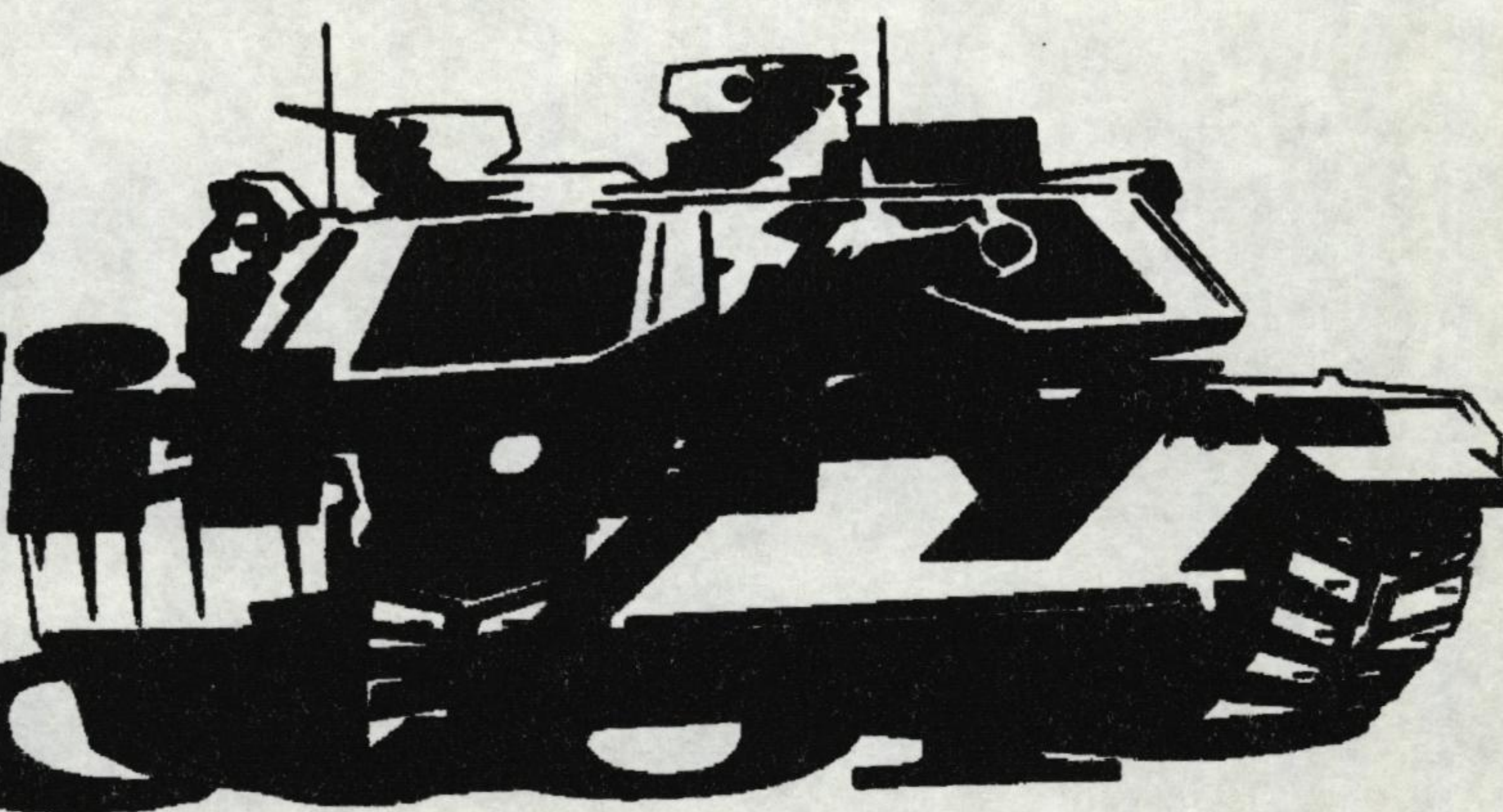


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FORUM

the military factor



South Africa has arrived at a crucial juncture in its history. There is a very real possibility that soon we will be witnessing the establishment of a democracy in our country. To reach this point, we have had to struggle long and hard. The African National Congress is proud that our efforts and sacrifices have at last brought hope of a better future to the vast majority of our people.

