



DEMANDS

UNSHACKLE MBEKI!



LET MBEKI SPEAK!

MBEKI RETURNS!



On the 5th November at the age of 77 Govan Mbeki walked free after 23 years on Robben Island and said: "The Ideas for which I went to jail and for which the ANC stands I still embrace".

The UDF is elated at the release of its patron and one of the giants of our struggle Comrade Mbeki. For the oppressed and exploited people of this country this is a most significant occasion.

Our joy however is tampered by the fact that Comrade Mbeki is still not a free person, he remains listed which means that he still cannot be quoted in the press. Furthermore South Africa Africa is in the grip of its harshest State of Emergency with almost the entire leadership of the UDF in prison or trying to evade arrest.

This was the climate in 1963 when the Rivonia trialists were arrested, a climate in which Comrade Mbeki once again returns.

UNSHACKLE MBEKI!

The banning of the Mbeki rallies has yet again exposed the hollow and cynical nature of the regimes so called "concessions" in releasing him.

The government is afraid of one man and what he has to say. Govan Mbeki is a leader of the people. In silencing him the government is silencing the people. However, like Mbeki the people are not going to retire, curl up and die or go away.

By cutting off Mbeki from legal outlets of expression the regime is trying to force him to break its laws.

The people have had enough of grand public gestures that are still borne because of the regimes attempts to stifle the real leaders of the people.

THE UDF DEMANDS THAT THE REGIME UNSHACKLE GOVAN MBEKI AND STOP OBSTRUCTING HIM FROM SPEAKING TO THE PEOPLE.

MBEKI-A LIVING BEACON OF OUR STRUGGLE

The life story of a people's leader

GOVAN ARCHIBALD Mbeki was born in the Transkei in 1910. His father was a chief but was deposed by the South African government.

Comrade Govan was educated in a mission school and won a scholarship to the Fort Hare university to study for an arts degree. He also gained a diploma in education and left Fort Hare at the end of 1936. During this time he was the leader of militant student opinion that existed then. It was an African minister, a member of the infant ANC who aroused Govan's interest in politics.

As a young man he also attended meetings of the ICU. In the early 30's Comrade Govan began to explore the Marxist view of communism and was influenced by Edward Roux, a SACP member.

SACKED FOR UNION WORK

By 1935 the time of the Herzog Bills Govan was deeply involved in the ANC. At this time Comrade Mbeki was sacked from his job for trying to organise a union. He then took to teaching first at a secondary school then at a teachers training college in the Transkei.

In 1938 he edited the territorial magazine later known as Inkundla Ya Bantu.

In 1939 he published essays entitled "The Transkei in the making". In 1941 he became the secretary of the Africa's Voters Association whose object was to restore voters to the common roll. The same year he was co-author of a new policy document drawn up for the ANC "The African Claims".

From 1944 to 1946 Comrade Mbeki was the first representative of the student body at Fort Hare.

In the 1950's Govan Mbeki went back to teaching in a coal mining area in Northern Natal.



Comrade Govan Mbeki - a living beacon of our struggle

He was sacked soon after for organising coal miners. He then went on to devote himself to full time political journalism.

He was manager of the Eastern province office of New Age and Spark.

By now Govan was an ANC kingpin in the Eastern Cape. He was an organiser, propagandist, policy maker, expert on rural questions as his book the Peasants Revolt prove.

He participated in the planning of the people's Congress in 1955, becoming leader of the ANC in the Eastern Cape. He was elected National Chairman of the ANC in 1956.

In 1961 he joined the SACP and was arrested and charged under the explosives Act. He was subsequently acquitted. In 1962 with the ANC already banned Govan Mbeki went underground in Johannesburg.

In 1963 he joined Umkonto We

Sizwe and became secretary of its first high command.

ARRESTED AT RIVONIA

In July 1963 he was arrested during a police swoop in Rivonia and stood trial with Comrades Mandela, Sisulu and 6 others in the Rivonia Trial-charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government by violence.

He was sent to Robben Island serving a life sentence for sabotage. In 1970 while in prison Mbeki completed his BA honours and in 1977 was awarded an honorary doctorate in Social science by the university of Amsterdam for his work on the Peasants Revolt.

On his release Govan Mbeki was met by a strong 500 militant but disciplined crowd at the Johannesburg airport.

A PROUD PAGE IN OUR HISTORY

On behalf of the United Democratic Front, I wish to welcome Comrade Mbeki into the fighting ranks. Twenty three years ago when a life sentence was pronounced against you and your fellow comrades, the enemy hoped that the masses of the people were going to be on the retreat for life. Your refusal to be cowed into submission served as an inspiration to younger generations of resistance. We also believe that it is our commitment to the South Africa of the future which sustained you over so many years in imprisonment. We want to assure you today, that the life which you spent with your comrades in prison has always been seen as a proud page in the history of the struggling people of South Africa. We say without any fear of contradiction that the masses of our oppressed but fighting people both inside and outside the UDF regard you as their leader. Since your imprisonment, many more patriots have died in the battle front; others were forced to leave the country they so very much cherished and loved. Yet we continue to say that a permanent and lasting solution to the problems which beset our country can only emerge from the democratic movement led by the African National Congress. We have witnessed the masses of our people taking it upon themselves to

Ma Albertina Sisulu, a president of the UDF and wife of jailed ANC leader Walter Sisulu, was to speak at a rally alongside Comrade Mbeki in Port Elizabeth. At the last minute the regime banned the rally. Here we publish extracts from the speech she was to deliver



urban the ANC. The sooner the regime realises that the ANC enjoys substantial support amongst our people the better for all of us. We take this opportunity to reiterate that the government must solve the problems of this country by negotiating with its principal protagonists. The government wants us to believe that it is committed to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in this country. Yet it has not



Nelson Mandela remains inside as yet created the conditions for such a process to take place. How does Botha explain the fact that he released Comrade Mbeki and then listed him. We are saying that the perspectives put forward by Govan Mbeki and the

rest of the ANC leadership can only facilitate change, not impede it. The ANC has as much right as Botha to canvass the opinions of the people of this land.

The leadership of the UDF cannot promise that our people will not defy the restrictions which were imposed on Comrade Mbeki.

We want to state once again that nothing short of a non racial democratic South Africa as envisaged by the Freedom Charter will bring about peace in this country.

Freedom or Death

Victory is Certain!

Comrade Mbeki, it is your sacrifices, your courage, your heroic determination which has inspired us to take the struggle into commanding heights.

In the name of those fallen, in the name of those who picked up the spears of the fallen, we welcome you once more into the cause for which you have sacrificed so much. **FREEDOM OR DEATH WE SHALL WIN!**

WHY WAS CDE MBEKI RELEASED?

Struggles of the last four years have created an enormous crisis for the regime and pressure continues to mount.

A victory for the people

The people of South Africa forced the regime to release Mbeki. Campaigns both nationally and internationally have put the issue of release of political prisoners high on the agenda. The release of Mbeki was a desperate attempt to buy time.

To diffuse international pressure

Recent reports indicate that sanctions are beginning to take their toll on the regime. Despite attempts to demoralise international campaigns by writing sanctions off as a failure the regime is becoming desperate to halt the sanctions campaign. Botha's imperialist allies are also desperate to justify their claim that "South Africa is changing" and Mbeki's release is hoped will help them diffuse the pressure on their own countries for more effective action against the regime.

To claim control

By releasing Mbeki the regime is attempting to project itself as confident that it is in full control of the situation. The regime is also trying to

depoliticise Cde Mbeki's release by treating it as a "routine administrative act" based on humanitarian grounds.

We however know that Cde Mbeki's release was a highly political act.

Botha is desperate to win acceptance for his latest toy telephone the National Council. The entire democratic movement has totally rejected this ploy to defend minority rule.

of the wrath of the people. Now the regime is attempting to provide them with an excuse to participate. "Political leaders are now being released and are free to participate in the negotiation process." Gatscha and company are also desperate to claim something in order to win credibility amongst the masses of the people. But our people are not fooled. As Mbeki



Govan Mbeki addressed a news conference in Johannesburg soon after his release.

To rescue the national council.

Botha's collaborators, the Gatscha's and Roy's have been forced to say they won't participate in the council for fear

of the wrath of the people. Now the regime is attempting to provide them with an excuse to participate. "Political leaders are now being released and are free to participate in the negotiation process." Gatscha and company are also desperate to claim something in order to win credibility amongst the masses of the people. But our people are not fooled. As Mbeki

WHY MBEKI WAS RELEASED CONT.

The regime is trying to blackmail Comrade Mbeki into retirement.

The regime has openly said that the release of other political prisoners depends on the "behaviour" of Mbeki. Thereby they hope to totally neutralise Mbeki politically. What they are forgetting is that he is a leader of the people. Since his release our people's respect for him and his disciplined conduct, overwhelmingly demonstrates that he will continue to shine as a beacon of our struggle for our people.

The regime has been forced to release a national leader of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, and the South African Communist Party, when they totally rejected this possibility only a year ago. This shows

our people yet again that the white minority are not all powerful and that we are drawing closer to the day of liberation.

The regime is attempting to create the conditions for "sham" negotiations on their own terms

It is not only the people who know that the white minority has

become an endangered species! The regime is aware that its days are numbered. So they are attempting to create the conditions for a settlement which will essentially leave minority rule intact. But this attempt is doomed to fail. The people of South Africa have restated time and again what the basic preconditions are for a political solution to be reached.



Mbeki is surrounded by well-wishers in Port Elizabeth



THE QUESTION OF NEGOTIATION



The regime is finding itself in a crisis of escalating proportions. In a desperate attempt they are attempting to create the conditions for a "settlement"—an Smith style—which will keep minority rule intact. Coinciding with Mbeki's release was much talk about National Regional Authorities, National Councils etc. It is hoped that "concessions" such as the release of Mbeki will "sell" easily towards such a

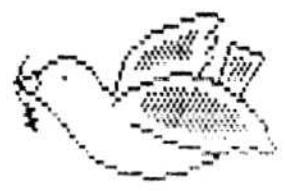
settlement. But the democratic movement has stated time and again what the basic pre-conditions are for negotiations.

This article looks at the question of negotiation. The fierce struggles of the last few years have created a new situation in South Africa. The question of the transfer of power from the white minority to the entire South African people (black and white) has been put on the agenda as never

before. But the determination of our people to settle for nothing less than this, is matched by the desperation of the regime to defend white minority rule using any and every method at its disposal. From this basic conflict flows two diverging views on every major issue of the day: the view on the one hand of the apartheid regime and its allies, and the view on the other of the democratic forces and our allies. The



NEGOTIATING



issue of negotiation is no exception: the democratic movements view on any proposed negotiation is guided by the extent to which they can help usher in a non racial democratic South Africa. The view of the regime on the other hand revolves around the extent to which negotiation can act as a mechanism to protect the economic and political power of the white minority. These two fundamentally different views, therefore will obviously give rise to two conflicting positions... on what constitutes meaningful negotiations, who are the parties to negotiation. The approach of the democratic movement to the question of negotiations in the current political situation can be summed up in eleven basic propositions:

1. FW BOTHA AND HIS GOVERNMENT HAVE NO INTENTION OF ENTERING INTO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

All the regime's action say loudly and clearly that they are not interested in negotiation, but are determined to destroy the democratic movement and perpetuate minority rule. Take their treatment of the UDF: we have committed ourselves to non-

violent, open opposition, but what has been the regime's response? We have been subjected to violence in its most extreme form. Not only have thousands of supporters

orders through its Joint Management Centres: "do not negotiate with revolutionary organisations like the civics because you give them credibility".



The Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress of the People on 26 June, 1955, represents the demands of the majority of South Africans

and followers been detained and imprisoned, but many have actually been kidnapped or murdered. Many of our comrades have been shot by vigilantes or the state, others have been sent to the gallows. At the same time the regime sends out its

their talk of negotiation is hollow. Recently FW Botha said that he had no intention of talking to the African National Congress. It is recognised throughout the world that there can be no solution to the South African conflict which excludes

BOTHA REGIME NOT COMMITTED TO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS

the ANC. Botha's insistence that he refuses to speak to the ANC is therefore tantamount to saying that he is not interested in meaningful negotiations. We need look no further than the regime's torpedoing of the Eminent Persons Group mission, their invasion of Angola, and their failure to act against the warlords of Natal. This is enough to show that the regime is not yet committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

THE ISSUE OF NEGOTIATION IS BEING USED TO TRY AND DEMOBILISE AND DISARM OUR STRUGGLE AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. At the moment the question of negotiations is being used by the regime and the main allies (Reagan, Thatcher and

attempt to divide our movement, to see if they can separate the 'hardliners' from the 'softliners', the 'nationalists' from the 'communist' and so on. In other words at this point, talk of 'negotiations' is a political ploy to buy time and disorganise the democratic movement. We do not

tantamount to convincing people to abandon the struggle.

THE REGIME IS ATTEMPTING TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR SHAM NEGOTIATIONS WHERE IT WILL BE IN A POSITION TO DICTATE TO THOSE IT IS 'NEGOTIATING' WITH.

The state of emergency is aimed at crushing



ANC's Tambo ...

believe as yet there is a genuine desire to negotiate on the important issues. In this context it would be irresponsible for us to encourage unrealistic expectations around the prospects for negotiations—such expectations would be based on the irrational and naive belief that the government has undergone a 'change of heart', when all evidence indicates the opposite. To give weight to such false hopes would be

the entire democratic movement. and installing apartheid's surrogate forces. Mass terror and repression, and the promotion of hand-picked 'authentic' leaders is designed to pave the way for an 'internal settlement' of the type Smith attempted to impose on Muzorewa. As with Smith's Rhodesia this course is doomed to failure and will only lengthen the conflict and lead to greater loss of life. Forums such as the National



THE journey from Pretoria to the Transkei takes only a few hours ... but it has taken Van Zyl Slabbert and Thabo Mbeki almost a lifetime.

Though born several hundred kilometres apart, they have waited almost 50 years and travelled halfway across Africa to Dakar, Senegal, to meet to discuss their common concern for their country's future and the welfare of its people.

The two led the delegations:

in Dakar.

Kohl) as a device to diffuse mounting pressure, particularly around sanctions. Furthermore the negotiations issue is being used in an

BOTHA HAS THE POWER TO END THE VIOLENCE

Council, Indaba's and so on, are totally unacceptable to our people and will create as much opposition as the tricameral parliament and black local authorities did. These are not forums for negotiations as the regime claims, but forums for revising apartheid rule, without any power or democratic basis from which to negotiate.

THE AGGRESSOR AND SINGLE GREATEST SOURCE OF VIOLENCE IN THE REGION IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. THE BALL IS IN THEIR COURT TO PROVE THAT THEY ARE SERIOUS ABOUT ENDING THEIR VIOLENCE AND COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO NEGOTIATIONS.

When the government demanded at the beginning of 1985 that Nelson Mandela renounce armed struggle in return for his release, he pointed out that "I am not a violent man...It was only when all other forms of resistance were no longer open to us that we turned to armed

struggle. Let Botha show that he is different to Malan, Stroomer, and Verwoerd. Let him renounce violence." Since Mandela made this statement three emergencies have been declared: hundreds of our people have been shot down, thousand

It is cynicism in the extreme for the perpetrators of all this violence to demand that it is the ANC which must renounce violence before there can be negotiations. Botha has the power to end this violence.
OUR JUSTIFIABLE



Townships all over the country are burning. 35 000 mourners at a funeral

detained and tortured, neighbouring states invaded and our leaders assassinated. Troops terrorise our people in the townships and villages, and apartheid vigilantes run rampant.

SCEPTICISM ABOUT THE REGIME'S INTENTIONS MUST NOT BE INTERPRETED AS A BLIND REFUSAL ON OUR PART TO SUPPORT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. We are not at all opposed to negotiations which are genuinely aimed at dismantling apartheid and ushering in a united non racial and democratic South Africa. It must be remembered that it is the oppressed people of South Africa, and particularly our fighting forces, who are most suffering the ravages of apartheid violence in this country. We have a deep interest in securing the speediest and most



Mass rally held in Mayfair in support of detainees

PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATION

peaceful resolution of the conflict as possible. The problem is how to get the regime to commit itself to this solution.

IN ORDER TO PERSUADE THE REGIME TO AGREE TO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS THERE WILL HAVE TO BE AN ESCALATION OF PRESSURE BOTH NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.

it will have no option but to accede to the enormous pressure to commit itself to a genuine process of negotiations. It must be made impossible for it to pursue the only other option available to it—a protracted and bloody war.

BEFORE THE REGIME CAN PERSUADE US THAT IT IS

negotiations, as Murphy Morobe put it shortly before he was detained : "How can we talk of negotiations when those people we say are our leaders who should be leading us to the conference table are put in jail? How can we begin to talk of negotiations when we cannot freely hold meetings, or move about in our task of



RELEASE NELSON MANDELA: RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS! This call is coming from all over the world. All over South Africa people are saying this. In fact, they are demanding this and are fighting for this

FREE MANDELA NOW

The struggle has to be escalated so that the regime has no alternative but to commit itself to meaningful negotiations.

An important part of that pressure will be the realisation by growing numbers of whites that the regime is committing them to a costly conflict which they cannot win. Eventually the regime must be so isolated, nationally and internationally, that

SERIOUS ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS. IT WILL HAVE TO TAKE A NUMBER OF BASIC STEPS WHICH WILL CREATE THE POLITICAL CLIMATE FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

We need far more than high sounding declarations of intent. To make negotiations possible, would require concrete material changes which would remove the fetters preventing the democratic movement from participating freely and equally in

organising people in a democratic way without running the risk of being incarcerated, or when military and police hold sway?

The UDF cannot attach its signature to any intention to negotiate as long as the ANC and other organisations remain banned. We must be given the right to seek a broad, democratic mandate without fear of detention or banning or even death..."

In order to create a

PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATION

CONT.



climate in which negotiations are politically viable, the following minimum measures would have to be implemented:

1. The release of all political prisoners (convicted and awaiting trial) and detainees, and the unconditional return of all exiles. Obviously our leaders cannot take part in the negotiation process from behind prison bars or outside the country.

2. The unbanning of the ANC and all banned organisations: the outlawed liberation movement would have to be free to fully consult with the people and the entire democratic movement in order to obtain a mandate to enter into negotiations.

3. The police and SADF would have to be withdrawn from the townships and villiages and confined to their barracks. This is necessary to create a climate of free and open discussion, so that apartheid forces are unable to intimidate and harrass people to prevent them from meeting about any proposed negotiations. Apartheid vigilantes and death squads would have to be dismantled.

4. For the same reason,

all laws restricting free assembly, press freedom, and free speech would have to be repealed. All repressive laws such as detention laws would also have to be repealed, as would all laws restricting freedom of movement.

5. Bantustan authorities including the so-called 'independent'

bantustans would also have to be stripped of their powers equivalent to those listed above, so that people in those areas would have the same freedom to organise as in other areas.

6. The State of Emergency will have to be lifted throughout the country.



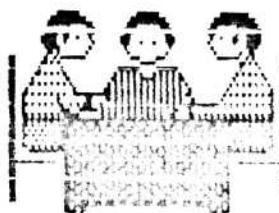
ANY NEGOTIATIONS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE WILL HAVE TO BE BETWEEN THE TWO PROTAGONISTS- THAT IS THE TWO MAIN PARTIES.

It is widely recognised that the two main protagonists in South Africa are the government and its allies on the one hand



and the ANC and its allies on the other. Any attempt by the regime to impose round table discussions consisting of parties it choses to negotiate with will be rejected as a transparent attempt to dictate the outcome of negotiations.

The democratic forces will reject any attempts to introduce a free-for-all where forces either peripheral to the conflict (fringe forces) or forces which more correctly belong to the other side of the table (anti-democratic forces) are lumped together with those leaders and organisations which have the standing, authority and mandate to speak on behalf of the people. Conversely, the organisations which spearheaded the liberation struggle will determine who their allies are. Any attempts to exclude leaders and organisations on the basis that they are unacceptable to the regime, would also be rejected.



THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

THERE CAN BE NO NEGOTIATIONS ABOVE THE HEADS OF THE PEOPLE

Any negotiations that take place would have to be open and conducted on the basis of thorough consultations, mandates, and accountability.

THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION SHOULD BE FULLY DETERMINED BY THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA. No outside powers should prescribe the form of negotiations, what issues to be negotiated about and the nature of the solutions which are desired. The

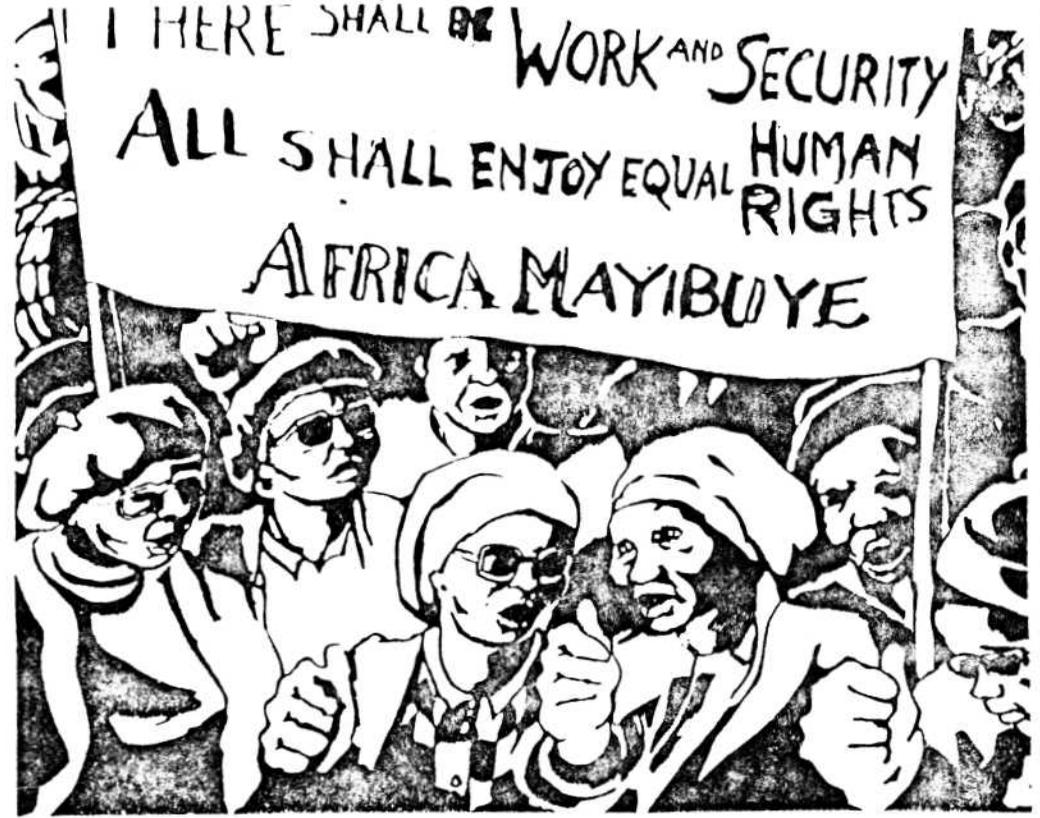
assistance of the international powers or agencies in facilitating the negotiation process should not be imposed but should be agreed to by the people of South Africa.

