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Social Movements and Democratization in South Africa.[1]

Conventional theoretical wisdom in South African studies in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s was that South Africa could not democratize peaceably. That wisdom was informed by the insights of conflict modernization theory. Conflict modernization theorists suggested that modernization exacerbated ascriptive social divisions which come to be reflected in the polity. Ascriptive politics, ethnic, religious, or racial, tended to degenerate into zero-sum political conflicts: political gain for one group implied loss for the other. States whose polities were so divided, Israel, Northern Ireland, Lebanon and most of all South Africa, were considered most unlikely candidates for democratization. When applied to South Africa, conflict modernization theorists have argued that South Africa was (and is?) embroiled in a struggle between white/Afrikaner nationalism, primarily embodied in the National Party (NP) and African[2] nationalism in the African National Congress (ANC). Both have mobilized for self-determination. Afrikaner nationalism has articulated this claim in the form of ethnonationalism; African nationalism through an anti-colonial struggle for independence.[3]

Events of 1990 and beyond have led conflict modernization theorists to shift levels of analysis. While not abandoning the deeply divided society metaphor, they have turned to the "transitions literature" to investigate democratization. Transitions theorists eschew theoretical explanation, content to describe democratization in terms of elite actions amidst contingent events. The image of democratization provided in transition theory is one where democratic pacts are imposed onto the political structure by a cabal of moderate elites. Consonant with this image is the notion that the election of 1994 be regarded as merely a "racial census." Paradoxically, conflict modernization theorists fail to explain how the same elites whose group affiliation made them unrelenting antagonists became the democratizing moderates. Democratization as a political—and especially a social--outcome remains mysteriously unexplained.

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[1] This paper is part of my ongoing dissertation research into the forces that made democratic transition possible. The other key aspect of my research is on the transformation of the National Party. This involves the transformation in the identity of the former ruling NP. This transformation involved the complex unfolding of class, racial and ethnic interests that had been part of the party's past. The central thrust of this transformation was from one of racial and ethnic exclusion to inclusion, as the NP moved from being a populist Afrikaner ethnonationalist party to one dominated by broader white racial concerns coupled with conservative class ones. Finally, the party dropped its racial exclusivism, and became multiracial. This made it possible for the NP elite to accommodate from above to demands for racial inclusion from below.

[2] For purposes of analytical consistency, African, Indian and Coloured refer to members of different racial groups as classified by the apartheid state. Black refers to all three groups combined.

[3] This perspective is advanced most forcefully by Hermann Giliomee. My thinking on South Africa and its transition has been deeply influenced by Giliomee's work, and while at variance to his overall conclusions, is deeply indebted to the insights it contains.

From a sociological perspective, this is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. Even if it were true that the election of 1994 were simply a racial census (a conclusion which I would dispute), social researchers are no closer to understanding how a deeply divided polity could have had such an election in the first place. It is not that the descriptive insights of transition theory are incorrect: elite agreements through compromise have been crucial to democratization. It is, rather, the theoretical assumption that transition theorists have made, without empirical investigation, that compromise was possible without other significant political changes in and between the crucial political contenders. Hence the central problem for this paper will be to understand what made the democratic transition in South Africa *possible* with a focus on the impact of the social movement activities "from below."

The central thrust of my argument is that democratization was made possible by the construction of an incipient inclusivist nation-building project under the rubric of the United Democratic Front (UDF) for equal political participation in central government institutions. UDF's success was in its ability to mobilize local level developmental grievances into national level political ones through the ideology of non-racialism. Its activity constituted a limited 'revolution against racism' of the exclusive state and forced more inclusive constitutional changes onto the state's reform agenda. Non-racialism made it possible to shift the center of political struggle away from zero-sum identity conflicts onto developmental class ones. While the deep racial, class, and ethnic divisions remain in South African society, they are, at least for the time being, marginalized from the key conflicts in the national state. The future of South African democracy depends largely on the ability of the political parties to maintain that distance from those identity-based concerns, while dealing with some of the underlying developmental inequalities.

The implications of South Africa's democratization, theoretically and empirically, are profound. Democratization occurred despite the fact that South Africa was and is deeply divided socially. This suggests that it is not in the large-scale structural divisions that democratic projects are either constructed or destroyed, but in the manner in which the collective actors respond to the various alternatives that they present. Democratization through non-racialism was one such project.

1. Conflict Modernization Theory and the Character of the South African Conflict

The theoretical literature on communal strife is replete with conflicting attempts to characterize group political conflicts. Two theoretical orientations to the problem of the persistence of group conflict in modern societies dominate the literature. The first argues that identity conflicts are rooted in the premodern, where ties of blood and family dominate the organization of social and political life. Such theorists were all convinced that modernization itself would replace such traditional identities with newer, more rational ones (Apter 1967; Huntington 1968). The sheer persistence of communal conflicts, even in developed countries, casts doubt on the central assumptions of modernization theory.

Social theorists responded by searching for new basic principles for understanding group politics in modernizing societies, and found it in the conception of divided societies whose members share nothing besides territory, markets, and the state (Furnivall 1948; Kuper and Smith 1971). The organizing principle for such societies is coercion, as a distinct cultural group gains control of the

state and uses it to maintain its ascendancy. These conceptual assumptions became the organizing principles for a new generation of Conflict Modernization theorists (Newman 1991). In this paradigm, modernization does not diminish ascriptive cleavages but exacerbates them. Racial conflict occurred because previously isolated racial groups are brought together in cities through industrialization and urbanization. Competition for the same economic niches creates ascriptive antagonisms. In such divided societies, politics becomes dominated by intractable identity issues. The state becomes dominated by one party with particularistic claims (Connor 1977; 1987; 1990; Glazer and Moynihan 1975; Greenberg 1980; Horowitz 1985; Lijphart 1977; 1985; 1989). Democracy is a highly unlikely outcome.

