

CHAPTER 3

COMMON PERSPECTIVES

Other than brief exceptions, such as the 1950s and the latter half of 1993, a characteristic of the white right has been one of division on issues of policy, strategy and tactics (and personality-driven differences). This has been a crucial weakness. It virtually reduced to zero the white right's bargaining power in the negotiating process for an interim and final constitution for a democratic South Africa.

Notwithstanding such divisions, however, in Afrikaner nationalist terminology Afrikaners or Boers share three indisputable common ethnic attributes: the Afrikaans language, Calvinist religion and Afrikaner history with its claim to an own territory or *volkstaat*. While race is not specifically mentioned as a fourth attribute, it is implied in the Afrikaner right's understanding of ethnicity. It is on the basis of these attributes that the Afrikaner right shares important ideological, political and philosophical perceptions. These shared perceptions and common values provide the broad parameters within which the Afrikaner right formulates its goals, identifies its enemies and forges its actions.¹⁰¹ Two of the central tenets of this shared worldview—the importance of national self-determination in an own territory and the role of religion—are discussed below. (The role of language in Afrikaner nationalist ideology follows in chapter 5 below.)

Territory

Throughout the world the nationalist right emphasises the primacy of a territorial base to ensure the survival of the nation. In *The Ethnic Revival in the Modern World*, Anthony Smith explores the awakening of ethnic feelings and nationalist aspirations in many parts of the world after the Second World War. Smith argues that one of the characteristics that distinguishes nations from ethnic communities is the territorial dimension:

[a] nation, by definition, requires a 'homeland', a recognised space and ecological base, if only to ensure cohesion and autonomy and the rights of citizenship, whereas an ethnic community, let alone catego-

ry, can maintain its sense of belonging or its distinctive cultural characteristics without such a territorial base.¹⁰²

For the South African white right the basic prerequisite of a nation wishing to secure its survival with its own culture, religion and language is a geographically defined territory. The white right argues that a nation that does not have its own territorial base is scaled down to the status of a group—and in the case of Afrikaners and even whites, a minority group.¹⁰³ Moreover, the white right contends that a unitary state (such as the present South Africa) cannot provide the Afrikaner with a meaningful future but will lead to the extinction of the Afrikaner people as a distinct nation.¹⁰⁴ The Afrikaner right wing has a firm conviction that it can lay claim to a historically distinct territory:

Historical evidence of the link between a distinct and separate territory and the Afrikaner people is fundamental to the demand of the right wing for self-determination in an Afrikaner fatherland.¹⁰⁵

For the AWB the right of a nation to its own territory enjoys Biblical support, and is crucial if a nation is to survive:

For a nation (*volk*) to have its own territory is an authentic Biblical concept. Nation and land are indivisible, the one is not conceivable without the other. To survive, a nation must have land which it can claim as its own. The bond with its own territory guarantees the survival and growth of a national identity... The future of the Boer *volk* is damned unless it obtains its own government to exercise its right to self-determination in an own territory.¹⁰⁶

To further its demands for a sovereign Afrikaner state the white right has developed a multiplicity of partition and secessionist models.¹⁰⁷ The idea of partitioning South Africa into various states, or into a confederation of states, has not been the exclusive preserve of the white right. The South African liberal icon of the 1930s and 1940s, Alfred Hoernlé, considered partition as a way of protecting blacks from white oppression and reducing the risk of racial conflict in the country.¹⁰⁸ More recently, German author and observer at the 1987 meeting between the ANC and Afrikaner academics in Dakar (Senegal), Klaus von der Ropp, has proposed partitioning South Africa to ensure genuine black independence and to provide whites with the security an independent enclave would offer.¹⁰⁹

Partition is the political division of a territory into autonomous sections in order to establish two or more sovereign governments.¹¹⁰ This can have two

implications for a partitioned territory. First, a state can be subject to partitioning to the point of vanishing altogether. An example is the division of Poland among its various neighbours in the nineteenth century. Secondly, two or more states can be created from one territory. This occurred in the 1990s with the partitioning of Yugoslavia into a number of independent states, and the partitioning of Czechoslovakia into a Czech and Slovak state.

Partition is “a complex negotiated process, where a spatial arrangement that is totally different from what existed before is reached between states within a common geographical area”.¹¹¹ Partition is usually fuelled by the recognition of a fundamental irreconcilability in the values and aspirations of identifiable population groups. Partition is frequently an attempt at solving conflicts in deeply divided plural societies along spatial lines.¹¹²