We are aware of the fact that, even though there is optimism that the negotiation process is gaining momentum, the road ahead is not going to be an easy one. There are many obstacles to be cleared away, and we are fully cognisant of attempts by anti-democratic forces bent on destroying any possibility of the negotiation process succeeding.

If we are to ensure that the advances we have made are not reversed, it is imperative that we identify the potential threats to this process.

This is a responsibility facing all South Africans, not just the ANC.

Historically, one of the greatest threats to democracy has been the armed forces. In South Africa, this threat has never been more significant than it is presently. This is precisely why we need to be clear and firm on our position regarding the current and future role of the military.

ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The history of this country has always been characterised by conflict. This conflict has itself been, for the most part, characterised by violence. The culture of violence that is so rife in our country has to be the responsibility of the apart-

Joe Modise, commander of the African National Congress' military wing, Umkhonto weSizwe, addressed the January meeting of the Tribute Forum on the topic "The Current and Future Roles of Different Military Forces in South Africa". The Forum was held in association with Southern Life.

Historically, one of the greatest threats to democracy has been the armed forces.

heid state. It is also an indisputable fact that the brunt of this violence has been borne by the black masses of our country.

The apartheid regime, in order to defend the ideology of racism and more particularly the material gain accrued by means of this ideology, has over the years built up a formidable military force, the South African Defence Force. The SADF has come to represent one of the worst features of apartheid South Africa. For the masses of this country, the SADF is synonymous with their brutalisation and oppression. The SADF enjoys no moral and political legitimacy

in the eyes of the oppressed.

The SADF has evolved into an extension of the National Party. Far from being an impartial state apparatus that is accountable to parliament, the SADF has engaged in activities designed to bolster apartheid and destroy any threat to its continued existence. Within the SADF are some of the most reactionary right-wing elements, the very same individuals who operated the hit squads, who killed innocent civilians in the Frontline States under the pretext of looking for terrorists, who massacred our people in the townships and who continue to engage in attempts to destabilise the peace process.

If the SADF is not brought under the control of a legitimate civilian authority soon, there is a strong possibility that it could play a major role in disrupting the negotiation process.

History has taught us that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Thus the apartheid legacy has also had the effect of generating armed opposition to it. Historically, the most effective

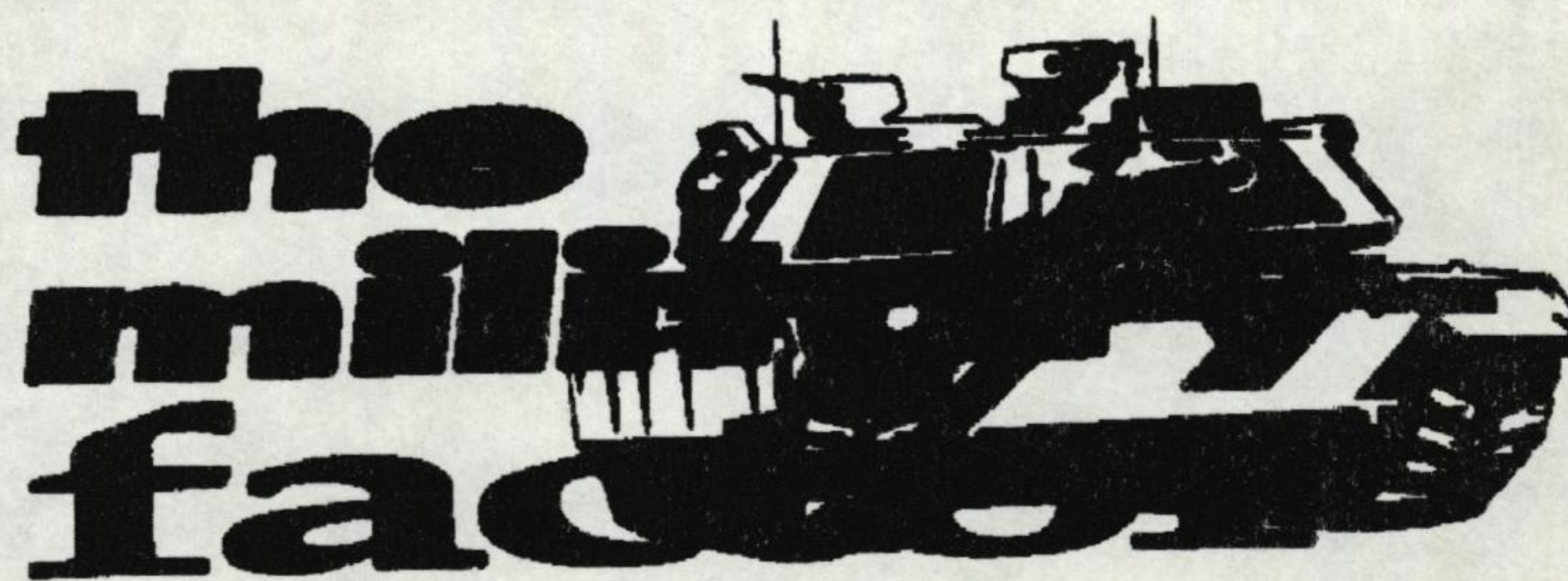
and consistent armed opposition to apartheid has been Umkhonto weSizwe (MK).

