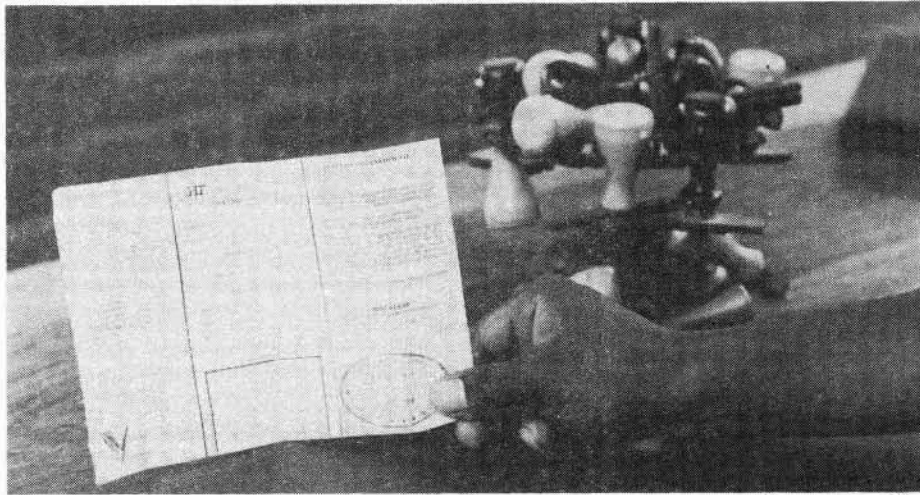


THE ABOLITION OF INFLUX CONTROL: WHAT NOW?



Picture by Joe Alfors

One of the most important pieces of legislation ever passed by Parliament was the Abolition of Influx Control Act, 1986. In one fell swoop the immense legislative apparatus governing the entry of Blacks into urban areas, their presence and employment therein and their removal therefrom was removed from the Statute Book, thereby heralding a new era regarding the presence of Blacks in urban concentrations. However, fears have been expressed that other forms of legislative control (like e.g. the laws on squatting, on slums, on trespassing etc.) will now be employed to achieve in essence the same kind of control over the movement and residence of Blacks; and that as far as citizens of the TBVC countries are concerned nothing has in fact changed.

In this article I shall contend that the "abolition of influx control" by the above-mentioned Act goes far beyond merely affecting "influx control" in its conventional meaning, and constitutes in fact a part-manifestation of a fundamental change, or reversal, in overall policy vis-a-vis Blacks which has been taking place over the last approximately eight years.

In order to justify such a profound statement, I shall have to deal with the general background of the policy followed in regard to Blacks over the last 65-70 years.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The imposition of White control over Black communities – very often after protracted military conflicts – placed Blacks in an inferior political position within the constitutional framework of the country. Except to some extent in the Cape Colony, they were subjected to a large number of restraints and restrictions, in the areas of political rights, settlement, freedom of move-

ment, employment, rights to land etc. This was especially the case with the movement of Blacks into the urban areas as these arose as a result of the economic development in the Country. This policy was pursued for the best part of 70 years after the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910; only since 1978 have we seen a fundamental change in direction.

It is obviously impossible to describe in this article the plethora of laws and regulations that came into force in those 70 years to control the movement, settlement, employment, residence, political rights, etc. of Blacks.

The report of the Stallard Commission in 1922 led directly to the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, which introduced the first country-wide control over the movement of Blacks into and their residence and employment in urban areas. Even before this time there were three other measures which had profound implications for the future development of the country and of government policy, viz. The Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, the Mines and Works Act of 1911 and the Natives Land Act of 1913. The first-mentioned two Acts provided for the recruitment of Blacks for employment particularly on the mines and also restricted their access to skilled categories of employment in the mining industry.