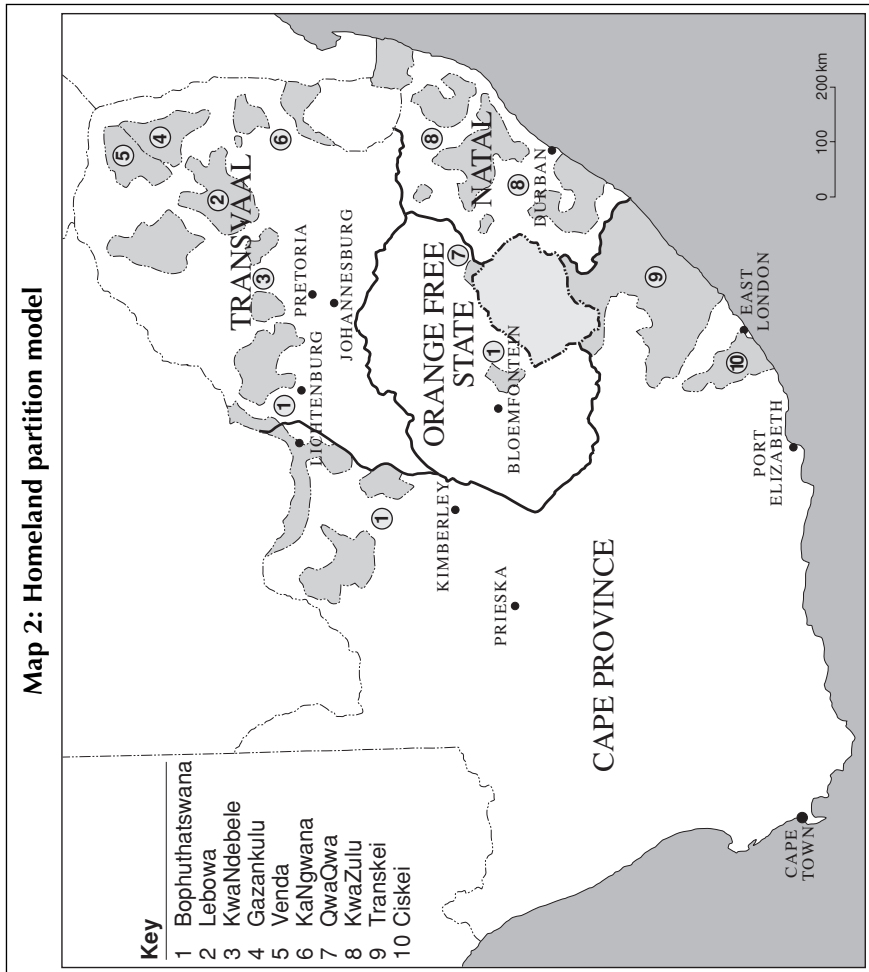
In contrast to partition which includes a process of negotiations, secession is usually a unilateral process where a definable geographic area opts out of union with another state within a common geographical area.¹¹³ An example is the secession of Slovenia and Croatia from the Republic of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s.

A potential future hurdle faced by the white right—or any other partitionist or secessionist movement in Africa—is the 1963 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Cairo Declaration which determined African states’ acceptance of frontiers inherited from their ex-colonial rulers.¹¹⁴ This was largely motivated by a fear of a repetition of the fragmentation characteristic of the pre-War Balkans. According to Smith,

African politicians have used every tactic to avert the break-up of their often fragile and precarious political units, in the hope that, given sufficient time, their present crop of ‘state-nations’ can be transformed into genuine ‘nation-states’ based on the presumed European model.¹¹⁵

The secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993 may have set a precedent for a redrawing of Africa’s colonial boundaries. Eritrea may be deemed a special case, however, as it was an Italian colony until 1941. It was given to Ethiopia in 1952, initially remaining an autonomous region within the Federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Writing in early 1993 Adam and Moodley argue that at the time the ANC was not in principle opposed to an autonomous Afrikaner territory. However, the



ANC feared that recognising the Afrikaner's right to limited self-determination would have opened up a Pandora's box of ethnic claims to self rule which could have balkanised the country:

The recognition of an Afrikaner heartland is widely resented by the ANC at present, not for ideological reasons, but because the precedent would certainly encourage similar claims by Zulu and other black nationalists.¹¹⁶

Homeland partition

Traditionally the mainstream white right has favoured the original apartheid blueprint of homeland partition (Map 2). This entails removing the majority of black people from 'white South Africa'. Blacks would become citizens of a number of independent states, each with a dominant ethnic component. Blacks who remain in white South Africa would be prohibited from settling permanently, and exercising any political rights there. Some within the white right—such as the Conservative Party—further advocated the creation of a homeland or an autonomous area for both coloureds and Indians. The HNP initially advocated the repatriation of Indians to the Indian subcontinent.

The manifest weakness of the homeland partition model is that it allocates 13% of South Africa's land area for the settlement of three-quarters of the country's population, to be divided into ten separate black states. The remaining 87% is allocated to 'white South Africa'. Moreover, blacks are separated along ethnic lines, but South Africa (minus the black states) is allocated to all whites as a racial group.

By 1993 only the HNP and a diminishing section of the CP continued to support the homeland partition model, partly because of its inherent flaws and partly because right wingers realised they lacked the power to enforce a division of the country where the majority black population would receive only 13% of the land.

