes six Ministers - Defence, Foreign Affairs, Law and Order, Constitutional Development and Planning, Justice and Finance - plus the following senior state officials: the Chief of the SADF, Chief of Army, Air Force, Navy and Chief of South African Medical Services, the Chief of Staff Intelligence, Director General of the National Intelligence Service (NIS), the Director-General of Foreign Affairs, the Director-General of Law and Order, the

Director general of the State President's Department, the Director of Security legislation, the Commissioner of Police, and the head of Security Police. Apart from these statutory or primary members, other Ministers and officials may be coopted at the State President's discretion. The State Security Council has its own secretariat. This is currently headed by Lt Gen. Charles M.Lloyd, a former General Officer Commanding both the South West African Territory Force and the Northern Transvaal command of the SADF. The SSC secretariat is responsible directly to the State President and its staff is drawn from various government departments, but with a very high military component.

The SSC's statutory responsibility is to advise the government on the formulation and implementation of "national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the Republic". This is wide enough to embrace virtually every area of government's internal and external activity. In practice, the SSC concerns itself with and manages the total range of policy strategies of the state. Under the Total Strategy, everything deemed to be connected with the security of the state falls under its purview. It is the SSC which coordinates and plans "the utilisation of all the means available to the state to achieve specific objectives" as spelled out in the formulation of the Total Strategy. While the fiction of superiority of the Cabinet is maintained and the SSC, in formal terms, only makes "recommendations" to the Cabinet, these carry the stamp of approval of the State President and in practice are merely endorsed by the full cabinet. The SSC meets weekly throughout the year, and is thought to prepare the agenda for the cabinet. It is also known to have met before the 1986 Federal Congress of the Nationalist Party, evidently to prepare the strategy to be adopted there.

In addition to the SSC, the NSMS now also embraces a series of other military-dominated structures which reach down to local government level. Once again in formal terms these Joint Management Committees (JMCs) and mini-JMCs, as they are known, are merely advisory to parallel structures of civil administration, but in practice they control the actions of their civilian counterpart in a similar way to that in which the SSC effectively controls the cabinet.

2. The Crisis of the Total Strategy

In practice the Botha regime's "reformed apartheid" programme rapidly proved to be almost as unacceptable to the majority of the people of the country as Verwoerdian bantustans. The programme's unacceptability to a mass movement increasingly uniting around the Freedom Charter's call for a democratic, non-racial South Africa, was evident from the moment it began to be implemented and was underlined in the campaign against the elections for the tri-cameral parliament organised by the United Democratic front (UDF) in 1983/4. However, the advances in the popular struggle, which took place between the time of the Vaal Triangle uprising of August 1984 and the declaration of the country-wide State of Emergency in June 1986, added an important

new dimension. Not only did they confirm the continued unacceptability of "reformed apartheid", they also demonstrated its unworkability as a viable solution to the deepening crisis. As is well known, through a combination of mass action (including strikes, schools, rent and consumer boycotts) and armed struggle, the period August 1984 to mid-1986 saw the balance of forces further shifted in favour of the oppressed at the expense of the oppressor. The mass action of the period succeeded above all in destroying the regime's "Black Local Authority" (BLA) system - a lynchpin of its proposed constitutional reform programme. By the end of 1985, not only were the BLAs largely inoperative, but embryonic structures of popular power had begun to be created in black urban residential areas and in the rural areas of some of the bantustans.

These developments were to have profound political consequences not only for the people and progressive forces but also for relations between different class forces within the white minority as well as between the apartheid state and the major imperialist powers, upon whose tacit goodwill if not openly declared support the apartheid system depended for its survival and prosperity. By the end of 1985 at the latest, it was becoming clear that it was not only the democratic movement which had concluded that apartheid was becoming unworkable and the country ungovernable. By the time of P.W. Botha's "Rubicon speech" of August 1985, racist minority rule itself was being widely seen on all sides of the political spectrum in all corners of the world as no longer viable. The regime had been placed in a position where it was seen as having no credible political solution to the crisis in South Africa. It had lost the strategic initiative.

This is one element, which is of critical importance in analysing current divisions within the white minority. But it is also necessary to complete the picture to take note of some of the elements of the regime's response to this situation, and in particular of the strategy it appears to have been following in the period since the declaration of the State of Emergency in June 1986.

3. The Regime's post-1986 Strategy

Faced with the failure of its own "reformed apartheid" programme to contain the advancing liberation struggle, the Botha regime was forced to make a strategic choice between two broad alternatives. First, it could respond to the growing mass challenge and international pressure by beginning to move onto the terrain of what may be described as serious negotiation politics. This would imply struggling over the terms, conditions and timing - but accepting the inevitability of - an eventual transfer of power. The alternative was to attempt to hold onto power by launching a reign of state terror at home and a wave of military aggression in the region.

The regime's chosen path was never really in doubt. It rejected pressure, including the threat of sanctions, to move towards a negotiated transfer of power. It was not, however, able to totally ignore all domestic and international demands for negotiation. Rather than openly rejecting such calls, it attempted to redefine the terms and scope of negotiation - to accept that negotiation should take place but try to shape and contain the process within parameters which would not imply a transfer of power.

Late 1985 and early 1986 saw the regime making a major effort to secure the support and endorsement of the western powers for its conception of a negotiated settlement. This was clearly the motivation behind the decision to receive and enter into discussions with the Commonwealth Eminent Persons' Group (EPG). Given the EPG's origins in a compromise resolution at the October 1985 Bahamas Commonwealth conference designed to avert a split over the question of sanctions, the regime evidently calculated that it might succeed in selling its version of negotiation to the Group. It accordingly went through the motions of discussing its proposals with the Group. This saga is well covered in the EPG's own report. When the Group presented its own proposals which would have implied moving beyond racist minority rule, the regime broke off discussions. The break with the EPG was symbolised by the SADF raids against Gaborone, Harare and Lusaka on May 19 1986. It was followed within a month by the declaration of a country wide State of Emergency. This has served as a cover for a reign of state terror involving detentions, bannings, restrictions and the unleashing of vigilantes against democratic organisations.