MK has always had and continues to enjoy the moral and political legitimacy that is absent in the SADF and Bantustan armies. For the oppressed and exploited masses of this country, MK has and continues to represent the noblest aspirations of our struggle to eliminate racism and economic deprivation.

MK has contributed significantly towards forcing the regime to the negotiating table. It has also contributed immensely in strengthening the ANC and defending the organisation when it

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We are ready to be part of a defence force which will reflect the new, democratic, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa.



was under political and military attack from the regime. The state has failed miserably in its attempts to destroy MK. MK is a reality, and that reality will never be wished away by those who want to monopolise a future defence force.

It is inconceivable that MK will not play a significant role now and in the future. It is also inevitable that there are other armed forces which have claimed a place in the political arena. Historically these forces have been insignificant; suffice to say that they do exist and that those who are genuinely interested in the liberation of this country will have a role to play.

Thus, historically there have only been two major players in the military field: MK and the SADF. It is these two armed forces which will play a decisive role in the formation of a new defence force.

ARMED FORCES AND THE PRESENT PHASE

Politics within this country has undergone a significant change over the past two years. There has been a significant revival of the extreme right. The upsurge of right-wing politics within certain quarters of the white community has also given rise to numerous reactionary armed groups. These elements have clearly exposed themselves as glorified right-wing terrorists who have to be curtailed before they inflict more indiscriminate violence upon our communities. They will have no role to play during a transitional period or in the future.

Allow me to refer briefly to other armed forces pertaining to the left in this country. The position of the Pan Africanist Congress is clear: they will continue fighting until their demands are met.

The Black Consciousness Movement of Azania claims to have a fighting force,

but from all indications it appears to be nonexistent.

Realistically, we are therefore focusing our attention on the following armed forces: MK, the SADF, the Bantustan armies and the five tribal battalions (non-independent Bantustans).

UMKHONTO WE Sizwe

The position of the ANC regarding MK is clear. MK will not be immobilised, neither will we allow a situation to develop whereby our forces are dispersed. In terms of our political perspective, we have identified negotiations as the dominant form of struggle.

We have never detracted from our position that we will not abandon other forms of struggle; rather we will create a situation whereby we will strengthen the negotiation process through the employment of different forms of struggle. We would be politically irresponsible if we abandoned the elements of struggle which would ensure that our negotiation position succeeds.

Lest there be any misunderstanding: we are fully committed to the agreements reached with the regime as regards the suspension of armed action.

Given the unacceptable levels of violence directed against our communities, which is also directed at destroying our organisation, we will commit MK to assisting our people to assert their right to self-protection.

Simultaneously, we are fully aware that MK will of necessity have to play a significant role in any future defence force.

Traditionally, MK, by its very nature, has trained as a guerrilla army. This was logical and necessary if we were to significantly engage the enemy in combat.

The political situation has changed significantly. The balance of power has changed radically. MK has to be creative and adapt accordingly. We have embarked on a programme of converting our army into a professional regular force. We are ready to be part of a defence force which will reflect the new, democratic, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE

It is clear that any future defence force will have to be negotiated and ultimately be established by a democratically elected parliament. We will also insist that, during this transitional phase, all security forces come under the control of an interim authority. The SADF will not be allowed to remain outside this process.

