

INTERNATIONAL

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Mr Franco is in no position to make economic policy all on his own. As a quirky gentleman politician without a party, he will have to bend to the will of the opposition coalition that organised Mr Collor's impeachment. And (in an ironic tribute to Mr Collor's achievements) all members of this coalition, including the parties of the left, say they want to persist with reforms to cut state spending and expose the economy to foreign competition. "The name of the next finance minister", said Orestes Quercia, the head of the Brazil Democratic Movement Party, the biggest party of all, "is

tax and structural reform."

Besides, Mr Franco's own views may recently have altered. "I'm not the only one who has changed. The world changed," he said last weekend. The extraordinary circumstances in which he became president will guarantee him some goodwill in Congress, at least for a while. That may help him to push through the urgent tax reforms needed to curb inflation. How peculiar it would be—and how excellent for Brazil—if Mr Franco, a reluctant bystander during many of Mr Collor's reforms, became the man who put them properly into practice.

Zulus

The damage he could do



Buthelezi and friends

BESPECTACLED he may be, but when Mangosuthu Buthelezi can be very frightening. This week his words have been frightening, too. He speaks of "anti-Zulu racism" and a plot to set up "Zulu concentration camps". He fulminates against both President F.W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, the president of the African National Congress. As leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party and boss of KwaZulu, South Africa's Zulu "homeland", Mr Buthelezi will clearly do whatever he can to wreck any constitutional deal for South Africa that leaves him out. And he can do a lot.

The latest complaints are aimed at the concessions Mr de Klerk granted Mr Mandela on September 26th, in order to lure the ANC back to the peace table. These included bowing to long-standing ANC demands, such as the fencing off and patrolling of various Zulu migrant workers' hostels in black townships. Mr de Klerk also agreed to stop Zulus carrying their "cultural weapons", such as spears, swords and clubs. This, huffed Mr Buthelezi, was discrimination.

Why should Zulus be fenced in, and forced to lay down their weapons, while the ANC's underground army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, keeps its caches of weapons under wraps?

Behind this question lies Mr Buthelezi's fear that his cosy relations with the ruling National Party may be drawing to an end. During the peace talks earlier this year, he sided with the Nationalists on many issues. Mr de Klerk blew kisses in return. Both had an eye on the aftermath of a future election. If each did well enough, they might form a coalition capable of blocking the ANC. Mr Buthelezi seems now to smell betrayal. Just possibly, Mr de Klerk has decided that it is better to have good relations with his chief adversary than with a potential ally. On September 30th the ANC confirmed that it was returning to the talks, and calling off a threatened general strike.

Welcome as the resumption of talks may be, the departure of Inkatha is hugely dangerous. The Zulus are the biggest and most cohesive of South Africa's tribes. If they feel cornered, and if Mr Buthelezi can unite them behind him, there is a danger of all-

out civil war against the ANC, in which Xhosas are disproportionately represented, though less so than in the past. With his organisational base in KwaZulu, and his claim (supported by a confusing family tree he shows off to visitors) to be descended from Zulu kings, he is in a strong position to make trouble. Whether he has royal blood or not, he has the backing of the present Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelethini.

In the week before the agreement between Mr Mandela and Mr de Klerk, Mr Buthelezi addressed three mass rallies. With a leopard's skin across his shoulders, and a shield, stick and spear in his hands, he warned Zulus that their foes planned to wipe KwaZulu "off the face of the earth".

At a speech in Nkandla, a dusty settlement in the heart of Zulu territory, not far from the grave of Cetshwayo, the Zulu king who resisted British invaders, Mr Buthelezi compared the ANC's planned march on Ulundi, the KwaZulu capital, to the British invasion of Zululand in 1879. The ANC, he implied, was an alien force and those who support it were traitors, like the "loyal natives" who once fought for the British against their own kinsmen. In Ulundi Mr Buthelezi told his civil servants that KwaZulu, far from being "a construct of apartheid" had its own "historically established sovereignty".

Many of the ANC's foes, from black homeland leaders to far-right Afrikaners, have put secession on the agenda as a last desperate option. Mr Buthelezi is no exception. But KwaZulu possesses institutions, such as a police force, army and government, which could make a KwaZulu independence drive difficult to stop. And if Mr Buthelezi peeled KwaZulu away from South Africa, others—including the sympathetic leaders of Bophuthatswana and Ciskei—might follow his example.

For now, though, Mr Buthelezi is probably bluffing. At midweek he joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu in calling for a moratorium on "vituperative attacks". Nobody knows how strong Inkatha really is. Although it claims to have 1m followers, it has lost many supporters to the ANC in the past five years. It has a loyal following among Zulus in country areas, but many Zulus in the cities support the ANC. In some places the conflict is generational: parents join Inkatha, children join the ANC.

On September 30th an independent commission under Judge Richard Goldstone concluded that the recent massacre of ANC marchers on the Ciskei border was "morally and legally indefensible". Inkatha people speak bitterly of three massacres during September in Ensimbini (14 dead), Enlanzeni (eight dead) and Kengeshe (ten dead). They say, with some justice, the world ignores massacres when the perpetrators are from the ANC and the victims from Inkatha.