



# THE SUPER -AFRIKANERS

Inside the  
Afrikaner  
Broederbond

.....  
*Introduction to the NEW EDITION by*

**MAX DU PREEZ**  
.....



IVOR WILKINS & HANS STRYDOM

‘Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom strip away the secrecy of sixty years to exposed the sinews of power by which the Afrikaner Broederbond manipulated South Africa.’

**-The Sunday Times**

The *Super-Afrikaners*, originally published in the 1970’s, scandalised a nation as it exposed the secret workings of the Broederbond. Out of print for over three decades, this edition with a new introduction by Max du Preez is available for a new generation.

The Broederbond was formed in Johannesburg in 1918 by a group of young Afrikaners disillusioned by their role as dispossessed people in their own country. The first triumph of this remarkable organisation was the fact that it was largely responsible for welding together dissident factions within Afrikanerdom, thereby ensuring the accession of the National Party to power in 1948. This highly organised clique of ‘Super-Afrikaners’, by sophisticated political intrigue, waged a remarkable campaign to harness political, social and economic forces in South Africa to its cause ... and succeeded.

Political journalists Hans Strydom and Ivor Wilkens traced, at great personal risk, its development from the earliest days to the present. The book includes the most comprehensive list of Broeders ever published.

‘The development, conflicts and strategies of the Broederbond are investigated at great length in this important book which simply has to be read by anyone interested in South Africa.’

**-Barry Streek**

## THE SUPER-AFRIKANERS

**IVOR WILKINS** was born in Potchefstroom in 1951. He entered the newspaper world as a photographer for *The Daily News* in Durban. He later switched to reporting, becoming the political reporter of *The Daily News*. In 1976 he joined *The Sunday Times* as political reporter. He later immigrated to New Zealand where he lives today.

The late **HANS STRYDOM** was a well-respected author and journalist for 30 years. He held the posts of Assistant Editor as well as News Editor of the *Sunday Times* for a period of twelve years.

After the publication of *The Super-Afrikaners*, he wrote another bestseller called *For Volk and Führer*, which told the true story of Robey Leibbrandt, the Olympic boxer, who attempted to assassinate General Jan Smuts and establish a pro-Nazi regime in South Africa. The book was later made into a film and four-part television series by the late Manie van Rensburg under the title *The Fourth Reich*.

His publication of 36 short stories in *Afrikaner Cameos* represented a few of the gems he contributed to the *Sunday Chronicle*, *Sunday Tribune*, *The Argus*, *Sunday Times* and *Pretoria News*. A stage production of *Volkstaat Blues* was produced by Des and Dawn Lindberg.

Hans passed away in 2004.

# THE SUPER-AFRIKANERS

Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom

JONATHAN BALL PUBLISHERS  
Johannesburg & Cape Town

*To my family and friends*

IVOR WILKINS

*To my wife Gertie, for the endless hours spent on deciphering codes  
and preparing the most extensive membership list of the  
Broederbond ever published ...*

HANS STRYDOM

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*'Do you realise what a powerful force is gathered here tonight between these four walls? Show me a greater power on the whole continent of Africa! Show me a greater power anywhere ...'*

H J KLOPPER – First chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, from a celebratory speech on the occasion of the organisation's 50th anniversary in 1968.

# *Introduction to the 2012 Edition*

by Max du Preez

The last 137 pages of Ivor Wilkins' and Hans Strydom's 1978 edition of *The Super-Afrikaners* were probably the most photocopied pages of any book in South African history.

The book was regarded in much the same light as a porn magazine by Broederbonders and their families – it was taboo to be seen to own one, but most were desperate to see what was in it.

Those last pages contained the first comprehensive list of members of the highly secretive Afrikaner Broederbond, some 7 500 of them.

Coming from a rural, Calvinistic, Afrikaner-Nationalist family, I knew better than to ask my father if he was a Broeder. I was one of the many who quickly scanned the last pages of *The Super-Afrikaners* to see whether my father's name appeared. It didn't. However, not every member's name was on the list and my father was a staunch Nationalist, an elder in the Nederduitse Gerevormeerde (NG) Kerk and a member of Rapportryers – the Broederbond's version of Rotary and Lions – all good credentials for membership.

I would have been disappointed had I found out that he had indeed been a member. I had always considered my father to be an honourable, no-nonsense man. In my view as his son, belonging to a secret, elitist and patriarchal clique would have been unbecoming of such a person. Or perhaps that only became my view as a politically aware adult.

As a teenager, my friends and I often talked about the Broederbond, wondering whose father was a member. If you had known your father wasn't a member, you would have considered it wise not to mention it because that could only have meant that he hadn't been deemed important or influential enough to be invited to become a member – there was, as Strydom and Wilkins explained in detail, an elaborate procedure prescribed for the proposing of new members.

What we discussed more often than not was whether or not the Broeders had a secret handshake – how else would they have known whether or not they were talking to a fellow Broeder? Several of the boys pretended to know and demonstrated weird and wonderful handshake rituals. As it turned out, no a secret handshake existed.

We also speculated about the initiation ceremony for new Broeders.

We reached consensus that strange cloaks, altars, daggers and the mixing of members' blood must have been involved. I was almost disappointed to read in *The Super-Afrikaners* that the initiation ceremony, elaborate as it was, was not quite as exotic.

The Broederbond was founded in 1918 with noble ideas a mere 16 years after the end of the South African War that devastated and traumatised the Afrikaner community, especially in the old Free State and Transvaal. The scorched-earth policies of the British Empire forced large numbers of Afrikaners to migrate to the cities where they were completely out of their depth. They were poorly educated and had few skills apart from good farming techniques. On top of that, the world, including South Africa, was trapped in a deep economic depression after World War I.

The Broederbond set out to help Afrikaners to adapt and to make a successful transition to urban life. Prof Pieter de Lange, Broederbond chairman after 1983, insisted in a conversation with me that the Broederbond's main aim during the early years was 'to make the Afrikaner a modern urban person while remaining an Afrikaner'.

The enemy in those early days was Britain and, by proxy, English-speaking South Africans as opposed to black South Africans: the *Engelse Gevaar* rather than the *Swart Gevaar*, which came later. The cry then was: Why are we the underclass in the land of our birth? Why are the English and the Jews controlling our economy while we do the work? We need economic liberation! (Does this sound familiar already?)

The Broederbond made that happen with remarkable resilience and resourcefulness. It started, or helped start, social and economic upliftment schemes like the *Reddingsdaadbond* and the *Helpmekaarfonds*, banks, media empires, industries and financial institutions like Volkskas, Federale Volksbeleggings, Federale Mynbou and Dagbreek Pers. It had a direct hand in establishing the Rand Afrikaans University (now the University of Johannesburg), the Goudstad Teachers' Training College and the University of Port Elizabeth.

By the 1970s, Afrikaners owned a substantial chunk of the South African economy in the form of successful companies like Sanlam, Saambou, General Mining, Rembrandt and Nasionale Pers – all dominated by Broeders. The civil service was run and staffed mostly by Afrikaners and the South African Railways was used to provide employment to unskilled and uneducated Afrikaners.

I am still amazed by this remarkable achievement by the Broederbond. Pieter de Lange tells me he was even asked by some Frelimo leaders in

Mozambique to advise them as to how to do for their people what the Broederbond had done for Afrikaners. In 2007 the then president of the ANC Youth League, Fikile Mbalula, said that South Africa ‘needed a black Broederbond’ to correct the injustices of the past.<sup>1</sup>

Many black South Africans have echoed this sentiment post 1994: If the Boers were able to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, why can’t we? In fact, there are many fascinating parallels between the Broederbond’s strategies designed to enrich members by awarding jobs and tenders to their pals and the ANC’s policies of black economic empowerment, crony capitalism and cadre deployment. Perhaps the greatest difference lies in the fact that the Broederbond invested heavily in education, training, conferences and workshops to enhance skills in order to prepare their ‘deployees’ to become effective contributors to the economy.

However, while economic upliftment was a noble aim, the Broederbond had other agendas. The Afrikaner did not only have to be transformed into a successful urbanite, but also had to remain a staunch Afrikaner, Calvinist and member of the National Party. The Rapportryers, Junior Rapportryers, the Voortrekkers (a youth movement that was the Afrikaner version of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides) and the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) were among the vehicles the Broederbond used for this purpose.

In addition, it had a more direct tool at its disposal: the Afrikaans media. Senior Broeder and later Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd was the editor of *Die Transvaler*. Andries Treurnicht, Broederbond leader between 1972 and 1974, was the editor of *Hoofstad*. The two ‘strong men’ of the Afrikaans newspaper industry during the heyday of the Broederbond, Nasionale Pers chairman Phil Weber and Perskor chairman Marius Jooste, were senior Broeders, and most members of their boards were Broeders. Broederbond executive member Willem de Klerk was editor of *Rapport*. My first editor in 1974, Piet Cillié of *Die Burger*, was a Broeder. His successors, Wiets Beukes and Ebbe Dommissie, were Broeders while an early leading Broeder and later Prime Minister, DF Malan, was *Die Burger*’s first editor.

Even the reformist editor of the Sunday paper *Die Beeld* and later of the daily *Beeld*, Schalk Pienaar, was a Broeder. I found the names of two of my other seniors during my short stint at Nasionale Pers on the list at the back of *The Super-Afrikaners*: Alf Ries, long-time political correspondent and confidant of premiers John Vorster and PW Botha, and Hennie van Deventer, former editor of *Volksblad* and later head of the group’s newspaper division. There were many, many more Broeder-

bonders and members of its junior wing, the *Ruiterwag*, working for Afrikaans newspapers right up to the 1990s.

