

INTERVIEWS: MANDELA - SLABBERT - BOSHOFF - MBEKI
FEATURE: THE POST-APARTHEID ECONOMY



Photo: Paul Velasco

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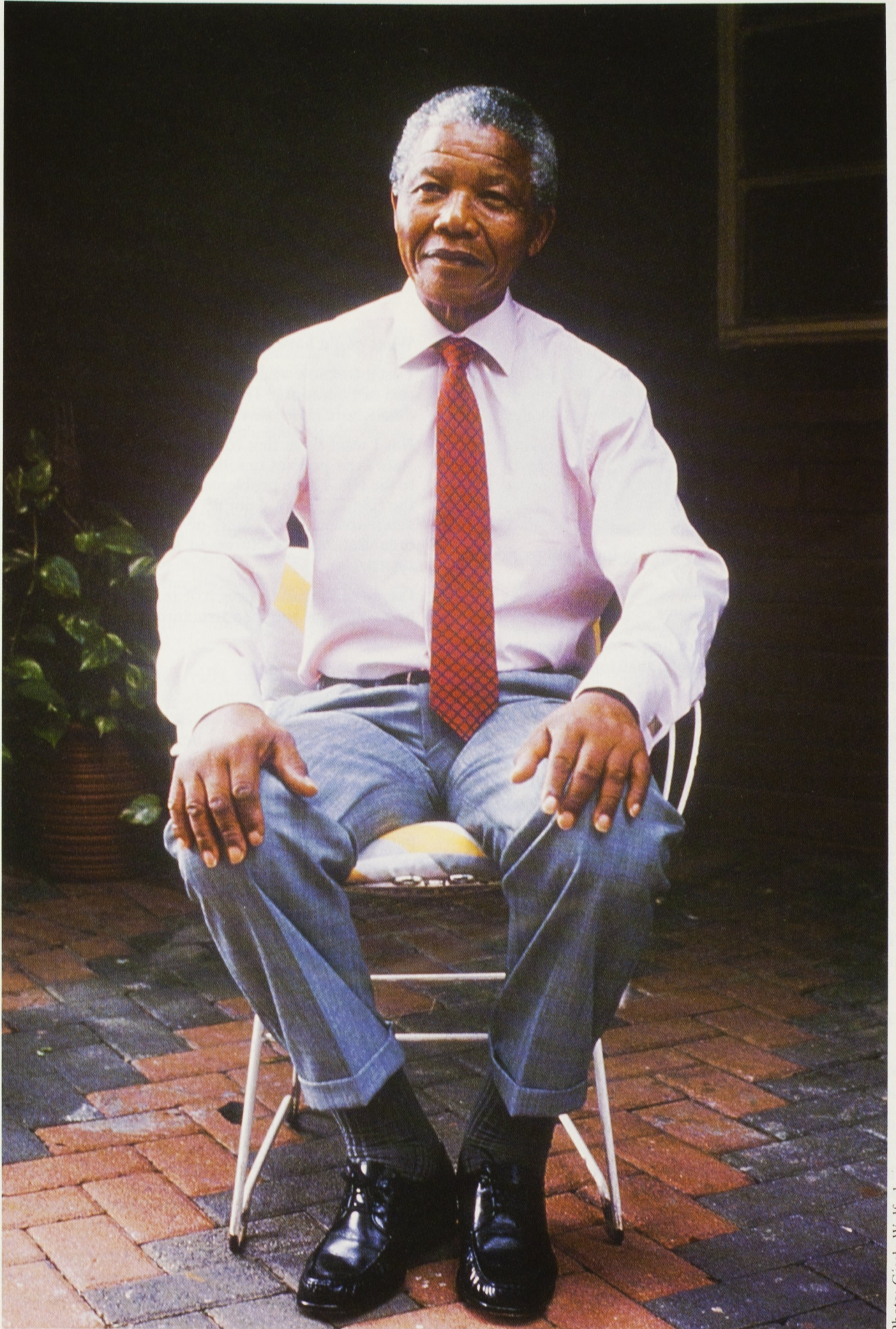


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NO EASY WALK TO FREEDOM

An interview with Nelson Mandela

At a recent meeting in the Transkei that was addressed by Nelson Mandela, the master of ceremonies told the (true) story of the junior school in the rural areas of the Transkei where, after the release of Mandela, the children told their teachers (Catholic nuns) that they were not going to eat again until Mandela came and addressed them.

