

MCH91-79-4-8

Discussion Paper

HOW HAS THE CHARACTER OF THE RIGHT WING CHANGED AS A PROBLEM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HOW DO WE DEAL WITH IT?

Introduction

16 November 1993

It is important to recall that until the late 1960s the NP itself represented the right wing in the South African political scene. In the late 1960s the Hertzog breakaway from the NP led to the formation of the HNP which presented a very feeble challenge to the NP right wing hegemony. It is only since the 1980s that the right wing has become a significant phenomenon.

We should also recall that the strength or perceived strength and intentions or alleged intentions of the ANC alliance has given a lot of impetus towards the formation of right wing groups. The power of the ANC and differences over how this should be dealt with were in the ultimate analysis decisive in the split in the NP and the formation of the Conservative Party.

Various right wing formations are not generally 'pure' right wing in the sense of operating from elaborated fascist or other theories, so much as reactions to the advance of liberation and attempts to avert this.

What is most significant for us to observe as much as the distinct character of right wing formations is the extent to which their programmes coincide with that of the regime. As will be shown, there are substantial areas of convergence in the demands of right wing formations and that of the regime. This is not to say that the right wing is merely an extension of the regime, but to suggest the need to look below surface rhetoric at what the objective demands of each sector is and see to what extent these diverge/converge.

In the present period another factor that has added significance to the right wing as a formation or series of formations is the weakening of the authority of the NP and its loss of support amongst white South Africans. The right wing has in various forms emerged as a challenge to the pre-eminence of the NP as the representative of the whites

Other factors that make this period significant are:

*Divisions within the NP where sections of the leadership appear sympathetic to the right wing agenda or to sections of the right wing e.g. Coetsee, Kriel, Bartlett, though they may not necessarily be sympathetic towards or have connections to the same section of the rightwing (we do not assume direct connections). In the case of Bartlett for example, while he has an undoubted sympathy for IFP he is unlikely to be sympathetic to the white right wing, except insofar as IFP is part of the FA together with them. [The question of the NP having direct

connections and infiltrating the right wing is dealt with later]

These divisions are not new but relate to long standing differences over policy towards the liberation forces and management of the transition.

The actions and postures of the right wing have been used by the NP particularly its more right wing section as bargaining chips against the ANC. The right wing threat is used as a reason for more concessions from the ANC

**Emergence of powerful former SADF/SAP generals as supporters of the right wing, most significantly General Constand Viljoen who had previously made much of his nonparty political stance. His emergence into the political arena is depicted as one determined by national exigency rather than political ambitions or narrow political interests.*

** emergence of a multi-racial right wing formation-first Cosag and then more recently (Cosag's change of name into) the Freedom Alliance*

**In common with the NP, the common factor of the right wing is an emphasis on regionalism as one element in limiting the power of a future majority government. [The crudeness of previous right wing positions now tend towards a coalescence with the negotiation demands of the NP and the adoption of some of the language of liberation Amongst the principles founding the Freedom Alliance's Manifesto are rejection of 'racism, discrimination and sexism'[Preamble (e) (ii)*

**Extreme resistance to joint control of the security forces [another point where the negotiating demands of the NP coincide with the dire threats of the right wing]*

The overall effect of the combination of threats as well as the weakening of will and narrowing of the base of the NP has been to heighten the atmosphere of brinkmanship and to create doubts about the advance of the process itself. Yet this brinkmanship predominantly relates to demands the regime (particularly its more reactionary members) supports and the ANC rejects.

CHARACTER OF THE THREAT TO THE PROCESS CONSTITUTIONAL ADVANCE ETC SHORT AND LONG TERM

The first question that arises is the capacity that these right wing forces may or may not have to block the transition process

a. by ensuring substantial white alienation from the process and at worst resistance to it

b. Refusal to implement the election process and this takes the following forms

i. Preventing voter registration [already partially implemented through officials burning ID books, as exposed by New Nation]

ii. No go areas/denial of freedom of political activity

Re preventing voter registration

At this very moment the ANC alliance has no freedom of access to Kwazulu and Bophuthatswana or what access it has in Kwazulu is subject to the possibility of violence and death. In the case of white farms, also, there are doubts as to the possibility of ANC organising [It is likely that the power of the ANC region in the Border area is sufficient to overcome the resistance of the Gqozo clique]

It is crucial to understand that remedying this situation only on the eve of elections is a substantial disadvantage since what is required is normal organising and campaigning as a prelude to an election.