Restoration of Boer Republics

The resurgence of strong Afrikaner nationalist sentiments in the late 1980s lead to an increasingly influential secessionist or *volkstaat* movement within the right wing. Propagated initially by the Boerestaat Party, and later popularised by the AWB and other smaller organisations, was the view that the Boer

Volkstaat versus Boerestaat

The Boerestaat Party (BSP) specifically strives for a Boer state for 'Boers' who it distinguishes from 'Afrikaners'. The late leader of the BSP, Robert van Tonder, argued that the citizens of the nineteenth century Boer Republics constituted a nation by themselves, and did not belong to the 'so-called' Afrikaans nation, even though they speak the same language. According to Van Tonder only Afrikaners of Voortrekker descent and whose forebearers fought on the Boer side in the Anglo-Boer War are regarded as Boer, which excludes the Afrikaners in the Cape and KwaZulu-Natal who Van Tonder referred to as, respectively, 'Cape Dutch' and 'Afrikaner liberals':¹¹⁹

We Boere are not South Africans. Neither are we 'Afrikaners'. The history of the Boere is totally different from that of the Cape 'Afrikaners'. The case for the new Boer Republic rests on history, language, culture and an own territory (state). Not merely on colour. That is the basis on which any folk's (sic) identity is determined.¹²⁰

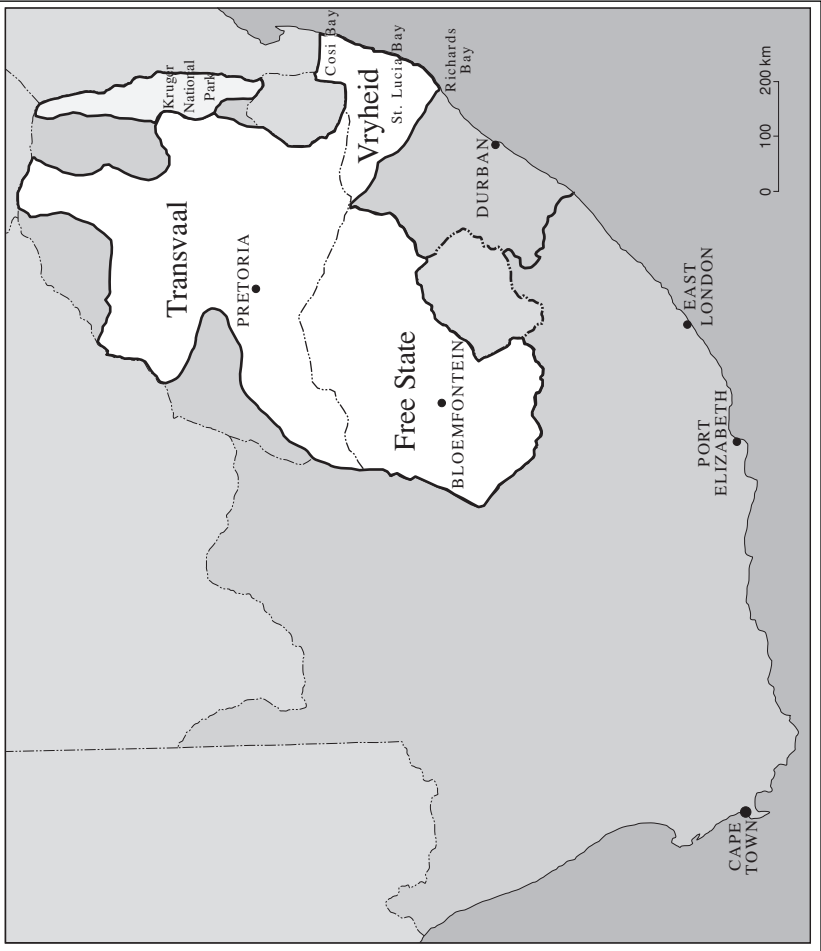
Traditionally the AWB adopted a more pragmatic approach, advocating a restoration of the Boer Republics for all white Afrikaners, and Christian English-speakers prepared to assimilate and support the concept of an independent Boer state. More recently the AWB has adopted a position similar to that of the BSP, stating that the Boer *volk* is not merely a white or an Afrikaans-speaking group.¹²¹

republics were robbed of their independence by the British during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902.

