Broederbond once more the power behind the throne

By David Shandler

ONE OF the first steps that President F W de Klerk took on assuming his position as head of state was to drastically cut the powers of the National Security Management System (NSMS) which, through a hidden coup, had become the essential power behind the P W Botha throne.

Botha had ridden to authority on the back of the country's military machine. Policy during his presidency closely reflected the thinking of securocrats. The influence of the Broederbond – the white male bastion of power which had steered the rise of the National Party through the decades of the thirties to the 1970s – waned dramatically during the Botha years.

VILJOEN: Broerderbond an important base

DE KLERK: New way of promoting Afrikaner interests

But during recent times, the Bond has increasingly come to see the need for a radical departure from the policy of apartheid as the means to protect white interests. The Afrikaner intelligentsia and most of the government realised during the final stages of the Botha realm that it was important to move fast to rectify the crisis and immobility into which the country had sunk. The accession of De Klerk marked the key moment in this process. It allowed a return to civilian government and in particular, the removal of the security system as the centre of all government thinking. In its place the Cabinet, the NP caucus and the Broederbond regained the authority of past years.

What are the signs of the return to centrality of the Bond?

Current policy closely reflects the thinking that has been emerging in the Broederbond since 1986. In essence there was an acknowledgement by this body that a maintenance of racial power would ultimately be detrimental to the survival of the Afrikaner. The only way in which Afrikaners could retain their place in the sun would be through doing away with racial categories, as well as the exclusive advancement of white interests.

Sources say that De Klerk sees the Bond as an important base. Similarly for his cabinet colleague Gerrit Viljoen, perhaps the key government intellectual. He is a former chairman of the secret organisation. Behind the scenes, Bond chairman Pieter de Lange is said to play an important role in developments.

As early as 1987, De Lange said that the Broederbond was "still committed to promoting Afrikaner interests, (but) the way in which it tries to do that now is through the promotion of everybody's interests".

Key Bond documents have in recent years acknowledged the ideological failure of apartheid. A 1986 working document stated that "it must be taken into consideration that group interests might reach across the colour line". It went on further to state that "the abolition of discrimination must thus not be regarded as concessions made under pressure, but as a condition of survival".

A further very interesting comment from the Broederbond is contained in the 1986 document and foresees the possibility of the government being in opposition: "A test we must apply as to the acceptability of a system, must always be what would be in our best interest, should we, for example, find ourselves in opposition."

In a similar vein De Klerk was forced to admit to the badgering of Brian Walden in a London weekend television interview that government was "prepared to give up power". Government, and presumably white South Africans were not, however, "prepared to

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Yuppies moet help bou aan nuwe SA

Watter invloed het daardie laat 20-eeuse verskynsel, die yuppie, op die openbare mening? Die skrywer en ekonoom P J Haasbroek voer in die bygaande artikel aan dat die yuppies oorreed moet word om te help bou aan die nuwe Suid-Afrika.

SOOS die Baader-Meinhof-bende en enkelouer-gesinne, is die yuppie 'n unieke maatskaplike produk van ons tyd.

Ekonomiese verandering het waarskynlik die sterkste vormende invloed op die yuppie-persoonlikheid gehad. Die yuppies het ontstaan in 'n wêreld van verbysterende wetenskaplike vordering, tegnologiese vernuwing en die aanpassing van alle organisasievorme daarby. Ekonomiese groei en ontwikkeling het versnel en die lewenspeil van sekere gemeenskappe het geweldig verhoog.

Die ekonomiese integrasie van die moderne ontwikkelde lande van die wêreld (insluitend die van Europa in 'n gemeenskapsmark), internasionale kommunikasie en snel-vervoer het die wereld laat krimp tot 'n *global village*.

Die het 'n ryk bodorp en 'n arm onderdorp. In Oos-Europa en die USSR het die ontevredenheid oor sosiaal-ekonomiese agterlikheid ontplof in radikale politieke hervorming. Net die Derde Wêreld sink bykans vergete weg in 'n moeras van ekonomiese, maatskaplike en politieke agteruitgang.

Die yuppies woon in die bodorp van die *global village*.

In die moderne toenemend geïntegreerde en vooruitstrewende wêreld van vandag lyk die ou politieke, maatskaplike en ekonomiese skeidslyne verdag: 'n struikelblok in die weg van vooruitgang.

Groepsverbondenheid het in die *global village* 'n anachronisme geword, 'n oorblyfsel van primitiewe tye toe individuele oorlewing van die lidmaatskap van 'n groep afhanklik was en groepe onderling om hul voortbestaan moes meeding in 'n genadelose zero-som-spel.

Die ware burger van die moderne wêreld is 'n kosmopoliet. Die yuppies is by uitnemendheid kosmopoliete.

Geïnspireer deur die moontlikheid van vooruitgang, selfversekerd in hul kundigheid, immer bewus van die oorsaaklikheidsverhouding tussen poging en prestasie, en ongeduldig met institusionele hindernisse in die weg van hul strewe na

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commit suicide".

The 1986 Broederbond document went on to note that there could be no guarantees. "We must think in terms of probabilities, of calculated risks. The greatest risk today, is that of taking no risk at all."