The Good Sisters conferred, and agreed that the threat was empty.

That day, lunch was not taken.

The Good Sisters then realised that more than indifference was needed to solve this problem. One then proved to be as wise as she was good, and left for town. An hour later she returned - with a tall, thin, elderly gentleman in a suit.

It is not recorded what this gentleman told the children, nor even who he was - but it worked. The kids scoffed down their supper, the Good Sisters relaxed and, it is rumoured, Mr Mandela's reputation has survived amongst this not too critical audience.

Nelson Mandela enjoyed this story hugely when it was told. He is clearly a people's person. After addressing this meeting he asked each of his audience in turn to introduce himself or herself. Some he then realised he knew - even after those 29 long years - certainly he knew the families of many, and he delighted in a quick friendly exchange on such issues.

His behaviour evidences his patrician origins. His family was of the Tembu royal house, and he had been groomed for high office there. To this day he stands and sits as erect as a rod, dresses impeccably and measures his words with care. With an honesty unusual in a politician he tells it as it is, even if the result is a furore, of which he has provoked his share.

If it is a characteristic of greatness to make those to whom one speaks feel both important and respected, then Nelson Mandela has greatness. The aloofness of his bearing is matched by his easy charm. Above all, he has dignity.

*What he lacks, however, is a system whereby an intrepid interviewer can somehow find his slot. One day **Rory Riordan** will expound on how he got the following interview with **Nelson Mandela** ...*

MONITOR: **The negotiation process. How do you see it developing from here on?**

NELSON MANDELA: Firstly, the government has yet to meet the preconditions for negotiation to begin, as are laid down in the Harare Declaration. In fact, they have only met one of the six preconditions, which is the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and other political movements. The government has not released that great a number of our people who are in jail because of convictions flowing from their opposition to apartheid. The government has not abandoned the political trials of many other of our people. The state of emergency is still law. Plainly we believe that the government must meet these preconditions before negotiation can begin.

It is wise for us to recall the logic behind these preconditions. They are there, plainly and simply, to put those who oppose the government into the same position of political freedom that the government is in. They are preconditions designed to open up political activity, and to allow the ANC and all other political organisations the opportunity to organise and mobilize in the same way as the government can.

We want the Harare Declaration preconditions met for just this reason - they will allow us to operate as a political movement with the same freedom that the government has. That is not the position now, of course.

Assuming that the preconditions are met, do you then want a Namibia-style constituent assembly election to decide which political movements have followings, before the parties at the negotiation table are decided?

As one can see, the government is wanting to bring into the negotiation process all types of people and movements. The homeland leaders, discredited town councillors - all sorts of their co-opted followers.

Our reply is simple - everyone and anyone is welcome at the negotiation table, but they must be able to demonstrate that they have support within the South African community. There must be some mechanism that is used to measure this support. The Namibian constituent assembly elections are clearly one such mechanism - there are others of course also.

But plainly, we will not wish to see the government clutter the negotiation process with hundreds of their

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clients who have no support, in a desperate effort to dilute our bargaining power. We thus require an adequate mechanism to assess support before the negotiation table is finalized. This mechanism, also, must be non-racial. No racially defined measure will ever obtain our support.

Do you wish for a bi-polar negotiation process, with just the government and yourselves represented?

No. But anyone at the negotiation table must be able to demonstrate more than that the government wants them to be there - they must be able to demonstrate support, through a suitable non-racial mechanism.

A representative of the government has said (in this edition of Monitor) that the government in turn has two preconditions that must be met before they will negotiate with the ANC. Firstly, they require the armed struggle to be suspended, and secondly they want a considerable decrease in the violence in Natal.

The question of the armed struggle is one issue for the negotiation process itself, and not a precondition for negotiations to begin.

