international social science journal

Just issued:

Vol. XXIV, No. 4, 1972

Published quarterly by the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris.*

Single issue:	£0.60	8 F	$2
Annual subscription:	£2.10	28 F	$7

Send your subscription to: Dar es Salaam Bookshop, P.O. Box 9030, DAR ES SALAAM.

Party System, Cleavage Structure and Electoral Performance: The South African General Election of 1970

SAM C. NOLUTSHUNGU*

INTRODUCTION

This discussion is mainly concerned with the rigidities in the white South African party-system, particularly those which arise from the cleavage structure on which the system is based. It is intended to examine some of the recent occurrences in white politics in the light of development themes taken from recent studies in comparative political sociology.

This approach need not detract from the distinctiveness of the apartheid regime, or the peculiarity of the overall social context it defends. Certainly the party-system in South Africa operates in a unique context: while there is enough freedom for white parties to compete (admittedly within limited ideological bounds) the political system as a whole is authoritarian and repressive—completely excluding the majority of the population from effective political participation. The dynamics of the political system too are perverse; while in most countries the suffrage has been extended over the last half century, in South Africa it has progressively been *restricted*—by the abolition of African, Indian and Coloured (indirect) representation in parliament.[1] Comparative analysis must, however, proceed from the presumption—a defensible presumption rather than an assumption[2]—that the distinctive characteristics of South Africa (in so far as anything important follows from them which is relevant to the present themes) can be accommodated within a discussion that is based on general analytical concepts and categories. Indeed, a case can be made for the view that a comparative approach to South African politics can serve as a corrective to the idiosyncratic appraisals which often arise from emphasizing the "eccentric" character of apartheid.

The analysis focuses on the *verligte* ("enlightened")—*verkrampte* (ultra-conservative) split in the ruling National Party, the breakaway Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP)—Reconstituted National Party—and the general election of 1970.

The ideological and political convulsions in nationalist Afrikanerdom stimulated considerable discussion and speculation, especially before the election. Among the opinions expressed one that is germane to the present discussion

*Sam Nolutshungu is a Research Associate in the Department of Government, University of Manchester.

1 I am grateful to Professor D. Austin for his comments on these aspects of S.A. politics.

2. Cf. A. G. N. Flew, "The Presumption of Atheism", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (September 1972), on the importance of this distinction.

was put forward by Heribert Adam,[3] a Canadian sociologist whose work has received high acclaim from some South African sociologists.[4] Adam concluded an analysis he undertook in 1967 on white élite attitudes thus:

> It is questionable whether the notion of a cohesive Afrikanerdom will continue to have much political meaning beyond the obvious cultural characteristics of this group. In the absence of strongly felt internal or external pressures, the former unifying emotional bond among Afrikaners is certainly giving way to a diluted ethnocentrism and nationalism, to be revived periodically in election campaigns or on memorial days.

Having concluded that Afrikaner-English integration had taken place smoothly, Adam doubted whether the transformation of South Africa into a "multi-racial society of equals" could occur as smoothly but he advised, enigmatically:

> the flexibility of the South African power élite to adapt its system of dominance to changing conditions, to strengthen it economically, and to streamline it by concessions towards deracialization should not be underestimated.[5]

The aim of the present article is to formulate—formulate more than answer—one of the questions which arises from such prognostications, namely, how far, if at all, is the "flexibility" of which Adam has written reflected in the behaviour of the party-system generally and in the 1970 general election in particular.

PARTY SYSTEM AND CLEAVAGE STRUCTURE

I

The internal behaviour of the white party-system of South Africa is sufficiently comparable to that of competitive systems in the West to justify the use of concepts evolved in the study of the Western systems (to analyse white politics in South Africa) although, of course, South Africa is neither liberal nor democratic. Two aspects of party-systems observed in the West are of direct interest here. Both relate to rigidities: the general failure of party-systems to change commensurately with observed social and economic transformations, and the particular inhibition of change in some systems by the ossification of cultural cleavages. The first is that "freezing of party alternatives" of which Lipset and Rokkan have written; the second is related to the process referred to as *verzuiling*, or pluralist insulation.[6] It is contended in this article that both processes have been at work in South Africa and that they reduce the political effectiveness of élite attitude changes. Before the

3 H. Adam, "The South African Power-Elite: A Survey of Ideological Commitment," in Adam (ed.) *South Africa: Sociological Perspectives* (London, 1971).

4 Cf. D. Archibald in his reply to a comment on his own "The Afrikaners as an Emergent Minority" (*British Journal of Sociology*, 1970) wrote: "Adam's book can be highly recommended ... outstanding in an extensive and on the whole undistinguished literature." He was referring to H. Adam, *Süd Afrika: Soziologie einer Rassengesellschaft* (Frankfurt, 1969). Adam's work includes *South Africa: Sociological Perspectives* (ed.) and *Modernising Racial Domination* (London, 1971).

5 "The South African Power-Elite", op. cit., p. 100.

6 S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (London, 1971)—Introduction.

substantive and historical analysis, a brief restatement of what has been written on the two processes in the comparative literature may be helpful.

The persistence of old party alternatives can be approached at two levels of analysis—in Rokkan's language, the micro-and macro-levels.[7] The first seeks explanations in voter allegiance and preference and the second in the behaviour of party organizations and whole systems. We are concerned with the macro-level. At this level, persistence is explained mainly in terms of the organizational advantages enjoyed by established parties. Lipset and Rokkan have written:

> *the high level of organizational mobilization of most sectors of the community* had left very little leeway for a decisive breakthrough of a new party alternatives.[8] (Emphasis added.)