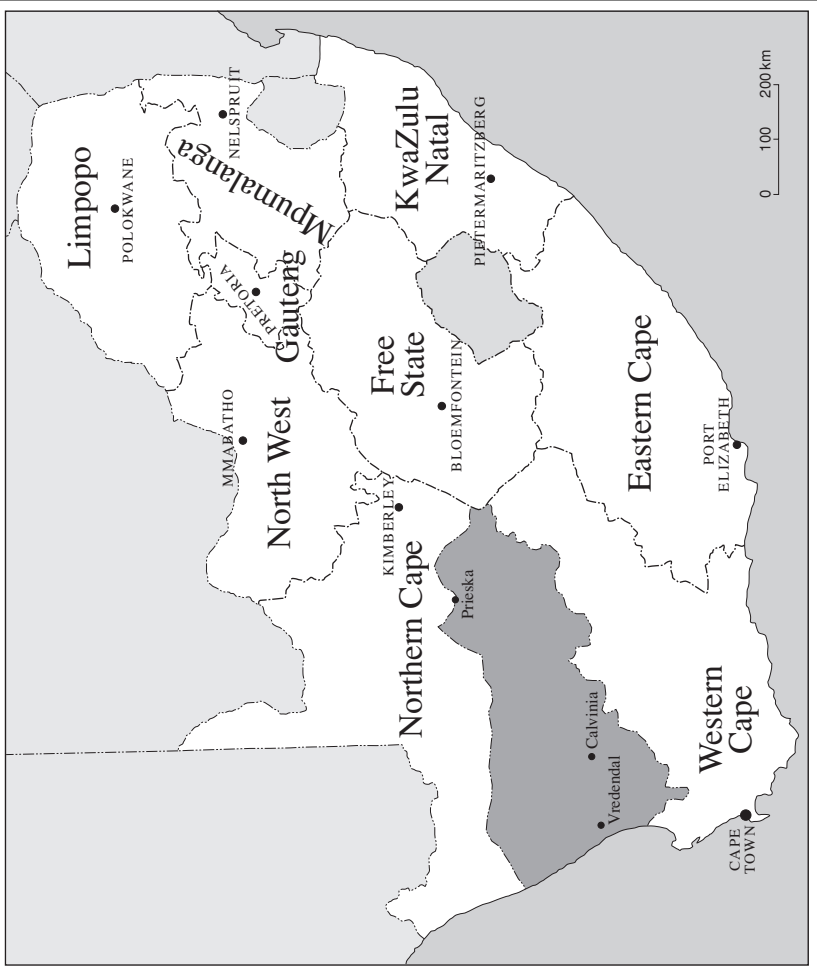
The *volkstaat* or *Boerestaat* (Boer state) movement advocated that the former Boer Republics—the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (South African Republic), the Orange Free State and Vryheid—be restored by way of secession from the remaining part of South Africa.¹¹⁷ This restoration would be based on cultural, historical and legal claims and not on the basis of race.¹¹⁸ In today's South Africa the restored Boer republics would cover the bulk of the provinces of Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West (i.e. the former Transvaal province), the Free State and northern KwaZulu-Natal (Map 3).

Unlike the homeland partition model, the secessionist *volkstaat* model is not prescriptive by allocating certain areas or homelands to other ethnic groups.

Map 3: Boer Republics volkstaat model



Map 4: Avstig/Freedom Front volkstaat model



The *volkstaat* model strives for an independent Afrikaner state but is not concerned about the remainder of South Africa. Moreover, unlike the homeland partition model which allocates a state for whites, the *volkstaat* model proposes an ethnically defined state for Afrikaners/Boers. White British immigrants would, for example, generally not be welcome in such a state.

Compared to the homeland partition model, the *volkstaat* or *Boerestaat* concept based on the Boer Republics is more tenable on three grounds. First, it bases its claim for a sovereign territory on the right of a people—who are distinct and definable in terms of, inter alia, their common ethnicity—to self-determination. That is, the claim is not, or not primarily, based on race. Secondly, it does not prescribe to those who do not belong to the Afrikaner/Boer people how they should arrange their political affairs. Finally, the borders of the proposed Afrikaner/Boer state can be understood on historical grounds. In theory the demands of the supporters of the *volkstaat* model are not fundamentally different to the demands for national self-determination of other stateless peoples, such as the Kurds, the Tamils in Sri Lanka or the Chechens in the Russian Federation.

A weakness of the *volkstaat* model, based on the Boer Republics, is that Afrikaners or Boers do not constitute a natural majority within the proposed borders of such a state. According to a 1993 analysis, the reconstituted Boer Republics would encompass 61% of all South African whites. However, whites would make up only 24% of the population of such a state. If Afrikaners only were counted their proportion would be even lower.¹²² Moreover, such a state would encompass the economic heartland of South Africa centred around the province of Gauteng. It is extremely unlikely that blacks, or whites who oppose this *volkstaat* model, would permit a minority to secede from South Africa, taking with them the country's primary source of wealth.

Pragmatic secession

Intellectual Afrikaner nationalist thinkers, centred around the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA), began developing models of an Afrikaner homeland in the late 1960s. These models strove to minimise the relocation of non-Afrikaners and left South Africa's economic heartland largely untouched.¹²³

In the late 1980s a well known right wing academic, Professor Carel Boshoff, founded the Afrikaner-Vryheidstigting or Avstig (Afrikaner Freedom

Foundation). The founding principles of the organisation were based on the belief that since black majority rule was unavoidable and white minority rule morally unjustifiable, Afrikaners would have to form their own *volkstaat* in a smaller part of South Africa.¹²⁴

Boshoff's plans for an Afrikaner state exclude the traditional Afrikaner/Boer areas in the Transvaal and the Free State. Boshoff's model envisages a state in the north-western Cape (Map 4). This area is economically underdeveloped and located mostly in the semi-desert environment, but has some potential for economic growth because of the presence of the Orange River, the Saldanha harbour and a variety of minerals.¹²⁵

A *volkstaat* according to the Avstig model would demand economic sacrifices from Afrikaners who move there from other parts of South Africa. Over the long run it is conceivable that some Afrikaner nationalists would make such a sacrifice. Zille points out that while many right wing leaders use economic factors, such as white unemployment, as important components of their mobilising strategy, there is little evidence to suggest that economic interests are the primary motivating factor behind right wing ideology.¹²⁶ It is frequently conceded in right wing circles that whites would have to be prepared to make significant economic sacrifices to implement right wing policies successfully. Boshoff puts it as follows: "We would rather be poor and free than rich in a common society."¹²⁷