The negotiation process is about the conditions necessary for the end of the armed struggle. And one of these conditions is the cessation of the enormous and continuous police violence against our people. In Sebokeng the police killed eight unarmed protesters, as just one example. The record is full of police brutality against our people, who are being killed and tortured as we speak here. This violence by the police against our people has to end for the armed struggle to end.

If the government is going to make the end of violence in Natal a precondition for negotiations then I can tell you clearly that they are not serious about negotiations. The situation in Natal would not be tolerated in any civilized country in the world. What is happening there is clear. The government is fully involved in that violence. They picked a side, and as has happened in so many other places in South Africa, they picked this side for only one reason - that they could be manipulated into attacking the UDF and the ANC. The government has regularly and repeatedly, all over South Africa, worked with and through a variety of parties to launch attacks on the UDF and the ANC.

In Natal, the government has, by this technique, systematically attempted to murder the leaders of the UDF.

Only the government can solve the violence in Natal, as the government caused it to happen, and has allowed it to continue, to suit their specific political purposes. For

them to now say that we must end this violence before they will negotiate is to show clearly that they are not serious about negotiations.

What are the ANC's non-negotiable issues in the negotiation process?

The process of negotiation is a process of compromise. Negotiation is compromise. The ANC is well aware of this, and is going into this negotiation process with a minimum of non-negotiables and expecting to be reasonable and to be involved in compromises.

Is the ANC committed to a bill of human rights being part of the forthcoming constitution?

Yes, over many years now the ANC has stated that it favours a bill of individual human rights for South Africa. That bill should be based on the Freedom Charter which is a very eloquent statement of human rights protection in itself. There may be some other rights that today, thirty five years after the Freedom Charter, also need protection. But yes, we favour a bill of rights and we favour the Freedom Charter as its base.

The government is proposing a wide variety of "no-domination systems". Dr Gerrit Viljoen has recently mooted a two-house parliament, with the one house being voted for on a universal franchise basis, and the other house, which presumably has veto rights, being elected like the American senate, with a loading of some sort.

As I said earlier, the process of negotiation is a process of compromise, and this we expect to be involved in. If those turn out to be the Government's proposals, we will consider them very carefully. But one that we will not concede on - there can be no bias, no loading, no blocking mechanism that is based on race as a criterion. That we will never accept, given the tragic history of our country under racist provisions and laws.

In your speech to the Transkei Chamber of Commerce you again repeated that an ANC government would nationalize industry in South Africa ...

That is the policy of the African National Congress going back to its adoption of the Freedom Charter.

To the Chamber of Commerce I repeated that this policy is designed around three industries only: the mining industry, monopoly industry and the banks. These small businesses, corner shops and other companies may be sure that if they do not fall into these categories they will not be affected.

I also referred the Chamber of Commerce to an article in Liberation magazine that I wrote as far back in 1956 on this topic. There I outlined reasons for nationalising

the companies of these three sectors. The mining industry has an appalling record of inhuman behaviour to its black workforce. It has a long history of paying starvation wages, of ensuring that Africans do the hardest and most dangerous work at the propface, of providing white workers with beds while Africans sleep on the floor. It still pays African workers pitiful wages and makes vast profits. Plainly we wish to control this, to ensure that such discrimination against our people does not continue and cannot happen again.

Then there is the question of monopoly industry in South Africa. Four groups now control over 80% of stock exchange companies. Plainly this is an aberration that cannot be allowed to continue. It leads to price collusion, price setting, and the exclusion of opportunities for small African traders. These things must be rectified.

Also there is the question of the need for the state to obtain capital for development. As I flew over the Transkei I was amazed to see that it appears unchanged from when I was last there - nearly thirty years ago. The farmers there told me that they didn't have the capital to develop the land. Where will this come from if we as a government do not own and control the banks and the mining houses?

You must remember also that when the National Party first came to power, they did so on a platform of nationalizing the mines. Their voters, the Afrikaners, rapidly became bourgeois and it was not necessary for the NP to take this step. But how many more followers do we not have? How can they become bourgeois in one or two generations as the Afrikaner has? Plainly we will need this development capital for such purposes.