Given that the SADF has played and continues to play a negative role in creating a climate conducive to negotiations, we have to insist on certain minimum standards of conduct. We are calling upon the SADF to accept a code of conduct which would allow it to play a more positive and constructive role. There is ample evidence of the clandestine activities of elements within the SADF who have and continue to play a pivotal role in instigating political violence. These elements have to be exposed and disbanded.

It is common knowledge that the SADF employs foreign mercenaries in its ranks — for instance, 32 Battalion, 31 Battalion and elements of Renamo. These forces have to be disbanded and personnel repatriated to their countries of origin. In addition, the use of Askaris, front companies, religious and educational institutions to further the aims of the SADF and the regime must stop immediately. Finally, the SADF has to engage in a process of confidence-building in its relations with the black community. If this is not done, it will make it more difficult for the SADF to play a meaningful role in the negotiations for a future defence force.

THE BANTUSTAN AND TRIBAL HOMELAND ARMIES

That great historical lie of so-called self-determination for certain sections of the black community has been exposed forever. We are pleased that some of the Bantustans have recently assumed a progressive character. We will engage these progressive elements and continue to assist and encourage positive developments in these regions.

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There are still many pockets of reaction which do not see the wood for the trees and continue to live under the false impression that they can maintain their privileged position indefinitely. If they were astute, they would recognise that ultimately their interests would best be served by recognising the necessity of a democratic future.

With regard to the armed forces in these regions, there can be only one position — all those forces which are serious about constructively participating in the formation of a new defence force must be drawn into that process.

THE FUTURE OF THE MILITARY IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is an absolute necessity to discuss a future defence force. Our starting point has to be that it must reflect the reality

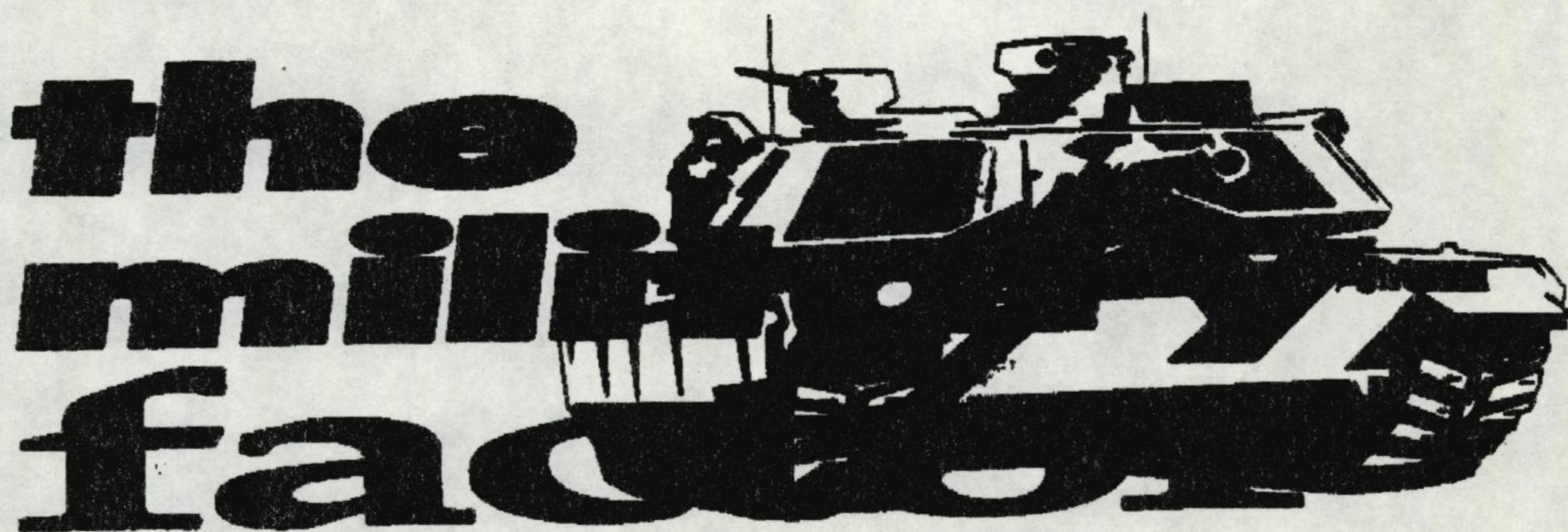
Any future military force will have to subject itself to the rule of law and the authority of parliament.