- However, although the main means through which the regime has attempted to cling onto power has been repression, it is evident that its entire strategy is not reducible to force alone. Rather the regime has sought to use repression as a means of rolling back the advances made by the mass struggle in the hope that this will create more favourable conditions for the re-launching, in a slightly modified form, of its stalled "reformed apartheid" programme. Two main strands can be identified (4). These are to some extent associated with different tactical positions within the NP and therefore the subject of some intra-regime rivalry. But a degree of complementarity is also evident.

The first, associated with what is called the "reformist" faction of the NP, focuses on attempts to draw representative groups of "urban blacks" into "negotiations". As part of this strategy some of the regime's spokesmen have begun speaking the language of "power-sharing". Such pronouncements are evidently intended to be all things to all men. Above all they are intended to blur the distinction between the regime's own reformed apartheid programme and the multi-racial power sharing proposals being advanced by certain circles of domestic monopoly capital and imperialism. The former can broadly be defined as the creation of "power sharing" structures in a system in which final direct political control

rests with the existing racist minority regime. The latter would imply some transfer of power within a "power sharing" system which would constrain the capacity of a new government to transform the basic structures of apartheid capitalism. "Reformist" rhetoric of this type has particularly become associated with Stoffel van der Merwe, the Deputy Minister in the State President's Department responsible for both Information and Constitutional Development and Planning. van der Merwe, who was appointed to the second of the above posts in June 1987, has been described as the regime's "frontline negotiator with voteless blacks" and is generally regarded as one the foremost "reformists" within the regime. van der Merwe has deliberately set out to create an image of flexibility and reasonableness. He is on record in a recent interview as saying, "If we say we want to create a system in which no one group dominates any other group or groups, it also means that white domination of such a system cannot be perpetuated" (5).

A closer examination of proposals emanating even from "reformist" elements within the regime indicates, however, that they remain firmly located within the problematic of reformed apartheid. They set out from an acceptance of the basic long standing objective of the Botha regime's "reform" strategy - to draw certain black allies into "power sharing" structures at local council, regional and national level in such a way that ultimate control remains in the hands of the present power holders. "Reformists" may now use the language of "power sharing", but they continue steadfastly to reject any transfer of power. In the interview quoted above, van der Merwe stressed that majority rule - or "black majority domination" as he called it - was non-negotiable; as was the maintenance of the "free enterprise" system. In a Nationalist Party pamphlet written in July 1986 he put the point even more bluntly, saying "...the National Party...**still resolutely rejects** any form of power-sharing which amounts to a **surrender of power**" (6).

The other element of current state strategy, favoured by the "militarists" who are regarded by observers as being in the majority in the cabinet as well as controlling the SSC is what has been described as the "Brazilian option". This is an approach which is seen to have been successfully applied by the military regime which took power in Brazil in 1964. It places emphasis on promoting "good government" at local level; attempting to ensure that local level administrative structures function efficiently and introducing programmes which bring concrete visible material benefits to influential strata of local residents. It is a version of a paternalistic, "hearts and minds" strategy premised on the assumption that democratic aspirations are not deeply rooted among the majority of the people, who can consequently be "bought off" with a few material concessions. The basic thinking underlying this is summed up in the following quotation from Magnus Malan:

"When you talk about democracy, what democracy are you talking about, African, Russian, or what? The big question

is also how many of the black people are only interested in the satisfaction of their material requirements - housing, education, employment, clothing, bread and butter etc. There are at the moment only a small portion that are really interested in political participation. I think that for the masses in South Africa democracy is not a relevant factor. For them, it concerns the satisfaction of their own requirements. These requirements change from time to time, and are presently being exploited by the revolutionaries"(7).

While the differences between the two tendencies are real enough, they occur within definite limits and aim at the same objective - creating a new support base for racist minority rule. Moreover, the two approaches are not incompatible and have to a considerable extent been complementary within an overall strategy aiming to impose new "power sharing" structures at local, regional and national level.

It is at local government level that the "Brazilian option" has been most evident. Using the cover of the Emergency, the military have entered townships, like Alexandra which has in many ways become a model, in force. They have established military-dominated mini-JMCs as local level structures of NSMS. Apart from providing a direct "security" back up, these mini-JMCs have also served to supervise and control over new "Black Local Authorities" which have now been set up in a number of areas. The apparent hope here, is that "hearts and minds" can be won by providing "good government" and reducing some of the grossest excesses of corruption, which are seen to have contributed significantly to the discrediting of the BLA system in the first place.

At provincial level, new Joint Executive Authorities embracing "white" provincial authorities and Bantustan administrations have been established. The first such body was set up in Natal in November 1987 and joins the Natal provincial administration and the Kwa Zulu bantustan authorities, the latter dominated by Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi. It will administer a limited range of services hitherto under the separate control of the two structures - principally roads, health services and education. The body is appointed, thus underlying the regime's rejection of the proposals for an elected "regional government" put forward by the Kwa-Natal indaba.

