

THE BUS.DAY, THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 1994

Proposal to change Act to extend election deadline

A PROPOSAL that the Electoral Act be changed to extend the deadline for parties to register is being mooted in government circles as one of several attempts to prevent the door being shut on negotiations with the Freedom Alliance.

This follows the firm refusal by Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the KwaZulu legislative assembly caucus to register under the constitution as it now stands.

The Freedom Alliance approached government yesterday and called on it to come up with a further proposal to take negotiations forward, softening the tone of its statements made after its leaders met on Tuesday.

Alliance chairman Rowan Cronje said it was not shutting the door on further talks and he would be contacting the ANC to convey the full tenor and official position of the alli-

BILLY P. DDOCK

ance leaders.

The ANC's national working committee met yesterday to evaluate the position of negotiations with the alliance. Depending on the outcome of the meeting, further talks with the alliance can not be ruled out despite there being little hope that the ANC will compromise further. There is speculation in the organisation that there are other ways of accommodating the alliance.

Apparently the idea of shifting the deadline is being floated as one measure which could relax the pressure on negotiators. Inkatha has a central committee meeting on Saturday, the deadline date, to decide on its stance.

But the idea has not yet been put forward as a firm proposal to any of the other parties and sources stressed this option could be fraught with difficulties. The Independent Electoral Commission would have to accept the

plan, and a series of other date problems would be created.

And there is no guarantee such a move would facilitate agreement with the alliance.

As it stands, the Freedom Alliance is facing its own difficulties, with the possibility that the CP or the Afrikaner Volksfront will break ranks and register as a tactical measure, withdrawing later if negotiations fail to meet their demands.

Cronje said the alliance was purely a negotiating front and parties would each decide what to do to meet the requirements of their constituencies.

Another initiative to break the deadlock is a meeting between a Sa-cob delegation, headed by its president Cedric Savage, and Buthelezi in Ulundi today.

Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer was also launching an initiative to enter into discussions with parties in the alliance.

Report by B Paddock, THA, 11 Diagonal St, Jhb.

Right may boycott South Africa poll

Pretoria, Wednesday

South Africa's right wing has edged closer to a showdown over the transition to majority rule, saying it will probably boycott all-race elections in April.

And the king of the Zulus has demanded that the South African Government cede him a province of eight million people to rule as a sovereign monarchy.

According to Zulu and Government officials, King Goodwill Zwelithini has told South African President F.W. de Klerk that he rejects South Africa's new Constitution, will not abide by the results of the country's first free elections in April, and intends to secede with all the territory that the British took from his forebears.

Conservative black and white groups in the Freedom Alliance said yesterday that they could compromise no further on their demands for ethnic self-determination. "We've come to the conclusion ... there is really no sense in carrying on with the negotiation process," the Freedom Alliance chairman, Mr Rowan Cronje, told reporters after a meeting of alliance leaders.

The two main members of the alliance — Chief Mangosuthu Buthe's Inkatha Freedom Party and the white separatist Afrika-



King Goodwill Zwelithini: rejects the Constitution.

ner People's Front — have frequently warned of civil war if their demands are not met.

Mr Cronje, saying it was unlikely that the alliance would take part in the elections on 27 April, added that members would now study what alternatives they had to taking part in negotiations.

He said talks with the African National Congress and the Government had "reached bottom" on the issue of whether the constituent assembly elected in April should have a free hand in writing a final constitution.

Mr Cronje said the ANC, which according to opinion polls could achieve a big enough majority in April to write the constitution by itself, refused to bind the constituent assembly to any accords reached with the alliance now. This made discussion of other issues irrelevant, Mr Cronje said.

The chief Government negotiator, Mr Roelf Meyer, said the alliance was making "a big mistake". It had won important concessions from the Government and the ANC in recent weeks, he said.

Mr Meyer and an ANC spokesman, Mr Carl Niehaus, said their doors were open for further talks and Mr Cronje also said the alliance was "not slamming the door".

ANC and right-wing leaders have spoken in recent weeks of the possibility that their differences will lead to violence.

There is almost no chance the Zulu king's demand will be accommodated, but it has cast an unexpected new shadow over the country's hopes for peaceful, all-inclusive elections in April.

