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AFRIKANER NATIONALISM, WHITE POLITICS AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

H. VAN ZYL SLABBERT

Introduction.

By political change is meant a change in the constitution of groups and individuals who effectively control political decision-making in South Africa. The size and diversity of such groups and number of individuals can either decrease, - in which case there is an increase in authoritarianism, - or increase, - in which case there is a move towards a decentralization or diffusion of political control. A clear distinction must in this case be made between interest groups, socio-economic and demographic processes, external or internal to South Africa, that exert direct or indirect influence on the taking of political decisions and the groups and individuals who effectively control and are responsible for such decisions. This is simply another way of stating that more often than not there is a discrepancy between the pressures for change and the decisions taken to cope with such pressures.

The central political problem in South Africa concerns the devolution of effective political decision-making to the Blacks. At present, effective political participation is limited to Whites, thus the problem is essentially a White-Black problem where this division on political grounds coincides with divisions regarding economic and social privileges. The factors affecting the devolution of political control are of course numerous and interrelated e.g. foreign investments, international relations and pressure groups; external military threats; the viability of the South African economy; rate of industrialization;

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population growth; Black political consciousness and resistance; White interest groups in South Africa etc. Most of these figure in analyses concerned with change in South Africa.

This paper would like to emphasize the strategic significance of Afrikaner Nationalists in relation to the problem of political change in South Africa. As a group they control effective political decision-making within White politics and therefore within South Africa in general. Whereas it could be true that if Afrikaner Nationalists should lose this control to another White group, it would not mean the solution of the problem of political devolution, it is equally true that the manner in which they come to terms with this problem could differ significantly from that of another White group. It could be argued that the structural constraints are such that in the long run it makes no difference which White group is in control, the outcome would be the same, but such an argument rests on apriori assumptions that in any case need not take note of short term events that provide the basis for more reliable if less dramatic predictions concerning developments within South Africa.

This paper attempts to present old material in a new way; in this sense, it is a "thought" paper rather than one claiming to present new evidence or original research. Its major theoretical point of departure can be found in treating the Afrikaner Nationalists as an independant variable in relation to political change and arguing their strategic significance in terms of the following assumptions:

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(a) The nature of present Afrikaner Nationalist control of political decision-making must be understood in terms of the development of Afrikaner bureaucracies in the period 1910 - 1948.

(b) Political control achieved in 1948 resulted in the interlocking of Afrikaner bureaucracies on the oligarchic level and consolidated Afrikaner Nationalist unity.

(c) At present the quality of Afrikaner Nationalism is changing away from political exclucisivism but political control is still entrenched in the same organizational structures. This broadens the base of political support but does not significantly affect Afrikaner Nationalist monopoly of political decision-making.

(d) Consequently an electoral change of government particularly from "left" of the government is extremely remote and poses the problem of the role of White electoral opposition in relation to the central problem of the devolution of political decision-making to Blacks.

Before elucidating these points of departure it should be made clear that in discussing Afrikaner Nationalism the emphasis will not be on the ideological level, i.e. the major tenets or philosophical content of the belief system, but on the organizational conditions within which this ideology is reflected. These conditions provide basic indicators of the parameters within which a change in White political decision-making is possible.

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The Bureaucratization of an Ethos.

One of the persistent myths of Afrikaner unity is the "all hearts beating as one" explanation. Frequently, Afrikaner Nationalist politicians and cultural leaders propogate the idea that every Afrikaner, even before the Great Trek, was part of a national movement which was the result of each Afrikaner individual's desire for freedom and independence, of his wish to maintain himself as part of an independant nation and of his firm belief in the predestination of God. Largely, in the contemporary situation, this type of explanation becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and within certain spheres of Afrikaner cultural life, acts as a strong factor for political mobilization.