How are you planning to implement this policy? Will you be purchasing shareholdings in order to control these companies, or will you just confiscate these shares?

These matters have not been fully considered - only the principle has.

Before we embark on the step of nationalization we will appoint an expert commission to investigate fully the issues concerned, and to report to us on their recommendations on this issue.

A businessman at the Transkei Chamber of Commerce meeting mentioned the issue of the privatisation of the shares of Iscor, something that happened recently. He noted how an asset of the state, of all of us, was sold to those who could easily afford to purchase it, predominantly white people, at a price that immediately was shown to be very low as the stock market judged it. He wanted to know if we would repurchase such shares at the price paid for, or at the market price, to end this issue that he called theft from all of us for the benefit of a few, mostly wealthy, people.



Photo: Paul Velasco

My answer is again, that such issues have not been worked out, and that the commission mentioned would investigate all such matters. There will be instances where control can be effected by government obtaining 51% of the shares of a company. In other instances it may be 40%, or even as low as 33%. This commission will report on all such issues.

Will businessmen be asked to submit arguments and memoranda to this commission?

What sort of commission would not accept submissions from such obviously interested parties? Of course it would.

I must again emphasize, as I have in my talks to various chambers of commerce meetings: this issue is one where we say to business people - "let's do this together". We ask them to acknowledge the problems I have mentioned, and to co-operate with us in eliminating them. This is not a step we would like to take in confrontation with business, or anyone else for that matter. Alternative ideas will be seriously considered.

If your commission, after thorough deliberation, recommends against nationalisation, will you go ahead?

If the commission finds, for example, that there are good reasons why a monopoly began as a monopoly and has continued to be one in the public interest, and should remain one, we will accept that. We are reasonable people, and wish to govern in co-operation with business.



Photo: Paul Weinberg

Have you as yet established this commission?

Not as yet. It is still down the track. We have many other things to get on with in the meanwhile!

As a final remark here, I would like to note that we are living with nationalised industry now, with no great problems. Electricity, the railways. We even, in the Reserve Bank, have a governmentally owned bank. Such a policy is not radically different from a lot of what is happening today.

The Conservative Party has published a pirated intelligence report alleging that the ANC has a plan to murder white right-wing leaders ...

That pamphlet, or report, whatever it was, did not originate from the African National Congress.

There seems to me to be a growing and increasingly desperate campaign conducted by leaders of the white right wing to destroy the negotiation process. The Conservative Party flourishes in an atmosphere of racism and racial fear, and it seems to me that they have an interest in seeing such conditions develop in South Africa.

Such conditions are the exact opposite of those that the African National Congress wishes to see develop. Our commitment to non-racialism is public knowledge. Our commitment to peace is as genuinely held. It is not so for the white right wing and its leaders.

It is against our policy to assassinate political leaders, and it is against our policy to target any group in a racial way. There was thus no report of the type alleged that originated from the African National Congress. It might be wise, when looking for the source, to consider who prospers by the conditions the alleged report attempted to create.

Ex-members of the African National Congress have alleged torture at the hands of Umkhonto officers and staff. How did you have this matter investigated?

It seems plain that the government and the media that support it are going to attempt to build this issue up. Let me explain precisely what happened.

The people concerned were involved in a mutiny in one of our camps. This was not recently, it was years ago. In the course of this mutiny eight people were killed by them. They were overcome,

they were thereafter tortured. They were subsequently tried and sentenced by our courts.

Later, President Tambo commuted their sentences and instructed that they be freed. They did not escape, as they are now claiming. They were released, freed, and allowed to go their own way.

Meanwhile the African National Congress has dismissed from the ANC all the officers responsible for the units, and the individuals, who were responsible for the torture. Dismissed from the ANC.

Would you be willing to allow an internationally respected judge to investigate this matter?

We believe our procedures to have been most thorough, and most severe on the offenders. We believe the matter has been appropriately and adequately handled and dealt with.