Yet the Broederbond found the most effective vehicle to promote its ideas (and members) in the South African Broadcasting Corporation, which had a monopoly on all radio and television broadcasts until the late 1980s. Piet Meyer, who was Broederbond chairman between 1960 and 1972, was chairman of the SABC Board for this entire period and beyond. In fact, the board and management of the SABC were completely dominated by Broeders during this time and Afrikaans channels were used unashamedly to promote and bolster Afrikaner Nationalism and the National Party. Black channels put a shiny veneer on apartheid and heavily promoted the Bantustans – *Radio Bantu*, as it was called, was for a long time a special Broederbond project.

The ‘Meyer establishment’ ran the SABC ‘like the Mafia’, long-time board member and Broederbonder Professor Sampie Terreblanche told a hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1997.<sup>2</sup> A decade earlier Terreblanche had had a change of heart and had resigned from the Broederbond and the National Party.

Another Broeder, Louis Raubenheimer, who was for years a senior executive at the SABC, told the TRC at the same hearing that the influence of the Broederbond had been exaggerated. ‘I never returned from a [Broederbond] meeting with any orders or strong idea of what I should promote in my job at the SABC,’ he said.<sup>3</sup>

In the three main Afrikaans ‘sister’ churches God, *volk*, patriarchy and the Broederbond all came together very cosily. The synods and theological seminaries were run by Broeders and a substantial number of dominees were members – I was baptised by one, did my Sunday School education under one and was confirmed as a member of the NG Kerk by one when I was 16 – and yes, I found their names on the list of Broeders. Church dogma and ideology were framed to promote the ideas of Afrikaners as a ‘chosen people’ and of racial segregation as God’s will: these were fundamental tenets of Afrikaner Christian Nationalism. Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists and certainly atheists were not eligible for membership.

The influence of the church dominated control of the system of Christian National Education, especially as applied at Afrikaans schools. For example, it was almost unthinkable that a principal of a prestigious Afrikaans school not be a Broeder.

Universities didn’t escape the Broederbond stranglehold either. When I studied at Stellenbosch University, the vice-chancellor was HB Thom, a

former Broederbond chairman. Two other chairmen, Gerrit Viljoen and Pieter de Lange, were vice-chancellors at the Rand Afrikaans University. The chancellors and vice-chancellors of all Afrikaans universities (and the bilingual University of Port Elizabeth) were mostly senior Broeders. Well into the 1980s Broederbond members also dominated at black, Indian and Coloured universities. Broederbond membership greatly enhanced the chances of young academics becoming professors or deans of departments or being appointed to commissions of enquiry.

The Broederbond also interfered with student politics on Afrikaans campuses. I first took note of the existence of the Ruiterswag, the junior Broederbond, when Piet Vorster, son of Prime Minister John Vorster, led an initiative to take back the Students' Representative Council at Stellenbosch from a more progressive group that had been elected in 1972. Some Broederbond professors and the local chapter of the Ruiterswag were behind efforts to install a council that would openly declare their membership of the National Party. I didn't know much about the *Ruiters*, as we called them, until I read *The Super-Afrikaners* some six years later. (It was reported there that a father who was a Broederbond member was under no circumstance allowed to discuss the organisation with his Ruiterswag son ...) And then there was the Afrikaanse Studentebond (ASB), a Broederbond/Ruiterswag-controlled body that controlled student politics at most Afrikaans universities.

And thus the Broederbond's tentacles spread throughout society, also dominating organised agriculture and sports bodies, especially those relating to rugby.

Within three decades it had deviated from economic upliftment and 'making the Afrikaner a modern urban person' to a power-hungry ethnic clique driven by an almost fanatical Afrikaner nationalism. All prime ministers and state presidents between 1948 and 1990 were Broeders and one can count the number of cabinet ministers during this period who were not members on one hand.

I suppose an argument for some form of confidentiality can be made regarding the task of giving the downtrodden Afrikaner a place in the economy during the difficult first half of the 20th century. But the Broederbond was obsessed with total secrecy. The solemn oath new Broeders had to take swore them to eternal secrecy, even after they were either expelled or had resigned. The Broederbond's almost paranoid directives regarding secrecy and security were published in *The Super-Afrikaners*.

The first journalist to expose some of the Broederbond's secrets was Hennie Serfontein, a former leader of the National Party's youth wing who became disillusioned with apartheid during the 1950s. Working with Charles Bloomberg, political reporter for the *Sunday Times*, he wrote many reports on the inside workings of the Broederbond from 1963 onwards. Serfontein published his book on the Broederbond, *Brotherhood of Power*, in 1978, only a short time before Strydom and Wilkins's book appeared in the same year.

Serfontein says that after the *Sunday Times* published Broederbond documents in 1963 that he had received from a disgruntled member, the only Afrikaans Sunday paper at the time, *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, published a Broederbond-planted story to the effect that the documents were stolen during a burglary at the Broederbond's offices. A member slept in the offices for almost a year to make sure that no documents were stolen at night. The leaks were investigated by General 'Lang' Hendrik van den Bergh, not only a senior Broeder but also head of the feared Bureau of State Security (BOSS). Van den Bergh had launched a witch-hunt to find the source of the leaks and Serfontein had discovered proof of extensive phone tapping. On 1 October 1963 the police raided the offices of the *Sunday Times* and seized photocopies of Broederbond documents.<sup>4</sup>

Serfontein's car was subsequently sabotaged and he even received an offer of tens of thousands of rands to reveal his sources and to desist from writing about the Broederbond. In 1965 his NG Kerk dominee refused to baptise Serfontein's daughter.

When Wilkins and Strydom began their new round of exposés of the Broederbond in 1978, this led to a new witch-hunt and police interference. The newspaper's computer was hacked and all the names of the members the two journalists had compiled were removed. The two writers were then offered R50 000 for the name of their source and an undertaking that the newspaper's series on the Broederbond would be terminated.

Few felt the wrath of the Broederbond as acutely as Beyers Naude. Naude was the son of the dominee who gave spiritual guidance to the small band of men who formed the Broederbond in 1918. A member since 1942 and chairman of one of its cells for years, Naude was Moderator of the Southern Transvaal synod of the NG Kerk until he had a change of heart about apartheid in the 1960s, especially after the Sharpeville Massacre. He gave a set of Broederbond documents to a fellow theologian (and non-Broeder), Professor Albert Geyser, for an opinion on the Broederbond's hold over the church and for advice on whether

Naude should resign from the Broederbond. Geysler gave the documents to the *Sunday Times*.

Naude was then hauled before the Broederbond's highest body, the Uitvoerende Raad, and grilled by General van den Bergh. He told them exactly what had transpired. Geysler and Serfontein were also questioned by the police. The SABC interrupted its regular services with a special 15-minute broadcast of the incident.

Naude founded the Christian Institute of Southern Africa in 1963, an ecumenical movement formed to promote reconciliation through inter-racial dialogue and research. He was forced to resign from his congregation in Northcliff and when he resigned from the Broederbond, he was stripped of his status as an ordained dominee of the NG Kerk. In the same year his brother-in-law and an influential NG Kerk theologian, Dr Frans O'Brien Geldenhuys, also resigned from the Broederbond.

In 1967 Naude and Geysler won a defamation case against Professor Adriaan Pont, a Broederbonder, who had called them 'communists'. They both received many death threats but the police made no attempt to act on this information. Geysler was found guilty of heresy by his church, the Hervormde Kerk, after a hearing masterminded by the Broederbond. His 70-year-old father was forced to resign from the organisation.

In 1973 Naude's passport was withdrawn and in 1977 he was declared a banned person with severe restrictions on his movements. He was also forbidden to be in a room with more than one person at a time. When *The Super-Afrikaners* was published, the authors were not allowed to quote him. The banning orders were only lifted in 1985.

Few renegades before or after Naude had been subjected to such vindictiveness and character assassination by Afrikanerdom. He was only welcomed back by the mainstream *volk* after the political negotiations towards a non-racial democracy began in 1990.

'Oom Bey' was an inspiration to a small group of Afrikaner dissidents – myself among them – who broke out of the Afrikaner Nationalist/apartheid laager. In an obituary after his death in September 2004 he was quoted as saying:

What really annoyed the leaders of Afrikaner nationalism when I broke ranks was that I was every bit as much a white Afrikaner as they were ... I reminded them of that side of Afrikanerdom which they have never been able to tame. It is an Afrikaner willingness to cross frontiers, relating to their own experience of exploitation, struggle and poverty.<sup>5</sup>

*The Super-Afrikaners* was undoubtedly one of the most important documents in the history of Afrikaner nationalism and of the apartheid era. It was by far the most comprehensive explanation of who and what the Afrikaner Broederbond was and how its members operated. It was published 80 years after the organisation was founded and while it was still a formidable force in South African society.

There were very few secrets the Broederbond could protect after the book hit South Africa's bookshelves. Its claim that it was purely a cultural organisation and played no role in politics was blown completely out of the water.

The publication of the book was probably more traumatic for the Broederbond than the Naude episode or the expulsion of Albert Hertzog and other members of the Herstigte Nasionale Party in 1969. Its inclusion of the Broederbond membership lists removed the aura of secrecy, says historian Hermann Giliomee in his monumental work *The Afrikaners – Biography of a People*:

All kinds of questions were now being asked about the Bond. In almost every Afrikaner institution, ranging from church councils and synods to university senates and business associations, Bond members were identified as a minority among members but a majority in leadership positions. Often non-members suspected that some key issues had already been resolved in Bond divisions, making the open discussions a mere formality. The question arose: Did the Bond, as the organisation's leaders liked to claim, recruit people because they had leadership potential, or did, as critics argued, people get promoted and become leaders because of their Bond membership?

Giliomee says Afrikaners now wondered: 'Was this elite not simply feathering its own nest?'<sup>6</sup>

*The Super-Afrikaners* covers the organisation's history between 1918 and 1979 and gives a detailed account of all its structures, leadership, documents, strategies, fronts and relationship with the National Party government. It also offers an analysis of the role and influence of the Broederbond that has largely stood the test of time.