In 1991 the Afrikaner Volkswag (Afrikaner People's Guard) bought the town of Orania, consisting of 90 houses and covering an area of 400 hectares. At the time of writing Orania had grown to a permanent community of about 750 residents, with a timeshare holiday resort on the banks of the Orange River, a home for senior citizens, two schools, a private hospital and a growing agricultural sector. According to Boshoff, Orania is intended to be the basis of the *volkstaat*, which would come into existence only once a large number of Afrikaners physically occupied Orania and other such 'growth points'.¹²⁸

Boshoff concedes that most Afrikaners might not move to the *volkstaat*. In his opinion it is nevertheless essential Afrikaners have this option, since this will make them feel more secure, thereby reducing tensions in the rest of South Africa. Boshoff regards this as being analogous with Israel, which serves as a refuge for Jews from all over the world.¹²⁹

The Avstig model is based on the principle of 'own labour'. That is, all work in the *volkstaat* is performed by its citizens. As a result the white residents of

Orania can be seen ploughing their fields, collecting the garbage and tending their gardens—work traditionally performed by blacks in South Africa.

The Freedom Front—of which Boshoff is a public representative—largely accepts the Avstig model for an Afrikaner *volkstaat*. The Freedom Front admits that a state can become a *volkstaat* only once its citizens predominantly consist of the same ethnic group. Moreover, all citizens in such a state (of which a majority would be Afrikaners) are to enjoy full political rights and be entitled to take part in regular elections.¹³⁰

Religion

The Dutch settlers at the Cape brought with them a fundamentalist form of Calvinism. Calvinism is firmly rooted in the scriptures and holds that all things are predestined by God, that man therefore has to accept that certain aspects of his life cannot be explained. Neo-Calvinist influences reinterpreted Calvinism as a philosophy of natural theology according to which God revealed Himself both in nature and in history. Consequently God must be recognised in everything and the will of God is apparent in all things.¹³¹ According to Leach such a neo-Calvinist interpretation has been used as a justification for the existence and protection of the Afrikaner people as a distinct nation:

The existence and the development of the Afrikaner people became an ‘act of God’ and, because God had created the nation, it had to continue. Another logical argument was that God had willed that there should be separate nations and races.¹³²

Early Afrikaner nationalism encompassed a distinct religious element—the Israelite myth. These were references to the Afrikaners as the chosen people and to South Africa as the promised land. Although the majority of early Afrikaners probably did not literally see themselves as God’s chosen people, they interpreted the creation of the Afrikaners as a distinct racial and ethnic group as part of God’s plan.

Until quite recently most Afrikaners—with their rural roots and largely isolated history—were, and many have remained, a deeply religious people. They traditionally have been attached to, and deferential towards, the ministers of their churches and the doctrines these ministers broadcast.¹³³

Church and politics

Even before the National Party came into power in 1948, the Afrikaans Reformed Churches became actively involved in the moral justification of apartheid ideology by providing it with a scriptural basis. Their collective philosophy was also based on the belief that the Afrikaners were a distinct people elected and sent by God to spread Christianity among the black nations of South Africa, while at the same time maintaining a separate identity and racial purity.¹³⁴ In 1944 the chairman of the Broederbond imbued the organisation and the Afrikaner people with a divine mission:

The Afrikaner Broederbond was born out of the deep conviction that the Afrikaner *volk* has been planted in this country by the Hand of God, destined to survive as a separate *volk* with its own calling.¹³⁵

After 1982, with the establishment of the Conservative Party, the political division among Afrikaners was also reflected in the churches. The largest and most important church associated with the Afrikaner right wing is the Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk or APK (Afrikaans Protestant Church). The APK was established in 1987 after the departure of conservative theologians and right wing members from the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk or NGK (Dutch Reformed Church), the largest of the Afrikaner churches. This was largely in response to the 1986 NGK synod where the church adopted the view that there is no biblical justification for apartheid. Moreover, the NGK accepted as official policy that racism and apartheid were sinful, and that membership of the church was open to all races.¹³⁶

The APK initially defined the Afrikaner people as a white nation (*'blanke volk'*). Only white Afrikaners, and whites who identified themselves with white Afrikaners, could become members of the APK. This changed at the turn of the century when all references to race were removed from the church's policy documents. It has always been up to individual congregations to decide who may or may not attend a church service, and special services such as marriages and funerals.¹³⁷

In July 1999 the APK advised its members not to take part in future elections. The church principally rejects the 'multi-cultural' and 'multi-religious' unitary state of South Africa. The APK argues that denying communities and nations the right to self-determination, and the idea that South Africa consists of millions of individuals of which 'half plus one' can demo-

cratically decide for everyone, results in democracy becoming a “tyranny of numbers”.¹³⁸