These advantages are thought to be closely connected with electoral factors—the electoral system itself and the advantage parties derive from having mobilized before, and in anticipation of, the extension of the suffrage. The two old parties in South Africa, the National Party and the United Party, might be said to have enjoyed this advantage since they are both legatees of the earlier National Party and South African Party created at the time of Union or soon thereafter. It is, however, more correct to regard the present parties as having come into existence well *after* the suffrage—the U.P. in the 1930s when the S.A.P. was transformed after its fusion with the N.P.; the present N.P. grew around the opponents of Fusion and was consolidated in the 1930s and 1940s. Both parties have the advantages of age, but this does not directly derive from having "got in on the ground floor".

Certainly the party-system which emerged after World War II has changed less than its environment.[9] Since 1948 it has been dominated by two parties, the N.P. and the U.P. The former has held office uninterruptedly since 1948 and, until the 1970 election, actually increased its electoral strength. New parties have not been successful, the cautiously liberal Progressive Party being unable to add to its single parliamentary seat.

The second source of rigidity—the process of pluralist insulation—has also occurred in South Africa. It is a commonplace of white politics that its dominant internal feature has always been the relationship between the two

7 S. Rokkan, *Citizens, Elections, Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Process of Development* (Oslo, 1970), Chapter 1, *passim*.

8 *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, p. 54. R. Rose and D. W. Urwin, who found it difficult to give correct statistical precision to some of the variants of the Lipset-Rokkan thesis, nevertheless agreed that party systems had changed little compared to society and economy as a whole. See their "Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems since 1945," in *Political Studies* (1970).

9 The most significant changes were the decline and disappearance of the Labour Party, the banning of the Communists, the absorption in 1951 by the N.P. of the Afrikaner Party and the splits in the U.P. resulting in the formation of the Liberal and Progressive Parties. All these developments occurred in the 1950s and were less definitive of the structure of the party system than the predominance of the N.P. and the U.P. and the failure of new parties to make any significant breakthrough. See also, G. M. Carter, *The Politics of Inequality: South Africa since 1948* (London, 1958), pp. 48-354; and J. Robertson, *Liberalism in South Africa 1958-1963* (Oxford, 1971).

segments of the white polity—the Afrikaners and English-speakers.[10] The controversies of the 1960s had a good deal to do with *verzuiling*.

Verzuiling may be defined as the insulation of sub-cultures from each other within a pluralistic society when members of the society have few cross-cleavage organizational affiliations. On each side of the frontier there is constructed a column *(zuil)* of organizations operating—in Parsonian terms—in all sub-systems at the various social levels (norms, goals and values). There is a "high membership crystallization" resulting in "most of the participants [tending to be] exposed to messages and persuasive efforts in the same general direction in all their . . . environments". *Ontzuiling* describes the opposite process by which the distinctiveness of each segment is reduced resulting in more "criss-crossing of multiple memberships in the system" and, in general, "less intolerance and distrust of citizens on the 'other' side".[11] *Verzuiling* is a particular *strategy* of nationalist parties especially rightist, extreme ones—of which the N.P. is, of course, one.

It has been suggested that a high level of *verzuiling* is incompatible with stability because of the inflexibility and the polarization it is likely to create.[12] Yet it cannot be denied that the party-system in South Africa, as it has emerged in the post-war years, has been stable. This is largely *because of*, rather than in spite of, *verzuiling*. Stability has been due largely to the integrative functions the N.P. performed in the process of *verzuiling*—a matter not uncommon in the career of extremist parties.[13] The N.P. not only mobilized Afrikaners against their "enemies" but persuaded them to abjure subversion in favour of the more temperate ways of elective politics. To a large extent also, the rigidities of *verzuiling* have been averted because the insularity is asymmetrical. The English-speaking segment is not *verzuild*, and in the last 24 years has been politically fragmented. This fragmentation reflected the lesser unity within the U.P. which, in contrast to the N.P., is ideologically and linguistically not homogeneous. Moreover, the polarizing effects of *verzuiling* within white politics have been less damaging to system survival because by far the greater part of the N.P.'s radical innovation was directed not at intra-white relations but at the relations of both white sections with the blacks.

The rigidities within the South African party-system are rooted in the rigidity of the political system as a whole. Because the system of dominance can only persist under very definite conditions, policy options are circum-

10 The development of separate English and Afrikaans institutions was in some cases an "accident" of history (e.g. the Dutch Reformed Churches) but in most cases it was the result of deliberate Afrikaner nationalist self-assertion. For an interesting, recent account of *"verzuiling"* in higher education, see David Welsh, "Some Political and Social Determinants of the Academic Environment," in H. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *Student Perspectives on South Africa* (Cape Town, 1972). See also, Carter, op. cit., pp. 218-280.

11 Lipset and Rokkan, op. cit., p. 17.

12 Cf. J. Linz, "Cleavage and Consensus in West German Politics: The Early Fifties," in Lipset and Rokkan, op. cit., p. 316. Cf. for a different emphasis: D. W. Urwin, "Social Cleavages and Political Parties in Belgium: Problems of Institutionalization," in *Political Studies* (1970).

13 Cf. John Frears, "Conflict in France: The Decline and Fall of a Stereotype", *Political Studies* (March 1972), p. 38.

scribed. This has a two-fold effect: it limits the "issue" market for new parties, while it closely defines the limits of conflict between existing parties. The overall stability of the political system is secured, not by policy innovations or adaptive change in the white party-system in favour of more conciliatory postures towards the blacks, but by repression.