The Act of 1913 (giving legislative content to the policy followed before 1910) created the so-called (Native) Reserves for the exclusive occupation of Blacks, and prohibited Blacks from obtaining any rights to land outside these areas (and non-Blacks from acquiring any rights to land within these areas). In 1936 another 7.25 morgen of land (to be bought by the SA Development Trust) were added to this, giving a total of approx. 18 million morgen, or roughly 13% of the area of the then existing South Africa, thus set aside for the ex-

clusive use of Blacks. It took almost fifty years before the Act was fully implemented.

The setting aside of this land had tremendous politically-ideological implications. It gave rise to the concept of two separate South Africas: a "White" South Africa, in which the interests, rights and privileges of the Whites would reign supreme, with the Blacks in a subsidiary position and tolerated mainly as temporary "sojourners", particularly in the urban complexes; and a "Black" South Africa where Black interests were supposed to be regarded as paramount, and in which Black political and economic development was to take place. With the rejection by the Verwoerd-government of the main recommendations of the Tomlinson commission, very little economic development took place (the Government has since tried to remedy this by means of its decentralization policy); politically, the policy resulted in the creation of the four "independent" TBVC countries and of another six so-called "national states", with a large degree of governmental autonomy. The theory underlying the apartheid-policy was that Black political aspirations must be satisfied in and through these separate Black "homelands", and that it was consequently justified to deny them political rights in "White" South Africa. In terms of this policy it was therefore perfectly understandable that when these four "independent" states were created, Black South Africans who by definition were regarded as citizens of those countries were automatically deprived of their South African citizenship. It was stated categorically that the policy was to lead to a situation where there would, finally, be no Black South African citizens. The increasing ideological emphasis placed on the concept of territorial and political separation brought in its wake the compulsory removal of millions of Blacks from so-called "Black spots" to the "Black" areas (sanctioned and enforced by Parliamentary decree and legal provisions as in section 5 of the Black Administration Act of 1927); and steps, at great cost to the taxpayer and in terms of human misery, to effect "consolidation" of the various "homelands" so as to lay the territorial foundations for eventual "independence" of each of these. The failure of this policy, as far as its end-objective is concerned, was admitted (grudgingly at first) when it became evident that effective "consolidation" would be beyond the financial means of the country and when most of the remaining homeland-governments made it clear that they will under no circumstances consider opting for independence.

In the meantime one law after another was passed to stem the flow of Blacks to the "White" urban areas, to effect control over their residence and employment in such areas and to restrict their rights and opportunities therein (bearing in mind that the Acts of 1913 and 1936, referred to above, were not applicable in urban areas). The Act of 1923 was followed, amongst others, by measures such as the Pass Proclamation of 1934 (compelling Blacks in Transvaal and the O.F.S. to carry passes), Act No. 46 of 1937 (prohibiting Blacks from acquiring ownership rights in urban areas, and providing for the compulsory removal of Blacks who had been introduced into urban areas contrary to law and of those who were "redundant") and the Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945, which consolidated the then existing legislation affecting Blacks in urban

areas, and which (amended from time to time) was destined to remain the main instrument of control for the next more than 40 years. With the implementation of Verwoerdian apartheid, the policy regarding Blacks in urban areas mirrored the concept of territorial and political separation. All conceivable legislative and administrative steps were taken to prevent, or at least restrict as much as was possible, the influx of particularly Black families into urban areas; their business and trading opportunities in these areas were severely curtailed; also property and occupancy rights; the provision of housing for families fell far behind the minimum required (especially in the Western Cape, which was regarded by the Government as a "White-Coloured preference area"); it was stated policy that institutions catering for Blacks should as far as possible be situated in the homelands (e.g. universities, high schools, old age institutions etc.); until the beginning of the 80's the granting of effective municipal rights to Blacks in their own townships was avoided (as the granting of such rights was interpreted as being contrary to the temporary nature of their residence there); all Blacks, except those exempted in terms of section 10(1) (a), (b) or (c) of (the now repealed) Act 25 of 1945, had to have a permit if they wanted to stay in an urban area for longer than 72 hours; no such Black could enter into an employment contract, and no employer could employ such Black, without official authorisation; Blacks were debarred from doing certain kinds of work; no person could introduce a Black into an urban area without permission; the main instrument of control was the so-called reference book (issued in terms of the Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act (sic!)), which contained all the references regarding the holder's right to be in the urban area, to be employed by his employer etc. and which had to be produced on demand (non-production being a criminal offence); provision existed for the forcible removal of Blacks who were convicted of being unlawfully in an urban area or who were regarded as "idle" or "disorderly"; the Prohibition of Interdicts Act made it impossible for a Black to ask for an interdict to stay the execution of a removal order, even if such order was unlawful. Over the years, literally millions of Blacks were convicted and jailed in terms of the legislation. A huge and separate administrative apparatus, in the form of the Development (Administration) Boards, aided by the Police and the State Department handling Black Affairs, was created to give effect to the policy.