While some Government officials suspect a Machiavellian bargaining manoeuvre, political allies insist that the king is serious and if not satisfied, the Zulu areas of South Africa face civil war.

— Reuter

Alliance edges nearer S Africa poll boycott

By ANTON FERREIRA in Pretoria

SOUTH Africa's right wing has edged closer to a show-down over transition to majority rule, saying it would probably boycott all-race elections in April.

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The two main members of the alliance — the Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the white separatist Afrikaner People's Front (AVF) — have often warned of civil war if their demands are not accommodated.

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ANC spokesman Mr Carl Niehaus said it was regrettable the alliance believed there was no point in more talks but the movement would not allow itself to be blackmailed.

The Government's chief negotiator, Mr Rieff Meyer, said the alliance was making "a big mistake". It had won major concessions from the Government and the ANC in recent weeks, he said.

Both Mr Meyer and Mr Niehaus said that as far as they were concerned the door was open for further talks, and Mr Cronje said the alliance was "not slamming the door".

AVF head General Constans Viljoen said "limited violence" might be needed to achieve white self-rule, and neo-Nazi leader Mr Eugene Terre'Blanche said at the weekend South Africa would look like Guy Fawkes night if whites did not get their own homeland.

Reuters

10.2.94
The Australian

A Kafkaesque dialogue ensues: Mr. Molefe is told he has no permission for the rally. He says he has come to get it. That has to go through internal affairs. So can he call the man responsible for internal affairs? The police say they don't have his number. After a few more minutes, Capt. Cyril Mosupye says: "There's no need to prolong this. The issue is short and precise: You don't have permission to hold this meeting. You don't have any other option but to pack your things and go."

Mr. Molefe complies to avoid a bloodbath. But as he crosses the border between Bophuthatswana and South Africa — a mere signpost — a final scene drives home how out of step Bophuthatswana is with the country that spawned it: The man who was prevented from bringing the message of black liberation to a black-ruled country stops to share a barbecue with white South African soldiers, long bitter foes of the ANC, who man the border post.

On a map, Bophuthatswana doesn't make sense. The land consists of six separate enclaves within South Africa, so that it's often impossible to know which country one is in. "At night I walk my dog in Bophuthatswana and go to bed in South Africa," says Alwyn Viljoen, a government spokesman. The country's appearance as a fantasyland is enhanced by the extravagant Lost City complex in Sun City, which features a lagoon with artificial waves, a golf course with crocodiles in the hazards and an area that trembles in a simulated earthquake.

But Bophuthatswana can point to real achievements that make it the only independent homeland that isn't an economic wreck. Its mines produce nearly a third of the world's platinum, its industrial zone attracts multinationals like Germany's Bayerische Motoren Werke AG, and the hotels and casinos of South African leisure giant Sun International Hotels Ltd. bring in tourism and tax revenue. Locally generated revenue provides about 80% of its budget, and the country claims its growth rate outpaces much of Africa's.

Bophuthatswana's high-school graduation rate is nearly double South Africa's, and Mmabatho's manpower center attracts students from South Africa seeking to acquire marketable technical skills. The country has achieved a degree of racial harmony and social peace that strikes visitors from South Africa. And then there's Mmabatho itself, a showcase capital that boasts a variety of gleaming structures, including a 60,000-seat stadium and a recording studio considered one of the best in the world.

"Our people continue to enjoy a standard of living their counterparts in South Africa can only marvel at," Mr. Mangope boasted recently. It is to preserve this that he wants Bop to remain independent or retain control of the region's wealth.

But critics say Bop's tranquility is achieved through constant harassment of opponents and laws that can turn a meeting between two people into an "illegal gathering." In the last election, Mr. Mangope was unopposed. His claims of uplifting the Tswana people are contradicted by the fact that the buck usually stops at a white desk. Whites hold top managerial posts in virtually all state companies, and the head of the army is South African.

Unemployment outside the civil service is massive, and those employed often work in South Africa. And then, does Mmabatho really need a stadium that can seat half its population? Or an "international" airport that can take jets? "Bophuthatswana's case is full of holes," asks Francine de Clercq, a professor at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, who has written on Bophuthatswana.