However, the mythical nature of this explanation becomes evident when events concerning White politics in general and Afrikaner politics, in particular in the period 1910 - 1948, are recalled. For example : An Afrikaner Prime Minister and General of the Boer War persecuting previous comrades in arms during the rebellion of 1914 (Kruger, D.W., 1971, Ch. V); the political conflict between Smuts and Hertzog, both veretans of the war against British Imperialism; an Afrikaner Minister of Religion, D.F. Malan, breaking away and attacking other Afrikaner leaders, e.g. Hertzog; Hertzog's rejection of the Broederbond and Malan's repudiation of the Ossewa Brandwag; the fact that the majority of the active servicemen during W.W.II were Afrikaners; (Van Jaarsveld, 1971, pp. 247, 250, 252); the uneasy truce between Malan, Havenga and Strydom for the purposes of the General Election which led to an Afrikaner victory in 1948.

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These events illustrate the high degree of disunity and internal conflict within Afrikaner ranks, rather than the opposite. Yet, paradoxically, the groundwork for Afrikaner Unity was also laid during this period. This came about because of the development of Afrikaner Bureaucracies on diverse fronts and the role of oligarchies or elites within them.

Prior and up to 1910, the majority of White people lived in a rural society. One can safely assume that the 25% of the White population that lived in urban areas by 1910 (Van Jaarsveld, 1971, p. 297) consisted largely of non-Afrikaners. Although Van Jaarsveld argues that Afrikaners had a collective consciousness by 1881, what he says about the early Dutch Colonists largely remained true for the Afrikaners in the Republic and the Cape up to 1881, namely that their unity was more a common reaction to environmental factors rather than a well organized and articulated ideological movement. (Van Jaarsveld, 1961, p.2.) Obviously a number of factors prior to 1910 were responsible for the Afrikaners developing some self awareness, e.g. British occupation, territorial needs, conflict with Blacks, etc. Singer's concept of "ethnogenesis" (Wrong & Gracey, 1967, p. 437), is appropriate to developments within Afrikaner ranks during this period. This concept refers to a process whereby an ethnic group is formed and the final stage in this development depends on "the nature of the structures that develop the content of the group's self image and the shared conception of its destiny."

The point is that these structures, as far as the Afrikaners by 1910 were concerned, were either absent of had a very tenuous

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hold on them. The most important organizations were the churches, and those related to the language movement. The low level of Afrikaner urbanization at this stage, as well as poorly developed facilities for communication and transport, made regular meetings and reinforcement of common loyalties extremely difficult. The type of Afrikaner leadership during this stage is also characteristic. Most of them were charismatic leaders who had exceptional personal qualities (Krüger, Steyn) or who were prominent in the Afrikaner's military struggle (De Wet, de la Rey, Botha, Hertzog, Smuts).

Thus one can argue that with the declaration of Union in 1910, the Afrikaners might have shared a common awareness based on shared experiences but they still did not have an organized unity of purpose. If there existed a collective ethos at this time it was not yet bureaucratized and there was no clear indication in which direction it would develop. This soon became apparent in the leadership struggles that developed between Botha, Smuts, Hertzog and Malan. In fact the period between 1910 - 1948 was one characterized by factionalism, breakaways, redefinitions of loyalty and the intermittent rejection of leaders, most of whom had been hailed as heroes a few years earlier. During this period there was not a single Afrikaner organization that seemed to enjoy the continued support and loyalty of the majority of Afrikaans speaking people. One cannot take seriously the statement that it is a "traditional characteristic" of the Afrikaner that he has always been loyal to his church, political party and organizations such as the F.A.K. (Kotze, 1968, p. 55) especially if one remembers that with the election of 1943 Smuts had 650,000 votes in his favour against

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the 350,000 of the opposition (Van Jaarsveld, 1971, p. 252). To talk of a collective Afrikaner ethos as the main factor shaping their destiny during this period is a concession to ideology which distorts the truth.

And yet the process of bureaucratization of Afrikaner life, coinciding with the processes of urbanization and industrialization provided the conditions for the development of such an ethos. If one could single out an outstanding feature reflecting the average Afrikaner's life during the period 1910 - 1948, then it is the various processes by which the Afrikaner became an "organization man". On all fronts of Afrikaner life, bureaucracies developed. On the economic front: S.A.N.L.A.M., S.A.N.T.A.M., Die Reddingsdaadbond, Federale Volksbelegging, Blanke Werkers Beskermingsbond, Ko-ordinerende Raad van Suid-Afrikaanse Vakbonde, Yskor, Foskor, Evkom. In 1936 Dr. A. Hertzog formed the "reform league" to launch an attack on the leaders of Trade Unions with a large Afrikaner membership. (Horrel, 1969, p. 10).