In the labour field, Blacks were debarred from participating in the recognized trade union structure and from using the ordinary industrial relations machinery, as they were excluded from the definition of "employee". Instead a separate system of work committees and regional committees was set up for Black workers.

Despite all the efforts, all the laws, all the officials, all the prosecutions and convictions, the policy proved a dismal failure. The urban Black population increased by leaps and bounds, as a result of economic push and pull factors. The economic interdependence of Black and non-Black became more and more pronounced as time went on. The inhumanity and unreality of the system became more and more pronounced. Political opposition by Blacks, often taking the form of violent reaction and rejection, became an almost common-

place occurrence in South African life. International condemnation mounted. It became obvious that the policy, and the ideological foundations which gave rise to it, were no longer tenable or practicable. The rational voices calling for the acceptance of the inevitability of Black urbanisation became overpowering and irresistible.

The fundamental question was: would the political authorities, the National Party Government in power, have the insight, the courage, the guts to reject a policy which for decades had been the basis of their approach in White-Black relations, which they have exploited successfully for such a long time for party-political purposes and which had kept them comfortably and indisputably in power for more than 30 years? Would they be prepared even to consider a turn-about, a reversal of concepts and principles which had assumed the character of holy cows amongst the electoral masses which had supported them through all these years? Where and when in the history of the modern western world had a government, a political party, secure in its position, ever considered a complete volte face in terms of fundamental principles and concepts? And if it were to, what was the price it would have to pay?

Despite the many differences I still have with the Government of Mr P.W. Botha, despite the many shortcomings I perceive in their present approach to the future political dispensation in this my beloved land, despite my basic rejection of some of the principles which, at the moment, are regarded as non-negotiable by him and his Government, I cannot close my eyes to the changes effected by this Government over the last seven to eight years.

FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES

I cannot in this analysis deal with all the changes that have come about in Government policy over the last decade; I shall refer only to those which I believe have some bearing on the substance of this article. (That many more changes have to come about is self-evident, if South Africa is to have peace and stability; a new political dispensation, and the repeal of the Group Areas Act, the Population Registration Act and the Separate Amenities Act are some of those which come to mind.)

The Wiehahn and Riekert reports paved the way for some of the fundamental changes which were brought about in these last few years. In terms of amendments to the Labour Relations Act in 1979, all forms of discrimination between Black and non-Black workers were eliminated in the field of labour; and the job reservation provisions under the previous legislation were repealed (as a matter of fact, today there is only one form of "job reservation" over, the one i.r.o. mines and works; the Government has indicated that it wants to repeal also this provision, the inhibiting factor being the strong opposition experienced from the White Mineworkers Union).

This was followed in 1978 by changes in the Urban Areas Act to allow for the introduction of a 99-year leasehold system for Blacks in urban areas, thereby finally admitting the permanence of the urban Black population. This was further emphasized by a White

Paper on Urbanization brought out in 1986 in which it was clearly stated that the Government accepts the inevitability of Black urbanisation, and which set a new urbanisation strategy. The White paper also enumerated the various legislative measures that the Government intends to have repealed to give effect to this strategy; this was in fact done in the Abolition of Influx Control Act passed by Parliament this year (discussed in more detail below).