Indeed, the town of Bodibe, only 18 miles outside of Mmabatho, reveals a different Bophuthatswana. Bodibe is a collection of brick and adobe houses without running water, electricity or phones. A man named Joseph, who declines to give his last name, lives in a tiny house with his wife and four children. He sleeps on the one bed with two of the children; the other two sleep on the floor with his wife. He has been unemployed since 1992, when he gave up a construction job in South Africa because the pay was too low to justify the long commute, leaving at 5:30 a.m.

Joseph laughs when asked whether Bophuthatswana offers him better opportunities than South Africa. "What opportunities?" he asks. "Look for yourself. It's a mess."

At a neighboring house, a group of 20 people sit down to discuss their lives. Of the 20, three have jobs — all in South Africa. "When Mangope says we're independent and well off, he's referring to himself and his friends," says one. All those interviewed say they wanted to rejoin South Africa, but complain of harassment. As their visitors leave, police cars are seen entering the village.

Many believe Mr. Mangope eventually will have to give in because the change in South Africa's government will deprive him of his only ally — an ally whose army restored him to power in 1988 when he was briefly toppled in a coup. Already, South Africa's Transitional Executive Council, a multiracial advisory body, is tightening the screws, suspending a \$63.5 million loan by the South African Development Bank to Bophuthatswana until free political activity is allowed.

If that is not enough, ANC and government officials say South Africa could cut off power and water and suspend financial transfers. Some officials of Bophuthatswana speak of retaliating by withholding supplies from the mines, but Finance Minister Martin van den Berg, a South African citizen, admits: "If they're willing to cut electricity, terminate the customs union and 10 other steps I can think of, they could bring Bophuthatswana to its knees economically and financially within six months."

And even if Mr. Mangope's defiance is simply a negotiating ploy to obtain greater regional powers in the hopes of continuing to play a role within South Africa, that move could backfire, too. South African polls show the ANC could get 74% of the vote in the region that would swallow Bophuthatswana. Jacob Buti Malefye, a 46-year-old resident of the town of Phokeng, explains why: "I woke up one morning and without moving anywhere, I was told I was in Bophuthatswana and had a new president," he says. "I want to wake up one morning and be back in my own country."

Nowhere Land

An Apartheid Creation, Tribal 'Nation' Wants To Remain on the Map

Refusal by Bophuthatswana
To Rejoin South Africa
Threatens April Election

ANC Says Tanks May Roll

By THOMAS KAMM

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

MMABATHO, South Africa — Bop Air's motto could be: The airline that's neither here nor there.

Bophuthatswana's flag carrier can't fly international routes because the world doesn't recognize its home country, saying it is part of South Africa. And Bop Air can't fly domestic routes within South Africa because it is considered a foreign airline. That leaves it flying only between South Africa and Bophuthatswana.

"This makes our life extremely difficult," complains finance manager Glenn Orsmond. "We're squeezed on all sides."

Bop Air's predicament goes to the heart of a question that is bedeviling South Africa's historic transition to black rule: Where does Bophuthatswana fit in the nascent multiracial South Africa?

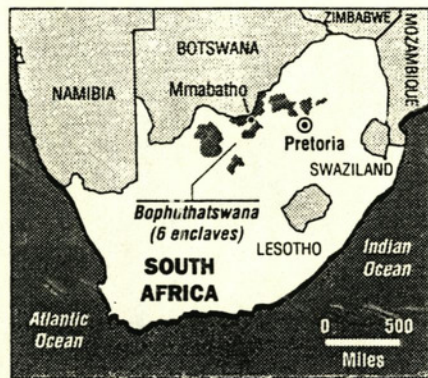
To many, the demise of apartheid has stripped the nominally independent black tribal homeland, which is recognized only by South Africa, of its *raison d'être* — if it ever had one. Bophuthatswana — pronounced Bop-pooh-tats-wana but commonly called Bop—should be bopped off the world map, its detractors say. "These are the very last days of Bophuthatswana," says Thaba Seboka, a law professor at the University of Bophuthatswana. "If nothing dramatic happens, its fate is sealed: It's bye bye Bop."