Re no go areas/lack of freedom of political activity.

In the bantustans, the situation is not uniform. The degree of political activity possible in Bophuthatswana is presently less than in Kwazulu and much less than in the Ciskei. In each case the situation on the ground is a result of both the degree of oppression and the strength or otherwise of organisation to resist this.

Even in the case of the Ciskei, the extent of military support from the SADF may boost the degree of resistance to a free poll and make the problems of the ANC greater, than indicated above.

The question of freedom of political activity is much wider than freedom to resist voter registration and the character of the resistance extends to attacks on ANC supporters and often communities in general.

Right wing control of key installations, in the case of whites particularly can also be used to cause devastation.

A key element of the right wing threat to the process is an undertaking to block the implementation of the TEC, to deny its authority. [Its practicality is not considered here]

The relationship of bantustan politicians to their present power bases means that they can exercise considerable power over civil servants.

There are also extensive threats regarding the ballot not being secret, that they will actually find out for whom one has voted. They are also using experiences gained in Namibia. In June this year the OFS NP's strategic plan was revealed in parliament by a CP MP. Their elections manager for the province is General Willie Meyer, Former OC of the SWATF. Nico Basson spoke of Meyer's involvement in the extensive anti-Swapo campaign that preceded elections there. The OFS NP plan wrote of the use of 'law suits, magicians, witch doctors and the Traditional Headers Association'; The THA is a DMI front that has been linked to Adult Education Consultants.

-There is also the question of warlords who may well retain arms- even if a TEC is implemented and still have the capacity, through their arms, to destabilise the process

As mentioned these are not threats in the offing so much as already in operation

White areas

Regarding the authority of the TEC, the Volksfront has already indicated that it sees itself and not the TEC as the executive in the transition.

Nonviolent civil disruption

There is some possibility of nonviolent civil resistance. According to a recent report, if only ten key Transnet technicians took the day off, the entire trains service on the Witwatersrand would be paralysed.

If fifty key white workers took the day off at Jan Smuts, the airport would cease to function. It is not known at present whether this is true or not.

One also needs to consider the possible role of the largest white union, the Mine Workers Union (MWU, comprising 50,000 members. It is affiliated to the AVF, with its president, Cor de Jager, a member of the 9-member AVF Executive Council. The MWU organises in the mining industry, Eskom, the iron and steel industry, the chemical industry, on the Rand Water Board and at the Atomic Energy Corporation. In the mining industry the MWU has 7,320 members in 'key positions', mostly underground. (Such workers have access to commercial explosives). There has already been a brief disruption of work at Highveld steel in Witbank in which MWU and AWB members participated.

It should be noted that possibly some of the most dangerous far right elements appear to be in leading positions in white unions

The local commando systems also have the capacity to cause a great deal of destabilisation especially if tolerated/ supported by the SAP

Finally, the white community embraces a whole lot of crazies and freelance causers of havoc, who can create a lot of damage

TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE RIGHT WING MOUNT ARMED ACTIONS OF VARIOUS SCALES AND TYPES?

*Intelligence estimates tend to suggest that civil war is an unlikely possibility but contingency plans have to be made against this possibility because even a limited attempt carries the possibility of large scale damage.

Amongst the reasons why such a prospect of an actual civil war is unlikely are the absence of a unifying perspective able to sustain even the preliminary sacrifices involved in such an

undertaking. Possibly the fear of majority rule and what it is supposed to bring in terms of loss of security, jobs etc etc may provide the basis for extensive mobilising

But what we are speaking about is a situation where in order to wage such a war ordinary people have to be prepared to do more than bomb a black taxi but abandon their homes and jobs, their family and allow the economy to collapse.

* *Secessionist war.* This also seems unlikely. In regard to the most promising candidate -Gatsha, the military capacity of the Kwazulu administration seems very limited according to Laufer in WM recently.[see Appendix] In any case the dependence on the central government may mean that this capacity is even more limited. This is not to exclude some attempt with attendant damage

In the case of whites, where is there a region to secede? Who has the commitment to move in large numbers towards such a region?

