

NATAL AND THE 1960 REPUBLICAN REFERENDUM

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Unless otherwise indicated in the text, this thesis is the original work of the author.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. INCH : INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY
2. KC : KILLIE CAMPBELL
3. KCM : KILLIE CAMPBELL MANUSCRIPT
4. KCP : KILLIE CAMPBELL PAMPHLET

NOTE: The above abbreviations apply to the footnotes and Bibliography. Other abbreviations are noted in the text.

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CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

For both English-speakers and Afrikaners in South Africa, the 1960 Republican Referendum was an event of profound significance.<sup>(1)</sup> For Afrikaners, it had for years been an almost 'sacred' ambition to establish an independent republic free of British domination. Indeed, the Herenigde Nasionale Party (HNP), led by Dr D F Malan, had been born as a result of the realisation that the Union's Dominion status did not give her the right not to join the Commonwealth in a war against Germany. Reeves' study includes investigation of the debate between the United Party (UP) and the HNP on the degree of independence enjoyed by the Union.<sup>(2)</sup> That republicanism became increasingly important to Afrikaners is evident in the publication of the 1942 Draft Republican Constitution and in the fact that the creation of a republic was made an objective of the National Party (NP).<sup>(3)</sup> The NP became more determined to achieve this objective after its accession to power in 1948.

For English-speakers, the Referendum was the culmination of a decade of intense opposition to Government 'tampering' with the Union's constitution.<sup>(4)</sup> In fact, ever since 1910, English-speakers in Natal had had doubts about the wisdom of joining a union that could easily see them dominated by Afrikaners.

A referendum had been held in 1910 for Natal to decide whether or not to become part of the Union, and thereafter a number of constitutional or political crises had occurred during which calls for secession had emanated from Natal. In a recent study of Natal separatism, Dr P S Thompson gives a detailed account of these responses.<sup>(5)</sup>

For the main part, Natalians relied upon creating lobbies within the South African Party (SAP) and the United Party. This was the strategy followed by George Heaton Nicholls in the 1930s<sup>(6)</sup> and it was also the strategy of Douglas Mitchell after 1949.<sup>(7)</sup> The leadership of persons such as Heaton Nicholls and Mitchell was, on occasion, challenged by 'populist' movements when feelings ran particularly high, as, for example, during the 'Devolution' crisis sparked off by the Flag crisis, Hertzog's election victory in 1929 and the financial crisis of the 1930s. The excitement died down following Coalition in 1933, followed by the fusion of the SAP and NP to create the UP in 1934. But, when in 1948 Malan's Nationalists were victorious, Natal's fears were rekindled.<sup>(8)</sup>

1948 was an important turning point for English-speaking South Africans, and for Natal in particular, for two reasons. Firstly, the NP surprised the nation with a shock General Election win, bringing with it the first all-Afrikaner Cabinet. Secondly, it was the year that the Dutch Reformed Church published its findings on education. This raised the bogey of Christian National Education (CNE), which was to become a persistent theme of opposition politics from then on.

The NP won the 1948 General Election by back-pedalling on republicanism and emphasising racial policy warning of the "swart gevaar".<sup>(9)</sup> However, for Natal the Afrikaner-dominated Cabinet was an alarming prospect. Had not the NP taken the side of the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s?<sup>(10)</sup> and was it not Dr Malan who had upset many Natalians with his attack on the Provincial system in 1929?<sup>(11)</sup>

Between 1948 and 1954, however, the NP Government continued to play down the republican issue. Dr Malan, for example, attended the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in 1949, and also the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. A recent study of South Africa's relations with the Commonwealth emphasises that the NP had realised that an insistence on isolation, an emphasis on anti-British feeling, and opposition to continued Commonwealth membership would not win them any political dividends;<sup>(12)</sup> hence its concentration on the Communist threat and apartheid. This policy was continued throughout most of Dr Malan's premiership.

Despite this caution, the bogey of Afrikaner domination raised its head in 1951 in the form of the Government's attempts to remove Coloureds from the Common Voters' Roll. The NP, in line with its policy of apartheid, had removed Indians from the Common Voters' Roll by the Asiatic Laws Amendment Act (N<sup>o</sup> 47) of 1948 and now wanted to remove the Coloured voters from it.<sup>(13)</sup> This latter objective was more difficult to achieve because it involved one of the entrenched clauses in the Union's constitution, the second of which ensured the equality of the English and Afrikaans languages. Alterations to these entrenched clauses required a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Parliament in joint session. Between 1951 and 1956 the Government went to great lengths to secure the removal of the Coloured voters from the Common Voters' Roll. Its goal was finally achieved during the premiership of J G Strijdom in February 1956.<sup>(14)</sup>

Natal came out in strong opposition to these moves, with organisations such as the Defenders of the Constitution being established in March 1952 and eventually amassing a membership of 15 000. This organisation was superseded by the War Veterans Torch Commando.<sup>(15)</sup> The Torch Commando was an organisation of ex-servicemen working against the NP Government and managed to recruit a national membership of 250 000 by 1952.<sup>(16)</sup> But, as is pointed out by Gwendoline Carter in her monumental study of South Africa politics since 1948, the crux of the matter was not disenfranchisement of the Coloured voters:

"It was not the right of the Coloured voters in the Cape Province which aroused such deep feeling, however, but the means which the Government used for this purpose, means which most non-Nationalists considered unconstitutional ...."<sup>(17)</sup>

Natal support for the Torch Commando did not therefore represent a liberal spirit in Natal. As Worrall has argued, the idea of the English-speaker being the country's conscience on racial matters is largely a myth that developed during the years spent in opposition to the NP. He traces the change in English-speakers' attitudes from that of backing a policy similar to apartheid prior to 1948, to a position critical of NP policy in the late 1960s.<sup>(18)</sup> The breakaway of the Progressive Party (PP) from the United Party in 1959 did not alter the fact that for most of the 1950s and early 1960s, English-speakers backed the UP's racial policy, which was very similar to that of the NP. What Natal feared was that once one entrenched clause was altered, the other

could just as easily be changed and thus the equality of English and Afrikaans threatened.<sup>(19)</sup>

In 1952 the Torch Commando announced that it would back political parties which opposed Government plans concerning the Coloured vote. This led to the establishment of what became known as the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF consisted of the Torch Commando, the Labour Party and the UP. It worked together during the General Election called in 1953 by Dr Malan because of the repeated defeat of his moves on the Coloured vote issue.<sup>(20)</sup>

Despite its title, all factions of the UDF were not in total agreement. The UDF was less a union than an organisation aiming at presenting a united front of independent organisations in opposition to the Government. In fact, there was increasing tension between the Torch Commando and the UP. Perhaps the most striking difference of opinion was that between two prominent Natal politicians: Senator George Heaton Nicholls and Douglas Mitchell, Natal UP Leader.<sup>(21)</sup>

Mitchell gave more prominence to national UP policy, in line with the UP's move to a more middle-of-the-road platform between English and Afrikaans voters, in an effort to win more Afrikaans votes, while Heaton Nicholls focused on Natal's rights. This is reflected in a speech he made to Parliament in opposition to the Separate Representation of Voters Bill (May 1951) which is reminiscent of the thinking within the "Natal Party" faction of the South African Party in the 1930s,<sup>(22)</sup> in which he had himself been prominent.

Heaton Nicholls argued that although the Government had a legal right to alter the constitution, it had no moral right to do so. Furthermore, the matter was important because if the South Africa Act were tampered with, this would destroy the contract of Union and leave Natal free to break away. The threat of secession was emphasised at a mass Torch Commando meeting held on 6 June 1952 in Durban, at which 45 000 people took an oath to: "... preserve the sanctity of the engagements entered upon at the time of Union ...."(23)

The seriousness with which Nicholls took the secession idea was seen during his visit to London in 1953 for Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation, when he questioned a number of important people on the issue of Natal secession. He found them to be not unsympathetic.(24) Mitchell, on the other hand, did not at this stage appear to contemplate action beyond opposing change constitutionally at elections and in the courts. This difference of political approach represents the basic differences that existed within the UDF. They were undoubtedly further exacerbated by personal and temperamental difficulties between the two leaders.(25)

The Torch Commando had been advocating a policy similar to Heaton Nicholls' for some time and now found itself moving away from the UP politically.(26) In August 1952, Heaton Nicholls resigned secretly from the UP. His resignation was not made public in order to preserve the appearance of the unity of the UDF.(27)

After the 1953 General Election had been won convincingly by the NP, the UDF was disbanded and Nicholls publicly resigned from the UP. Following

a speech in which he referred to the Union as an "unfaithful and sordid marriage,"<sup>(28)</sup> and which had caused a sensation in the press, he was approached to lead the Union Federal Party (UFP) which had been established by members of the Torch Commando, the Natal branch of which had been contemplating forming such a party for some time.<sup>(29)</sup>

Details of the Torch Commando's involvement in the creation of the UFP are well documented in Dr B L Reid's work, as well as in Heaton Nicholls' autobiography and in Carter's study mentioned previously.<sup>(30)</sup> Certain features of Natal politics that were evident during 1948 to 1953 were to reappear during the Republican Referendum of 1960. These included attempts to present a united front of opposition groups, and secessionism amongst certain factions.

The 1953 by-election in Durban's Berea constituency, and the 1954 and 1959 Provincial Elections also show certain recurring themes or issues which became important rallying points for the Anti-Republican Front in 1960. In the 1953 by-election in Berea (Durban), opposition to the republic and the Natal Stand (secessionism) were the main issues. However, the UFP was shown to be a minor political force with the convincing defeat of its candidate, Col A C Martin, former Headmaster of DHS and Colonel of the DLI, who features prominently in this thesis.<sup>(31)</sup> Heaton Nicholls claims that this defeat was the result of threats from the Minister of Economic Affairs, E H Louw, not to give Government backing to certain industrial developments in Natal, forcing big business to shy away from the UFP.<sup>(32)</sup>

In the 1954 Provincial Elections, republicanism and the Natal Stand were once again prominent issues. The establishment of a republic was seen as a disastrous step by the UFP which saw such a move as a breach of the contract of Union. Hence their Natal Stand was based on the right of Natal to secede if the original contract Natal had agreed to was broken. The UP, on the other hand, regarded the imminence of the republic as exaggerated.<sup>(33)</sup> The UP focused on the legal position which led it to state that if a republic were legally established, it would have to accept it, maintaining that the UFP's position was illegal. It can be seen here that in attempting to win as many Afrikaans votes as possible, the UP was forced to opt for a position that would not alienate those voters: thus, it could not staunchly oppose the idea of a republic.

A further very emotional issue in 1954 was education. Col Martin, the UFP'S spokesman on Education, had made a number of very justifiable claims concerning the Natal Education Department so that the issue became an important factor in the election. In response, the Natal Provincial Administration, which was UP-controlled, established the Jarvis Commission to investigate these allegations. This made the whole issue subjudice, preventing discussion before the Commission had reported. Racial policy was another very important issue for Natal. The UFP advocated a "progressive" race policy, while the UP was more in tune with the conservatism of English-speakers, particularly in Natal. The UP very convincingly defeated the UFP in Natal,<sup>(34)</sup> while the NP improved its position nationally by capturing a numerical majority of the votes for the first time.<sup>(35)</sup>

In November 1954, Dr Malan resigned to be succeeded as premier by J G Strijdom. Strijdom's policy was more openly republican than Dr Malan's had been and he saw his goals as the improvement of the Afrikaners' position in South African society and the establishment of a republic as soon as possible. In response to the policy of "Afrikanerisation" the UFP defended the rights of English-speakers. It attempted to negotiate with Mitchell some kind of joint front to protect those rights, and sent letters to Commonwealth members of parliament asking for support for their policy.<sup>(36)</sup> Both efforts failed; however, opposition to the republican ideal led at this time to the establishment of the Anti-Republican League, which quickly gained support and petitioned the Queen in 1955. This grouping was supposed to be neutral, but Reid has traced strong links between it and the UFP.<sup>(37)</sup> However, the Anti-Republican League was short-lived. It lost much support because of Mitchell's public opposition to its policy, which he warned could result in bloodshed.<sup>(38)</sup>

The republican issue, English-speakers' rights and education were also the main issues of the 1959 Provincial Elections. After its poor showing in 1954, the UFP was forced to back down on its Natal Stand and race policies. Once again, education was a vital issue, especially after the Government overrode the Natal Provincial Council's nominee for the post of Deputy Director of Education and appointed J H Stander, in what became known as the "Stander Affair". However, the UFP fared poorly against the UP, while the NP improved its position in Natal by capturing an additional seat.<sup>(39)</sup>

In 1958, Strijdom died and was succeeded by Dr H F Verwoerd as Prime Minister. Verwoerd was strongly republican, as Strijdom had been, and on 20 January 1960 he announced in Parliament that a Republican Referendum would be held that year to decide the issue.

The Referendum of 1960 is given scant attention in most works dealing with South African or Natal politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Often the events of the pre-1960s are given in much detail with the Referendum tacked on, or they are briefly included as the conclusion of a phase in white politics which was becoming increasingly irrelevant in the face of growing Black political militancy.<sup>(40)</sup> Works that do discuss the referendum in any detail tend to focus on specific aspects. For example, T Wilks, in his biography of Douglas Mitchell, is primarily concerned with the role Mitchell played, while P S Thompson's main interest is the secessionist opposition which recurred at that time.<sup>(41)</sup>

It is a common mistake to view as important only those movements which succeeded while those that failed are viewed as 'lost causes'. This approach overlooks the fact that politics is the interaction of opposing forces and their history is not fully explicable unless the 'lost causes' are taken into account.

Natal was the only province to vote against the proposed republic and was the location of vociferous and much publicised secessionist activity. Hence it becomes important to record the reasons for Natal's 'NO' vote

and to discern the degree of determination behind the secessionist calls. Apart from doing this, this thesis attempts to detail the organisation of the campaign and the role played by specific personalities in order to provide a full and accurate account of the last, and possibly the most traumatic, chapter in the saga of Natal's secessionism.

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F O O T N O T E S

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2. L Reeves, 'The War Issue and the Demise of the Fusion Government in 1939' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Natal (Durban), 1984).
3. INCH, Pamphlet, P27.36, 'Die Republikeinse Orde, Party se Toekomsbeleid soos deur Dr Malan Uiteengesit,' HNP, 1941.
4. For Detail see: G M Carter, The Politics of Inequality (London, Thames and Hudson, 1958); E H Brookes and C de B Webb, A History of Natal (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1979), pp 277-285; P S Thompson, Natalians First (Johannesburg, Southern Book Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 1990), pp 123-176; G Heaton Nicholls, South Africa in My Time (London, Allen and Unwin, 1961), pp 429-481.
5. Thompson, pp 27, 35-37, 66, 78, 117-118, 126-133.
6. Heaton Nicholls, pp 220-227.

7. T Wilks, Douglas Mitchell (Durban, King and Wilks, 1980), pp 67-68, 79-87. Elected representatives of Natal met to call for a Natal Convention in response to Government measures.
8. Thompson, p 124; Wilks, Chp 7; Brookes and Webb, pp 277-285.
9. B L Reid, 'The Anti-Republican League of the 1950s,' South African Historical Journal, N° 14, November 1982.
10. B Bunting, The Rise of the South African Reich (London, International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1986).
11. Heaton Nicholls, pp 198-204.
12. B H Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth. The Origins of South Africa's Break with the Commonwealth of Nations in 1961' (unpublished MA thesis, UCT, 1973).
13. Carter, p 130.
14. Ibid, pp 119-144.
15. Brookes and Webb, pp 277-285.
16. Carter, pp 302-329.
17. Ibid, p 119.

18. D Worrall, 'English South Africa and the Political System,'  
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19. Wilks. p 72.
20. B L Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962: An English-speaking  
Reaction to Afrikaner Nationalism' (unpublished Phd Thesis,  
University of Natal (Durban), 1979).
21. Ibid; Heaton Nicholls, pp 443-454.
22. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
23. Ibid; Heaton Nicholls, p 449.
24. Ibid, pp 469-470.
25. Wilks, pp 82, 86, 97-99; Heaton Nicholls, pp 461-463.
26. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid, p 44.
29. Ibid.

30. Ibid; Heaton Nicholls, pp 459-471; Carter, pp 302-334, 352-353.
  31. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
  32. Heaton Nicholls, p 473.
  33. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
  34. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
  35. Reid, 'The Anti-Republican League ....'
  36. Ibid.
  37. Ibid.
  38. Wilks, p 114.
  39. Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962.'
  40. See Reid, 'The Federal Party, 1953 - 1962'; Brookes and Webb, pp 277-285.
  41. Thompson; Wilks.
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PART A

JANUARY TO MAY 1960

CHAPTER TWO : A REFERENDUM IS ANNOUNCED

On 20 January 1960 Dr H F Verwoerd announced, during a No-Confidence Debate, that a referendum would be held to decide the republican issue. Opposition Members of Parliament were shocked and surprised at the announcement of South Africa's referendum.

Verwoerd announced that a simple majority would decide the issue.<sup>(1)</sup> This was a significant departure from the policies of ex-Prime Ministers Malan and Strijdom. They had always proclaimed that the broad will of the people, taken to mean a clear two-thirds majority, would have to support the proposed republic before it would be established.<sup>(2)</sup>

According to Verwoerd's announcement, the Union was to be considered one constituency. No separate referendums were to be granted to any particular province and South West Africa would not be allowed to vote on the issue. The existing constitution would form the basis of the republican constitution, which was made possible by the series of changes made during the 1950s with a republic in mind. These included the national anthem being limited to Die Stem and the removal of OHMS from official correspondence. The only significant change would be the replacement of the Governor-General by a State President, while the crucial issue of Commonwealth membership would be decided on the basis of the Union's interests. Voters were promised that they would know the Government's position before the referendum.<sup>(3)</sup>

In retrospect it is surprising that this announcement took so many observers by surprise for, during 1959, Verwoerd had been deliberating over the most opportune time to establish a republic. As early as May 1959, The Natal Witness reports him as clarifying, in Parliament, a statement made by him to the effect that the Provincial Elections would be a test of public opinion on the republic issue. In that statement he had explained that the actual test would not be the Provincial Elections but that those elections would provide useful information to the NP as to how to approach the establishment of a republic.<sup>(4)</sup>

At about the same time, The Star had commented, in an editorial, on an announcement by Verwoerd to the effect that the Government was considering scrapping the Senate. Noting an increasing tone of "... arrogance, almost megalomania ..." <sup>(5)</sup> in the Prime Minister's speeches, the editor expressed concern as to what type of republic would be established. The Rand Daily Mail saw the possible abolition of the Senate as a sign that the republic was imminent because the 1942 Draft Republican Constitution had visualised such a course of action.<sup>(6)</sup>

The Star went on to report that, in a speech at Vrede, Verwoerd had stated that a simple majority would be sufficient a mandate to establish a republic. The Star saw this as a sign of increasing pressure within the NP for a republic and expressed the opinion that the establishment of a republic was more imminent than most people realised.<sup>(7)</sup>

In September 1959 Verwoerd announced to the Orange Free State NP Congress that he did not think that the establishment of a republic could be delayed much longer, but he was against calling for a decision on the issue in 1960 — the Union Festival year.<sup>(8)</sup> The Daily News described this announcement as "... another stanza of his pie-in-the-sky ... refrain"<sup>(9)</sup> and claimed that Verwoerd was facing:

"... precisely the same dilemma as his two predecessors in office: when it comes to actually taking the plunge as distinct from warbling verbally, the obstacles turn out to be formidable."<sup>(10)</sup>

Here The Daily News seems surprisingly smug considering the attitudes expressed in other newspapers. However, this quotation should not be seen out of context. The Daily News went on to ask how much longer Nationalist supporters could be expected to wait for the republic promised them as a basic principle of their Party.<sup>(11)</sup>

Thus The Daily News was questioning the ability of Verwoerd to put off any attempt to establish a republic any longer, despite the obstacles perceived by the editor to be blocking such a course of action.<sup>(12)</sup> It also called on anti-republicans to fight against the republic on all fronts.<sup>(13)</sup>

Another indication that Verwoerd had set his sights on the republic in 1959 was the fact that in September he paid an unusual personal visit to

Pietermaritzburg in order to attend a National Party fete and to launch the Provincial Election campaign in the province. His motive in doing so was — in the words of a leading student of the period — "to call the Federal's bluff."<sup>(14)</sup> He was met by jeering Union-Jack and poster-bearing students singing "God Save the Queen". NP workers were hard-pressed to keep the students out of the Pietermaritzburg City Hall, where the fêete was being held, and scuffles and general fighting erupted.<sup>(15)</sup> Later that evening, students cut off the electricity supply to the City Hall, interrupting Verwoerd's speech, and poured water on the audience from the gallery. Fireworks and tear-gas were also in evidence.<sup>(16)</sup>

These "attacks" did not deter Verwoerd. During his speech he made it clear that no provincial authority would be allowed to stop a decision taken legally by the central Government. He also laid it down that there would be no separate referendum on the republican issue for Natal. Being part of the Union, the province would vote as and when the other provinces did. The Prime Minister also reiterated that a three-quarters or two-thirds majority was not necessary to decide the issue. A "decisive" majority would be sufficient to give the Government the necessary mandate to take the Union into republican status.<sup>(17)</sup>

The bluff of Natal's staunch anti-republicans and anti-Nationalists had been called, and beyond the display of vociferous, and sometimes juvenile, behaviour and press backing for the demonstrators,<sup>(18)</sup> they could do nothing in response to Verwoerd's challenge. Furthermore,

despite their efforts, the Provincial Elections passed with the National Party improving its position in the province (this was also the case in the Orange Free State, Transvaal and the Cape Province).

The Rand Daily Mail pointed out that although the NP had improved its position in terms of seats, the total number of votes cast in its favour had fallen by 80 000 when compared with the last General Election (1958). According to the editor, its enthusiasm for a republic had been dampened because of this fact.<sup>(19)</sup> However, a report in The Daily News suggests that the reason for the Party's silence, after their gains in the provincial elections, was that internal discussions were taking place within the NP on exactly how to approach asking the public to decide the republican issue. Theo Gerdner, Natal leader of the NP, is reported as advising NP supporters that only the basic issue of "yes" or "no" to a republic should be put to the public.<sup>(20)</sup>

In surveying the political prospects at the end of 1959, there were several reasons why the Nationalists should have concluded that the anti-republican forces had lost much of their impetus. Possibly the most determined anti-republican opposition in the 1950s came from the Union Federal Party (UFP) and its associate, the Anti-Republican League.<sup>(21)</sup> By late-1959, both these organisations were in no condition to oppose any moves towards establishing a republic. The UFP had received yet another resounding defeat in the Provincial Elections<sup>(22)</sup> and the Anti-Republican League was being disbanded in Natal and the Transvaal.<sup>(23)</sup>

Another important indicator that anti-republicanism was waning by late-1959 was the failure of the United Party to push anti-republicanism during the 1959 Provincial Elections, repeating its strategy of 1954, in order to attract as many Afrikaans voters as possible. This had been particularly evident in its failure to launch a planned Anti-Republican Congress in Durban.

The Congress had been planned for mid-August 1959 and had been organised as a result of the large number of motions at the 1958 Natal UP Congress requesting that UP anti-republic policy be clearly and widely proclaimed.<sup>(24)</sup> It was hoped that top-calibre speakers would attract widespread local and national media interest and that the impetus created by the Congress would boost UP Provincial Council candidates in the approaching Provincial Elections.<sup>(25)</sup>

In July 1959, the UP Natal Provincial Executive Committee approved the planned Congress and left it to Douglas Mitchell (UP, Natal Leader) to make a press statement.<sup>(26)</sup> However, the Provincial Elections came and went, and no press release was forthcoming. By November 1959, the UP Provincial Executive had decided to cancel the Congress, although it reaffirmed its commitment to the existing constitutional position of the Union.<sup>(27)</sup>

The precise reason as to why the UP Anti-Republican Congress was abandoned is not clear.<sup>(28)</sup> In the 1954 Provincial Election, the UP had been careful to take a very moderate anti-republican stand in order to

attract more Afrikaans and/or non-Nationalist republican voters.<sup>(29)</sup> Mitchell's failure to respond to the call to summon the Anti-Republican Congress may therefore be an indication that the UP intended to follow the same policy with regard to the 1959 Provincial Elections. Secondly, the UP leadership was well aware of the failure of the UFP's "Natal Stand" platform in previous elections and would not have wanted to be identified too closely with such extremist policies.<sup>(30)</sup> Hence, it is very likely that the planned pre-election Anti-Republican Congress was cancelled in order to avoid identification with extreme anti-republicanism. Whatever the reason, the effect was unfortunate, for it gave the impression that the Party was moving away from its clear-cut position on republicanism.