Government statements since De Klerk's speech echo these sentiments closely. The government is now taking the risks that Botha was not prepared, or not capable of taking.

But the cost for the government and the Afrikaans intelligentsia is an increasing polarisation within the Afrikaner community. Of particular concern to the Bond at present is the growth of traditionalist Afrikaner nationalism in the form of the Conservative Party and various right-wing splinter groups. Efforts are at present being made by the leadership of the Bond to heal the rift that has developed.

An alleded recent Bond document states that the differences that have emerged can be dealt with without conflict. "It is trusted that the Afrikaner will be big enough in spirit to talk the matter out peacefully with each other," the document said.

"Before the Afrikaner sits with anybody else at a constitutional negotiation table, he owes his fellow Afrikaners an Afrikaner Conference. We trust that Afrikaner leaders will be big enough to make such an Afrikaner Conference a reality."

The Broederbond, having thrown the cat among the pigeons, is now attempting to sort out the mess within the Afrikaner community that has resulted. It is assumed that Bond leaders see their common Afrikaner identity with the right-wing elements of the volk as the basis on which a rapprochement and settlement can be forged.

While there may be these common ties of loyalty, there may be greater problems to be addressed. Of particular concern is that the Broederbond and the National Party have come to represent the more affluent and cosmopolitan sections of the Afrikaans community. Cosmopolitan as they are, they are more prepared (and able?) to live in a context outside of the safe confines of the laager. The white workers, lower middle class members and poor farmers represented by the rightwing, see their safety and security best served by maintaining their group identity in a xenophobic attempt to ward off alien outsiders.

The test for the Broederbond now is whether it has the capacity to unite all Afrikaners behind the programme it deems necessary for the salvation of South Africa.

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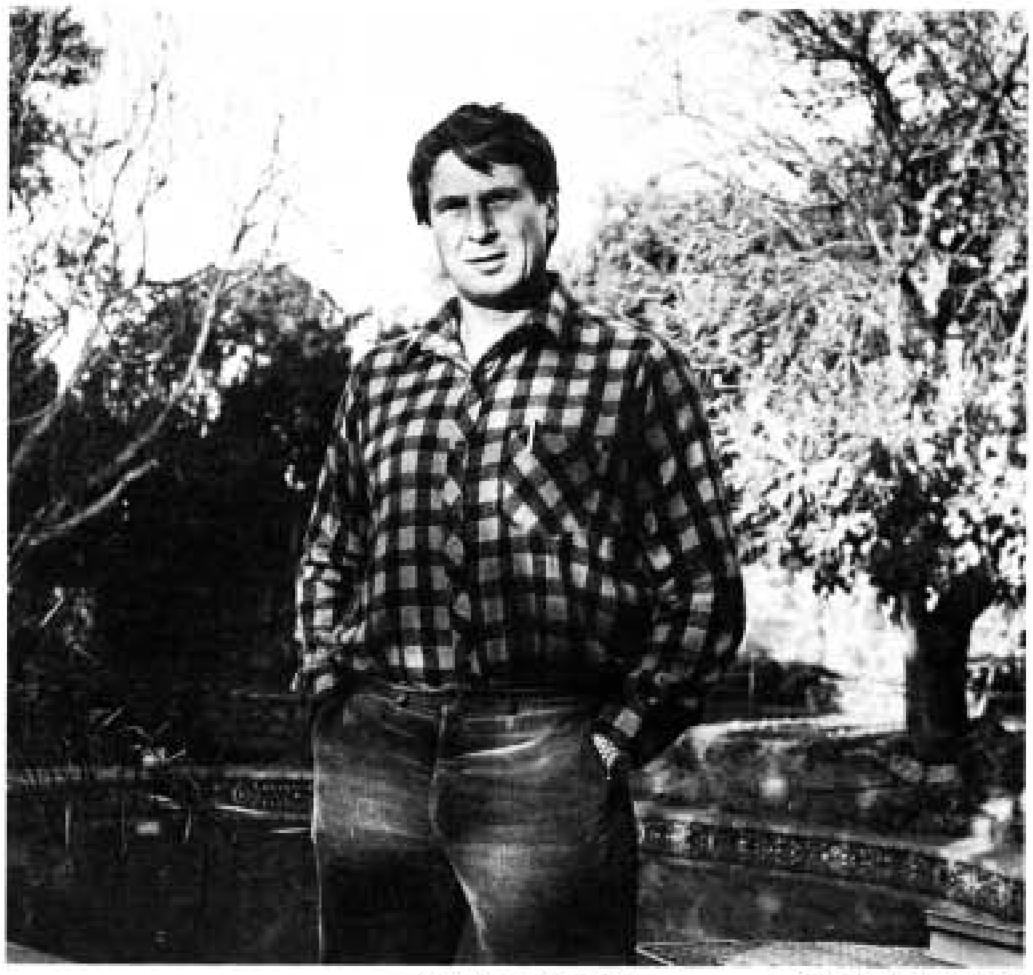
sukses, vorm die yuppies 'n besonder dinamiese groep in die gemeenskap.