At national level, the regime's plans continue to envisage establishing a National Council. This is intended to serve as a forum to negotiate a new "power sharing" constitution and in the meantime "give blacks a say" in national questions. The latest version represents a modification of the original proposal first put forward in January 1986, in that it introduces an elective element. Under the National Council Bill published in September 1987, nine seats on the Council which would originally have been filled by "representatives" of "urban blacks" chosen by the regime will now be directly elected. However, the Council will still be a purely advisory body subordinate to the existing

legislature. It will also still have a built in majority bloc of "moderates", known allies and members of the regime. Commentators have compared the proposed Council to the indirectly elected Natives Representative Council (NRC), which existed between 1936 and 1950. The NRC was supposed to advise the government on "racial policy" but was in practice ignored and earned the nickname "toy telephone". The UDF has described the proposed National Council as another "toy telephone".

It will be apparent from the above, that the regime's current proposals, whether in their "reformist" or "militarist" form, do not envisage more than a re-launching, in a slightly modified form of the original stalled "reformed apartheid" programme. In concrete terms, the Botha regime's current political strategy appears principally to rest on the hope or expectation that the repression of popular organisation and struggle will encourage "moderate" potential black allies, who have hitherto remained aloof, to come forward and accept the "deal" already on offer and rejected by the masses. A minority of "reformists" within the regime are said to believe that there is a chance of bringing elements of the ANC into this, the majority of "militarists" are reportedly of the view that the war against the ANC can be won and that the movement can therefore be excluded (8).

In addition to the intended impact on the domestic front, the regime's strategists evidently hope that such an approach will benefit them internationally. The short term aim appears to be to use the language of negotiation, as well as the defiant response to sanctions, to reinforce the argument that sanctions do not work and are in any case unnecessary since some "real change" is underway. The hope evidently is that this will strike a resonance with the positions being argued by Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl et al. In the longer term the regime appears to be calculating that, if it cannot obtain endorsement from the west in advance, a successful re-launching of its "reformed apartheid" strategy will create a new de facto reality on which to base a bid to improve relations with the major western powers. Its strategists appear to recognise to some extent that it was the perception that apartheid was weak that led to increased international pressure in the 1984-6 period. They appear, therefore, to be hoping that a successful strong arm approach will present the world with a *fait accompli* which will restore the credibility of "reformed apartheid" and lead to some new accommodation with the western powers on terms more favourable to the regime.

There can be no doubt that the reign of terror launched by the regime under the Emergency has, as the NEC put it, meant that "we have not advanced on all fronts in our general offensive with the same speed and success" (9). In this sense the enemy has made certain tactical gains in the past 18 months. But, as argued at the beginning of the paper, it has not regained the strategic initiative. In examining contradictions within the white power bloc at the present moment all these complexities have to be taken into account. The system remains in crisis. The regime has not regained the strategic initiative. It is still unable to

produce a political solution, and racist minority rule itself appears doomed. On the other hand, the challenge from the oppressed masses is perhaps felt less intensely than it was before the Emergency. The regime itself, or at least some of its members are using a discourse of "power sharing" and "negotiation" similar in form if not in substance to that of imperialism and monopoly capital.

II. CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN THE WHITE MINORITY

In general terms all of the various elements described in the previous section - the deepening crisis, the "reforms", militarisation, and the increasing perception that racist minority rule is doomed - have revealed, produced or heightened contradictions between different forces within the white power bloc. Some of these contradictions were already evident in the 1963-73 boom period but were held in check by the general conditions of prosperity and the veneer of stability. Others have only emerged with the onset of crisis. In broad terms, the regime's attempt to implement its "reformed apartheid" strategy and its failure to produce a viable "solution" to the deepening crisis has led to a fracturing in two different directions. First there has been the revolt of far right reaction generated by the "reforms". Second the failure of the "reforms" has led certain forces to move towards acceptance of solutions reaching beyond the parameters of racist minority rule. The limits of this process should be stressed at the outset. We are discussing minority tendencies within "white politics". Over half the white electorate (52,1%) supported the Nationalist Party in the May 1987 election - more than in 1948. However, both the breakaway tendencies have been generated by the current crisis. It is unlikely that either has yet peaked. Both therefore need careful analysis. In addition, contradictions have also emerged within the regime, the governing Nationalist Party and associated institutions, such as the **Afrikaner Broederbond**. Some brief consideration of these is given in the last part of this section.

1. Far Right Reaction

The first, and still, in numerical terms at least, the most important effect of the eroding cohesion of the power bloc has been the growth of far right reaction. In class terms the far right draws its support from certain categories of small capitalist agriculture, white labour and the white urban and rural petty bourgeoisie. These are class forces originally mobilised and united under the banner of Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1940s, whose current perception is that any "reforms" or modifications to apartheid are a "sell out" made at their expense. They generally hanker after the "golden days" of apartheid and fear that even minor adjustments to the system will result in the undermining of their privileged position in it. In

addition to these, the far right now also draws support from certain categories of the English-speaking petty bourgeoisie, including, prominently, former Rhodesians and other recent immigrants.

The emergence of a far right faction within Afrikaner nationalism had, of course, already been evident under Vorster. The growing influence of *verligtes* within the Nationalist Party and the modification by the regime of certain minor apartheid regulations by the Vorster regime provoked a reaction from *verkramptes*. The high point of this during the time of Vorster's premiership came with the breakaway of the **Herstigste Nasionale Party (HNP)** in 1969. Under Vorster, however, the revolt of the far right was largely kept in check. The HNP itself was confined to the fringes of white politics, standing in numerous elections but winning only a derisory share of the vote. With the coming to power of the Botha regime and the implementation of the "reformed apartheid" programme, however, far right influence grew. In the 1981 elections, the combined far right vote (cast for the HNP and Connie Mulder's National Conservative Party) reached 15,5% - compared to the 3,3% in the 1977 elections. However, far right reaction did not in the end find its only, or even its most important, expression in the HNP. A variety of political groupings, cultural, religious and other organisations began to be formed in the early 1980s, while far right opposition to Botha's "reforms" also built up within the Nationalist Party. This finally culminated in the breakaway of 18 MPs and the formation of the **Konserwatiewe Party (KP)** in 1982.