Before taking the decision to gamble on a Referendum, Verwoerd consulted several public opinion surveys.<sup>(31)</sup> When he took the matter to the caucus, there was by no means unanimity. But, the majority were prepared to support his determined advocacy of this course of action.<sup>(32)</sup> Another possible prompt to Dr Verwoerd and his caucus opting for 1960 as the referendum year is that mentioned by Professor Heard. He maintains that they saw the fiftieth anniversary of the Union in 1960 as a year of heightened emotions and therefore an opportune moment to decide the republican issue.<sup>(33)</sup> However, Heard's speculation does not take account of the sudden change of heart on Verwoerd's part. The Prime Minister had pledged to keep 1960 a controversy-free parliamentary session because of the "special nature" of the year. It would seem that his decision to abandon his pledge and to

announce the referendum had been more the result of the identification of a waning of anti-republican determination, rather than a desire to exploit heightened emotions during an anniversary year.

Dr Verwoerd's announcement of the referendum was a surprise to the whole nation. Reaction to the announcement ranged from jubilation amongst the NP and its Press, to shock among the UP and the English-speaking newspapers. Die Burger commented happily that the anti-republicans were acting "... soos mense wat die eerste belangrike ronde klaar verloor het ...,"<sup>(34)</sup> while The Daily News referred to the announcement as a "bombshell".<sup>(35)</sup> Most criticism of Dr Verwoerd's announcement centred on the requirement of a majority of one, the Commonwealth membership issue and the lack of consultation of non-Europeans. However, the UP failed to respond immediately as a Party and Die Burger accused it of being in a state of disarray at the announcement. Individual UP MPs refused to comment until after a caucus meeting on the morning of 22 January 1960 had formulated a policy statement and their leader, Sir de Villiers Graaff, had had a chance to respond.<sup>(36)</sup>

In Natal the reaction was especially vigorous, although it wasn't as vociferous as might have been expected.<sup>(37)</sup> The Natal Mercury even welcomed the challenge that had "... overhung the nation like a sword of Damocles ...."<sup>(38)</sup> E C Wilks and E J V Grantham (Natal MECs) both expressed their shock at the announcement.<sup>(39)</sup> Their response echoed that of Douglas Mitchell who had asked where the spirit of the Union festivities had disappeared to after the Prime Minister's announcement.<sup>(40)</sup>

All three leading Natal English-language newspapers made calls for a united effort amongst anti-republicans. The Daily News called on all who valued democracy and the Union to join in battle against the republic,<sup>(41)</sup> while, by 27 January 1960, The Natal Mercury was calling for a "determined stand" by English-speakers,<sup>(42)</sup> and The Natal Witness speculated that "the political hatchet" would be buried in a united anti-republican effort.<sup>(43)</sup>

Shortly after Verwoerd had made his announcement regarding the Referendum, a number of events occurred which were to have a very significant effect on the campaign. These included the Coalbrook mine disaster, riots in Cato Manor and later at Sharpeville, and the now-famous address of the British Prime Minister to the Union's Parliament. These events highlighted the major challenges facing white South Africans in deciding their constitutional future. These challenges were the growth of a determined and strong African nationalism, revolutionary changes in the nature of the Commonwealth and mounting international criticism of racism generally and of apartheid in particular. They formed a complex background to Verwoerd's request for a decision on the future of their country as far as the white electorate was concerned.

On 21 January 1960, one day after Verwoerd announced the referendum, disaster struck the Coalbrook mine in the Orange Free State. Four hundred and thirty-eight, mostly black, miners lost their lives.<sup>(44)</sup> After a prolonged search, it became evident that there was little hope of saving the men's lives and the search was abandoned. This disaster was

coverage. Verwoerd was accused of having the search cancelled when he discovered that most of the miners were black.<sup>(45)</sup>

The reaction of the international media served to confirm the growing opposition to South Africa's internal policies that existed internationally; especially in the newly multiracial Commonwealth. White South Africans of both major Parties would have to consider carefully the merits of remaining within the Commonwealth in the face of such opposition. The "new" Commonwealth had already made an impression in the Union early in 1960 with press reports of Nigeria demanding the Union's expulsion or withdrawal if her internal policies were not altered.<sup>(46)</sup>

Further criticism and a firm warning were to come from the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, when he made an official visit to the Union from 27 January 1960. He was on the last leg of an extended African tour which had seen him proclaiming the merits of democracy and equality in various speeches or conferences throughout the trip.<sup>(47)</sup>

Macmillan addressed both Houses of the Union Parliament on 3 February 1960. He spoke of his sense of privilege at being able to visit the Union in its fiftieth year, commenting on the industrial and economic development which had taken place, noting the role British investment had played in it. However, the focus of his speech was African nationalism.

After comparing the emerging African and Asian nations with those that had evolved in Europe, Macmillan claimed that this nationalist force had been evident throughout his tour to differing extents. He said:

"The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it."<sup>(48)</sup>

Although Macmillan had avoided condemning the Union's internal policies by name, he had clearly made it known that Britain would not support "white" South Africa against "Black Africa". In a very definite warning he went on to add:

"As a fellow-member of the Commonwealth it is our earnest desire to give South Africa our support and encouragement, but I hope you won't mind my saying frankly that there are some aspects of your policies which make it impossible for us to do so without being false to our own deep convictions about the political destinies of free men to which in our own territories we are trying to give effect."<sup>(49)</sup>

The "Winds of Change" speech, as it has become popularly known, took Verwoerd and the Union by surprise. According to Meiring, a senior official in the Department of Information who was closely associated with Macmillan's tour, the entire Press corps were shocked by the speech. Before the speech, at their press conference at Groote Schuur, Verwoerd

and Macmillan had appeared arm-in-arm and were cheered by waiting reporters. Meiring comments:

"Things were certainly going swimmingly and nobody was prepared for anything but complimentary platitudes from Macmillan ...."(50)

This impression was confirmed to the press when no copy of the speech was issued.<sup>(51)</sup> Macmillan, admitting that Verwoerd seemed shocked, claimed that he had sent a broad outline of his speech to him.<sup>(52)</sup>

Caught by surprise, Verwoerd was forced to defend his policies in an impromptu speech. Macmillan notes that, from that moment onward, the atmosphere of his tour remained formal, with Verwoerd never venturing to discuss his speech.<sup>(53)</sup> The speech not only soured relations between the two leaders; it caused widespread condemnation from Nationalist quarters as interference in the Union's internal affairs. The Natal Mercury saw this as a "transparent and belated attempt to offset some of the impact of the British Prime Minister's statesmanly and objective survey" and accused Verwoerd of taking a "gamble that did not come off".<sup>(54)</sup>

The Mercury's claim is maintained by Heard who claims that Verwoerd had announced his republican plans before Macmillan arrived in the Union in order to get an indication from him regarding the status a South African republic would have in the Commonwealth.<sup>(55)</sup> This is borne out in Macmillan's autobiography where he claims that Verwoerd used part of their conference on 4 February 1960 to get some statement or impression

from him that would give him an advantage in the referendum. However, Macmillan refused to give Verwoerd any such advantage — especially after noting the strong support of Britain evident in his reception by people in Natal and the Cape. Verwoerd did, however, use the conference to discuss the procedure for South Africa to approach the Commonwealth with a request to remain a member as a republic. Macmillan advised Verwoerd to attend the next Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conference, in May 1960, in order to put his case orally rather than via correspondence.<sup>(56)</sup>

White South Africans had been left in no doubt that Britain was withdrawing from Africa and leaving them to their own resources.<sup>(57)</sup> This is reflected in a speech made in Parliament by Douglas Mitchell, UP Natal Leader, shortly after the "Winds of Change" speech. He said:

"One thing is certain. Britain is getting out of Africa. She is getting out for eternity and you cannot bring her back. Ultimately South Africa will be the only white settlement in Africa." Putting the question of the republic aside, he went on to say: "Mr Macmillan said that Britain was leaving Africa on considerations which were opposed to the way we were taking. He had said in effect: 'Good-bye. And the best of luck. You are on your own. It is a different path to ours.'

"That may be, but it will not make white South Africans change their opinions. The white people of South Africa are here to stay."<sup>(58)</sup>

Mitchell's speech reflects a feeling of being discarded by Britain on the part of white English-speaking South Africans. Although his fiery determination not to give in was praised by the Government, his words can have had little comfort for anti-republicans. They were already nervous that any republic would be, at some stage, thrown out of the Commonwealth. They wanted assurances that a South African republic would remain in the Commonwealth and they worked to maintain their ties with the Monarchy and with Britain. But such assurances Macmillan was unable to give. Furthermore, the sense of Britain betraying English-speakers was to become a useful card in Verwoerd's hand during the referendum campaign.

Macmillan's speech is held by Mansergh to be the first public expression of a new trend in British policy which he described as "a change of wind on Downing Street" which heralded not only changes in Britain's view of her Empire, but in the nature of the Commonwealth as well.<sup>(59)</sup>

From the end of World War II, various Commonwealth members had begun to show an increasing degree of autonomy. This was partly due to the fact that the Dominions had always had a fair degree of autonomy, and because the newly independent members evidenced such differing interests and needs that a large degree of flexibility had to exist if the Commonwealth was to survive. Evidence of this was that from 1949, various member countries concluded military alliances with or without Britain's involvement.<sup>(60)</sup> India and Ceylon refused to be part of the subdivision of the world, and particularly South Asia, into spheres of influence by

the superpowers. They advocated non-aligned status. Hence the Commonwealth was divided between aligned and non-aligned members and needed to be flexible in order to accommodate both. These divisions also made consultation amongst members over defence issues difficult.

It had always been understood that the members of the Commonwealth would consult each other on matters of foreign policy and security. This mechanism, however, was broken during the Suez Crisis in 1956. Britain, together with France, took action in Egypt without consulting any Commonwealth member. Canada reacted sharply, speculating that the Commonwealth would dissolve, while India blatantly denounced Britain's actions as "naked aggression." Later, when the Soviet Union invaded Budapest, India's judgement was very restrained, much to Britain's chagrin.<sup>(61)</sup>

Although a split in the Commonwealth was avoided, the Suez Crisis indicated that the Commonwealth was no longer a British-dominated organisation but a "club" that members joined for reasons of national convenience.

Beyond this change in the nature of the Commonwealth, the attitude of the British Government to granting independence to former colonies also changed. Initially it was a gradual process that led to an Act of the British Parliament granting independence. Increasingly, it became a paper exercise aimed at getting these nations off Britain's hands as soon as possible. Mansergh comments that between 1957 and 1967 it was the Colonial Secretary's aim to "do himself out of a job", and that by 1966

he had succeeded.<sup>(62)</sup> This change in attitude is ascribed to increasing public pressure on the British Government and from organisations such as the United Nations to grant independence. Another vital factor was the rise of strong African and Asian nationalisms.

A characteristic of the new Commonwealth members was hostility towards South Africa. By 1960 there was such a firm lobby against South Africa's apartheid policy that her request to be a republican member was to provide the opportunity for a stand against racism and a test of the notion of Commonwealth membership for nations which were republics.

The issue of internal African discontent and the solution to that problem was another facet of the complex scenario into which Verwoerd's announcement of the referendum must be placed. African unrest had been occurring throughout the Union from the early 1950s in response to the introduction of legislation aimed at enforcing white supremacy. In African townships these made themselves felt in the form of shack removals and liquor raids.<sup>(63)</sup>

June 1959 had seen serious riots in Durban's townships over low wages, shack removals and liquor raids<sup>(64)</sup> and January 1960 saw the murder of nine policemen at Cato Manor, outside Durban, during a liquor raid.<sup>(65)</sup> These incidents were followed by the Sharpeville killings which focused the attention of human rights campaigners throughout the world on the Union.

As these pressures mounted overseas, a hard-core militant element emerged from within the African National Congress (ANC). This was the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). The ANC had decided to organise pass-law demonstrations on 31 March 1960 but were pre-empted by similar action organised by the PAC on 18 March 1960.

The PAC organised a mass strike and march at the Sharpeville township outside Vereeniging to protest against the removal, under the policy of influx control, of families which could not pay higher rents. Their anger was exacerbated by the daily liquor raids and influx control arrests that had been made by the local police. The police were surprised at the size of the crowd. When they ordered the 5 000 people to disperse, the crowd refused, believing that an important announcement about passes would be made.

Lodge claims that the police were inexperienced at handling large crowds and that "their behaviour may have been influenced by the memory of the recent attack on policemen in Cato Manor".<sup>(66)</sup> Davenport reinforces Lodge's argument, claiming that "undisciplined police, who were probably not told to open fire before the first shot went off ..." panicked at the pressure of the mob around their station.<sup>(67)</sup> Sabre jets, saracens and sten guns were used to fire upon the crowd with 54 people being killed.<sup>(68)</sup> Similar violence occurred at Langa and Nyanga townships outside Cape Town on 30 March, two people being killed there by police.<sup>(69)</sup>

The Government responded by declaring a state of emergency and announcing its intention to introduce legislation that would result in the ANC and PAC being banned. On 30 March 1960, after nineteen hours of debate within the Party, the UP decided to back the Unlawful Organisations Bill (Banning Bill), which became effective on 8 April 1960. Preceding that date, 18 000 people were arrested under emergency regulations in a crackdown on protesters. Tension remained high as protests continued when, on 30 March 1960, the PAC staged protest marches in Durban and Cape Town to demand the release of arrested leaders. Further violence broke out in June 1960 in Pondoland. This was part of the ongoing reaction to the new Bantu Authorities system which had seen a series of clashes between the armed forces and the rebels there. On 6 June 1960, between eleven and thirty Africans were killed in such a clash.<sup>(70)</sup>

Verwoerd's announcement of the referendum was thus made at a moment when anti-republican opposition was declining. It was also made against a backdrop of a variety of local and international pressures. These pressures greatly influenced the white electorate's reaction during the referendum campaign.

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F O O T N O T E S

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2. NATAL WITNESS (NW) (28.01.59).
3. 'PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT . . . .'
4. NW (06.05.59).
5. THE STAR (editorial) (06.05.59).
6. RAND DAILY MAIL (RDM) (editorial) (06.05.59).
7. THE STAR (25.05.59).
8. NATAL DAILY NEWS (NDN) (editorial) (09.09.59).
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
12. These included the possible loss of Commonwealth membership, the reaction of English-speakers and the possible economic consequences of republicanism.

13. NDN (editorial) (09.09.59).
  
14. This idea is borne out by the following comment of Reid's on Verwoerd's visit to Pietermaritzburg: "The appearance of the Prime Minister at a public meeting in Natal's capital, the first in years, marked a new offensive by the Nationalists against English-speaking Natal. He was determined to call the Federal's [Union Federal Party] bluff as regards the republic and to test how determined the anglophiles were in their defiance." B L Reid, 'The Federal Party and the Natal Provincial Elections ....' Natal in the Union, 1931 - 1961. Pietermaritzburg, Department of Historical and Political Studies, University of Natal, 1981.
  
15. NW (05.09.59).
16. RDM (05.09.59).
17. NW (05.09.59).
  
18. Throughout 1959 "English language" press reports raised the possibility of a republic being established imminently and questioned the type of republic that would be established. The Natal Witness reports on the demonstration against Verwoerd gives prominence to the actions of the students. It seems to delight in the idea of the Prime Minister being "smuggled into the city by a roundabout route." The paper allocated much front-page space to photographs of the various anti-Nationalist posters. Little attention is given to what Verwoerd had to say. See NW (05.09.59).

19. RDM (22.10.59).
20. NDN (30.11.59).
21. Although the Anti-Republican League was nominally autonomous, Dr Reid has shown that intimate ties between it and the UFP did exist. See B L Reid, 'The Anti-Republican League ....'
22. For a history of the UFP, see B L Reid, 'The Federal Party ....'
23. NW (03.11.59).
24. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, File N° 1 'UP Natal Provincial Head Office, Congresses, Vol 12 1954 - 1959,' 1958 UP Congress Agenda, Resolution on republic issue.
25. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, 'The Campaign Against a Republic,' Confidential Report of the Subcommittee Appointed by the Natal Executive, 8 May 1959.
26. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, File N° 5 'UP Natal Provincial Head Office, Committees, Provincial Executive Committee Minutes, 20 February 1948 to 21 November 1967,' Minutes, 10.07.59.
27. Ibid, Minutes, 19.11.59.

28. A possible reason could be that Mitchell was closely involved in the defection of the "progressive" MPs in late-1959. However, there is no reference to this in Wilks's discussion of this period. See Wilks, Chp 9.
29. B L Reid: 'The Federal Party and the Natal Provincial Elections ....'
30. Ibid.
31. Dr Verwoerd's private secretary admitted that, in the months before the January 1960 announcement of the referendum by Dr Verwoerd, the Government had been considering the merit of advancing the republican cause on the basis of several surveys. See F Barnard, 13 YEARS WITH DR H F VERWOERD (Johannesburg, Voortrekkerpers, 1967), pp 119-120.
32. Ibid.
33. K A Heard: GENERAL ELECTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1943-1970 (London, Oxford University Press, 1974), p 98.
34. DIE BURGER (22.01.60).
35. NDN (editorial) (21.01.60).
36. DIE BURGER (22.01.60).
37. SUNDAY TIMES (24.01.60).

38. NATAL MERCURY (NM) (editorial) (22.01.60).
39. NDN (21.01.60).
40. Wilks, p 123.
41. NDN (editorial) (27.01.60).
42. NM (editorial) (27.01.60).
43. NW (28.01.60).
44. P Meiring: INSIDE INFORMATION. (Cape Town, Howard Timmins, 1982),  
p 159.
45. Barnard, p 72.
46. DIE TRANSVALER (14.01.60).
47. H Macmillan, POINTING THE WAY 1959 - 1961. (London, Macmillan, 1972),  
pp 150-161.
48. Ibid, p 156.
49. Ibid, p 158.
50. Meiring, p 160.

51. Ibid.
52. Macmillan, p 155.
53. Ibid, p 160.
54. NM (10.02.60).
55. Heard, p 99.
56. Macmillan, pp 153-155.
  
57. White South Africans were noting that Britain was pushing for vastly increased rights for Africans in the crumbling Central African Federation. It was becoming increasingly clear that a settler-dominated government would never be given independence by Britain. See Macmillan, pp 164-166.
  
58. Wilks, p 124.
  
59. N Mansergh: THE COMMONWEALTH EXPERIENCE, Vol 2 - From British to Multiracial Commonwealth. (London, Macmillan, 1982), p 176.
  
60. 1951 - Australia and New Zealand sign the Pacific Security Agreement with USA;  
1954 - S E Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) established by Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan;  
1967 - Australia assists US at divisional level in Vietnam;  
See Mansergh, p 168.
  
61. Ibid, p 171.

62. Ibid, p 176.

63. T R H Davenport: SOUTH AFRICA: A MODERN HISTORY (Johannesburg, Macmillan South Africa, 1981), pp 285-288; T Lodge: BLACK POLITICS IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE 1945 (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1983), pp 33-230.

64. Davenport, pp 285-288.

65. Barnard, p 72.

66. Lodge, p 210.

67. Davenport, p 286.

68. NM (22.03.60).

69. Lodge, pp 210-223.

70. Davenport, pp 285-288.

CHAPTER THREE : THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE  
AND THE 1960 COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE

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The announcement of the referendum brought the long-proposed republic alarmingly close to reality. In terms of Verwoerd's announcement, the referendum would decide the issue on the basic principle of whether or not a republic was favoured without details of the future constitution being revealed. A simple majority, even of one vote, would be required and the electorate would be limited to all white South Africans. South West Africa was excluded on the grounds that the Union's constitutional status had no effect on her.<sup>(1)</sup>

Early February saw a campaign mounted to include South West Africa, which the Mercury saw as an attempt by the NP to "bolster confidence".<sup>(2)</sup> During the debate in the House of Assembly on the Prime Minister's Budget Vote, Verwoerd suddenly announced that the Cabinet had reconsidered the issue of South West African participation and that the territory would be included as part of the electorate. He claimed that South West Africa had originally been excluded to prevent the Opposition from arguing that the republic could not be won without its support, and because South Africa's constitutional position had no bearing on South West Africa's position. Now he agreed with Graaff that South West Africa should be included.<sup>(3)</sup>

The Mercury roundly denounced the move, accusing the Government of "expediency". It felt that the sudden change of stance was the result

of "... a belated awareness that their votes might be badly needed ...."(4) A modern commentator sees the inclusion of South West African voters as one of the three ways in which Verwoerd hedged his bets and manipulated the electorate to give the Republicans a more favourable position.(5)

A further source of discontent was the fact that the referendum was to occur in the Union's fiftieth year. Many English-speakers, and Natalians in particular, felt that the spirit of the planned festivities had been killed by Verwoerd's announcement. "Where is the spirit of the Union festivities now? The Prime Minister has killed it stone dead," commented Douglas Mitchell soon after the announcement.(6)

In both Durban and Pietermaritzburg, planned festivities were scaled down. A ceremonial council meeting was planned in Durban and the City's General Purposes Committee reduced the festival budget to £1,950 from £5,000. Most of the money was allocated to flags and bunting for decorative purposes.(7) In some quarters it was felt that this still amounted to too much expense.(8)

Pietermaritzburg's Mayor, C B Downes, and his Council spent much time deliberating as to who would accept the flags that were being carried round the Province by Voortrekkers and Boy Scouts. Eventually the Council avoided compromising itself by asking the Administrator to receive the flags.(9)

While festivities around the country began on 6 April, with great crowds of people marching in Bloemfontein, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Natal made little effort and the start of the festival "... fizzled out like a damp squib ...."<sup>(10)</sup> 31 May saw both Verwoerd and Graaff give speeches at an official gathering in Bloemfontein, which for months had been preparing for a huge influx of people. Natal, on the other hand, kept its celebrations low-key. In Pietermaritzburg, the Mayor addressed eight hundred people in the City Hall. He said that because of recent political events, the occasion was not one for celebration. The spirit of Union was reaffirmed and loyalty to the Queen was pledged.<sup>(11)</sup>

While opposition to the Union festival was building up in Natal, three controversial Bills were introduced to Parliament: the Referendum Bill, the Education Bill and the Banning Bill. The Referendum Bill was introduced to Parliament by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, P W Botha, on 11 March 1960. Its First Reading Debate saw concerted opposition from all opposition members of the House of Assembly. Most objected to the lack of consultation with "non-whites" over this major constitutional change. Graaff led the opposition to the measure:

"The Government gave a guarantee to the Coloureds that there would be no diminution in the rights of the Coloured voters. Now, at this first opportunity of displaying its good faith, it has refused them a say in this extremely important matter which affects both the form of Government and their own future."<sup>(12)</sup>

The Coloured Representative, C Barnett, supported Graaff's position, while the Progressive Party and Margaret Ballinger, Native Representative, argued for a decision made by all qualified voters, irrespective of race.

The Nationalists responded by threatening simply to pass a Bill establishing a republic; the Minister of Lands, Paul Sauer, claiming the Government had no choice but to do so because of the Opposition's reaction. Verwoerd pointed out that the decision to hold a referendum had been taken in a Parliament in which Coloureds were represented, and accused the Opposition of trying to use the Coloured vote to "... foil the wishes of the majority of whites".<sup>(13)</sup> The Transvaler reiterated this view in claiming that the UP was using diversionary tactics, allowing non-Europeans a say in European affairs.<sup>(14)</sup>

The Mercury came out strongly against the Bill. It published a list of "Nationalism's 4 Deeds of Shame" on the front page. These were: the bare majority; the inclusion of South West Africa for 4 000 extra voters; the exclusion of 30 000 Coloured voters because the Government had little support there; and the acceptance of spoilt papers.<sup>(15)</sup>

The issue of spoilt papers arose from the provision in the Bill which, contrary to the normal practice regarding spoilt papers, allowed voters to write on the ballot-paper, provided that this displayed a clear preference. Only signatures were prohibited. Furthermore, the Bill made provision for the election of pro- and anti-republican agents and eight helpers per constituency; made the Union and South West Africa one

constituency (although individual constituencies were used to define polling areas and to allow a breakdown of results); gave no fixed date for the referendum; and did not bind the Government to act in accordance with, or against, the result.<sup>(16)</sup>

A further UP worry was that nominated referendum agents were appointed by the Electoral Officers, who were Government employees. J L Horak, MP (UP, Sunnyside) found this "most sinister":

"By selecting an unsatisfactory nominee he can influence the outcome of the election in the area for which he is responsible."

Horak also worried that while the NP would nominate its own members as Republican referendum agents, the UP could find itself competing with many organisations.<sup>(17)</sup>

A further crisis surfaced when threats were made by NP MPs to use means other than a referendum to secure the republic. In an address to the Nasionale Vroueklub of Parliament on 15 March, Verwoerd claimed that a referendum was simply "one weapon" that was to be used to obtain a republic. If that method failed, another would be tried.<sup>(18)</sup>

Graaff accused Verwoerd of making an irresponsible threat in the event of his chosen method not working, while the PP took the outburst as an indication that Verwoerd was not sure of victory and was looking for a way out. The UFP's Col Martin saw the threat as typical of the 'subversive Broederbond Government'.<sup>(19)</sup>

"To say that Natal was shocked is an understatement" was The Mercury's summary of Natal's reaction to Verwoerd's statement. The paper attacked him for his "outrageous" threat, militaristic tone and contempt for the democratic process. The inclusion of South West Africa and the acceptance of spoilt papers were even seen as part of Verwoerd's "... heads I win, tails you lose," attitude.<sup>(20)</sup> Columnist John Desmond claimed that South Africa was living under an "incipient dictatorship" because Verwoerd was "openly contemptuous of the will of the people".<sup>(21)</sup>

Die Burger, on the other hand, responded that the choice was not between a republic or no republic. Rather, it was between a republic now or later.<sup>(22)</sup>

Meanwhile, the NP MP for Kempton Park, Fritz Steyn, had told Durban audiences that the republic was part of South Africa's political evolution and had always been part of the Nationalists' programme.<sup>(23)</sup>

Further acrimony between the Republican and Anti-republican factions broke out in Parliament over the question of the majority required in terms of the Bill. Verwoerd claimed, in defence of the bare majority required, that the Opposition had forced the NP into a corner and reiterated his stance that if the referendum was lost, an alternative method of establishing a republic would have to be found.