**Coup.* This appears to be widely discounted, by most authorities on the SADF but before we are totally complacent let us remember the long professional tradition of the Chilean military that preceded their overthrowing Allende. Professionalism is an absolute value for soldiers unless they perceive a regime as representing something totally alien to the social order to which they have pledged allegiance.

This may underscore the point that a settlement needs to be as inclusive as possible. Does it mean going so far as 'assisting' de Klerk in making alliances on the far right-if this will facilitate stability?

But even if we do not discount a coup attempt, around what unifying perspective would it be sustained?

*The possibility of sporadic guerrilla warfare against a democratic government must definitely be envisaged and its success and duration will depend on the degree of loyalty of the police

*the same goes for the related question of destabilisation that can take a variety of forms which will also depend to a large extent on what attitude the police take up.

What is the composition of the right wing? To what extent is it a force, as presently organised and unified, for cohesion or inner tension. To what extent are there contradictions of a substantial kind within the right wing?

With regard to the black right wing, in the case of Bop and Ciskei they have no social base of significance. At the same time and for this reason, these administrations have a substantial interest in the blocking of the transition and ensuring their continued access to bureaucratic power.

In the case of the IFP we know that it does have a social base,

which is mainly regional and whose quantity is not clearly established, though it is diminishing.

The IFP power is manifested in a fairly substantial contribution to low intensity warfare through its hostel bases on the reef and the power of warlords in Natal

Unlike the Ciskei and Bop whose hopes rest on the continuation of the present, the IFP has certain expectations that it would like to see realised in a future role of some importance and power.

The core base of the IFP appear to be rural, older people with lower levels of formal education

The IFP has become a 'multiracial' organisation with the presence of a whole range of riff raff from Rhodesian wars, NIS, DMI and nut cases armed with mythology about the noble Zulu. There are also some writers who argue for an affinity between the Afrikaners and the Zulus, both with their 'proven bravery' etc. Still others believe that the future is black but let it at least not be red and this means opting for Gatsha

Sections of capital and to a declining extent international capital have tended to back the IFP because of its perceived procapitalist stance. But its use of violence may be causing a rethink insofar as this tends to promote an unstable climate for business.

There is finally a strong segment of support for the IFP within the Natal section of the NP.

Base of the white right wing outside its formal membership

-sections of the NP. The reasons for this phenomenon relate to differences over the transition and go back to the PW period with FW's election representing a partial victory over the more militaristic faction within the NP. Insofar as the militaristic tendency has never been completely defeated it is consequently present as a force pushing for less concessions to the ANC, a harder line generally, a willingness to resort more readily to military solutions (e.g. Umtata raid) and undermining of negotiations as a way of resolving the conflict

-the SADF/SAP/Security forces and large sections of the civil service may also provide a substantial base of support, not necessarily always active support for the right wing. This is because these forces stand to gain little from power sharing and fear for their security and also because of their fanatical opposition to communism

-The Conservative Party and other 'more intellectual formations'

In the main they are constitutionalists. They respect rank.

The death of Treurnicht presented de Klerk with a more militant leadership under Harzenberg, and one of the reasons for the formations of the FA may have been to bring them into line and

reduce their leadership role in the right as a whole.

re AWB and other militaristic formations

a. relatively small in numbers - figures given by various sources for AWB member vary so widely that it is not possible to give an estimate at this stage.

b. highly armed but fairly thoroughly infiltrated

The detention of four members of the AWB, including 'Commandant General' Dirk Ackermann, the leader of the AWB's armed wing (the Wenkommando) were detained under section 29 on 1 October 1993. They were suspected of planning to attack Koeberg, the WTC, raid the SADF Combat School at Lohatla (N Cape) for arms and vehicles and of involvement in reconnoitring the home of Peter Mokaba. Steph Jacobsen, former commander of the AWB in the Western Cape (reportedly ousted by AWB hardliners) alleged that the AWB had at least two members in key positions at Koeberg - one in security and an operator involved in the actual running of the plant. Those arrested came from several areas of the country.