II

Three parties have seats in the South African parliament: the N.P. which is predominantly an Afrikaans-supported party and the U.P. and the Progressive Party which both derive most of their support from English-speakers. The Progressive Party arose out of the departure of liberal dissenters from the U.P. in the 1950s. Both of the major parties have always sought and obtained some support across the cleavage line, but they are, in fact, based on that cleavage. Partly because its nationalism was rooted in resentment of the Afrikaners' inferior status vis-à-vis the English speakers, and partly because Afrikaners are more numerous than the English speakers, the N.P. has always been less solicitous of English speakers' support than the U.P. has been of Afrikaans votes. Although electoral expediency has always meant that it should seek areas of agreement with some of the English speakers, this consideration has always been strongly counterbalanced by ideological claims for purity. These claims reflect the apprehension of many Nationalists that preoccupation with "English" votes could only result in the under-representation of Afrikaners' material interests and the betrayal of their nationalist aspirations. In the 1930s and 1940s it was seen to be of long-term interest, as well as of immediate electoral advantage, to accord priority to "Afrikaner unity" before "white unity".[14] The issue of white unity had long been an important cause of tension in Nationalist ranks, contributing in no small measure to the factionalism of the 1930s and 1940s. The factionalism was electorally a source of weakness for the party, and it was only contained by a series of compromises among the feuding groups which, among other things, established the N.P. as the sole political agent of the movement, accepted the gradualist, parliamentarist orientation of the party leadership and emphasized the need for Afrikaner national unity and political domination as prerequisites of white unity.[15] It was also confidently expected that differential population growth would quickly secure Afrikaner political domination—provided unity could be maintained.[16] The party encouraged the creation of an Afrikaans *zuil* of business, labour, cultural and religious institutions (parallel to existing English-dominated ones), and consolidated these with existing Afrikaans organizations. By ingenious social mobilization which was both particularist ideology and grand strategy, a classic exercise in *verzuiling* was accomplished. The division of the white population was thus politically institu-

14 See D. F. Malan, *Afrikaner Volkseenheid en My Ervarings Op Die Pad Daarheen* (Cape Town, 1959), pp. 45-219. See also S. C. Nolutshungu, "Issues of the Afrikaner 'Enlightenment'," in *African Affairs* (1971).

15 M. Roberts and A. E. G. Trollip, *The South African Opposition, 1939-1945* (London, 1947) is still the best available account.

16 *Die Transvaler*, editorial of 22 November, 1944. (Dr. Verwoerd was editor at the time.)

tionalized to Afrikaner nationalist advantage. The nationalist movement was rightist, extremist and racist.

Nationalism also had an economic dimension which, considering the virtual conflation in South Africa of the (white) National and Industrial Revolutions, was appropriate. English speakers comprised the bulk of the middle and upper-middle class, while Afrikaners were mostly poor, working-class, and lower-middle class. The populist characteristics of the party and its singular determination to protect whites from black economic competition derived from these circumstances. The N.P. did not, however, become a party of labour—it is, and always was, innocent of socialism and implacably hostile to communism. And because of its racist characteristics, the N.P. attracted widespread opposition at home and abroad, a hostility which came to a head in 1960, the year of African independence, of Sharpeville, and of Macmillan's "wind of change" speech.

The intensification of African nationalist and white liberal opposition in South Africa, coupled with mounting external hostility to white minority rule, emphasized the need in the late 1950s and 1960s for a broader white solidarity, and to that degree, for the deradicalization of the N.P. if the republic was to survive. In the face of such developments, how might the cleavage structure and the party system be expected to behave? How far could *ontzuiling* be expected to proceed?

It is distinctly possible that *ontzuiling* might have one of three effects on the party-system: increase the one-party tendency, create splits in the two main parties thus favouring coalition government, or make the system more completely a two-party one by strengthening the U.P. If the first contingency was realized by the absorption of oppositional elements into the N.P. without major adjustment of N.P. policies, then it would hardly lead to flexibility and it is doubtful whether it could make the system more stable. If it was realized by material compromise then the party-system of South Africa would very nearly revert to the post-Fusion situation in the later 1930s. Then the Fusion which had occurred between the N.P. and the S.A.P., and under Hertzog and Smuts respectively, which created the U.P. was rejected by Afrikaner nationalists (and eventually by Hertzog also). Fusion failed not only because of the immediate policy issues of the day on which Nationalists took a distinctive ideological stand, but because it created fertile ground for more interest-specific aggregations and ideologically coherent oppositions like Malan's purified N.P. to develop. Moreover, a return to the rather meaningless gyrations of cliques under picturesque leaders which characterized the 1930s is clearly not what is meant by those who desire "flexibility" on the one hand, and "stability" on the other. Similar remarks can be made about the second alternative also, namely that it would be indistinguishable from the pre-1948 situation out of which the present system has emerged. A more convincing alternative government system—the third possibility—would arguably secure internal flexibility and stability in the white polity although it is not clear how this should noticeably increase the durability of the system against its external opponents beyond what the present system already achieves. Without large