As I indicated earlier, it would, to my mind, be a mistake to see the Abolition of Influx Control Act, important as it is, in isolation; its significance and impact must be seen against the background of the important changes in Government policy that have come about over the last few years, some of them only this year. Of these I wish to draw the attention to the following:

1. The administration of Black Affairs in the so-called White area (excluding Black Education and Land Matters) has been transferred to the Dept. of Constitutional Development and Planning; in other words, to a new Minister and a different corps of public officials.
2. In 1982 provision was made for the granting of extensive municipal powers and functions to Blacks in urban areas in the Black Local Authorities Act, further improved by amending legislation in 1986. (The fact that in some communities these bodies have proved to be unacceptable does not detract from the principle that legal provision for their creation symbolises the nature of the fundamental change in government policy).
3. The Government has stated categorically that it will no longer pursue a policy of forced removals. (see hereafter).
4. Restrictions on Black business undertakings in Black townships have been removed. In most urban areas the central business districts have now been declared open to all races.
5. The Government has stated clearly that it accepts that the political aspirations of Black South Africans cannot adequately be met through the existing political channels in the national states and the TBVC countries and that a new constitution for South Africa has to be negotiated, such constitution providing for participation of all population groups in the country. It has thereby acknowledged that the present constitution as contained in the RSA Constitution Act of 1983 and providing for the tricameral Parliament is inadequate and cannot be maintained in its present form. Despite various attempts made in the past, the Government has, however, not succeeded in getting a sufficient number of credible Blacks to involve themselves in such a process of negotiation with the Government. Time will show whether its latest attempt, the proposed statutory National Council (the draft Bill was published for comment some time ago) will fare any better. There seems to be a strong assumption that, apart from other steps which the Government should take, the release of Mr Nelson Mandela is a prerequisite.

It cannot, however, be disputed that this acknowledgement by the Government and its willingness to negotiate a new constitution (and not create one unilaterally as happened in the case of the present Constitution) represent a marked deviation of policy.

The Government has also stated clearly that, although it will not compel any of the national states to take independence, it is still committed to the ideal.

6. In line with promises made by the State President, the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act, 1986, provided for the restoration of South African citizenship to those Blacks permanently resident in South Africa who lost their SA citizenship when the TBVC countries became independent. In this way about 1 750 000 Blacks will regain their SA citizenship.

The Official Opposition strongly urged the Government to extend SA citizenship also to those Blacks living permanently in the TBVC countries, thereby creating a dual citizenship in respect of them (as is the case with "citizens" of the national states). It has become apparent that in the light of the repeal of other legislation (as e.g. the various influx control laws) it will be impossible to treat those people as "aliens". As the situation stands at the moment, these TBVC citizens will be subject to forms of control that have now, in fact, been repealed in respect of South African Blacks. The imposition of such control, I believe, will be unworkable and impractical.

It is understood that discussions with the Governments of those four states are being held to resolve this issue.

However, there can be no doubt that the restoration of citizenship as described above constitutes a major reversal of policy.

And disappointing as it may be that the TBVC citizens are at this stage to be treated as "aliens", this cannot detract from the fact that for millions of Black South Africans the repeal of these laws has brought freedoms and rights that they have not experienced in all their lifetime.

7. Important also are the changes reflected in the Identification Act, 1986. This Act provides for the issue of a uniform identity document to all South Africans irrespective of race or colour; it repeals the Blacks (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act of 1952 (which I referred to earlier) and thereby abolishes the Reference Book system which, as I indicated above, was the main instrument of control over Blacks. It is also interesting that, although in the Population Register people will still be classified according to the various racial/ethnic categories as set out in the relevant Act, the new identity document will carry no reference to the individual's race or colour.