This led Graaff to ask why Verwoerd chose a method he was afraid would cost him his ideal. Mitchell found the bare majority unjust and told Parliament that if Natal did not think the majority was adequate, it

would tell the Government to "... go and be damned because we will not accept that decision". He admitted that he was advocating rebellion.<sup>(24)</sup>

The debate on the Referendum Bill was interrupted by the outbreak of African unrest in the Union and a State of Emergency being declared. Claiming that the Government's race policies were responsible for the violence, the PP turned the Prime Minister's Budget Vote debate into a race policy harangue.<sup>(25)</sup> Using the unrest to request a moratorium on the republican issue until law and order had been re-established, Graaff argued, during the Second Reading of the Referendum Bill, that while the UP accepted the challenge the referendum posed, he felt it was not the time to divide the nation on such a contentious issue. He felt that there could only be two reasons why the Bill was being pushed through Parliament: stupidity or diversionary tactics. He advocated concentration on the causes of the unrest and the way it was being handled.<sup>(26)</sup>

While the Volksblad claimed that Graaff's plea showed how desperate the "Monarchists" were,<sup>(27)</sup> the Mercury praised his "restrained and statesmanlike" argument and repeated his call as a special plea from Natal.<sup>(28)</sup> Mitchell similarly pleaded that, "At this time the Government should avoid any contentious matters."<sup>(29)</sup> Further support for Graaff's position came from the PP which added that it was also opposed to the proposed republic because it did not guarantee individual rights and excluded a large portion of the population from voting.<sup>(30)</sup>

During the second day of the Second Reading Debate on the Referendum Bill, M Vause Raw (UP, Point) restated the UP's stance that the Government should find a better time to broach the issue. Referring to the Minister's wide powers to alter regulations provided in the Bill, he claimed that the Bill was open to abuse.<sup>(31)</sup>

Summing up, Graaff proposed an amendment to the Bill postponing referendums during states of emergency. Not surprisingly, it was rejected, along with an amendment that Union citizens overseas be allowed to vote.<sup>(32)</sup> Throughout the rest of the Bill's passage through Parliament, the UP proposed a number of amendments, all of which were rejected.<sup>(33)</sup> Finally, during the Third Reading Debate, Graaff proposed that the Bill be not read the third time because it did not guarantee a fair test of the will of the electorate; because it gave the Government dictatorial powers; and because it did not allow for "shades of opinion" as it only asked for a response on the broad principle. In response, the Minister of Transport, B J Schoeman, accused Graaff of rehashing previous points and repeated the assurances of the Prime Minister that there would be sufficient notice of the date of the referendum and whether or not the Union would be in the Commonwealth; that the Opposition would be able to make propaganda against the republic without hindrance during the state of emergency; and that the constitution of the republic would be based on the existing constitution.<sup>(34)</sup>

Reacting to Schoeman's assurances, Mitchell stated that he would not accept any assurances from the Prime Minister or from anyone else, claiming that the Bill could be "a complete, barefaced swindle," there

being no guarantee that the Prime Minister's assurances would be honoured.<sup>(35)</sup>

Despite such vigorous opposition, the Bill became law on 7 May 1960. The Mercury was very critical of the "legal, strictly legal" way the Government forced its will on the people and castigated the UP for basing its opposition on legal rather than moral grounds, describing its tactics as "disastrous".<sup>(36)</sup>

The proposed Union Education Advisory Council Bill, introduced to Parliament shortly after the Referendum Bill, was a further source of discontent, particularly in Natal. It made provision for the establishment of an advisory council on which Provincial and Government nominees would sit. They would advise the Minister and the Provincial Councils on measures to be taken, and could reject any Provincial Ordinance that conflicted with national education aims.<sup>(37)</sup>

A pamphlet issued by the Natal Education Vigilance Association, based in Durban, claimed that the Bill had sinister implications. The first was that the Council would not be independent because members would be remunerated, appointed by the Minister and fully employed by the Council. The Association questioned whether the Council would be able to contradict the Minister and if it would wish to do so. Secondly, the Council was not representative because: a majority of members were to be appointed by the Minister; the Provinces' nominees could be vetoed by the Minister; and members did not have to have an educational background.

Thirdly, the Council was permitted to inspect any school which received any form of Government aid and, fourthly, the Provincial Councils were forbidden to pass legislation without the Minister's approval. Finally, this measure was the culmination of a series of moves that had taken place since 1948. It was thus an "important step to the control of the minds of our children," and represented "indoctrination, intolerance, obscurantism" and "ignorance".(38)

The Education Advisory Council Bill was in this way denounced as a limitation of Provincial rights and a further step towards the control of education by Afrikaner ideologues in Pretoria. The Action Committee for Freedom in Education, which was established on 6 May 1960 in Pietermaritzburg,(39) and the Natal Education Vigilance Association, based in Durban, issued pamphlets, while Mitchell threatened an "intense reaction" from Natal to the Bill.(40) The PP set up a committee, which included Col Martin of the UFP, to co-ordinate the activities of those opposed to the Bill during May 1960.(41)

In Parliament, Mitchell claimed, during the introduction of the Bill on 25 April, that the UP would not "... be a party to this first stage of Government's taking over of education. We are utterly opposed to the measure."(42) The PP concurred, opposing the Government's attempt to "... straight-jacket education out of ideological considerations". The UFP's Col Martin prophesied doom, warning that "... a New Dark Age ..." was being entered,(43) while the Mercury argued that major constitutional changes should not be introduced during a state of emergency.(44)

Most Anti-Republicans linked the Education Bill to the Referendum Bill in their speeches and statements. In Natal, Mitchell organised rallies in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg City Halls to register Natal's opposition to both Bills. Both meetings were well attended. In Pietermaritzburg "God Save the Queen" was sung.<sup>(45)</sup> Both Bills were roundly denounced in the Provincial Council as well.<sup>(46)</sup> The Education Bill undoubtedly provided the Anti-Republicans with a lot of anti-Nationalist and anti-republic mileage, although it was held over until the next session of Parliament when the 1960 session was shortened to celebrate the Union's half-century.

The outbreak of violence in South Africa, especially the Sharpeville incident, led to the controversial Banning Bill being introduced in Parliament and interrupting the progress of the Referendum Bill. The Bill, supported by the UP, was designed to give the Government the power to ban 'subversive' organisations — particularly the ANC and PAC.<sup>(47)</sup>

The outbreak of unrest had the effect not only of drawing attention away from the Referendum issue but of emphasising points of agreement between the Government and Opposition. Mitchell apparently "entranced" the House of Assembly with his call for unity of purpose in support of the Banning Bill.<sup>(48)</sup>

A recent study of the UP during this crucial phase in its history has shown how it grappled to formulate a successful race policy in opposition to apartheid after 1948.<sup>(49)</sup> The Party's broadly based support was a hindrance to efficient decision-making and it ended up trying to follow a

policy that fell between the NP on the right and the PP on the left. This resulted in ambiguous policy statements such as, "While it is opposed to equality, it is equally opposed to the purely negative policy of apartheid".<sup>(50)</sup> It also led to the PP branding it a "... ship without a rudder".<sup>(51)</sup>

A fourth important event in the first half of 1960 was the 1960 Commonwealth Conference. Both the Press and the UP hoped that it would solve the question of republican status in the Commonwealth.<sup>(52)</sup> Verwoerd had argued during his January 20 announcement that the issue of Commonwealth membership would be decided closer to the date of the referendum. His reason for putting off a decision was, he said, that the Union's membership would depend on what would best serve her interests at the time.<sup>(53)</sup>

Initial reaction to this announcement voiced concern as to the country's future Commonwealth links. Mitchell felt that the ultimate aim was a republic outside the Commonwealth: "The Government may proclaim that the Republic will remain in the Commonwealth. It probably will. But at any time thereafter, however, it will be free to cut adrift from our friends without any further reference to the voters."<sup>(54)</sup>

The Mercury questioned whether the Prime Minister's assurances could be trusted in view of the fact that the assurances of previous Prime Ministers that a republic would only be established if the broad majority of the voters agreed, had been so easily forgotten.<sup>(55)</sup>

The Daily News saw the republic as the conclusion to the 1899-1902 war as far as the Afrikaners were concerned; the aim being a republic out of the Commonwealth.<sup>(56)</sup>

In response to continual Nationalist claims that any South African republic would remain in the Commonwealth as long as this suited South Africa,<sup>(57)</sup> the UP warned voters that South Africa would not automatically remain a member of the Commonwealth. Graaff, after declaring that the UP was a "Commonwealth Party" the previous day, stressed in Parliament that India had not become a republican member automatically. She had had to reapply for membership.<sup>(58)</sup> The Nationalists rejected this idea as propaganda<sup>(59)</sup> and claimed that the republic would lead to better Commonwealth relations.<sup>(60)</sup>

The confidence displayed by NP speakers in asserting that it would be South Africa's choice as to Commonwealth membership was possibly the result of a confidential letter sent to Verwoerd by Macmillan during his tour of the Union in January and February 1960. The letter stated that it would be procedurally correct to apply for membership as a republic at that stage. However, the letter made no mention of any likely opposition to the request and gave the impression that acceptance would be automatic.<sup>(61)</sup>

The 1960 Commonwealth Conference has to be seen in the light of the world-wide negative reaction to South Africa's racial policies following Sharpeville. The Union had been strongly criticised by Commonwealth members, and the Malayan Prime Minister had demanded that the incident be

discussed at the forthcoming Conference. In New York, Ecuador introduced a resolution in the United Nations' Security Council denouncing apartheid and asking the Secretary-General to make arrangements that would ensure that the UN Charter was upheld.

This put Britain in a difficult position. Older Commonwealth countries, like Australia, felt that the resolution should be vetoed on the grounds of non-interference in member nations' domestic affairs.<sup>(62)</sup> The newer Commonwealth members, like Ghana, wanted South Africa to be censured. Macmillan's goal was to avoid a Commonwealth split, and this led to Britain abstaining. The result was that the General Assembly passed a motion of censure on South Africa. This breached Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter, but it stalled a full Assembly taking stronger measures.<sup>(63)</sup>

As feelings strengthened against South Africa amongst Commonwealth members, it was forecast that Macmillan, the chairman of the Conference, would have his work cut out to control proceedings and the diverse opinions represented in it. The Union Government's reaction was that no discussion of internal policies would be tolerated at the Conference.<sup>(64)</sup>

Louw, representing the Union in place of Verwoerd who had been wounded in an assassination attempt whilst opening the Rand Show, was greeted by demonstrations, both for and against the Union's race policies, on arrival in London in May 1960.<sup>(65)</sup> As the various Commonwealth Prime Ministers arrived, demanding discussion of apartheid, the British Press extensively examined the nature of the Commonwealth and the Union's position in it. The more radical papers called for the Union's immediate expulsion, while

the Sunday Times and the Observer were opposed to expulsion but wanted a declaration of principles from the Prime Ministers.<sup>(66)</sup>

To accommodate Afro-Asian demands to discuss apartheid, in the face of the Union's insistence on the non-interference principle, it was decided that no formal discussion of the issue would take place. However, the Prime Ministers would meet individually with Louw to discuss the matter.<sup>(67)</sup> The Conference became very heated with Louw receiving a grilling from the Press as well as from individual delegates.<sup>(68)</sup>

The central issue became the drafting of a communique (joint statement) that would satisfy all delegates. By 17 May 1960, consensus had emerged that a decision concerning republican membership of the Commonwealth should wait until the Republican referendum had been held and the question put formally to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers. However, there was a deadlock on how the communique should be worded.<sup>(69)</sup> Some delegates wanted a firm denunciation of the Union's policies and a clear statement that republican membership was not automatic, while others were against interference in South Africa's internal policies.<sup>(70)</sup>

The final communique, after reaffirming the principle of non-interference, merely stated that South Africa's racial policy had been discussed and that views had been exchanged with Mr Louw. On the subject of republican membership of the Commonwealth, it stated:

"The meeting affirmed the view that the choice between a monarchy and a republic was entirely the responsibility of the country concerned.

In the event of South Africa deciding to become a republic and, if the decision was subsequently expressed to remain a member of the Commonwealth, the meeting suggested that the South African Government should then ask for the consent of the other Commonwealth countries."<sup>(71)</sup>

Verwoerd reacted to the communique in a speech read to Parliament on his behalf by the Minister of Finance, Dr T E Donges. He claimed that three important aspects of the communique were especially satisfying to the Government. Firstly, the principle of non-intervention in member country's internal affairs had been upheld. Secondly, despite differences, the communique indicated that the Union's continued membership was desired, and thirdly, it recognised that the form of government of a member state was that state's own affair. Verwoerd concluded:

"There follows only one conclusion, namely that, whereas South Africa's membership as a monarchy is, despite differences, expressly desired, and whereas the form of government — republic or monarchy — is not a condition of membership and is indeed not even a matter for consideration by the Commonwealth, the Union, in the event of its becoming a republic with all the other circumstances remaining unchanged, will be equally welcome ...."<sup>(72)</sup>

Graaff responded to this speech in Parliament on 19 May, during an Appropriation Bill Debate. He argued that Verwoerd was applying a "unilateral" interpretation to the communique which was clearly not

intended. He contended that if South Africa's race laws were not reformed, she would not be admitted to the Commonwealth and would be denied access to preferential trade, defence mechanisms and the sterling area.<sup>(73)</sup>

Reinforcing this argument, the UP's Division of Information and Research pointed out that the atmosphere at the Conference had clearly not been as welcoming as Verwoerd had made out. Louw had been attacked and, since the Conference, Canada's Prime Minister, J G Diefenbaker, had hinted that Canada could oppose South Africa's re-entry to the Commonwealth as a republic. To reinforce the Party's opinion that the communique was a warning to South Africa and an indictment of her race policies, the Division quoted from an editorial in the Sydney Morning Herald:

"... the Union has been served notice that its admission as a republic will be contingent on satisfactory reforms of its racial policies."<sup>(74)</sup>

The UP's point of view was totally vindicated in June 1960 when R A Butler, the Leader of the British House of Commons, stated that Verwoerd's interpretation of the communique was wrong.<sup>(75)</sup> The Star claimed that no matter what "verbal gymnastics" the Prime Minister used, a South African republic would be forced out of the Commonwealth.<sup>(76)</sup>

The Commonwealth Conference communique has to be seen in the light of the interests of Britain. Macmillan's fear was that a declaration which condemned South Africa's race laws too strongly could lead to the Union

leaving the Commonwealth, hastening its disintegration. On the other hand, he also feared that no declaration would lead to dissatisfaction amongst the new Afro-Asian members, causing them to secede. Thus, Britain's role was determined more by a preoccupation with keeping the Commonwealth alive, than by concern over the racial or republican issues that were dealt with in the final communique. This is borne out by the following quote from Macmillan's report to the Queen:

"The official text is weak but has the advantage of being agreed ... It does not, of course, make any progress in the solution of the problem, but it does at least keep the Commonwealth for the time being from being broken up."<sup>(77)</sup>

The effect of the Commonwealth communique on the republican debate in South Africa was that it was used by both sides in the campaign. Although the UP's hope that the conference would clear up the issue of republican membership had not been fulfilled, the communique could be interpreted as a clear warning of what was intended. On the other hand, Verwoerd had made the most of the communique's ambiguities to claim a victory. The communique, a weak agreement between vastly differing opinions and interests, thus merely led to two totally different interpretations of South Africa's membership prospects.

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F O O T N O T E S

1. 'Prime Minister's Statement on Republic ....' Details of the reaction to Verwoerd's announcement can be found in Chp Two.
2. NM (08.02.60).
3. NM and NW (10.03.60).
4. NM (11.03.60).
5. K A Heard, pp 114-115. The other two ways were:
  - a) the reduction of the voting age to 18 years, which was advantageous because the average Afrikaans age was lower than English-speakers;
  - b) the exclusion of coloured voters from the decision.
6. Wilks, p 123; Thompson, p 159.
7. NM (16.03.60).
8. NM (editorial) (23.03.60).
9. NM (24.03.60 and 31.05.60).
10. NM (07.04.60)

11. NM (28.05.60 - 01.06.60)
12. NM (12.03.60).
13. Ibid.
14. NM (17.03.60).
15. NM (12.03.60).
16. Ibid.
17. NM (16.03.60).
18. NW (17.03.60) and NM (16.03.60).
19. NM (17.03.60).
20. Ibid.
21. NM (26.04.60).
22. NM (28.03.60).
23. NM (21.03.60).
24. Wilks, p 124; Thompson, p 160.

25. NM (25.03.60).
26. NM (23.04.60).
27. NM (06.05.60).
28. NM (25.04.60).
29. NM (23.04.60).
30. NM (26.04.60).
31. NM (27.04.60).
32. NM (28 and 29.04.60).
33. NM (30.04.60 and 3,5,6,7.05.60).
34. NM (03.05.60).
35. NM (04.05.60).
36. NM editorial (05.05.60).
37. NM (27.04.60).

38. Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCP 1022, 'The Education Bill and What it Means'; Action Committee for Freedom in Education, Pietermaritzburg nd. This particular pamphlet is stamped by the Natal Education Vigilance Association; NM (27.04.60.)
39. NM (07.05.60).
40. NM (23.04.60).
41. NM (27.06.60).
42. NM (26.04.60).
43. NM (28.04.60).
44. NM (editorial) (29.04.60).
45. NM (10 and 11.05.60).
46. NM (Various reports — May 1960).
47. NM (25 and 26.03.60).
48. NM (04.04.60).
49. W B White, "The South African Parliamentary Opposition" (Unpublished phd thesis, University of Natal, 1989).

50. Ibid.
51. NM (29.04.60).
52. NM (21 and 22.03.60).
53. 'Prime Minister's Statement ....'
54. Wilks, p 123.
55. NM (22.01.60).
56. NM (22.01.60).
57. Minister of Defence, J J Fouche (03.03.60 and 26.04.60); Verwoerd (27.03.60): NM (4,28.03.60 and 26.04.60).
58. NM (16.03.60, 22 and 28.04.60); Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth', Macmillan, pp 154-155.
59. Minister of Finance, Dr T E Donges: NM (16.03.60).
60. Verwoerd: NM (28.03.60).
61. Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth'; Macmillan, pp 154-155
62. Article 2 (7) of UN Charter.

63. Macmillan, pp 167-169.
64. NM (02.04.60).
65. RDM (02.05.60).
66. INCH, E H Louw Collection (PC4), File N° 188, British Press Comment: South African Information Service, London, 24 May 1960.
67. Ibid; Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth'.
68. INCH, PC4, File N° 189, British Press Comment: Report on Mr Louw's London Press Conference, 4 May 1960; Macmillan, pp 170-176; Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth.'
69. NM (13.05.60); London Times (12 and 13.05.60); Cape Argus (14.05.60).
70. Webb, 'South Africa and the Commonwealth'; Macmillan, pp 170-176.
71. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, File N° 6: 'Republican Issue 1939-1960 and Anti-Republican League,' 'The Republic and the Commonwealth Conference' (UP Division of Information and Research, Johannesburg, 21 May 1960).
72. Ibid.

73. NM (20.05.60).

74. UP Archive, File N° 6, 'The Republic and the Commonwealth Conference,' 21.05.60.

75. NM (03.06.60).

76. The Star (03.06.60).

77. Macmillan, p 176.

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PART B

THE BATTLE FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE ELECTORATE

CHAPTER FOUR : THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Ever since his first parliamentary session as Prime Minister, Verwoerd had advocated a republic to unify English and Afrikaner citizens<sup>(1)</sup> and the central theme of the Republican referendum campaign was the unity that would result from a republic. Indeed, a pro-republican pamphlet claimed that "... racial harmony between our two races ..." had always been the Nationalists' goal.<sup>(2)</sup>

It was argued that the monarchy was the major source of division in South Africa. The pamphlet quoted above claimed that the NP's unity policy had failed because of:

"... a constitutional set-up which itself must divide some of our people in their hearts into two distinct loyalties."<sup>(3)</sup>

On announcing the referendum, the Prime Minister had argued that a republic would see the end of a "... 150 years' struggle between South African nationalism and what is to some extent a foreign nationalism".<sup>(4)</sup> Later, in a speech at Meyerton on 27 March, he claimed that:

"One of the main reasons why the Nationalist Party wanted a republic in South Africa was that it wanted to bind the people into one nation with one flag, one national anthem and one loyalty."<sup>(5)</sup>

He went on to say that the attempt at unity between the UP and PP would not last because:

"There were thousands of members of the United Party, especially among the English-speaking section, who would support the Nationalist Party if South Africa were a republic.

The only reason why they supported the United Party was because of the fear of a republic."<sup>(6)</sup>

Other speakers reminded voters that Afrikaners could never feel totally equal under a monarchical system<sup>(7)</sup> and argued that it was easier for English-speakers to become republicans than it was for Afrikaners to become monarchists.<sup>(8)</sup> The Deputy Minister of Education, Arts, Science & Social Welfare, John Vorster, argued at a meeting on the Bluff that because none of the major Parties objected to a republic in principle, and because the Nationalists objected to a monarchy, it was best to go for a republic to establish unity.<sup>(9)</sup>

Tied in with the question of unity was the need to reassure English-speakers that their interests would be protected in a republic. The UP and its "vicious press" were attacked for sowing distrust. Apparently "Every movement, every idea, every law was branded by them as being anti-British".<sup>(10)</sup> Furthermore, the UP was accused of misrepresenting the Nationalists by its scorn of the Party's attempts to create unity.<sup>(11)</sup>

Thus, much time was spent allaying English-speakers' fears concerning the republic. They were constantly reassured that their language rights — a critical issue in the 1950s — would remain intact and that Englishmen and Afrikaners would be equal in every way.<sup>(12)</sup> Vorster claimed in Durban that there was no revenge motive behind the quest for the republic<sup>(13)</sup> and it was pointed out that the republic would be based on the existing constitution and the South Africa Act.<sup>(14)</sup> Verwoerd argued that this fact made any fear of the 1942 Draft Republican Constitution irrelevant<sup>(15)</sup> while Die Transvaler spoke of the "new spiritual atmosphere" that would develop. Existing laws would be maintained so that there was no reason why unity would not abound in the new republic. The only significant change would be the replacement of the Governor-General by a State President.<sup>(16)</sup>

Finally, voters were approached directly by Verwoerd via the famous "Dear Friend" letter, which asked:

"... will you, through not voting for a republic let South Africa continue as a state in which the English- and Afrikaans-speaking sections cannot unite? Then the struggles of the past and differences of descent will remain stumbling blocks due to unsolved conflict on the question: British Monarchy, or South African Republic ...."<sup>(17)</sup>

The second pillar of the republican campaign can be broadly labelled: the protection of the European South African's interests. In his response to H G Lawrence's (PP) question as to who would take part in the

referendum during his announcement on 20 January 1960, Verwoerd replied:

"The white electorate will decide the destiny of their South Africa  
...."(18)

This set the tone for much of the Republican campaign. A pamphlet issued in September 1960 made the point even more bluntly. It stated that the Government's aim in pursuing the republic was for power to remain "... in the hands of the whites."(19)

Despite one deviation after the outbreak of violence in March 1960, this was the theme of most of Verwoerd's speeches. The deviation occurred when, at the height of the violence, Paul Sauer, Minister of Lands, admitted publicly that some changes would have to be made to the racial laws. This faux pas was quickly rectified by Eric Louw, Minister of External Affairs, who claimed that no changes would be made. The UP managed to capitalise on the incident by asking whose policy the NP would follow — Sauer's or Louw's? Louw dismissed this argument in a scathing attack, critical of the UP for attempting to divide the Cabinet.(20)

At Meyerton, shortly after the violence broke out, Verwoerd called on people to remain calm. He claimed that the violence was a result of a group of troublemakers using "mass psychology". Arguing for the separation of white and black, he advised whites to ignore the "ignorant furore" created by the international press and amongst Commonwealth member nations. The proposed republic would make no difference to the

Union's race problems, he said, just as the monarchy had made no difference to them.<sup>(21)</sup> Later, at his Union Festival address in Bloemfontein, he foresaw a white republic surrounded by black neighbours who were "satisfied and prosperous".<sup>(22)</sup>

At the end of June, Verwoerd received an unexpected bonus as far as his much-derided race policies were concerned when, within days of independence, the new Congo Republic was in a state of civil war. As the new black government failed to keep control, United Nations forces intervened and many whites fled to the Union, bearing horror stories of their recent experiences.<sup>(23)</sup> According to an Afrikaner observer and historian, this incident shattered the arguments of those proposing a more liberal race policy and greatly increased Verwoerd's popularity in South Africa.