'Ruled by Our People'

But drama there is: Bophuthatswana's autocratic president, Lucas Mangope, is resisting reincorporation, defying not only South Africa's likely future president, Nelson Mandela, but also, in all likelihood, a majority of his own 2.3 million citizens. "We are not going to willingly revert to a system where once again we will be oppressed and deprived by a far-away government, the only difference this time around being the color of the skin of the people at the top," Mr. Mangope, who has ruled the homeland since its 1977 independence, said recently. "We want to be ruled by our own people, for our own people."

As South Africa prepares for its first democratic elections April 26 to April 28, this challenge highlights how the dismantling of apartheid has unleashed a complex power struggle between ethnic groups that was long obscured by the overriding issue of race.

Joining Bophuthatswana in resisting South Africa's new constitution, the king of the Zulu tribe is reported to want to secede from South Africa, and white supremacists are threatening "total war" if they



don't get an autonomous homeland. Talks involving the government, the African National Congress and the unhappy parties of the new South Africa broke down Tuesday and are given little chance of resuming before parties are to register for the ballot on Saturday.

While unlikely to derail the elections themselves, the clash raises serious doubts over how free the ballot will be and threatens to turn what began as a negotiated revolution into a messy, violent affair.

It would be the ultimate irony of apartheid that a homeland ostensibly created to give blacks the rights they were denied in South Africa could be the spoiler in the country's transition to black rule. But by insisting on continued independence — or at the very least, broad powers within a federal South Africa — Mr. Mangope is on a confrontation course that could turn what was the playground of apartheid, where whites flocked to taste the domestically forbidden fruits of gambling and pornography, into a battleground of the new South Africa. "If the only option left to us is to roll in the tanks, then that is what we would do," Matthew Phosa, the ANC's legal adviser, said recently.

Make-Believe Nations

Bophuthatswana is one of the 10 black tribal homelands created by apartheid's architects in the heyday of white supremacy. In a form of ethnic cleansing, South Africa sought to create a white majority by stripping blacks of their South African citizenship, rights and benefits and making them citizens of make-believe nations created for them.

Through forced removals, gerrymandering and the redrawing of borders, about 18 million of South Africa's 28 million blacks were parked on these reservations, which represented barely 15% of South Africa's territory. Now, as apartheid goes, many feel the homelands should go, too. Their citizens recently regained South African citizenship, and plans have been

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IF, AS seems increasingly likely, an inclusive constitutional settlement can not be reached and the three components of the Freedom Alliance — Inkatha, the CP/Afrikaner Volksfront and Bophuthatswana — resolve to boycott the election, the question that arises is: What then?

Bophuthatswana appears to be the easiest "problem" to resolve, but even then it is not simple. The homeland government's position as a key negotiating partner is curious. Unlike its alliance allies which have a measurable base of support, polls consistently fail to register support for President Lucas Mangope's party equivalent to the 0,25% necessary to win a single parliamentary seat.

In that light, the Bophuthatswana government's vigorous struggle for enhanced and protected regional powers, while perhaps inherently worthy, is fairly meaningless given that it would not be represented at all in a national legislature and would have minimal representation in the relevant regional ones.

It does, however, have a full-scale administration including security forces. And as has been demonstrated during ANC attempts to electioneer in Bophuthatswana, those forces are able to block those activities and, presumably, voting, in April. Unless the administration simply concedes defeat, overcoming those problems could be a complicated, even bloody, exercise.

The Inkatha/KwaZulu situation is far more complex, though. As a poorer region, and a self-governing rather than an independent homeland, KwaZulu's physical resources are more limited than Bophuthatswana's. Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, according to the latest polls, can claim the support of about 23% of the voters of KwaZulu/Natal — or less than 5% of the national total.

However, this is a solid constituency, made more potent by the factor of Zulu nationalism which he exploits, not least by his close identification with Zulu king Goodwill Zwe-

lithini. Nevertheless, his support is significantly down on earlier polls, which gave him real hope of controlling Natal. An election which confirms the latest polls may be too great a humiliation for Buthelezi to bear, and probably explains his resistance to any deal.

His problems, though, may increase. Centre for Policy Studies director Steven Friedman says there is talk out of Natal that the NP and ANC's patient work with Zwelithini may yet bear fruit.