ANY NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE AIMED AT TOTALLY DISMANTLING APARTHEID AND CREATING A UNITED, NON RACIAL AND DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

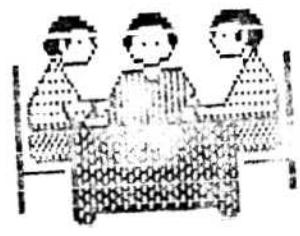
The Freedom Charter would provide the basis for the creation of a new South Africa since its accepted by the overwhelming majority of South Africans-black and white. Apartheid itself is a non negotiable issue. Any attempts to further fragment the country, maintain bantustans, entrench group areas or regional chiefdoms would be rejected. Any

attempts to entrench apartheid through racist provisions, such as 'minority rights', 'minority vetoes' etc would be unacceptable. It would be pointed out that the provisions of the Freedom Charter encourage and protects the cultural heritage of all South Africans, insofar as these do not promote racism. Negotiations would not exclude the possibility of a democratic constitution including a bill of rights to protect all individuals. This would flow from and be consistent with

is absolutely fundamental to the democratic movements position on negotiation. A minority exercises power over the resources of the country, the apparatuses of the state, the economy. Any attempt to negotiate an arrangement which leaves this power basically intact, would be a betrayal of what the masses have fought for. This is why we say that negotiations must be about the transfer of power out of the hands of that minority to the entire South African people.



democratic demands of the Freedom Charter. However, any attempt to constitutionally entrench the monopoly of political and economic power by a minority would be totally unacceptable. It



Cape Town awaits his arrival

LOCAL organisations are making efforts to get ANC leader Govan Mbeki to address a mass rally in Cape Town.

A committee consisting of various organisations has already been set up to prepare for his visit to Cape Town.

The committee consists of organisations like the United Democratic Front, the National Education Crisis Committee, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Cape Youth Congress, the United Womens Congress and several other groups.

According to sources, the 77-year-old Mbeki is eager to visit Cape Town. It is believed that he will be in Cape Town the first weekend of December.

Excitement is building up in most parts of Cape Town as local organisations, area committees and support groups begin preparing for his arrival.

Already thousands of pamphlets, posters and stickers have been distributed throughout the city and even in the rural areas.

Grassroots spoke to residents of

Cape Town townships about the release of Mbeki who had spent 23 years in prison. A woman from KTC squatter camp who did not want to be named said that it was the struggle of the people that released Mbeki. "The Government did not release him on humanitarian grounds", she said.

She called for the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners.

A resident of New Crossroads said Mbeki has been imprisoned for his belief in freedom for all people.

Santa arrives early in PE

THE day Govan Mbeki entered the townships of Port Elizabeth, all traffic laws were liberated.

People hung out the sides of fast moving taxis, children and old women danced on the sidewalks and crowds of people *toyitoyed* after the cream-coloured car which carried Mbeki through the streets.

Govan Archibald Mvunyelina Mbeki, the former chairman of the African National Congress, this week entered Port Elizabeth's New Brighton township for the first time in 23 years.

His arrival was described by one enthusiastic onlooker as an early visit from Father Christmas: "He came from the cold and brought so much warmth. His presence has brightened the lives of so many suffering people. They have hope again. It is like an early Christmas present."

Mbeki's car moved off and taxis, scooters and private vehicles joined the motorcade. Television crews perched on the bonnets of cars, filming the procession and photographers hung out of the windows.

The stream of cars grew into a river as oncoming traffic, pushed to the side of the road, turned around and joined in the procession. The noise of hooting cars could not drown the singing and shouts from the streets: "Mbeki is back, after 23 years on Robben Island, Viva Mbeki, he is home."

Mbeki sat with clenched fist, smiling at the jubilant reception.

By EDYTH BÜLBRING and
MBULELO LINDA

Fruitsellers abandoned their wares to follow the cars and shack dwellers left their homes to line the streets and call their greetings. An excited woman jumped into the air, lost her balance and fell on the sidewalk. She laughed and, undeterred, chased after the cars. Traffic jams ensued as young people crowded streets and surrounded the car.

A man was knocked down by a car. But he picked himself up and limped off, waving his clenched fist, his injuries forgotten.

A passing Casspir went on its way, ignoring the procession. Fishermen and boaters on the Swartkops River raised their fists when they heard the name Mbeki.

When the car stopped, residents crowded around it and sang "*Babe uMbeki Yinkokeli*" (Our father Mbeki, is our leader).

An old scooter weaved precariously in and out of the cars when the driver stood up, clenched his fist and shouted slogans. Three youths tobogganed on the top of a taxi roofrack and people spilled in and out of the cars which rode bumper to bumper.

"If this is the reception for Mbeki, can you imagine what it will be like on the day of liberation," said a woman dressed in the colours of the ANC.

— Pen

Mbeki leaves Jo'burg for home town

By Jo-Anne Collinge

Released African National Congress leader Mr Govan Mbeki left Johannesburg yesterday morning for his home city of Port Elizabeth where he was set to enter the township of New Brighton for the first time in 23 years.

Mr Mbeki's exit from Johannesburg was quiet in comparison to his arrival two days earlier, when about 500 supporters and scores of journalists turned out at Jan Smuts Airport.

A group of 60 politicians and trade unionists accompanied him to the airport yesterday, according to United Democratic Front president Mrs Albertina Sisulu, at whose home he spent the weekend.

Mr Mbeki (77) gave a 45-minute press conference on Saturday. At the conference his intended role in South African politics was indicated.

It was announced that he was prepared to intervene to end violence between groups with opposing political views, wherever it might occur, including Maritzburg.

Mr Mbeki is restricted from being quoted unless ministerial permission is granted. No such permission was given for the Johannesburg press conference.

At his first press conference in Port Elizabeth, where he could be freely quoted, Mr Mbeki made it clear he was still a communist and a member of the ANC.

The Minister of Justice has warned the media that Mr Mbeki may not be quoted.

Immediately after Saturday's press conference a crowd of about 200, who had been singing in the lobby outside the hall, crowded in to greet Mr Mbeki. There were tense moments outside Khotso House a short while later when the crowd left the building still singing loudly.

They came face to face with a contingent of riot and security police, but dispersed without incident.

Mr Mbeki then attended a private lunch to which people who had known him before his trial and life imprisonment were invited. On Saturday evening, he was feted at a larger function at St Barnabas School in Bosmont.

● See Pages 3 and 4.

YOUTHS danced the emotional toyi-toyi, sang freedom songs, chanted slogans and gave the clenched fist salute when African National Congress leader Mr Govan Mbeki, 77, returned to a hero's welcome in Port Elizabeth's black townships on Sunday — after a 25-year silence.

It was like a pilgrimage to the townships he first came to during 1955 as local editor of *New Age*.

Mr Mbeki, who was released on Thursday last week after serving 23 years of a life sentence for sabotage, appeared touched by the tumultuous welcome.

With him was his 71-

SAPA

year-old wife, Mrs Epainette Mbeki, his attorney, Mrs Priscilla Jana and members of the Inter-Denominational African Ministers Association of South Africa.

On his arrival at the H F Verwoerd Airport in Port Elizabeth he was met by a group of people. Among them was the former president of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, Dr J Moodliar, and a contingent of local and foreign television and media representatives.

Visit

On learning about Mr Mbeki's planned visit to the townships, people, young and old, including former Robben Island prisoners and members of community-based organisations, started

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Return of hero

← From Page 1

gathering outside the Qeqe service station in Ferguson Road where they waited for him for more than an hour.

After having lunch in town, Mr Mbeki's car, driven by the Rev Mcebisi Xundu, arrived at a service station at about 2:45 pm where he alighted to greet the blind former treason trialist, Mr Phakama Simon Mkalipi, who is also a patron of the Eastern Cape regional branch of the United Democratic Front.

Before the motorcade left the service station on its tour of the townships, the crowd sang a freedom song, giving the clenched fist salute and dancing the toyi-toyi.

The procession which started with about 20 cars swelled to more than 100 as others joined on the way.

The motorcade travelled through New Brighton, Kwazakhele, Zwide, Soweto, Veeplaas and Motherwell and there were frenzied scenes as people, attracted by the singing and hooting of the vehicles, rushed out of their homes to line the streets to wave at Mr Mbeki.

Some joined in the

singing, chanting of slogans "viva Mbeki", "Govan is ours," "Viva ANC" and "Mayibuye", and the toyi-toyi dancing.

The motorcade stopped at St Peter's Anglican Church, Spondo Road, in Zwide, where Mr Mbeki briefly addressed a crowd, among whom were another former Pefco president, Mr Zolile Skosana, who shook hands with Mr Mbeki.

From his speech — which may not be reported because he is "listed" — it was clear that Mr Mbeki was both moved and happy to be back in the townships. Some of the women wore Xhosa traditional attire.

UDF condemns police action

The UDF has condemned the "unprovoked police attack" on UDF activists and sympathisers who assembled at Jan Smuts Airport on Saturday night to welcome released ANC leader Mr Govan Mbeki, a spokesman for the national executive of the UDF said.

The UDF alleged that several people were seriously injured, spectacles broken and clothing

and personal possessions lost in the mêlée that followed the attack.

Senior UDF and Cosatu officials, who were present, maintained crowd discipline and urged the 400-odd crowd not to sing or lend themselves to police provocation, the spokesman said.

"The UDF is convinced that the police deliberately created a situation which can be used to ban

or prohibit the reception meetings, press conferences and other ceremonies being arranged for Mr Mbeki.

"We demand that an independent commission of inquiry be instituted at which journalists and other observers can testify to the exemplary behaviour of the people in contrast to the brutality the police unleashed," the spokesman said. Sapa

Welcome from UDF

THE United Democratic Front welcomed Govan Mbeki home and hopes "he will still be with us in our struggle in the destruction of apartheid," UDF president Mrs Albertina Sisulu said last night.

Asked whether she thought it likely that other political prisoners would soon be released, Mrs Sisulu said that since 1985 there had been rumours that Nelson Mandela would be released, but he is still imprisoned.

—Sapa.

The ailing man who rose from bed to greet his friend

By MONO BADELA

WHEN 74-year-old ailing Simon Phakama Mkalipi heard Govan Mbeki had been released, and that he was going through New Brighton, he got up and walked.

Blind for more than 28 years, he found it difficult at first. But the thought of being reunited with fellow treason trialist Mbeki, "gave him strength — it drove him on", said Mkalipi's wife, Maria Mkalipi.

Mkalipi may not be quoted — like Mbeki, he is a listed communist.

He met the man he regards as his leader on Sunday when Mbeki returned triumphantly to Port Elizabeth's townships after a short trip to Johannesburg.

It was, as Maria Mkalipi says, "a joyous reunion of comrades in arms."

"You see my husband has what is known as an inner vision. He said he could see Mbeki very clearly," said Maria Mkalipi.

"He now realises that freedom is just around the corner. He is now very hopeful that his other leader, Nelson Mandela, will soon be home."

Mkalipi's meeting with Mbeki was brief but, according to his wife, a much longer appointment has been fixed for the two ANC stalwarts.

But Mkalipi has not lost his power to enchant and inspire people with his vision of an undivided South Africa, free of racism and exploitation.