The theory of conflict modernization became fashionable for analyzing South African politics in the late 1970s and 1980s. Following the logic of the theory, South Africa's racial conflict emerged from the Nineteenth century settler society. Early industrialization led to a horizontal split between black and white, and a vertical split between Afrikaner and English whites (Adam and Giliomee 1979; Greenberg 1980; Giliomee and Schlemmer 1990). Reflecting Afrikaner political marginalization under successive pro-British governments, Afrikaner ethnonationalism developed in the 1930s. It's success was predicated on a vision for Afrikaner triumph against English domination and African threat. In 1948, the NP won state power through a narrow electoral victory. With successive elections, the NP's proportion of electoral votes rose to a high of 65%, with over 90% support by Afrikaners in 1977. Accompanying electoral success was apartheid: state policy advancing Afrikaner ethnonational interests and white privilege through black exclusion and superexploitation. Large-scale industrialization of the 1960s and 1970s exacerbated divisions between black and white, though it ameliorated differences between Afrikaner and English speakers (Connor 1990; Giliomee 1989; Giliomee and Schlemmer 1990; Horowitz 1991). The NP entered the turbulent 1980s with a broader racial-national concern for the self-determination of the white community.

In the case of the ANC, Giliomee argues that it is a movement similar in goals and ideology to other African liberation movements. These movements were defined in their struggle against colonial oppressors. Their principle aim was national liberation through the eviction of the colonizers. Mobilization against the colonial administration subordinated ethnic concerns to national ones: it was a people's struggle for independence. Giliomee, for example, recognizes that other political tendencies exist within the ANC, namely a workerist socialism, and a democratic liberalism. However, he clearly states that the dominant political tendency is that of anti-colonial nationalism. In sum, by the 1980s, the struggle in South Africa was between a white racial-nationalism and a black anti-colonialism.

Because of the large-scale structural divisions between black and white South Africans, racial-national theories made scholars pessimistic about prospects for peaceful change and democratization (Connor 1990; Giliomee 1989; Giliomee 1990).[4] De Klerk's bold move to liberalize politics in 1990 caught many of these scholars by surprise. Without abandoning the precepts of conflict modernization, some of these scholars turned to the transitions literature to

[4] Once important and perceptive exception to this conventional wisdom has been the work of Heribert Adam and Koogila Moodley (Adam 1971; Adam and Moodley 1986; Adam and Moodley 1993).

account for democratization (Giliomee et. al. 1994; Giliomee 1995; Giliomee 1996).

The transitions literature has been highly influenced by the theoretical orientation of American political science with its emphasis on elites and formal institutions (Baloyra 1987; Burton and Higley 1987; di Palma 1990; Etzioni-Halevy 1993; Geddes 1995; O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworksi 1991; Sisk 1995; Wickham-Crowley 1994). For these scholars, democratization occurs when moderate elites in the regime and its opposition win political struggles with radical anti-democrats in their respective camps. The moderates in both camps then compromise ideologically, and ally. The compromise is codified through pacts: negotiated agreements circumscribing democratization through institutions protecting former elite power and privilege. When the pacting process holds out against the radicals, democratization ensues.

The image of democratization embodied within transition theory is one of a settlement grafted onto the polity from above by a cabal of moderate and compromising elites. Hence South Africa has not democratized because the elites were consensually unified, a condition Rustow once suggested was necessary (Rustow 1970). Even less so because there has been a fundamental change in political terrain in the last decade. Instead, democratization has developed in South Africa because the crucial contending elites "share an interest in preventing a slide into anarchy and making the economy work for both blacks and whites" (Giliomee 1996, p. 25). The peaceful election founding election of 1994 was nothing more than a racial census in which less that 5% of the Black and White voters not voting for historically black and white parties (Giliomee 1994; Schlemmer 1994; Johnson 1996).

Both Conflict Modernization and Transition theory leave scholars without an explanation for democratization in the country. Even if the election of 1994 was merely a "racial census," what has to be explained in view of South Africa's deep racial and class divisions is how that election was possible in the first place. Simply suggesting that elites shared an interest in avoiding chaos and reviving the economy merely begs the question of how such economic rationality became injected into a polity theoretically assumed to be pervaded by communal irrationality.

Empirical evidence of the last six years points out the weakness of the assumptions of irrationality. While it would be simplistic to suggest that the transitional outcome was predetermined beforehand, the fact remains that negotiations to draft a new constitution were largely successful. Scholars observing the activities of the negotiations have suggested that they represented a convergence in the distance between the parties (Friedman 1993; Sisk 1995). Underlying that convergence was a conflict less concerned with identities than with the distribution of good and services. In short, class appeared to be the dominant cleavage of politically organized conflict in post-apartheid South Africa.

Post 1994 analysis and evidence supports this observation. Analyses of the election of 1994 have corroborated the observation that most South Africans voted in accordance with their ascriptive racial characteristics. However, those same investigations have challenged the conclusion that South Africans voted for those parties primarily *because* they represented their racial or ethic concerns. In fact, in the case of supporters of the two largest parties, the ANC and NP respectively, the evidence suggests that race and ethnicity consciousness and mobilization represented minor concerns. Far more important were ideology, policy, and past and present performance. Racial and ethnic concerns were more significant for the Inkatha Freedom Party,

the Pan Africanist Congress, and the Freedom Front (Mattes et. al. 1995). However, these parties combined represent only approximately 15% of the voters in the 1994 election (Reynolds 1994).