Parallel to the inconclusive trilateral talks, the two parties, and President FW de Klerk in particular, have been holding intensive discussions with the king, and some say the king's advisers are suggesting that he accept a deal on offer which formalises his status and that of his kingdom at a level no worse than exists now.

As important, it would guarantee the income he currently receives from the KwaZulu administration — funds which originate in the central treasury but which would in future be channelled through the new KwaZulu/Natal region established by the new constitution and dominated, in Inkatha's absence, by the ANC.

Would Zwelithini forsake Buthelezi? It may seem unlikely. But the

BUSINESS DAY 10-02-94 Zwelithini is now the kingpin in talks impasse

ALAN FINE



□ ZWELITHINI

pair's relationship has not always been a happy one. In the 1970s it was particularly tense when Buthelezi accused the king of using state funds

to establish an opposition party to Inkatha. And in December two incidents hinted at tension between them. First, Zwelithini criticised the alliance's withdrawal from talks, and then he appeared to set himself up for a clash with Buthelezi over the appointments of certain chiefs.

Both incidents were quietly smoothed over, but doubts about the relationship remain. And the NP/ANC offer to the king may just be sufficient to wean him away from Buthelezi. This would be close to a death blow to the Inkatha leader who has depended on ethnic politics to maintain his position.

And that may not be the end of Buthelezi's problems, Friedman surmises. A further drain on his support base would occur if those lieutenants, like Joe Matthews and Ben Ngubane, who have consistently fought within Inkatha for a constitutional settlement, then felt sufficiently confident to contest the election under another banner. They would be joined by most of the DP and NP MPs and others who deserted their parties in the hope of fighting the election in Inkatha colours.

The polls point to a drop in Inkatha's national support of three to five percentage points in the past year, coinciding with the party's

toughening negotiating stance. It is feasible that those votes, plus some which a participating Inkatha would otherwise receive, would go to those candidates.

And the party for which they would stand? There is no real evidence so far. But Friedman suggests that the new African Christian Democratic Party, which currently seems merely a new project by elements of the defunct Afrikaner Volksunie and assorted conservative black politicians, may provide a home for them.

And they may have natural allies among the more moderate sections of the white right wing — which has suffered, like Inkatha, a pattern of lost electoral support in the period.

A constitutional settlement with the neo-Nazi right is, and probably always has been, impossible. Their guerilla war has begun, as shown by the rash of bombings. Countering it is a law and order function.

What Friedman calls the "conciliatory right" — which includes Gen Constand Viljoen and parts of the Afrikaner Volksfront — is probably not yet ready for a deal. Although there were claims that Viljoen and some of his colleagues were close to a settlement with the ANC, involving a new constitutional principle which fudged until later the issue of a volkstaat, it seems he cannot sell a strategic compromise to the more militant and impatient Volksfront constituents. His rejection at a rally 11 days ago is evidence of that.

A deal with Viljoen and his allies may have to wait until some time in the post-election future, until (and if) sufficient numbers of their constituents discover that life under an ANC government, while not ideal, is tolerable — allowing them to reduce their sights from a full-scale volkstaat to something less.

Painting scenarios about SA's medium-term future is a tricky, probably foolish, task. The only certainty, perhaps, is uncertainty. But while the country faces a further period of uncertainty and possibly instability, it need not necessarily be unmanageable.

WILL we, five or 10 years from now, look back on the events of the past few weeks in SA and say: That was when it all started? That was when SA's dream of a stable, prosperous, multiracial nation turned to ethnic nightmare? Every South African, every international investor, every foreign government — everyone with a constructive interest in the African continent — must hope that scenario is mere hysterical fantasy.

Many believe it is: they argue that the far right's support is minimal and the strength of the military overwhelming; that SA's security forces can crush violent dissent from the black and white right, which have vowed to resist April's elections, so casting doubts over whether a poll can be conducted in all parts of SA.

But if no one can quite believe that SA could join the list of ethnic horror stories of our time, the country's politicians have yet to demonstrate the will to avert such an outcome.