scale changes in voter allegiances, and theory suggests that these do not easily occur, it is unlikely that the small Progressive Party would benefit substantially from the lowering of barriers between U.P. and N.P. supporters by *ontzuiling*. The P.P.'s race policy is too far from the consensual position. Regarding the N.P. and the U.P. themselves, it is by no means self-evident that *ontzuiling* would materially alter electoral strengths. This judgment is based on that persistence of voter allegiances which has been noted in established party-systems. Although this freezing of loyalties is due, in part, to the integration of party loyalty with other social and institutional affiliations, it may be expected to persist if these other affiliations merely diminish in relevance without dissociative social changes occurring and favouring radical alternative affiliations. In South Africa such alternatives might arise if present social and economic developments so dramatically increased differentiation among Afrikaners that conflicting group-specific interests within Afrikanerdom became more important than the awareness of common interests to preserve overall Afrikaner domination. Conceivably, this might happen if the governing élite sought to achieve economic growth by abolishing the restrictive laws which protect white from black labour.[17] A white working-class party might then be expected to arise, forcing a redefinition of white politics along class lines. There is no reason to suppose that such drastic changes will occur in the practical future, or if they do, that class consciousness among white workers will be extensive enough to fructify in an important white party of labour. And whether or not—*if* it happened—cultural cleavages would dissolve, or the party-system be transformed, is entirely a matter of speculation.

Meanwhile, a high level of *verzuiling* is being sustained at the practical level by the functions performed by the *zuil* in organizing support for the party and distributing the material advantages issuing from its electoral success. Furthermore, it provides effective access between various clusters of interests across the Afrikaans community and the party leadership at the top. It is doubtful whether the Afrikaner political élite, despite attitudinal adjustments and ideological revisions, will readily dismantle so effective a political machine. Machine politics—which has elsewhere been shown to be resilient—is, of course, an aspect of the N.P. which is often understated in the frequent emphasis upon its ideological-mobilizational characteristics.[18]

All these rigidities seriously reduce the capacity of the N.P. leadership to initiate far-reaching innovations in favour of greater white solidarity. It is, of course, very much the case that the present solidarity-in-pluralism is (below a certain level of black opposition) adequate for the continuance of the overall system of white dominance. The importance of the rigidities then lies in what

17 On the job colour bar, its importance and its origins, see H. J. Simons and R. E. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950* (Harmondsworth, 1969).

18 Cf. Roberts and Trollip, op. cit., Chapter V. The term "machine politics" is used without the particularistic connotations it has in the American context. On the general point see among others: R. E. Wolfinger, "Why Political Machines Have Not Withered Away and Other Revisionist Thoughts," *Journal of Politics* (May 1972); H. Bienen, "Political Parties and Political Machines in Africa," in M. F. Lofchie, *The State of the Nations: Constraints on Development in Independent Africa* (London, 1971); and J. C. Scott, "Corruption, Machine Politics and Political Change," in *American Political Science Review* (1969).

they suggest about the "flexibility" of the élite with regard to the larger adjustments which have universally been demanded—the dismantling of the apartheid state itself.

THE DIVISIONS IN THE NATIONAL PARTY AND THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

The issues, and the conduct, of the disputes among supporters of the N.P. in the last decade indicate the difficulty of bringing about a significant re-orientation of that party in spite of the manifest desire of some members of the élite to do so. The divisions first became apparent in the aftermath of Sharpeville, when internal and external opposition to the government greatly intensified. The question that faced Nationalists was whether the party should seek to conciliate at least some of its critics or whether it should adhere steadfastly to its apartheid policies. Most Afrikaner nationalists felt that demands for black equality with white should be resolutely resisted, and political activity in favour of such equality should be thoroughly suppressed. A few Nationalists felt that some minor concessions might be made within the framework of apartheid policy; most of these felt that the economic development of the tribal reserves and the hastening of their progress towards "self-rule" might go some way towards meeting the objections of external critics while realizing the "legitimate" aspirations of Africans. Very few Nationalists in the Cape Province felt that coloureds should be enfranchised in order to conciliate some of the government's critics or to strengthen the polity by giving the coloureds a vested interest in its defence.[19]

With the republic embattled, the ruling party had to take stock of its relations with English speakers. It could persist in seeing them as the representatives of British imperialism and allies of "British-Jewish finance", or it could seek their co-operation in consolidating the white position. Certainly, there were now greater dangers than either British imperialism or British-Jewish financial power. Besides, among the élite, a few Afrikaners were making their way into the world of "Big Business" and might be expected to have increasingly more in common with their traditional enemies. The dilemma facing the party was a familiar one: whether to emphasize the exclusive identitive aspects of party ideology or, in deference to state needs, to be more accommodating. At first, the former tendency towards exclusivism seemed to triumph. For, in the *dies irae* of 1960-61 the republican campaigns of the Afrikaner nationalists reached their climax as the Union was made a republic and taken out of the British Commonwealth.

The Boer-Briton tensions had an additional dimension. Afrikaners saw the English speakers' institutions as irredeemably liberal and therefore hostile to the emergent Afrikaner state. True enough, the English Language Press, Churches and Universities were critical of measures adopted to secure the state; and, although most English speakers were unquestionably loyal to the state, the few white liberals and even fewer communists were English speaking.

19 Cf. Van Heerden reported in *Die Burger*, April 23, 1967. Also A. Hepple, *South Africa: A Political and Economic History* (London, 1966), *passim*.