Furthermore, in the two and half years since the election, there has been very little evidence of overt racial and ethnic mobilization or conflict. Where present, it has been organized primarily by the fringe elements of the Far Right. In addition, the final draft of the new democratic constitution has recently been ratified by all parties in parliament who accord it highly as a consensus document with high democratic content (Star December 5, 1996; Beeld 11 December 1996; Sunday Times December 22, 1996). South African elites might not be consensually unified, but they appear to overwhelmingly accept the democratic 'rules of the game.' How and why most of these elites were able and willing to accept these new rules in such a divided society is what remains to be answered.

2. Setting the Stage for Political Change: Modernization and Class Formation

Conflict modernization theorists have argued that modernization leads to exacerbation of communal conflicts. In the aftermath of WWII, South African entered its most intensive phase of modernization. Growth rates between 1946 and 1974 averaged 4.9% with peaks of 8.5% in 1963-4. This is in start contrast to growth rates averaged only 1.8% between 1974 and 1989 (Crankshaw 1994, p. 131). The sizable growth rates up to 1974 set in motion massive changes in the structure of the South African economy, levels of urbanization, occupational structure, and education. Mining and agriculture declined drastically in sectoral contribution to the national economy, while manufacturing and commerce showed large growth.

Levels of urbanization for whites increased from 58% to 88% between 1946 and 1985, Indians from 56% to over 90%, Coloureds from 39% to 75%, and Africans from 18% to 32% for the same period (Greenberg 1980, p. 422; RSA PC3/1985, pp. 32-34). Despite the determined efforts of the apartheid state to prevent urbanization of the majority population, the urban population exceeded the rural population in 1990 (Kane-Berman 1990, p. 8).

Economic development altered employment patterns. Especially notable in this respect is the changing racial division of labor. In general, in the period up to 1974, whites moved into white-collar jobs which became a source for Afrikaner upward mobility as shown below; in the period after 1974, whites moved out of white-collar jobs into managerial, professional and supervisory ones to the virtual exclusion of other races (Crankshaw 1994, p. 45). Coloureds and Africans, on the other hand, moved into white-collar jobs in large numbers. For example, between 1965 and 1989, the numbers of Coloureds and Africans in white-collar jobs increased from approximately 30,000 to 100,000 and 100,000 to 450,000 respectively. Similar trends were evident in the semi-professions. Here white employment increased from approximately 140,000 to 350,000 between 1965 and 1989, while African and Coloured numbers increased from 50,000 to 200,000 and 20,000 to 50,000 respectively. Finally, in the period 1965 to 1989, levels of artisanal employment levels have been fairly stable for whites at approximately 175,000, while Coloured and Indian levels have shown moderate increases from 22,000 to 45,000 and 2,000 to 14,000 respectively. But African artisanal employment has shown spectacular growth from negligible levels in 1970 to over 50,000 in 1989 (Crankshaw 1989, pp. 41-45).

Perhaps nowhere are the effects of modernization more evident than in education. White pupil enrollment levels increase from approximately 700,000 to 1 million between the years 1958-1989, Indian levels remained at roughly 100,000, and Coloureds increased from 200,000 to 800,000. However, levels of African enrollment showed spectacular increases from 1.5 million to 5 million (Crankshaw 1994, p. 126).

Aggregate figures for white occupational distribution conceal what is perhaps the most astounding change of all: the impact of apartheid on the disparity between English and Afrikaans speakers. In 1946, 30.3% of Afrikaners were involved in agriculture; by 1977 this had declined to a mere 8.1%. Similarly, the percentage of Afrikaners in blue collar labor was 40.7% in 1946, dropping to 26.7% in 1977. The shift out of agriculture and blue-collar work was complemented by a shift into white-collar employment. In 1946, 29% of Afrikaners were employed in white collar jobs, in 1977 this had risen to 65.2% (O'Meara 1996, p. 138). Afrikaner personal income consequently grew quite phenomenally. In 1946, Afrikaner per capita income was 47% of that of English speakers, while in 1977 it was 71%. Another important change was the percentage rise of Afrikaner ownership in the private sector which more than doubled in the first twenty years of Nationalist rule (Adam and Giliomee 1979, pp. 170-3).

Overall, South Africa's modernization patterns in the post war period have thoroughly urbanized all but the African population. Even there, despite the attempts by the state to prevent African urbanization, an urban black working class, and a smaller black middle class has developed. Whites have consolidated their positions in the professional and managerial positions, while blacks have moved in ever greater numbers into all other spheres of economic activity. Within the white minority, the picture is one where the economic differences between Afrikaners and English speakers have rapidly diminished. It should not be surprising if those economic changes eventually impacted on the policies of the state, and the politics and social bases of the NP and its opposition.

3. State Reform 'from above' and the Transformation of South African Politics

In the context of the pressures emanating from a modernizing economy, the state embarked on a reform program with both internal and external components. Internal reform involved two components: labor reform leading to black industrial citizenship, and constitutional changes leading to the Tricameral parliament and associated local government development. The major thrust externally was an attempt to secure the apartheid state in the context of anti-colonial nationalist movements in the frontline states of Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia. Although an extended discussion of the specific causes for these changes are beyond the scope of this paper, it is probably a fair assessment to say that only labor reform can be directly attributed to internal political pressures. Here the obvious contradictions between the state's apartheid policies which did not recognize the permanence of the African urban population and the demands of a modernizing economy were crucial. The state's willingness to implement some labor reform was accelerated by wildcat labor strikes of 1973 which led to pressures from manufacturing capital to modernize the labor framework (Alden 1996; Price 1991).