If the SAP's allegations are true, these arrests indicate that the SAP is well informed of developments in the AWB, and are largely capable of preventing armed action from this quarter.

A similar swift police crackdown on rightwing theft of arms is reported in Saturday Star 6 November 1993, within 18 hours of the theft. This seems to lend support to the general thesis of their being extensively infiltrated.

c. Mainly working class, unemployed, farmers and displaced farmers

d. The discipline of the AWB and other militaristic formations is not uniform

e. highly militarised, but it may be that they respect rank. Noteworthy was Terre'blanche's statement that he would be prepared to serve as a corporal under Viljoen.

f. Ideologically appear to move towards a confederal option

-Previously they argued for the 1913 Land act, restoration of Boer republics

Some within the AWB not clear except that they want no change

-This category includes the BWB (Boere Weerstandsbeweging) this category and a variety of other crazies

Choices for de Klerk

Need in the first place to note that the way that the right wing

has been contained has strengthened the right wing within the cabinet. There has not been a clampdown but their continued presence has been as a pressure group that has strengthened the hand of those sections of the cabinet resisting the transition process.

Despite its conspiratorial overtones, it may be calculated by the right wing in the cabinet and even the majority of the cabinet, as essential to link with the FA against the ANC.

But what are the conditions for this, how does it affect a settlement with the ANC (can he balance both?)

To what extent does Viljoen carry the whole of the FA, within which there are varying forms of extremism, especially can he contain the CP? Are his supporters the same as theirs? There are repeated indications of independent actions that stretch the basis of the unity e.g. separate AVF bilaterals from the ANC bilateral with the FA as a whole.

The referendum may have been conceived as a way of sorting out the right wing and creating a basis for an alliance.

The AWB is part of the FA but it is a loose cannon going in all sorts of unpredictable directions.

But de Klerk has on his back extensive national and international pressure for momentum and freedom of political activity. He has to weigh this up against what this means in terms of ANC victory and the extent of such a victory

Another painful choice for de Klerk is whether he can as a new born nonracialist form an alliance with the whole of the Freedom Alliance

The basis for an alliance with the IFP (enhancing a nonracial image) may seem to contradict that with the CP? (despite FA manifesto, still fundamentally racist)

The AVF may also be moving in a different direction towards a confederation of a radical type.

Viljoen on the other hand is pushing for a nonracial volkstaat as just one region.

Can de Klerk go it alone in terms of elections? Despite current appearance of unbridgeable differences, is it not in de Klerk's interest to find a way of joining up with the FA. Opinion polls indicate a very low figure for the NP. Combination with the FA would appear to be the only way to reach a 20 or 25% figure

He must take into account the degree of support of the various groups in the FA,

Will he get a GNU if he makes an alliance with the FA and if so how will it operate?

CHOICES/PROBLEMS BEFORE THE ANC?

We are confronted by a stalled process, threats of blockage, war and new alliances

Options:

- a. Maximise pressure on de Klerk to undermine the powers of the problematic bantustans (most problematic for him is obviously IFP support)
- b. Pressure re AWB- dealing with their threats is possibly distinct from the rest of the FA and may because of their relative isolation practical.
- c. Heighten divisions within the FA especially divisions within the IFP itself -and
- d. also heighten divisions within the NP in order to ensure achievement of a and b above in this section. The Roelf Meyer's may be willing to go along with this as opposed to the Kobie Coetsees
- e. Address white working class fears re property, rather than necessarily focusing relatively exclusively on regionalism, the way in which the right wing leadership is presenting the problem. Insofar as this may be a reality, ethnic fears of Zulus (and various other peoples) as has happened in Natal Sonke festival.
- f. The ANC needs to develop a more elaborate policy towards the police and devote more attention towards integration of some of its trained forces into the future police forces. The significance of this question is widespread, but in the present context, the police attitude to right wing terror, as indicated, may be crucial. It also appears that recent POPCRU actions has increased tensions within the police force and the possible resistance of right wing sections.
- h. Political space for the right has to be addressed. What is the role of the right in the new SA. Is there any space for them other than military options? Can we not define the nation in the making in such a way that the right has a possibility of making an input into the new nation in the making.