9. A significant departure from past policy is also contained in the Black Communities Development Act, 1986. The Act provides for the acquisition by Blacks of freehold (ownership) rights in Black townships (in addition to the 99-year leasehold system mentioned above), for the conversion of a 99-year leasehold to freehold, for the creation of so-called development areas and for the granting of ownership rights in such areas i.a. to township developers and to employers (for disposal to or occupation by Blacks in their employ), and to the transfer of property owned by the (now defunct) Development Boards to the Black Local Authorities established within their areas (thereby making such Local Authorities major landowners and providing them with a rational tax base). This is obviously

one of the steps taken by the Government in the implementation of its urbanisation strategy.

10. In terms of Proclamations issued under the Group Areas Act restrictions were imposed on the employment of people in certain categories of employment (e.g. managers) if such people were to be members of a group different to the group for which the group area had been proclaimed. These Proclamations have been repealed.

11. The Abolition of Development Bodies Act, 1986, provides for the abolition of, amongst others, the Development Boards (previously known as the Administration Boards). These bodies have been the main instruments for the application of the various influx control laws and other measures controlling the lives of Blacks in urban and peri-urban areas. With the abolition of the influx control laws and other legislation controlling the lives of Blacks in urban areas, these bodies (most of them intensely disliked by many Blacks) have in fact become redundant.

THE ABOLITION OF INFLUX CONTROL ACT 1986

The following are the most important provisions and implications of the Act:

1. By repealing most of the provisions of section 5 of the Black Administration Act of 1927, it has removed the statutory power of the Government to effect the forcible removal of Black communities and individuals (i.e. outside urban areas). It thus provides tangible evidence of the Government's stated intention to cease forcible removals. (Whether it has not, or will not, on occasion use other methods to achieve such removal is another matter; but the legislative machinery it used in the past is now no longer available.)

2. It repeals Chapter 4 of the Development Trust and Land Act 1936, thereby effectively ending control over the residence and employment of Blacks on White farms.

3. It repeals the entire Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act 1945 (or what was left of it). As indicated above, this Act has been the principal instrument for the control of Blacks in urban areas and contained the provisions relating to "influx control", but in actual fact went much wider than merely influx control. The following are some of the implications of the repeal:

(a) It removes the legislative distinction between those Blacks who had section 10 rights (and who were consequently "exempted" from some of the more onerous control provisions of the Act) and other Blacks who were not so exempted; in essence the division amounted to a differentiation between those Blacks regarded as permanently urbanised (by definition) and others.

(b) The requirement that no Black person (unless he was "exempted" in terms of section 10 of the Act) may be in an urban area for more than 72 hours without official permission has been scrapped. In other words there are at the moment no legislative provisions prohibiting Blacks from coming to such areas; in this sense, Blacks now have the same freedom of movement as other persons. Consequently, the provision in the Act that Blacks who remain "unlawfully" in the urban area could be compulsorily removed, has also disappeared.

(c) The requirement that no Black (unless "exempted") could enter into employment has been removed.

(d) The requirement that no employer may employ an "unexempted" Black without official authorisation no longer applies.

(e) The prohibition on the "introduction" of Blacks into urban areas has been removed.

(f) The requirement that a Black person could at any time be required to produce proof that he is either "exempted" or has the necessary permission to be in the area or to be employed has now disappeared, inter alia because of the scrapping of the reference book system.

(g) The curfew system (providing for proclamations prohibiting Blacks from being in the urban area outside a Black township between the stated hours at night time) has been scrapped.

(h) The provisions for the forcible removal of "idle" and "disorderly" Blacks from urban areas have been removed from the statute book.

(i) Section 9 of the Act empowered the Minister to prohibit a person from running a school or other educational institution or place of entertainment or church mainly for the benefit of Blacks outside a Black township; section 9 also contained the infamous "church clause", in terms of which the Minister could forbid the attendance of Blacks at any church or other religious service outside a Black township if such attendance would constitute a "nuisance" to residents in the vicinity of those premises or in such area or if he regarded as undesirable that Blacks should be present in such numbers on such premises. These provisions have also been repealed.