"White public feeling in the Union was inflamed as a result [of the Congo rebellion] and Verwoerd's policy of separate development received a new impetus. His personal authority, too, was immeasurably strengthened. South Africa's stock, which had declined steeply after Sharpeville, rose rapidly once more. The atrocities in the Congo had come at an opportune moment to provide the Government with a new breathing space."<sup>(24)</sup>

While the reaction which Krüger describes did not apply to all South African whites, the Congo rebellion was undoubtedly the "crunch" for many UP supporters, deciding them to vote for a republic.

Verwoerd summed up Republican policy in his "Dear Friend" letter to voters in September 1960:

"The struggle between Eastern and Western nations, between Communism and Christendom, is such that both groups of nations will grant and concede anything (including the white man of Africa, his possessions and his rights) to seek the favour and support of the black man. This has led to chaos in the Congo. Internal conflict and further elimination of the white man seem imminent in most other parts of Africa. Until the western nations realise more fully what is happening, we should at least combine and protect ourselves.

If we do not take this one step now, we ourselves may possibly, but our children certainly will, experience all the suffering of the whites who are being attacked in, and driven out of, one African territory after the other.

You love your country. You love your children. Sixty or more years of life lie ahead of many of them. I plead for their sake, their unity, safety and prosperity."<sup>(25)</sup>

The Republicans went on to argue that the two pillars of their campaign, white domination and white unity, would result in prosperity for all the Union's people.<sup>(26)</sup>

The UP's immediate concern at the outset of the campaign was to counter the NP's contention that a republic would bring about national unity.

Graaff, Mitchell and other UP speakers attributed the disunity that existed to the determination of the NP to establish a republic, stressing that the violent unrest in the country made white unity imperative.<sup>(27)</sup> Both the Orange Free State and Transvaal UP Congresses branded the republic as sectional and divisive.<sup>(28)</sup> Marais Steyn, speaking at a meeting to protest the Education and Referendum Bills in May, claimed that the referendum would divide the country "on a bitter emotional issue when national unity was more necessary than ever before".<sup>(29)</sup> In June, Graaff pointed out that unity depended not on a change of constitution but upon a change in attitude on the part of the Nationalists.<sup>(30)</sup>

This point was reinforced for Natal anti-republicans by an incident at Durban's South Beach. The National Party Jeugbond, at the opening of a fete, declared part of the beach to be an independent republic. In the process, a Union Jack was seized, trampled and spat upon. The Mercury asked pointedly where the spirit of unity had disappeared to!<sup>(31)</sup>

The second line of argument used to counter the NP's unity platform was the issue of the type of republic to be established. Despite the assurances of the Prime Minister and other Republican speakers that the republican constitution would be very similar to the Union's constitution, anti-republicans repeatedly mentioned dictatorships and the 1942 Draft Republican Constitution. Mitchell warned voters, soon after the announcement of the referendum, that:

"The new constitution will be at the mercy of the Government if a referendum gives it a majority on the principle of a republic."<sup>(32)</sup>

John Desmond warned Mercury readers of his daily column that the republic would be cut off from the world and would develop into an increasingly ruthless dictatorship.<sup>(33)</sup>

The Progressives warned that the electorate was being conned because not enough information had been provided about the republic.<sup>(34)</sup> The Party's main concern, however, was that the new republic should have a constitution based on human rights, acceptable to the whole population.<sup>(35)</sup> The PP leader, Dr J Steyler, stated that his family background made him favour a republic and that he thought a referendum was a fair means to gauge public opinion but he felt that this was not the appropriate time to raise the issue.<sup>(36)</sup>

The Federal Party's Col Martin continually warned the electorate of the possibility of a one-party Broederbond state if a republic eventuated.<sup>(37)</sup> At a Black Sash meeting in March 1960, he warned that the electorate must:

"... expose our Government — our Broederbond Government — for exactly what it is: a narrow, racialistic, sectional Government — Nazi inspired, thriving on hate, determined to achieve Apartheid (a special form of hate). It is determined to eliminate the British tradition and our language."<sup>(38)</sup>

Martin's speech illustrates the way in which fear of Afrikaner domination, distrust of unity overtures from the Nationalists, and doubts as to the type of republic to be established, were reinforced by what

were perceived to be attacks on English-speakers' rights and things British.

The Nationalists were seen to fall into the so-called "trend" of attacking English-speakers' rights and of removing any official symbol which reflected the "British connection". On 22 January 1960, The Mercury claimed that Verwoerd's plea for unity was camouflage "... for systematic destruction of every assailable sector of British association".<sup>(39)</sup> Later in the month, it claimed that the goal behind the republic was "... the domination of Afrikanerdom in a state in which the British element in all its phases is subordinate, if not suppressed".<sup>(40)</sup> By March 1960, the paper was more blunt, saying that the problem with the Union, for Nationalists, was that it was "... not only a monarchy but its administrative system is from top to bottom British. So that's it — the unforgivable sin of being British!"<sup>(41)</sup>

In 1960, the "attack" on British symbols seemed to manifest itself in the announcement that the Queen's head would not appear on the new decimal coinage to be issued in February 1961. The Mercury claimed that that removed all doubts of the Nationalists' intentions in regard to the republic.<sup>(42)</sup> Other attacks on British symbols and English-speakers' rights since Union had included the banishment of "God Save the Queen"; the "kraaling-off" of English and Afrikaans children into separate schools; the removal of the Queen's head from postage stamps; the removal of OHMS from official envelopes; and the employment of more Afrikaners than English-speakers in the civil service.<sup>(43)</sup>

In Parliament the Minister of Defence was closely questioned on the alleged overlooking of English-speakers for promotions in the Defence Force. In one instance, a senior, experienced naval officer was overlooked and an Afrikaner with little sea-faring experience appointed to take command of a naval station. A new tax on dividends from shares was also seen as being directed at English-speaking South Africans, it being contended that as they had the majority interest in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, this would affect them most.<sup>(44)</sup>

As the campaign got under way, Mitchell, who had consistently played upon the fears of the English-speaking community, returned to the theme when he warned the electorate, while opening the Anti-republican Centre in Pietermaritzburg on 1 June 1960, to be wary of Nationalist "... tricks, traps and political wiles,"<sup>(45)</sup> while Mr Geoff Oldfield, MP (UP, Umbilo), claimed that Verwoerd wanted the capitulation of English-speakers rather than their co-operation.<sup>(46)</sup>

It has already been shown that the UP's indecisiveness on a race policy was a hindrance to its image.<sup>(47)</sup> The Party appeared to have no firm alternative that would inspire confidence in its supporters. Indeed, the Progressives were arguing by August 1960 that they and not the UP were the alternative to the NP.<sup>(48)</sup>

In response to Verwoerd's calls to voters to ignore international and local protests, and his argument that the choice was between separate development or multiracialism, Graaff argued that a compromise was the solution. Speaking at the UP's Orange Free State Congress, he argued

that it was possible to satisfy international demands by simply following a more moderate approach, and accused the Nationalists of exploiting racial prejudice.<sup>(49)</sup> He reiterated this argument at Kokstad, claiming that total equality was not the answer to apartheid. A change of direction was all he felt was necessary to improve the Union's international position.<sup>(50)</sup>

In August 1960, Graaff devoted an entire speech to the UP's position. Speaking at Rosebank, he listed points which differentiated the UP from the NP and PP. This list included such items as that the reserves were to be developed while job reservation was to be removed; a policy of African settlement in urban areas; respect for the basic human rights of Africans; a separate voters' roll with representation in Parliament by whites and self-administration in the Reserves; the Cape Coloureds were to be accepted as part of Western society; a concerted effort to assist commerce and industry to raise African living standards; and reappraisal of the laws that caused the unrest.<sup>(51)</sup> Speaking at the Anti-republican rally in Durban on 19 September, Graaff went on to contend that the UP's policy would make Africans feel that they "belonged in South Africa".<sup>(52)</sup>

Responding to Verwoerd's announcement on 3 August 1960 that the referendum would take place on 5 October, Mitchell claimed that the Government's Bantustan policy was going to result in the development of a "Congostan" in the Transkei.<sup>(53)</sup> Mitchell had always been opposed to the policy of granting full independence to the "homelands," although it is revealed in a recent biography that his basic approach to the "Native question" was very similar to that of the NP.<sup>(54)</sup>

Because events in the Congo had made such an impact, the press and the Progressives attempted to challenge the Republican interpretation of what had happened there. Ray Swart, MP (PP, Zululand), argued that the Congo revolution showed clearly how important it was that Africans be given the opportunity to gain experience in democratic systems,<sup>(55)</sup> while The Mercury claimed that the events in the Congo were a warning to South Africa of the dangers of a Bantustan policy.<sup>(56)</sup>

Furthermore, Verwoerd's reference in his "Dear Friend letter"<sup>(57)</sup> to the Congo incidents as a possible scenario for South Africa if his republican option was not followed, drew sharp criticism from The Mercury and The Rand Daily Mail. The Mercury accused Verwoerd of using scare tactics by launching a "campaign of racialism", while the Mail saw the letter as an attempt to reintroduce the "swart gevaar" platform.<sup>(58)</sup>

Opponents of the Government also argued that, as a direct result of the Government's race policies, the country was in a dire economic position. Mercury editorials focused on the outflow of capital, which has been estimated at around £12,5 million, and pointed out the £500-million drop in share values<sup>(59)</sup> after Sharpeville. Government policies were, furthermore, responsible for the slump in the retail trade and for the fact that nineteen countries were boycotting South African goods.<sup>(60)</sup> During 1960, Ghana and Malaya joined the boycotting nations<sup>(61)</sup> and the UP's Arthur Hopewell (MP, Pinetown) pointed out that in the poor economic position, all the Government offered the nation was a constitutional change.<sup>(62)</sup>

Besides these arguments against the two pillars of the Republican platform, namely white domination and national unity, the central point in the anti-republicans' argument against the republic were the implications it had for Commonwealth membership.

Following the 1960 Commonwealth communique, it was the UP's position that no assurance could be given that South Africa would remain a member as a republic. This view received backing in July 1960 when Lord Home, the British Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, announced that no decision would be taken on the issue until the constitutional process had begun. The Canadian Prime Minister, J G Diefenbaker, also lent validity to the UP's point by categorically denying that there could be any advance acceptance of a republican South Africa as a member of the Commonwealth.<sup>(63)</sup>

Reacting to Dr Verwoerd's assurance that he would endeavour to keep South Africa in the Commonwealth when he announced the date of the referendum, Graaff warned voters to vote with the idea in mind that the country would be out of the Commonwealth. Martin saw the announcement as showing disregard for the Commonwealth,<sup>(64)</sup> while The Daily News saw it as an "invite to expulsion".<sup>(65)</sup> The Mercury pointed out that the country would lose access to the Prime Ministers' Conference, defence co-operation; the sterling trade area and preferential trade; co-operation in communications, research, education and broadcasting; and the right of Commonwealth citizens to enter and work freely in any member country.<sup>(66)</sup> Although Mitchell had a lot to say on the subject of the

monarchy, he argued that as long as no constitutional change was entered into, the country was "safe" within the Commonwealth. (67)

Anti-republican speakers' notes, issued by the UP, advised speakers to concentrate on the fact that once the referendum was over, the issue of Commonwealth membership would be out of the hands of the voters; that South Africa was independent as a member; and that the Governor-General was South African. (68) However, the most emphasised loss was preferential trade.

During the UP Central Executive Meeting on 7 June 1960, S F Waterson had suggested that the focus of propaganda be the impact of the loss of preferential trade on the country. (69) This saw a series of speakers including the issue in their speeches. Vice-Admiral, Sir Dymcock Walson (Commander-in-chief, South Atlantic), speaking at the opening of the Royal Show in Pietermaritzburg, commented on the value of preferential trade to South Africa. The fruit and wine industries' exports were worth £2 500 000 and £750 000 per annum respectively, while the sugar industry's exports to Britain alone were worth £2 500 000 per annum. (70) Graaff also hinted at the possible side-effects losing Commonwealth membership would have on the sugar industry. (71)

July 1960 saw a series of four articles appear in The Daily News and The Cape Argus discussing the economic implications of a republic, (72) while in September a pamphlet, ostensibly issued by concerned deciduous fruit farmers, was circulated in the Western Cape. It warned farmers of

the devastating losses that would accrue through exclusion from the United Kingdom market:

"The Western Province fruit industry is dependent for its existence upon the free and protected access to the UK market. If it loses this access it will go to the wall and the fruit farmers with it." (73)

The argument relating to preferential trade was that a republic outside the Commonwealth would stand to lose the tariff-free markets in member countries, particularly Britain, which had been established in 1932. The sugar industry was a frequent example because the majority of the country's output was absorbed by Britain, at inflated prices per ton, under the 1951 Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. A non-member republic would have to suffer the low open-market prices. (74)

Furthermore, it was argued that trade would cost more because of the loss of access to the sterling area. This was an area where all trade was contracted in pounds sterling, overcoming costly foreign exchange shifts. (75)

Anti-republican speakers also emphasised the sentimental or emotional importance of the Commonwealth. This was particularly evident in Natal where "God Save the Queen" was sung and the Union Jack displayed at all anti-republican meetings. (76)

Identification with the British Empire linked the English-speaking minority in South Africa to English-speakers in the rest of the Commonwealth, giving them a sense of strength that was largely illusory.<sup>(77)</sup> Worrall expands on this point by claiming that the ties English-speakers had with the Commonwealth, and with English-speakers the world over simply by the universality of their language, resulted in a confidence in their language, culture and society which did not exist amongst Afrikaners. This confidence meant that there was very little effort made to develop an English-speaker's "political tradition" in South Africa to defend and promote its interests. However, such development did occur amongst Afrikaners who were very conscious of the need to defend their language and culture. This difference in attitudes is a possible reason why English-speakers were always reacting to Afrikaner political innovation rather than charting the changes themselves.<sup>(78)</sup>

Although not everyone would agree with the view that Afrikaners always forced English-speakers to react to their initiatives on the grounds of demographic and delimitation advantages, Worrall's point is important to bear in mind, particularly during the 1950s. In the light of the close connection between the English-speakers' identity and power and the Commonwealth, it is feasible that any threat to Commonwealth links would be considered a traumatic wrench by, and a considerable threat to, English-speakers.

Two examples during 1960 reinforce this point. Firstly, in June 1960, The Mercury's Editor quoted the Australian Prime Minister's pronouncement on republicanism. Robert Menzies felt that, despite the trend toward republicanism, British people had an "instinct for monarchy". This led the Editor to remind readers that the loss of the monarchy, via the loss of the Commonwealth connection, was a "tangible factor" in the decision that had to be made.<sup>(79)</sup> Secondly, a Mercury survey of Natal towns produced the following comment from C B Downes, the Mayor of Pietermaritzburg, on the possible loss of Commonwealth membership:

"... do the people of this country realise that when entering Britain they will be classed as foreigners?"<sup>(80)</sup>

Because of the attachment of most English-speaking Natalians to "King and Commonwealth," the Republican campaign gave rise to a movement for secession in Natal. The idea of a secession was not new. In 1914, Botha had feared a Natal breakaway if the Government did not enter World War I<sup>(81)</sup> and the 1924 and 1929 election victories of Gen J B M Hertzog saw a further outbreak in calls for secession.<sup>(82)</sup> Later, in the 1950s, organisations such as the War Veterans' Torch Commando and the Federal Party backed a "Natal stand" in opposition to the threat of an Afrikaner republic.<sup>(83)</sup>

Prior to the referendum, the evidence of secessionist activity is limited to reports on Parliamentary debates, letters to the editors of various newspapers, and reports on Mitchell's speeches. As early as

23 January 1960, there were calls for Natal to lead the way in demanding a democracy under the Crown.<sup>(84)</sup> Perhaps the most famous secessionist statement in Parliament is Mitchell's often quoted "go and be damned" speech in which he admonished the Government for the bare majority requirement in the Referendum Bill. When asked by Deputy Minister of the Interior, P W Botha, if he was advocating "open rebellion," Mitchell replied: "Yes. If the Government persists in its attitude, then it must bear all responsibility."<sup>(85)</sup> Mitchell never had a chance to explain this statement owing to the uproar that ensued in Parliament.

The letters to the editor generally advocated secession in the light of perceived Afrikaner attacks on English-speakers' rights and British symbols. The UFP's view that it was Natal's right to enter a separate referendum was often expressed in such letters. This argument is based on the fact that, at Union, Natal had decided via a referendum to join the other Colonies, and was entitled to the same treatment before entering a republic. Furthermore, it was argued that the Union was a contract and any breach of it, such as creating a republic, left Natal free to disassociate itself from the rest of the Union.<sup>(86)</sup> It was claimed that Natal had a legal and moral right to remain out of the republic:

"Natal has a moral right if not a legal right to keep out of the republic. Natal can do it. Natal can save herself by her action, and by her example she can save the whole of South Africa, or at least part of it."<sup>(87)</sup>

Letters, such as the one quoted above, cannot be taken as representative of any widely-held opinion. Indeed, as they amount to almost the sole evidence of secessionist views in Natal, they suggest that the movement was representative of a small section of the population.

The degree of involvement of Mitchell in secessionist plans before the referendum is a subject of much speculation. Col Martin, Leader of the Federals, claimed that he, Mitchell, Boyd (PP Natal Leader) and the Colonel who led the secret 'Farmers' Organisation'/'Horticulturalists,' signed a postcard as a pledge to "... go all out for Natal UDI with Douglas Mitchell leading," after a protest meeting in May 1960.<sup>(88)</sup> In an interview, the 'Horticulturalist' leader would not confirm or deny that such an agreement had been concluded. According to him, there was "... no positive scheme or device of a practical kind ..." for secession, although the organisation had considered it.<sup>(89)</sup> Mitchell consistently denied that there was any secessionist plan behind any of his statements.

In June 1960, The Mercury reported him as saying:

"All is not lost if we do not win the referendum. I am not prepared to accept a decision for South Africa as being a decision for Natal."<sup>(90)</sup>

Later, Mitchell tried to put the record straight by claiming that he did not see a lost referendum as binding in Natal if the electorate gave him a mandate to oppose it. He said that he would fight a republic until a

law was passed to establish it. But when he was asked what he would do once he had the mandate, he replied: "I'll cross that bridge when I come to it."<sup>(91)</sup>

Perhaps Mitchell's most famous "secessionist" statement was that made in Durban on 19 September 1960 at the mass anti-republican rally, which was the climax of the referendum campaign. He opened the meeting by asking: "Who the hell does Verwoerd think he is ...?"<sup>(92)</sup> Later that same evening, he had the crowd agreeing to "march again":

"Will you be prepared to march again? (a roar of 'yes');

Will you oppose a republic? ('yes').

If Dr Verwoerd loses we will let him know we don't want him and his republic. This is not the last of the spirit of resistance to a republic!"<sup>(93)</sup>

In the emotional atmosphere of the rally, this statement was generally taken to be a call for secession. Mitchell, however, claimed that it was raining that night and that his fellow-speaker, Graaff, was concerned that the elderly people in the Durban City Hall might find themselves "beleaguered" by the crowd outside. Hence, his prime objective was to get the crowd outside the building to disperse. He continued:

"They had fallen in on military lines, so it was a matter of using the type of language most suited to the moment. I said to Sir de Villiers, I would get them to march away. There was also

another question. Where did we go from here? We had this enormous body of people behind us in high fervour and we might need them again pitched to the same key. It is no good working people to such a pitch of emotion such as this and telling them: Good-night everybody! Cheerio! and we all go off to bed.

... We wanted to keep them enthusiastic for future causes. It was also an opportune moment to let them know that they might be needed to repeat the evening's activities ...."<sup>(94)</sup>

Mitchell's biographer agrees that his main concern was to give impetus to the campaign without necessarily committing himself to secession. According to him, Mitchell's outburst jogged Natalians into showing a united front against the republic. This seems to be the only value that so-called "secessionist" threats had before the referendum. It was an emotional appeal to the British connection, followed seriously by only a minority. As an emotional appeal it was successful, as the following extract from the Mercury's editorial of 26 September 1960 shows:

"In the last few weeks the people of Natal have recaptured the spirit of the Natal stand. This development has initiated a tremendous new surge of anti-republican hope and enthusiasm throughout South Africa."<sup>(95)</sup>

However, this emotional appeal to voters, whom Mitchell once described as "lethargic" and "lazy," was not always well received. The Progressives

accused him of being irresponsible and of advocating unconstitutional methods,<sup>(96)</sup> while members of his own Party stated that Natal would not secede.<sup>(97)</sup> The Nationalists pointed out that Natal would be worse off racially if she seceded and Die Burger accused Mitchell of making "Battle of Britain" statements.<sup>(98)</sup> In September, Die Burger accused the UP of stirring up jingoistic feeling in Natal by its appeal to things British. It asked where the South African "veneer" found elsewhere in the Union had gone. It saw the Durban crowd as being carried away on a "... buitengewone uitbarsting van rojalitiese emosie wat op ander plekke sy volgelinge ongemaklik sou laat rondskuif het".<sup>(99)</sup>

Reacting to anti-republican claims that there could be no assurance of Commonwealth membership, Verwoerd claimed at Groblersdal that he was sure that the older members of the Commonwealth, Britain, Canada and Australia, would ensure that South Africa remained a member.<sup>(100)</sup> One month later, on 3 August 1960, during his radio address to the nation to announce the date of the referendum, Verwoerd claimed that if he won the poll he would apply for republican membership. He said:

"Although the Government does not lay claim to any prior assurances, it is firmly convinced that mutual and common interests will lead to approval notwithstanding mutual differences."<sup>(101)</sup>

He went on to warn voters that if admission was refused, the republic would still be established, and in that event he promised to attempt to establish cordial relations with Britain and the rest of the Commonwealth.<sup>(102)</sup>

Later in August, T E Donges (Minister of Finance) claimed that the Republicans wanted to stay in the Commonwealth because of the obvious advantages economically, militarily, diplomatically, and especially in terms of relations with Britain. However, he warned that Macmillan had already stated that any choice between whites and blacks would leave the British no option but to side with black Africa.<sup>(103)</sup> The Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Science, B J Vorster, reiterated this point of view when, in a speech on the Bluff, he warned that rejection of South Africa as a republican Commonwealth member would not be because she was a republic, but because of her race policies.<sup>(104)</sup>

Towards the end of the campaign the Republicans had refined their argument. They wanted a republic in the Commonwealth, they argued, as long as there was no threat to South Africa's internal policies. Pamphlets issued from August all reflect this point of view.<sup>(105)</sup> One pamphlet quoted various prominent Commonwealth leaders who had emphasised the principle of non-interference as a Commonwealth policy. It then argued that it was obvious that the proposed republic would be acceptable to the Commonwealth. Voters were asked if they believed those prominent leaders or Graaff.<sup>(106)</sup>

Nationalist opposition to secessionist outbursts in Natal has already been noted. However, some Republican speakers continued to refer to the relationship between the Union and the monarchy. The Minister of the Interior, Tom Naude, referred to the Queen as ineffectual because she

never knew anything about the laws passed in her name.<sup>(107)</sup> Furthermore, Deputy Minister P W Botha declared the monarchy to be an un-South African, dividing factor.<sup>(108)</sup>

To counter Anti-Republican claims as to the dire economic results of republican status, the Republicans pointed out that economic ties reflected material interests and were unlikely to be influenced by constitutional change. In June 1960, the Minister of Economic Affairs, Dr N Diedericks, argued that new trade agreements could be drawn up with Britain and other countries,<sup>(109)</sup> while Minister B J Schoeman pointed out that British investors were not about to abandon their investment in the Union when it became a republic.<sup>(110)</sup>

It was pointed out that the 1932 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which laid down the preference system, made no mention of Commonwealth membership being a requirement. Furthermore, Australia and New Zealand had, in fact, left the GATT preference system because it gave Britain too much advantage.<sup>(111)</sup> The Anti-Republicans were accused of trying to stampede voters, who were exhorted to join the Republicans in a "Commonwealth Republic".<sup>(112)</sup>

Both the Anti-Republican and Republican factions wound up their campaigns with addresses to the nation over the radio. Graaff spoke for the Anti-Republicans, highlighting the dangers the Republic posed and the importance of Commonwealth membership. Verwoerd, speaking in favour of the Republic, accused the Anti-Republicans of indulging in party-politics. He reminded voters that the constitution would remain

largely the same and of the problems in Kenya and the Congo. Referring to Commonwealth membership, he claimed that if the "older" members could be persuaded by Ghana to expel South Africa, then this would occur whether or not South Africa was a republic.<sup>(113)</sup> Denied the use of the SABC, the PP and UFP both issued statements to the press. The Progressive Party accused Verwoerd of establishing a republic in order to dominate the country and of "irresponsible exploitation of colour prejudice" in raising "swart gevaar" fears, while the Federal Party warned of the Broederbond nature of the republic and reminded voters that a republic would be a breach of the contract of Union.<sup>(114)</sup>

On the eve of the referendum, Mitchell warned Natalians that they had reached the "point of no return" and would face disaster or salvation the following day. Calling on voters to vote for security and prosperity, he said:

"Vote 'no' today and thus throw your full weight into the fight for democratic government, decency and self-respect. Throw out fear and mistrust and with your fellow-South Africans in all Provinces, follow the sign-post for security and prosperity by voting 'no' to Verwoerd's republic."<sup>(115)</sup>

With this exhortation to voters to protect their interests and vote "no," the Anti-Republican debate in Natal was completed. It was up to the Party's infrastructure to get the electorate to the polling stations to vote.