Paradoxically, a de Klerk alliance with the FA may help this process, just as the formation of the FA as such has had a positive feature in that it has facilitated dealing with the right as a whole and not isolated pockets and also reduced the threat of military options.

NOTE

A question that is important to ask is how ideological and social combine i.e. how important is communism in fact -does it relate to attachment to religion and fear of loss of property or is it an artificial fear, mouthed only by leaders. Anti-communism is deeply ingrained in Afrikaner upbringing. Groenewald says that Marxism is the essence of the problem. Viljoen has said that race and ethnicity are not so much the problem as communists.

Are they representing the views of ordinary Afrikaners. It seems likely, at this point in time.

It is more likely that a concept like volkstaat has no resonance with rank and file and does not connect with experience and actual fears on the ground.
nothing

Appendix

MEMBERS OF THE AVF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, DIRECTORATE, SIGNATORIES TO THE FOUNDING STATEMENT, and DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE INAUGURAL MEETING ON 19/05/93 IN PRETORIA.

A) AVF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (9 members)

- 1) Ferdi Hartzenberg
(chair, CP leader and CP MP for Lichtenburg, Western Transvaal)
- 2) Eugene Terre'Blanche
- 3) Dries Bruwer
(CP MP for Lydenburg and head of the Transvaal Agricultural Union)
- 4) Jurg Prinsloo (CP MP for Roodepoort)
- 5) Fanie van der Westhuizen
(treasurer; CP-supporting businessman)
- 6) Andrew Gerber (CP MP for Brits)
- 7) Prof. Johan Schabort
(was the leader of the *Blanke Bevrydingsbeweging*, a tiny group of virulently anti-Semitic and racist members described by Eugene Terre'Blanche in the 1980's as "mentally deranged"; the BBB was banned briefly after the Strijdom Square massacre. Schabort is also a member of the CP's Mobilisation Committee.)
- 8) Len Van Niekerk Venter
(vice-president of the Iron and Steel Workers' Union)
- 9) "Cor" de Jager
(president of the Mine Workers' Union)

Note: Jaap Marais was elected or appointed to the EC in absentia; in the event of Jaap Marais declining to take up his post, Andrew Gerber was designated as the man to replace him. Jaap Marais did withdraw, and has stayed out of the AVF.)

NB: There is no representative from the AVU on this council.

B. DIREKTORAAT VOLKSFRONT (4 members)

This Directorate is to "support" the executive council.

- 1) Constand Viljoen
(ex-General; former chief of the SADF)
- 2) HP "Tienie" Groenewald
(ex-Major-General; also the leading member of the *Volkseenheidskommittee*, VEKOM, which initiated COSAG; he is usually referred to as former Chief-of Staff Intelligence but apparently this is not correct: he was Chief Director Military Intelligence, "a position subordinate to that of MI, a post held by a Lt-General" according to a rather confusing editor's note in The Citizen: see the attached photocopy.)

3) Koos Bisschoff
Appointed or elected Chief of the CP's Mobilisation Secretariat at their 6th biennial congress on 18/03/93; Lt-General "Koos" (Jacobus) Bisschoff had recently retired from the post of Chief-of-Staff Planning of the SADF. He also served as OC of Eastern Transvaal Command, OC Northwest Command (Potchefstroom), and OC of an unnamed operational sector inside Namibia. He is responsible for the co-ordination of the CP's national mobilisation campaign.

4) Kobus Visser (ex-General and former head of the CID)

Sources: Volksblad 20/05/93; Beeld 04/06/93

C. 18 PARTIES AND ORGANISATIONS WHICH ARE SIGNATORIES TO THE FOUNDING STATEMENT OF THE AVF

Political parties / organisations:

- 1) CP
- 2) AVU (although they objected to one clause in the founding statement of the AVF which rejected "the idea of a unitary state in which members of other nations could constitutionally rule or co-rule over the Afrikaner-Boerevolk." Beyers said this was unacceptable because it did not mean self-determination, but domination over other races / nations.)