That said, Broederbonders have in the post-1990 era played down the organisation's power and influence. Giliomee agrees with that. He relies partly on an unpublished history of the Broederbond by Broederbonder and historian Ernst Stals and says it was 'mostly serving as a debating

forum for a small band of activists' where members 'seriously grappled with the issue of Afrikaner interests and survival'.<sup>7</sup> It had an open door to Cabinet, but did not make any final decisions or give firm guidance.

My own view is that if Wilkins, Strydom and Serfontein erred on the side of overstating the importance of the Broederbond, Giliomee (and Stals et al) erred on the side of trivialising it.

But it is, in hindsight, clear that the power of the Broederbond was starting to wane by 1979. Christi van der Westhuizen makes the point in her book *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party* that the grand apartheid plan had died with Hendrik Verwoerd in 1966 and with that the zeal to promote old-style apartheid disappeared.<sup>8</sup> White minority domination persisted however, but under Vorster the maintenance of minority domination became more flexible and the anti-English sentiment less virulent. He also initiated a process of slightly relaxing the most visible aspects of apartheid and launched détente initiatives with some African states.

The willingness to increasingly embrace white English speakers was partly because the Afrikaner had made huge strides towards achieving economic parity with 'the English', and partly because of Vorster's more relaxed personal views of non-Afrikaner whites and his relationships with some English-speaking business leaders. This *toenadering* vis-à-vis English speakers continued under Vorster's successor, PW Botha. This development naturally implied a diminishing role for the Super-Afrikaners.

The publication of Wilkins' and Strydom's book also coincided with the Information Scandal, a madcap scheme to improve apartheid South Africa's image abroad by, among other things, trying to buy foreign newspapers and starting one, *The Citizen*, in South Africa. In the process millions were misspent and some money pocketed. This cost Vorster and two other Broederbond stalwarts, General 'Lang' Hendrik van den Bergh and Connie Mulder, their jobs.

A major impact of the scandal was that it undermined that old Afrikaner characteristic: blind respect for and loyalty to leaders. Afrikaner leaders, says David Welsh in *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, 'were expected to be, and invariably were, beyond reproach in the conduct of their public and private lives, at least as far as corruption and dishonesty were concerned'.<sup>9</sup> And now it turned out that these leaders, at least some of those in senior positions, and all of them prominent Broederbond members, were lying through their teeth, even to Parliament.

Welsh quotes Willem de Klerk, senior Broeder, brother of FW de Klerk and then editor of *Die Transvaler*, as writing at the time:

We are credulous, we willingly let authority figures go their way 'because they know best'. We rely heavily on the arbitrary powers of the man at the helm. We neither dispute nor cross-examine. And just look at where a few men have landed us – authority figures whom we virtually idolized.<sup>10</sup>

This was not good news for a males-only society that preferred to operate in great secrecy and make decisions for Afrikaners in dark, smoke-filled rooms.

The Minister of Defence since 1966, PW Botha, succeeded Vorster as Prime Minister in 1978. During his eleven years in power, the influence of the Broederbond was further diminished: he did not have much affinity for intellectuals and set up the National Security Council of securocrats and generals as the main policy advisers to government.

It was Willem de Klerk who had coined the terms *verlig* (enlightened) and *verkramp* (with closed minds) in the early 1970s to describe the divides in Afrikanerdom. By 1978 the National Party – and the Broederbond – were seriously divided between *verligtes* and *verkrampes*. This eventually led to the breakaway of Andries Treurnicht, chairman of the Broederbond between 1972 and 1974, and the formation of the Conservative Party in 1982. Most CP leaders resigned from the Broederbond.

The Broederbond was now dominated by *verligtes* – and it slowly started redefining its primary role. From consolidating and furthering Afrikaner nationalism and boosting the Afrikaner's position in the economy, the Broederbond now began to see its task as preparing the Afrikaner for a move away from apartheid.

Dr Gerrit Viljoen, one of the NP and the Broederbond's foremost intellectuals, was elected chairman of the Broederbond in 1975 and served until 1980. It was a period of remarkable change in the Broederbond.

Viljoen was interviewed by the political reporter for the *Rand Daily Mail*, Helen Zille, on 1 August 1978. She wrote:

As a verligte Afrikaner and one of the National Party's top brains, he is at the forefront of the planning for change ... As chief of the Broederbond, he holds the most important position in the cell system that is being geared to prepare conservative Afrikaners for change.

She quoted Viljoen as believing that 'one of the National Party's greatest mistakes was to impose on blacks a policy worked out by whites without consultation' and that the major problem was 'convincing Afrikaners to

give up measures that they have always been told were essential to ensure their survival and identity. The way out of this is a reassessment of the concept of identity.’

Viljoen said the ideal would have been a confederation between ‘white’ South Africa and the Bantustans with community councils representing urban blacks, adding this significant sentence: ‘In time we may find that the things we have in common outweigh our differences. Then we can opt for closer co-operation until eventually we could decide to become a federation in which all South Africans, black and white, have equal rights within a single system.’

Viljoen wasn’t exactly proposing a simple democracy in a unitary state, but for 1978 – and he the chairman of the Broederbond – this was significant.

The CP was not the only party to the right of the NP. The Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) was formed in 1973 but only became prominent in the early 1980s.

The rise of rightwing extremism and the unwavering clinging to old-style apartheid by the CP had a marked influence on mainstream Afrikaner thinking and hence the Broederbond and the NP. According to David Welsh it ‘deepened introspection’:

[It] held up a mirror to more modern-minded Nationalists of what the NP had stood for in the not-so-distant past – and they did not like what they saw. The crude racism of the HNP, the AWB and other groups in the mushrooming ultra-right embarrassed and repelled them, thereby lending urgency to the quest for a more equitable system.<sup>11</sup>

Willem de Klerk agrees: ‘It may sound strange or even ironic, but I’m convinced that the founding of the Conservative Party also contributed to the De Klerk leap of 2 February 1990.’<sup>12</sup> He explains:

The whole CP experience was a trailblazer for FW in the sense that that it made him ripe for the antithesis. He had to justify his philosophy to them and in the process he gained more clarity. Exactly the same happened with Afrikaners who didn’t support the CP. They saw a terrifying image in the mirror: the image of dangerous fanaticism, of disgusting racism and stupidity hiding behind piety ... They got scared of the dark forces that could be activated by the ideology of apartheid. It had a purifying effect which made them look for a corrective.<sup>13</sup>

The problem of the Coloured population not having a place in the grand scheme of apartheid – they were not regarded as part of ‘white’ South Africa, nor did they have a natural ‘homeland’ – resulted in a new plan for a so-called Tricameral Parliament with three ethnic chambers – one each for whites, Coloureds and Indian South Africans.

This proposal was initiated by the Broederbond and then put forward by a committee of the NP under PW Botha just before the 1977 white general election and was part of the motivation for the CP split. It was put to the white voters in a referendum in November which resulted in the NP’s ‘yes’ campaign achieving 66 per cent, demonstrating the low ceiling of rightwing popularity.<sup>14</sup>

The new constitution of 1983 was sold with the slogan ‘healthy power-sharing’ which meant ‘own affairs’ should be governed by ethnic bodies while ‘general affairs’ could fall under a joint body. In practice, the Tricameral Parliament failed to reduce the overwhelming power of the white Volksraad (assembly) or the Cabinet. As Christi van der Westhuizen put it, ‘White vetoes were built into the institutional arrangements for regional, local and group autonomy, making a mockery thereof. This not only translated into continuing white rule, but also an entrenchment of NP dominance.’<sup>15</sup>

The glaring flaw in the NP’s desperate attempt to ‘share power without relinquishing power’ was the absence of an even remotely legitimate solution for what at the time was known as ‘urban blacks’ – black citizens living outside the Bantustans, which meant almost half of all black South Africans by the early 1980s.<sup>16</sup> The only change on this front was the creation of black local authorities in 1982 and four years later regional services councils (freehold property rights in townships were returned to blacks in 1985), which simply served to further inflame black anger.

The new constitution failed miserably, says Leon Wessels, then an influential young NP MP and Broederbond member:

It failed because the underlying approach was completely wrong: settle the old constitutional disputes as far as the Indian and Coloured communities are concerned, and deal with the aspirations of black South Africa later ... there was no way black South Africans were going to relinquish their South African citizenship.<sup>17</sup>

And yet, the 1983 constitution did represent the first structural move away from grand apartheid since 1948. Also, it can be argued that these half-hearted reforms contributed to more urgency in the debates inside

the Broederbond, the NP and among white South Africans in general, as well as a speeding up of genuine reforms. The constitutional adjustments led to the founding of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 and a significant rise in the national political temperature, with strikes, boycotts and huge rallies becoming common.

Former State President FW de Klerk, at the time chairman of the ministers' council of the white assembly in the Tricameral Parliament, also points to some positive aspects of the tricameral experiment:

The tricameral constitution was, despite its shortcomings, a symbolic point of departure for change and an important step ahead in the constitutional development of our country. South Africans from three communities came together for the first time in parliament to consider matters of general interest. There was genuine political interaction and accountability ... This regular contact, debate and interaction broadened the attitudes of all those involved.<sup>18</sup>

Late in 1984 the widespread civil disobedience and violence escalated once again and showed no sign of abating. From 1985 onwards the NP government started repealing key apartheid laws, a move suggested by Broederbond position papers. In 1985 section 16 of the Immorality Act banning sex across colour lines and the Mixed Marriages Act were abolished and a year later influx control was scrapped.

The NP was meanwhile making no progress with a plan to accommodate black political aspirations, despite appointing a Special Cabinet Committee chaired by Chris Heunis to investigate different options in 1983.<sup>19</sup> But after the abolition of key apartheid laws in 1985 the expectation grew that more fundamental reforms were in the offing and that PW Botha was going to announce a giant leap into the future when he opened the NP Congress on 15 August 1985 – that he was going to 'cross the Rubicon' towards a new constitutional dispensation.