The KP has now established itself as the major party political organisation of the far right. The HNP, although still drawing some support, is in decline; its bid for hegemony having been defeated by the KP. The HNP lost its only seat in parliament in the May 1987 whites only elections and is now facing defections to the KP, the most prominent being that of its former Secretary General and sole elected MP, Louis Stofberg. The KP, significantly, has recognised the potential support which it has among certain social categories in the English-speaking community. Unlike the HNP, it does not push an Afrikaner exclusivity and is, for example, committed to maintaining the existing official language policy.

However, while the KP is currently the most important far right organisation in the parliamentary arena, the **Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB)** led by Eugene Terre'blanche has emerged as a major extra-parliamentary force. The AWB has shown that it is able to mobilise large numbers of supporters at rallies, demonstrations and the like and has won several tests of strength when the NP has attempted to hold meetings in its strongholds. Terre'blanche has an evident strong charismatic appeal within the far right and, at joint meetings, has frequently upstaged both the KP and HNP leaders. After the formation of the KP in 1982, the AWB allowed its own political party - the **Blanke Volksstaat Party (BVP)** registered in 1980 to become virtually moribund and concentrated instead on what appears to be a strategy of of

entryism into the KP. Considerable numbers of AWB members joined the KP (which unlike the HNP permits dual membership) and AWB influence within the KP is considerable. Press reports have spoken of even Conservative Party Members of Parliament distributing AWB literature. According to one estimate the AWB has 100.000 or more members (10).

In addition to its general ideological/political influence, the AWB also has some military or para-military power. The organisation has its own para-military wing - called the **Stormvalke** - whose declared objective is to take up arms and resist any "sell out of the Afrikaner". In 1983, Terre'blanche, received a suspended prison sentence on an illegal arms charge. Two other AWB members imprisoned on the same charges were released at the same time as Comrade Govan Mbeki. In September 1986 there were reports that the AWB was organising farmers in the Eastern Transvaal into a **brandwag** to defend themselves against landmine attacks. The latter was considered a sufficiently serious development for Magnus Malan to warn the AWB not to compete with the SADF (11).

As well as having its own para-military organisations, there is considerable evidence of significant far right support within the SADF and SAP. By November 1982, far right influence within the SADF was considered to be sufficient to prompt the then Chief of the SADF to issue a warning through the pages of the official SADF periodical, **Paratus**, against SADF personnel becoming involved in "secret military factions" (12). A specific regulation exists preventing members of the police joining the AWB. Despite this, however, Terre'blanche has openly boasted of AWB support within the SAP and offered free legal assistance to any SAP member "victimised" for association with the AWB (13). After the AWB broke up a NP meeting at Pietersburg due to have been addressed by R.F.Botha in May 1986, the Minister of Manpower, Pietie du Plessis, publicly accused the police of taking sides with the far right. He said Terre'blanche had "actually entered the building escorted by police" and that the police did nothing to stop Botha's meeting being disrupted (14). A number of prominent personalities who held high rank within the 'security forces' were nominated as KP candidates in the May 1987 white general election. They included Gen H.J. van den Berg, the former head of BOSS and Brigadier Theuns 'Rooi Rus' Swanepoel, the former chief interrogator of the Security Police. Swanepoel, who stood against Foreign Minister R.F.Botha, described his goal as being to root out the "communists in the government" (15).

The far right has proved over the years that it has a definite relatively secure constituency among those strata of the white electorate identified above. In the May 1987 election, the KP increased the number of its parliamentary seats from 18 to 22 and displaced the PFP as official opposition in the white House of Assembly. The percentage of the total vote cast going to the far right nearly doubled from 15.5% in 1981 to 29,5% in 1987.

Moreover, the influence of the far right has probably not yet

peaked. There were a number of specific factors at the time of the 1987 election which probably reduced the total far right vote to a lower level than it might otherwise have been. The two main far right parties - KP and HNP - entered the election not only having failed to negotiate an electoral pact but also against a background of well known public feuding. At the same time, the NP went into the election with a strongly rightist programme clearly intended to appeal to potential far right voters (16). One commentator estimated before the election that had there been a united front, the far right could have won up to 38 seats (17). In numerical terms, the far right is estimated to have the potential support of up to 400.000 members of the white community (18).

It is unlikely that the far right will ever take over state power. Its only "solution" to the crisis would be to intensify repression, but in a context where repression alone is increasingly seen as incapable of guaranteeing stability. There is no important force in the capitalist class which shows signs of being willing to ally with it - a fundamental condition for coming to power. It seems to be generally recognised within the capitalist class that a far right regime could only take South Africa more rapidly down the low road to Clem Sunter's wasteland.

This does not mean, however, that the far right can be dismissed or ignored. The real question is not whether the far right will come to power, but whether it will stage some insurrectionary activity aimed at blocking a move towards a transfer of power (or even "power sharing"). The fact that the far right has support within both the SADF and the SAP as well as its own para-military organisations, means that it has some capacity to become the basis of an OAS-style terroristic "resistance movement". The menace posed by the far right is likely to become more pronounced the closer we move towards a transfer of power and, indeed, any serious move towards democracy would seem to be dependent on the physical neutralisation or defeat of the far right forces. This raises the spectre of some future "civil war" among the whites - between far right bitter einders and more far-seeing forces prepared to contemplate a transfer of power. The bitter einders would undoubtedly try, in such an event, to transform this into a "black-white racial war" by various provocations.