He was unbanned in 1968, after being confined to KwaZakhele for five years. Today he is a patron of the Port Elizabeth region of the United Democratic Front.

Mkalipi was born in 1913 in Grahamstown and came to Port Elizabeth in 1939 where he worked for a cigar-



In a moving moment Simon Mkalipi (right) is reunited with former colleague Govan Mbeki. Picture: WALTER DHLADHLA, AFP

ette company. He joined the ANC in 1943.

He was active in the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and led several marches in Port Elizabeth in protests against Pass Laws, the Group Areas Act and increased rents and bus fares.

Mkalipi was in Kiptown when the Congress of the People adopted the Freedom Charter in 1956.

That year he defied an order not to attend a prayer meeting in Grahamstown and was sentenced to eight months imprisonment.

One December afternoon, while serving his sentence, the security police arrived with a warrant for his arrest. He was taken to Port Elizabeth where he was told he was charged with of high treason.

In the Northend Prison he joined many former ANC leaders like Professor ZK Mathews, Cannon James Calata, Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Vuyisile Mini, Caleb Mayekiso, Florence Mayekiso and Frances Baard.

He was flown to Johannesburg and locked in the Fort. Every day, during the preliminary period of the marathon treason trial, he would be handcuffed and escorted to the Drill Hall to join his colleagues. The state lost the case in 1961 and all 156 accused were acquitted.

It was in 1958 during the trial that Mkalipi became blind. Maria Mkalipi claimed her husband was pushed and fell on his forehead while serving his sentence in Grahamstown.

●Canzibe Ngxiki, another ex-Robben Island prisoner, was the first

former colleague to meet Mbeki on Friday morning. When charged with furthering the aims of the ANC, Ngxiki called on Mbeki and life prisoner Raymond Mhlaba to give evidence in his defence in the Cradock Regional Court.

Ngxiki forced his way through the crowded hotel lobby and entered Mbeki's suite. After seeing him he said he was convinced that Mbeki still had a major role to play in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Also making a pilgrimage to meet an old friend was Mayford Mfazwe, 59, a veteran ANC campaigner who has spent about 20 years in banishment after serving a five-year sentence on Robben Island.

"People are very excited about Mbeki's release," Mfazwe said.

How a schoolboy's rage turned Mbeki towards Marxism

WHEN Govan Mbeki spoke about how he came to embrace Marxist political thought, two themes emerged.

One was the memory of police brutality on the streets of Johannesburg, which had etched itself into his memory when he was still a high school student.

The other was what he perceived to be the failure of the church to intervene in the wake of attempts to remove the franchise from Africans.

Mbeki was born on July 8, 1910 at Mpukane location in the Nqamakwe district of Transkei. He was the youngest of five children. His father was a chief, Sikelewu Mbeki, and his mother, Johanna Mabola, was the daughter of a Methodist missionary.

He told me how, at the age of eight, he saw his family — along with many other black people in the Transkei — being "robbed of their land".

His father's forebears had moved to Nqamakwe when the Zulu king Shaka was still attempting to consolidate his rule in Natal in the face of widespread resistance.

Nqamakwe was one of seven districts in which areas were fixed for "white occupation". According to Mbeki, this meant there would be no further allocation of land for local black residents.

He first came into contact with the African National Congress at the age of 14, while in Std 4. A parish priest, Rev Mhlongo of the Independent Methodist Church, held fund-raising concerts for the ANC which were attended by local children. During the concerts, Mhlongo explained the aims and objects of the Congress.

As a high school pupil at Healdtown, Mbeki recalled, he was also

Govan Mbeki, quiet man of the Rivonia trialists, has given no interviews since his release. But he did give one interview earlier this year, to journalist THAMI MKHWANAZI — then a fellow Robben Island prisoner — in which he described his conversion to communism

touched by the poverty he saw among whites in the Transkei. There had been a breakdown in subsistence farming among Afrikaners, who had been hit by natural disasters, and many had resorted to roaming the country for work.

The Mbeki family — with their cattle, sheep, goats, poultry and horses — was relatively well-off by the standards of black South Africa. "Many whites came to our house asking for food and shelter," he told me. They stayed overnight.

These events — unusual in South Africa — took place against the background of the National Party's aggressive "twart gevaar" propaganda campaign, a tactic used to remove the franchise from Africans.

Mbeki became increasingly disillusioned with Christianity. "There seemed to be no answer," he said. "I thought the church would stop (Prime Minister JB) Hertzog. But it seemed to do nothing. This undermined my confidence in the church. My mind was in turmoil."

Mbeki's first experience of trade unionism came in the late 1920s, when he acted as an interpreter —



New Brighton women

from English to Xhosa — for his cousin Robert Mbeki, a prominent figure in the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union.

Mbeki had got his own political career off the ground when he formed, with other students, the Transkei Students' Association: "With all the noble ideas of youth, the move was to improve the conditions of the oppressed and exploited people."

In 1929, in the year-end vacation, Zizi — his clan name — travelled to Johannesburg to visit his sister, who ran a shebeen near Doornfontein to augment the family income. It was on

Johannesburg's streets that he had his first direct experience of brutality perpetrated against blacks in the urban areas. He recalled "regular police harassment for pass offences and illicit liquor." The raids, which were almost daily occurrences, were accompanied by beatings, he said.

"I was helplessly angry at what I noticed, but had no answer for the state of affairs," he said.

An answer emerged for Mbeki in 1933, when as a matric student in the high school section of Fort Hare University he came into contact with left-wing political activist Dr Eddie Roux, a botanist.

Mbeki remembered Roux pitching a tent on the slopes of Sandile's Kop near the university. The young student was invited to the tent by a senior colleague, Ernest Mancoba, where they heard the botanist give lectures on communism.

Mbeki - champion of the oppressed

Roux was a member of the Communist Party of South Africa, and had been a leading light in the Young Communist League. His "tent lectures" — which went on for two weeks — had a tremendous effect on Mbeki, providing an explanation for the plight of the "oppressed and exploited masses".

Then, in 1934, an "Afro-American" teacher named Max Yergan came to South Africa to establish a Christian Union at Fort Hare. After building a hall, he travelled back to the United States and also spent some time in the Soviet Union. When he returned to Fort Hare, said Mbeki, "he was no longer the Max Yergan we had known — concerned only with church work".

Yergan, who remained at Fort Hare for another year, was invited to deliver lectures on communism and fascism to the political science class. At the time, Mbeki was reading the subject as one of his majors for a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Mbeki became friendly with Yergan who, he said, invited him to his home and "fed him" with literature. One of the first books his friend gave him was Lenin's *State and Revolution*.

The friendship with Roux was also maintained, and in 1946 Mbeki contributed a volume on co-operatives to

Roux's Cape Town-based publishing concern, *The African Bookman*.

In his final year at university, he wrote an article for the college magazine criticising a book by Edgar Brooks, who referred to "coloureds" as "the sins of our forefathers".

Mbeki argued strongly for the integration of races as a solution to South Africa's problems. The university's principal, Alexander Kerr, took exception to his article, and ordered him to withdraw it. He refused, and the issue never appeared.

The years 1934-1935 saw the introduction of the "Native Bills" which were intended to remove Africans from the voters' common roll. Mbeki participated in the activities of the "All African Convention" established in Bloemfontein to fight the Bills.

It was during this time that he worked during school holidays for the CNA in Johannesburg. He said he learned about the problems of workers from this personal experience: poor wages earned by blacks as well as confrontation with the police in matters of labour relations.

He recalled how during the Depression whites were placed in supervisory positions even though they did not

know the job. Then an undergraduate, Mbeki was fired for organising the workers.

After completing his degree he asked the then treasurer of the ANC, Dr AB Xuma, to take him on as national organiser. "I asked him to pay me £8 a month," he said. Xuma refused, saying the ANC had no funds and that at 26, Mbeki was young enough to find a job elsewhere.

Mbeki turned to teaching, at the same time writing a book, *Transkei in the Making*. It was published by Verulum Press in 1939 and serialised in the magazine, *The New South African Outlook*.

After reading the series two men running a printing business offered Mbeki the editorship of a newspaper they were planning in exchange for rights to the series. He accepted. The paper was called *The Territorial Magazine* and later, *Inkundla ya Bantu*, and he edited it until 1944.

The rest of Mbeki's history is well-known; and at the time of his arrest, he was a member of the High Command of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto weSizwe, and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

SOUTH FOCUS

At the feet of Zizi

WHEN Govan Mbeki was jailed I was half-way through primary school. I have dim memories of adults talking in concerned tones about the Rivonia trialists.

Later, with a growing political awareness, we discussed the leavers and "the movement" in hushed tones at home school.

On the floor of Khotso House at the weekend, a million memories came flooding back. It is difficult to be an unemotional journalist under the circumstances.

No amount of state control can remove the overwhelming emotion I felt sitting a few feet away from Mbeki and listening to him speak for the first time.

Something inside me was tremendously encouraged by the quiet strength of his bearing. The room where the press conference was held was a chaotic scene of jostling journalists. Cameras of every shape and size clicked, flashed and whirred away all the time. A near fight broke out between media people arguing about space.

In the centre of it all Mbeki radiated calm and order. Outside Khotso House an enthusiastic crowd sang freedom songs with an excitement that filled the air. Metres away policemen in yellow cars watched with an air of controlled tension.

MORE than two decades of state control could not remove the overwhelming emotion journalist SYLVIA VOLLENHOVEN felt sitting near Mbeki and listening to him speak for the first time. In fact, it was difficult for her to be unemotional at the ANC leader's press conference in Johannesburg at the weekend. Here she describes her experience.

There would be discussions between the ANC in Lusaka and Mbeki as soon as possible, but for the moment Mbeki would ease back into community life and keep a low profile. There are clear indications that the ANC is willing to negotiate with Pretoria as soon as possible.

Secret talks with leaders in prison as well as in exile are already happening, although neither the ANC nor the Government wishes to talk about it at this stage.

Inkatha leader Gatsha Buthelezi is causing Nelson Mandela and the rest of the ANC leaders grave concern.

There is no chance of neither the ANC nor the UDF organisations taking part in the National Statutory Council or any other "advisory bodies". (A history of advisory bodies that went back as far as 1984 was recounted at the press conference).



Govan Mbeki, Albertina Sisulu and Winnie Mandela. Picture: GUY TILLIM (Afrapix)

Never dreamed

Inside 'Ma' Albertina Sisulu echoed the sentiments of many when she said she had never dreamed "for a day" that she would be speaking on behalf of the United Democratic Front (UDF) at a press conference for Mbeki.

An emotional Winnie Mandela could barely speak at first. Addressing Mbeki as 'Dada' she talked like a daughter who was telling her father of the horrors that had taken place at home during his absence.

Priscilla Jana, Mbeki's lawyer, wore a beautiful yellow silk sari. The edge of her sari had a fine pattern in yellow and black.

Instead of the traditional dot on her forehead, she wore what looked like a minute spear tip made from cloth, in the same colours as her sari.

This was no ordinary press conference. Behind Mbeki, smiling young people - some of them were probably not even born when he was jailed - stuck a giant ANC banner on the wall.

"Ma" Sisulu reminded everyone of how much work lay ahead still, saying: "We must make it clear that our demands for the release of all political leaders and detainees still stands."

"We hope and wish that this is the beginning of that process."

Winnie Mandela said she was "almost ashamed" that Mbeki had to come back to the same conditions he fought 23 years ago.

"We must exercise great caution in our excitement. We are dealing with schizophrenic people who are known for doing one good act and (then) doing ten times worse," she said.