The cultural bureaucracies were: Akademie vir Taal, Lettere en Kuns, Broederbond, F.A.K., Die Ossewa Brandwag, S.A.B.R.A. Whereas political organizations included: The South African National Party (Botha); the United Party (Hertzog & Smith); the Purified National Party (Malan); the New Order (Pirow) and the Afrikaners Party (Havenga).

A common feature of all these bureaucracies is that the majority of people belonging to them spoke Afrikaans. Language was also one of the main issues in two other prominent Afrikaans bureaucracies, namely the Afrikaans churches and educational institutions. The important point about these bureaucracies is

that they originated in different spheres of activity often for diverse and even contradictory goals. However, in them elite groups could articulate the needs of their members as they conceived of them and interpret the events which the majority of Afrikaners were experiencing. Above all, Afrikaner collective action could be mobilized on diverse fronts and the recruitment of regular leaders was made possible. The leaders encouraged, exhorted and pleaded with Afrikaners to understand and react to the changes they were experiencing.

These changes were formidable and extensive. The two more important concerned the massive process of urbanization of Afrikaners and their economic position during a period of equally large scale industrialization. An idea of the rate of urbanization can be gained if one remembers that in 1910 about 75% of Whites were rural inhabitants whereas in 1961 only 16% still lived there. The dislocation brought about by such a migration as well as the economic position of the Afrikaner vis-a-vis non-Afrikaner Whites as well as Blacks, was a common thread which linked various Afrikaner bureaucracies. Cultural, political and economic organizations addressed themselves to this problem. Thus the Afrikaans churches held national conferences on the poverty of the Afrikaner in 1893, 1916, 1923 and 1934 (Van Jaarsveld, 1971, p. 313). Hertzog used the state bureaucracy to introduce a "civilized labour" policy in 1924. The F.A.K., a cultural organization, organized a national conference in 1939 from which developed Die Reddingsdaadbond - an organization specifically geared to the economic advancement of the Afrikaner. At the same time the

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Afrikaans language was a symbol of this poverty, but also a strong unifying factor in education, literature and religion.

Yet, despite all these changes and attempts to deal with them, political unity before 1948, remained an unattainable goal for Afrikaners. When it did happen it was brought about by events outside Afrikaner ranks. These events were symbolized by the vote in Parliament on Sept. 4, 1939, when Smuts committed S.A. to W.W.II. This decision did not immediately lead to political unity but as Stultz (Plural Societies, Autumn, 1972, p.26) argues persuasively, it lead to Hertzog breaking away from Smuts and joining Malan in the Re-United National Party. Although Smuts won the election in 1943 with a handsome majority, his opposition consisted of all the re-aligned Afrikaner organizations The average members may not have been as devoted and enthusiastic as their leaders, but the latter could negotiate and consolidate amongst themselves. They desperately needed political victory to consolidate the unity of Afrikaans. The declaration of peace and the immediate post-war situation favoured this possibility. Malan and Strydom decided to forget their differences for the moment, but most important, Malan and Havenga decided to join forces for the 1948 election. On this agreement Stultz comments as follows:

> "The importance to Malan of his alliance with Havenga became clear on the morning of May 28 when the final results of the general election were known. The Re-United National Party increased its representation in the House of Assembly by 22, from 48 to 70 members, but this total was still 7 seats short of an absolute majority. The Afrikaner Party

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however, won 9 of the 10 seats it had contested. For only the second time in the political history of the Union, a government was turned out of office by voters." (1972, p.32)