2. Forces looking beyond racist minority rule

While the growth of far right reaction has been one important effect of the fracturing of the power bloc, there has also been a growth of forces within the white community looking towards solutions which reach beyond the parameters of racist minority rule. These now reach much broader strata of the white community, than the tiny minority of progressive whites who have always been involved in the democratic movement or broader anti-apartheid struggles. This growth has been fuelled by the failure of the Botha regime's "reformed apartheid" strategy and in some cases by

a dashing of illusions about how far Botha really intended to go. A number of different currents, with varying class bases and different degrees of distance from the regime have emerged. These need to be carefully analysed and distinguished.

1. Monopoly Capital

First, there has been a certain change in the stance of monopoly capital in the past few years. This has above all been the result of a lack of confidence in the Botha regime generated by the failure of its total strategy. As indicated earlier, the Botha regime came to power with a degree of support from monopoly capital unprecedented for a NP administration. This was in part based on tactical considerations and a calculation that the NP was there to stay. This was well expressed in an interview given to *Business International* by Harry Oppenheimer in 1980:

"Since we're not going to get the Nationalists out of power so quickly - much as I'd like to see the Progressive-Federal party come in - one has got to find a means of doing social justice in a way that the reasonable people in the Nationalist Party might go for" (19).

But there were also strong expectations or illusions that the regime's "reformed apartheid" programme would in fact succeed in making South Africa safe for capitalism as well as in opening up the Southern African region to South African capital.

Until the latter part of 1984, relations between monopoly capital and the regime remained generally warm. This was reflected in various business-government meetings and in the fact that most of the leading business personalities supported the campaign for a "Yes Vote" in the November 1983 referendum on the tri-cameral constitution. There was also widespread support for the Nkomati Accord signed with Mozambique in March 1984.

This began to change during the 1984-86 surge forward of the people's struggle, as the perception grew that "reformed apartheid" was failing. The first real sign of a strain in relations between monopoly capital and the regime came in November 1984 when the arrest of trade unionists involved in the stay-away organised at that time led six leading capitalist organisations to submit a memorandum complaining that the regime's heavy-handed action was threatening to undermine industrial relations procedures. Significantly this memorandum was also signed by the *Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut* whose president said that "ethnic considerations" no longer had the same weight among his membership as in the past (20). The same month also saw the first signs of disquiet at the regime's non-observance of the Nkomati accord signed with Mozambique. With the breakdown, in November 1984, of attempts to promote a ceasefire between the MNR bandits and the Frelimo government in Mozambique, and amidst growing evidence of continuing support by the Pretoria

regime for the MNR bandits, serious concern began to be expressed that a continuation of bandit activity at its existing levels at least, was placing in jeopardy the Nkomati Accord, and all it represented in terms of Pretoria's credibility in the region and at the wider international level (21).

By the beginning of 1985, serious criticism was also being voiced of the regime's handling of the deepening fiscal crisis of the apartheid state. In January 1985, *The Star* summed up the views of leading businessmen on this as follows:

"For the first time in the country's long history the feeling is increasingly growing that things have got out of hand and that the government - in the visible form of [Finance Minister] Mr du Plessis - simply has no answers..."

Talk of the end of the 'spirit of Carlton and Good Hope' began to be common.

By mid-1985 it had become apparent that many of the leading spokespersons for monopoly capital had come to the conclusion that the Botha regime's "reformed apartheid" programme was incapable of resolving the multiple crisis of the apartheid state. Various alternative "plans", "proposals" and "scenarios" for the future began to be mapped out. While these varied in detail, they suggested that monopoly capital had come to see itself as obliged by the advances in the popular struggle to move beyond the parameters acceptable to the "reasonable people" in the Nationalist Party in their desperate search for a solution which would make South Africa safe for capitalism. Botha's "Rubicon Speech" of August 15th 1985, in which he basically reaffirmed his unwillingness to move beyond the existing "reform" package, led to a major rupture between the regime and the monopolies. The financial press was unanimous in calling for Botha's resignation. The *Sunday Star* wrote:

"Business leaders who normally support President Botha were 'shattered' by his speech...His speech, watched by millions globally, ended any remaining cosiness between business and the government, built up after the Carlton and Good Hope conferences." (22).

This was followed by the meeting in September of the same year between the ANC and a group of leading personalities associated with monopoly capital. This meeting took place despite strictures from Botha about "disloyalty".

It was, in short, the pressures created by the 1984-6 advance of our people's struggle that forced monopoly capital to review its positions and to conclude that racist minority rule - even on the basis of a programme of social and economic "reform" - was no longer capable of creating stable conditions for capital accumulation. In the current Emergency-phase, monopoly capital appears generally to still be of the view that it will eventually be necessary to move beyond Nationalist Party rule to some system

in which the structures of government are "multi-racialised". At the same time, however, this class force is evidently concerned to constrain the capacity of any new post-NP government to act in ways which would seriously threaten the position of monopoly capital. Although precise proposals have not yet emerged, it is clear that ideally monopoly capital would like to initiate a process of negotiation from which some kind of federalist or "consociational" system would emerge. This would entrench minority vetoes and legally enforceable "rights". Not only would these entrenched rights protect existing capitalist ownership patterns, they would also severely limit a new government's capacity to transform the system of exploitation and oppression or even to act to rectify the most glaring inequalities generated by apartheid. In other words, the guarantees being sought would tend to place severe restrictions on any programme aimed at achieving the democratic demands put forward in the Freedom Charter. As a fall back, monopoly capital would probably be prepared eventually to settle for a deal which offered major guarantees to big capital but did not exclude nationalisation altogether. In this respect it is notable that Gavin Relly is on record "accept[ing] a measure of state planning and intervention...to compensate for the errors of omission and commission of the apartheid era" (23).