Mandela said she did not know whether there was any significance in the fact that Mbeki was released on the 25th anniversary of the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela.

"(And) we don't want to attach any significance to your release on Guy Fawkes Day."

Mandela said she would like to believe that Mbeki's release was a thermometer with which the Afrikaner was "measuring the political heat of the country".

Later, the conference heard that Nelson Mandela had sent greetings to the comrades from Pollsmoor Prison.

It was said that the leadership of the banned ANC was not merely concerned with one section of the population.

Nelson Mandela was apparently opposed to a "propagandist stance" when it came to searching for a solution to South Africa's problems.

After Mbeki's release, the following has become clear.

Flying kick

It is unlikely that Mandela would be released before Christmas.

At the end of the press conference about 200 people filed out of Khotso House, singing and chanting.

The street was sealed off and people dispersed. I have rarely seen the police, especially in Johannesburg, so restrained.

No teargas, no loudhailer, no baton charges and no sunshots. The tension of waiting for something to happen was unbearable.

Govan Mbeki, the skittle-shaped white man who loomed if the top half of his body was solely by a broad leather belt, stood in an across the street.

When he was tightly wedged into his jeans at the Khotso House Rambo-style he took a flying kick at the gate leading to the Khotso House underground parking.

But the locked gate merely bounced back at him and a young man obligingly unlocked it.

He went inside the garage for a while and then emerged, having seemingly done nothing much.

Later as Mbeki's car left, the fat man and a host of other unmarked cars seemed to go off in the same direction.

SPECTRUM

— elite of the ANC elite

PATRICK LAURENCE

The release of Mr Govan Mbeki gave many South Africans their first glimpse, if only on television screens, of a self-declared member of the underground South African Communist Party (SACP).

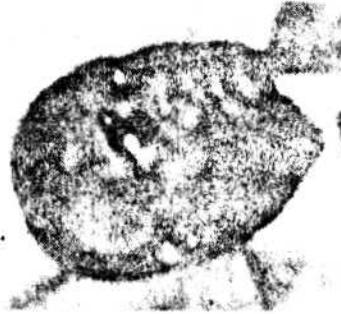
The 77-year-old man who appeared before them within hours of leaving Robben Island was hardly a Fidel Castro or even a Nikita Khrushchev.

Far from resembling the bearded Cuban president with his contempt for bourgeois niceties or even the table-thumping former Soviet leader, Mr Mbeki was a model of middle-class gentility.

Dressed in a conservative grey suit and a discreet tie, the dignified, grey-haired and bespectacled Mr Mbeki looked for all the world like an African clergyman. His manner was appropriately grave as he weighed his words before answering questions from journalists. His tone was conciliatory, even when he was taking a hard line on, say, the proposed National Council.

Mr Mbeki reaffirmed his loyalty to the SACP within hours of his return to public life, causing a flurry of excitement in the process: the Minister of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee, cited it to justify the ban on quoting him (the ban

... and a force to be reckoned with



THE MEN AT THE TOP: of the SACP — a secret organisation which does not disclose its membership: chairman Dan Thloome and general secretary Joe Slovo, and Oliver Tambo, president of the ANC — an estimated two-thirds of its 30-man executive are SACP members.

had been temporarily lifted for Mr Mbeki's first post-prison conference; the Afrikaans newspaper *Beeld* pondered whether it was prompted by the fear that he would be assassinated if he did not do so.

While it may cause shivers of horror in the corridors of power, the SACP is a fact of life in South Africa. Its ability to win the allegiance of men of intelligence and perseverance like Mr Mbeki and before him, Braam Fischer, who died in prison in May 1975, makes it a force to be reckoned with.

The SACP, one of South Africa's oldest political parties, was founded under the name of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921. It was a legal party until 1950, when it was banned by the National Party Government of Dr D F Malan.

It re-surfaced again as a secret party in 1953, re-forging its fraternal ties with the African National Congress after the outlawing of the ANC in 1960. The SACP helped form Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC, in 1961.

ship could vary from a few hundred to a few thousand members. What is certain is that its influence is much greater than its numbers suggest.

Its influence springs largely from its close alliance with the ANC. Government propagandists talk about the communist-dominated ANC, suggesting that the SACP is the real driving force behind that ANC. Whether that is so is open to debate.

But there is little doubt that the SACP is an important factor in the ANC. An official United States report put the proportion of "known or suspected" SACP members serving on the ANC's 30-man national executive committee at roughly half. Officially South African estimates are in the order of two-thirds.

The SACP draws many of its recruits from the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe. As Umkhonto fighters generally represent the most dedicated and determined sector of ANC rank-and-file members, SACP members constitute an elite within an elite.

The ANC's "armed struggle" — or "terrorist war" — tends to enhance the SACP's position. The bulk of the ANC's weapons come from the Soviet Union and it is the SACP which provides the link.

According to the US State Department report, the SACP was very worried by South African Government attempts in 1984-85 to wean black nationalists in the ANC from their alliance with the SACP.

The SACP is dubbed "Stalinist" by its enemies, as many of whom are drawn from the liberal-capitalist camp as from the National Party. But, according to Dr Tom Lodge, of the University of the Witwatersrand, that is too stark a categorisation.

The SACP is strongly pro-Moscow, but that does not mean it is wedded to the ossified doctrine of Stalinism. Stalin died in 1953. Time has moved on. So has the SACP. It is in tune with Mr Mikhail Gorbachev's new doctrine of "glasnost" (openness), with all that it may — or may not — entail in the long run.

Whatever its precise ideological outlook, the SACP has survived its banning in 1950 to become one of the actors on the South African stage.

Its strategic position within the ANC, its commitment to socialism and the tendency of township radicals to link capitalism with racism, means it will not necessarily be confined to a minor role in the dramatic years ahead.

**UNRAVELLING
THE MEANING
OF MBEKI'S
RELEASE ...**

**VIEWS FROM THE GOVERNMENT
AND THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES**

While the Govan Mbeki release is at least a tacit acknowledgement by the government that its 'real opposition' is the ANC, Winnie Mandela is wary of the flood of 'over-optimistic' expectations that the release of Nelson Mandela may follow. THAMI MKHWANAZI reports

WINNIE Mandela has cautioned against "over-optimistic expectations" following the release of African National Congress leader Govan Mbeki.

The influential activist, wife of the ANC's best-known leader, believes the release reflects government weakness — but has called upon "the oppressed and exploited" people of South Africa to react with "restraint, caution and circumspection".

Mandela believes the government's gagging of Mbeki is an "admission that he has not lost his influence among the downtrodden".

The decision to release the veteran resistance figure, she claimed, reflected government recognition that "they had failed to defuse escalating resistance against apartheid".

It was also an acknowledgement that the "real opposition" in South Africa was the ANC, not the Conservative or Progressive Federal parties, she said.

The restrictions placed on Mbeki — he is "listed" and may not be quoted — were a safeguard against his words triggering off an irreversible wave of resistance.

But Mandela warned that it is customary for oppressed people to expect the release from prison of their authentic leaders to be followed by freedom. Mbeki thus had a "tremendous responsibility", as people could become demoralised if radical changes did not quickly follow his release.

Ill-thought-out actions could be used by the government to keep other political prisoners in jail, said Mandela. Violent action such as the police baton-charge on crowds waiting to greet Mbeki at Jan Smuts airport should be seen as a "mischievous tactic" which was intended to be provocative.

She said the release of Mbeki was a "gamble", a short-term plan to take the steam out of the sanctions and disinvestment debate, and give "ammunition" to potential allies like Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

Mandela said the government should have heeded the warning given by the Rivonia trialists, including Mbeki, more than 20 years ago — they had predicted that apartheid would lead to escalating violence.

She found it "strange that the government now gives us back — after more than two decades in jail — the very man who with the others predicted the present violence."



Winnie Mandela welcomes Govan Mbeki to Johannesburg
Picture: WALTER DHLADHLA, AFP

It was also odd, she said, that the South African government once advised Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith to release imprisoned political leaders, and yet did not draw lessons from their own advice.

Mandela said Smith would have saved more than 45 000 lives had he done in the Tiger Talks in the Sixties what he was forced to do at Lancaster House more than a decade later.

In response to persistent reports in the Afrikaans press, which praised the government for "demystifying"

Mbeki, Mandela said the demands of "the people" on the ANC leader would be heavy: they would expect him to bring freedom, not be seen as a "toothless bulldog".

Beeld had commented that "The myth has suddenly become a human being who must — like all other citizens — abide by the law."

"Mbeki must realise that he has played his role and that he now has the choice either to withdraw from politics or to exert a moderate influence on South Africa. Because he surely is the one person who must know that there is no hope of a successful revolution — having had 23 years to ponder."

IF 77-year-old veteran ANC leader Govan Mbeki was released on compassionate grounds, as President PW Botha implied this week, then several other political prisoners should also have been considered, according to the Release Mandela Campaign.

"Oscar Mpetsha, although in good health and virile, has had one of his legs amputated (from the knee down) and Harry Gwala is partially paralysed," said RMC representative Aubrey Mokoena.

"Surely Botha's claimed compassion should have included the release of a one-legged man and a man who is paralysed."

Azapo agreed that prisoners like Mpetsha, Gwala, ANC leader Nelson Mandela and PAC president Zeph

The other prisoners in poor health

By SEFAKO NYAKA

for military training.

The 74-year-old Mthopeng is currently serving his third spell in prison, this time for 15 years.

He was found guilty on charges under the Terrorism Act at the marathon Bethal Trial in 1979.

Mthopeng, who is presently being held at Johannesburg Prison, is known to be suffering from a cancerous tumour.

Opening the Cape National Party congress this week Botha said the government would not hesitate to show compassion when this became the overriding factor in considering the release of security prisoners.

"If prisoners do not meet the conditions I laid down in parliament, they will not be released, but at the same time ... will not hesitate to show mercy if we feel mercy must be the determining factor," he said.

A few days earlier Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee had told newsmen Mbeki had been selected for release because he was 77 and starting to show signs of his age.

He also conceded that if anything happened to one of the major security prisoners while still in jail it would play into the hands of radical activists.

But Mbeki, who was released last Friday, showed no obvious signs of ageing and has displayed remarkable stamina for a man his age.

A VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE

THE release of Govan Mbeki has filled the hearts of millions of South Africans with joy. Many see it as a step towards ultimate victory. It is the struggle of our people that has secured his release. Grassroots looks at why he was released and what possible future moves can be expected.

THE release of Govan Mbeki is a victory for the struggling people of South Africa. For years we have struggled for the release of all of our leaders. The names of Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki and all the Rivonia trialists have been on the lips of thousands of South Africans. And all over the world, streets and buildings are named after these Rivonia comrades to remind people of our struggle here in South Africa.

In 1985, Botha showed that he felt the pressure of the demands for the release of our leaders. He said he would release our leaders if they would "renounce violence". Mandela replied for all political prisoners when he rejected Botha's offer. He said that it was the regime that should renounce violence, and that he and his comrades would not turn their backs on the ANC. The Rivonia prisoners, said Mandela, were answerable to the people, not to Botha.

In the mass struggles of 1985 and 1986, the regime was shaken. Mandela and the ANC became central issues in the South African crisis. The entire international community, as well as important Botha allies like big businesses, began to echo the call to release the Rivonia comrades and unban the ANC. Even 'homeland' leaders like Buthelezi insisted on the release of Mandela before they would consider working in Botha's new National Council.

The people had made Mandela and his comrades such a key factor that the Botha regime could no longer pretend that they were not an issue.