On this rather sad note, Nelson Mandela had to speed for his next meeting, and Monitor's Rory Riordan had to speed for his plane. The interview left more questions unput than were answered - a good reason for a follow-up!

IT'S PARTITION OR BLACK DOMINATION

An interview with Carel Boshoff

Prof Carel Boshoff is probably the most widely respected leader of the conservative Afrikaner right.

He is a personal friend of all of the overtly political leaders of white conservative movements, and Prof Boshoff's Afrikaner Volkswag is a powerful unifying factor within the white right.

Prof Boshoff began his working career as a missionary in the NGK, and later became a lecturer and finally a professor of missionary sciences in the theology faculty of the University of Pretoria.

In 1972 Prof Boshoff became chairman of the SA Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) and he held this post when SABRA got caught up in the turmoil surrounding the proposed new constitution in 1982. It is because of the strength of Boshoff's personality and his commitment to that organisation that SABRA stayed with the conservative political trend through this period. Prof Boshoff remains chairman of SABRA today, which he describes as a membership organisation that does research into "racial affairs and into new attitudes and views on racial issues, such as the issues of the black nations of South Africa, their destiny and the relationship between the races in South Africa".

In 1980 Prof Boshoff became chairman of the Broederbond. However, the turmoil around the proposed new constitution saw Boshoff resign his chairmanship and later his membership of this organization. He describes the Broederbond as "remaining within the NP, trying to be their think tank, and bringing more trouble onto themselves!"

In 1984 Prof Boshoff was prominent in setting up the Afrikaner Volkswag and was its inaugural chairman, which position he still holds. His wife, Dr H.F. Verwoerd's daughter Anna, was, and remains, its deputy chairlady and executive officer. Prof Boshoff describes the Volkswag as an organization committed to "building up Afrikaner identity, self esteem and nationalism - the will of the nation. It remains committed to the volk, and the volk's need of freedom". It is restricted to white Afrikaners, and its unit of membership is the family. It has about 7000 family members, or 25 to 30 thousand individual members, and is still growing. The families of all prominent Afrikaner rightwing leaders are members: Mr Jaap Marais, Dr Andries Treurnicht, Mr Eugene Terreblanche, etc.

In 1988 Prof Boshoff established the Stigting Afrikanervryheid, which is a ten man thinktank working for only one idea - Afrikaner freedom. It does not have a membership, and works towards Afrikaner freedom and self determination, and the way in which that could be achieved.

Rory Riordan interviewed Prof Boshoff at his Pretoria smallholding.

We have seen a considerable shift of policy between each of the last four National Party (NP) heads of state. A continuous shift, beginning from Dr Verwoerd to Mr Vorster. From Mr Vorster to Mr Botha there was probably a bigger shift. And from Mr Botha to Mr De Klerk, probably a bigger one again. Would you summarize these shifts?

There has been a deviation in philosophy of how South Africa should solve its political problems, in particular with regard to the racial situation and the different nations. The idea of freedom for the different nations is being lost, and now we are moving towards the idea of a unitary state with guarantees for minorities. I can't see how that can be achieved.

The way things are going is a dispensation of black rule in South Africa, while still believing in group identity and the belief that those groups can come together in a democratic government - this is the thinking of the NP now.

When did this happen, when did this deviation begin?

This was a long time ago now - I feel that the influence of Kissinger on South African thinking was very strong. I believe it began then, in the days of Mr Vorster. Kissinger used Mr Vorster to side with the western powers to bring Rhodesia to hand over power. What influenced Mr Botha I can't tell. Mr Vorster was a good friend of Mr Kissinger. But Mr Botha was probably influenced by foreign pressures, made tangible through the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Also the national press plainly held influence. Mr Dawid De Villiers, Piet Cillier, Wimpie De Klerk - they also came out strong on the belief that the homelands were not the only solution, and that further policies were required for South Africa. Now the homeland idea is being abandoned. The homelands are being brought back, and the idea of one South Africa is the philosophy of the De Klerk administration.

All De Klerk has done is to bring forward clearly the consequences of the 1983 constitution. All that is happening now was accepted at the time of this constitution - one land, one nation, one citizenship, one government. All of this was accepted in 1983. What we have now are the logical consequences of that time.