There is as yet no complete clarity on who and which organisations monopoly capital sees as leading and participating in such a post-NP government. Our movement's undisputed position as the vanguard of the struggling oppressed people, demonstrated once again during the 1984-6 surge forward, has led some of the more far sighted elements of monopoly capital to the view that the ANC is an indispensable element in any "settlement". However, considerable hopes still seem to be being placed on Buthelezi and Inkatha. In May 1986, Gavin Relly responded to a question on his attitude towards Buthelezi saying,

"You can't expect us to run away from the single black leader who says exactly what we think. I like Buthelezi and what he says. Business has talked to him for a long time. None of us believe in the simple blackism that the ANC puts forward. Life's not like that. I've been told that Buthelezi plays a rough game in Natal. But South Africa is not for the faint hearted" (24).

More substance was given to the intended role for Buthelezi (who has despite considerable efforts failed to secure a country-wide base among the oppressed population) during the Kwa-Natal indaba. This received substantial backing from both Natal-based capital and monopoly capital in general. In a nutshell the indaba proposals would amount to handing over administrative control throughout Natal to Buthelezi and Inkatha, who would then be placed in a better position to terrorise communities throughout the province. Buthelezi would also thereby secure his place in future national negotiations on the basis of his regional base - as a force or factor which could not be ignored. These plans, however, received a set back when the indaba proposals were

rejected by the regime - on the grounds that they were based on the principle of "majoritarianism" rather than "power sharing".

The severe limitations of the degree of monopoly capital's "break" with the Botha regime need to be stressed. If it has differences with the regime, monopoly capital also has serious reservations about the democratic movement. The programmes and proposals for a post-NP South Africa emanating from monopoly capital envisage something very different from the non-racial democratic society called for in the Freedom Charter. It is not any inherent inability to coexist with racist minority rule that has forced monopoly capital look for alternatives, but rather a perception forced on it by the developing struggle that racist minority rule can no longer guarantee stable conditions for capital accumulation. The latter is the principal strategic objective sought by this class force and it is a "political solution" which will best guarantee stability for capital accumulation that the monopolies are seeking. In the concrete conditions of struggle which have emerged in South Africa, monopoly capital has shown a degree of vacillation normally attributed only to the petty bourgeoisie. It is at moments in the struggle when the challenge from the democratic movement is felt most intensely that the greatest distancing from the regime occurs. At moments, such as the present Emergency phase, when the regime appears to be more in control the distance is much less. For example: A number of leading business personalities who initially condemned the Emergency, have now endorsed it (25); Some credence is being given to the regime's pronouncements on "power sharing"; The monopolies are cooperating actively in sanctions busting; And evidence has emerged even of businessmen being drawn in to assist NSMS structures in the implementation of the current "hearts and minds" strategy (26). Moreover, there can be no doubt that the regime is making some effort to heal the rift with monopoly capital. The Thatcherite economic "reform" measures - including privatisation of state corporations, changes in the tax system, and a freeze on state expenditure - which will dominate the legislative programme in the current session of parliament are evidently intended to appeal to business.

Beyond this there are, of course, a number of more permanent links with the regime and the military in particular, which influence the positions taken by monopoly capital. A number of major monopolies have strong ties to Armscor, whose policy is, wherever possible, to award contracts to the "private sector". Over 900 private contractors employing 70.000 people have lucrative contracts with Armscor, including the subsidiaries of major monopolies (27). As comrade Mac Maharaj has put it, "For such firms, increasing defence expenditure, the development of new weapons systems, and their use in war contributes to accumulation" (28). Domestic repression, as well as regional destabilisation is, in short, "good for business".

The limitations of monopoly capital's current positions can perhaps be summed up as follows. While this class force has shown some indication that it is prepared to contemplate a post-NP

negotiated settlement (something which cannot be ignored and, indeed needs to be encouraged), it has not shown any sign that it is itself willing to do much to bring about a move towards any such situation. The monopolies have, as yet, given no indication of being prepared to put their considerable class power behind any attempt to dislodge the regime or force it to create a climate for negotiation. On the other hand, the monopolies have made it abundantly clear that if and when a process of transition does occur, they will put up a stiff fight to ensure that a post NP negotiated settlement does not seriously affect their interests. Indeed, the monopolies appear to be more actively involved in preparing a strategy for struggle on the terrain of a post-NP society (where the principal adversary will be the democratic movement), than in acting to create the conditions for a move onto such a terrain.

Among other things, this suggests the following:

* First, the democratic movement needs increasingly to assume the offensive even now in the debate/struggle over the character of a post-apartheid society. We need to set the pace in defining the issues under debate. We should not allow ourselves to be submerged in reacting to proposals from others, and should not allow concerns of the monopolies - about how their interests would be affected - to dominate the debate. Rather we should force them to address the concerns of the people - to say how the people will share in the country's wealth; have work and security; houses, security and comfort. Moreover, we should seek to widen the debate beyond the ranks of the hired academics of big business, where much of it is now located. As well as obviously implying a need to democratise the debate and bring it to the people's organisations, this could also involve challenging a variety of organisations active in specific fields to say how they will contribute towards bringing about change and eliminating inequalities. These could include various professional bodies (medical, educational, legal etc) with largely white memberships as well as church, cultural and other organisations.