Desperate to regain the political initiative, the regime changed the laws so that they could release political prisoners on 'humanitarian' grounds. They could then release the Rivonia comrades without being seen to back down politically. They even threw in the release of a couple of AWB terrorists to try and calm down the anger of right-wing whites.

They hope that they can release some of the Rivonia prisoners - maybe even Mandela - with the minimum political disruption. The State of Emergency is designed to stop us giving these leaders the welcome they deserve. The regime hopes that releasing a few prisoners will win them more support from overseas governments and from elements in the community (like Buthelezi) who they want to pull in to their schemes.

Mbeki's release is a test case. If there are no major upheavals, they will release others. Possibly even Mandela. What they are trying to say to us is "keep calm and we'll release these prisoners".

This new strategy shows that the regime is weak. Not only has it failed through 23 years of imprisonment to make South Africa and the world forget Mandela - now they are forced to release him before they can get their own plans going.

Govan Mbeki has struck a further blow. He made it clear when he came out that he is still a member of the ANC and of the South African Communist Party, and that he has not changed his position. This gives the liberation movement a loud public voice right inside South Africa.

While Mbeki has been released, and more may follow, we must not back down on our demands. All our leaders in prison and detention must be released. And we demand the right to hear them - Mbeki may still not be quoted because he is 'listed'. We demand that the ANC and all other organisations be unbanned. And we demand that the People Shall Govern, as the Freedom Charter demands. There must be growing pressures on the regime to meet these demands - they cannot be allowed to sit back after releasing a few prisoners.

Govan Mbeki has come out into a changed world. But the most important difference is that victory for the people is now in sight, even for the ailing eyes of the ageing comrade.

Not a new dawn, says Buthelezi

ULUNDI. — Govan Mbeki's release would be hailed abroad and locally, but "the release of one political leader does not hail a new political dawn," Chief Minister of KwaZulu and Inkatha President, Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi said in a statement last night.

"One swallow does not make a summer and one prominent political leader released does not herald a new political dawn.

"I pray that the release of Mr Mbeki will yet prove to be the coo of the dove which heralds the coming dawn," Dr Buthelezi said.

The release of Mr Mbeki could have vast implications for South African politics, he said.

The South African government was shackling its "democratic feet" when it imprisoned Black leaders in 1963.

It was not only Blacks who would gain from the release of political prisoners, but every population group, he added.

The release of Mr Mbeki and others would not in itself be sufficient to give the State President the credibility that he needed to do what he has publicly undertaken to do, Dr Buthelezi said.

It was however a start.

"Mr Mbeki's release will re-vitalise hopes that Nelson Mandela, Mr Seph Mothopeng and all political prisoners will be released," he said. — Sapa.

Backing for Mbeki from Umsa

By Mekeed Kotlolo,
Pretoria Bureau

The United Municipalities of South Africa (Umsa) — which called for the unconditional release of all political prisoners — has welcomed the release of Mr Govan Mbeki (77) and supported his confidence in the policy of negotiation and peaceful pursuit of the liberation of blacks.

A press statement by Umsa also asked the State President and his Cabinet "to take bolder steps by going further and immediately release Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and others so that the climate should be created accordingly to normalise the political situation in this country".

It further appealed to the State President to "push ahead with reconciliation and let the rest of the political prisoners join their families at Christmas".

We regret that no political negotiation and peace plan, including the National Council, will ever successfully and effectively take off if it has not been negotiated by a body which includes national leaders such as Mr Mbeki, Mr Mandela and Mr Sisulu.

Dangerous course, says Treurnicht

By BRIAN STUART
DR Andries Treurnicht, Conservative

Party leader, said the government was "on a dangerous course" in releasing political prisoners, but the Progressive Federal Party has welcomed the move.

Dr Treurnicht said the release of Govan Mbeki and other political prisoners was "a calculated risk" by the government, but the CP had doubts about it.

There was a danger of releasing people on humanitarian grounds, only to find that they had not forsworn violence, leading to the possibility of re-arrest.

"I believe the government is on a dangerous course if it releases

people without them renouncing violence."

The views and position of Mbeki in the ANC, in particular, were well-known, said Dr Treurnicht.

Mr Dave Dalling, PFP spokesman on justice, welcomed the release. He said Mbeki had served more than 20 years imprisonment.

He described yesterday's announcement of the release by Mr Kobie Coetsee, Minister of Justice, as "a very welcome development.

"It is to be hoped that this will be the precursor of the release of other well-known political prisoners.

"If these other releases take place it could be a significant beginning to help create the climate for real negotiation on a new constitution," said Mr Dalling.

The National Democratic Movement welcomed the release of Govan Mbeki and other pol-

itical prisoners. "We sincerely hope that this is a forerunner, of the release of more political leaders in prison or in detention," the movement said in a statement last night.

The NDM hoped that Mbeki would be allowed to freely participate in the political process.

Should he be restricted his release would have no meaning.

"We hope that this will open up the urgent debate on the unbanning of the ANC, because unless their leaders can take part freely as respected representatives of that organisation the political process cannot be opened up in order to resolve the conflict in South Africa.

The Five Freedoms Forum also welcomed the release of Mbeki after so many years of imprisonment, but questions that not all political prisoners have been released, the Five Freedoms Forum said last night.

— Sapa.

'Continuous process'

ANNOUNCING the release of the prisoners yesterday, the Minister of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee said the State President's announcement in the House of Assembly on August 13, 1987, that the release policy which applied to prisoners in general would in future apply to security prisoners as well, had resulted in the releases.

"In this regard the State President requested me to consider seriously the case of prisoner Govan Mbeki and I thus requested the various advisory bodies who deal with the consideration and recommendation of the release of prisoners, including the advisory release board under chairmanship of Judge Kumleben, to advise on the possible release of prisoner Mbeki and a number of identified prisoners.

"Emanating from the advice now rendered by the Advisory Release Board, the government has decided to release the

following prisoners who had served more than 20 years of their sentences: G Mbeki, J Nkosi.

"Furthermore it has been decided that in terms of the release policy security prisoners M Matsobane, W S Tshikila and V T Masuku received remission of sentence to such an extent and that they now can be released.

"These release actions have been finalised today (Thursday). The release policy as announced will be applied in the usual manner as a continuous process.

"It is also announced that in terms of Section 69 (1) of the Prisons Act, 1959 (No 8 of 1959), as amended the State President has granted special remission of sentence to Prisoners J D Viljoen and H G Jacobsz and that they can be released.

Likewise in terms of Section 69 (1) of the Prisons Act (Act 8 of 1959), as amended, the State President, in the spirit of goodwill which is fostered

by the coming festive season, approved that 3 (three) months amnesty be granted to all sentenced prisoners who are or will be in South African prisons on 1 December 1987 excluding certain categories such as:

- Crimes of violence (under certain conditions).
- Rape (under certain conditions).
- Robbery (under certain conditions).
- Security prisoners.
- Prisoners sentenced in terms of unrest related transgressions.
- Prisoners sentenced for refusing to testify.
- Stock theft etc.

"The complete list, due to its length is not published, and interested parties can obtain more information from the liaison office of the South African Prisons Service.

"It is expected that a considerable number of prisoners of all population groups will benefit from this over a period of time," he said. — Sapa.

Beeld believed Nelson Mandela's release could follow, as a "formula" was finally been found to solve the problem of the ANC leadership split.

But for this to happen, said the newspaper, "Mbeki and the black community will have to show that they do not intend exploiting this opportunity for the purposes of political confrontation and chaos."

Beeld hoped Mbeki and the other released prisoners would not ruin a "praiseworthy effort and thereby harm the chances of others to be released. Mbeki, they warned, "knows that the result will be" if he makes any attempt to put his "ANC or communist convictions" into practice.

At a press conference organised by the government immediately after his release last week, Mbeki was adamant he was still a member of the banned ANC and South African Communist Party.

Mbeki's captor is 'dismayed'

By RIKA van GRAAN

BRIG WILLEM "Rivonia" van Wyk, the policeman who led the raid on the African National Congress high command at Rivonia when Govan Mbeki was arrested in July 1963, expressed his dismay about Mbeki's release yesterday.

Brig Van Wyk, who retired from the police three years ago, yesterday recalled in detail the events which led to the arrest of Mbeki and his six colleagues at 3 pm on July 11 that year.

He remembers Mbeki as a tall and strongly built man who was dressed in a brown overall and a black cap when he was arrested. For some time Mbeki lived at the Rivonia house occupied by Johannesburg artist Arthur Goldreich and his wife. All members of the ANC high command lived there. The premises had 13 outbuildings in an L-shape.

At that time Mbeki was regarded the leader of the ANC in the Eastern Cape. He was also in charge of the monthly newsletter *New Age*.

Mbeki was also involved in the first attacks soon after Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed (on December 16, 1961) the ANC made public their decision to change policy



Brig WILLEM "RIVONIA" van WYK, the man who led the Rivonia raid during which Govan Mbeki and ANC leaders were arrested.

from non-violence to violence.)

Prior to the Rivonia case Mbeki served three years for bombings in the Eastern Province area, Brig Van Wyk recalled.

As a lieutenant at the old Marshall Square, Brig Van Wyk led the Rivonia raid.

"We drove to the premises in a drycleaner's van borrowed in the city. There was no partition between the driver's seat and the back.

"I realised that if someone looked through the window in the front they would see the 13 policemen packed in the back of

the vehicle. A police dog accompanied us.

"An hour before the raid we telephoned and somebody answered the telephone. We left Marshall Square and called at Rivonia police station where we got police blankets to hang a partition between the driver and the men.

"As we arrived at the gate a Black security man told us the boss was not home.

"We eventually got through and called at the house where we said we were from the drycleaners and lost our way to Sleepy Hollow.

"But in the short time we were in the house, asking the people there whether they had washing for us to do, we made our observations.

"Quickly, before any of the occupants of the house could make a move, all the men got out the back of the van and, within minutes the ANC high command, with the exception of Nelson Mandela, had been arrested."

Police took possession of radio transmitters as well as maps with targets indicated.

Most of the targets were post offices and police stations, the brigadier said.

Police also took possession of Nelson Mandela's diary and passport. He was overseas at the time, travelling on a false passport in the name of David Motsamai. Mandela was arrested later when he returned to the country.

After the raid the 11 men went on a 11 month trial at the Pretoria Palace of Justice.

The accused were sentenced exactly 11 months after their arrest on June 11, 1964.

The brigadier said last night although Mbeki is now an old man of 77, he can still be a danger to peace in our country.

Behind the scenes: global

CONSIDERABLE pressure on the main actors in the South African conflict to begin talking to each other lies behind the release of Govan Mbeki.

Both the government and the African National Congress will be hard-pressed to withstand the kind of arm-twisting apparently now being used to persuade them to go through at least the formalities of a verbal exchange — even if, in the short term, the content falls far short of any progress to a negotiated settlement.

If such an exchange does take place — as a number of usually well-informed diplomats serving in the Frontline states expect it will within the next 10 months or so — it will neither be the end of this world nor the herald of a brave new dawn.

There is a difference between an exchange of signals, talks about talks, exploratory talks and actual negotiations. And any or all of them can be spread out over a long period with few or no conclusive results.

Given the balance of forces in the

country and the region at the moment, the release of Mbeki et al — and the strong likelihood that others will follow sooner rather than later — is an ambiguous victory for the ANC.

No doubt the outlawed movement is correct in saying it was domestic and international anti-apartheid pressure which made the release necessary. Notably, it was the kind of pressure that came eventually to include Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

But, equally certainly, the South African government appears to believe the release is one of perhaps a number of tactical retreats it can afford to make.