However, for the first time in the history of the Afrikaners, a fully fledged "organization man" was Prime Minister. He had been at various times a minister of religion, newspaper editor and a party political leader. The "age of the generals" was past and Malan, in a sense, was a symbol of a collective ethos that had been bureaucratized. The victory of 1948 meant, amongst other things, that political power could now be used to give organizational consolidation to this ethos. Thus Krüger could write of the Afrikaners that only one year after political victory: "Afrikanerdom was closing its ranks, ignoring outside opinion and preparing to raise barriers to safeguard itself. The unveiling of the Voortrekker Monument on 10 December 1949 was a remarkable manifestation of this spirit." (1971, p. 250)

The Consolidation of Afrikaner Nationalists

It is generally agreed that the years immediately subsequent to 1948 was a period of consolidation. (Van Jaarsveld, 1971, Ch. XV; Kruger, 1971, Ch. XV & XVI). This was mainly brought about by a process of Afrikaner organizations interlocking with one another at the top or elite level and clarifying the priorities for maintaining Afrikaner unity. (For a behind the scenes look at how this was done, Schoeman's book is as good as any in the field of political gossip, 1973.) One clear priority which even today transcends whatever internal differences might exist amongst Afrikaner institutions, is the necessity to maintain political control of South Africa. The almost hysterical reaction of the

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Afrikaner establishment to the breakaway of the H.N.P. (a right wing split from the National Party) in 1969 under Dr. A. Hertzog, gave evidence of how sensitive it was to any development threatening political unity. The time-worn bureaucratic slogan of "change from within" became the rallying cry against the H.N.P. accusation that the National Party was betraying the Afrikaner ethos for political pragmatism.

The interlocking of Afrikaner organizations has had a few important consequences for Afrikaners in South Africa. In the first place it integrated leadership at the top of Afrikaner organizations. The trafficking of top personnel amongst these organizations (as in the case of Malan) became a familiar occurrence: from Professor-to-Editor-to Prime Minister (Verwoerd); Teacher-Party Organizer-Cabinet Minister (W.C. Botha); Minister of Religion-Editor-M.P. (Treurnicht) etc.

Secondly, it introduced a great deal of organizational independence into everyday Afrikaner life. A child born into an Afrikaans family could move from the cradle to the grave within the framework of Afrikaner organizations : Afrikaans nursery, primary and high schools; in the place of Boy Scouts the Voortrekk the equivalent of the Chamber of Commerce is Die Afrikaanse Sakekamer and then a variety of cultural organizations already mentioned, plus new ones that developed such as Die Rapportryers and Die Ruiterwag.

Thirdly, it facilitated the formulation of collective goals for Afrikaner organizations and introduced a unity of purpose into corporate Afrikaner action. e.g. "The Church" supports the Government; "the Universities" support "the Church" and vice versa. This corporate support and interaction was facilitated

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by the integrating role performed by certain Afrikaner organizations with overlapping membership such as the F.A.K., National Party, the churches and Die Broederbond. For example, the F.A.K. has affiliated to it more than 2000 cultural, religious and youth bodies to which it gives financial and organizational assistance (Serfontein, Sunday Times, 28.1.73). According to the same journalist the Broederbond has in its membership: 24 Principals of Universities and Teachers Training Colleges; 171 Professors and 116 lecturers; 468 Headmasters; 121 School Inspectors; 647 Teache: 22 Newspaper Editors; 15 Directors of the S.A.B.C.; 59 Secretarie: of State Departments and 16 Judges (Sunday Times, 28.1.73). Whether these figures are completely accurate is not as importa as the underlying principle that such a voluntary organization performs an important integrating role with regard to other organizations. It is not so important within which particular Afrikaner organization a decision is eventually formalized, as long as the taking of such a decision has the backing of other Afrikaner organizations with possible vested interests. It is this kind of information which can effectively be transmitted by an exclusive organization with extensive overlapping membership

The fourth consequence that the interlocking of Afrikaner organizations had, was to present the average Afrikaner with his own "establishment". If one could venture a generalization on especially the "white collar" Afrikaans worker, it would be that he is an "organization man" with a well developed awareness of "the establishment". Who exactly embodies "the establishment" can, of course, vary from one community to another, but for the average "white collar" Afrikaner they are conceived of as having the power to ostracize him, to influence his career and general social acceptance.