The collapse of talks between government, the ANC and the Freedom Alliance illustrates a spectacular failure of political will on all sides. A deal was within reach which might have brought at least a large proportion of the white far right and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party into elections, consolidating the centre and leaving only the lunatic fringes in violent opposition. But in the end, SA's politicians failed to reach out and take it.

It is easy to heap most of the blame on Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi: he shouts at journalists, insults ambassadors, exasperates businessmen and, in the words of political columnist Ken Owen, "has alienated his democratic friends, here and abroad, by petulant quarrels... surrounded himself with eccentric foreigners and sycophants... (and) drifted into shabby alliances with bantustan leaders and right-wing racists" — among them AWB leader Eugene Terre'Blanche. Buthelezi is his own worst enemy.

But if his behaviour is outrageous,

Politicians lack the will to make democracy succeed

BUSINESS DAY 16/2/94

PATTI WALDMEIR

his demands for constitutional change are not. One can question his motives, his reliability as a negotiator, his willingness to contest free elections. But his basic constitutional demand is far from unreasonable: he wants a federal SA, arguing that such a model would best cater for one of most ethnically fragmented societies on earth.

No issue is so central to SA's future: will the political system guarantee ethnic minorities real power, or relegate them to the role of permanent, impotent opposition? Every democracy is, in some sense, the dictatorship of the majority. But can SA democracy survive if the constitution creates permanent losers who can never hope to rule? Can it prosper if a significant minority of the electorate rejects the legitimacy of the constitution?

Federalism would offer regional minorities, such as the Zulus, a chance to secure a political base, and use it to keep the majority — ruling from the centre — in check. But the ANC is suspicious of this argument: for its goal has always been to create a colour-blind SA where ethnicity is subsumed in a single nationhood. (Afrikaner Volksfront leader Gen Constand Viljoen mocks this, saying nations cannot be built "like you make instant coffee: a little black, a

little white, a little bit of coloured...")

Still, the ANC seems willing to accept the need to accommodate Afrikaner ethnicity. For though it is easy to dismiss the white far right as neo-fascist racists, the ANC accepts that some ordinary, decent Afrikaners also want a homeland. Indeed, though the deal has since fallen through, the ANC agreed in principle to establish such a volkstaat after the elections, with a separate Afrikaner chamber in Parliament to work out the details. But when it comes to assuaging Zulu fears of domination, the ANC draws the line. It believes Buthelezi's only goal in arguing for federalism is to perpetuate his power in a tribal state called KwaZulu.

While it is prepared to allow Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini to remain a symbolic monarch under Natal's new constitution, it refuses Buthelezi the strong provincial powers he demands. It is almost as though the ANC accepts that whites may fear blacks — but that blacks may not fear other blacks. Yet the history of African decolonisation suggests the highest price is usually

paid by Africans.

So, after two-and-a-half years of stop-start constitutional negotiations, the gulf between the right wing and the ANC remains as wide as ever. The ANC believes it needs a strong central state to carry out its sacred charge: to empower blacks economically, after centuries of deprivation. And the right wants regional autonomy to protect itself if the ANC uses that central power to oppress rather than to uplift.

Yet even some ANC officials believe the party did not try hard enough to accommodate the Freedom Alliance. It could have conceded marginally greater powers to regions, including limited regional taxation, and offered to entrench these powers in the final constitution. Such a deal was on the table, agreed between the Freedom Alliance and government last year, but the ANC rejected it. In the end, the ANC made a purely tactical offer: two ballots, but nothing on regional powers. It won the tactical battle, but lost the moral high ground.

"I put myself 10 years down the road and I say: should we have been so stubborn on this and that? Was it worth it?" asks one ANC official.

His concern is echoed by a government negotiator: "Is the ANC really prepared to accept a civil war to

ensure central government has over-riding powers on health policy?" Even now, it is not too late to avert this grim prospect. Parliament could retroactively extend the election registration deadline. Creative solutions could be found to allow last-minute participation, but only if parties find the will to reach real agreements, and not just move deadlines. At least all parties say they are still committed to negotiations, and have stopped short of an overt call to violence.

There is a chance that the white far right could yet be persuaded to participate: both the ANC and Afrikaner Volksfront tried hard to do a deal, and may yet succeed. But the breach with Inkatha appears permanent. Inkatha negotiator Ben Ngubane accuses the ANC of "sacrificing national unity for power"; it is far from clear that the ANC is willing to reverse that order of preference.