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CHAPTER FIVE : THE ORGANISATION OF THE CAMPAIGN

A. THE VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

In practical terms, Verwoerd's announcement of the referendum made voter registration vitally important. Both the NP and the UP began their campaigns with voter registration drives, in order to register as many voters as possible before the Supplementary Voters' Roll closed at the end of February 1960.

The referendum required legislation to establish the necessary machinery, as South Africa's existing Electoral Act did not allow for a referendum. On 10 March 1960, an amendment to the Electoral Consolidation Act of 1936 was introduced in Parliament by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, P W Botha.<sup>(1)</sup> The Referendum Bill, as it became known, was to become a referendum issue in itself.<sup>(2)</sup>

Thompson and Prior have isolated the delimitation system (which loaded constituencies in favour of the rural areas) and the geographical distribution of the population (which saw most non-Nationalist voters concentrated in relatively few urban constituencies) as two factors which contribute to Afrikaner Parliamentary domination.<sup>(3)</sup> The result was that:

"... at any general election ... the English vote — already a minority — [was] cut to a fraction of its numerical value."<sup>(4)</sup>

However, in a referendum, each voter's vote counts in the final result because it is the number of votes rather than the number of seats won, that is decisive. This accounts for the value accredited to voter Registration Drives by all parties contesting the referendum.

Although the Sunday Times felt that the NP benefited from being forewarned of the announcement,<sup>(5)</sup> the NP Natal Executive met late in January to discuss its campaign.<sup>(6)</sup> At the same time, Natal UP Leader, Douglas Mitchell, returned to Durban to plan the UP's campaign.<sup>(7)</sup> Thus, on a formal level, the NP and UP began their Voter Registration campaigns simultaneously.

By the time of Mitchell's arrival, a number of steps had already been taken by his Party Organisers. Extra copies of the Voters' Roll and Supplementary Voters' Roll were being typed with a view to having an office in central Durban (Milton House) and a checkpoint at the shopping centre in Durban North. An extensive poster campaign was also planned to "... plaster Durban and the rest of Natal ...".<sup>(8)</sup>

In the Pinetown constituency, the UP called for the mobilisation of all helpers in order to start a house-to-house canvass and to establish checkpoints at various shopping centres. It was the branch chairmen's responsibility to organise the Voter Registration Drive in their constituencies.

A Special Note in a circular outlining the guidelines for the registration campaign, urged branch chairmen to keep up the momentum

until Referendum Day. It also drew attention to the importance of registering settlers who had qualified for the vote after completing the required number of years' residence. The assumption was that such immigrants were likely to be anti-republican. Canvassers were also urged to be ready to admit new members to the Party, and to advise voters to ensure that they held valid Identity Cards<sup>(9)</sup> after fears had been expressed in the press that voters without them would not be allowed to vote.<sup>(10)</sup>

Within the Pinetown constituency, good results were reported from the Northdene, Hillcrest and New Germany branches. However, the results from the Westville, Pinetown and Kloof branches were not as good. These poor results were blamed on the tardiness of the local committees and an inability amongst local UP and PP supporters to work effectively together.<sup>(11)</sup>

The February Voter Registration Drive was very successful, with 27 700 voters being registered in Natal. Of those, 23 600 were anti-republican.<sup>(12)</sup> The Natal Mercury congratulated the UP and PP on their excellent results, claiming they had been "... a severe shock to the Nationalists" and noting the importance of voters in safe seats registering.<sup>(13)</sup> As Douglas Mitchell warned in May 1960, it was imperative that all voters in safe seats registered,<sup>(14)</sup> as the referendum was an opportunity for English-speakers to make their votes count.

As soon as one Supplementary Voters' Roll closed, another opened, leading to the start of a Voter Registration Drive for the new roll, which closed on 30 June 1960. The new Drive saw the NP, UP, PP and a resurrected UFP<sup>(15)</sup> mobilise on a more organised footing. There was also strong speculation that the referendum would be held after August, following the appeal of a Government spokesman to republicans to register by 30 June 1960.<sup>(16)</sup>

On 4 March 1960, J H Steyl, Chief Secretary of the NP in the Transvaal, wrote to Verwoerd outlining the plans made to facilitate the organisation of the NP's voter registration and fund-raising campaign in Natal. This plan was the result of a visit to Dundee on 2 March 1960 by Steyl, Piet Koornhoff and Koos Havenga of the Head Office of the NP in the Transvaal.<sup>(17)</sup>

The plan involved the allocation of the time of Party Organisers, including organisers Mulder, Reichel and the Chief Organiser of the Transvaal, Havenga, into a tight schedule of organisational visits in order to boost the Natal NP into a fighting machine. A conference of all Party workers in the Durban constituencies was planned for 19 March 1960. It was addressed by Koornhoff and Reinecke, as well as Fritz Steyn, MP (Kempton Park). Steyn also spoke at a meeting aimed at English-speaking republicans on the same evening.<sup>(18)</sup> The meeting was punctuated by heckling and was described as "chaos" by the Mercury.<sup>(19)</sup>

From this it may be seen that the NP's programme was thoroughly planned until the end of May 1960, with the help of the Transvaal NP. It is

possible that this intervention was deemed necessary after the poor showing of the Natal NP in the previous registration drive, although this has not been confirmed. Steyl informed Verwoerd in his letter that further details would be planned once the date of the referendum was known.<sup>(20)</sup>

The PP launched itself into the second voter registration drive by pledging itself to canvass for voters until 30 June 1960, and by establishing a Reject the Republic Fund.<sup>(21)</sup> The Party appealed to voters to ensure that they were registered and exhorted those who had recently registered to ensure that their registrations had been accepted.<sup>(22)</sup> This campaign was focused on hotels and blocks of flats, and an office was opened in Bulwer Road to facilitate it.<sup>(23)</sup> Meanwhile, the UFP pledged itself to work to defeat Verwoerd and uphold Her Majesty's position in the Union after its March 1960 Congress.<sup>(24)</sup>

The UP's campaign was also upgraded. On his arrival from Cape Town to attend a UP Natal Provincial Executive Meeting on 14 March 1960, Mitchell commented that:

"Although Dr Verwoerd has not yet announced the due date of the referendum, we cannot afford to take chances .... The United Party election machine will be put into motion right away, and we intend to fight every seat in Natal."<sup>(25)</sup>

The Provincial Executive reinforced Mitchell's position by expressing "... the urgency for the continuation of our [UP's] anti-republican

campaign ..."<sup>(26)</sup> and by declaring Natal to be on an election footing. After a six-month vacancy, the position of Provincial Secretary was filled by the election of C Renton. It was hoped that he would oversee the smooth running of the Party in Natal.<sup>(27)</sup>

Renton followed this meeting up by sending to all UP branches and divisions in Natal a letter in which a suggested programme of events was set out. Each branch or division had to follow the procedure and report back to the Provincial Secretary once each phase was completed.<sup>(28)</sup>

At Divisional or constituency level, organisation was well under way. The Pinetown Divisional Committee made detailed plans for voter registration and fund-raising. A card index of registered voters was to be drawn up by each branch in duplicate. The extra set was to be sent to the Constituency's Campaign Manager, John Strydom, who was to compile a Master Index of registered voters for the entire constituency. Branches were divided into cells and lists were made of voters in each cell. Cell sheets had to include the names of all registered voters, the names of all teenagers turning 18 by 30 June 1960, and all British settlers and aliens "... in order that a drive can be made to encourage these residents to register as South African citizens". House meetings were arranged to explain the citizenship procedure and to iron out any problems.<sup>(29)</sup>

By April, the UP had handled 10 000 registration cards in the new registration campaign and Mitchell warned supporters and workers not to slacken their efforts in the registration drive, despite Graaff's plea

for a moratorium on the referendum due to the UP's stance that the period in which the violence that had erupted with the Sharpeville incident was not the time to mount such a crucial referendum.<sup>(30)</sup> John Strydom, campaign manager of the Pinetown Division, reported to the UP Coast General Council that the registration drive had "... aroused enthusiasm wherever [the canvassers] had gone".<sup>(31)</sup>

Minutes of the UP's Westville Branch Committee Meetings show that they were gradually complying with the suggested programme of action. Their AGM had been held on 28 March 1960 and all necessary officials had been elected. By the end of April, this branch was preparing to find 40 canvassers to prepare for the final registration "push" and to start the referendum campaign as such.<sup>(32)</sup> The Zululand Divisional Committee decided to put its constituency on an election footing, in line with the earlier decision of the Natal Executive. All branches were urged to give one last drive in the registration campaign before the Supplementary Roll closed on 30 June 1960.<sup>(33)</sup>

May 1960 saw the UP's Head Office in Natal issuing a circular exhorting Party workers to do their utmost to get as many anti-republican voters registered as possible:

"Remember the vote is our greatest weapon, and the ballot-box the deciding factor. The organisation must leave no stone unturned to ensure that every person who is qualified and who is opposed to this Government is registered."<sup>(34)</sup>

This plea was a confirmation of Mitchell's call, early in May, for a special drive in safe seats because that was where "... the viable majority ..." and the "... key to our success ..." was.<sup>(35)</sup>

June saw the UP continue its round of speakers and rallies in Natal and nationally,<sup>(36)</sup> with the Johannesburg branch going so far as to establish an all-night telephone service to allow voters to register and check registrations.<sup>(37)</sup> In Natal, the UP opened two Anti-Republican Centres: one in Durban and the other in Pietermaritzburg. The Durban Anti-Republican Centre was situated in Milton House and opened on Saturday evenings. This was, as the Mercury pointed out, convenient for those attending cinemas across the road to check their registrations.<sup>(38)</sup>

All parties took both registration drives extremely seriously as evidenced by the care taken by both major Parties in organising effective registration campaigns. Although the UP managed to register the most voters, 9 000, the NP was the Party which made the most impressive gains. It increased its registered voters to 7 000.<sup>(39)</sup> During the voter registration campaign, two issues dominated Party organisers' minds. The first was the necessity of raising money to pay for the campaign and the second was the issue of unity among anti-republican groups.

The NP made detailed plans for fund-raising in Natal and nationally as early as March 1960. According to J H Steyl, Chief Secretary of the Transvaal NP, Con Botha (Natal NP Secretary) was responsible for the collection of funds for the Republican Fighting Fund (Republikeinse Strydfonds). Steyl estimated that Natal should raise at least £20 000

through the Fund which, after running costs of £8 000 were deducted, left £8 000 of the £16 000 estimated cost of the NP, Natal's, campaign to be provided by the NP Federal Council.<sup>(40)</sup>

The NP's fund-raising efforts fared well in Natal. Ten Nationalists in Vryheid donated £250 each<sup>(41)</sup> and Die Burger reported in June that £30 000 had been raised in Natal. It ascribed £6 000 of that amount to donations from English-speakers.<sup>(42)</sup> This confirms the Daily News report that many businessmen in Durban, Pinetown and Pietermaritzburg were paying hundreds of pounds in contributions to the Republican campaign in order to "keep in" with the Nationalist Government.<sup>(43)</sup> By August 1960, the NP had passed their £20 000 Natal goal by £20 000.<sup>(44)</sup>

The UP did not fare very well financially. A recent study of the Party has detailed the difficult financial predicament the UP found itself in towards the end of J G N Strauss's leadership in the mid-1950s.<sup>(45)</sup> To compound this, the 1959 split of the "liberal wing" away from the UP led to the loss of an important backer, in the shape of Harry Oppenheimer.<sup>(46)</sup> A UP Pinetown constituency circular, issued in February 1960, specifically instructed canvassers not to campaign for funds for the Anti-Republican Fund as a national appeal was being organised by employing full-time Party organisers.<sup>(47)</sup> This appeal was known within the Party as the Mobilization Scheme. It consisted of an organised campaign to raise funds by way of donors pledging specific monthly contributions. Only constituencies that were not mobilised were required to canvass for funds for the UP's Fund.<sup>(48)</sup> The minutes of the Zululand Divisional Committee in April 1960 reflect a healthy

fund-raising drive with good contributions to the Anti-Republican Fund from most branches. (49)

A further problem for the UP in terms of finance was the drain of traditional UP backers' money into NP coffers. Press reports to this effect have already been noted. (50) In June 1960, Sir de Villiers Graaff spoke of the importance of persuading businessmen to contribute to the UP en masse, to limit the possibility of victimisation which they feared would result if the Government found out. (51)

By June 1960, Die Vaderland was claiming that the UP was struggling to raise funds. (52) The minutes of the Finance Committee for June bear out Die Vaderland's claim. Only central purchasing was permitted and only specific members of each of the three General Councils in the Province were authorised to approve expenditure. No campaign managers could bind the Party financially and the Finance Committee cancelled the opening of more Anti-Republican Centres. (53)

Thus, while the NP made good headway with the raising of campaign funds, by the end of June 1960, the UP was struggling financially and had established tight control over expenditure.

Natal English-speaking newspapers were behind a united, anti-republican front very soon after the announcement of the referendum. The Natal Witness claimed that "... the political hatchet is to be buried ..." and that a "... completely united front was to be established ...". (54) However, friction at Branch level shows this comment by the

Witness to be wishful thinking. For example, in Hillcrest, PP women were accused of "cattiness".<sup>(55)</sup>

The UP and PP continued to work independently and Mitchell denied any political alliance of the UP and other anti-republican Parties.<sup>(56)</sup>

Mitchell's denial caused a member of the PP to write to him and accuse him of failing to respond to the unanimous resolution of a meeting of 2 500 PP supporters in Pietermaritzburg on 11 February 1960<sup>(57)</sup> for co-operation between all major anti-republican parties.<sup>(58)</sup>

In reply, Mitchell claimed that he was confused by the calls for a "concerted effort" and that other Parties meant "political alliance" by that term. He also pointed out that the attacks being made on the UP were unworthy of Parties which claimed to be eager to co-operate:

"If the other parties wish to consider some concerted effort other than a political alliance, they have merely to say so but so far attempts to make political capital at the expense of the United Party seems to be the order of the day ...."<sup>(59)</sup>

Mitchell also pointed out that the Provincial Elections of 1959 had given the UP a mandate to fight republicanism and that no other Party had the machinery or the necessary finances to stage such a campaign.<sup>(60)</sup>

By the end of February 1960, although both the PP and the UP were prepared to co-operate in fighting the republic, the UP was not going to

be drawn into any political alliance and was determined to "fight on its feet".<sup>(61)</sup>

As the various Parties began to mobilise for the Second Voter Registration Drive, calls for unity amongst anti-republicans surfaced once again. Early in March 1960, the Mercury reported that Die Burger had commented on the existence of more than one anti-republican organisation and fund for "monarchy lovers" to choose from.<sup>(62)</sup>

PP speakers repeatedly called for co-operation and unity amongst anti-republicans.<sup>(63)</sup> In a letter to Mitchell, C C Henderson (Member of UP Provincial Executive) claimed to have been approached by PP members to work together. Henderson asked Mitchell what the UP policy was on this issue.<sup>(64)</sup> Mitchell replied that there seemed to be very little prospect of co-operation as the PP only wanted to embarrass the UP. He claimed that the PP realised that most of their supporters were UP members and that they were following the same policy that the UFP had followed.<sup>(65)</sup>

The lack of UP-PP co-operation is clearly seen in the minutes of the Zululand Divisional Committee. UP workers were advised to leave nothing to the PP to do as "... they were known to have done no work".<sup>(66)</sup> This possibly reflects ill-will remnant from the breakaway of sitting UP MPs in 1959 to establish the PP.<sup>(67)</sup> Zululand's MP was one of these.

Furthermore, the PP had every intention of nominating its sitting MPs as referendum agents. Mitchell, on the other hand, insisted at a meeting held to protest the Referendum and Education Bills, that the UP would

nominate all referendum agents because only it had the necessary machinery to run the campaign and to process postal votes efficiently.<sup>(68)</sup> At a similar meeting in Pietermaritzburg the next day, he reaffirmed his position but said he would welcome all non-Nationalists to work for the anti-republican campaign.<sup>(69)</sup> That is, Mitchell was not closing the door to co-operation on his terms. In May, the Mercury made a strong editorial plea for Natalians to co-operate, claiming that:

"The eyes of South Africa are on Natal as it marshals its forces for the anti-republican battle. This Province will be the spearhead of the non-Nationalist Campaign. It is no mere trick of rhetoric to describe it as 'South Africa's hour of greatest need,' and Natal will be betraying its history and its heritage if it sacrifices absolute unity on an altar of Party politics."<sup>(70)</sup>

The paper conceded that organisers and the electorate would be "... 'cutting off one's nose to spite one's face' if the machinery already in existence ... were not used to the full in a common cause". However, it called on the voters to "forget Party labels" and reminded the UP and PP that they would not have to lose their individual identities if they were allies in a common cause. The Editor warned that if anti-republic support was "... dissipated by antipathy between other Parties ..." only the Nationalists would benefit.<sup>(71)</sup>

One day after this editorial was published, both the PP and UFP issued press releases claiming that they were willing to co-operate in a common front with the UP.<sup>(72)</sup> Martin claimed, in a letter of explanation to

Mitchell, that the UFP's press release was a pledge from its leader to the public that he would do all he could to ensure unity amongst anti-republicans. In the press release he claimed that he had told Leo Boyd (PP, Natal Leader) and Mitchell this.<sup>(73)</sup>

Martin's letter to Mitchell clarifies the differences between the UFP and PP's offers of co-operation. The PP was prepared to co-operate but felt that it was unfair that the UP nominate all the referendum agents when they were the sitting members of Parliament in three Natal constituencies. Martin, on the other hand, was prepared to drop his 'Party line' in respect of referendum agents. He claimed that the UFP's only concern was that the men chosen be popular, of good character and have a suitable personality. He was, however, convinced that it was important for the public to perceive a semblance of unity otherwise:

"... the impression would be created that there was disunion somewhere, and this could have an adverse effect ...."<sup>(74)</sup>

In reply, Mitchell thanked Martin for clarifying his position on referendum agents and requested a meeting with him to discuss the issue when he returned to Durban. Although obviously pleased at the UFP's concession, Mitchell remained steadfast that he was not going to let any other Party have referendum agents. However, he did not rule out working with the PP:

"... it seems that the Progressives desire to go their own way .... I do not, however, take that as their last word and am still hopeful

that he [Boyd] will follow your example and be prepared to negotiate with the United Party on the basis of such agents." (75)

Martin thus played an important role as a catalyst for co-operation, advocating at least to make the opposition elements present a united front in public. Throughout his letter to Mitchell he refers to "our campaign" — signifying his desire for some form of unity of purpose. (76)

Mitchell's position concerning co-operation became UP policy after a meeting of the Central Executive Committee in Johannesburg on 7 June 1960. It was agreed there that the Party would nominate referendum agents in all constituencies and that there "... would be no United Front agreement with other anti-republican organisations or body". (77) Members of other Parties would be permitted to assist as individuals. The reasons given for this stand were as follows:

- "a) The fact that the anti-republican cause might be gravely prejudiced by our co-operation and consequent identification with other anti-republican groups whose general policies were unacceptable to the vast majority of the South African electorate.
- b) The nation-wide organisational network of the Party constituted the only organisational machine through which anti-republican

sentiment in South Africa could be effectively mobilised in order to poll the maximum anti-republican vote."<sup>(78)</sup>

Minute eleven of the same meeting suggests that not everyone in the UP agreed with this policy. The Stellenbosch East Branch had put forward a resolution requesting a round-table conference with all "splinter groups" to establish a united front. The Central Executive rejected this resolution on the basis of past experience of such fronts.<sup>(79)</sup> Judging by the minutes referred to above, the Rand Daily Mail had speculated wisely when it suggested that the UP was reacting to the failure of United Fronts in 1948 and 1953, desiring to avoid formal association with political extremes.<sup>(80)</sup>

Calls for unity continued in the Mercury and members of the PP still offered their co-operation.<sup>(81)</sup> The PP's Action Committee in Johannesburg was offering to work with any anti-republican agent by mid-June 1960<sup>(82)</sup> and these conciliatory moves were welcomed by the Mercury. Its Editor pointed out how important UP/PP co-operation could be in organising aspects of the campaign such as transport to the polls.<sup>(83)</sup>

By the end of the second voter-registration drive, the UP had stated clearly its policy regarding unity amongst anti-republicans. This was based on a determination not to form any potentially damaging alliances. The UFP had conceded the dominance of the UP and, although the PP was determined to nominate referendum agents in the constituencies it held, it was prepared to co-operate. Its insistence on nominating referendum agents left the decision up to the Electoral Officer.

B. THE REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Once the registration drives were successfully completed, both camps began to prepare their organisations for the campaign and for Referendum Day.

On 1 July 1960, the Chief Secretary of the Transvaal NP, J H Steyl, issued a confidential bound document titled: "Handleiding vir Veldtog."<sup>(84)</sup> Although it referred to the Transvaal, no specifics were laid down, the intention being that its principles could be applied to any province. Judging by the extent of the Transvaal NP's involvement in Natal's Republican Voter Registration Drives, it is plausible that the same, or a similar document formed the basis of this Province's campaign organisation. Its stated aim was:

"... om 'n eenvormige en doeltreffende stelsel van organisasie vir die volkstemming wat voor die deur staan, daar te stel."<sup>(85)</sup>

Amongst the regulations were very definite and detailed instructions to Party organisers. Everything — from the personal attributes of the organisers to what canvassers should carry in their briefcases — was listed. Organisers were also warned that anyone who could not raise the required funds would be a burden on the organisation and would cause extra work for others. Good results were achieved in fund-raising, with £310 000 being collected by July 1960.<sup>(86)</sup>

After the climax of the voter registration drives, the UP seemed to be struggling to raise money and workers.<sup>(87)</sup> Mitchell spoke at two meetings early in July at which only 23 (07.07.60) and 50 (08.07.60) people attended respectively. He complained at the latter meeting that:

"all he got from the 'lethargic, too damn lazy' people of Natal was 'talk, talk, talk and not work, work, work'."<sup>(88)</sup>

He went on to criticise the fact that only a handful of people were assisting in the organisation of the anti-republican campaign. Commerce and industry were also attacked for not offering more financial support. Mitchell continued:

"Either we fight or we lie down and let the Nationalists wipe their boots on us. And when I say fight, I mean fight!"<sup>(89)</sup>

This lack of effort and enthusiasm to start fund-raising and canvassing late in July 1960 is reflected in the minutes of the UP's Westville Branch.<sup>(90)</sup> August saw Verwoerd announce the date of the Referendum as 5 October 1960 in a radio address to the nation.<sup>(91)</sup>

The Republican campaign was to be launched nationally by Verwoerd during a speech at Lichtenburg on 6 August,<sup>(92)</sup> while he was to launch Natal's campaign at Ladysmith in September.<sup>(93)</sup>

A number of predominantly English-speaking constituencies, including Berea (Durban), were earmarked by Republicans for 'Operation Sentiment.' This canvass was aimed at convincing English-speakers to vote for a republic within the Commonwealth.<sup>(94)</sup>

Anti-republicans were "flabbergasted" at the news of the date of the Referendum, according to the Daily News,<sup>(95)</sup> a possible reason being surprise that the Government would let the referendum go ahead during a period of internal unrest. The anti-republicans had repeatedly argued that it was unwise to broach such a crucial issue at the time. Mitchell hoped that the announcement of the date would "... quicken the pulse of the anti-republican resistance movement in South Africa".<sup>(96)</sup>

The UP announced that, in order to save organisers' time, a series of large rallies would be organised rather than many small meetings. Graaff was to open a fund-raising fete in Durban on 16 August and a major canvass of the Durban area was planned from 27 August.<sup>(97)</sup> The Pietermaritzburg Anti-Republic Centre embarked on a similar canvass with PP and UFP support.<sup>(98)</sup>

A circular to all constituencies called for administrative centres to be opened in all constituencies and for telephones to be applied for in the Party's name. Details of the advertising campaign, deadlines and other administrative details were laid down.<sup>(99)</sup> By 15 August 1960, the Star was describing the UP's organisation as second to none.<sup>(100)</sup>

The Progressives launched a national 'Reject the Republic' fund<sup>(101)</sup> and their campaign in Natal saw a series of meetings, the first of which was held in the Musgrave Congregational Church Hall.<sup>(102)</sup> On 18 August, Dr Jan Steytler (PP Leader) addressed a rally of 400 people at which the crowd roared 'No!'<sup>(103)</sup>

A number of similarities between the approach of the UP and the PP to the Republic could be discerned in media usage and in public speeches. Die Transvaler commented:

"Al sou die United Front dus waarskynlik nie op papier bestaan nie, in die praktyk beveg hy reeds die hoogste staatkundige ideaal van Suid-Afrika met een doel, met een metode en uit een front."<sup>(104)</sup>