The Afrikaner right has had little difficulty finding biblical justification for a nation’s right to resist a government which acts against its interests and freedom. In 1990, the leader of the Conservative Party, the late Dr Andries Treurnicht (a moderate by white right wing standards), and a former minister in the Dutch Reformed Church argued:

The Bible does not take the side of tyrants who ignore the rights and freedom of their people and who destroy laws which protect them. The authority of a government is limited by the authority of God... If a law made by a government contradicts the authority of God or that of the freedom of the nation, it is not only permissible, but also acceptable, to disobey the government.¹³⁹

Religious prophecy

In the post-1994 era the Afrikaner right has placed increasing significance on the prophecies of Seer Nicolaas van Rensburg. Van Rensburg (1864–1926) lived on a farm in what is now the North West province, where he is said to have had more than 700 visions about the Afrikaners and their future. Van Rensburg was a simple man and the only book he read was the Bible. His visions appeared in symbols, which were objects he came into daily contact with. Van Rensburg’s visions were not always chronological and often even he failed to interpret them at the time.¹⁴⁰

Publisher and author, Adriaan Snyman, has written extensively on Van Rensburg and has spent years interpreting his visions. Snyman’s book *Stem van ’n Profeet*, (also translated into English, ‘Voice of a Prophet’) is widely available in the commercial book trade. It is likely that Snyman’s interpretations of Van Rensburg’s visions are shared by most believers of the Seer’s prophecies. Indeed, there are strong indications that the insurrectionist plans of the right wing Boeremag (Boer force/power), which resulted in a series of bombings in late 2002, were at least partly motivated by Van Rensburg’s prophecies. (Chapter 4 on the Boeremag follows below.)

Van Rensburg prophesised that “total reform” would take place before the Boer nation would get its own Republic, provided such reforms are similar to the reforms God expected of Israel during the days of Nehemiah (governor of

Judea around 440 BC).¹⁴¹ In the Old Testament book of Nehemiah 13, God tells Israel how they have sinned against Him and how He expected them to reform. Namely that all foreigners be excluded from the community, that the Sabbath be a day of rest and that there be no mixing between the people of Judah and those of other nations.

Van Rensburg predicted the coming into power “of a black government”, but that this would be of a short duration only.¹⁴² A moderate ‘communist-inclined’ leader takes over power which, according to Snyman, is Nelson Mandela. During this time, “hostility from Indian ranks reaches a crisis over the Afrikaans language... the language of the Boers and everything connected with it is now being denied and trampled upon. All the protests of the Boer fall on deaf ears.”¹⁴³ Van Rensburg further said “a day would come when the Indians would occupy positions of power in the country. The Christian values of the Afrikaner would then be in direct conflict with the religion of Islam.”¹⁴⁴

Thereafter, “the bloodiest period in our [the Boer’s] history begins—hundreds of innocents are murdered in their houses”, then “the blacks will first disappear, after which the jingoes and the English will flee”.¹⁴⁵ The Boer’s enemies will initially flee to Durban (in KwaZulu-Natal), but will eventually leave the country.¹⁴⁶

Van Rensburg had a vision of a large nationwide strike during which all trains would stop and there would be a massive power failure in Gauteng.¹⁴⁷ According to Snyman’s interpretation, the strike will occur just before or after South Africa’s second democratic election (which took place in mid 1999), “which would be the time when Afrikaners would finally turn their backs on the Government... Then revolution would break out and in the confrontation that follows the Afrikaners would take back the country.”¹⁴⁸

In a vision Van Rensburg revealed that it is only after the violent death of a black leader, and a massive strike cripples the country, that real trouble starts. As the black leader is buried,

[v]iolence and civil war will erupt... The first large-scale violence erupts and the Witwatersrand (Gauteng) in particular feels the brunt of black violence... However, when the armed forces advance on Pretoria at dawn, the Boers are ready for action and Johannesburg is bomb-attacked, which shakes the whole world.¹⁴⁹

In another vision Van Rensburg saw an unexpected night attack on Johannesburg by black people during which thousands of white people are killed in one night.¹⁵⁰ It is alleged that an Afrikaner woman by the name of Johanna Brandt was given a similar warning by an angel in 1916, that one day Johannesburg would be attacked by black people and thousands of white people murdered.¹⁵¹

Van Rensburg had a vision of German arms being supplied to the Boers by rail from the port of Lüderitz (Namibia) to the northern Karoo town of Prieska. It is at Prieska that the Boers are armed and become “a force to be reckoned with”.¹⁵² It is also in Prieska where an interim Boer government is formed.¹⁵³

After the death of the black leader Van Rensburg sees a man “in a brown suit rise very unexpectedly to gather the nation together and take matters in hand by means of a coup d’état”.¹⁵⁴ In another vision Van Rensburg saw the Boers being summoned to a hillock north of the town of Lichtenburg where the “man in the brown suit” makes his first appearance and is accepted by the Boers as their leader.¹⁵⁵

Van Rensburg further predicted that a “spiritual leader who will unite and arm the nation, will rise in the Eastern Province” (Eastern Cape). Although Van Rensburg did not say how this man would arm the Boer nation, Snyman believes it will be spiritual as well as physical:

This shows another clear parallel between the oppression which the Boer nation finds itself in and the experiences of the Israelites when they were subjected to oppression by God because of their disobedience. During such times, strong leaders and God-fearing people rose from the nation to lead them to freedom—and without exception that freedom was gained through Divine intervention.¹⁵⁶

Israel Identity¹⁵⁷

Most right wing Afrikaners adhere to their traditional nationalist religion, Calvinist Protestantism. However, some on the radical fringes of the right regard the Afrikaner as a chosen people destined to rule others because of a divinely ordained superiority. Use is made of the Calvinist distinction between the elect and the damned to make a natural classification of the ‘heathen’ blacks as the damned.¹⁵⁸ An even smaller minority of extreme right wingers

have misinterpreted aspects of Calvinist thought and Old Testament writings, and formed supremacist sects generically referred to as Israel Identity.

The Israel Identity movement is small in South Africa, and even among the extreme white right enjoys limited support. In fact, in a document attributed to the extreme right wing Boeremag, the Israel Identity movement is identified as a front organisation of the Illuminati which wants to destroy the Boer people (see below).¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless an analysis of the Israel Identity movement is important because of the disproportionate role its adherents have played in the commission of racially motivated violent crimes and acts of terror in South Africa.

Israel Identity originated in Great Britain and formed into a non-denominational historical society called the British–Israel World Federation in 1919. The basic belief of Israel Identity is that the ten lost tribes of Israel can be traced historically and archaeologically to the British Isles, the United States and the Nordic people of Europe.¹⁶⁰ Israel Identity believes that Adam is the father of the white race only. The argument is made that Adam is “a Hebrew word meaning: ruddy, to show blood, flush, turn rosy”—the implication being that only fair skinned people can be seen to blush.¹⁶¹

As a son of God, made in His likeness, Adam and his descendants, who are also the children of God, can know YHWH God as their creator. Adamic man is made trichotomous, that is, not only of body and soul, but having an implanted spirit, giving him a higher form of consciousness and distinguishing him from the other races of the earth (Deut. 7:6, 10:15; Amos 3:2).¹⁶²

Followers of Israel Identity believe in the scripture according to Jahweh—the name of God, expanded from the four letters, YHWH, that form the proper name of God in Hebrew.

Israel Identity divides people into two groups: the children of God or Adam, and the children of Satan. That is, there are two mutually exclusive genetically definable groups in the world. This biological classification is taken from Genesis 3:15 where God told the serpent (Satan): “And I will put enmity between you and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and hers...”. The argument is then made that just as angels had intercourse with earthly women (Genesis 6:4), so Satan had intercourse with Eve. Eve produced three children: Cain, Abel and Seth. Cain is the offspring of Satan, and Abel and Seth the offspring of the union between Adam and Eve.¹⁶³

Israel Identity traces the lineage of ‘Satan’s children’ to a number of biblical ancestors. Cain is seen as the first ‘coloured person’ and rebel against God. Another ancestor of Satan’s children is Ham—the father of the ‘brown’ and ‘black’ African nations.¹⁶⁴ Ham was Noah’s second son. Noah’s first born, Shem, is the ancestor of Abraham and Jacob—who produced the white nations of the world. Japheth, the third born son, is said to be the father of the oriental or Asian peoples.¹⁶⁵

Abraham is the ancestor of the people of Israel. Israel Identity places strong emphasis on the historical separation between the southern kingdom of Judah, which includes the tribes of Benjamin and Levi, and the northern kingdom of Israel which includes the remaining ten tribes of Israel. According to Israel Identity, the greater part of the tribes of Benjamin and Levi mixed with the descendants of Esau. As Esau married Canaanite women—who, in turn, were the descendants of Ham—the lineage of Judea and Benjamin was mixed with the seeds of Satan.¹⁶⁶ For Israel Identity most Jews of today are descendants of Judea and Benjamin, and consequently they are Satan’s children. Thus, God’s chosen people are not the Jews of today, who are ‘Satanic impostors’. God’s true chosen people are the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel: the white peoples of the West.¹⁶⁷

Some Israel Identity groups are more radical than others.¹⁶⁸ The most radical groups espouse a hostile form of racism and white supremacy:

We believe the White, Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and kindred people to be God’s true, literal Children of Israel... This chosen seedline making up the ‘Christian Nations’ of the earth stands far superior to all other peoples in their call as God’s servant race.¹⁶⁹

Unsurprisingly radical Israel Identity groups advocate strict racial segregation lest there be biological mixing between the races (and thereby between the genetic descendants of God and Satan). Just as the Israel of the Old Testament had to be separate from the heathens, so the white nations of today need to remain segregated from other races:

We believe that as a chosen race, elected by God, we are not to be partakers of the wickedness of this world system, but are called to come out and be a separated people. This includes segregation from all non-white races, who are prohibited in God’s natural divine order from ruling over Israel. Race-mixing is an abomination in the sight of the Almighty God, a satanic attempt meant to destroy the chosen seedline, and is strictly forbidden by His commandments.¹⁷⁰