Either way, April's elections will almost certainly go ahead, however violently the right resists. Government officials vow that they will be "ruthless" in suppressing dissent (with full ANC support). As one government official says: "If the fight is on, then it is on. We will act with full force right at the beginning and wipe them out." But one can be forgiven for wondering whether the right — the Zulu impis and conservative whites with military training and access to commercial explosives from the mines and, possibly, to larger arms from military armouries — can be crushed so easily.

Neither is a majority, even within their own ethnic group; but each, and especially both together, can cause havoc through sabotage and terrorism, and a sharp increase in serious township violence.

Ngubane warns: "The constitution should reflect the diversity of SA. If it does not, there is every chance that there will be no new SA." Ngubane is almost certainly wrong. The new SA will be born on schedule; but it could prove less stable, prosperous and democratic than seemed possible only months ago. SA's politicians can step back from the brink — but first they must find the will to do so. — Financial Times

Will a new SA become dominant in Africa?

WILL a new SA government make a substantial shift in our involvement in Africa? Will SA come to dominate the continent? Who will benefit?

These were some of the questions raised at a conference in Windhoek last week. Most African countries were represented, including Egypt and Nigeria, as well as the UN Conference on Trade and Development and other agencies. Three possible scenarios were suggested: SA as a continental superpower, SA as a major power point (the others being Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya), or non-hegemonic mutually beneficial relations across the continent.

The conference was opened by Namibian Prime Minister Hage Geingob who stressed the need for new inclusive relations across Africa. He was followed by Prof. Adedeji, former head of the UN Economic Commission, who argued that the marginalisation of Africa in the new global system made it imperative that SA was integrated into the continent on the basis of mutually beneficial relations. The removal of apartheid meant that the entire continent was now free, opening up a vision of a transition to new economic, political and social relations. The

ANC representative shared this vision and reaffirmed the ANC's commitment to being part of the continent on an equitable basis.

However, the debate on race relations disclosed a different legacy. The Kenyan participant showed that in 1991 Kenya imported goods worth R150m from SA and exported only R24m. This ratio is roughly the same for most African countries and there is no sign of change. So would the further integration of SA, including membership of the OAU, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Southern African Development Community and Preferential Trade Area make matters any better?

The Egyptian delegate said his country expected that democratisation of SA would bring an end to the Angolan civil war and to instability in the region. In anticipation, Egypt has facilitated an exchange of business delegations, and Eskom has signed an agreement with the Egyptian electricity authority on technical co-operation with a view to establishing a continental network. Since Eskom has already established a grid reaching to central Africa, this perspective is not unrealistic.

The rest of North Africa is also in-

BEN TUROK

creasing its trade — with Morocco's trade volume with SA at \$50m last year. However, all these countries have a trade deficit with SA.

Taking a positive view, which areas of co-operation could be mutually beneficial? Prof Onimode of Nigeria suggested that SA's integration could help increase security across the continent, there could be improved diffusion of technology, SA could increase Africa's manufacturing capacity as well as providing skills and entrepreneurship.

Several speakers argued that more emphasis should be placed on two-way benefits and that Africa could meet certain needs of SA. Africa remains richly endowed in most natural resources. Shared use would go a long way to making it less dependent on external sources.

Others argued that more research was needed on continental trade, capital and labour flows. Research is also needed on the kind of institutions an integrated continent will require beyond present regional organisations, which will also need

restructuring. Mechanisms will have to be established which can draw civil society institutions such as churches, non-governmental organisations and trade unions into building regional links and not simply depend on inter-governmental relations. It was felt that too much had been left to governments and that people-to-people relations had not been encouraged. Europe, for example, has social contacts across a wide range of activities.

The approach of mutually beneficial relations was seen to produce benefits for all on the continent. But this kind of co-operation was also seen as a means of strengthening Africa's external relations as a whole. This is especially important in a period when, according to the ANC, regionalisation of the global economy has underscored protectionism in the north.