Guidelines for labor reform were developed by two government commissions, the Wiehahn

Committee of Inquiry into Labour Legislation, and the Riekert Committee of Inquiry into the Utilization of Manpower. Combined, these argued for the recognition of black unions and that urban blacks be accorded the right to work and own housing in 'white' South Africa. Underlying both of these reports was an acceptance of the general principles of apartheid: that most blacks were residents and citizens of the black homelands (Alden 1996; Price 1991). Hence they did not challenge the overarching political dispensation within the country. Their significance, undoubtedly not appreciated at the time, was in the manner in which their recommendations, once implemented, facilitated the development of the non-racial labor unions. These unions were to become critical political actors in the mid and late 1980s.

The only other attempt at internal reform in the mid 1970s was the Theron Commission of Inquiry into the Coloured Population. This report delved into the socio-economic and political conditions of the Coloured people, most of whom lived in the Western Cape. The commission reported in 1976, on the very day of the Soweto uprising. Although most of the social and economic recommendations of the commission were accepted by the government, the constitutional suggestions were not. Instead a cabinet committee was established to make alternative recommendations. This committee and its forebears were the state organizations which drafted the Tricameral parliament. However, this new constitutional dispensation was part of a much grander strategic plan by new leader of the NP, P. W. Botha, to secure white domination in South Africa via improving state security in Southern Africa (Alden 1996).

The outlines of that grand plan was first enunciated by the new Prime Minister P. W. Botha to the NP Congress in October 1979. However, it was a vision which was developing within the NP leadership, and even amongst the black homeland leadership in the late 1970s (Starcke 1978). The essence of that vision was that Southern Africa in the year 2000 would encompass a constellation of states within which the various races and ethnic groups would be accommodated. The principles of this constellation were either federal, or even better confederal, and who would cooperate on issues of mutual concerns, particularly economic and security ones. Both the Frontline states and the homelands formed part of this constellation. Citizenship was dual: a Southern African citizenship which allowed everyone to live and work wherever they want; and citizenship of a state, homeland, province, city-state, or canton wherein they vote (Starcke pp. 19-21). This vision was what guided state-led reform of the 1980s. Of course, elements of the vision were open to alternative interpretations by various factions of the NP elite, who in turn could be pressured one way or another by various constituencies within the state and polity. Differing interpretations of the vision led to the NP split in 1982 and its subsequent transformation, while the implementation of the vision precipitated militant popular resistance under the rubric of the UDF.

The initiative for constitutional reform had begun under the leadership of Prime Minister Vorster who established the Theron Commission. Although his government rejected the recommendations of the commission for the direct representation of Coloureds in the state, he did establish a cabinet committee to investigate further. P. W. Botha, who was then minister of defense, chaired the committee. Also on the committee was Connie Mulder, leader of the Transvaal NP, the largest and most conservative wing of the party. The committee's proposals were announced in August of 1977 and were endorsed at the party's four provincial congresses in that year. In essence, they entailed the establishment of three separate houses of parliament empowered to legislate on 'own affairs'. Matters of 'general affairs' would be dealt with through a Council of Cabinets in which

all three groups would be represented and would legislate by consensus. Also proposed was an executive state president elected by an electoral college. The houses of parliament were based on the demographic numbers of whites (4), Coloureds (2) and Indians (1), which in effect meant that the white parliament would be able to dominate numerically should legislation face opposition in the other parliaments. Each parliament would be able to elect its own Prime Minister, though the white parliament would elect the President. Additionally, the proposals suggested a multiracial President's Council, separate regional councils, and separate municipal councils for towns which qualified. The proposals represented, not an abandonment of apartheid, but the extension of racial divisions to all levels of the state (Sarakinsky 1992, pp. 8-10). That explains why they were acceptable to all members of the party.

The proposals were never implemented because the state could not find Coloureds and Indians to serve in the separate institutions (personal interviews 1996)[5]. The state put the proposals on ice in the midst of the leadership struggles surrounding the Information scandal in which the Department of Information, headed by Mulder, had abused funds for the purpose of promoting South Africa internationally. P.W. Botha successfully used the Information Scandal to win the leadership of the party from Mulder. Botha then referred the proposals to another committee, and this committee along with the newly formed President's Council drafted legislation for a new constitution. These proposals were very similar to those drafted earlier, but contained some significant differences. First, instead of separate parliaments, there was now one parliament with separate houses, each to deliberate over 'own affairs' but to meet jointly in matters of 'general affairs.' In addition, instead of separate regional and local government institutions, the state aimed to modify Black local authorities in line with the Wiehahn and Riekert commissions' acceptance of urban blacks as insiders in white South Africa. In effect, the changes signified a willingness to adapt the underlying philosophy of separate development, and it was to this that the verkramptes disagreed. In February of 1982, the NP split and the Conservative Party was formed later that year. In July of 1982, Botha announced at the NP Federal Congress that the party had a set of proposals they were ready to support, and he put them to the white electorate in a referendum in 1983. With the orthodox ideologues out of the NP, there was room for new thinking, and the *verligtes* pushed ahead with the implementation of the Tricameral parliament; most were oblivious to the confrontation that it would evoke.

A. State Reform 'from above' and (Limited) Revolution Against Racism from Below.

Black insurgency involved the unfolding of three successive stages of political action, each leading to the dominance of particular ideologies and organizations. First, there was the students uprising of 1976 which began in Soweto and spread rapidly to many townships in the country. The uprising lasted approximately a year. It was sparked by a decision of the

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[5] I am unable to provide names of interview sources at this stage of my research, but they will be available in later more finished writings.