At a Cabinet meeting in Pretoria 13 days earlier Heunis put his committee's proposals forward that black South Africans be accommodated in Cabinet pending negotiations on a new deal based on full citizenship for all. 'We believed these new announcements – provided they were properly presented and marketed – would draw the world's attention and convince the international community that things were really changing in South Africa,' says De Klerk<sup>20</sup>

Botha asked several cabinet ministers to submit proposals for his

15 August speech, a task eagerly embraced by Foreign Minister Pik Botha, who ordered his deputy, Louis Nel, to oversee the writing of the draft with the help of senior diplomat Carl von Hirschberg. Chris Heunis also made proposals for the speech. Pik Botha left for Europe to brief the governments of the US, Britain and Germany, claiming that the state president's speech would be 'the biggest thing in South Africa since the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape'.<sup>21</sup> South Africa and the Western capitals were abuzz with talk of a possible release of Nelson Mandela, the final dismantling of apartheid and proper negotiations with the leaders of black South Africans.

According to FW de Klerk, PW Botha was 'livid' about the expectations created and rewrote the speech given to him. When he took the podium and delivered his much-anticipated speech live to an international television audience of some 300 million, including US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, it was the 'old Botha', threatening and wagging his finger. He said he was not about to lead white South Africans to suicide. Mandela was in jail because he planned a revolution and would only be released if he renounced violence. The UDF and ANC were 'barbaric communist agitators' and 'murderers' serving 'masters far away from this beautiful land of ours'. And he repeated his old slogan: the world can only push South Africa up to a certain point and no further.

Historian Hermann Giliomee says Botha 'looked like an old-fashioned proponent of white *baasskap*'.<sup>22</sup> FW de Klerk says the international audience was 'stunned and disappointed' and that this was 'probably the greatest communications disaster in South African history'.<sup>23</sup>

In the wake of what came to be known as the infamous 'Rubicon speech' the rand collapsed and triggered Chase Manhattan Bank and a string of other international banks to stop rolling over the country's debt. 'Our reputation was in tatters and it was impossible to get money anywhere in the world,' says Barend du Plessis, Minister of Finance at the time.<sup>24</sup> But it also meant a 'serious collapse of international confidence in the South African government's capacity to handle the escalating crises from all over,' says FW de Klerk.<sup>25</sup> The noose of international isolation, financial sanctions and pressure from within and without was tightening markedly.

Pik Botha was quoted in *Beeld* as saying, 'It was the dramatic beginning of the end. The speech caused events to gather speed and created eddies in the apartheid river that we later recognised as the first signs of the demise of the NP government'.<sup>26</sup>

Botha certainly didn't cross any Rubicon, but he did at least put a big toe into it. Hidden in his speech was this sentence: 'If any of the black homelands would prefer not to accept independence, such states or communities would remain part of the South African nation; they are South African citizens and they will have to be accommodated within political institutions inside the borders of South Africa.'<sup>27</sup> This was a much more significant deviation from the ideology of apartheid than accommodating Coloureds and Indians in Parliament.

But the fall-out of the 'Rubicon speech' changed the South African political landscape and brought a new urgency to the reform-minded intellectuals in the Broederbond to lead the way to an alternative to white domination.

Gerrit Viljoen resigned as Broederbond chairman when he was made a cabinet minister in 1980. He was replaced by Professor Carel Boshoff, son-in-law of Hendrik Verwoerd and a respected but conservative theologian. He lasted less than three years and left soon after the CP split to head up the Suid-Afrikaanse Buro vir Rasse-aangeleenthede (SABRA).

Then the era of Pieter de Lange began. According to De Lange:

Now the AB (Afrikaner Broederbond) moved further to the left of the middle [of white politics]. The AB actually started getting their doubts about apartheid in the late 1970s – they wouldn't have elected me as chairman if they were still full-blooded apartheid supporters.

We started looking at the constitutional future of South Africa and where the Afrikaner would fit in. We made the firm decision that we stand on the side of a negotiated solution and not of war. It may sound simplistic now, but at the time it was quite overwhelming

I remember a Uitvoerende Raad meeting during 1983 where there was a difference of opinion. I asked every member to stand up and declare his position. In the end there were two out of eighteen that could have been termed as to the right. The others were prepared to run with this risky undertaking.

And then in 1986 we sent out a document to all divisions of the AB stating that it was inevitable that there was going to be a black State President, and all the implications flowing from that.<sup>28</sup>

The document was called *Basiese Staatkundige Voorwaardes vir die Voortbestaan van die Afrikaner* (basic constitutional conditions for the survival of the Afrikaner). It stated boldly that the status quo had become un-

sustainable and that all citizens had to have effective participation in the political and legislative processes. All South Africans should have equal human and civil rights.

In the document the Broederbond reverted back to its original aim of 'securing the survival of the Afrikaner', but now it said that the only way to do that would be through sharing power with black South Africans rather than excluding them. It qualified this by saying that power sharing should be such that no group could dominate another, minority rights had to be protected and power had to be devolved to limit government interference. The way to get there was through a negotiated settlement.

So how was this going to be sold to Afrikaners who, in 1986, still firmly believed in white rule in most of South Africa and black rule in the ethnic homelands? How was the ordinary Afrikaner going to be convinced to eventually accept a black president?

Says De Lange:

The Uitvoerende Raad members had the task to visit divisions and regions to put the document in the correct context. I probably did more than most myself. The AB had about 18 000 members then.

It meant that the AB had to go through the country, cities and the platteland, to convince people in some position of leadership in their communities that a negotiated solution was the way forward; that a full democracy with voting rights for all was the answer.

Those people then went to talk to those in their spheres of influence, and so on, everybody down the line knew other Afrikaners to talk to. It had a tremendous impact on the Afrikaner and broader South African community at the time.

The National Party had nothing to do with this. It was a secret internal AB project with only a few people at a time being addressed.

The National Party didn't receive it at all well, although some thought it was the right way to go. Cabinet members like Barend du Plessis supported the document. FW was very worried about it – at that time he always kept a little door to the right open (*hy het altyd so 'n deurtjie in die donker hoek na regs opgehou*).

So we got through to the more conscious Afrikaners and planted the idea of a negotiated settlement. Sensible people knew that it was a choice between a bloodbath or the end of apartheid and a negotiated, peaceful transition.<sup>29</sup>

Asked whether this new thinking was motivated by moral concerns, fear of revolution or by concerns about Afrikaners' economic future, De Lange responded:

It was mostly a debate about the morality of the status quo, but also there were practical grounds. The immoral nature of apartheid was by then absolutely clear to all.

This debate was underpinned by several practical considerations. Firstly, it was madness for 3 million people to try and manage a country of almost 40 million people. You needed the talents, the skills and the cooperation of the black majority to make this country survive, to make it a success. That wasn't hard to understand. The second practical argument was that we were going bankrupt, and that was also easy to comprehend by anyone who knew even a little about the economy. The third consideration was that whites were completely outnumbered. We had the military and administrative power, but the majority had the support of the outside world. The ongoing conflict was just going to escalate and could end up in a blood bath ...

So we'd be asking people: is that the future you want for yourself and your children? There was fear of the future, but not only fear. And there was a healthy dose of realism. I organised two workshops (*dinkskrums*) with the military and some of the top minds during that time. The conclusion was that we could have maintained the status quo with our military for a long time, even after bankruptcy. But by the end of the 1990s everything would have collapsed. We would have started killing each other in the streets. Now, if the best brains in the country tell you this and you still want to continue, then you must be very stupid.<sup>30</sup>

The AB document was approved by the AB's Executive Council in November 1986 with 89 percent of branches agreeing with it.<sup>31</sup> De Lange says the membership of the AB declined by almost a third after the acceptance of the document and had a very negative financial impact on the organisation.

Commenting on the AB's moves in the 1980s veteran political journalist Allister Sparks says:

It was the Broederbond which first devised the apartheid ideology and functioned as the primary think tank for government strategy thereafter. But after the late 1970s its role began to change as more Afrikaner intellectuals perceived the need to reform. It became the main agency

for trying to find a way out of the Afrikaner's historic dilemma: how to abandon apartheid and come to terms with the black majority without losing control of the country and ultimately the national identity of the Afrikaner volk.<sup>32</sup>

Also in 1986, De Lange became the first establishment Afrikaner leader to meet with a leader of the exiled ANC. He met with Thabo Mbeki, then Director of Information and adviser to Oliver Tambo, at a Ford Foundation conference in New York:

It wasn't a chance meeting. I knew the Ford Foundation and the ANC were planning it, and I was happy to meet. I told the Executive Council of the AB that there would be an ANC presence at the conference – the AB was paying for my trip. I read a paper on education in South Africa at the conference and when I sat down, the ANC's head of education grabbed the microphone and said, 'De Lange, we are going to kill you.' Thabo was outside the meeting at that stage and when he came back Mac Maharaj told him what happened, Thabo apologised to me and explained that the man suffered from exile madness. Afterwards Thabo and I had time to chat – we were both pipe smokers, so we lit our pipes together. That afternoon we met again in my hotel and then we went for supper with my wife. She told Thabo the fish and chips he ordered was too oily and bad for him. He said it was the first time he had a meal with an Afrikaner woman.

We talked for a long time, about the chances of negotiations and of a negotiated settlement; of the situation and attitudes inside the country and of the ANC's stance on armed struggle. I told him that fundamental change in South Africa was imminent and we were preparing the white population for real negotiations, but that the Afrikaner would insist on the preservation of his cultural identity. It was a good meeting.<sup>33</sup>

De Lange says he told PW Botha about his meeting and his impressions of Mbeki and the ANC's positions – he met Botha privately every six weeks. 'Botha wasn't angry, which made me think he already had something up his sleeve,' says De Lange.

De Lange was right. Botha's Minister of Justice and Prisons, Kobie Coetsee, paid Nelson Mandela a secret visit in hospital in Cape Town in November 1985 (Mandela was being treated for an enlarged prostate gland). Botha encouraged Coetsee to maintain the contact. In 1988 Botha asked Niel Barnard, head of the National Intelligence Service, to form a small committee to engage with Mandela. These meetings went

on even after PW Botha resigned as president and was succeeded by FW de Klerk.