When business organizations—traditionally associated with Jews and Britons—called on the government to modify its race policies, albeit in trivial ways, this "interference" was resented and denounced by some Afrikaner leaders.[20]

Verwoerd's government also summarily dismissed the idea of enfranchising the coloureds as suggested by the Cape "Liberal Nats", and he further indicated that he saw no reason to deviate from existing policies. Yet he did introduce new policies to meet the dangers threatening the state, many of which were to form the topics in the intra-party conflict which openly erupted during Vorster's premiership. They included more intense repression of opposition to white minority rule, military preparation against the possibility of external intervention, the adoption of a more conciliatory attitude towards English speakers and the encouragement of white immigration. Verwoerd also became increasingly preoccupied with strengthening the economy. His government collaborated with business interests in defending and trying to expand South Africa's threatened external markets and, with less success, tried to gain more active business support for his policy of total economic apartheid. The immigration policy was intended to overcome the bottlenecks in industry created by job-reservation, as well as to increase the numbers of whites.

In the light of threats of sanctions and boycotts against South Africa, foreign policy gained a new urgency. By extensive propaganda abroad, the South African Government tried to reverse the tide of world hostility, and by the final two years of his ministry (1965-66) Verwoerd had come to accept the need for a more tactful approach to African states than the defiant, contemptuous one he had previously taken. Shortly before his death he received the Prime Minister of Lesotho in South Africa.[21]

Verwoerd's response to African demands within South Africa was to accelerate the implementation of his "total apartheid". He stepped up the removal of Africans and Indians to their respective tribal "homelands" and "Group Areas". In 1963, he declared one of the tribal reserves, the Transkei, to be "self-governing", and in deference to external criticism, the policy aim of the government was redescribed—it was "separate development" rather than "white mastery" which was being pursued. In practice the distinction was elusive.

Such minor adjustments as Verwoerd was constrained to initiate made the right-wing of the party restive, as became apparent when a number of rightist ideologists, including some members of parliament, decided to set up a National Council to combat Communism. Among the participants at the Council's first conference in 1964 were persons who were to feature prominently in subsequent controversies. Such were S. E. D. Brown, editor of the *South African Observer*, Jaap Marais, M.P., Prof. A. D. Pont of Pretoria

20 *S.A. Press Digest*, May 15, 1960, pp. 182 ff., *Star*, May 3, 1960.
21 See A. Vandenbosch, *South Africa and the World* (Kentucky: U.P., 1970), pp. 272 *et seq.*; S. C. Nolutshungu, "The Pan-African Policy of the Governments of South Africa, 1945-1970: An Introductory Outline", University of London Institute of Commonwealth Studies, *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Vol. 2.

University, and G. Beetge of the White Building Workers' Union. All were to become ardent supporters of Hertzog, Marais becoming a deputy leader of the H.N.P. when it was formed; all were on the executive. Other participants who were also rightist but demurred when the great break came included Dr. Treurnicht, editor of *Hoofstad* and Dr. C. Mulder, M.P., now Minister of the Interior.[22] It was 13 months later that the distinctiveness of this faction and its relative isolation from the rest of the leadership were to become public. In August, 1966, following an Afrikaans student conference which had been divided over whether or not to support Brown's *Observer*—and by implication Hertzog and Marais who were becoming increasingly identified with it—party publicists became active. The cue was given by Brown making attacks on Nationalists who associated with liberals in such organizations as the South African Foundation and the U.S.-South Africa Leadership Exchange Programme, and by Marais (in common with the *Observer*) attacking the "liberal" views of the editor of the National Party main daily newspaper in the Cape, *Die Burger*. *The Sunday Times* revealed that there was a rightist group led by Hertzog and that Brown was their mouthpiece.[23] *Die Burger* led the attack on Brown while *Die Vaderland* vacillated.

The rightist position could be briefly stated as a desire to return to the exclusive and extremist policies and style of the N.P. They were suspicious of "white unity", and opposed the immigration policy. They favoured a defiant attitude towards the outside world and viewed the government's collaboration with English speaking businessmen known to be opposed to apartheid with misgivings. Resentful of the liberal influence of organizations like USSALEP, they wished for more repressive policies against liberals in general and wanted the party purged of all who had liberal inclinations. The party and its institutions—notably the Afrikaans Press—should remain unshakably Calvinist. Thus they deprecated the worldliness of the Afrikaans Sunday papers.[24]

For a while, after August 1966, the ideological dispute was fought out by proxy through Afrikaans editorials, M.P.s not confronting each other directly even in the party caucus. This reflected a desire to avoid a split, since many, recalling the party's years in the wilderness in the 1930s and 1940s, considered that the worst fate which could befall it was *skeuring* or schism. The desire to take a decisive stand and yet avoid a split was reflected in *Die Nataller* (N.P. Natal) which felt that the *Observer* should be "dealt with and quickly" but scrupled to add: "When we say that we do not in any way mean that

22 *Christian Civilization Against Communism* (Pretoria, 1964). Dr. Koornhof, a *verligte* who was then Cultural Director of the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Societies (F.A.K.), was also on the executive.
23 *The Sunday Times*, August 14, 1966.
24 See H.N.P.'s "complete election manifesto" in *Die Afrikaner*, April 10, 1970. Also P. O'Meara, "Tensions in the Nationalist Party," in *Africa Report* (February 1969); A Sampson, "The Breach in the White Laager," in the *Observer* (London), April 5, 1970.