Minister of National Education, Andries Treurnicht, later to be leader of the Conservative Party of the Far Right, to require that African students to be instructed in Afrikaans. Interestingly, the rebellion spread to the Colored community in the Western Cape, where over 20,000 students were involved in confrontations with the state. Most of these students were native speakers of Afrikaans. Colored involvement suggests that the issue of Afrikaans was really superficial; underneath that lay the effects of black consciousness (BC) in creating a new racial assertiveness to an urban youth denied access to wealth, property, security and the state (Marx 1992). By creating a black identity with positive overtones, BC made possible cross-racial opposition to the state. The fact that some Coloreds joined the anti-apartheid struggle is very significant, since the apartheid state had attempted to cultivate an identity of relative privilege with respect to Africans (Horowitz 1991; Marx 1992; Price 1991).

BC politicized a whole generation of young blacks, some of whom were jailed by the state. Others fled to ANC camps in exile. In both places, the ANC's tradition of non-racialism was influential. The ANC infiltrated some of its new recruits back into the country with the aim of promoting civil organizations which would oppose the state (Barrell 1991). The indirect and direct influence of the ANC culminated in the formation of the UDF in 1983. At inception, the UDF had over 550 member organizations. At its height, it was in the region of 800. UDF mobilized initially around material concerns. By 1985, it was to broaden these to include one national political goal: democratize the state by ending apartheid (Alden 1996; Marx 1991).

UDF's success was in large part attributable to its inclusiveness of organization and ideology. It recruited members from all races and classes. Its collaboration with whites and black petty bourgeois organizations often led to material gains at the cost of the emergence of a relatively privileged and more conservative elite. In revolutionary terms, the UDF was a victim of its own success. UDF did pose the most sustained revolutionary challenge to the state, and it was only in the late 1980s that the state was able to curtail its power through repression (Alden 1996; Marx 1992; Price 1991). UDF's real contribution was to fuse the assertiveness of the black consciousness movement with the non-racial tradition of the ANC in calling for the democratization of the state and society (Frederikse 1990; Marx 1991). UDF rediscovered non-racialism and then dispersed it throughout the county's townships with successful organization, although there is evidence that its reach in the townships was confined largely to the activist leadership (person interviews 1997). Non-racialism was also influential in certain white circles. Universities, in particular, became sites of cross-racial collaboration in struggle against the state.

The third stage of black resistance was the union movement. COSATU formed through the merger of the non-racial Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in 1985. COSATU's paid-up membership was around ½ million at inception, rising to well over a million by 1990. The unions had developed through a decade-and-a-half struggle to build strong and democratic shop-floor organizations. They had not entered politics because of the potential threats this might pose to their continued existence. Finally, in the late 1980s, the UDF also succeeded in goading COSATU into politics. The unions played a far more strategic politics than UDF, using

large scale strikes and boycotts to pressure the NP regime to democratize. COSATU also used pressure to get the NP regime, and eventually the ANC, to adopt more pro-worker legislation (Alden 1996; Seidman 1994). COSATU's real impact on politics is now only beginning to be felt in the development of the social-democratic compromises. It was crucial in shifting the central ideological focus of black politics from UDF's populist non-racialism to a workerist non-racialism.

Overall, South African black politics is unique in the African context. The three movements mentioned above all reveal an urban bias, being organized primarily amongst the working classes broadly defined. UDF and COSATU are distinct from BC in their stress on non-racial inclusivism, and their attempts, partially successful, in creating internally democratic organizations.

B. Aborted State Reform from Above and the Creation of Political Stalemate

How did black insurgency impact the strategies of the state and the perceptions of the state elite? State reform of the late 1970's and early 1980s was aimed at co-opting sectors of the black population. The Tricameral parliament was the first such attempt, with a three houses for white, Coloured and Indian South Africans respectively. Tricameralism was a bold attempt to co-opt Coloureds and Indians while still maintaining white control of power at the center. It was for this reason primarily that the fourth house for Africans was scrapped early on in the development of the new constitution: there was no way to constitutionally guarantee white power and maintain white democracy. To have solved this problem would have required that the state implement separate houses for each racial grouping, a possibility preempted by boycotts by the prospective co-optees of the Indian and Coloured houses. Furthermore, it would have required that the state take seriously the possibility that the bantustans were not the solution to African separate development. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, this was not the case: the state was not willing to concede that the bantustans were already a failure, and this is most clearly indicated in the adoption of the Riekert and Wiehahn insider/outside dichotomy noted earlier. The fact that African insiders did not have political representation was a problem, but one that was to be dealt with after the implementation of the Tricameral parliament (Heunis 1983, col. 7053; personal interviews 1996).

Tricameralism opened the space for political mobilization from below, and it was in that space that UDF was formed. Nationally, the agenda of the UDF was to oppose the Tricameral parliament. Almost immediately after the implementation of the Tricameral Parliamentary elections, the townships in the industrial heartland erupted in violence. The levels of unrest were unprecedented in the history of the country. Perhaps the best indicator of the extent of problem it posed for the state is in the levels of repression to which the state had to respond to quell the uprising. In 1983, there were 453 detentions, 1985 1.129, 1986 7.992, 1987 29.132. Members of the state's security apparatus were obviously and justifiably concerned. When they plotted these figures on a monthly basis, the projections in 1986 for 1986 and beyond were horrendous: the revolution which has always been forecast by pessimists was upon them! (personal interviews 1996). They had to do something.