We would be naïve to ignore the experiences of other countries that have had to establish a new force from previously antagonistic military groupings. We will draw upon those experiences but at the end of the day we will have to rely on our own experiences and reality.

There are basically three possible scenarios which can emerge in relation to the creation of a future defence force:

- Total demobilisation of armed forces and their fresh recruitment into the new force.
- A negotiated integration of all armed forces in order to ensure that the transformation does create a new force representative of a democratic society.
- The absorption of all armed forces including MK into the SADF.

Support for any one option depends



of the new South Africa we are all striving for.

We have to define the nature of a new defence force. This process will look at the following points:

- The need to define the objectives of a new defence force. This will involve an assessment of the changed balance of forces regionally and internally, and requires a rational approach to a revised threat analysis.
- The threat analysis will then define the necessary force levels of a new defence force. We can expect a radical cut in the force level primarily due to the fact that the traditional threat analysis as perceived by the present South African government was based on false ideological motives.
- The relationship between the military and civilian authority. Any future military force will have to subject itself to the rule of law and the authority of parliament.
- There will be no compulsory military conscription. A new defence force will be a professional volunteer force.
- A policy of affirmative action is necessary. Historically, black sol-

diers have been disadvantaged in relation to issues such as promotion, etc. The new force will have to reflect the composition of a new society.

- There will have to be a substantial reduction of military bureaucracies. There will have to be rationalisation of defence expenditure and expensive, unnecessary military programmes.

A NEW DEFENCE FORCE: HOW IT IS CREATED

There have been various debates as to how to proceed with the creation of a new defence force. This debate is tainted according to which political position one holds. Partisanship will inevitably surface during any discussion related to a new military establishment.

I will not address myself to the positions that have emerged within the SADF/Nationalist camp as they are free to express their own views on the subject however tainted those positions may be ideologically.

Rather, I will present what we would like to see emerge from a new defence force.

entirely on where each group positions itself on the political spectrum. For our part, we are presently inclined towards the second option.

Having stated that, it must be clear that there are numerous technical considerations which need to be thrashed out through constructive negotiation between the major players.