(Space does not allow me to discuss in detail the full effect of the repeal of Act 25/45.)

4. The Blacks (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act, 1956, has been repealed, thereby restoring a fundamental common law right.

5. The Contributions in respect of Black Labour Act, 1972, (providing for the compulsory payment by employers of levies based upon their employment of Blacks) has been repealed.

6. Procl. R74 of 1968, containing the Black Labour Regulations, has been repealed.

7. Section 3C of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, 1951, has been repealed. Under this provision the Minister could issue a notice prohibiting employers in a specified area from introducing and employing any worker without a certificate from the relevant local authority that proper accommodation is available for such employee.

The above details give some indication of the wide ramifications flowing from the Abolition of Influx Control Act. It is obvious that they go very much further than merely abolishing the influx control provisions.

APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS RELATING TO SQUATTING, SLUMS AND TRESPASSING.

Fears have been expressed that, while it is conceded that the Abolition of Influx Control Act did repeal many of the obnoxious provisions relating to "influx control", the Government will use other measures to indirectly

achieve the same results as were achieved by means of these repealed provisions; in other words, that other measures will be utilised to prevent freedom of movement and Black urbanisation. Critics voicing these fears refer to the recommendations in the President's Council report on urbanisation, and some statements in the Government's White Paper on Urbanisation. As for example the following:

"Orderly or planned urbanisation implies the freedom of movement of all citizens and also refers to the operation of economic and social forces and the concomitant obligations. It means further that the process of urbanisation must be ordered, planned and directed by predominantly indirect forms of control, such as incentive and restrictive measures, as well as by direct measures comprising legislation and ordinances." (p. 71)

Reference is made to statements in the White Paper about restricting the availability of industrial land in the metropolitan areas, and about the need that may arise that communities may have to be moved ("In the interest of planned development, the effective management of urbanisation or in aid of an improvement in their own living conditions it will sometimes be necessary for individuals and groups to move. However, all such moves will always be negotiated with the individuals and groups concerned.") [par. 4.1.7., p. 7]

And in the explanatory memorandum which accompanied the Abolition of Influx Control Bill the following paragraph appears, referring to the Government's policy in respect of urbanisation in so far as legislation is concerned:

"(d) universal measures to combat nuisances such as disorderly squatting, slums and conditions that contain a health hazard, will, where necessary, be amended and applied more effectively."

Critics also point out that the Government has used "coercive" measures to compel people to move from Crossroads to Khayelitsha, and that in some other cases Blacks have been prosecuted for "trespassing".

One can understand that in a situation where for many decades a policy has been followed dictated by ideological considerations in total disregard of the interests and feelings of the people affected by the policy, it is extremely difficult to believe that the same people who applied that policy had come to other insights and would now display entirely new attitudes and approaches. In a situation like ours suspicion and distrust could easily become the dominant reactions and responses.

It is, indeed, easy to be cynical.

I do not share the cynicism. Having made a study of the President's Council report and the Government's White Paper, having been involved in the Standing Committee which had dealt with some of these bills, having had the opportunity to listen to Government spokesmen and the relevant senior public officials, having seen the changes in policy effected by this Government over the last number of years, I have no reason to doubt the Government's sincerity in pursuing a proper urbanisation strategy as set out in the White Paper. There are some prerequisites if such a policy is to succeed: enough land for urban settlement has to be pro-

vided and an extremely imaginative housing policy will have to be followed. I believe the Government is fully aware of this. It is the duty of responsible citizens to keep on pressurising the Government to put into practice the many constructive plans and approaches set out in the White Paper.

This is undisputably clear to me: with the passing of the Abolition of Influx Control Act and the other Acts to which I have referred in this article, we have come to the end of an era, an era that can never be re-opened again.□

Reviewed by Peter M. Stewart

PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE

Paul Malherbe, **A Scenario for Peaceful change in South Africa.**

College Tutorial Press, 1986

Julie Frederikse, **South Africa: a different kind of war,** Ravan Press, 1986.