Mr. Jaap Marais, M.P., and his supporters should flag in their conservative zeal."[25]

Five months after taking office in February 1967, Vorster indicated his stand on the issues dividing Afrikaners—but he did so only indirectly. He attacked the *Observer* and issued a strong warning against papers which carried "false reports".[26] In the caucus discussions in 1967-68, the ideological and policy debate between the government and the right-wing rebels was mostly indirect—taking the form of government condemnation of the right-wing *Veg* and *Observer*, and *verkrampte* attempts to get the Sunday papers also condemned. On one particular policy there was outright disagreement between Vorster and Marais from the outset, namely, the decision by Vorster to allow foreign teams visiting South Africa to include black sportsmen. Marais indicated that this deviated from Verwoerd's clearly stated policy; but he submitted to the government's view.[27] Although *Veg* and *Observer* could be easily assailed, there were rightists whom the government refrained from denouncing—such were Piet Meyer, head of the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation and a member of the Afrikaner secret society *Die Broederbond*, and Dr. Treurnicht. Indeed, so important was Treurnicht as a spokesman of the right that the debate eventually came to assume the aspect of a contest between him and Piet Cillié of *Die Burger* for the conquest of the soul of Afrikanerdom.[28] In 1968, the Prime Minister made his position even clearer to the South African public when he attacked "super-Afrikaners" who falsely alleged that the "nation" was in danger, and when he dismissed Hertzog from his post as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs. In 1969, during the budget debate in the lower house of the S.A. Parliament, Hertzog gave vent to his distrust of the N.P.'s policy of white unity. In a long speech he extolled the virtues of Calvinist Afrikaners and gave the English speakers only faint praise. The latter had one weakness, "basically the English-speaking Afrikaner is liberal".[29] Eight days later, also in Parliament, the Minister for Transport and the leader of the N.P. in Transvaal, Ben Schoeman, repudiated Hertzog's speech.[30]

At this time—May, 1969—it would have been hard to guess how much support Hertzog enjoyed among the rank and file of the party. At a meeting in Badplaas, Hertzog clashed with Dr. Koornhof, Deputy Minister of Bantu administration and of immigration. The audience rejected Hertzog. On the following day, 2nd May, 1969, at nearby Carolina, they met again and

25 *Die Nataller*, August 12, 1966.
26 *Star*, August 14, 1967; "Jaap Marais Praat Reguit" (part of a series of polemical reminiscences) in *Die Afrikaner*, August 14, 1970.
27 "Jaap Marais Praat Reguit" in *Die Afrikaner*, August 7, 1970.
28 *A Dagbreek en Landstem*, October 19, 1969; "While most South Africans regard the ex-minister (Hertzog) as a sort of Don Quixote who is fighting historical windmills, they see Treurnicht in a different light . . . if the thoroughgoing (deursnee) Nationalist of the North had to choose between Treurnicht and Cillié who it was he held in higher esteem, the editor from the Cape (Cillié) would certainly not be the one."
29 Republic of South Africa, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly*, 1969—Cols. 3880-3881. By this time there was much speculation that Hertzog would leave the N.P. and from his own party—cf. *Veg*, May 1969.
30 *Assembly Debates*, Col. 4516.

Koornhof was shouted down. A motion expressing concern over Hertzog's "evasive attitude of recent times" was rejected. And then at a meeting at Ermelo, Hertzog's own constituency, the audience, reflecting both a desire to maintain party unity as well as indecision, passed a vote of confidence in both Hertzog and Vorster.[31]

Subsequent exchanges were merely polemical, and attempts to resolve the conflict seemed perfunctory and were certainly unsuccessful. The party congresses held in September were no clear guide to popular feeling either. They all supported the government's policies but expressed quite conservative sentiments. The congresses in Natal, the Cape and the Orange Free State steered well clear of the widening division in the party, but not so the Transvaal Congress.[32] As the rebel leaders Hertzog and Marais were both Transvaal M.P.s a showdown was to be expected. It came when six delegates from Innesdal (Marais' seat), Losberg, Waterberg and Ermelo, refused to vote in support of the government's sports policy. They were given a month in which to toe the party line or leave. Marais was subsequently expelled. And as the government announced an early election, Hertzog, Marais and their supporters called a conference in Pretoria, established their own party and prepared for the election. Several known *verkrampte* intellectuals shrank from joining Hertzog's party, preferring to work within the old party.[33]

The *verkampte* revolt had been couched in traditional ideological terms and the Hertzog faction used traditional strategies. It emulated the N.P.'s strategy of *verzuiling* but its column was ideological. The effect however, was the same, for the ideology was exclusive of English speakers. Their "column" included the Afrikaner Order, reportedly turned into a secret society like the *Broederbond*,[34] the society for the preservation of the Afrikaans language—(*Die Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans*), and their press *Die Afrikaner* and *Stêr*, supported by *Veg* and the *Observer*. As the election approached, the H.N.P. stated its cause in more specific, material terms: but in this respect the H.N.P. emulated the N.P. in its militant days. Indeed it claimed to be the true N.P.—Vorster's party was the deviating faction. The H.N.P. drew attention to the social provision for whites, which they considered inadequate, and asserted that it compared unfavourably with government expenditure on Africans. (It was alleged that lesser privileged whites were a good deal worse off than blacks.) It was also claimed that apartheid was being infringed and the white areas were overflowing with blacks and that the protection of whites from black criminals was also inadequate. Immigration was a major topic. Portuguese immigrants, it was said, could not be assimilated into Afrikanerdom yet they were taking the jobs of Afrikaners. Portuguese immigrants sympathized with blacks. Job reservation was being undermined, with the government conniving. It was frequently stated that big business was being allowed to get away with activities that were dangerous

31 *Cape Times*, May 6, May 10, 1969.
32 *Die Transvaler*, September 12, 1969.
33 Most notably Treurnicht.
34 *Dagbreek en Landstem*, October 5, 1969.

to the *volk*. In brief, the government was appeasing liberals and had itself been infected with liberalism. It was accused of bad faith and Vorster was accused personally of opportunism, dictatorship and intolerance of Afrikaners.[35]

While all this could be said to reflect the feelings of the less privileged whites it would be false to suppose that the H.N.P. had a definite class orientation distinguishable from that of the N.P. "The less privileged" is a wide category including not only the working class and the poor, on whose relative deprivation within the ruling race the H.N.P. hoped to capitalize, but also some at higher economic levels who were suffering status deterioration (like the party's rightist ideologists) and a broader category suffering status inconsistency due to a change in the economic structure (e.g. small farmer, small businessman). *Die Afrikaner's* consistent interest in share prices also indicated that it did not mind capitalism. The H.N.P. was not a class party, it was nationalist—or that, at least, is what it wanted to be.