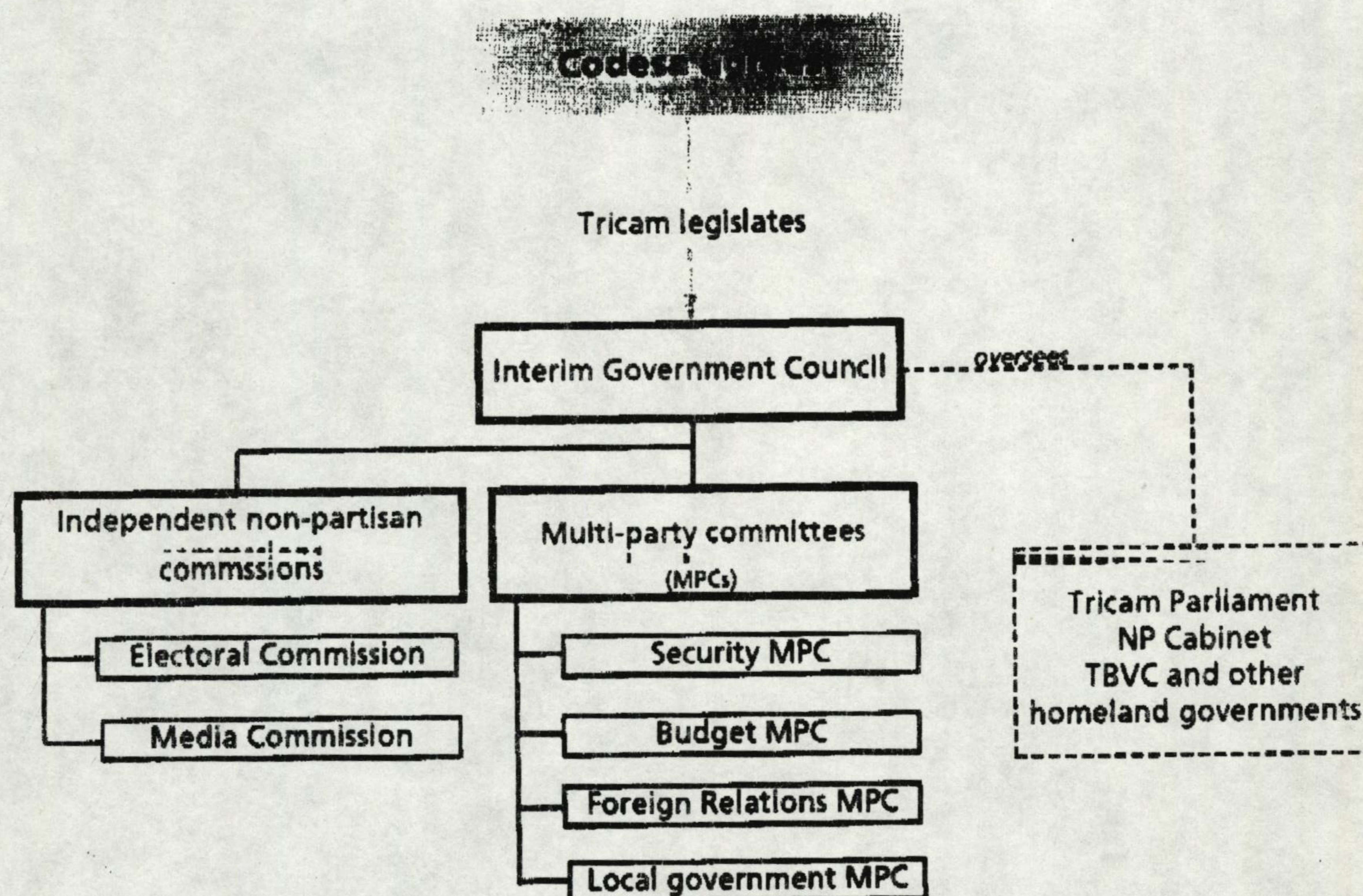
These considerations revolve mainly around the following issues: differences in military cultures; ideological and political differences between the various forces; the nature and levels of training; the level of and access to education of members of the forces involved, and differences in technical and logistical fields.

CONCLUSION

The extent to which the creation of a new force is successful will depend on the seriousness and good intentions of the various opposing forces.

For our part we are ready, but we will not accept any agreement which falls short of establishing a truly representative and constitutionally bound future defence force. ■

Phase I: An impartial referee



Elections for Constituent Assembly

Interim structures in this phase will be charged with the task of levelling the playing field. They should ensure equal treatment for all organisations, especially in the election campaign.

Three categories of structures will be needed:

1. Independent commissions appointed by Codesa and non-partisan in their composition:
 - Electoral Commission – made up of South Africans of integrity to organise and supervise elections. It will have sole and exclusive control of the electoral process, with powers to validate or invalidate election results.
 - Media Commission – made up South Africans of high standing to ensure fair and balanced reporting. Emphasis will be on an Independent Communications Authority which will take charge of all state broadcasters and appoint new boards. This will also cover the TBVC territories. (See page 45)
2. Multi-party Committees to take charge of the most important areas: security, the bud-

get, foreign relations and others such as local government. They will have complete control over these areas.