De Lange says De Klerk told him after his historic speech of 2 February 1990 when he unbanned the ANC and announced the release of Mandela that he would not have been able to take that step if the Broederbond had not prepared the way for it.

In 1993 the Broederbond abandoned its secrecy and declared itself an open organisation to which anyone, women included, who associated with the 'Afrikaner cause' could belong. It changed its name to the Afrikanerbond and has subsequently become a relatively insignificant lobby group.

The *Super-Afrikaners* constitutes the most comprehensive explanation of the inner workings of the Broederbond ever published and remains so to this day. Born with noble ideas of service to the Afrikaner, the Broederbond subsequently deteriorated into a powerful group of ethnic chauvinists. Although vilified as a racist, sexist, xenophobic organisation consisting of fanatical white supremacists devoted to promoting Afrikaner Nationalism and keeping *Swartgevaar* at bay at any cost during the darkest days of apartheid, few readers are aware of the pivotal role the Broederbond subsequently played in helping to guide the Afrikaner towards accepting a democratic dispensation. This new introduction to the original 1978 edition emphasises the importance of an understanding of the evolution of this organisation and the various roles it played between 1918 and 1994. Only with that knowledge and insight can South Africa's history be properly understood.

*Max du Preez*

July 2012

*Max du Preez is a veteran journalist and broadcaster, and author of several books on South African history and politics. He was the founder/editor of the only anti-apartheid newspaper in Afrikaans, Vrye Weekblad, between 1988 and 1994.*

## Notes

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2 *Beeld*, 16 September 1997

3 *Op cit*

4 JHP Serfontein, *Brotherhood of Power – An Exposé of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond*. London: Rex Collings, 1979, pp 19–25

5 David Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. Cape Town: Jonathan Ball, p 188

- 6 Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners – A Biography*. Cape Town: Tafelberg, p 581
- 7 *Ibid*, p 421
- 8 Christi van der Westhuyzen: *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party*. Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007, p 86
- 9 Welsh, p 106
- 10 *Ibid*, p 107
- 11 Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, p 204
- 12 W de Klerk, *FW de Klerk – Die Man en sy Tyd*. Cape Town: Tafelberg and Jonathan Ball, 1991, p 115 (author's translation from Afrikaans)
- 13 *Ibid*, p 117 (author's translation)
- 14 Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, p 226
- 15 C van der Westhuizen, *White Power & the Rise and Fall of the National Party*. Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007, p 128
- 16 Van der Westhuizen, *White Power*, p 128
- 17 Interview with Leon Wessels
- 18 FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek – 'n Nuwe Begin*. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1999, pp 114–115 (author's translation)
- 19 FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek*, p 117
- 20 FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek*, p 120 (author's translation)
- 21 T Papenfus, *Pik Botha and his Times*, Pretoria: Litera, 2010, p 395
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- 23 FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek*, p 122
- 24 T Papenfus, *Pik Botha*, p 397
- 25 FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek*, p 122
- 26 As quoted in T Papenfus, *Pik Botha*, p 399
- 27 As quoted in FW de Klerk, *Die Laaste Trek*, p 122 (author's translation)
- 28 Interview with De Lange
- 29 Interview with De Lange
- 30 Interview with De Lange
- 31 David Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, p 202
- 32 Allister Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country – The Inside Story of South Africa's Negotiated Settlement*. Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 1995, p 55
- 33 Interview with De Lange

# *Publishing The Super-Afrikaners*

by Jonathan Ball

Publishing *The Super-Afrikaners* by Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom in 1978 remains a memorable moment in my long publishing career and a landmark in the history of Jonathan Ball Publishers. Perhaps even a landmark in South African book publishing.

I had left a good job at Macmillan specifically to publish South African history and politics which they were too scared to do, preferring to kowtow to the apartheid regime, toeing the line so as not to jeopardise their school-book publishing interests. School-book publishers tend to do the bidding of any government in the interest of profit.

It was late 1976. In June of that year Soweto had caught alight, literally and figuratively, with protests that would change South Africa forever. As a publisher, I wanted to play the role of midwife at the birth of stories that would emerge from a changing South Africa. So, with more enthusiasm than capital, I embarked on an adventure in publishing.

Our first books were, as are our books today, true to our policy statement formulated by myself, but truth be known, a little plagiarised from one of the great British publishing houses in those far-off days when idealism and standards still held some sway and were not derisively laughed at. It read: 'To publish books about South Africa that enlighten and entertain. Books of a liberal sanity that pander to neither left nor right nor to clever contemporary fashions in thinking ...'

Notice that we called it a 'policy statement'. We felt then that 'mission statements' were for religious zealots and we also did not use the word 'vision', thinking, like Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, that 'if you have a vision you should go and see a doctor'.

And so it was that an array of books emanated, in their proud and colourful livery, from our modest offices in the Johannesburg industrial area of Selby. Henry Lever's fine analysis entitled *South African Society* and Hennie Kotze and Pierre Hugo's *Oorlewing in Politieke Perspektief* were the first liberal analyses of South Africa's political prospects in those bleak days just after the Soweto riots among other books too numerous to mention.

Around 1977 the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* started running an exposé of the Broederbond – the hyper-secret Afrikaans, all-male 'brotherhood'.

Two intrepid staff members, Hans Strydom (News Editor and Assistant Editor) and Ivor Wilkins (journalist), had found a deep-throat – forgive me – an informer. At clandestine meetings this informer was nervously providing Ivor Wilkins with cardboard boxes full of Broederbond documents, circulars, minutes, resolutions, plans and strategy documents as well as lists of members.

Hans and Ivor would pore over these and produce the facing leader-page pieces that each Sunday fascinated the nation, riveted my attention and piqued my publishing instincts.

I wasted no time in contacting them. The *Sunday Times* was the flagship title of South African Associated Newspapers. Times Media hadn't yet even been thought of. South African Associated Newspapers remains a better name for this newspaper group than any of the subsequent names they have called themselves. What an extraordinary thing the ego of a new wave of management is with its name changes, visions, mission statements, etc. Now we have Avusa.

South African Associated Newspapers was based in Main Street, conveniently close to the Fed, a pub where the liberal imbibing of a variety of libations helped to oil the human machinery of the group when deadlines had been met and it was left to the great presses in the bowels of the building to do their work. This remains an essential therapy for journalists to this day.

Many a meeting between Strydom, Wilkins and I would take place at the Fed but I am moving ahead of myself.

My first meeting with Hans and Ivor was arranged at the Carlton Hotel, now devoured and destroyed by the new Johannesburg at no great loss to architectural history. We used to call it 'the new Carlton' because there was one before it, an elegant old building beloved of our parents and grandparents but, like anything of architectural merit in Johannesburg, it had been torn down to be replaced by this new brutal monstrosity of concrete and glass. We met in a ground-floor restaurant which was the trendy place of the moment, always packed to the rafters. I'll bet no one even remembers its name now. Johannesburg is like that.

After the initial, get-acquainted pleasantries I came straight out with my proposal which I had, in any event, hinted at on the phone at the time of setting up the meeting.

I wanted a full and comprehensive book on the Broederbond, backed by their documents and by additional research. I would pay each author an advance against future royalties of R25 000, something unheard of in South Africa at a time when publishers did not pay advances.

They thought about this and, like the decent men they always proved themselves to be (good journalists, not those from the gutter press, are usually good men and women because they have thought about and have often seen life with all its vagaries and moral dilemmas in the raw), they quizzed me to find out whether I knew what I was letting myself in for. They warned me that these were powerful men, these Broeders, with influence that spread far, wide and deep into South African society. Such men would not welcome a book exposing their secret doings. They were capable of malevolence.

Already the editor of the *Sunday Times* was threatening to spike their articles, saying that it was enough ... the public had had enough. They knew this not to be the case and they speculated (subsequently to be proven true) that he was being got at.

They said they wanted to think about it. I was confident they would do it, especially with the imminent prospect of having their articles spiked. Twenty-five thousand rand was also a respectable amount in those far-off days.

The next day they accepted the offer and a contract was drawn up. Then the work began, hardest for them by far because they were the ones who, while holding full-time, senior jobs in journalism, had to work deep into the night like raw-eyed vultures at their typewriters churning out the words. My task, while easier, was rather complex.

Strydom and Wilkins, though colleagues, were substantially different characters. Strydom, dressed in the gear of a Boer *Veld-Cornet*, would look not in the least out of place and Wilkins, got up as a British Subaltern, would appear equally appropriate. I am truly sorry to have to use an image like this from our fractured past but I can think of no other that so perfectly captures their appearance and demeanour, and even aspects of their respective characters: Strydom, dogged and obstinate, a man on a mission to expose this organisation that he believed so damaged his people and their prospects in a future South Africa; Wilkins, urbane, self-contained, pursuing a good story while doing good, solid work to counteract the force of an anti-liberal secret society, but not a man on a mission.

And what of me? I was a publisher to the marrow and I had a bestseller gestating in the minds of two remarkable, and in those days, old-school journalists. I was helping to prick the bloated and pompous balloons of power. Stirring the pot. There is nothing I like better. And, what is more, after much debate and a thousand options I came up with the title *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*.

It was an intense time. We met frequently. Lunch at The Fed, lunch at the News Café in Melville, at Hans's house where his charming wife Gertie would provide us with comfort food and always remained calm in the face of whatever rages and squabbles had arisen, with her common sense and ability to calm her husband. I remember endless drinks at Hans's bar under the stairs at his house in Melville.

The squabbles were invariably over the book's structure, who would write which chapters, both authors quite naturally wanting to do the more interesting sections, the 'sexier' bits.

The bar under the stairs at Hans's house (just a stone's throw from where the Broederbond was founded in the Melville koppies) became a second home to me. I would spend many nights each week drinking whisky with Hans and talking, sometimes deep into the night. Ivor would join us, though less frequently, because I think he respected his liver more than Hans and I did ours.