It is not difficult to understand the Pretoria government's reasoning.

It clearly believes that over the past 17 months of Emergency rule it has

The talk among diplomats in the Frontline states is of enormous arm-twisting of both ANC and Pretoria by world leaders, pressuring both sides towards the negotiating table. The Mbeki release is considered a part of this. By HOWARD BARRELL in Harare.

struck quite hard blows against some sections of the ANC's internal underground, seriously debilitated legal mass anti-apartheid organisations, plugged up many of Umkhonto we Sizwe's infiltration routes through neighbouring states, and made it nearly impossible, in the short term at least, for any neighbouring state to play a significant support role in the struggle against apartheid.

The more insightful of Pretoria's own analysts and friends in the West

over the next 10 months, this fact will not rule out attempts to cobble together some sort of "conservative consensus" who lack component would be the National Statutory Council or some more credible version of it.

On the contrary, talks with the ANC would make more compelling the need that the government build up an institution like the NSC. Ian Smith needs his Abel Muzorewa and Jeremiah Chirau. As President Botha might be said to have the same need.

Among other things, having a reasonably viable alternative would strengthen the government's hand in pushing for a round table design for any future talks or negotiations. The government could introduce to such a conference a number of supposedly

pressure on both sides

autonomous black parties which would owe their presence there almost entirely to government political largesse.

The release of Mbeki — and the likelihood that Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu will follow — also has precisely the effect of clearing away an important obstacle between Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi (together with others like him) and participation in the NSC or some variant of it.

For this and related reasons, the release of political prisoners could strengthen the government's hand in going for conservative consensus which includes selected blacks. It could result in the South African version of the Rhodesian "internal settlement".

The ANC and its allies face a critical

challenge: to take full advantage of the situation that could soon arise.

For the ANC and its allies the future is complex and difficult. If not formally, then at least in a factual sense, the ANC could soon find itself unbanned.

There is nothing intrinsically dangerous in this for the ANC. Any outlawed revolutionary movement must always fight for an open mass presence. The point is regarded as almost universally applicable in revolutionary theory.

But this could place the ANC in some difficulties about whether or not it then gives up its armed struggle. It will require extraordinary political will and organisational sophistication in the ANC and its allies to avoid what they would probably describe as

In addition, it is well known that the



Ian Smith

ANC's vision of negotiations with the government — if they come — is of the ANC heading a broad front of political, trade union and other anti-apartheid forces.

This front — the ANC would hope

continue here at the bottom

— would sit across a "two-sided table" from the government and its allies. The ANC would make attempts to introduce into the talks a multi-party or round-table design which would introduce a plethora of small and supposedly autonomous parties which it would regard as irrelevant to the central conflict.

And, of course, the ANC has undertaken on several occasions in the past not to enter into serious talks with the government. So negotiations would be a requirement of the ANC.

A realisation of the difficulties which could lie ahead probably the reason for the ANC's response to Mbeki's release: that the ANC will not in any way restrain itself following this release.

On the contrary, it has been sounding off in the Frontline states since Thursday last week that it believes it is necessary to escalate its offensive, primarily inside the courtroom.

DOUBT THAT THIS IS A TEST RUN BEFORE THE BIG ONE: FREEING MANDELA

Walter Sisulu, 75, a former secretary general of the ANC, is tipped as the next ANC man to be freed — the *de facto* lifting of the ban will become more apparent.

But although the ban may be revoked, *de facto* or *de jure*, the State of Emergency is likely to be left intact. That will place the ANC in the same position as the legal, though severely harassed, United Democratic Front. The two opposition forces share a broadly common ideological approach.

The national State of Emergency, declared in June 1986 and renewed a year later, was imposed to contain an attempt by the ANC to fan the township revolt of 1984-1986 into a full-scale people's war or popular insurrection. Thus one government objective in the present situation, is to wean the ANC of its long-standing commitment to "armed struggle". Conversely, it hopes to lure the ANC, or sections of it, into participation in approved structures, including the national council.

Stoffel van der Merwe, the man Botha has entrusted with a mandate to give impetus to internal negotiations with black leaders, has argued that there is no justification for the ANC's guerrilla war today. Whatever rea-



PW
Botha

sons the ANC may have had originally for its decision to revert to guerrilla war, these no longer hold, Van der Merwe argued in parliament. His speech might be construed as a bid to persuade the ANC to abandon its hope of winning power through revolutionary war. Another, concomitant government aim might be to split the ANC into external and internal wings, a variant of Botha's earlier attempt to separate ANC nationalists from communists.

The unfolding situation will, of course, present the ANC with difficult decisions. To function as a semi-

legal movement in the minuscule areas of political freedom left by the Emergency restrictions is hardly an attractive proposition.

At the time of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons peace mission to South Africa in 1986, the ANC was prepared to suspend its guerrilla campaign while negotiating with Botha — on condition that troops and police were removed from the townships. Botha, however, is not offering to negotiate with the ANC now, still less to withdraw security forces from the townships. His lieutenants are merely hinting that he may be prepared to allow released ANC leaders a degree of freedom.

Botha has not extracted a formal renunciation of violence from Mbeki. But the ANC leader's release is clearly based on a tacit undertaking that he will not try to mobilise mass demonstrations against the system, let alone plan violent actions. Mbeki has indeed been restrained, cautious and conciliatory in his remarks.

But for the ANC *per se* armed struggle remains a major bargaining card even if, as some observers have argued, the government is stronger on the military terrain than it is in the political arena. The ANC is hardly likely to throw it away until it is in a

much stronger position.

Summing up the ANC's position on armed struggle, the Commonwealth's Eminent Persons said in their report: "For the ANC to renounce violence now would be to reduce itself to a state of helplessness. There must first be sufficient indications of the South African government's readiness to negotiate the transition to non-racial sovereignty." The ANC position has not changed.

After the Emergency was renewed in June the UDF Natal president, Archie Gumede, mooted the possibility of participation by the UDF in existing political institutions as a way of mounting pressure on the government and of breaking the logjam. He was promptly repudiated by UDF. There is no evidence that the ANC will react differently to a similar proposal from its ranks.

If the government further raises the cost of hosting ANC guerrillas for neighbouring states, then these states may try to coax the ANC into opting for a political solution. Short of that possibility, however, the ANC is unlikely to forgo its guerrilla war, although it may tread warily in the immediate future for fear of jeopardising the release of Mandela and his comrades.

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Firstly, because it does not believe the South African government has had a change of heart and is yet ready to negotiate seriously over the key issue — the transfer of political power to the majority.

Secondly, because the ANC cannot, viewed from its perspective, allow foreign states to define the content or tactical compromises of its struggle.

And, thirdly, because inside the country is where it believes its stronger contingent lies.

Quite how acute the ANC's understanding is of the complications developing at this juncture is unclear.

But the more serious people in its ranks have ditched the unrealistic triumphalism which has lingered elsewhere for far longer than is justified by the really quite limited gains it made in the two years after September 1984.

These more serious ANC members appear to realise there is little in the way of immediate or significant ground that is likely to be won at the negotiating table beyond the trenches the ANC and its allies occupy on the political-military battlefield.

It is a thought which should sober up anybody in the ranks of the ANC. If it does not, the ANC could soon find itself in very serious trouble at a time when, for it, the stakes can never have been said to be higher.

FOR ALL PW'S CHIDING, THERE'S LITTLE

THE freeing after nearly a quarter of a century of the veteran African National Congress prisoner, Govan Mbeki, has put the release of his world renowned comrade, Nelson Mandela, firmly back on the agenda. The question now is not so much whether but when the charismatic Mandela will be freed.

Only one factor can delay the emergence from jail of Mandela in the next few months: an upsurge in the now quiescent revolt in South Africa's black townships, triggered by the return to political life of Mbeki. So far, however, there is every evidence that Mbeki, 77, and the black leaders shepherding him into life outside prison, will not do anything to jeopardise the freedom of Mandela and the five ANC prisoners who were jailed for life with him at the Rivonia trial of 1964.

President PW Botha has chided the press for speculating on when the next wave of political prisoners will follow Mbeki, charging that premature conjecture is irresponsible. But his own cabinet ministers have confirmed, with a proviso or two, that the release of Mbeki is both a trial run for the release of further political prisoners and the first move in a wider game plan.

The first and immediate aim is to re-initiate the stalled move to establish a national council. Devised as a forum where leaders of all races can draft a new constitution for all South Africans, the council has so far failed to win endorsement from a single credible black leader. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the 1.5-million strong Zulu-based Inkatha movement, has set the liberation of Mandela and the leader of the rival Pan Africanist Congress, Zeph Mothopeng, as a pre-condition for his participation.

Anxious to persuade Buthelezi to serve on the council, the government has started to move toward fulfilling his condition. But it is doing so cautiously, testing the reaction of South Africa's black and white communities to the release of lesser known prison-

ers before freeing Mandela. It is Govan Mbeki who got his freedom, but the real invitation is to Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who made the release of political prisoners a pre-condition to joining the government's national council. PATRICK LAURENCE reports

ers before freeing Mandela.

The government has a second, associated motive: to "demythologise" the ANC and its leaders. The ANC has been outlawed since 1960. Many of its major leaders, including the original "high command" of its underground army, Umkhonto weSizwe, have been in jail or exile since 1964. The rest have been in exile.

Over the years, however, the public has not forgotten either the ANC or its imprisoned leaders. Instead, the ANC leadership has grown in stature and become shrouded in a status-enhancing mystique. The government now wants to reverse the process. In a revealing choice of phrase, the pro-government Afrikaans newspaper, *Beeld*, said in an editorial on Mbeki's release: "The Mbeki myth has suddenly become a human who, like all citizens, must be law-abiding and thus peaceful."

De-mystification infers two developments: the re-emergence of the incarcerated ANC leaders into public life where they can make mistakes and, as a logical corollary, the unbanning of the ANC. The ban on the ANC seems to have been partially lifted, in practice if not in a strict legal sense, in Mbeki's case.

He has made no bones about his commitment to the ANC and to its "revolutionary ally", the South African Communist Party. But he has not been prevented from speaking on their behalf, although the restriction prohibiting the press from publishing his remarks is still in force. When Mbeki is joined by his colleagues —

We've only had pain from Mbeki release, says Vlok ...

Weekly Mail Reporter

THE chances of Nelson Mandela, the jailed leader of the African National Congress, being released from Pollsmoor Prison near Cape Town in the foreseeable future are negligible.

In spite of some speculation after the release of former ANC national chairman Govan Mbeki, 77, last month, that Mandela would be the next to be freed, possibly before Christmas, senior South African police officers have made it clear that this is not going to happen soon.

The security police are not happy with the way in which Mbeki has acted since his release — and this could even lead to him being banned. He is already listed as a communist and cannot be quoted in South Africa.

Mbeki's activities are being monitored closely by the police. Although neither the Minister of Law and Order, Adrian Vlok, nor the head of the security police, Lieutenant-General Johannes van der Merwe, would be drawn on whether his behaviour would affect the chances of other political prisoners, it is clear his actions are influencing government decisions about whether to release more ANC leaders.

Van der Merwe said Mbeki's activities were being manipulated by the ANC and everything he had done was at the orders of the ANC.

And Vlok said the government had not got its pound of flesh, and had only received pain, with the release of Mbeki.

Vlok, who like Van der Merwe, was speaking at a briefing to South African political correspondents at Walvis Bay said: "We had hoped that Mr Mbeki, who is suffering from sugar diabetes, would quietly retire.



Govan Mbeki: under watch

But this has not happened. He is being misused by people around him for political purposes."