The battle between the N.P. and the H.N.P. was joined with rare acrimony. Personal attacks, broadsides and snippets of confidential, compromising information emerged from both sides.

The campaign took an ominous turn when, following Jaap Marais' revelation that the government tapped telephones, Vorster warned that Marais would get into difficulty if he interfered with state security. Fifteen days later, on 21st February, certain newspapers were visited by the police and warned not to publish a statement that Marais was thought to have released to them, and on 23rd February, General J. P. Gous, head of the Special Branch begged the Supreme Court for an order serving as a temporary interdict prohibiting Marais from making known the contents of this statement. Meanwhile, Hertzog had been convicted for failing to give evidence to a one-man commission appointed to investigate his allegation that the Bureau of State Security had consumed ten times the amount officially allocated to it. The Special Branch also became active. In addition to searching Marais for a document, they rudely searched the offices of *Die Afrikaner* and the home of its editor. When *Die Afrikaner* published a letter purportedly written by the Prime Minister, but which was a parody of his views, Vorster, claiming that the letter had done him harm as an electoral candidate, asked the courts for an injunction against *Die Afrikaner*, which was granted.

Several electoral meetings of the H.N.P. were disrupted by N.P. supporters and there was more violence in the campaign than there had been in 1966. Ben Schoeman, the Minister for Transport, reflected: "I have been in politics for 40 years and have been through many elections but never have I been involved in one so bitter or where the levels have sunk so low."[36]

On both the sports policy and the decision to admit black diplomats the government stood firm. On everything else ministerial statements were either conflicting, indecisive or rightist. To gain the support of voters in the insecure occupational categories *verkrampte* policies were announced. On 3rd April,

35 *Die Afrikaner*, 1970; everywhere the right blamed the "verligtes" for having conspired over a long period to engineer the split, *Veg*, July 24, 1970.
36 *Argus*, April 10, 1970.

eighteen days before the election, Dr. Koornhof prohibited the employment of Africans as counter assistants, salesmen, receptionists, switchboard operators, clerks, cashiers and typists in shops, offices and factories in the "White Areas" (over 70 per cent of South Africa).[37] The same Deputy Minister had earlier offered assurances that immigrants would be so selected that they neither threatened people's jobs, nor altered ratios of adherents to the various white churches.[38] Promises were made also about more mundane bread-and-butter issues. The government would curb land price increases; it would raise the salaries of civil servants; the defence force, the police, and railway workers would have higher holiday bonuses. Since the public sector predominantly employs Afrikaners[39] these promises were mainly directed at the Afrikaans vote. To the rest the government used the revolt as an indication of how conciliatory its own position was, and, as usual, it stressed its unique ability to secure the white state. But the main thrust of its campaign was directed at the Afrikaner right.

The two other important parties the U.P. and the P.P. restated their now familiar policies.[40] The U.P. opposed job-reservation and declared that it would, if elected, have a labour policy that would curb the "excessive movement of Bantu into white areas", while providing farmers, industrialists, businessmen, and householders with a readier supply of black labour. This would be achieved by allowing "Bantu" men and women to be permanently employed, and by permitting them to live "within reasonable distance" of their places of work. To solve the racial problem the U.P. advocated "race federation". The federal constitution would work as follows:

> There would be a separate electoral roll for each group and these separate rolls would provide for representation for:
>
> (1) Coloured people by six Members of Parliament and two senators (who might be white or coloured).
> (2) Africans by eight M.Ps and six senators (who would be white).
> (3) Indians by two M.P.s and one senator (who would be white).
>
> In addition a communal council or councils for each group would be established, consultations between the various groups would be by means of "a system of interlocking statutory committees on which selected M.P.s and members of communal councils" would serve.[41]

To demonstrate its commitment to the defence of the state the U.P. issued a pamphlet "devoted largely to Mrs. Suzman", the P.P. Member of Parliament for Houghton. It noted that she had opposed the Terrorism Bill. "In other words, she opposed the principle of creating a widely defined offence of terrorism to meet the danger on our borders."[42] The U.P. also appealed to electors not to waste their votes on the H.N.P. and the P.P. (in the same breath) as these were ineffectual pressure groups, but to give them instead

37 Notice No. R531, *Government Gazette*, April 3, 1970.
38 Assembly Debates, 1968, 601 5949.
39 Cf. S. Van Wyk, *Die Afrikaner in Die Beroepslewe Van die Stad* (Pretoria, 1968).
40 An outstanding account of these parties is given by J. Robertson in her *Liberalism in South Africa*.
41 *Argus*, April 2, 1970; cf. *Star*, February 2, 1970.
42 *Star*, April 27, 1970.

to the United Party. It also promised a new deal for pensioners, civil servants and farmers.