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The abovementioned consequences are of course not unique to the case. Most cultural groups with a high degree of ethnocentricism have their own organizations and display a certain degree of exclusiveness. The distinctive feature of the Afrikaners as an ethnic group within the political context of South Africa is that through its control of political power, it not only governs itself but the whole country. This fact presents both liabilities and advantages to Afrikaner Nationalist Unity. The liabilities revolve around the dilemma of coming to terms with societal issues in such a way that Afrikaner political support is not threatened. This will be discussed presently.

The advantages for Afrikaner unity are almost self evident. It seems highly unlikely that the Afrikaner government could mobilize support from all its adherents, be they Afrikaners of non-Afrikaners, on purely exclusive value or ideological grounds. This type of appeal is usually more effective with culturally conscious Afrikaners in the fields of education, religion, agriculture and some professional or semi-professional occupations. The White "blue collar" worker is far more sensitive to issues that affect his immediate material interests. In this respect political power and the machinery of state become very effective instruments of manipulation.

The ratio between Afrikaners and non-Afrikaner Whites was already 1,790,000 to 1,150,000 in 1960 and 71% of the Whites employed by the State were Afrikaners. (Van Jaarsveld 1971, p.275) Apart from Whites employed by the State it has become tradition in South Africa, since the implementation of Hertzog's "civilized labour" policy that the government looks after the interests of

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the White worker. If it is taken into account that it is in any case the prerogative of the governing party in an electoral system to manipulate, within limits, wage increases and economic conditions in order to mobilize support, then it is clear that Afrikaner political control is reinforced not only by the "faithful" but by White workers who are more or less indifferent to the higher ideals of Afrikaner Nationalism.

The picture that has been sketched of Afrikaner unity rests on the assumption that this unity could not have been consolidated without the use of political power. Secondly, that political power alone could not have brought about this consolidation were it not for the existence of a variety of Afrikaner organizations within which elite groups could resolve differences and mobilize collective support. Thus, individually, political power and Afrikaner organizations were necessary but not sufficient conditions for unity; together they became sufficient and also interdependent.

Herein, then lies the strategic significance of Afrikaner Nationalists within the overall political context of South Africa. As a group they control political decision-making. This control is conceived by them as a pre-condition for their existence as a national group. This factor modifies a simplified collusion theory between Afrikaner political power and "English capital"; or a straightforward White-vs-Black conspirational explanation; or the underlying assumption of Adam (1971) that the Nationalists are guided by a committment to "rational economic pragmatism". What is true of all these types of explanations is the primary importance of the relative degree of affluence and economic security of the Afrikaners as a group, but so far this is mediated by the Afrikaners

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control of the State and not so much of private capital. As the group in control, they have made and undoubtedly will make adjustments to the economy and demands from the socio-political sphere but the tempo of these adjustments have, no doubt for very differ reasons, been a source of frustration for liberal economists and Black activists. The real source of this frustration could very well be the difference for Afrikaner Nationalists between Afrikan political control and White political control.

However, as was mentioned earlier, this control does present some liabilities for the Afrikaner Nationalists. External to the a major problem is that political decisionmaking does not only involve themselves. Internally the dilemma is presented by the tension between maintaining an exclusive cultural identity and at the same time maintaining political control. To put it differently, Afrikaner Nationalists are making a cost-benefit analysis of those "traditional characteristics" which are no longer regard as necessary to maintain political control. It is not completely fortuitious that such an analysis can be afforded at a time when there is significant change in the economic position and degree of urban adjustment of Afrikaners generally. Some of the possibl directions of this change can be evaluated within the framework c the preceding analysis.