There is a certain perversity involved in presenting a scenario for peaceful change in South Africa. To do this is to deny the extent to which political violence is a feature of South African Society. It indicates a refusal to accept the significance of the deaths that have occurred both in the struggle against apartheid and in the name of that struggle. Indeed, it could be argued that to present a scenario for peaceful change in South Africa is to have an inadequate understanding of the nature and severity of the crisis confronting this society.

While the concept of peaceful change may now be obsolete there can be no doubt that there exists within South Africa the potential for much greater violence. As Merle Lipton argues, "It is this prospect - 'too ghastly to contemplate' - that provides the incentive, indeed the moral duty, to pursue the difficult, and now often unpopular, role of nurturing the diminishing possibilities of reform and negotiated change that still remain." Given this imperative and the obvious sincerity of Malherbe, one is obliged to take cognisance of his arguments.

Malherbe lists four prerequisites for peaceful change:

- We must overcome white complacency
- We must overcome white fear of ending baasskap
- We must bring about a change of government, and
- We must secure black co-operation.

Much of the argument in his book is devoted to the justification of these prerequisites by means of a consideration of the "main actors in the drama". In essence, he sees a deadlock between the National Party government, which despite rhetoric to the contrary remains committed to 'old fashioned baasskap', and the ANC, which is only prepared to discuss the handing over of power. Malherbe's analysis leads him to the conclusion that since power is effectively in the hands of the white population the only way to break this deadlock is for the white population to vote for the PFP, thus bringing about a change of government. Given this scenario, the logic of his prerequisites for change is evident.

For most of the remainder of his short book Malherbe chastises the PFP for following the politics of protest

as opposed to attempting to establish a balance of power situation in Parliament. The PFP, he argues, should aim to gain power by securing Black co-operation and overcoming white fear. Malherbe's conception of white fear is a central theme in his book and it would appear that many of the inadequacies of the book emanate from the inadequacy of this conception. White fear is not merely an abstract paranoia of black domination. It also emanates from having too much and hence too much to lose. Furthermore, even if the PFP was to win an election, it is unlikely to gain the co-operation of either the bureaucracy or the security forces. This could only lead to the further paralysis of parliament and an escalation in violence as state structures assert their autonomy.

Malherbe's scenario is further marred by a simplistic analysis of the ANC and the UDF and a facile, and in this context unnecessary, consideration of the relative merits of capitalism and socialism.

Julie Frederikse, in stark contrast to Malherbe, attempts to document the different perceptions which have culminated in South Africa being the site of an embryonic civil war. In order to do this she has assembled a collage of interviews, photographs, songs and extracts from newspapers, posters and pamphlets, loosely arranged into five chapters. The intention is that the words and pictures will "enable readers to make sense of the emerging situation - in terms of how the people of South Africa express their own experience".

For non-South Africans Frederikse's book might indeed be fascinating. South Africans, however, will probably feel that the complexity of South African society has eluded its scissors and glue approach. It is even possible that the conception and structure of the book prevent an adequate understanding of South African society from emerging. Nowhere is the reader informed of the criteria, for the inclusion of information and much of the content functions at the level of propaganda which, by its very nature, distorts reality. Thus while one is made aware of the vastly different perceptions which one finds in south Africa, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct an image of the society itself. Frederikse has attempted to overcome this problem by including a commentary but, unfortunately, this often contributes to the distortion as it is simplistic and contains many unsubstantiated assumptions.

Finally, when considering a society which is permeated by violence and the potential for violence, it is important to remember Hannah Arendt's observation that once violence as such is glorified or justified, one leaves the realm of the political and enters that of the antipolitical. Julie Frederikse, it would seem is not always aware that **A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR** documents the end of politics in South Africa.□