Hans needed these meetings. He needed constant encouragement and for me to maintain a lively interest in the book, which I did. It was my lead title and I had far more than I could afford invested in it already, but I needed to keep showing him that my interest was not flagging. On this subject Hans's wife Gertie played a massive role in encouraging and quite literally wheedling the book out of her husband. She calmed him, fed him, poured his whiskies and endlessly listened to him: '*Ja, ou ma'tjie. Dit was ook jou boek. Jy was die derde skrywer.*'

Meanwhile, the *Sunday Times* editor, Tertius Myburgh, called time on the *Sunday Times* articles. He spiked them.

The book progressed slowly. It was delivered to us chapter by chapter. Our editor Alison Lowry (now Chief Executive of Penguin) would read it, and I would read it. The material was riveting but how would we structure all this disparate editorial on so many aspects of South African society? Bear in mind that the Broederbond's tentacles reached into every corner of the country and its structure: schools, sport, universities, the professions, agriculture, the press, the judiciary, arts and cultural organisations and, of course, it dominated every department of state at national and provincial level.

I think I came up with the idea of breaking the book into three sections. I also think that from then on we all found it easier to think of the way forward within this structure while Alison did the best she could to forge coherence between the editorial styles of the two authors so that they would not differ too jarringly.

But a much, much bigger motive for speeding up the book arose. We

heard that someone else was working on a rival book at the same time – the seasoned old Broeder-baiter, Hennie Serfontein.

Now, I have always been philosophical about competition. I try to do things better than competitors. But Hans was very put out by the prospect of imagining months of work being pipped at the post. He wanted to hurry the book. He wanted to do a quick first volume to be followed by the rest of the book at a later date. All bad ideas although very understandable under the circumstances.

The only thing to do was to put our heads down and produce the best possible book as quickly as possible without compromising its quality.

At about this time I started receiving disconcerting telephone calls at my office. A cultured, even refined Afrikaans voice would ask why I was getting involved in ‘all this’ and was I aware of possible consequences? I adopted the stance that if he wouldn’t tell me his name I wouldn’t talk to him. I maintained this stance even when the voice changed and became more aggressive and the threats more pointed without ever actually becoming direct death threats.

This wasn’t comfortable. At the time South Africa was a country in which things happened to people.

Most importantly at around this time, at the suggestion of Hans and Ivor, I made contact with Kelsey Stuart, the man who, quite literally, wrote the book on press law. He agreed to read the manuscript and to act for us should the need arise. I was thrilled. Stuart was a cool customer and I discovered only later with what pleasure and satisfaction he worked on this book but I am again getting ahead of myself.

At this time I started to make sales calls as did Nick Britt, our sales manager, but only to our most trusted customers as we feared the possibility of someone seeking an interdict to prevent publication of the book.

One of the more interesting sales calls I made was to sell the book in advance of publication to the Managing Director of Exclusive Books, its founder, the celebrated Mr Philip Joseph.

Exclusive Books, now ubiquitous, had only one branch at the time, in Kotze Street in Hillbrow. Philip was known to all as PJ, but never to his face – to his face he was always ‘Mr Joseph’. A dapper man always impeccably turned out in a three-piece Savile Row suit, he spoke in a clipped and precise English accent. He had seen service in the war in the RAF and, rumour had it, in the Battle of Britain.

PJ occupied an imposing office in a building around the corner from his shop to which I made my way with a mock-up of the book’s cover.

This was top secret as was the whole project but the cover indicated the most secret aspect of it all. Its principal design feature was simply the title *THE SUPER-AFRIKANERS: INSIDE THE AFRIKANER BROEDERBOND* but this was set against rows of type running diagonally, these being a section of the thousands of names of Broederbond members we would publish in an index to the book.

For fear of an interdict we were keeping the book as much under wraps as possible but the 12 000 names we were publishing were sheer dynamite.

When I explained the project to PJ he sat silent and riveted, deep in thought. I then showed him the dust jacket and I think he gasped at the prospect of 12 000 names.

Then he spoke. My admiration for this man knows few bounds so do not misinterpret what I say. The fact is that he had quite a pompous manner and, in his precise upper-class English, he said words to this effect: 'My dear boy, what you and these fellows are doing is quite remarkable. This may be the most important book I have sold in my time as a bookseller. It is a remarkable piece of publishing and I will give it my full support on one condition: that I have your assurance that it has been vetted by an able and appropriately qualified lawyer.'

I explained that Kelsey Stuart was on our side.

He asked if he could summon two of his key staff members. I agreed, on condition that they were sworn to confidentiality. I knew them all and trusted them. I think it was Esther Jacobson (Richards) and Keith Spooner-Reid who duly arrived.

I was invited to do my sales pitch again which I did with alacrity. PJ followed by making his two key staff members aware of the extent to which he felt committed to the book.

After some whispered conversation they ordered a thousand copies.

As we got closer to a completed manuscript new obstacles reared up all around us.

Our call for printers to quote had them all (all, not some) running a mile. I most admired the ones who were honest.

The typical reaction was: 'Jon, we won't print this. No major Afrikaans company will give us another job.'

When you have to be a coward it takes a certain courage to admit that you are being one.

The best and most telling response was from one of the big Afrikaans printing and publishing groups. Their rep, a gentleman and a man with whom I frequently took lunch, roared with laughter when I asked him

to print it. *'Ek kan dit nie doen nie,'* he said, *'maar jy sal nooit weet hoe graag ek wil.'*

I believed him and was coming to realise how many Afrikaners resented the Broederbond. As an elite organisation it excluded many of them – those who had married an English-speaking woman, been to an English school, had got divorced or did not have the right church affiliations.

I have already observed that no printers wanted to print the book. I don't want to belabour the point but need to add that, anticipating this reaction, I had in my possession a letter from my bankers, The Standard Bank of South Africa, guaranteeing my ability to pay. So all the printers (being most of them) who said, 'You are a small publisher, its a big print run, we are scared you won't be able to pay,' were presented with a copy of this letter.

They still refused to print and would be dismissed summarily. I have a way with contempt.

Finally we found a printer, not a free-spirited champion of freedom of the press, but a jobbing printer in Doornfontein who needed the money. He was on the verge of going bankrupt and subsequently did. Although he could print he could not bind the book because they were not book printers. One of the essential things that makes a printer a book printer is the capacity to bind books. Printing at a printer and binding at a binder had already gone out with the ark and was far too expensive.

We had no choice.

It would be printed by the soon-to-be-bankrupt Everton Offset in Johannesburg and bound by Wallach's in Pretoria who were prepared to bind but not to print, the legal liability being completely different for the two parts of the process. Printers were liable for what they printed. For Wallach's, situated in Pretoria, to print the book would have been commercial suicide. They would however go bankrupt, after many years in business, only a few months later. I must record in writing of all these printer bankruptcies that things were tough in South Africa at that time: interest rates were in the early 20s and it was not easy funding businesses of any kind but especially not those requiring expensive capital equipment like printers.

But Everton would print and a few days later our excitement was difficult to contain as the book spilled off the presses. The smell of the ink and the clatter of the machines have always held a special meaning and significance for me.

'Publish and be damned!' '... if it's the truth and in the public interest, publish and be damned!'

I knew with every fibre of my being that this was the truth, and few exposés could have been more in the public interest and, which is quite different, of interest to the public.

But there were still hurdles to overcome. We had to move the large printer's quires, piles of printed paper, on pallets from Doornfontein to Pretoria where they would be folded, sewn, cut, trimmed, and then bound.

This was not an easy task. We hired a truck which our own sales chief Nick Britt drove laden with our precious cargo. Back and forth to Pretoria Nick went in a response over and above the call of duty. Deep into the night he drove while we awaited the arrival of each cargo load to keep the binding line running.

Then something happened that fuelled much conspiracy-related speculation. The binding line broke. Someone's done this deliberately? This line has never broken before. What the hell is going on? Recriminations, whispered accusations and the sombre, ominous silence of the factory – with Monday's deadline fast approaching and Hennie Serfontein's book selling in the shops.

No one would fix a binding line at that time of night. Many wouldn't fix it in the morning either as it would be Saturday and, in any event, Wallach's was in trouble with its creditors, so perhaps even getting it fixed on Monday would be difficult.

I wracked my brain and phoned my brother who suggested I call a friend of his who was a whizz with machines and studying engineering at Wits. With some convincing, knowing that students can always use a little extra cash, I got Keith Foster to come over to Pretoria.

The whole team of printers and binders sceptically watched him walk around the binding line and look at its myriad components. Who was this *snotkop* from Wits and how could he fix it where they had failed? Their comments and mutters attested to not only their scepticism but also to the irritation they felt at having someone brought in above them.

Looking at them and shaking his head Keith called me over: 'Get rid of all these guys,' he insisted, 'and you go and sit with them in the office as well.'

I withdrew with the muttering crew and we sat and waited. Precious time was slipping by. And yet more time. While the others muttered and moaned that nothing could be done and they should be allowed to go home for the weekend I watched Keith walking along the binding line. Prodding here, bending to look there.

Time passed.

Then a clatter. Just a short, jerky clatter. Then another and then the whole glorious industrial symphony of a binding line going full speed filled the air.

It was a fine moment. Cheers and handshakes were offered all round. Even the former sulkers swallowed their pride and got on with the job in hand.

Binding continued throughout the weekend and without further problems we were delivering the first books into key bookshops when they opened their doors on Monday.

We needed to do this as we had bound ourselves to a deadline because an interesting situation had arisen with the two newspaper groups when they heard a book on the Broederbond was soon to appear.

The Argus Company contacted me wanting to run extracts of the book. I said that I would consider this but would require more money than the derisory amounts newspapers offered in those days and frankly still do. When Tertius Myburgh heard of this competitor interest through his formidable grapevine he contacted me in a real state of near panic. A formidably charming man, he brought the full weight of it to bear along with a bit of threatening ... that I would never get a *Sunday Times* serial again ... He was able to wield the carrot and the stick in the same breath with considerable aplomb, all his points interspersed with his boyish laughter.