The co-operation referred to by Die Transvaler was evident in PP support for the Pietermaritzburg canvass<sup>(105)</sup> and was sealed by the appointment of all the UP nominees as the anti-republican referendum agents.<sup>(106)</sup> Once this had happened, the last obstacle to PP/UP co-operation was removed and by 24 August Mitchell could announce that the anti-republican machine was in 'top gear' and that discussions on constituency level had led to agreement amongst all anti-republican factions.<sup>(107)</sup>

The upswing in activity in the referendum campaigns of both factions in August was due to three things: the media,<sup>(108)</sup> the announcement of the date of the referendum (5 October 1960), and the opening of applications for postal votes from 15 August.<sup>(109)</sup> By 13 August 1960, the Anti-Republic Centre in Pietermaritzburg, which was open until 21:00

daily, was handling hundreds of applications per day.<sup>(110)</sup> The Anti-Republican Postal Vote Centre in Durban (the central provincial postal vote processing point for the UP), was handling 30 postal votes per hour by 16 August.<sup>(111)</sup>

It became increasingly important for as many postal votes as possible to be used due to the high population numbers in some constituencies. For example, the Point constituency had 14 262 voters, which meant that 1 000 voters would have to be processed per hour on polling day.<sup>(112)</sup> The Mercury made a series of appeals to the electorate to apply for postal votes or to make enquiries as to whether they were entitled to such a vote.<sup>(113)</sup> A complicating factor was that the latest voters' rolls for urban constituencies were in chaos. This affected the UP more than the NP as most new voters were resident in the urban areas, where most of the UP's support came from.<sup>(114)</sup>

Some idea of the degree of organisation required to process postal voting successfully is given by the Pinetown Constituency's 'Referendum Directive N° 64'. This document spelt out the postal vote procedure. All branches in the constituency had to send their applications to the Pinetown headquarters. From there they were posted on to the central Postal Vote Centre in Durban, where they were sorted, sent on to other constituencies or lodged. Postal Votes were accepted by the Electoral Officer from 10 September 1960. By the end of September, after repeated press reminders,<sup>(115)</sup> 1 000 postal votes were being handled per day.<sup>(116)</sup>

Postal voting became a source of UP-NP mud-slinging in the Point constituency in Durban. D M Carpendale, anti-republican referendum agent, warned the electorate of NP tactics to keep them away from the polls. He claimed that the NP had been telling the voters that they should apply for postal votes through the NP. The NP's Provincial Secretary, and republican referendum agent in the Point, J C Botha, accused the anti-republicans of "stampeding" voters into voting "No" by playing on their fears and suspicions. He claimed that Carpendale was trying to "... sling mud at the republican campaign" and he felt that they were desperate if they had to rely on "distortion". In retaliation, Carpendale called on voters to have nothing to do with the republican canvassers. The Mercury joined the fray by accusing the NP of "Form II name-calling" in describing as monarchists all those who:

"... are opposed to his [Dr Verwoerd's] roseate dreams of a Nationalist republic."<sup>(117)</sup>

By the end of August 1960, the Star announced that the intensive phase of the UP's campaign was about to begin. It published the UP's slogan, which reflected the importance it had placed on efficient organisation:

"IF WE CAN GET OUR PEOPLE TO THE POLLS WE MUST WIN."<sup>(118)</sup>

With the campaign well under way, September 1960 saw Graaff and Mitchell (among others) speaking at various venues throughout Natal. Mitchell urged local businessmen to give up their secretaries to assist with typing and clerical work. He also urged voters to attend Graaff's major

speeches in Durban and Pietermaritzburg later in the month. (119)

In line with the UP's policy of holding a few major rallies, large rallies were planned for Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The Mercury, already having appealed to voters not to be apathetic, (120) expected 40 000 people to attend and 5 000 people to march through the streets at the Durban rally (19 September 1960). Clearly attempting to recall the anti-NP protest days of the 1950s, it likened the procession to those of the Torch Commando. (121)

On 19 September, the Mercury devoted five out of eight columns of its front page to the rally to be held that evening. The headline read: "NATAL NEEDS YOU AT CITY HALL TONIGHT" and was supported by an article in which Mitchell and Boyd (PP Leader in Natal) appealed to voters to attend, and by a photograph of a defaced anti-republican poster. (122) Graaff was the speaker at this meeting and it is significant, in terms of unity, that Boyd publicly supported the rally, indicating that the PP accepted Graaff as leader of the anti-republicans.

8 000 People marched through Durban carrying banners, cheering and singing 'God Save the Queen,' which could be heard on the Beach Front. Scuffles broke out when some NP supporters tried to join the march, and the St John's Ambulance had to treat 39 people who had collapsed. (123)

Some indication of the impact of the Durban rally can be obtained from the response of the press. The Witness claimed that 40 000 people had roared 'No.' The Daily News claimed that Natal's response gave hope to

struggling anti-republicans elsewhere in the Union.<sup>(124)</sup> Die Burger saw Durban's response as unusual while the Rand Daily Mail saw the Government as being "taken aback by the response".<sup>(125)</sup>

The Durban rally was followed by a rally at Ladysmith on 20 September. It was attended by 2 000 people.<sup>(126)</sup> Cars from all over Natal were seen streaming into Ladysmith. The Rand Daily Mail reported that, "Between Colenso and Ladysmith the convoy reached as far as the eye could see along the road."<sup>(127)</sup> PP Members, De Beer and Swartz, spoke in Pinetown, and Vause Raw (MP, Point) spoke to 1 500 people at Glencoe.<sup>(128)</sup> A repeat of the Durban rally was held in Pietermaritzburg on 26 September; it was attended by 20 000 — 25 000 people. Thereafter an anti-republican march by Natal University students took place on 28 September.<sup>(129)</sup>

The UP's Division of Organisation ensured that the UP's organisation was functioning efficiently. It provided very detailed instructions to referendum agents, sub-agents, polling agents and messengers. Referendum agents were required to appoint these officials to each polling station.<sup>(130)</sup> In response to a UP-Natal Head Office notice, which asked referendum agents a series of questions relating to the referendum procedures and organisation,<sup>(131)</sup> the referendum agents reminded branches of various details pertaining to the referendum. These ranged from deadlines to applying for telephones and completing the canvass of voters.<sup>(132)</sup>

Extensive transport arrangements were also made. These included providing branches with details of the extra transport available from Head Office, should this be needed. A pool of 100 cars was available to transport voters to any constituency within 200 miles of Durban. Five aircraft were also available to transport last-minute postal votes.<sup>(133)</sup>

These constituency-level arrangements were filtered down to the branches, as various branch minutes indicate.<sup>(134)</sup> The minutes of the Westville Branch show that not all UP members were in favour of co-operation with the PP — even at this stage. The Chairman of the branch, J T Martens, took issue with Donald Shave, the acting chairman, who had called for a Joint Referendum Meeting with the Progressives. He accused Shave of selling out to the Progressives. The dispute was eventually solved amicably when it was pointed out that Shave had acted with the permission of the Natal Head Office. It is, however, illuminating to see that although unity of purpose amongst anti-republican forces was party policy, it was difficult to sustain at grass-roots level.

Turning to the Republicans, September saw a series of meetings being held throughout Natal. Speakers included B J Vorster (Minister of Education, Arts and Science), Willie Maree (Minister of Bantu Education), C Mulder (MP, Randfontein), Paul Sauer (Minister of Lands) and Verwoerd.<sup>(135)</sup>

The NP was praised by Die Burger for the excellent work it had done in securing postal votes, and the Mercury reported early in September that northern Natal postal votes were being applied for by the NP daily.<sup>(136)</sup>

Extensive transport plans were also drawn up.<sup>(137)</sup>

Probably the most important and provocative aspect of the Republican campaign was the 'Dear Friend' letter. This hand-written letter, on blue 'Libertas' paper, was sent to voters by Verwoerd as a final attempt to persuade them to vote for the republic.<sup>(138)</sup> It evoked a massive public response.

The Daily News reported that many voters felt it necessary to respond to the letter,<sup>(139)</sup> which called for a republic to protect the white race, to establish unity amongst whites, to prevent a repetition of events in decolonised Africa, and to combat communism.<sup>(140)</sup> Both English and Afrikaans speakers published letters for and against the republic, or sent them direct to Pretoria. Of those that emanated from Natal, the majority were from English-speakers against the republic.

Some voters returned letters with comments on each point Verwoerd made scrawled all over them. Others simply wrote phrases or slogans such as, "Frankly it contains a lot of unadulterated 'Bull'" or "Stick the republic up your ...!" Other responses included long sentimental letters recalling the pre-1920s and pledging firm allegiance to the Queen and the Union Jack.<sup>(141)</sup> The Mercury published a photograph of a woman placing the letter in a rubbish-bin marked, "Verwoerd's Letters. Waste paper for Anti-Republican Funds".<sup>(142)</sup>

The significance of the 'Dear Friend' letter must lay in the fact that it allowed the Republican argument to reach each voter. Whether or not they agreed with the views expressed in it, the electorate had been forced to take note of the Republican point of view. Furthermore, in

linking white unity and security to safety from African domination, the letter could well have swayed some waverers to join the Republican camp.

A feature of the referendum campaign was vandalism and disruption of activities. While this was a trend throughout the Union, it was particularly prevalent in Natal. From early August 1960, reports appeared in the Union's newspapers of referendum-related vandalism. This ranged from ripping down the posters of the opposition faction to abusive telephone calls and letters. Both the Rand Daily Mail and the Mercury carried reports of telephone calls being interrupted by a "sturdy voice" in the Pretoria area, calling on people to vote for the republic.<sup>(143)</sup> The Star commented at the end of September that as fast as posters were erected, they were pulled down. It felt that the anti-republicans were winning this 'battle'.<sup>(144)</sup>

In Natal, Die Vaderland complained, poster vandalism had taken on serious proportions. Of the 60 republican posters erected in Pietermaritzburg, 53 were removed. The Mercury, on the other hand, reported that of the republican posters erected, 200 were damaged in Durban and 150 in Pietermaritzburg. Only two large anti-republican posters in West Street were damaged. There were also reports that the republican offices on the Bluff and in Pinetown had been vandalised with black paint.<sup>(145)</sup>

In northern Natal, the anti-republicans also found themselves on the receiving end as far as the 'poster war' was concerned. In Vryheid, 13 out of 19 posters were stolen, and one was blacked out. In Newcastle, half of the erected posters were removed.<sup>(146)</sup>

A further aspect of disruption was the overrunning of republican meetings and the passing of votes of no confidence in the republic at these meetings. Although meetings of both factions were disrupted in other provinces, no disruption seemed to occur as regularly and, seemingly, as well orchestrated as that which occurred in Natal. Meeting after republican meeting was disrupted by heckling, the singing of 'God Save the Queen' and by votes of no confidence. From the south coast to the north coast, republican meetings were disrupted.<sup>(147)</sup> In Durban, the Minister of Lands (Paul Sauer) had to face a packed City Hall where three quarters of the audience chanted, "No!, No!, No!" whenever the republic was mentioned. When Ben Schoeman (Minister of Transport) refused to allow a vote of no confidence at the Pietermaritzburg City Hall, 2 000 of the 2 750-strong audience walked out.<sup>(148)</sup>

The Mercury reported, happily, that the Government was taken aback by the extent and strength of feeling displayed towards the republic in Natal<sup>(149)</sup> and Willie Maree (Minister of Bantu Education), Natal NP Leader, complained of the heckling that occurred at republican meetings.<sup>(150)</sup>

Both Die Vaderland and Die Transvaler carried reports that there was a secret organisation whose tactic it was to attend republican meetings and disrupt them. Die Vaderland claimed that a "Durban lawyer" had led a convoy of 50 'ND cars' carrying 200 anti-republicans to Maree's Port Shepstone meeting. This meeting, as well as one in Pinetown, was disrupted by continuous heckling and saw votes of no confidence in the republic passed.<sup>(151)</sup> Die Vaderland feared similar occurrences at

Dr Verwoerd's meeting in Ladysmith on 18 September; however, a peaceful crowd of 2 500 heard him speak.<sup>(152)</sup>

Die Transvaler claimed that the strategy of the 'monarchists' was for certain unnamed firms to organise their workers into groups of ten and to provide them with transport. Each member apparently brought a friend and they met in the town where the meeting was to take place. Once in the hall, they would fire questions at the speakers and pass motions of no confidence. These motions were easily won because republican meetings in Natal were usually small. It would then be claimed in the press that these were huge anti-republican victories.<sup>(153)</sup>

Two meetings confirm these reports. The first was a republican meeting in Warner Beach where Blaar Coetzee, MP (NP, Vereeniging) was speaking. Of the 700-strong audience, 600 were anti-republicans who heckled and stood up to show their disapproval of the republic after a no confidence vote was disallowed.<sup>(154)</sup> The Daily News reported that at least 60 cars parked outside the meeting bore ND registration plates — supporting Die Transvaler's claim.<sup>(155)</sup>

Further confirmation is given by the huge anti-republican support for Vause Raw's speech in Glencoe. The meeting was attended by over 1 000 anti-republicans who arrived in convoy from various parts of Natal.

"... dozens of cars, including some from Vryheid and 'Maritzburg, had streamed into Ladysmith. Between Colenso and Ladysmith the

convoy from the South reached as far as the eye could see along the road."(156)

Those who were not anti-republican were not permitted to enter the hall. Die Transvaler reported that residents of Glencoe hoped that the 'monarchists' would not return because of: the 200 cars that arrived; the men armed with chains, pieces of iron and knives; the vandalism in the town; and the litter left behind them.(157)

After the meeting, the convoy was stopped by the police at Cedara on the main Johannesburg road. Vause Raw complained about the way the convoy members had been treated. They apparently had torches shone in their faces and their registrations noted.(158)

The Mercury responded to the reports of a secret Natal organisation mentioned in the Afrikaans press, by denying the existence of any such organisation:

"Since anti-republicans started attending republican meetings and passing votes of no confidence to show the true feelings of Natal, some quarters of the Nationalist Press have been putting out wild stories of a cloak and dagger organisation bent on intimidation and breaking up meetings — which has not happened yet."(159)

The paper went on to claim that the convoy to Glencoe had been necessary to ensure a fair hearing for the first anti-republican speaker in northern Natal. It saw the police road blocks as a Government attempt at intimidation.(160) Recent research has indeed uncovered the

existence of an organisation known as the 'Horticulturalists' or 'Farmers' Organisation.' According to its leader, it was the result of a 'general frustration' at the government's policies. It had no official name and no records of its activities were kept. The names it is known by were given to it by outsiders.

Details of the organisation's structure are available in P S Thompson's recent book, Natalians First.<sup>(161)</sup> 'The Horticulturalists' leader claimed that part of the organisation's aim was to jolt Natal into voting, and in that they were certainly successful. He recalls the Glencoe meeting referred to above as a highlight. However, he recalls that the NP supporters carried chains and knives, while Die Transvaler recalls it the other way around!<sup>(162)</sup>

Thompson speculates that Mitchell would have tolerated the organisation as long as it did not threaten the UP's leadership of the referendum campaign. This seems reasonable, judging by Mitchell's firm rejection of any formal alliances or united fronts in the campaign. The relationship between the UP and the 'Horticulturalists' is unclear, as Thompson states, although Col Martin (UFP Leader) claimed there was a formal agreement between the UP, UFP, PP and 'the Horticulturalists' to fight the republic and "go all out for Natal UDI with Douglas Mitchell leading".<sup>(163)</sup>

Another vital part of the campaign was the role of the media. From the extensive references to various newspapers in this thesis, a clear

distinction between the views of the Afrikaans and English press may be discerned. June 1960 had seen the UP discussing the importance of a close relationship between the editors of the various English newspapers and the Party. The reason given for this was that the English Press:

"had given a certain measure of publicity, but in recent times had played up other groups to such an extent that there was confusion in the minds of the voting public."(164)

An undated document entitled 'Memorandum on Referendum Campaign' was distributed to newspaper editors, judging by the following sentence:

"In this instance, the only medium we are considering is the Press, and of the Press, those papers under the control of your company."(165)

This document divided the electorate into groups to give editors an idea as to how to pitch their propaganda and what to say. The document suggested: epigrams on the front pages of newspapers — especially morning newspapers which are "... read in the bus or train and probably left at work"; a series of answers to questions asked by Nationalists; articles aimed at each of the identified groups; interviews with prominent voters; and cartoons. (166)

From June 1960, the Mercury, among other papers, carried a small notice on the front page warning voters of how many days they had left to register. This was repeated daily as polling day approached. Small

darkly-framed squares with slogans in them calling on voters to vote 'no' also appeared. An example is: "The Commonwealth Stands for Friendship; A Republic for Loneliness. No Republic."<sup>(167)</sup> A series of articles also appeared on how to vote, postal voting and other organisational issues. In the days before the referendum, large anti-republican adverts appeared in the Mercury together with many articles reminding voters to check their numbers and exhorting them to vote early. The Editor ran a front-page editorial titled: "To save South Africa Put a Firm X Against No!"<sup>(168)</sup> On 5 October the Mercury's headline read: "Today is South Africa's Day of Destiny."

The final days before polling saw the last-minute organisational details being finalised. Transport arrangements were published and a bus bearing the banner: "HAVE YOU VOTED YET? LET ME DRIVE YOU TO YOUR POLLING BOOTH" would stop on signal for voters between 07:30 and 20:30. Both Party leaders rounded off their campaigns with radio addresses to the nation on 4 October.<sup>(169)</sup>

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F O O T N O T E S

1. NM (11.03.60).
2. See Chp Three above.
3. L Thompson and A Prior, South African Politics (Cape Town, David Philip, 1982), p 3.
4. Killie Campbell Africana Library, FJ320 FOR 30940, 'The English-Speaking Vote Can Be Decisive,' The Forum, September 1960, Vol 9, N° 6.
5. Sunday Times (31.01.60).
6. NDN (30.01.60).
7. The Star (28.01.60).
8. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, Mitchell Collection, Letter: M de Villiers to D E Mitchell, 22.01.60.
9. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 13, 'UP Natal Constituen-  
cies, Pinetown, Referendum,' Circular N° 26, 18.02.60.
10. Sunday Times (31.01.60).

11. UP Archives, File N° 13, Letter: R C Palmer to A Hopewell, 18.02.60.
12. NM (01.03.60).
13. NM (02.03.60).
14. NM (07.05.60).
15. On 28 March 1960, the UFP decided not to disband after resurrecting their Congress, adjourned in November 1959, on 26 March 1960.  
NM (07.03.60).
16. NM (21.03.60).
17. INCH, H F Verwoerd Collection, PC 93, File N° 1/30/5/1, Letter: J H Steyl to Dr H F Verwoerd, 04.03.60.
18. Ibid.
19. NM (20.03.60).
20. INCH, PC93, Letter: Steyl to Verwoerd, 04.03.60.
21. NM (02.03.60).
22. NM (06.05.60).

23. NM (03 and 08.06.60).
24. NM (28.03.60).
25. NM (15.03.60).
26. UP Archives, File N° 5, 14.03 1960.
27. Ibid.
28. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 21, 'UP Division of Organisation, Correspondence with Natal Provincial Office, 1959-1961,' Letter: C Renton to Branches and Divisions, 16.03.60; see Appendix A, p 187.
29. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 10, 'UP Natal Constituencies, Pinetown, Vol 1 — Divisional Committee Minutes,' Circular N° 27, Directive N° 2, 'Anti-Republican Voters Registration — 1960,' 07.03.60.
30. NM (05 and 06.04.60); see Chp Four above.
31. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 2, 'UP Natal General Councils, Coast General Council, Minutes and Annexures — 1944-74,' 04.04.60.

32. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 16, 'UP Natal, Durban Berea Branches, Manor Gardens, Westville,' Westville Minutes, 05 and 24.04.60.
33. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archives, File N° 14, 'UP Natal Constituencies, Zululand - Eshowe - Divisional Committee, Minutes and Reports,' Minutes (AGM), 25.04.60.
34. UP Archive, File N° 21, Organisational Circular N° 2/60, 'Annual General Meetings of Branches and Divisions,' 19.05.60.
35. NM (07.05.60).
36. RDM (08, 29.06.60).
37. NM (17.06.60).
38. NM (02, 04 and 08.06.60).
39. NM (01.07.60).
40. Steyl suggested the following division of the shortfall amongst the provinces and South West Africa:
- |           |   |     |   |        |
|-----------|---|-----|---|--------|
| Transvaal | : | 45% | : | £3 600 |
| Cape      | : | 35% | : | £2 800 |
| OFS       | : | 12% | : | £ 960  |
| SWA       | : | 4%  | : | £ 320  |
| Natal     | : | 4%  | : | £ 320  |

Any left-over funds would be refunded in the same proportions. If South West Africa was excluded from the referendum, its contribution would be divided proportionately amongst the provinces. INCH, H F Verwoerd PC 93, File N° 1/30/5/1, Letter: J H Steyl to Dr H F Verwoerd, 04.03.60.

41. Die Transvaler (17.06.60).
42. Die Burger (09.06.60).
43. NDN (29.06.60).
44. Die Vaderland (08.08.60).
45. Strauss was forced to resign in November 1956. He was replaced by Sir de Villiers Graaff. White.
46. S L Barnard and A H Marais, Die Verenigde Party (Durban, Butterworth, 1982), P 130; B Hackland, 'The Economic and Political Context of the Growth of the Progressive Federal Party in South Africa, 1959-1978,' The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Collected Seminar Papers N° 27 (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1981).
47. UP Archive, File N° 13, Circular N° 26, 18.02.60; see various circulars for details of the national appeal.

48. Ibid.
49. UP Archive, File N° 14, AGM Minutes, 25.04.60.
50. See p 111 above.
51. UP Archive, File 'UP Central Head Office ...,' Minutes, 07.06.60.
52. Die Vaderland (14.06.60).
53. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, File N° 4, 'Natal Provincial Head Committee, a) Natal Finance Committee — 05.01.50 - 05.09.62,' Minutes, 15.06.60.
54. NW (12.01.60).
55. UP Archive, File N° 13, Letter: R C Palmer to A Hopewell, 18.02.60.
56. NW (04.02.60).
57. NW (12.02.60).
58. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: K White to D Mitchell, Esquire, 11.02.60.
59. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: D Mitchell to K White, 18.02.60.

60. Ibid.
61. UP Archive, File N° 14, Zululand Divisional Committee Minutes, 09.02.60.
62. NM (07.03.60).
63. NM (15 and 24.03.60).
64. It seems that Mitchell had established a network of 'listening posts' across the Province in the 1950s. These consisted of people who reported on the reaction of voters to UP policy and politics in general, and their existence was confidential. It is not definitely known if Henderson was one of these 'listening posts,' but it would explain the wide range of information supplied to Mitchell. UNISA SANLAM Library, UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: C C Henderson to D Mitchell, 02.03.60; Letters pertaining to the 'listening posts' evident in the Henderson Collection at the UP Archive: Henderson Collection, Confidential Letter: D T Horak (Provincial Secretary, Natal) to Robert (surname unknown), 20.07.58 and 23.07.58.
65. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: D Mitchell to C C Henderson, 07.03.60.
66. UP Archive, File N° 14, AGM Minutes, 25.04.60.
67. Barnard and Marais, pp 99-136.

68. NM (10.05.60).
69. NM (11.05.60).
70. NM (editorial) (11.05.60).
71. Ibid.
72. NM (12.05.60).
73. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: Col A C Martin to  
D Mitchell, 12.05.60.
74. Ibid.
75. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: D Mitchell to Col A C Martin  
16.05.60.
76. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Letter: Martin to Mitchell,  
12.05.60.
77. UP Archive, File 'Central Executive Committee ...', Minutes, 07.06.60.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. RDM (09.06.60).

81. NM (07, 16, 18, 27 and 30.06.60).

82. NM (17 and 30.06.60).

83. NM (16.06.60).

84. INCH, PC93, File 1/45/5/1, 'Handleiding vir Veldtog,' 01.07.60.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

87. NM (02.07.60).

88. White has shown that after the crisis that faced the UP in the mid-1950s concerning the Party leader and finances, the UP cut its permanent organisational staff to save money. This resulted in a heavy dependence on voluntary, and sometimes lethargic, workers. White, p 459.

89. NM (09.07.60).

90. Fund-raising events planned included jumble sales, cake sales, a fashion show and a "gambling party"; UP Archive, File N° 16, Minutes, 18.07.60.

91. NM (04.08.60).
92. Die Transvaler (05.08.60).
93. NM (08.08.60).
94. RDM (14.08.60).
95. NDN (03.08.60).
96. NM (04.08.60).
97. NM (08.08.60).
98. NW (05.08.60).
99. UP Archive, File N° 13, Natal Head Office, 'Referendum Circular N° 1,' 08.08.60.
100. The Star (15.08.60).
101. NM (06.08.60).
102. NM (10.08.60).
103. NM (18.08.60).

104. Die Transvaler (11.08.60).
105. NW (05.08.60).
106. NM (05.08.60).
107. NM (25.08.60); Weekblad (19.08.60).
108. See p 133 below.
109. NM (06.08.60).
110. NW (13.08.60).
111. NM (16.08.60).
112. NM (20.08.60).
113. NM (06, 13, 15, 16 and 17.08.60).
114. NM (24.08.60).
115. NM (07, 14 and 16.09.60).
116. NM (16.09.60).
117. NM (26, 27 and 30.08.60).

