

THE WAY FORWARD

FROM XIMOKO PROGRESSIVE PARTY

- Prof. H.W.E. Ntsanwisi -

Messrs Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We gather here at CODESA II to reflect upon what has been achieved in the months which have passed since December 1991. On the one hand we have heard messages of hope, on the other, signals of dissent in the inability of the crucial Working Group 2 to reach consensus on fundamental issues related to constitution-making and the constitutional principles which need to underpin the new constitution.

The point is, though, that seen in toto great progress has been made. All parties have been exposed to the views and positions of others and in all working groups there have been signs of a preparedness to make concessions toward consensus. However, the legacy of distrust which still prevails in the wake of decades of division brought about by Apartheid remains a factor which we cannot ignore in the process of negotiation. Considering the strains and stresses of our society, and comparing our present progress with the rate of progress characteristic of such processes elsewhere in the world, *we need not, I believe, hang our heads in shame.* Hitches and stoppages are inevitable - they will test our mettle and we dare not be diverted from our present course by such difficulties.

In respect of the work of Working Group 2 the Ximoko Progressive Party has argued the principle of inclusivity in the matter of constitution-making. Consistent with this argument we have supported a higher special majority for constitutional amendments - we would accept 70% here.

However, as a political party with a strong regional focus we in the Ximoko Progressive Party are sensitive to, and would strongly support the principle of regionalism as a natural extension and enrichment of structures for democratic government. Allowing regional communities the right to conduct their own affairs and protecting that right constitutionally is surely a positive step to broadening the very basis of the democracy which we seek.

The XPP has numbered itself amongst the not insubstantial company which has preferred ^{in addition} a ^{substantial} majority of regional representatives in the Lower House contemplated and in respect of decisions regarding regional matters in the absence of a second house which is regionally constituted.

We have also supported a bicameral legislature for the New South Africa with the upper chamber constituted so as to represent regional interests in a manner consistent with democracy. Our support, in company with the general consensus, for a special majority of 75% in respect

of the Charter of Fundamental Rights is unqualified.

Messrs Chairmen, CODESA 2 should not degenerate into a slanging match in which blame is apportioned for intransigence or credit sought for magnanimous compromise. Inevitably this has happened and we need to live with it. We should not be deterred thereby from our great enterprise and in the weeks and months to come seek new avenues to reach out to one another.

Negotiations must succeed. There is no alternative that we can contemplate that will not bring upon our country misery and suffering, bloodshed and violence that will exceed the levels that even now offend the sensibilities of all civilised people.