* Second, there are areas of vulnerability which could be developed in an attempt to encourage/cajole the monopolies to withdraw support from the regime. Success here would both weaken the regime and possibly also encourage the monopolies to become somewhat more robust in pressing the regime. In particular, the monopolies could be confronted with their collaboration with the military, a point of vulnerability for them at the political/ideological level. This would suggest the possibility of considering directing some diplomatic and other pressure towards challenging, delegitimising and raising the costs of their ties with the military and their involvement in the arms industry.

ii. Other forces

Another immediately more encouraging effect of the fracturing of the white power bloc has been a significant increase in the numbers of white intellectuals, professionals, church people, youth, students etc. - both English and Afrikaans-speaking - breaking with the "white establishment". This trend can, in the first instance, be seen as a symptom of the deepening ideological crisis of the apartheid system and state. The past fifteen years have seen the classic Verwoerdian formulations of apartheid being ditched in favour of a discourse of "reform". This was initially ambiguous, broadly cast and pitched at generating high expectations. In practice, it has increasingly been forced by the developing struggle to reveal its limitations and contradictions, and has failed dismally in its quest to mobilise significant support among the oppressed. At the same time, the liberal ideology of monopoly capital with its attempt to present apartheid and capitalism as entirely distinct phenomena has run up against a popular consciousness increasingly clear about the relationship between capitalist exploitation and apartheid oppression. All of this has led to important desertions from the ranks of the organic intellectuals of the ruling class, including a number of from Afrikaner nationalism.

There have also been a number of other specific factors which have contributed to this process. Militarisation and the drift towards war, has meant that apartheid no longer offers white youth only the prospect of a privileged, comfortable life. Enjoyment of the "good life" now has to be interspersed with periods of active service in the SADF fighting apartheid's regional wars or doing battle in townships. This has prompted a growing rebellion against conscription by increasing numbers of white youth. The undermining of the white "parliamentary democracy" through the emergence of the NSMS, although accepted by most whites, has also had some effect. Most importantly, it brought to a head a simmering conflict within the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) between a centrist majority unable or unwilling to look beyond the white parliamentary arena and a minority seeking some relationship to the extra-parliamentary democratic movement. This led to the resignation in 1986 of the then PFP leader Frederick van Zyl Slabbert and the formation of the Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa (IDASA). The dashing of current PFP leader, Colin Eglin's hopes of forging a new centrist alternative to the NP in the May 1987 elections have meant that conflicts over role definition have continued within the PFP. Finally, the state's move away from the policy of protecting the privileges of white wage earners through job reservation and the like, while leading some strata of white labour to support the far right has led other white workers to turn towards the democratic trade unions.

Left to themselves, such currents would have had little potential to become much more than pockets of dissidence, symptoms of decay of the apartheid system and augurs of its future downfall. It is

to the credit of the democratic movement that it has sought to weld these disparate currents into more than an expression of vacillating, rootless alienation - although there remain many expressions of just that. The activities of organisations like the End Conscription Campaign (ECC), IDASA, Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (Jodac), the Five Freedoms forum, the National Union of South African Students (Nusas), the Black Sash and others, as well as the various meetings with our movement have been important aspects of the process of encouraging such elements first to move onto the terrain of forces for change and eventually, in some cases, to become part of the broad democratic movement.

It is among such social categories that the greatest prospects for effective political work/education within the white community will continue to lie. We should be realistic. The growth in their ranks will not be dramatic. We will not reach the majority in the white community. The influence within the white community of those we do reach will be limited. Nevertheless, the impact of advances in this area can reach beyond the numbers directly influenced as the Dakar meeting showed. Gains in this area can be an important part of the process of delegitimising racist minority and establishing the ANC's position as the legitimate representative of an alternative democratic and non-racial South Africa.

It seems to the present writer that some attention should be given to finding ways to follow up major "events" like Dakar. Consideration could perhaps be given to finding ways of further publicising and developing our positions on cultural and language rights of minorities, not in a defensive way but because these are real issues which will have to be faced in a liberated South Africa. We can also win the argument about the legitimacy and necessity of the armed struggle. We could perhaps think about publishing some of our material in the Afrikaans language and encourage Afrikaners to think of themselves as Africans (which is, after all, the correct English translation of Afrikaners).

3. Contradictions within the regime

While the above have been the most visible effects of the erosion of the cohesion of the white power bloc, contradictions have also reached right into the regime, the state apparatus, the Nationalist Party and associated institutions such as the Broederbond. The well known divisions between *verligtes* and *verkramptes* which appeared in the 1960s, have as the crisis deepened, multiplied and a number of different factions and groupings now exist. The major differences in the current Emergency phase are said to be between a "reformist" minority and the "militarist" majority. The basic positions of each were discussed earlier. In addition to this, a "New Nat" faction supposedly willing to move beyond racist minority rule emerged during the 1984-6 surge forward. Some of these left the NP before

the May 1987 election and constituted themselves in the Malan/Lategan/Worrall independent movement (which has now split). Others are said to still be in the NP, however. Differences between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military have also been reported over aspects of regional destabilisation policies. Justice Minister, Kobie Coetzee, is said to have lobbied for the release of political prisoners. The increasing dominance by the military over the security apparatuses of the state has reportedly led to resentments by the security police, and so on.

The significance of such contradictions has often been greatly exaggerated. At one stage, for example, it was alleged that there were up to 33 "New Nat" MPs. Unlike old style *verligtes*, personified by Chris Heunis, whose bottom line was that although "blacks will be in parliament white Nats will keep ultimate control", the "New Nats" were said to be willing to contemplate a transfer of power (29). In the end some of those so named - such as Wynand Breytenbach, the Deputy Defence Minister - proved to be closer to the *verkrampste* than *verligte* wings of the party. Several others, such as Stoffel van der Merwe, were no more than *verligte* "reformists" seeking negotiation within the parameters of racist minority rule. Moreover, many of those who genuinely did hold something approaching positions attributed to the "New Nat" have now resigned from the party. A small number, the best known being Albert Nothnagel, have remained in the the NP, but under strong pressure from Botha and lacking any support from "high profile NP leaders" are reported to have "retreated into the laager" (30). Most other divisions within the NP can be characterised as tactical - they are about the means to achieve the common objective of retaining racist minority rule.