I naturally wanted the *Sunday Times* to run extracts but needed money. The book owed me R50 000 by way of royalty advances, a soon-to-be-received printing bill, a binding bill and all the design and make-ready costs would soon be due. Some competition for the extracts would be a good thing.

This was especially the case because the two newspaper groups treated book publishers with the utmost contempt. When you had a book that interested them they wanted to pay a pittance (or nothing at all) and then gut the book. This situation still pertains to this day, 34 years later, and has been a retarding factor in the development of a viable publishing industry in South Africa.

Anyway, this situation blew up into an edgy one between the two groups and there were cross-shareholdings linking them. I think the matter was settled up at the level (if one can refer to it in that way) of Greaser McPherson, chairman of Argus, and Clive Kinsley and Tertius Myburgh of SAAN.

Myburgh had spiked the exposé earlier. The political risk of the whole situation was now sanitised by a book from a third party and he couldn't

abide the thought of 'his two journalists' being serialised by a rival newspaper group. I was made, by the standards of the day, a substantial offer for three extracts, told to shut up, and Argus immediately and mysteriously dropped out of the bidding.

The *Sunday Times* was going ahead with the first extract on an agreed Sunday – thus the need for us to release the book on the Monday or risk seeing our massive publicity promoting Serfontein's book instead of our own.

Thus the tension at the disconcerting binding-line breakdown on the Friday before publication.

But all went well from the moment the book hit the shops. It sold like proverbial hot-cakes. We were delivering to some of the bigger outlets every other day. Booksellers, never very courageous, either politically or with their advance orders, were besieging our telephone lines.

On the Monday after the Monday of publication the lawyers' letters started to arrive from all over the country. Within a matter of four or five days there were half a dozen or so irate letters from angry and wounded Broeders.

I will not deny that this was discombobulating and not a little nerve-racking.

After the fourth or fifth letter I contacted Kelsey Stuart. Ever the cool customer, he said, 'Let a few more arrive and then bring them down to the office.'

I was to do this each week for four or five weeks as 27 writs arrived in all.

'Sir, what are you saying to them?' I asked. These were not the days when 28-year-olds spoke familiarly to older men, especially distinguished older men.

He favoured me with one of his rare smiles. 'I will look after them all and I don't want you to lose any sleep. I will tell them that by their own admission the organisation is a cultural organisation for the male elite of Afrikanerdom. How can making people aware of the immense influence they exert be in any way offensive? I will close by inviting them to meet me and my Counsel in court. I think few of them are likely to want to do so.'

What of the consequences of the book? What happened post publication? I have recently again been asked this question by a young filmmaker who thinks the whole story of the book may make a movie along the lines of *All the President's Men*, the Bernstein and Woodward Water-gate story.

The answer to this is I don't know and I can't hazard an answer, espe-

cially as any such speculation about its impact could sound portentous coming from a publisher who, when young, thought he could change the world but now knows he can't.

Hermann Giliomee, the historian, however wrote in his book *The Afrikaners: A Biography of a People*:

... a second shock for the nationalist elite was the publication in 1978 of two books on the Afrikaner Broederbond, one of which included an almost complete list of the secret organization's members. It listed 13,262 members in 914 divisions in 1980 [sic]. The organization's influence, always overrated by scholars, was already on the wane, and the publication of members' lists removed the aura of secrecy.

Change was taking place apace in South Africa. Perhaps it removed a brick or two in the wall that was apartheid.

We all moved on. Ivor married a charming girl and, like the Owl and the Pussycat, they sailed off on a pea-green sea landing up eventually in New Zealand, where they now live.

Hans Strydom continued his journalistic career, wrote another fascinating book for me entitled *For Volk and Führer* on Robey Leibbrandt, the boxer recruited by the Nazis at the Berlin Olympics and sent back to South Africa to disrupt the war effort. He was thwarted by the intrepid Jan Taljaard. The book made a marvellous film produced by Manie van Rensburg which he called, rather lamely I thought, *The Fourth Reich*.

Hans, later, after his retirement from the *Sunday Times*, perhaps imagining life to be better on the publishing rather than the writing side of books, started a publishing company called Scripta Africana which reprinted books on the Boer War, including several bestsellers. He died in March 2004.

But back to the immediate aftermath of publication. Some weeks passed and I did not get a bill from Kelsey Stewart. I had paid him an interim amount and I made an appointment to see him to ask how much I still owed. Nothing, he said. He'd not had so much fun for years and wouldn't have missed it for anything.

There is a direct line from Kelsey Stuart to the lawyers I use today. He trained a generation of press lawyers.

Many books have been published about South Africa under our imprint since that time. All of them, in their various ways, exciting to us as publishers but we waited a long time for one with the political impact

of *The Super-Afrikaners*.

Driven also to expose the abuse of power Andrew Feinstein, a former ANC MP, preferring truth to power, wrote *After the Party*, an exposé of the ANC government and the Arms Deal.

I continue, with a team of dedicated colleagues, to publish significant books about South Africa.

*Jonathan Ball*

Umbria, May 2012

## *Profile of Power*

World attention is focused on South Africa: a vast, rich country of extremes and diversity, the country of gold and diamonds, apartheid and Soweto, Biko and Botha. Hardly a week goes by without South Africa making international headlines.

Yet despite the probing spotlight of critical world attention, a crucial element of South African political reality has largely escaped detection. This strange, unique society is not ruled, as is generally believed, by “whites” or “Afrikaners”. It is not as simple as that. A dominant force is an ultra-secret organisation, the most exclusive and influential underground movement in the Western world.

It is called the *Afrikaner Broederbond* (Brotherhood).

Although it has only 12 000 scrupulously selected members, it plots and influences the destiny of all 25-million South Africans, black and white. By stealth and sophisticated political intrigue, this 60-year-old organisation has waged a remarkable campaign to harness political, social and economic forces in South Africa to its cause of ultimate Afrikaner domination. And, to an extent beyond the most optimistic dreams of its founders, it has succeeded.

The South African Government today is the Broederbond and the Broederbond is the Government. No Afrikaner government can rule South Africa without the support of the Broederbond. No Nationalist Afrikaner can become Prime Minister unless he comes from the organisation’s select ranks.

Mr P W Botha, the current Prime Minister, is a member – as were his four predecessors, Dr D F Malan, Advocate J G Strijdom, Dr H F Verwoerd and Mr John Vorster. Every member, except two, of the Botha Cabinet is a Broederbonder.

From this pinnacle of executive control over South Africa’s affairs, the organisation’s 12 000 members permeate every aspect of the Republic’s life. Through its network of more than 800 cells in the villages and cities of South Africa, the organisation has infiltrated members into town and city councils, school boards, agri-

cultural unions, the State-controlled radio and television networks, industry and commerce, banks and building societies.

Its membership spirals insidiously upwards through the strata of South African society, into the provincial administrations, the departments of education, planning, roads and works, the hospital services, universities, the quasi-state corporations, the civil service, the National Party caucuses, working through the administrators of the provinces, through Parliament and the seat of government, until it finally reaches its apex in the offices of the Prime Minister.

Its all-pervading influence has made its indelible mark on South Africa. The Bantustan policies, the Christian national education policy, the sport policy, the coloured and Indian policy – all the major political peculiarities which have shaped South Africa into a constitutional oddity bear the stamp of the Broederbond on their formulation and execution. Beneath the trappings of Parliamentary “democracy”, and behind the remarkable success of South Africa’s ruling National Party, lies the extraordinary power of the Broederbond.

In 1934 when the organisation was 16 years old, the then chairman, Professor J C van Rooy, set an ambitious goal for the Broederbond. Probably more than any other single statement in its history, this sums up the organisation’s fervent purpose. Van Rooy wrote, in a secret circular to its members:

“The primary consideration is whether Afrikanerdom will reach its ultimate destiny of domination in South Africa. Brothers, the key to South Africa’s problems is not whether one party or another shall obtain the whiphand, but whether the Afrikaner Broederbond shall govern South Africa.”

Since then, the organisation has been an abiding force in the shaping of modern South Africa’s destiny. From the time the Broederbond scored its first major political triumph in the 1948 general election victory of the National Party, it has gone from strength to strength. Through periods of changing fortunes the organisation has weathered crises and setbacks, but has tenaciously sought its “holy grail” of ultimate control.

Whether Van Rooy’s dream of the Broederbond *governing* South Africa has been achieved or not may be open to debate. But that it is *Broederbonders* who govern South Africa is beyond all doubt.

The first chairman of the organisation, H J Klopper, summed it up in a celebratory speech at the 50th anniversary of the Broederbond in 1968, when he said: “From the time the Afrikaner Broe-

derbond picked up momentum, it has given the country its governments. It has given the country every Nationalist Prime Minister since 1948. However indirectly, its efforts gave the Republic to our nation. It has given the country two State Presidents.<sup>1</sup>

“Do you realise what a powerful force is gathered here tonight between these four walls? Show me a greater power on the whole continent of Africa! Show me a greater power anywhere, even in your so-called civilised countries!

“We are part of the State, we are part of the Church, we are part of every big movement that has been born of the nation. And we make our contributions unseen; we carried them through to the point that our nation has reached today.”

An extraordinary achievement. From humble but determined beginnings in the hills around Johannesburg in 1918 when the Afrikaners were confused, dispirited, spent, the organisation has

*Dr Verwoerd.*



built a government that today holds a world record of unbroken rule, and a party that, following the 1977 general election, holds the biggest-ever majority in the South African Parliament (135 seats in the 165-seat Assembly).