The Possibilities of Change

Recently, across the spectrum of "White politics" in South Africa, a great deal of attention has been given to changes withi the Afrikaner ranks. A number of events have contributed to this interest: the rejection of H.N.P. leaders by the Nationalist Government; the ferment of discussion and questioning by Afrikaner

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intellectuals that sparked off the infatuation with the concept of verligtheid (enlightenment); attitude surveys by Afrikaans newspapers and academics. For example Rapport (an Afrikaans Sunday newspaper) found that 75% of Afrikaners regarded themselves to be South Africans first and then Afrikaners; 69% of the supporters of the National Party regarded themselves as "verlig" (Rapport 19.2.72). In five Dutch Reformed Church congregations in Pretoria, 62.9% of the males and 52.2% of the females said it was not a sin to vote for a political party that did not explicitly maintain the Afrikaans language and traditions (Alant, 1972, p.47D). Appeals by Afrikaner businessmen, academics and editors for a more tolerant attitude on racial and economic matters. This tolerance as far as Afrikaner exclusivism is concerned is succintly summarized by De Klerk (Editor of Die Transvaler, an Afrikaans daily and coiner of the term "verligtheid"). Under the significant caption of "Who are the real Afrikaners" he pleads that " .....we (sic) should not disqualify Afrikaners who do not conform to our (sic) definition of what constitutes an Afrikaner. Today, being an Afrikaner has a much more heterogenous meaning. There are many kinds of Afrikaners but they are all still Afrikaners." (Die Transvaler, 21.12.73.) He then goes on to state that one can find liberal, pregressive, atheistic and even Roman Catholic Afrikaners. Compared to the position adopted by D.J. Kotze, (Professor of History at the University of Stellenbosch and Chairman of Die Rapportryers), in his book Positiewe Nasionalisme, De Klerk's plea is nothing less than cultural blasphemy.

These events led to a rather widespread conclusion that Afrikaner Nationalists were becoming more enlightened and made a re-alignment of political affiliation in "White politics" possible.

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This, despite the fact that even at present no clarity exists as to what "verligtheid" is supposed to imply. The concept itself is fast losing any political significance due to the fact that political and quasi-political movements outside establishment Afrikaner ranks have appropriated it in order to draw support from Afrikaners. This is true of movements such as Verligte Action, the Progressive Party and the "young turks" of the United Party. Within these movements the hope is cherished that somehow "verligte" Afrikaners will "save the situation". However if one confines the concept of "verligtheid" to the context within which it originated, viz. establishment Afrikanerdom, this enthusiasm appears to be somewhat misplaced.

In the first instance, Afrikaner "verligtheid" is not a movement. An Afrikaner verligte is an individual who experiences a conflict between the parochial demands of the particular organization within which he finds himself and the more universal demands of his occupation. Thus an Afrikaans minister of religion experiences a conflict between the demands made on him as a member of an Afrikaans church and as a member of the "Universal Christian Church"; an Afrikaans businessman feels the tension between the demands of Afrikaner economic and political interests and the dictates of supply-and-demand economic rationality; an Afrikaner academic, especially in the humanities, has to come to terms with problems regarded as "controversial" within his own University and the predominant theories on these problems within the international academic community. Should such an individual make a public concession to these universal demands, he becomes a "verligte". Afrikaner "Verligte Action" has thus far been individual action.

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The important point is that different Afrikaner "verligtes" respond to different and sometimes contradictory tensions. A minister of religion who demands material sacrifice has something else in mind than the businessman who pleads for a high economic growth rate. This is an important reason why no unified "verligte movement" can develop. Different Afrikaners are simply "verlig" about different kinds of things.

The attention given to Afrikaner verligtes, especially by the English press, is due to the individually prominent Afrikaner verligtes' nuisance value to the establishment within the institutional boundaries of the Afrikaner organization in which he finds himself. The moment he moves outside these organizational boundaries the term "verligtheid" is no longer appropriate and he can be placed on the traditional liberal-conservative continuum of White politics. The dilemma of the Afrikaner verligte is precisely that what he has to say is regarded as far more important outside Afrikaner organizations than within. At the same time he realises that he can only have a significant impact for change if he can penetrate the oligarchy within his own organization. The price for this membership is exactly contrary to what he is doing, namely cautious conformity.