118. The Star (31.08.60).
119. NM (05, 08 and 09.09.60). The Torch Commando was well known for its banner and torch-bearing protest processions. Thompson, pp 124-133; Carter, Chp 12; Wilks, pp 73-74.
120. NM (editorials) (05 and 14.09.60).
121. NM (17.09.60).
122. NM (19.09.60).
123. Banners included such slogans as: "THEY FOUGHT AND DIED UNITED FOR DEMOCRACY" and "WE DON'T DIG A REPUBLIC." NM (20.09.60).
124. NW (20.09.60); NDN (20.09.60).
125. Die Burger (21.09.60); RDM (21.09.60).
126. NM (21.09.60).
127. RDM (21.09.60).
128. NM (22 and 24.09.60).
129. NM, NW (27.09.60); NM (28.09.60).

130. UP Archive, File N° 25, Organisation Circulars 12 and 13/1960,  
12.09.60.
131. UP Archive, File N° 13, Natal Head Office, 1960 Referendum Campaign,  
03.09.60.
132. UP Archive, File N° 13, Referendum Directive N° 5, 08.09.60.
133. UP Archive, File N° 13, Transport Pool - NO Republic, nd.
134. UP Archive, File N° 16, Westville Minutes, 30.09.60.
135. NM (09, 16, 17, 19 and 30.09.60).
136. Die Burger (24.09.60); NM (07.09.60).
137. Die Vaderland (28.09.60).
138. NM (24.09.60).
139. NDN (28.09.60). INCH holds a number of files of letters returned to Verwoerd with comments for and against the republic. INCH, PC93, Files 1/45/3/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 'Teen Republiek.' Also Files 1/45/2/1 and 1/45/2 (Positive Responses).
140. INCH Pamphlets, P27.38 and P27.47, 'Dear Friend' Letter, 20.09.60.

141. INCH, PC93, Files 1/45/3/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 'Teen Republiek.'
142. NM (20.09.60).
143. RDM, NM (24.08.60): see various issues of RDM, Die Transvaler, Die Burger, The Star, NM and NDN during August 1960.
144. The Star (23.09.60).
145. Die Vaderland (23.08.60); NM (23.08.60, 12.09.60).
146. NM (20.09.60).
147. Sunday Times (09.10.60).
148. NM, Die Transvaler, Die Vaderland (17 and 20.09.60).
149. NM (21.09.60).
150. NM (19.09.60).
151. Die Vaderland, NM (16.09.60).
152. Die Vaderland (17.09.60).
153. Die Transvaler (17.09.60).

154. NM (22.09.60).

155. NDN (22.09.60).

156. RDM (21.09.60).

157. Die Transvaler (26.09.60).

158. NM (26.09.60).

159. NM (22.09.60).

160. Ibid.

161. Thompson, pp 163-166.

162. Die Transvaler (26.09.60); Interview, Leader of the Horticulturalists.' Some hospitalisation was necessary for some members.

163. University of Natal (Durban), Department of History, Video-taped Interview, Prof A H Duminy and Dr B L Reid talk to Col A C Martin, 30.11.79.

164. UP Archive, File 'UP Central Head Office ...,' Minutes, 07.06.60.

165. UP Archive, File N° 25, Memorandum on Referendum Campaign, nd. Although no specific details are given as to who 'company' refers to, the clipping service at INCH shows that similar slogans, advertisements and articles appeared in most major English-language dailies: The Star, Argus, NDN and NM.

166. Ibid.

167. NM (12.08.60).

168. NM (04.10.60).

169. Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX : REFERENDUM DAY AND THE AFTERMATH

Referendum Day, 5 October 1960, was a hectic day for the anti-republicans as Party workers at the polling stations prepared for the influx of voters they had been canvassing. Polling hours were from 07:00 to 21:00,<sup>(1)</sup> but all polling stations had been ready for use the previous evening<sup>(2)</sup> and polling agents were required to be at their stations from 06:30.<sup>(3)</sup>

While Afrikaans newspapers reminded voters of the long-striven for republican ideal and of the duty of voters to vote,<sup>(4)</sup> the Mercury pushed the anti-republican position. The following slogans appeared:

"TODAY IS		"YOUR WEALTH
'NO'		MY WEALTH
DAY	and	OUR
EVERY VOTE COUNTS"		COMMONWEALTH"

A number of photographs portraying the 'British connection' under the headline: "DON'T BREAK THE LINKS THAT BIND YOUR FUTURE TO A GREAT PAST," evidenced the pro-British emphasis of the anti-republican campaign in Natal. The Editor warned the electorate that an anti-republican victory would not signify the end of the battle against the republic and provided practical information, such as the places where results would be

announced and the addresses and telephone numbers of polling booths. Exhortations to the electorate to vote early also featured prominently.<sup>(5)</sup>

In Durban a large 'NO' had been painted on the side of a ship and this gained much publicity, while there were signs and placards on street-lamps, cars and in shop-windows.<sup>(6)</sup>

That the day went well organisationally is evident, not only from the response of the public but also from the praise that was forthcoming from all levels within the UP. Graaff thanked all those who had worked so hard,<sup>(7)</sup> as did Mitchell.<sup>(8)</sup> Campaign managers, polling agents, drivers, caterers, pilots, branches and divisions of the Opposition Parties were all showered with praise and thanks.<sup>(9)</sup>

The Star's editorial headline was: "Well done!" and the editor praised the co-operation which had led to the "... build-up of the massive organisation needed to mobilise the latent anti-republican strength," as well as the "enthusiasm and determination" of voters and organisers alike.<sup>(10)</sup> The Rand Daily Mail reported on the "unprecedented" numbers and enthusiasm of voters, while the Daily News saw the enthusiasm as evidence of the strength of the opposition to the Nationalists.<sup>(11)</sup> The Mercury saw the response as evidence of the electorates' care for their country's future.

All reports agreed that the referendum had seen the most intense and enthusiastic voting in the Union's history.<sup>(12)</sup> The UP branch in Kimberley chartered a light aircraft to take postal votes to North-eastern Cape towns and to polling stations in South West Africa.<sup>(13)</sup> A light aircraft was also used to ferry voters to distant towns from Johannesburg and voters in Swaziland reportedly travelled miles by car to vote in Eastern Transvaal towns. A Cape Town woman was so eager to vote that she allegedly cast her vote one hour after her husband had passed away.<sup>(14)</sup>

In Pietermaritzburg people stood in mist and rain for two hours waiting to vote, while groups of teenagers acted as babysitters. A voter travelled the 350 miles to Colenso, from Swaziland, to vote, and an Estcourt grandmother arrived to vote in her pyjamas because her transport had failed to arrive. Ladysmith had a 50-car shuttle service running between Durban, Newcastle and Vryheid.<sup>(15)</sup>

Further evidence of the intensity of voting in Natal was the fact that by 20:00 many constituencies reported 90% polls. Mitchell's Natal South Coast constituency saw 50% of the registered voters vote by midday, and Zululand had an 80% poll by 17:00.<sup>(16)</sup>

The proceedings were marred by a number of accusations of malpractice in some constituencies. In Newcastle, three cases of postal vote malpractice were afterwards referred to the courts, while in others there were accusations that the Nationalists were abusing postal votes, as evidenced by the large number of unacceptable applications.<sup>(17)</sup> The

Pinetown Division of the United Party also experienced difficulties with certain polling districts: Northdene, for example, was considered too big to be one polling district.<sup>(18)</sup> In Durban it was reported that a number of voters had found that they were down as having voted, or as having made use of a postal vote, when they had not cast their ballots.<sup>(19)</sup>

Despite these minor problems, the referendum was extremely successfully organised, as is evidenced by the high percentage polls in all constituencies. In Pietermaritzburg City, where there was one polling station for 13 866 registered voters, there was a 93% poll.<sup>(20)</sup>

The counting of votes was scheduled to begin at 07:00 on 6 October 1960 and the first result was expected at approximately 15:00 the same day.<sup>(21)</sup> By the time the evening Daily News went to press, it was clear that the Republicans would have a majority win, however slight. Its editorial headline read: "Over to Dr Verwoerd."<sup>(22)</sup>

The Mercury announced to the Province: "Republicans Win Ballot," on the morning of 7 October 1960, claiming that it had been clear by 21:26 on 6 October 1960 that the Republicans had won. With five results outstanding, it was realised that over half the voting electorate had voted for the republic. During the early stages, after the urban area votes had been counted, the anti-republicans had led. However, in the mid-afternoon on 6 October, the Welkom result swung a 2 000-vote Anti-republican majority into a 2 690-vote Republican majority.<sup>(23)</sup>

Of the 1 763 261 voters in the Union, 1 602 005, or 90,85%, cast votes. Of these, 51,84%, or 830 520 voters, had voted for the Republic,<sup>(24)</sup> giving the Republicans a 74 580 vote<sup>(25)</sup> or a 4,5% majority. Natal had the highest percentage turn-out in the Union, with 178 585 out of 193 103 voters (92,5%) casting votes.<sup>(26)</sup>

The most severely anti-republican areas were the Durban and Pietermaritzburg constituencies which showed an 83,0% 'no' vote.<sup>(27)</sup> The only Natal constituencies which produced 'yes' majorities were Vryheid and Newcastle, while Durban North produced the highest turn-out in the Province<sup>(28)</sup> and the highest anti-republican vote in the country.<sup>(29)</sup> The closest contest in Natal occurred in the Drakensberg constituency where only 58,1% of the 92,4% turn-out voted against the republic.

Heard argues that the Government's slight victory would not have been possible had they not lowered the voting age to eighteen years. According to his estimates, this provided 46 000 more votes for the Government than for the Opposition because the Afrikaners' mean age was lower than the English-speakers'. Furthermore, the exclusion of 29 000 Coloured voters and the inclusion of South West African voters — which led to an 8 000 majority there — assisted in determining a pro-republic result. However, despite these dubious measures, there was a clear 3,0% swing to the Nationalists in the Union and 1,29% in Natal.<sup>(30)</sup>

Perhaps the most significant aspect of these statistics is that they show that the anti-republicans' concerted registration campaigns, and efforts to get voters to vote, had been extremely successful. Throughout those

campaigns, voters had been reminded of the necessity of registering and voting in previously unopposed seats. Seven suburban Durban seats were unopposed in the 1958 General Election (Durban: Berea, Central, Musgrave, North, Umbilo, Point and Pinetown). These seven constituencies managed a 92,37% poll on average, with an average of 87,87% of voters in those constituencies voting against the republic.<sup>(31)</sup> One has to agree with the comment of the author of a recent study of the nature of the separatist movement: "Never had the white polity of Natal expressed itself so fully and decisively on an issue".<sup>(32)</sup>

The Daily News commented on the size of the majority and claimed that it was now up to Verwoerd to decide if the majority was sufficient to establish a republic.<sup>(33)</sup> The Mercury claimed that the Prime Minister must feel disconcerted at the narrow margin of victory and said that the result reflected the "acute divisions in South African society".<sup>(34)</sup> The Natal Witness felt that: "Not even Dr Verwoerd [would] claim that the republic will be a sign and a pledge of national unity," while even the Nationalist organ, Die Nataller, sounded a note of concern. It expected a rumpus in Natal over accepting the republic and warned the Government that it would have to prove its unity claims.<sup>(35)</sup>

Verwoerd addressed the nation in a radio broadcast on the evening of 7 October 1960. The decision was a momentous one, he said. The high percentage poll and the geographical and numerical aspects of the majority made the decision final.<sup>(36)</sup> He also appealed to English-speakers who agreed with his views to join his Party or to establish their own Party so that he could bear them in mind when

formulating the Government of the new republic. These conciliatory moves were positively received by Natalians as surveyed by the Mercury.<sup>(37)</sup>

Responding to Verwoerd, the PP called on him to establish a multiracial National Convention. According to the Progressives, this was now more imperative than before because if Verwoerd proceeded on the basis of the slim majority he had obtained, this could lead to further division in South Africa. The Progressives also appealed to the Commonwealth not to expel South Africa. The UFP's Col Martin accused Verwoerd of wanting to "annex" Natal as a "... new state to be run on authoritarian lines to suit a narrow racial oligarchy". He warned voters that if they were prepared to reject their "culture, traditions and loyalties," they would "... be both dishonoured and servile".<sup>(38)</sup>

The UP waited until after its Central Executive Committee met in Johannesburg on 7 October 1960 to respond to the referendum result. The meeting was opened by T W Higgerty (Chairman) who thanked Graaff for his leadership. In reply, Graaff registered surprise and disappointment at the failure of the Party to gauge the extent of the republican support in the rural areas. He is minuted as saying that, "... The platteland [is] running away from the Party ...."<sup>(39)</sup> Despite its excellent organisational feat, he was not optimistic about the Party's future. According to the minutes of the meeting, "he was sure that the Party could be kept together and he was convinced that it could weather the storm. From the wreck the Party would rescue what it could".<sup>(40)</sup> Although discussion is not detailed in the minutes, Graaff obviously gave

expression to the tremendous sense of ruin and defeat which pervaded the Executive.

As a partial remedy, it was decided to issue a statement "to give a lead to South Africa". The statement, supported unanimously by all members of the Executive, expressed thanks to everyone involved in the organisation of the referendum and to the Party's supporters. It pointed out that the majority did not reflect the broad will of the people and would lead to a sectional republic. Furthermore, it stated that the Party was a 'Commonwealth Party' and that its immediate role was now to fight to keep South Africa in the Commonwealth and to monitor all legislation to ensure that the Government stuck to its promises. This was especially needed in respect of racial policy. "By the application of western standards" the statement contended, "it is possible for peoples at different stages of development to live in harmony within the confines of one state."<sup>(41)</sup>

Graaff's press statement is characteristically vague on the practical implications of the UP's policy, and particularly its race policy. He also made no reference to Natal, even though his address to the Executive Committee had mentioned that the "... position in Natal was extremely inflammable".<sup>(42)</sup> The official minutes provide no record of the detail of discussions that took place. But, written in the back of the minute book is the following undated note signed by the General Secretary of the Party:

"Not minuted was Mr Douglas Mitchell's statement to the committee that he would lead a 'Natal stand' to take that Province out of the Republic. He said, "I have come a long way with you gentlemen as comrades in arms but I must now leave." After much discussion, Mr Mitchell was persuaded to carry on in the Party (and the country). He agreed, provided Sir de Villiers Graaff would accompany him that afternoon to Durban, where he was to be met by large numbers of 'Natal Stand' supporters in order to explain the position to them."<sup>(43)</sup>

That secessionist feeling in Natal was running high was evident in that calls went out during the week-end of the 7th and 8th to organise a huge crowd at Louis Botha airport to show support for Mitchell.<sup>(44)</sup>

Furthermore, the Natal Anti-Republican Youth Front (Youth Front), lead by F N Sharpe, B J Edwards and M A Clark (Social Science students at Natal University), was established on 7 October to fight for "... an independent Natal under the Queen of South Africa".<sup>(45)</sup>

Mitchell had done much to fuel this feeling throughout the Referendum campaign, and before he left for Johannesburg he had made yet another ambiguous statement. Thanking all those who had voted and worked for the Anti-Republican cause, he said:

"... I would personally like to say that not only have I appreciated the spirit of unity which has bound us together, but I hope and trust it may be found possible for that to continue to exist and to grow in intensity."<sup>(46)</sup>

Although no record is available of Graaff's response to Mitchell's demand that he explain the situation to Natal, Mitchell arrived at Louis Botha airport alone. He was, reportedly, visibly shaken by the size of the crowd and, later, their hostility. His daughter and grandson were apparently reduced to tears by his ordeal.<sup>(47)</sup>

The crowd screamed for secession and chanted "No, No, No!" as Mitchell's aircraft taxied in. A message was then given to him informing him that the crowd was there to support his stand. Mitchell made another famous statement when he asked not to be pushed into anything rash from behind because it made him "a wheelbarrow and not a leader". He pleaded with the crowd to give him and Graaff, who was going overseas to discuss the Commonwealth position, time to decide how to approach the future.

John Shave, a member of the Youth Front, demanded that Mitchell stop stalling and threatened to "break" the UP leaders if they let the people down. However, not everyone in the crowd was hostile to Mitchell. Shave's demands were continuously interrupted by shouts of: "Give him a break — he's had a hard two days," and, "You're talking a lot of hot air."<sup>(48)</sup>

Behind the scenes negotiations had been conducted between Mitchell, Boyd, Martin and 'the Group' (or 'Horticulturalists') to plan Natal's reaction to the referendum result. According to Martin, this group had agreed, as early as May 1960, to pursue Natal independence after the referendum.<sup>(49)</sup> Being a secret or semi-secret organisation, no statement was issued by the Group, and its leader subsequently denied

that it ever contemplated a UDI.<sup>(50)</sup> But Martin was adamant that the agreement made in May 1960 be honoured. The following statement was recorded in the Mercury:

"It is now the urgent duty of political leaders in Natal to implement the clear duty given to them by the electorate and to honour the undertakings which they gave to one another.

As Leader of the Federal Party I am ready to do so now."<sup>(51)</sup>

The Youth Front opened centres in Durban and Pietermaritzburg and organised a huge march through Durban and a rally at Albert Park. At the rally, Sharpe, the leader of the Youth Front, called for more time for Mitchell, while Martin reminded the crowd of their previous pledges to 'march again' and asked them if they would be prepared to do so.<sup>(52)</sup> Secessionist activities even included a broadcast for ten minutes by Freedom Radio on 30 October 1960.<sup>(53)</sup>

Mitchell tried to find a position between the views of the UP and those backing secession. It was clear from Graaff's press statement that the UP had decided to accept the republic. This was implied in his affirmation of the UP as a Commonwealth Party and his pledge to fight to keep South Africa in the Commonwealth. It has already been seen that Mitchell had been prevailed upon to toe the Party line. However, he continued to waver between rejection and acceptance of secession after 8 October 1960. According to his biographer, Mitchell made a visit to Verwoerd on 13 October to discuss increased Provincial powers for Natal

as an alternative to secession. Following the rejection of this overture by Verwoerd, he is said to have turned his "... thoughts to the secessionist point of view".<sup>(54)</sup> This resulted in visits to Sir John Maud, the British High Commissioner, and to Sir Roy Welensky, the Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. They both squashed any chance of Natal linking up with Britain or the Federation if it seceded.<sup>(55)</sup> Thus rebuffed, Mitchell found that he could do little more than attempt to save face by pushing for increased Provincial powers.

Mitchell's public speeches reflect his wavering attitude. On 12 October he was reported as appealing for calm in Natal, commenting: "The whole feeling in Natal threatens to break through the barriers of self-control, self-restraint and social discipline which have been built up over the last fifty years."<sup>(56)</sup> After the Provincial Head Committee of the UP met on 20 October, he seemed finally to abandon all thought of secession. Referring to the proposal that safeguards to safeguard Natal's Provincial powers should be sought by a Natal delegation to Verwoerd, he claimed that he felt: "... sincerely that any attempt to break away completely with the Union is not the desire of the people of Natal."<sup>(57)</sup> However, once he became a member of the delegation, he again referred to Natal's right to decide its own future on the basis of the Government's response to the resolution passed by the Natal Provincial Council (NPC).

The Provincial Council had passed a resolution on 31 October 1960 demanding certain entrenched principles. These included freedom of worship; language equality between English and Afrikaans; parental choice

in education; autonomous universities; press freedom; power to the NPC to legislate on all aspects of education in the Province; entrenching existing provincial powers; own police; and financial powers.<sup>(58)</sup> It was hoped that Verwoerd would accede to the demands as he would be forced to respond to the NPC's resolution.

These principles were sent to Verwoerd as a memorandum and, on 1 December 1960, a delegation from Natal (Mitchell, Wilks, Grantham, Boyd and Heaton Nicholls) met the Prime Minister in Pretoria. Boyd represented the PP, which had come out in favour of "democratic actions" rather than secession<sup>(59)</sup> after an emergency conference between Boyd and Steytler on 7 October 1960.<sup>(60)</sup> Heaton Nicholls represented the UFP, whose leader, Martin, claimed Mitchell was against the UFP leader's inclusion.<sup>(61)</sup>

The Prime Minister rejected the resolution<sup>(62)</sup> and the draft republican constitution was published on 10 December 1960. The Mercury's political correspondent remarked on the calm reception the draft Bill received in Natal:

"None of the urgency and anxiety of the referendum campaign was seen in the reception by the general public today of the draft Bill for setting up a republic in South Africa."<sup>(63)</sup>

In response to Verwoerd's rejection of the Natal resolution and the publication of the draft constitution, Mitchell finally accepted the inevitable on 14 December 1960, claiming that there could be no goodwill, social stability, peace, prosperity or happiness for anyone under the

existing Government.<sup>(64)</sup> The only remnant of the movement for secession at that stage was the pathetic vote of 80 members of the Youth Front for a resolution urging secession from the Union<sup>(65)</sup> and Martin's defiant claim that the publication of the unchanged constitution meant that Natal was "... free to demand a new deal ...."<sup>(66)</sup>

A possible factor that caused Mitchell's public statements to waver between approval and rejection of secession was the fact that inside the UP it was increasingly felt that secession was not feasible or desirable. It has already been seen that Graaff's statement after the referendum made no mention of the rejection of the republic.<sup>(67)</sup> A Pinetown Branch meeting at the end of October 1960 is minuted as unanimously rejecting secession<sup>(68)</sup> while Arthur Hopewell, the MP for Pinetown and Chief Whip of the UP in Natal, stated categorically that only constitutional action could be followed and that no "... public representative would be so irresponsible as to suggest that we could shoot them out".<sup>(69)</sup>

Mitchell had tried to use every means at his disposal to get the electorate to vote, even the threat of secession. It was only after the referendum that he had to face the moment of truth and seriously consider the viability of secession as an option for Natal.

The Press in Natal was divided over what action Natal should take after the referendum. The Mercury's initial response to the loss of the referendum was remarkably non-committal on the secession issue. However, while arguing that the Government's failure to secure a two-thirds majority meant that it did not have the authority to alter the status of

the Union, it lent strong support to the resolutions of the NPC, arguing for the understanding of Natal's 'special position'.<sup>(70)</sup> The Natal Witness is reported as calling upon Natal to stand up for Crown and Commonwealth,<sup>(71)</sup> while the Daily News immediately denounced any secessionist movement.<sup>(72)</sup>

Elsewhere in South Africa, English-language newspapers expressed concern at the idea of Natal seceding. The Rand Daily Mail, for example, said that while it sympathised with the Natalians, it could only "... deplore the senseless escapism which expresses itself in these calls for secession" and appealed to them to get over their "... rush of blood to the head".<sup>(73)</sup> The Star wanted anti-republicans to adjust their ways of thought and speech to the new circumstances in the country.<sup>(74)</sup>

Afrikaans-language newspapers advised Natalians to accept the republic and predicted that the secessionist calls would die down. Die Burger claimed that the situation in Natal was the result of the deliberate provoking of anti-republican sentiment by leaders of the anti-republican campaign. It also ran an article on the leaders of the Youth Front, claiming that they were good South Africans who had been misled by the anti-republican propaganda.<sup>(75)</sup>

Republicans in Natal allegedly felt that the Natal stand was the typical response of English-speakers to any major event in the constitutional history of the country and contended that it would disappear shortly. Die Vaderland quoted the Nationalist MP for Vryheid, Dr D J Potgieter, as saying:

"Ons is nie vir hierdie nuwe 'Natal Stand' bang nie, want ons is gewoon daaraan. By elke nuwe konstitusionele ontwikkeling het 'n mens altyd 'n 'Natal Stand' gehad."<sup>(76)</sup>

By the time of the publication of the draft Bill to establish a republican constitution in South Africa, the impetus for the moves for secession and for special consideration for Natal had waned. Mitchell made one last stand against the republic during the Parliamentary debate on the Bill. On that occasion he claimed that Natal considered itself ruled by force. "... We do not accept the Republic in Natal," he declared, "We reject it. We will have no part in it ...."<sup>(77)</sup> His words, however, had more than a hollow ring.

With increasing international attention focused on the Government's crackdown on African nationalist opposition, particularly Nelson Mandela, newly elected leader of the ANC, who went underground in 1961, it became clear that South Africa's continued presence in the Commonwealth was untenable.<sup>(78)</sup> As a result, Verwoerd withdrew South Africa's membership on 15 March 1961.<sup>(79)</sup> Thus, on 31 May 1961, a republic was declared and all the formal links with the Commonwealth broken. The Republic of South Africa had now to fend for herself alone in the world, and English-speaking Natalians were left to fend for themselves in the republic.