It was in the context of this violence and state repression that the willingness of the state to hold African exclusion as sacrosanct was undermined. This is most clearly evident in the pattern of constitutional proposals which the state placed on the table. In respect of the African population, the state's reform efforts were until 1985 all organized within the logic of apartheid: that Africans do not have citizenship rights in white South Africa because they are citizens of the bantustans. Hence the local government reforms of the early 1980s which led to the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982. This act established town councils in the African townships of 'white' South Africa and granted them authority to administer local affairs (Alden 1996, p. 131). It was the participants in these town councils who became the prime targets for UDF insurgencies. At the same time, the state proceeded with the formation of multi-racial provincial and regional government formations for whites, Indians and Coloureds. This culminated in the Promotion of Local Government Affairs Amendment Act of 1985 which created a single local government for whites, Coloureds and Indians. There was no hint of including Africans in these multiracial bodies at the time in May 1985. By February 1986, the government had come full circle on this and had called for the direct representation of Africans in all levels of provincial government (Alden 1996, p. 136). In less than one year, coinciding with the period of most intense insurgency, the government had abandoned the central principle underlying its program of constitutional reform to date.

Unfortunately for the state, multiracial provincial government found no more legitimacy in the eyes of the black population, and it was pressured to continue searching for a solution to the problem or black inclusion and maintaining white power. At the same time that the government called for the inclusion of Africans into provincial government, Minister Heunis announced a bill to create a National Council, a forum which would negotiate a new constitution (less than three years after the implementation of the last 'new constitution.' The forum was to be used to bring Africans in particular into the constitutional negotiating process (Heunis 1988, pp. 229-234). The Council was stillborn, since the state could not find suitable negotiating partners to participate in drafting a new constitution. This was primarily because the state wanted to nominate its negotiating partners. Hence the National Statutory Council Bill arrived in parliament as 36 member body, of which the President could appoint 8. Other appointees were 6 homeland leaders, 9 urban black community representatives elected by electoral college in 9 regions, four provincial administrators, 3 chairs of ministers councils in parliament, Minister of Constitutional Development, and up to 5 other ministers (Pottinger 1988, p. 128). Even Mangosuthu Buthelezi, at the time seen as a moderate homeland leader and essential to the success of any further negotiations, would not participate. His own public response to such overtures was: "[If] the State President turns his national council into a castration chamber then only those who aspire to be political eunuchs will want to go there (Smith 1988, p. 236).

Unable to get negotiating partners of substance, the state lost its political initiative in the arena of constitutional reforms. Underlying this loss of initiative was an unwillingness by the state abandon white monopoly of political power at the center. Hence the pattern in which state reforms ensued: first constitutional reforms concentrated on securing black local government participation, then regional government, and finally central government solutions were proposed. Each step represented a defensive retreat by the state in maintaining white power at the center. In the event, as long as the state maintained a commitment to a racial division of powers, it was unable to find legitimate negotiating partners. A stalemate developed in 1987

which was only broken under the new leadership of de Klerk in 1990 who was willing to negotiate with the African National Congress.

C. Insurgency, and Pre and Covert Negotiations.

Up till now, I have treated the state as a unity. This has been to show central state response to pressures from civil society. It would be incorrect to assume that such a unity existed. In fact, the state was profoundly divided, right up to the level of cabinet. It was these divisions which eventually made the ascendance of de Klerk and a negotiation strategy possible.

The first set of direct contacts between the ANC and state occurred in November of 1985 when the Minister of Justice, Koebie Coetsee, responded to one of Mandela's many requests for a meeting. It was an informal meeting precipitated by the ongoing unrest (personal interviews). Links were then established between Mandela's lawyer and the ANC in exile (Sparks 1994, 21-31). In March of 1986, the state sent a three person delegation to meet the ANC in Paris. These South African delegation included Mike Louw, the second in charge of National Intelligence, and Thabo Mbeki of the ANC (Seegers 1996, p. 245). In May of 1988, Coetsee formed a special committee to broaden discussions with Mandela. The team includes NIS head and deputy head Niel Barnard and Louw, Commissioner of Prisons, General Willemse, director-general of prisons Fanus van der Merwe, and Coetsee himself. Mandela's diary records 47 such meetings. Mandela recognized Barnard as the key strategist of the group. Barnard was to assess Mandela's thinking on three issues: violence, his support for, or belief in, communism, and majority rule versus power-sharing (Sparks 1994, p. 36-48). Eventually, it was National Intelligence who was to organize the fist direct talks with the ANC in London, and then make the arrangements to have the exiles return to commence negotiations.

Part of the problem in attempting to explain the origins and development of democratization is to understand what happened in these talks, and who in the cabinet and state more generally knew about them. The conventional understanding is that the talks were kept underwraps, known only to those directly involved, Botha, and perhaps one or two others (Sparks 1994). My own information suggests that this is an overly simplified view, that many other cabinet ministers knew about them and had wanted to get involved. The most obvious person not included was Chris Heunis and his department: it was, after all, the constitutional think-tank of the state. The possible reasons for Heunis' exclusion are manifold. Fist, there was the reality of turf-battles in the state between Coetsee as head of Justice with legal access to Mandela, and Heunis (personal interviews). Second, there was the problem that Heunis had as the Minister who had developed a constitution which had led to so much violence. Botha never could forgive him for this, and he became *persona non grata* in the cabinet (personal interviews). Third, there was evidence that Heunis' department had come to fundamentally different conclusions about how to proceed with reform than those closest to Botha.