There is no important tendency within the regime or NP that the democratic movement can positively welcome or seriously contemplate entering into even a tactical alliance with. This does not mean, however, that the contradictions which have emerged within the regime are irrelevant. They reflect differences over how to respond to the challenge posed by our struggle. The differing positions represent differing levels of resistance/reaction to our demands and struggle. Moreover, the struggle between them appears to be crystallising in and around the contest to succeed P.W. Botha. Although Botha has indicated that he has no plans for an early retirement, a succession struggle is clearly underway. The generally recognised contenders in this are F.W. de Klerk; Gerrit Viljoen; Chris Heunis; Barend du Plessis; R.F. "Pik" Botha and Magnus Malan (31).

Although none of these candidates offer anything other than a programme aiming at the maintenance of racist minority rule, it cannot be a matter of indifference to us which of them takes over from Botha. Most importantly, if Magnus Malan, who is now reported to have a retired Brigadier, Kobus Bosman, actively lobbying for him in the NP caucus (32), were to become NP leader it would mark a further step towards a complete military take over. In this respect it is worth recalling that although they do

not currently appear to be favouring Malan, important sectors of imperialism and monopoly capital have often turned to military dictatorships in times of crisis. At one stage there was talk of an enlightened military under Malan imposing reform. It is not impossible that this kind of talk is revived. Our movement can take some initiatives in this situation. Most directly, we can show how it is only ANC policies which can guarantee democracy in South Africa, while apartheid in its various guises inevitably leads to militarisation and dictatorship. Less directly, although the democratic movement itself cannot initiate a campaign in the arena of "white politics", we could perhaps consider supporting a broad-based campaign by sympathetic forces around some theme like, "Stop Magnus Malan and the Military Take-Over of Our Country". As with other campaigns, this could of course be used to raise a range of further issues.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The present paper has attempted to analyse and describe some of the major effects and implications of the erosion of the coherence of the white power bloc which has emerged in the last decade or so. The paper has argued that there has been no independent, internal dynamic underlying this fracturing. The divisions which have appeared within the dominant classes have been provoked by the advances in popular struggle which have brought about a major change in the balance of forces between oppressor and oppressed. The paper has argued that racist minority rule is in irreversible decline, and that this will in general tend to further heighten contradictions within the white minority. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that there is still a direct relationship between level of pressure of mass struggle and the degree of contradiction within the white minority. It is at moments in the struggle when the pressures from "below" are felt most strongly, that contradictions within the dominant classes are at their sharpest. Conversely, at moments in the struggle when the challenge of the oppressed is felt less intensely, contradictions within the power bloc recede. This would suggest that even on tactical grounds there is little to recommend an approach of unilaterally offering concessions - such as suspending the armed struggle. There is no dynamic within "white politics" that suggests that any such move would substantially increase support from within the white community for a move beyond racist minority rule. On the contrary, it would by lessening the pressure, probably slow, at least temporary, the process of disintegration which have drawn some strata of the white community away from positions supportive of racist minority rule.

This is not to suggest that the only response called for is to intensify general pressure. The paper has suggested that there are a number of specific points of intervention which can widen specific contradictions within the white community to our advantage. At the same time, the paper has attempted to draw

attention to the fact that the very same process of decay and disintegration of the cohesion of white power, which make it feasible for us to widen the ranks of forces for change also allow the far right to expand its influence among other strata. The potential menace posed by this also needs to be taken into account.

While pressure from mass struggle and international action is fundamental, this does not diminish the importance of presenting the ANC case at all levels. It is precisely when our forces are regrouping on the ground that we must take political and ideological initiatives aimed at maintaining and widening divisions in the enemy camp. It is not a question of choosing between mass revolutionary struggle on the one hand, and political/ideological action aimed at "forces for change" on the other. On the contrary, the political, military and diplomatic struggles are, as always, inextricably linked. In the past we have perhaps tended to see political struggle as aimed at the masses at home, and diplomatic action as directed at peoples and governments abroad. Perhaps we need to think of a kind of politico-diplomatic offensive at home - reaching into sectors from which we have been excluded in the past. We do not become direct participants in "white politics", but we do need to take every opportunity to present our positions and prepare our white compatriots for the future.

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21. See Financial Mail 30/11/1984, R.Davies, "South African Strategy Towards Mozambique since Nkomati", Transformation, 3, 1987 pages 18-20.
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25. On this see, for example, the 1987 annual statement by Anglo American Chairman, Gavin Relly, part of which reads: "In the circumstances the imposition of the State of Emergency last year and its recent renewal, though regrettable, were necessary to contain the widening cycle of senseless violence" (abridged version reprinted in Financial Mail 17/7/1987). A year earlier, in his Chairman's Report for 1986, Relly had written, "While the process by no means has been easy, ...experience has shown that disparate groups can come together and reach agreements acceptable to all parties...Naturally, all this cannot proceed in an environment clouded by the restrictions imposed by a state of emergency, and measures which have resulted in the incarceration of people who would have to be included in future negotiations. It is impossible in these circumstances to maintain, let alone develop, the sound industrial relations essential to a free enterprise, democratic State" (abridged version reproduced in Leadership, 5, 4, 1986).

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