This brings the argument back to one of the central themes of the preceding analysis, namely the power of Afrikaner Nationalist elites making up the establishment. Any fundamental split in Afrikaner unity will be manifested at the top, i.e. within the oligarchic ranks of Afrikaner organizations. Thus, for example, if the Synods of the major Afrikaans churches should consistently oppose the caucus of the National Party, or vice

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versa, or if Afrikaans Universities, in their corporate capacity through councils and senates, should denounce the caucus or Synods etc., then significant threats to Afrikaner unity will arise. Up to now, the advantages brought about by political control have succeeded in transcending internal oligarchic dissension and maintaining a workable "elite consensus". (Again Schoeman's book gives interesting insights into the personal infighting behind the scenes to reach such a consensus on a political level).

It was indicated earlier on however, that on this elite level, the tensions between maintaining an exclusive cultural identity and political control are beginning to manifest themselves. It is against this background that De Klerk's statement referred to above can be understood. In the most general terms the implications for Afrikaner unity are that those organizations which give primacy to those rigid and exclusive cultural and moral values traditionally associated with Afrikaner Nationalists (for the sake of brevity they can be called cultural organization are beginning to lose influence in political decisionmaking, whereas those who can broaden the scope of political support are gaining in strength. In the latter category the Afrikaans press is definitely playing an important role much to the chagrin of Afrikaner cultural organizations such as the F.A.K., Broederbond, the churches and G.H.A. (an organization whose goal is to promote the purity of the Afrikaans language).

These developments are symptomatic of the underlying structu changes that the Afrikaners have experienced, namely, adjustment to urban living and greater economic mobility. Because of this cultural organizations have a decreasing appeal for Afrikaners

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generally and consequently a concommitant loss of political influence. This is evident especially with regard to the more affluent upper-class Afrikaners who have become more catholic and/or generally bourgeoisie in their cultural pursuits and strongly anti-Afrikaner traditionalism. Particularly interesting also is the antagonism between the "cultural purists" and the Afrikaner literary and artistic establishment. Afrikaans literature and poetry has up to the sixties always been a strong source of support for Afrikaner cultural organizations with its emphasis on "colloquial realism" (Van Wyk Louw N.P.). Since the sixties Afrikaans literature has revealed various phases of alienation from its own cultural background and is generally regarded with suspicion and sometimes openly rejected by Afrikaner cultural bodies.

Lower down the economic scale Afrikaners are becoming more indifferent to cultural organizations. As was mentioned earlier their concerns have always been more immediate and material and their support could only be effectively consolidated after political victory had been achieved. Insofar as their political support entrenches their economic position, they are quite amenable to elite groups decorating it with ideological or cultural pretensions. To the extent that these cultural pretensions are increasingly no longer a pre-condition for political membersh the ranks of Afrikaner workers will be swelled by White workers generally, thus further decreasing the appeal of exclusive Afrika cultural organizations. It can be argued that the failure of the breakaway H.N.P. to read these signs lent a particular pathos to their attempt to create a new political platform for the "true" Afrikaner Nationalist movement. On the one hand the Afrikaner

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worker had no major cause for dissatisfaction under the National Government; on the other hand, the cultural organizations, without their alignment to political power stood the chance of losing whatever remaining influence they had. From neither of these sources was it realistic to expect a major defection to the H.N.P.

The conclusion to be reached from the abovementioned changes is that a number of Afrikaner organizations that played a significant role in bringing about the political victory in 1948, are experiencing a form of goal displacement, i.e. they are still part of the machinery of political control but not quite for the goals to which they pledged primary allegiance. Although their allegiance is being compromised by the need to maintain political control, it does not seem in danger of being lost to the National Government. Thus, Afrikaner political control in White politics seems to be ensured for the forseeable future even though the quality of Afrikaner Nationalism and unity is changing. This change away from cultural exclusivism will and has strengthened the appeal of the National Party amongst the electorate making the maintenance of White privilege and prosperity the issue that will cut across the traditional (language) divisions in White electoral politics. Given the institutional support which the National Party enjoys as the "political arm" of a Nationalist movement, the success with which they can manipulate the issue of White prosperity and privilege will entrench their position even more within White politics.

So far, the analysis has focussed almost exclusively on the "internal" dimension of Afrikaner politics. From this analysis three general inferences can be drawn:

(a) Given the historical development of Afrikaner politics

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dominance, it is today quite clear that political decision-making is dominated by Afrikaner oligarchies.