Van der Merwe said the rally, which was to have been addressed by Mbeki in Port Elizabeth last weekend, had been prohibited because it would contribute to the raising of the revolutionary climate in South Africa.

Asked if the government feared the Mbeki rally would lead to an outbreak of violence, he replied: "It may create or promote a revolutionary climate."

But he conceded in reply to another question that the banning of the rally could lead to frustration.

"There are certainly disadvantages but we have to decide which is the greatest disadvantage."

Van der Merwe added: "Everything

Mbeki does is at the command of the ANC."

Moreover, senior government representatives have said they are worried about the high profile Mbeki had received since his release and widespread negative reaction from whites, as had been reflected in mail received objecting to his release.

It is argued that Mbeki is being used as part of a subtle ANC strategy to give maximum publicity to the ANC while not overstepping the law.

Whatever the accuracy of the police view of events since Mbeki had been released, Vlok and Van der Merwe left no doubt that the release of Mandela was not on the cards.

They also argued that "legal, radical groups" such as the United Democratic Front, its affiliates, the Congress of South African Trade Unions and some trade unions were deliberately trying to increase the revolutionary climate in South Africa at present. Vlok said a thousand new organisations had been established for this purpose.

As they believe Mbeki is part of this strategy, under orders from the ANC.

The *Cape Times* commented in an editorial this week: "It seems plain that the release of Mr Nelson Mandela is not on the cards ... A decision to release Mr Mandela is a decision to talk to the ANC, allowing them to play an open role in politics."

And talking to the ANC has emphatically been ruled out by Vlok and Van der Merwe. Indeed, the police are still convinced they will be able to defeat the ANC militarily.

The possibility of Mandela being freed in these circumstances is very remote.

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By **KHULU SIBIYA**

IN an unprecedented move, especially in view of the current state of emergency in the country, the government has given permission for recently released ANC veteran Govan Mbeki to address an open-air rally in Port Elizabeth tomorrow.

This is the first time that the government has sanctioned a rally of this nature — to be addressed by a self-confessed member of the ANC — since the state of emergency was declared two years ago.

Thousands of people are expected to attend the rally at Dan Oege Stadium, Port Elizabeth, to hear Mbeki, who is a listed person and cannot be quoted in South Africa, speak for the first time in public since his release.

The rally is also the second authorised public meeting where the ANC has been officially allowed a platform since it was forced into exile in 1970.

The first took place two years ago in the Jabulani Amphitheatre, Soweto, where Zinzi Mandela delivered a message on behalf of her father, Nelson, responding to President PW Botha's proposal that he was prepared to release him from Robben Island on condition that he renounced violence.

The 77-year-old nationalist leader, who was sentenced to life imprisonment 23 years ago, will share a platform with the wives of his colleagues and former cell mates. They are Winnie Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, wives of Nelson and Walter, respectively.

Also expected to address the rally is the patron of the United Democratic Front and president of the World Council of Reformed Churches, Dr Allan Boesak.

Permission to hold the rally was granted by the local police chief, Brigadier Ernest Schnetler, and the acting magistrate for Port Elizabeth, JM Oosthuizen, on Wednesday.

However, two restrictions have been placed and these are that the rally should take place between 12pm and 4pm and that it should take place within the grounds of the stadium. People attending must travel in cars and buses, and not on foot.

Meanwhile, there has been wide speculation that the government has released Mbeki as a test case for the possible release of other political prisoners and to test whether his utterances could lead to public disturbances.

So far Mbeki has been keeping a low profile in his new home in New Brighton.

The rally is organised by the Interdenominational Ministers' Association of Southern Africa.

The organisers said in view of the state of emergency, which was presently in force, they were making a special appeal to all those who would be attending the meeting to conduct themselves in "a peaceful and dignified manner appropriate to the occasion".

"This is all the more by reason of the respect with which Mbeki is regarded in the whole country," said Hlamasa.

Mbeki rally is planned

By **MONO BADEMA**

FREED African National Congress leader Govan Mbeki is set to re-enter South African political life in Cape Town next weekend — at a rally which could be the city's biggest in four years.

The rally, organised by Cape Town's Mbeki Reception Committee, is tentatively planned for November 29.

The former ANC chairman, released on November 6, has kept a low profile, appearing in public only twice. Although he is "listed" and cannot be quoted, he can speak at public gatherings.

The contents of this newspaper have been restricted in terms of the Emergency Regulations

Mbeki speaks at rally

FREED Robben Island prisoner and former national chairman of the ANC, Mr Govan Mbeki, will speak at an open-air service in Port Elizabeth tomorrow.

The city's chief magistrate has placed certain restrictions on the certain restrictions on the service.

This will be the final rally to be addressed by Mr Mbeki since his recent release after spending 23 years in jail.

It will be held at the Dan Oege Stadium in Zwile township.

Other speakers will include Mrs Winnie Mandela, wife of the jailed ANC leader, Nelson Mandela; Mrs Albertina Sisulu, president of the United Democratic Front and wife of jailed ANC chairman, Mr Walter Sisulu and UDF patron and president of the World Council of Reformed Churches, Dr Allan Boesak.

The rally has been organised by the South African Council of Churches and the Interdenominational Ministers' Association of Southern Africa.

Thousands of people are expected to attend the service.

Mbeki banning backfires

From MARIMUTHU S. BRAMONEY

PORT ELIZABETH: — The banning of what was to have been an ANC leader Govan Mbeki's first rally since his release from life imprisonment has back-fired on the Government.

Although the authorities banned the mass rally scheduled for Zwide's Dan QeQe Stadium at the weekend, they failed to deter Govan Mbeki's commitment to the struggle for a nonracial, democratic South Africa.

Mbeki, who was released from prison only three weeks ago, has scored a major psychological victory by delivering his rally speech at a press conference attended by a large contingent of foreign journalists and a few local reporters.

Statesman

Members of the Diplomatic Corps, who waited patiently on Saturday even though the banning of the rally was upheld by an urgent sitting of the Supreme Court in Port Elizabeth, were also at the press conference.

The diplomats were later given a private briefing by the ANC leader. Details of the discussions have not been disclosed.

Sharp-witted and looking extremely fit, Mbeki was calm as he read out his rally speech. The poise, charisma and dignity of his approach resembled all the hallmarks of not only a national leader, but also that of an



Govan Mbeki at the press conference in Port Elizabeth. On the left is his daughter, Linda, and on the right is his wife, Epainette.

international statesman. The stature in which he is held was reflected by the messages of support the ANC leader received from more

than 50 governments and organisations around the world. Some of the messages were from the International Organisation of Journalists (IOJ), the

All-India Peace and Solidarity Organisation and from political parties from Europe, Canada and the United States.

Although disappointed at the banning of the rally, residents of Port Elizabeth's townships also made it clear that they held Mbeki and his fellow leaders in the "highest esteem" and that no amount of intimidation and harassment would deter them from supporting their leaders. One young man, who said his name was Kava, had his own assessment of why the authorities banned the rally.

"As far as I am concerned the Government was afraid that if more than 100 000 people attended the rally it would have been a solid show of support for Mbeki and the ANC. The authorities had cold feet at the last moment," he said.

Support

Another young man, Jabu Ngwenya, said local residents had been looking forward to welcoming Mbeki home and listening to his views.

"Although we are disappointed we have been unable to listen to Mbeki we are certain that he will lead us in the future," he said.

There is speculation that Mbeki's first public rally was banned because the government had realised it would have clearly demonstrated to South Africans and the world the support leaders such as Mbeki and the ANC enjoy. According to some observers the government was afraid that the attendance at the rally would have been similar to those in Zimbabwe in 1980 when Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo drew thousands to their public meetings.

— Press Trust News Agency

SOUTH Dec 2-9

Not deterred by Mbeki ban



Govan Mbeki

GOVAN MBEKI is expected to speak in Cape Town on December 13.

The Mbeki Reception Committee has decided to go ahead with their plan for a big Cape Town rally to be addressed by the veteran African National Congress leader recently released from Robben Island after 23 years.

This follows the banning by police of a rally in Port Elizabeth last weekend, days after the meeting had been sanctioned by PE's Chief Magistrate.

The MRC this week asked the Chief Magistrate of Wynberg and the Western Cape Divisional Commissioner of Police for permission for Mbeki to address the rally.

Athlone offices raided

"We want to prevent a repeat of the situation in Port Elizabeth," said United Democratic Front publicity secretary Hilda Ndude.

The results of the application are expected within days. Mbeki is expected to thank the people for their support over all the years.

"We want to have an open air rally so that as many people as possible can attend," Ndude said.

The offices of the Mbeki Reception Committee in Athlone were raided by security police this week. Documents, posters and pamphlets were confiscated, according to a committee spokesperson.

At the time of going to press, the police had not responded to a request for comment.

Rally is banned

THOUSANDS of disappointed people were turned back in Zwide township, Port Elizabeth, when a rally to be addressed by recently freed ANC veteran, Mr Govan Mbeki, was banned by the authorities on Saturday.

Even an 11th-hour application challenging a police ban on the rally was rejected by a Port Elizabeth judge, Mr Justice Jones.

The rally which was to be held at the Dan Qeqe Stadium, was banned late on Friday by the Divisional Commissioner of Police, Brigadier Ernest Seemiller, in

terms of the emergency regulations.

The police clamp on the rally came shortly after permission had been granted by the Chief Magistrate of Port Elizabeth, Mr J Oosthuizen.

The meeting would have been the first to be addressed by Mr Mbeki since his release from Robben Island after 23 years in prison.

There was confusion in the township as people were turned away from the stadium by the police. Hundreds of others milled around the stadium hoping that the meeting would take place.

... but Mbeki himself hurt by restrictions

GOVAN MBEKI was released a month ago — but his public activities have been so restricted that he has spoken more freely to journalists than to people in South Africa's townships.

This is understood to be a source of great disappointment to the resistance veteran, qualifying his happiness at being released.

From the time of his initial press conference — tightly controlled by the Bureau for Information — Mbeki's political role has been severely curtailed. Of four public appearances, three have been press conferences, themselves restricted by his "listing" order.

Many believed the rally scheduled to take place in Port Elizabeth last weekend would see Mbeki setting out the parameters of his political role nationally, and in the Eastern Cape. The gathering was organised by the Inter-denominational African Minister's

By MBULELO LINDA and RICHARD BARTLETT, Port Elizabeth

Association of South Africa (Idamasa).

But an eleventh-hour banning ruled this out, once again forcing the ANC leader to address a small group of journalists.

Before he shared his thoughts with the media, more than 500 disappointed admirers had milled around Dan Qeqe stadium in the vain hope that the ban on the rally would be overturned.

Entry to the stadium was barred early on Saturday morning — people began gathering at 10am — as "greenflies" (municipal police), SA Defence Force troops and *kitskonstabels* kept a close watch. There was a security force presence at the entrances to all Port Elizabeth townships, and several busloads of people on their way to the rally were turned

back. Some buses had come from as far afield as Ciskei.

A tense crowd waited until 4pm, watched by marshalls and traffic police lining Zwide's Johnson Road, parallel to the stadium.

Although the crowd was reprimanded by police after posing with clenched fists for photographers, there were no serious incidents.

Half an hour after the crowd finally dispersed, Mbeki addressed journalists at Port Elizabeth's Elizabeth Sun Hotel. In terms of his listing under the Internal Security Act, Mbeki may not be directly quoted.

However, he expressed regret that his colleagues were still imprisoned. Apartheid had to disappear before all the people of South Africa could be free.

The banning of the rally prevented whites and blacks from coming together in the search for freedom.