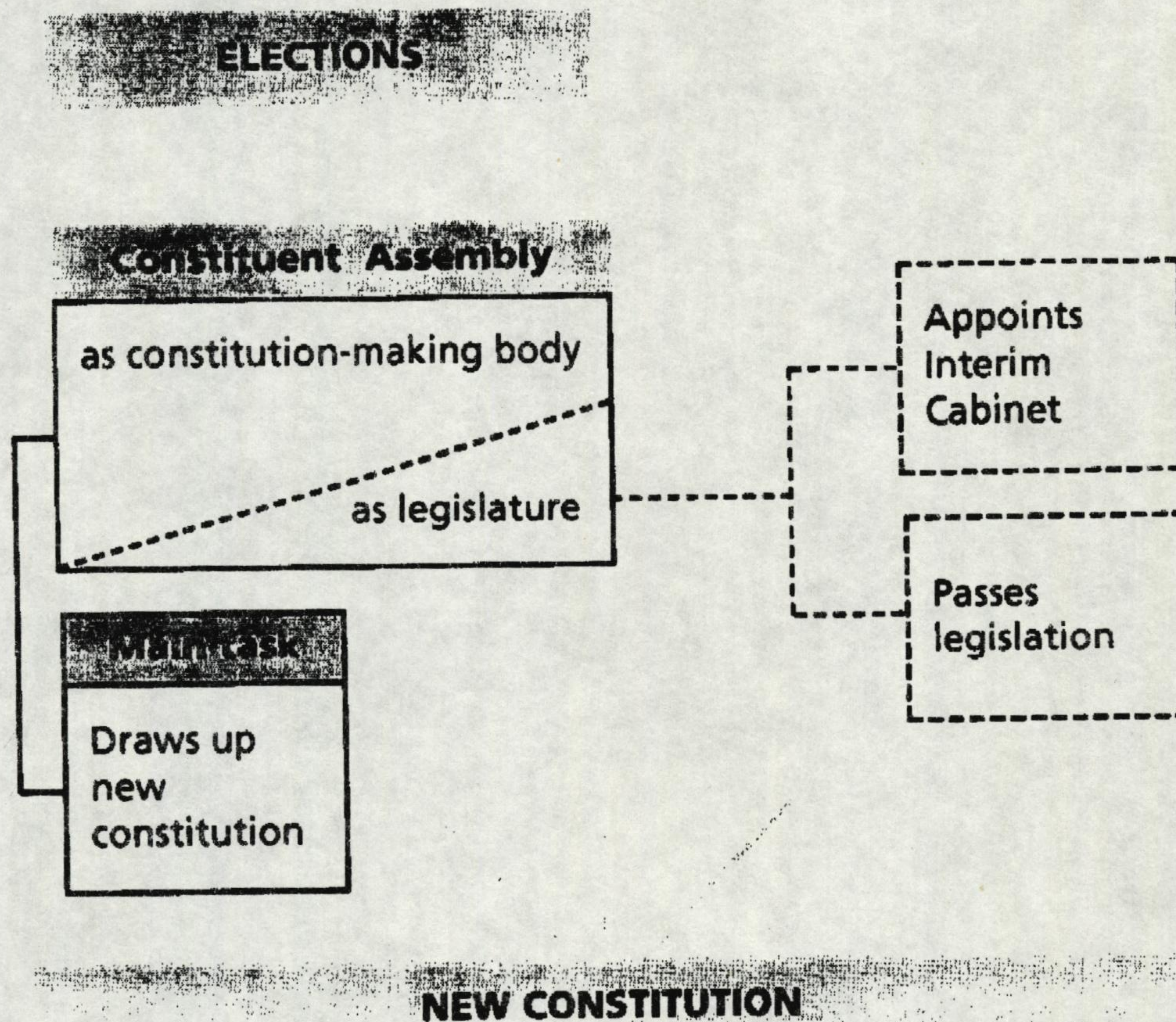
3. Interim Government Council: A body made up of parties in Codesa which oversees the tri-cameral parliament, the NP cabinet and structures in the TBVC and self-governing territories. It can veto as well as initiate legislation. Tri-cameral parliament to dissolve either when elections are declared or when the Constituent Assembly is elected.

The international community should be intimately involved at various levels. In particular, organisations which were represented at Codesa 1 should help supervise elections. Preferably, they should be integrated into at least the Electoral Commission.

Attention needs to be paid to the place and role of socio-economic forums. (See page 29)

The period between the legislation of Codesa decisions and elections should not exceed six months.

Phase II: Sovereign structures



1. The Constituent Assembly (CA) will be elected on the basis of proportional representation. All South Africans 18 years-old and above will be eligible to vote. Some form of identification will need to be agreed upon. Parties which receive 5 per cent and more of the vote will have seats on a proportional basis in the CA.
2. The CA will operate both as a constitution-making body and as a legislative assembly.
 - When it operates as a constitution-making body (the main task) it will take decisions by a two-thirds majority.
 - As a legislative body it will pass legislation relevant to the transition and operate on the basis of consensus. It will also appoint an interim cabinet, preferably from all the parties in the CA. The interim cabinet will also strive to operate by consensus.
3. The constitution-making process should not exceed nine months. Incentives/penalties should be worked out to ensure that this is adhered to. This should apply to all parties.
6. The constitution could include "sunset" clauses to help ease the country into full-blooded democracy.