(b) There is a decrease in cultural exclusivism in Afrikaner politics which makes an increase in electoral support on grounds other than "tribal" or ethnic affiliation much easier.

(c) This has coincided with a greater emphasis on White rather than Afrikaner privilege and prosperity as the predominant goal of political decisionmaking. The most important changes which made this possible were the urban adjustment of the Afrikaner and the drastic narrowimg of the affluence gap between Afrikaners and other Whites generally since 1948.

However, when the analysis shifts to the "external" dimension of Afrikaner Nationalist control, i.e. in relation to the central political problem posed in the introduction, namely, the devolution of effective political decisionmaking, these generalizations concerning developments within Afrikaner ranks, have to be modified in terms of their implications for White politics in particular and the problem of political change in general. The concluding section will be concerned with a few of these implications.

Some Implications of Change

Insofar as one of the principle functions of political power is the redistribution of rewards and facilities, the Nationalist Government finds itself subject to contradictory demands: the one electoral and the other not. The common denominator of White political contentment is the level of privilege and prosperity enjoyed. At the same time the lack of privilege and prosperity

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on the part of the Blacks is the most prevalent source of politi discontent. The contradiction or dilemma lies therein that the Nationalistic Government or any White Government under the prese dispensation, has to tread the path of White electoral politics to get into power and once there, use the power to accommodate demands that do not only originate from the electorate.

Within the framework of electoral politics, the Government is only vulnerable, i.e. removable, from the "right". (That is, insofar as they can be outbid by an opposition party in maintaini and/or promoting White privilege.) As has been pointed out, the possibility of this happening in the conventional electoral sense of the word, seems remote at this stage. This was recently underlined by the defection of a prominent member of the United Party to the Government (Marais Steyn). His considerable influence within the United Party has been applied to recruiting the "grudge vote" in White politics. His defection coincided with internal and policy changes in the United Party. The new emphasis on federalism and "shared power" (with Blacks), however ambiguously formulated, is easily exploitable by the Nationalist Government as a "sell-out" to the Blacks - a point already repeatedly made in the Afrikaans press.

Within the framework of national (societal) politics, i.e. Blacks included, the Government is under pressure from the "left". That is, insofar as Black demands for improvement in material conditions can be effectively organized, articulated and brought to bear on the Government. To whatever extent this does happen, it immediately becomes an issue in White politics. This should not be understood in a simplified economic sense of what is given to the one (Blacks) is literally taken away from the other (Whites),

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but rather the point tries to indicate the political boundaries within which the problem of the devolution of power and consequently privilege and prosperity have to be evaluated. In terms of these boundaries, it is clear that the Government will be extremely sensitive to the possibility of major fluctuations in the economy and other non-electoral sources of pressure which cannot be readily translated for the voters.

Given the above points, it follows that any White opposition political party "left" of the Government will be forced into a re-evaluation of its role as an opposition, as the option of getting into power becomes increasingly remote. With the decreasing importance of "White tribalism" as an issue in electoral politics a re-alignment of political affiliation on the liberal-conservative continuum seems plausible. There are strong present indications that White opposition parties "left" of the Government will be involved in redefining their role as opposition after the general election expected early in 1974.

Given the relative security of the Nationalist Government in the electoral sense, it is likely to become increasingly intolerant of any White forms of "liberal" non-parliamentary opposition. This was borne out in 1973 with regard to organizations such as the Christian Institute, S.P.R.O.C.A.S. and N.U.S.A.S. It would appear that the major reason for this intolerance is the one given by the Government when threatening to curb the English press in 1974, namely, that such forms of extra-Parliamentary opposition simply confuse and exacerbate the debate between White control and Black demands. The same intolerance has been evident with regard to non-Government sanctioned forms of Black opposition.

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The general pattern that seems to be emerging, is that all forms of dissent or opposition, whether Black or White will increasingly be forced into Government sanctioned organizations or institutions. This will ensure that the Afrikaner Nationalists will play a strategic role in whatever political change may come about.

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