What caused this shift in NP thinking? You have mentioned international pressures - certainly they have played their part - but what else?

Certainly international pressures. Also the opinions and efforts of the money powers in South Africa. People of influence - many did not accept the idea of balkanising South Africa. Also, the power of economic integration was very strong. The economy was

integrated, and it is becoming more so. The idea of independent economies, after Verwoerd, was never taken seriously. The idea of a "white" economy, becoming less and less dependent on black labour, did not take on.

Where is the NP taking us now?

It plans towards a democratic constitution. But whether this will be accepted is to be doubted. Blacks are in a very strong numerical position, and they know it. They have the power of labour, and purchase power. They have political power, they've got the youth which they manipulate. They've got international support, financial support. So they are working towards a black government.

The blacks will use white expertise, white technological knowledge, administrative expertise. They'll make use of whites as far as they need whites. But the situation will be black orientated.

Has this trend become irreversible now - can it still be stopped?

It can be stopped by partition. But there will be a part of the land in which this will be unchangeable.

All of this brings me to see the need for a two-fold solution for the South African problem. A black state emerging is unpreventable now, but I still have my doubts as to how it will develop and be stabilized. This "unitary" state ("unity" between the Xhosa and the Zulu's will not be easily created!) with our diversity, is very doubtful. Thus I stand for the Afrikaner taking his freedoms along with the other nations.

A multiparty democratic constitution may work for a while. It will probably have a strong federal element, and even special provisions for whites like special schooling for whites - Mr Mandela has stated that he has accepted that.

I believe they, the government and the ANC, are trying their utmost best to establish this multi-party democratic dispensation - but I believe the odds are against them.

Could the NP survive a white election now?

At this point in time, I doubt it. Many people are not accepting these arrangements - but I do not think the NP will allow an election now!

Do you think that the ANC should have been unbanned now, and Mr Mandela freed?

I think it was a mistake to do this before a guarantee was given that the armed struggle was to be abandoned. This should have been a precondition. The NP obviously tried for it, but didn't get it, and went ahead anyway. It was a mistake to do it without some compromise from the other side. Now it is irreversible. To ban the ANC again would see an uprising of emotion around the world - it would be very problematic.

Do you see the possibility of a white, right wing, security led revolt happening in South Africa?

Well, if that happened it would surprise me. I would not reject it out of hand, but it would surprise me. It is not the way the Afrikaner does things.

The problem is, in taking over government, you also take over the responsibility of the black population, the need to create jobs, the problems of housing, schooling, urbanization, of health care and so on - if you take the government by force, you should realize that you are accepting these responsibilities also! And I don't think you'll do better!! (I believe the option, to have an alternative freedom, is stronger).

What is your personal vision for the South Africa you would like to see?

My ultimate goal is a commonwealth of free, self-determining nations, living according to their world view. Working together with common aims, yes. Building up a prosperous sub-continent.

But to achieve that, in the meantime we will have a problematic interim phase of a unitary state and an Afrikaner state. Peace can prevail, but on a very sensitive footing.

Do you in any way admire the non-racial aspirations of the ANC?

I do not believe they are real! They wish for a one man, one vote situation in which they will take power. They'll show some sympathy for whites, but in the end that is not their main concern. Their concern is to take power.

Last night I thought of a description of you, that is probably uncharitable, but on which I'd like your comment. "You are the one person who is respected throughout the white right and who has a policy that many black South Africans may well accept, but the white right might not be ready for it yet".

Ja, I think the idea is still a bit drastic for many of them. They still believe that some kind of miracle may happen to change things from the processes we have talked about. I have much sympathy for them, and for what is driving them. The idea of an Afrikaner nation with its republics and the freedom of the past, our Afrikaner history - I have so much sympathy with that that I would not fight with it. I'm just trying to put realistic questions into the discussion.

We can only achieve as much as we've got power. We can defend just what is within our power, and we should plan with that as a point of departure.

Do you feel that many people within the conservative white community will come to accept your proposals for a very diminished volkstaat?