The Progressives restated their qualified franchise alternative to the main parties' policies. If elected, the party would grant a common role vote to all citizens with the necessary qualifications—Standard 8 (roughly equivalent to pre O-level year) or Standard 6 plus the regular income of a semi-skilled white worker. Minorities would be protected by having a senate so elected that it "will ensure multi-racial government by rejecting legislation detrimental to any racial group". Individual liberty would be safeguarded by a Bill of Rights.[43]

THE ELECTION RESULT

The election was indeed a happening. There were seven parties, the National Party, the United Party, the Progressive Party, the Herstigtes Nasionale Party and three small parties: the National Alliance Party, the Front, and the Democratic National Party; and a few Independents. These latter three parties were in favour of very minor adjustments in government policy and were all on the right. The Front was a veteran of the 1966 election.

The National Party was returned with a reduced majority—the first time this had happened since 1948. Nine seats gained by the N.P. in the 1966 election went to the U.P. The H.N.P., cause of so much agitation, was soundly beaten, all 78 candidates being rejected and 75 losing their deposits. The Progressives increased their majority in Houghton and came very near to winning a second seat at Sea Point. The smaller parties were routed: all four National Alliance candidates lost their deposits, and so did the candidates of the Front and the D.N.P. The N.P. won the seats previously held by the Herstigtes.[44]

Out of 2,028,487 electors, 1,508,285 voted in the 154 contested seats. The percentage of the electorate who voted was high: 74.36 per cent—highest in the Cape (77.67 per cent) and lowest in Natal (66.95 per cent). A quarter of a million young white people (18-21 years) voted for the first time.

With one by-election outstanding at Langlaagte (subsequently held by the N.P.) the voting was as shown in Table 1.

Table 1—VOTES CAST IN 1970 BY PARTY AND PER CENT COMPARED WITH PERCENTAGES FOR 1966 ELECTION

	1970		*1966*
N.P.	820,968	54.43	58.62
U.P.	561,647	37.23	37.05
H.N.P.	53,763	3.56	—
Prog.	51,760	3.43	3.1
Others	8,365	0.725	1.23

Source: *The Argus*, April 24, 1970.

43 *Argus*, April 20, 1970.
44 Five Progressives, five Independents and three U.P. candidates lost their deposits (by failing to obtain a minimum of one-fifth of the winning candidate's total in each case).

The opposition U.P. gained the most; yet although unexpected not all its gains were remarkable. In one of the constituencies the Nationalist vote had been split by the H.N.P. The Natal constituency of Umlazi had always been U.P., changing hands only when the M.P., Harry Lewis, crossed the floor after the 1966 election. Zululand had been U.P. before 1966, and so had Umhlatuzana; Florida, too, was a U.P. stronghold.[45]

The Orange Free State and South West Africa remained N.P. territory.

The distribution of seats in the new House of Assembly was as follows:

Table 2—COMPOSITION OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

After General Election 1970		*After General Election 1966*	
National Party	118	National Party	126
United Party	47	United Party	39
Progressive Party	1	Progressive Party	1
		(Since abolished: Coloured Representatives)	4
Total	166	Total	170

It is hard to form any clear judgment of the electors' behaviour beyond the trite statement that it reflected increased dissatisfaction with the government's policies. Whether the U.P.'s gains signified a swing to the left is doubtful. As has been noted, the U.P. largely recovered votes previously lost to the N.P. and to this extent the election result was conservative—halting the progress towards a one-party system. From this point of view the P.P.'s marginal success can be seen as reflecting a bias in the party-system toward old parties—since, compared to the four other contenders, the P.P. is old. On the other hand, the votes gained by the new H.N.P. signified the comparative effectiveness on the Afrikaner electorate of a sectarian, traditionalist posture. The H.N.P.'s reverses should not be allowed to obscure the fact that it did pluck 70,000 votes on almost exactly the same policies for which the Republican Party was so casually dismissed in 1966. In almost every constituency formerly contested by the Republicans, the H.N.P. won more than double the number of votes gained by the Republicans in 1966.

If the 1970 election result, consistent with what we know of the "freezing of party alternatives" in other stable party-systems, illustrated the conservatism of the party-system, the developments which preceded it showed the resistance of the cleavage structure to *ontzuiling*. The conflicts between the H.N.P. and the N.P., the severity with which the government responded to the H.N.P. challenge, and the electoral strategy of the H.N.P., all indicated the continuing primacy for the Afrikaner élite of unity within the group both as a matter of ideological disposition and as a question of electoral strength. The H.N.P., by its utterances and strategies, confirms the impression—I put it no higher than that—that the cleavage between Boer and Briton is deeply rooted in

45 Other seats gained by the U.P.: Benoni, Port Elizabeth Central, Maitland, Turffontein, Jeppes.

the political consciousness of Afrikaners. It is this political-cultural dimension as well as practical electoral considerations which, together with the basic conservatism of an established competitive party-system, severely inhibit *ontzuiling*.

Seen against these rigidities in the party-system and the cleavage structure, attitudinal adjustments at the élite level somewhat diminish in political significance and the "flexibility" to adjust the system of dominance by concessions to opponents—of which Adam wrote with such assurance—seems, in this light, overstated. It would in any case be difficult to see how the collapse of cleavages between white groups should result in more concessions to blacks' aspirations, and it seems from our review merely eccentric to suppose that there is enough "flexibility" for the system of racial dominance to be transformed, more or less smoothly, into a "multi-racial society of equals".