Botha had always relied closely on the military, and especially on military intelligence for formulating strategic responses to insurgency (Seegers 1996). Military Intelligence had come to view the conflict through the eyes of counter-insurgency theory. Essential to this was the

notion that the country was being subjected to a Total Onslaught, a conflict against every level of society being inspired, organized and supported by communist agitators in the townships. These agitators were then linked to the communist-dominated ANC who was in turn controlled by the Soviet Union. The logical solution was then to eliminate the conspirators in the townships and then deal with the problems of development though co-option (personal interviews).

As early as January 1985, leading constitutional thinkers of the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning had a different assessment. Their position was eventually published in a document entitled *Ons Skrik vir Niks* (We Are Not Afraid of Anything) in March of 1987. The document suggested that repression was counter-productive in that it led to the emergence of more radical, and often corruptible leadership (personal interviews; Seegers 1996, p. 248-9). Instead the department suggested that it would be better to unban political organizations and remove the unenforceable aspects of Apartheid (Seegers 1996, p. 249). The document was supported by over 20 members of the civil service and some in the cabinet (Mail and Guardian, October 11-17, 1996). It died a quick death, ostensibly by Botha, and eventually led to the removal of security clearances for two members of the Department of Constitutional Development.

In this context, National Intelligence requested a briefing by one of those relieved of their security clearance. They wanted to understand the potential benefits to negotiation. They had also, after the many visits with Mandela contact with the ANC in exile, come to the conclusion that continued repression was more costly that beneficial (personal interviews). In addition, they had been able to see past the Total Onslaught ideology which so dominated military thinking. Mandela was not a communist, the ANC was not controlled by communists though there many communists in the ANC leadership. And the USSR was changing its position on supporting revolutionary nationalist movements to one for negotiation (Seegers 1996, p. 249). Having come to this conclusion, the problem was to get Botha to meet Mandela unconditionally (personal interviews 1997). When this was eventually achieved, it July of 1989, it was of no significance, for other events had overtaken Botha and the securocrats.

Two changes were crucial in this regard. First, South Africa had eventually agreed to a negotiated settlement in Angola and the independence of Namibia. The significance of this settlement was in the removal of 35,000 Cuban troops and the moderate outcome of the settlement. Second was the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Combined, these undermined the ability of the securocrats to argue with any conviction that the USSR was leading a Total Onslaught against the state. At the same time, it strengthened the hand of the verligtes in the cabinet and state who saw this as the key opportunity to unban the ANC and commence negotiations (personal interviews). Botha, though, remained unconvinced. Interestingly, in a 1995 interview with Botha conducted by Financial Times correspondent, Patti Waldmeir (1997), Botha reiterates his belief that Mandela was and is a communist, and that the state entered negotiations from a position of weakness rather than strength. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that had Botha remained in power, he would have taken the state to the negotiating table in the manner of de Klerk.

But nature intervened. Botha took ill. Botha in an effort to diminish his workload resigned his position as head of party. In a narrow victory, de Klerk, the archtypical party centrist, took

over. Using his position as leader of the party, he deliberately flouted Botha's leadership as head of the state and led a delegation to a number of Frontline states. An enraged Botha called an emergency cabinet meeting, and then one by one, the cabinet told him it was time for him to go (on the grounds of his waning health). Botha resigned, on public television, after a rambling speech denouncing his own party leadership. De Klerk took over, and in the last months of 1989, made the necessary arrangements to unban the ANC in his opening speech of parliament in 1990. Although the current thinking on the matter suggests that de Klerk was unaware of the secret negotiations with the ANC, there is good reason to believe that this is not the case. National Intelligence was probably pressurizing Botha to meet Mandela as early as 1988, perhaps 1987. They probably realized that he was not going to do it, and then cast around for a way out of dilemma. There is some evidence to suggest that some cabinet members and the Broederbond were thinking of a coup against Botha as early as 1986 (Sparks 1994, p 75). Coetsee was the leading cabinet member who organized what was really s silent coup (Personal interviews 1997). My suspicion is that National Intelligence had come to conclusion that Botha had to go, and they collaborated with Coetsee. They also knew that the most likely successor to Botha was de Klerk as leader of the largest wing to the party. I suspect that they had informed de Klerk of their activities prior to his ascendance to head of state, and perhaps even prior to becoming leader of the party. Such a position would be consistent with how de Klerk relied on National Intelligence in the post 1990 era, moving Barnard to head of Constitutional Development where he organized and oversaw the governments negotiating team. National Intelligence was also used to spy on Military Intelligence and gather information leading to the purge of 23 military generals accused of human rights abuses (personal interviews 1997). Either way, it was a "miracle" of sorts that de Klerk did become president because it was only he who could hold the cabinet together in the post 1990 transitional phase with his tremendous powers of persuasion and his firm base in the party (personal interviews 1996).

D. Providing the Inclusive Path Out of Stalemate.

The focus of this paper is not so much on the range of pressures which brought the state to negotiate but on what made the negotiations possible in such a deeply divided county. Most important in this regard has been the tradition of non-racialism in the ANC. As far back as 1955 in the ANC's famous document, *The Freedom Charter*, the ANC had advocated a position which suggested that the future South Africa should be democratic and that it "belongs to all who live in her, black and white alike."

UDF resurrected that non-racialism and dispersed it far more widely though the townships and nationally through its campaigns. Non-racialism was also influential in certain white circles. Universities, in particular, became sites of cross-racial collaboration in the struggle against the state. UDF's primary concerns with organizational cohesion led to a need for mobilizing resources. Many white organizations, business, churches, and foreign donor organizations were crucial in making this organizational growth a possibility. For example, in 1987, the UDF's own budget was over R2 million, with over R200 million donated by various groups to its affiliates (Marx 1992, p. 144). UDF and its affiliates signaled the birth of a civil society operating independently of the state, and capable of developing its own views and institutions.