They'll accept the idea that we should start with a smaller piece, and extend it as much as possible. I'm not working on boundaries, but rather on a growth point. Now I'm suggesting a growth point bounded by the Orange and the Olifants rivers, a large area really. This should be developed as a development point. Now it is

an underdeveloped growth point, and I suggest it should become a land of exclusively white development. With strong decentralization policies, whites would be encouraged to go to it.

Don't you think this is very dramatic medicine for the white community to be asked to swallow?

Well, you see, the options are so few for them! It's either the way of black rule, and domination, or it is a way of creating your own future!

You have had the courage to put down the boundaries of your Volksstaat. The CP has consistently not done this. Why do you think it has not?

Well, as a political party, they have to take into consideration where their voters live, and their voters' sentiments. They feel that they should concentrate on the taking of power. They cannot concentrate on the area I have pointed out - it is only five parliamentary constituencies!

The CP seems to be in a very difficult situation here. In private conversations, one says: "Now SA is 87% white and 13% black land. You say you'll compromise on that - will you accept 13% white and 87% black?" and they reply "well, we'll negotiate". But their position is increasingly untenable. They tell the white voter that South Africa remains as-is, with small alterations to the bandanna of the "black states". But this policy hasn't worked, has it?

Well I shouldn't answer for them! I am trying to convince them to accept my proposal, which I'm sure can be done.

If you were a black South African, what would you want? Can you answer that?

Oh yes, I've worked with blacks, as a missionary, for many years, in Lebowa and in Soweto. I feel there is so much that is precious in black culture and that there would be so much lost if they were melted together.

The differences between a Zulu and Tswana - these include such precious qualities. They should not be lost. If I was a black person, I'd like to have my freedom, and a prosperous land of my own. This is also what I wish for the Afrikaner nation, and I'd wish it for the black nations also. It may sound sentimental - but it's my real attitude!

Mr Terreblanche and the AWB. Do you have disagreements with him?

Well, I think we differ in style, and in some personal ways of doing things. But we worked together in the Great Trek Commemorations. I don't want to humiliate him. We are different persons, working in different fields with different styles.

There have been worrying outbursts of anti-Semitism at AWB rallies, including the burning of the Israeli flag. To me it seems as if Israel has been very supportive of the South African government over a long time - I'm surprised to see such things. What is the feeling here?

I always try to accept that you cannot take responsibility for everything that happens, even in your own meetings. At a meeting of the Volkswag a person may rise and say things which I don't accept. I may not even have the opportunity to respond immediately.

I don't believe there has been a real anti-Semitism among Afrikaners. There may be pockets here and there, but I don't think it is the idea of the Afrikaner. As a Christian nation, they appreciate the Jews for what they suffered as God's people!

Right wing para-military violence - do you think there is a possibility of that breaking out in South Africa?

It seems very serious. At this moment we should be very cautious about the possibility, because there is an impatience particularly with the demonstrations and the marches. I feel that is a serious situation. I hope it won't happen - I am seriously concerned about it. But there is enough anger, and fear, together, and impatience.

Do you think that this violence would be directed more at the National Party, or the ANC?

No, I feel that it may be directed at the marchers. People are tired of marches, and I have warned that this is building up to something ugly. I hope we will prevent that.

Do you think that there is a chance that integration can work in South Africa? We see some hopeful examples - say, the residences of Stellenbosh University are opened, and a few years later, if someone suggests they be closed, there is anger about it.

No, never. Youth are always experimental. But when they grow up - no, I don't believe it will work.

What do you think right wing Afrikaners will do if the processes we have outlined, towards a non-racial country, continue on the one hand, and if they don't get the partition option on the other hand?

I don't think the Afrikaner will accept it. I don't want to whip up emotion, but I don't think the Afrikaner will take foreign domination. I think the Afrikaner will always see freedom as the most precious thing in his world-view. Freedom and religion. They'll fight for their freedom. That's not a kind of fighting among groups. But when it comes to the question of irreversible domination - I think you'll have trouble - I'm warning that you'll have trouble.