Paramilitary organisations:

- 3) AWB
- 4) *Die Verkenners*;
Described as a "cultural-political organisation set up by rightwingers, some of whom are HNP members"; it was also speculated that the group may consist of disgruntled former members of the security forces ("verkenner" can mean "recce.")
- 5) Boere Freedom Movement (*Boere Vryheidsbeweging*; BVB; led by Jan Groenewald, brother of Tienie Groenewald)
- 6) Pretoria Boere Commando Group (Now led by ex-32Btn officer Willem Ratte, with Jan Groenewald the founder and still a leading member)

Agricultural organisations:

- 7) OFS Agricultural Union
- 8) Transvaal Agricultural Union Security Committee¹
- 9) Farmwatch (*Plaaswag*) (This might be a paramilitary group -

¹ At the SAAU's annual congress on 20/10/93, pro-NP officials won the top posts; Boet Fourie was voted in as head of the SAAU over Dries Bruwer, head of the TAU, while the OFSAU's Pieter Gous lost the vote for the post of vice-president. Moves are also afoot to exclude political officer-bearers from management posts. Bruwer warns this could cause a split in the SAAU.

no information available)

10) Boere Crisis Action

Trade unions:

11) Iron and Steel Workers' union

12) Mine Workers' Union

Community organisations

13) Loch Vaal Municipal Association

Boerestaat Groups

14) *Afrikaner Vryheidstigting (Avstig) / Volkswag: Afrikaner Freedom Foundation / Guardian of the Volk:*

- these are organisations headed by Prof. Carel Boshoff (ex-chair of the Broederbond

15) *Oranjewerkers*

(the group which established Morgenzon as the nucleus of a future white enclave; black people have not been excluded from Morgenzon)

Cultural groups / think tanks:

16) *Afrikaanse Kutuurbond (Afrikaner Cultural Association)*

17) SA Bureau for Racial Affairs (SABRA; also headed by Carel Boshoff)

18) Centre for Contemporary History (*Sentrum vir Eietydse Geskiedenis: Sege*)

D) DECISIONS MADE AT THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE AVF:

1) That government be requested not to allow final decisions to be made in the multi-party talks on certain core matters in the following weeks; only "concept decisions" should be made on constitutional principles, the form of a future state, and self-determination.

2) In the current climate of violence and intimidation it is unacceptable that negotiations and the planning of an election continue

3) The ANC must not extend its "actions of violence" to schools

4) The AVF will not take part in negotiations as a group, but act as a co-ordinating organisation to unite the Afrikaner-Boerevolk for self-determination.

NOTE:

According to an article in Beeld 04/06/93 by Francois Lotter (and

this has been alleged by various other journalists), of the 18 organisations which were at the meeting to formally launch the AVF, four nearly walked out of the inaugural meeting over the objection raised by the AVU: the AVU, the Afrikaner Volkswag, Avstig, and SABRA. This article also claims that General Viljoen and Lt-General Visser also nearly walked out over the same issue. At a meeting at the University of Pretoria on 25/05/93, Viljoen reportedly said that all people who regarded themselves as Afrikaners, including "coloured" people, could join the AVF.

B) Other personnel appointed since the inaugural meeting:

Colonel Piet Botha

Secretary of the AVF Executive Committee (which is dominated by the CP); appears to have been responsible for the statement calling on Afrikaners to prepare for war as the FA went into a meeting with the SAG on 29/10/93. Viljoen and Hartzenberg reportedly denied knowledge of this statement.

Joseph Chiolo: Secretary: organising.

F.J. Combrink

Of the AVF Media Concern Group, Potgietersrus, Box 1216, Potgietersrus

Gert Ehlers

AVF area leader, Ysterberg (Potgietersrus)

Ds. Mossie van der Berg: Chair of the Management committee of Radio Pretoria

ends.

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

26 November 1993

**TO: ALL NEC MEMBERS
ALL REGIONAL SECRETARIES**

I hereby wish to inform you that the NEC meeting which was scheduled to take place on the *1 - 2 December 1993* is now being postponed to a later date. This has been caused by matters that still have to be concluded at the World Trade Centre.

We will inform you of the new dates as soon as the officials make a decision on this.

Yours in the struggle

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Khulu Mbatha', is written above the typed name.

Khulu Mbatha
Co-ordinator