In the mid 1980s, under pressure from the UDF, the union movement finally entered politics. With its ability to organize strikes, the movement was able to step into the breech when state repression had diminished the capacities of the UDF. More importantly, the UDF led to the development of a young leadership schooled in the ideology of non-racialism, and familiar with its practice by virtue of the cross-racial collective action which successful organization building required (personal interviews 1997). Finally, both UDF and the unions made class and developmental concerns primary to their day-to-day demands. UDF was important in demanding community level upgrading from the state, while the unions advocated demands for higher wages and other workers' benefits. Neither of these were particularly threatening to white material interests (except for white workers in lower paid jobs), and not threatening at all to white national interests. The principle axes of conflict in the 1980s was thus asymmetrical. It was not a conflict predominated by two competing nationalisms with demands for separate territory, recognition of separate identities and so on. While there were clearly concerns of identity on the part of the National Party and the white minority, identities was not central to mobilization from below.

The importance of this asymmetry was clear in the formal negotiations where non-racialism meant the national rights of whites was uncontested (Sisk 1995). One member of the state's covert negotiating team with Mandela and the ANC expressed it to me as follows:

Non-racialism was very important in finding a solution to the conflict in the country. Our interactions with the ANC leadership inside and outside [the country] demonstrated clearly to us that, while we disagreed with the ANC on many matters, especially on the nature of the economy, we would be accepted by them in and ANC government. Our interactions with the PAC did not reflect this acceptance (personal interviews 1996).

Instead interviewees have remarked on the mutual love for South Africa found in the ANC and their cultural commonness (Sparks 1994; Waldmeir 1997). These perceptions of the ANC leadership in NP elite circles are usefully contrasted with those of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). The PAC has contested the national rights of whites, and has been a reluctant participant in the negotiations process, maintaining a revolutionary rhetoric and strategy until 1993. Its dismal results in the 1994 elections suggest that most black South Africans reject its anti-white nationalism, and provides a useful test of the import of non-racialism. Had the PAC been the leading black opposition, NP elites have suggested that South Africa would have "ended up like Bosnia."

4. Democratization and National Identity.

Many scholars have noted the intimate relationship between nationalism and democracy (Greenfeld 1992; Mann 1994). Here the path of most states of Western Europe are perhaps the ideal type. Nations form in the context of modernization (Anderson 1991; Mann 1994) and are incorporated into the modern bureaucratic state (Mann 1994; Smith 1991). Crucial here is the development of an inclusive form of mobilization and incorporation. Yet not all states in Europe, or even Western Europe have traveled along this inclusive path. Germany is one case in point

where the construction of the polity along lines of familial descent was crucial to the formation of the authoritarian and fascist state (Brubaker 1992).

South Africa includes both of these paths. Afrikaner nationalism, was of the latter type, but was based on race and language not descent, and was institutionalized a racially exclusive polity. The Pan Africanist Congress developed an anti-colonial discourse and movement, and approximated—inversely-- the exclusivism of the apartheid state. In the latter part of the 20th Century, and after a period of intensive modernization, a more inclusive movement emerged. The principle agency for that inclusive nationalism, and thus democratization, was the insurgency of the black community. Conflict modernization theorists, for example, have a tendency to totalize the conflict, not recognizing the differences between the PAC/ANC and NP/CP camps. Giliomee, for example, reduces those ideological differences to one of strategy (1989).

And yet, nothing could be more inaccurate. Had the Far Right dominated the power struggles in the 1980s within the party, South Africa could never have transited to democracy. The evidence for this is clear: the Far Right, for the most part, did not participate in the negotiation process. They have continuously pressed claims for a separate state. And after the recent adoption of the new constitution by the NP, ANC and numerous other parties, Far Right leaders condemned it as "selling out of the white man."

Similarly, the PAC has, only in late 1996, accepted the new constitution, with reservations. Prior to this it had argued that it protects "settler" interests over those of Africans.

Hence South African democratization is startling because it occurred in what was conventionally seen as a deeply divided society. However, modernization set the structural context for undermining much of those divisions by bringing blacks and whites into interdependent relations in a capitalist economy. The insurgencies of the 1980s then shifted much of the political terrain in line with those larger structural changes, setting in place the possibilities of a non-racial path of nation building within an inclusive democracy. South Africa's politics resembles the ideal-type divided society less. Hence, unlike conflict modernization theorists who saw in South Africa useful comparison with divided states like Israel, Northern Ireland, Lebanon, I argue that the politics of the 1980s made those comparisons less relevant (though no less interesting). Better comparisons are with Latin America and South Korea. However, the general pattern of democratization in these regions has been dominated by elite reform from above, rather than insurgency from below. Hence the power that the key organization in the *ancien regime*, the military, still plays in politics in Latin America, or the limited authority of parliament in South Korea (Seidman 1994). On the other extreme have been cases of revolution. Here the state has collapsed, and the old regime was swept away by tides of insurgency (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1980). It is in the intermediate cases that South Africa finds its most compelling comparisons (Burton and Higley 1987). Democratization occurs when elites give way to some demands from below. Perhaps most instructive here is the case of England, where the Chartist movement forced a progressive expansion of the franchise upon conservative elites (Mann 1994). The comparisons suggest that relative balance of forces in democratization processes will impact the meaning of the future democracy. In state-led democratization, democracy is likely to be corporatist with party competition regulated by the pact. In mass-led democratization, democracy is likely to be more competitive, and its future failure or success dependent upon developing a social contract (Karl 1990; Przeworski 1991).

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