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F O O T N O T E S

1. UP Archive, File N° 13, Letter: R C Palmer to Hillcrest Sports Club, 09.08.60.
2. UP Archive, File N° 13, Directive N° 2: Polling Stations, 30.08.60.
3. UP Archive, File N° 25, Organisation Circular N° 13/1960: Duties of Polling Agents, 12.09.60.
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5. NM (05.10.60).
6. Thompson, pp 159-161.
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12. NM (06.10.60).
13. RDM (05.10.60).
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15. Ibid.
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17. UP Archive, Henderson Collection, Report on Referendum in Newcastle constituency, 28.10.60.
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19. NM (06.10.60).
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21. UP Archive, File N° 13, Referendum Directive N° 4: Postal Vote Organisation, 30.08.60.
22. NDN (06.10.60).

23. NM (07.10.60).
24. Thompson, pp 166-167.
25. Krüger, The Making of a Nation, p 329.
26. Heard, pp 112-117.
27. Ibid.
28. Thompson, pp 166-167.
29. NM (07.10.60).
30. Heard, pp 115-116.
31. See Appendix C: Referendum Result in Natal, p 193.
32. Thompson, p 166.
33. NDN (07.10.60).
35. NW and Die Nataller quoted by: The Star (07.10.60).
36. The Republicans had won by ± 74 000 votes (numerically) and by three provinces to one (geographically).
37. NM (08.10.60).

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41. See Appendix B, p 189.
42. UP Archive, File 'UP Central Head Office ...,' Minutes, 07 and 08.10.60; Sunday Times (09.10.60).
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44. NM (08.10-60).
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48. Ibid.
49. University of Natal (Durban), Department of History, Video Taped Interview: Lt Col A C Martin talks to Prof A H Duminy and Dr B L Reid, 30.11.79; Private Collection, Typescript: 'The Aftermath of the Referendum and the 'Natal Stand,' nd.

50. Interview: Author and the Leader of 'the Horticulturalists,'  
27.11.86.
51. NM (10.10.60).
52. NM (12 and 15.10.60).
53. NM (31.10.60).
54. Wilks, p 136.
55. Ibid. An entry in Mitchell's diary dates his visit to the High Commissioner as 13.10.60, while his visit to Welensky is not recorded. A visit to Cape Town is recorded on 19 and 20 October 1960. It is possible that he met Welensky there. UP Archive, Mitchell Collection, Mitchell's Diary, 1960.
56. NM (12.10.60).
57. NM (24.10.60).
58. NM (26.11.60).
59. RDM (10.10.60).
60. Sunday Times (09.10.60).
61. Reid Collection, 'The Aftermath ....'

62. The memorandum was rejected on the grounds that it was impossible to entrench vague principles and because the resolutions tended to federalism. Verwoerd claimed that he had pledged minimum changes to the constitution and he stood firm.

INCH, PC93, File N° 1/30/5/2. 'The Report of Discussions Between the Prime Minister (and Minister Naude) and a Deputation ...,' 01.12.60; INCH, PC93, File N° 1/30/5/3, Letter: H F Verwoerd to A E Trollip, 06.12.60.

63. NM (10.12.60).

64. Thompson, p 72.

65. NM (14 and 15.11.60).

66. NM (10.12.60).

67. Appendix B.

68. UP Archive, File N° 13, Minutes, 20.10.60.

69. UP Archive, File N° 10, Minutes, 27.10.60.

70. NM (editorials) (8, 10, 12 and 13.10.60).

71. The Star (07.10.60).

72. NDN (editorial) (06.10.60).
  73. RDM (editorial) (10.10.60).
  74. The Star (11.10.60).
  75. Die Transvaler; Die Burger — various articles.
  76. Die Vaderland (10.10.60).
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  78. Various newspaper reports: January-May 1961; Davenport, pp 286-290.
  79. Macmillan, pp 300-305.
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## CHAPTER SEVEN - CONCLUSION

The referendum forced English-speakers to face up to the loss of the 'British connection'. The initial reaction of all Parties claiming English-speakers' support was one of fear of the affect any future republic could have on South Africa's Commonwealth membership. The Commonwealth represented the last formal links the Union had with Britain, for the Statute of Westminster of 1931 had ended the constitutional subservience of the Dominions to the British Government at Whitehall,<sup>(1)</sup> while symbols of Empire had one by one been whittled away by successive Nationalist Governments. By 1960 Verwoerd could claim that a republic would cause little change in the existing constitution, besides substituting a State President for the Queen and the Governor-General.<sup>(2)</sup>

The reaction of English-speakers must be seen as part of a response to Afrikaner rule. Their traditions were perceived as being under particular threat after 1948, when Malan's Nationalists embarked on a vigorous policy of 'Afrikanerisation', especially in the civil service. Analysing English-speakers' stereotypes of Afrikaners in various studies between 1949 and 1967, Charton points out that the number of politically orientated terms English-speakers used to describe Afrikaners increased during the 1950s. This could be taken as a sign of a fear of increased Afrikaner domination by English-speakers.<sup>(3)</sup> 'Fear', however, is only a partial explanation for their behaviour, for it can be argued that neither their culture nor their economic dominance was seriously threatened. This being so, their reaction was as much the result of xenophobia as it was a feeling of weakness.

In focusing on the importance of the 'British connection', anti-republican Parties emphasised their spiritual or emotional bonds with the motherland as much as the economic importance of trade preferences. Anti-Republicans also repeatedly denied the Prime Minister's assurances that little would be altered constitutionally. In the absence of a draft constitution before the referendum, voters were continually reminded of the spectre of Afrikaner domination, the republican constitution drawn up by the HNP in 1942, and the influence of the Afrikaner Broederbond, which was believed to control Government policy behind the scenes. The UFP went so far as to link the Nationalist Government with the Nazis of Hitler's Germany.

In actuality, the Commonwealth and Britain that English-speakers, particularly in Natal, believed in and were longing to retain links with, had changed vastly. Britain's world influence, formerly exerted through her Empire, was shrinking while the newly emergent member nations of the multiracial Commonwealth had completely transformed its character.

Even when this was recognised, English-speaking spokesmen repeatedly failed to gauge the extent of change. During the debates on the Constitution Bill in Parliament in 1961, for example, Mitchell argued that the republic threatened the country's Commonwealth membership by forcing it to reapply for membership. He argued that the Government had put South Africa's future at risk and at the mercy of countries like Ghana and Nigeria, and that the Union's position in the Commonwealth would be secure if a pretext to expel it were not offered.<sup>(4)</sup>

In the event, Britain's main concern at the 1960 Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference had been to keep the Commonwealth together. Surely a point would have been reached when South Africa's policies would have become so repugnant to the new, multiracial Commonwealth that the choice of expulsion or break-up of the Commonwealth would have been posed?

The other issue propagandised by the Anti-Republican campaign was that of the economic effect which the loss of Commonwealth membership would have on the Union. It was argued that the effect on South Africa's economy would be devastating if she lost the sterling trade area, preferential trade and the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. Despite a vigorous campaign in the media and the speeches of Party leaders, this argument was easily countered. The Nationalists pointed out that preferential trade was declining and that the various trade agreements did not make Commonwealth membership mandatory. It was also argued that it would be easy to negotiate new trade agreements with former and new trading partners. Furthermore, they pointedly asked why trading partners and international investors would abandon trade links and investments worth millions of pounds!

It also seems as if the UP misinterpreted calls by business leaders for stability as reflecting their fears regarding the loss of Commonwealth links. It seems rather that what concerned many businessmen was not the loss of Commonwealth membership so much as the indecision and instability which was sapping business confidence during the referendum. Once the referendum was over, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange showed gains of pre-Sharpeville levels.<sup>(5)</sup>

Squaring up to the emotional reaction of English-speakers and the economic losses which it was believed that the republic would cause them, was the fear of African nationalism. The referendum was held in a year which saw unprecedented levels of African protest violence. Most notable amongst this violence were the Sharpeville and Langa incidents, which received world-wide condemnation, and the extensive faction and protest violence in Pondoland throughout 1960. Furthermore, the experiment of democratic government in the Congo failed, and this highlighted the dangers that were believed to face 'the white man of Africa'.

Against this background, the Republicans preached 'security' for the white man, while the UP continued to call for moderation. Graaff advocated a more moderate application of separate development in an attempt to appease international opinion. However, it is doubtful whether such a policy would have satisfied international demands in the long term. The UP's Anti-Republican partner, the Progressives, advocated a qualified franchise and participation by Africans in Government. In these circumstances, the Republicans could portray Britain as having sacrificed the white man to Black Africa in the full knowledge that many English-speakers sympathised with the Government's Apartheid policy. Many undecided voters, caught between Afrikaner and African nationalism, preferred to risk Afrikaner domination and maintain the status quo than to embark upon the uncertain future that seemed to be the alternative. Verwoerd's 'Dear Friend' letter, which focused on the 'swart gevaar', thus found a receptive audience.

In Natal, Mitchell ensured that the UP, with himself at the helm, was the leading player at all stages. Refusing all formal alliances or even to establish a United Front similar to that of the 1950s, he eventually agreed only to a working agreement to co-operate on an individual level. This saw the Anti-Republican Parties follow different policies, while agreeing in their opposition to the Republic. For example, the PP advocated a multiracial referendum and a multiracial republican constitution, while the UFP openly backed the 'Natal Stand'. Col A C Martin, UFP leader, played an important role in bringing about such unity as existed, but this at all times barely concealed differences of policy and personality.

The combined efforts of the UP, PP and UFP must be seen as very successful throughout the Union. In Natal, although an Anti-Republican victory was to be expected, the degree of determination was outstanding. Evidence of this can be seen in the success of voter registration drives and in the organisational structures and procedures, which resulted in high percentage polls and landslide majorities in most seats. Anti-Republican successes in seats which had been unopposed in the General Election are particularly impressive because of the dedication required to get the virtually dormant electorate to the polls.

One reason for the success of the Anti-Republican campaign in Natal was the efficiency of the UP's organisation. There were, however, a number of other factors which contributed to their success. The first of these was Mitchell's leadership. Not only was he a long-standing Member of Parliament; he had been UP leader in Natal since 1949. In this position

of unchallenged leadership he articulated the opinions of many Natalians, his most significant contribution to the victory in the Province being his ambiguous statements bearing secessionist connotations. These statements provided an emotional boost to a campaign which, in June 1960, had been struggling to get off the ground. His passionate calls for volunteer Party workers and appeals to British and secessionist sentiment thereafter attracted a huge following. While Mitchell utilised this political ploy to the full, secession as an option for Natal did not have to be seriously considered until after the referendum.

The second factor contributing to the Anti-Republican's success in Natal was the role of the secret organisation known as 'The Group' or 'the Horticulturalists'. This organisation was partly responsible for organising huge anti-republican crowds at rallies, while it also provided protection for Anti-Republican speakers who ventured into Republican areas such as Ladysmith. It was also infamous for its disruption of Republican meetings, at many of which votes of no confidence were passed. 'The Horticulturalists' were known for their secretiveness, were known to have been the organisers of convoys of cars to meetings, and were accused of bearing bicycle chains when attending meetings. One must agree with a recent comment that 'the Horticulturalists' helped increase the emotional level of the opposition to the republic.<sup>(6)</sup>

Another pillar of the Anti-Republican campaign, nationally and in Natal, was the unquestioned support it received from all English-language newspapers, with the possible exception of the Cape Argus.<sup>(7)</sup> Certainly the Anti-Republicans enjoyed the unstinting support of Natal newspapers.

Articles on the economic importance of Commonwealth membership, interviews with prominent Anti-Republicans, advice on registration, voting and transport arrangements, slogans, cartoons, advertisements and count-downs to voting day all featured prominently in the bombardment of the electorate with Anti-Republican propaganda.

An interesting feature of newspaper responses during the referendum year was that they tended to back a liberal, Progressive Party race policy while staunchly supporting the Anti-Republican cause. This unity was broken in Natal after the referendum, when the newspapers were split on the question as to how to react to the calls for secession. The Natal Mercury advocated Natal's rights and became a supporter of the extension of provincial powers, while the Witness openly advocated secession. The Daily News followed the Argus company's line and denounced all secessionist activity, while Die Nataller and other Afrikaans newspapers presented the 'Natal Stand' as a 'flash-in-the-pan'.

Apart from the UP's successful organisation, the person of Douglas Mitchell, and the support of 'the Horticulturalists' and of the press, the success of the Anti-Republican campaign in Natal must also be ascribed to the unity of purpose of the various Anti-Republican Parties. At a national level, success slipped away as a result of a misplaced emphasis on the economic doom that would result from the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth, while Republicans were able to capitalise on white fears and prejudices by means of calling for the preservation of white dominance and security.

The UP's race policy was indeed a handicap, for it could propose nothing more liberal than the NP did without being branded 'liberal' at the core and losing support. A recent study claims that Graaff felt that it was the UP's association with the PP that cost it the referendum.<sup>(8)</sup> Against the background of the violence that was occurring in South Africa in 1960, this opinion has some validity, for the UP failed to articulate successfully a moderate race policy between the policies of the NP and PP.

The Anti-Republican campaign in Natal had a distinctive 'British' character with 'God Save the Queen,' the Union Jack and pledges of loyalty to the Crown a common feature of most rallies. After the referendum, secession became the central issue. In these circumstances, Mitchell succeeded in maintaining the initiative and the leadership of the province in the face of the initial, very vocal support which secession received.

The issue of secession forced a choice between two alternatives on white Natalians. Firstly, they could attempt to secede and, after facing any attempt by Pretoria to prevent it — including the likelihood of military action — they would have to face a future as a minority in a small, economically dependent, British Colony dominated by Zulus.<sup>(9)</sup> The second option was to reject secession, push for increased Provincial rights and hope that the new republic would remain in the Commonwealth, as Verwoerd had promised.

Mitchell had to opt for the second option because he knew that Natal's secession was not practicable, especially without British support. He also must have sensed that faced with the stark realities of the option that was before them, secessionist support amongst the average English-speaker was losing ground very quickly. However, it is clear from the minutes of the Central Executive Committee that he had seriously considered the secession option before finally rejecting it.<sup>(10)</sup>

The Progressives were, in Graaff's view, a liability, and the Party was not very positive about co-operating with the PP — especially as its leaders had seceded from the UP the previous year, thereafter refusing to give up the seats they had won as UP candidates. However, the Progressives lent important logistical support to the UP and, in Natal, were instrumental in steering agitation away from secession. It was Leo Boyd who initiated the idea of approaching Verwoerd with certain demands for safeguards and for the extension of provincial powers.

The UFP, on the other hand, was a "shadow" of its former self and played a minor role in the referendum campaign. This role was limited to issuing statements,<sup>(11)</sup> its only prominent representatives being Martin and Derek Heaton Nicholls. Martin's statements received much publicity in the Mercury, while Heaton Nicholls' role was limited to his being a member of the Natal delegation that met Verwoerd. It was the UFP which consistently enunciated the extreme anti-republican stance. Martin was the prime mover in the campaign for secession and was an important figure in establishing unity of purpose amongst Anti-Republicans.

Finally, it is important to review the Republican campaign in Natal. As is the case with most ruling parties, the NP had the financial resources to mount a professionally organised campaign. The use of mock ballot-papers to gauge the response to the referendum and the 'Dear Friend' letter were examples of their imaginative campaign. The Anti-Republicans were outraged at the audacity of these initiatives. In Natal, however, the Republican campaign was extensively disrupted by Anti-Republican supporters.

Verwoerd undoubtedly played a crucial role in the Republican campaign. Not only was he a strong, determined leader with a burning vision of the country's destiny, he was the leading advocate of both republicanism and white domination. His approach to the voters was simple and personal. Most importantly, however, he was not prepared to put up with any 'Natal Stand' threats. From his visit to Pietermaritzburg in 1959, when he faced up to the vicious and sustained demonstration of anti-Nationalists who ran around on the roof and cut the electricity of the City Hall, and doused water on the crowd, he had clearly made up his mind that Natal's 'stand' was simply bluster. This opinion was reflected in Afrikaans newspapers which dismissed the 'Natal Stand' as the usual hysterical reaction of 'jingoistic' Natalians which would die down soon enough.

The result of the referendum was a triumph for Verwoerd with a general swing towards the Government being recorded. Graaff and the UP had their Commonwealth Party platform removed after the 1961 Prime Minister's

Conference and found it increasingly difficult to oppose the Nationalists because of their similarity of outlook on the 'Native Question'.

The referendum campaign was undoubtedly a watershed in South African history. The National Party at last achieved its long-awaited republic, while English-speakers awaited the republic which they had so long feared as the culmination of Afrikaner nationalist rule. For Natal, this was a moment of truth. In this crisis, led firmly by Mitchell, its political leaders managed to present a unified facade to the electorate during the campaign and thereafter settled down grimly to adapt to the new dispensation, knowing that the dream of secession could not be realised.

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1. Brookes and Webb, p 272.
  2. 'Prime Minister's Statement ....'
  3. N C J Charton, 'Afrikaners as Viewed by English-speaking Compatriots.' In H W van der Merwe (editor), Looking at the Afrikaner Today (Cape Town, Tafelberg-Uitgewers Beperk, 1975), pp 40-51.
  4. House of Assembly Debates, January - February 1961, Col 410-413. Second Reading of the Constitution Bill.
  5. See NM economic reports post-October 1960. In fact, during the early 1960s the republic went on to show unprecedented economic growth, Davenport, pp 287-288.
  6. Barnard and Marais, p 143.
  7. Ibid, p 142.
  8. Ibid, p 144.
  9. The price of British support for starting negotiations on secession was one man, one vote. Wilks, p 137; Thompson, p 170.
  10. UP Archive, File 'UP Central Head Office ...,' Minutes, 07.06.60.
  11. Reid, 'The Federal Party ....'
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APPENDIX A

1960 REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME OF ACTION

PERIOD 15 MARCH to 17 APRIL (5 weeks)

Annual General Meetings of Branches to be held.

Divisional Committees to ensure that there is adequate branch coverage.

Complete up-to-date card sets (ie, cell cards) for constituency, and breakdown of working set into cells.

Intensify drive for Anti-Republican Fighting Fund. (This only applies to those constituencies which have not been mobilised.)

Appointment of the following key personnel:

- a) O C Cards
- b) O C Fund Raising (not applicable to constituencies already mobilised)
- c) Chief Canvass Officer (Duty to seek cell leaders and Canvass Task Force)
- d) Transport Officer
- e) Chief Postal Voting Agent

Look out for suitable constituency committee room (not applicable to seats already mobilised).

Continue with the Registration and Citizenship Drive (new posters will be made available).

PERIOD 18 APRIL to 15 MAY (4 weeks)

Continuation of the holding of Branch Annual General Meetings until 30 April.

Holding of Annual General Meetings of Divisional Committees.

Copies of Supplementary Roll will be supplied to constituencies. Card sets to be amended accordingly.

PERIOD 16 MAY to 30 JUNE (6½ weeks)

Constituencies to commence canvass of entire divisional area with object of:

- a) Canvass for voters' registration;
- b) Ascertain feelings of voters in respect of the "Verwoerd" Republic, "Yes" or "No."
- c) Tracing postal votes.

Continue drive for Anti-Republican Fighting Fund.

Constituency committee rooms to open by 1 June or the beginning of period (not applicable to constituencies already mobilised).

Programme and Speakers required in respect of Anti-Republican rallies and meetings to be submitted to the Provincial Secretary by the Divisional Committees before 1 June.

NB: Divisional Committees should hold regular report-back meetings after the completion of each period and full reports submitted in duplicate to the Provincial Secretary.

DISTRIBUTION: Members of the Natal Executive Committee  
Members of Parliament, Senate & Provincial Council  
Chairmen of General Councils  
Divisional Chairmen & Secretaries  
Branch Chairmen & Secretaries  
Campaign Managers  
Secretary, Division of Organisation

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APPENDIX B

PRESS STATEMENT BY SIR DE VILLIERS GRAAFF

I have already expressed my gratitude to all those people, no matter to what party they belong, who worked and voted against a Republic in the Referendum on Wednesday. I believe that we were right in the attitude we took up and in the view we expressed at the polls.

The unprecedentedly high poll was a tribute to the self-sacrifice of our supporters and the efficiency of our organisation.

When the final count was taken, it was clear that only some 52% of those who actually voted favoured a Republic and by no stretch of imagination can that slender majority be described as representing the broad will of the people.

The Government has intimated that it interprets this majority as a mandate to proceed with legislation to create a Republic in South Africa. With their majority in Parliament they are able to ensure its passage.

Any Republic created with such a mandate will, in the nature of things, be a sectional Republic and not a South African Republic. Whether it will ever become a truly South African Republic, in the full sense of the word, depends largely upon the actions of the Government. True national unity rests not upon outward forms, not upon words, but upon deeds. The actions of the Government in the months which lie ahead will provide the true test.

Although only a slender majority supported a Republic, I am satisfied that many of them did so in the sincere belief that that Republic would

be within our Commonwealth. They were influenced to accept this brief by the propaganda of the Prime Minister and his Party.

A heavy responsibility therefore rests on the Government not to introduce any legislation in Parliament before we have the certain knowledge that we shall remain in the Commonwealth. To help obtain the necessary agreement with other Commonwealth countries, my services are at the disposal of South Africa.

We are a Commonwealth Party. Maintenance of our membership of the Commonwealth is not only a fundamental principle for ourselves but also for the millions of people in South Africa who are not parties to the narrow ideology of the Government.

Our two tasks now are to do everything humanly possible to ensure that we shall remain in the Commonwealth despite the difficulties engendered by the actions and policies of the Government, and to examine the legislation introduced by the Government with the greatest thoroughness, in order to ensure that the promises made by the Government during the past campaign are implemented to the full.

We shall pay particular attention to their undertaking that the only material change will be the replacement of the Governor-General by a President, that equal language rights will be maintained, and that the Republic will be based upon our present Constitution as enshrined in the South Africa Act. We shall also particularly concern ourselves with the maintenance of the freedom of the press, indirectly threatened by the Prime Minister in his broadcast last night.

At the same time we must reiterate our conviction that the creation of the Republic, in itself, will solve no problems. The millennium will not have come. If there is to be any hope for true national unity, if any of our real and urgent problems are to be solved, a change of heart on the part of the Government is essential.

For our part, we of the United Party will continue to strive for true national unity, based on a real desire to ensure the participation of both sections of our European peoples in all the activities of the South African society. To that end we shall re-dedicate ourselves to the spirit of our South African Constitution as bequeathed to us by our forefathers, who expected us to place South Africa first.

We shall continue to strive for better relations with our non-European population. We shall seek to create among them a sense of belonging in South Africa. We shall accept the Cape Coloured people as part of the Western group. We shall accept the detribalised Native settled in our urban areas as a permanent part of our urban population. We shall support Commerce and Industry in their expressed desire to implement our policy of affording those people higher living standards. We shall re-examine all aspects of our race relations, in the light of the important changes which have taken place in the last 20 years in South Africa and throughout the world. More particularly, we shall be ready to reconsider the legislation and regulations which have caused real hardship to our non-European population. And we shall ensure their ordered advance, in accordance with the principles of our Party as reflecting the highest traditions of South Africa.

In this reappraisal, we recognise that the tribal native with his home in the Reserves should have special attention and that policies for him may well be different from those for the native permanently settled in urban areas.

We shall strive to retain and extend friendly relations with the outside world, not only through our Commonwealth association, but also by consolidating existing friendships and by seeking and cementing new friendships, on the African continent and amongst the nations of the Western world.

Our major efforts will be directed towards proving to the world that by the application of Western standards, it is possible for peoples at different stages of development to live in harmony within the confines of one state.

We have lost the Referendum but our efforts to establish sane, moderate policies in South Africa go on.

JOHANNESBURG,

OCTOBER 8, 1960.

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UP ARCHIVE, FILE: 'UP CENTRAL HEAD OFFICE ...,'  
PRESS STATEMENT BY SIR DE VILLIERS GRAAFF, 8.10.60

REFERENDUM RESULTS : NATAL

ELECTORAL DIVISION	VOTERS ON ROLL	TOTAL	%	FOR	ANTI	%
DRAKENSBERG	9 956	9 200	92,4	3 801	5 349	58,1
DURBAN:						
* - Berea	12 916	12 130	93,9	1 010	11 098	91,5
* - Central	12 120	11 004	90,8	1 445	9 538	86,7
* - Musgrave	12 769	11 918	93,3	823	11 053	92,7
* - North	13 507	12 735	94,3	1 282	11 426	89,7
* - Point	14 156	12 631	89,2	1 554	11 049	87,5
* - Umbilo	12 386	11 348	91,6	1 766	9 357	84,0
- Umlazi	12 675	11 721	92,5	2 706	8 983	76,6
NATAL SOUTH COAST	10 206	9 444	92,5	1 669	7 761	82,2
NEWCASTLE	10 446	9 712	93,0	5 793	3 865	39,8
PIETERMARITZBURG:						
- City	13 866	12 751	92,0	3 689	8 978	70,4
- Districts	11 496	10 679	92,9	1 890	8 705	81,5
* PINETOWN	11 520	10 767	93,5	1 705	9 016	83,7
UMHLATUZANA	14 473	13 432	92,8	3 887	9 495	70,7
VRYHEID	9 554	8 843	92,6	5 613	3 175	35,9
ZULULAND	11 057	10 270	92,6	3 666	6 570	64,0
T O T A L	192 104	178 585	93,0	42 299	135 598	75,9

\* UNOPPOSED : 1958 GENERAL ELECTION

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