Phineas Priesthood

The idea of the 'Phineas Priesthood' developed on the fringes of the North American right in the early 1990s. The Phineas Priesthood is not a membership organisation in the traditional sense. Rather extremists become 'members' when they commit 'Phineas acts'—virtually any violent activity against people who are not white. In this way, achieving Phineas Priesthood status can become the goal of extremists who want to commit violent acts against black people.¹⁷³

The inspiration of the Phineas Priesthood comes from the Old Testament and the Book of Numbers (25:6–13). Phineas was the grandson of Aaron, who objected to the consorting of an Israelite with a Midianite woman and killed them both. Phineas' actions so impressed his peers that it assured his succession to the High Priesthood. The memory of Phineas' act also resulted in a faction of priests, after the Babylonian exile centuries later, claiming descent from Phineas and the special status this apparently implied.¹⁷⁴

South African Israel Identity is variously referred to as *Israelvisie* (Israel Vision), *Blanke Israelisme* (White Israelism) and *Wit Teologie* (White Theology).¹⁷¹ Israel Identity had an estimated 10,000 South African followers in the mid 1990s.¹⁷² At the time of writing the number of followers is likely to be significantly lower. The most prominent organisation espousing the views of Israel Identity is the *Gemeente van die Verbondsvolk* (Congregation of the People of the Covenant). Other Israel Vision groups include *Verstrooide Israel Sending*, *Gemeente van die Verbond*, *Dogters van Sion*, the Federation of the Covenant People, and *Phineas Priesterorde* (Phineas Priesthood).

South African Israel Identity groups place great significance on a statement attributed to the Old Testament prophet Zephaniah: "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering" (Zeph. 3:10).¹⁷⁵ From the vantage point of Zephaniah, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia would have been south of Ethiopia. This is used to justify the settlement and control of southern Africa by white Europeans. One South African Israel Identity group, the Federation of the Covenant People, up it as follows:

... the land of ancient Ethiopia ends in a water line which in former days completely segregated the southern tip of the continent from

that to the north... a water line made up of rivers all of which have their source in ancient Ethiopia... the Cunene, the Cubango, the Cuando and the Zambezi... The land thus segregated is today known as Rhodesia, South Africa, South West Africa, the protectorates and Mozambique... The people living 'beyond the rivers of Ethiopia' are called 'my suppliants' and 'the daughter of my dispersed'. These are not just haphazard terms, as they are found time and again in the Bible and are applied to the Israel people who vanished from the land of Canaan after disobedience to the Laws of God... Thus with the occupation of the land from the Cape [by the European settlers] to the water boundary of the Cunene–Cubango–Cuando–Zambezi, the sons of Jacob are seen entering into their God-appointed heritage.¹⁷⁶

Israel Identity groups emphasise the following Old Testament verse: "Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you" (Exodus 34:12). This verse is interpreted to mean that the white nations of the world who are descendant from Israel—such as the British settlers and the Afrikaners—are forbidden by God to enter into any agreement with the black inhabitants of countries they settle in:

The Lord did *not* even imply that Israel was permitted to make a covenant or any agreement with the inhabitants of the land [even] if they rescinded their own faith and accepted that of Israel—*He was adamant and said that they should not make a covenant and that was that. 'Majority Rule' was not the order of the day and certainly not supported by God.*¹⁷⁷ (Italics in the original.)

South African followers of Israel Identity justify their demands to bring back segregationist policies, and establish a white or Afrikaner state, as being a divine right. Moreover, irrespective of their present position of powerlessness, South African Israel Identity followers are emboldened by their belief that divine prophecy dictates that their aims will come to fruition. A book published by the Federation of the Covenant People states:

Only one thing is certain now. This land 'beyond the rivers of Ethiopia', is a God-given homeland and is part of God's Plan and Purpose for His people and so it can never be entirely lost and the Israel people in the land '*shall bring mine offering*'. God has stated it and so it *will* be accomplished although at present it may appear impossible.¹⁷⁸ (Italics in the original.)

Radical offshoots of the Israel Identity movement in South Africa go so far to argue that they have a divine duty to prevent racial mixing and fight for God's chosen people. Moreover, that blacks being the descendants of Satan do not possess a soul. This makes the killing of black people morally justifiable. A number of radical followers of Israel Identity have committed atrocities directed at blacks. For example:

- Barend Strydom (self proclaimed leader of the White Wolves) killed eight black people in the vicinity of Pretoria's Strydom Square in 1988.¹⁷⁹
- In 1990 two members of the Orde van die Dood were convicted of killing a black taxi driver. They claimed the murder was justified on biblical grounds.¹⁸⁰
- Eugene Marais was convicted of shooting and killing seven black bus passengers and injuring 27 in 1990, in retaliation for the stabbing of eight whites by blacks on the same day.¹⁸¹
- On Christmas eve 1996 three members of the *Boere Aanvals Troepe* (Boer Attack Troops) set off two bombs at a Worcester shopping centre killing four Coloured shoppers and injuring 60.¹⁸²
- In January 2000 Johan de Wet Kritzinger allegedly shot and killed two black commuters and wounded four others in Pretoria.¹⁸³ Kritzinger is a follower of the White Wolves.