Dis dus nodig om te vra wat is die heersende denkwyse in Suid-Afrika waarop die yuppies hul invloed uitoefen.

DIE Suid-Afrikaanse yuppie het sy oorsprong in die apartheidstelsel, die totaalstelsel wat die sentrale waardes van apartheidsparadigma weerspieël en, vanselfsprekend, ook die konflik tussen houdings en waardes rondom apartheid.

Dit beteken nie dat die yuppies die waardes van die dominante paradigma aanvaar – of noodwendig afwys – nie. Net dat hulle, soos almal in Suid-Afrika, apartheid beleef.

Ons kan nog 'n stap verder gaan. Op elke terrein is diskriminasie geïnstitusionaliseer: in die politiek, in maatskaplike verhoudings en in die ekonomie.



PJ Haasbroek RIAAN DE VILLIERS

Dit het op bevoorregting uitgemond, op ongelykheid tussen groepe. Die vraag is nou na die mate waarin die opkoms van die Suid-Afrikaanse yuppie juis te danke is aan die eksklusiewe bevoorregting van hul onderskeie groepe.

Al die jong blanke rekenmeesters, dokters, prokureurs en ingenieurs kom uit 'n gemeenskap met een van die hoogste lewenstandaarde ter wêreld. Die standaarde word nie net gemeet aan private besit en verbruik nie, maar ook aan die dienste wat die owerheid verskaf.

Die yuppies het in Suid-Afrika se mooi rustige woonbuurte grootgeword en hul onderwys in staatskole en universiteite geniet waar die owerheid 80 persent van die koste subsidieer.

Hulle verkoop hul professionele kundigheid in die apartheidsgemeenskap aan dié wat dit kan bekostig – hoofsaaklik lede van hul eie groep.

Inderdaad soek hulle die rykste weivelde uit vir hul praktyke. Hulle leef en werk dus steeds in blanke groepsgebiede, grotendeels geïsoleer van die ander gemeenskappe.

Die yuppies is op die hoogte van die aktuele vraagstukke van hul tyd. Hul belangstelling strek gewoonlik veel wyer as hul eie spesialisasierigtings, want dit is vir die yuppie belangrik om oor alles 'n standpunt te hê.

Nogtans is hulle bereid om ook ander teenstrydige standpunte te oorweeg. Dit lei tot indringende debat, want die yuppie aanvaar selde die konvensionele wysheid op gesigswaarde. Ook ten opsigte van apartheid.

TEEN die agtergrond wil ek, gegewe die gevaar van veralgemening, 'n (voorlopige) kortlys van yuppie-houdings en – waardes oor apartheid aanteken:

- Yuppies glo in die vryheid en burgerregte van die individu. Die mees basiese vryheid en reg is om jou persoonlike vermoëns ten beste te ontwikkel en te gebruik;
- Apartheid belemmer individuele vryheid en perk burgerregte in. Dit bring ongelykheid mee. Die primêre oorsaak van ongelykheid lê egter op die individuele vlak, by persoonlike onvermoë en onwilligheid om hard en produktief te werk, om te innoveer en om ondernemend op te tree;
- Yuppies bevraagteken die grondslae van Suid-Afrika se "etnies sosialisme", ons oormatig gereguleerde sosiaal-ekonomiese stelsel. Hulle verwerp burokratiese beplanning en beheer onomwonde as ondoeltreffend, vertragend en 'n belemmering van individuele inisiatief en prestasie. Hulle bejeën die konstitusionele vermenigvuldiging van politici in Suid-Afrika se regering met argwaan;
- Yuppies ondersteun demokratisering, omdat hulle die verband tussen politieke stabiliteit en sosiaal-ekonomiese vooruitgang begryp. Solank Suid-Afrika se toekomstige regering net nie kortsigtige beleidsrigtings inslaan nie, gee die meeste yuppies blykbaar nie om wat die regering se kleur sal wees nie. Tog gee almal heimlik die voorkeur aan 'n meritokrasie;
- Min yuppies is werklik patrioties. Hulle ken die buitelandse markwaarde van hul kundigheid en bly net in Suid-Afrika omdat die persoonlike koste-voordeel-verhouding nog positief is. As hul voordele afneem, of die sosiale koste styg, sal hulle nie skroom om te emigreer nie. Suid-Afrika kan maklik oornag die meeste van sy yuppies verloor.

Dit sal 'n ramp wees as ons hierdie dinamiese groep van vooruitstrewende jongmense met hul kundigheid verloor.

Tans is ons deeglik bewus van die pynlike ekonomiese beperking wat die uitvloei van kapitaal uit Suid-Afrika meebring. Die emigrasie van yuppies sal 'n verlies van menslike kapitaal van hoë gehalte wees, wat die beperking van ons ekonomiese groei en ontwikkeling pynlik sal vererger.

Die yuppies se aanwesigheid in Suid-Afrika moet vir hulle persoonlik sinvol wees. Een manier om hulle hier te hou, is deur die uitdaging aan hulle te stel om te help bou aan die nuwe Suid-Afrika.

(Met erkenning aan Rapport)