The theme of a declining role for Africa in the new global system was taken up repeatedly, particularly in the context of the completion of the Uruguay Round of GATT. Most speakers thought this would have a negative effect on African economies since, in the name of a global drive for the liberalisation of mar-

kets, it created conditions for the unparalleled penetration of one country by another.

Curiously the conference also resolved to revisit the ideas of pan-Africanism, which was originally conceived as an ideology of liberation from colonial rule, but which has fallen into disuse. Pan-Africanism will be reviewed as a basis for discourse and as a basis for policy in the coming period when it is hoped that Africa can become more united and move towards transformation.

The foundations for this process have been laid by the OAU and the ECA in the moves towards regional integration and the formal creation of an African common market leading to political union.

Much of this debate was futuristic in character, but given the substantial progress being made in Europe, North America and Asia in creating integrated trading blocks and closer union, it may be a mistake not to give these moves due consideration. The conference resolved to set up research teams to take central issues further, and we can expect to hear more from this worthy undertaking.

□ Turok is director of the Institute for African Alternatives.

Dear Sir,
OF COURSE detention under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act is undesirable, anti-democratic and illiberal. However there is, I believe, an unanswerable case for retaining it at least until April — and possibly for brief renewable periods thereafter, subject only to Parliament getting agreement from the Constitutional Court. Plainly, preventive detention comes into conflict with a code of human rights; but the constitution also stresses the need for defending the security of the state.

On what grounds does somebody like me, with a lifelong commitment to liberal doctrines, argue in favour of retaining Section 29? The country is on the brink of a campaign of violence (not just of civil disobedience), the intention of which is to discredit the elections and to destroy the agreement reached in the constitutional negotiations which were boycotted by those now threatening to inflame racial passions and to intensify the disastrous violence from

Strong case for retaining Section 29

which the country has already suffered too much.

Let me ask the opponents of the retention of Section 29 how the TEC is expected to deal with those who openly admit they are out to get a volkstaat by any means possible, and who have already engaged in sabotage and indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians? If this violent campaign is to be curbed before it turns really nasty, it will be necessary to detain several hundred prominent members engaged in the right-wing extremist movements — just as Gen Jan Smuts did in rounding up the Ossewabrandwag and Stormwag leaders during the last war.

If preventive action is to be taken, it will probably be difficult, if not impossible, to formulate charges that would stand up in court. The alternative is to wait for the extremists to destroy, kill and maim before

arresting them. By then, it is likely that the dissident, violent minority will have gone a long way towards fulfilling their aim of derailing the elections and the draft constitution.

In a choice between a demonstrable threat to the safety of the state and a temporary abrogation of a democratic principle, who can doubt that — especially at this critical period — the interests of the state should come before those of a violently disruptive minority? The DP, PAC and others who want to see Section 29 scrapped should be realistic about what needs to be done to prevent mayhem.

COLIN LEGUM

Kob Cottage, Harris Road
Kalk Bay

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Dear Sir,
AS A Business Day subscriber I thor-

PO Box 1138
Jo'burg 2000
Fax: (011) 836-0805

oughly enjoy Signature which is a magazine of quality and excellent presentation. Having just read the February issue I refer particularly to the delightful article "Femme Fatale" by Percy Baneshik on José Dale Lace, which expands "on the basic story ... in a book 'Bird of Paradise' by Daphne Saul".

Saul describes her work as a "biographical sketch ... based on the in-depth and meticulous research carried out by the late Dr Thelma Gutsche, well-known in SA for her historical biographies and other works.... Dr Gutsche had amassed the material over a period of years with the expressed intention of writ-

ing José Dale Lace's biography."

Gutsche had just completed her research and was on the point of starting to write the book when she died suddenly, working at her desk, on November 5, 1984. When her estate was settled it was agreed to pass on her research files so that a summary could be written by someone else — for which Saul was a happy choice. It is interesting to note, too, that Gutsche was responsible for the discovery of the 1903 Royal Academy painting of Lace, rolled up and disregarded, and used her influence to have it restored. The painting now dominates the main reception room at "Northwards".

I write not to detract from Mr Baneshik's article, but to pay tribute to the original work and painstaking research of Gutsche, which I think would be of interest to readers of Signature as her name is not mentioned in the article.

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