South Africa's present power structure is a tribute to the Broederbond's tireless efforts on behalf of Afrikanerdom. The present Prime Minister is Broeder number 4487. His predecessor, Mr Vorster, was member number 3737 and Dr Hendrik Fransch Verwoerd was member number 1596. Dr Verwoerd, whose term of office saw two of the Broederbond's most cherished achievements – the advent of Republic in 1961 and the acceptance of the Bantustan policy – maintained a very close relationship with the organisation. He became a member on February 17 1937 and was elected to the Executive Council, the organisation's supreme body, in October 1940. He remained on the Executive Council for 10 years until 1950 when, as he said, he exchanged "the Cabinet of the Afrikaner Broederbond for the Cabinet of the nation." During his term as an Executive member he attended 51 meetings and was absent, with apologies, on only two occasions.

Shortly after his election as Prime Minister in 1958 he attended a national meeting of the Broederbond where he told his fellow members: "Friends, there is nothing that gives me greater pleasure than to be with you. When the invitation arrived I knew there would be people who would have doubts about my coming, doubts reflecting caution. But I never had one moment of doubt and the reason is simple.

"I do not see that the opponents of our national organisation, the opponents of our Afrikaner ideal, may dictate the movements of the Prime Minister of the country.

"I saw it not only as my privilege, but also as my duty to draw closer by my presence the ties that always existed unobtrusively between our Afrikaner organisation and our Afrikaner Government. And that is why I am here: to draw the Broeder bonds tighter."

A former chairman of the Broederbond, Dr P J (Piet) Meyer, referred to this close relationship in his address at the 50th anniversary meeting of the organisation in 1968. He told the meeting that Dr Verwoerd had consulted the Broederbond in July 1959 about the Republic referendum – six months before he told Parliament he was going to the country to test national support for the Afrikaners' republican dream. "He asked the Afrikaner Broeder-

bond to accept co-responsibility for the new Republic, a task that the AB accepted with great eagerness and the provision of large amounts of money.”

Dr Meyer added that he had seen Dr Verwoerd a week before he was stabbed to death in Parliament by an insane messenger, Dimitri Tsafendas in September 1966. According to Dr Meyer: “He gave me, as chairman of the Executive Council, permission to start planning for a new Republican flag and a change in the State President system to bring it more in line with the old Transvaal and Free State presidencies – obviously with the necessary adaptation to comply with the present circumstances. . . We will give attention to the State Presidency when the time is right.” Significantly, the new constitutional proposals for South Africa announced in 1976 include a strengthened State Presidency with executive powers.

After Dr Verwoerd’s assassination, and after the flurry of activity over his succession by Mr Vorster, the ties between the Broederbond and the Prime Minister’s office were quickly renewed. On August 2 1967 the Broederbond chairman, Dr Meyer, reported that “during the recent Parliamentary sitting, the chairman of the Executive Council personally conveyed our organisation’s heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our friend (the organisation’s term for member), the Prime Minister, for everything that the Government has done to the advantage and in the interests of our country and all its peoples” (Broederbond circular entitled *Us and Our Political Leaders*).

He noted that the “doors of the Prime Minister and of our other political leaders” were always open to the Executive Council.

The relationship was rocked soon after, however, by the bitter struggle in the National Party between pro-Vorster faction and the extreme right-wing group under the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr Albert Hertzog. The debilitating struggle, which ended in a split in the party, seriously dented the new Prime Minister’s position and also caused a major crisis in the Broederbond where the divisions sapping the party were mirrored.

In the early stages of the revolt, the Broederbond chiefs called on Vorster to discuss the problem. The meeting is reported in a Broederbond document, number 8/67/68 of November 2 1967. Dr Meyer reports:

“The Executive Council delegation held an open-hearted discussion with our friend (Mr Vorster) about:

- (a) The contribution of our organisation to the desired and essential unity of our nation, among our own members and in all spheres;
- (b) The role in this connection of all communications media, particularly the Press – including our own;
- (c) The areas of activity, tasks and problems of our Afrikaans cultural organisations;
- (d) The undermining philosophies that are threatening the spirit and soul of our nation – namely humanism, communism and liberalism – and measures to combat them;
- (e) The dangers of increasing economic integration under the leadership of businessmen who do not subscribe to the policy of separate development, and the complementary problem of the Afrikaner continuing in the subordinate economic role;
- (f) The application of our national education policy which has now been ratified by legislation.

“Our honourable Prime Minister thoroughly informed the delegation about his and his Government’s standpoints in connection with all these matters, and informed us confidentially on the immediate and urgent problems to be tackled by the Government.”

Despite the encouraging and placatory tone of this report, all was not well for a long time and the lingering divisions in Afrikanerdom continued to strain the Broederbond-Cabinet relationship considerably. It was clear that Dr Meyer himself was in two minds about which side to back, and it was only Vorster’s bulldozing personality and his highly efficient information network that enabled him to scrape through.

The 1968 Broederbond annual report mentions the divisions among Afrikaners, Vorster’s controversial sports policy, unity between Afrikaans and English-speaking South Africans, and the contentious issue of black diplomats in the Republic – all issues causing bitter dissent in the National Party at the time. The vital importance to the Premiership of the Broederbond’s support is illustrated by a remarkable speech Vorster made to the organisation that year in which he explained each point at issue. Clearly he felt compelled to account for the more flexible line he was adopting in contrast with the rigid, preordained style of his predecessor. He was fighting desperately to keep the Broederbond on his side, for he was well aware that failure to do so would seriously jeopardise his position.

During the speech he made a major concession to the organisation, strengthening its position even further, when he gave permission for Cabinet Ministers to serve on the Broederbond's Executive Council.

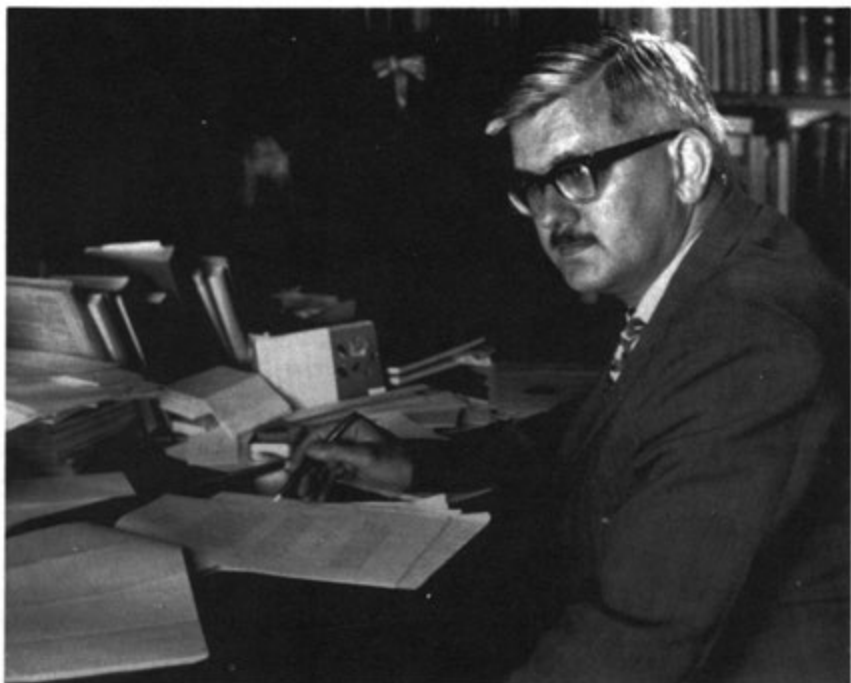
In 1969, the year Dr Hertzog and his dissidents broke from the National Party to form the Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP), an Executive Council delegation again went to see Vorster – this time at the Prime Minister's official residence, Libertas, in Pretoria.

“Broeder Vorster said he appreciated and welcomed the Executive's co-operation,” after receiving the seldom-awarded Broederbond badge “as a token of our unifying brotherhood,” reported Dr Meyer in the secret circular to members of October 7 1969. Obviously relieved by this sign that the Broederbond would back him, Vorster described the meeting as a “lovely day”, Meyer reports.

By 1972, after about 200 extreme rightwingers had been expelled from the Broederbond's ranks for refusing to dissociate themselves from the HNP, Vorster could breathe easily again. He had carried the day and the Broederbond-Cabinet relationship was well and truly healed. The organisation's annual report of the year notes: “The relationship between the Executive Council and our Broeders in responsible circles (the organisation's term for the Government) has never been better.”

From the Prime Minister's office the Broederbond's representation can be traced down the line of executive control, threading its way through every Cabinet Minister's office with only two exceptions. These exceptions are the Minister of Finance, Senator Owen Horwood, and the Minister of Indian Affairs and of Tourism, Mr Marais Steyn. Their respective disqualifications are that Senator Horwood's English-speaking background precludes him from membership of the rigorously Afrikaner organisation, while Mr Steyn is a second-choice Nationalist. He crossed the floor from the opposition benches where, for years, he had the reputation of being the only opposition member who could harass the formidable Vorster in debate.

When Vorster reshuffled his Cabinet early in 1978 the brotherly tradition of power was maintained. The only newcomer to the Cabinet itself was Mr F W de Klerk who became Minister of Posts and Telegraphs and of Social Welfare and Pensions. He too is a member of the Broederbond, having been invited to join in 1964 at the unusually young age of 27 (*Sunday Times*, January 29 1978).



*Present chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, Prof Gerrit Viljoen.*

Thus whenever the South African Cabinet meets, it is a tribute to Van Rooy's ideal expressed more than 40 years ago – that the Broederbond should govern South Africa.

The Executive Council of the Broederbond are all leading Afrikaners in their own right. The chairman is Professor Gerrit Viljoen, Rector of Rand Afrikaans University in Johannesburg. A highly talented and articulate man, he was described as "brilliant" by the former American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, during a visit to South Africa in 1976.

The vice-chairman is a highly significant and powerful figurehead in Afrikanerdom, their spiritual leader, the Reverend D P M Beukes, moderator of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, the largest of the three main Afrikaans churches.

The other Executive members are Dr F C Fensham, Professor of Semitic Languages at the University of Stellenbosch; Mr J M de Wet, former Commissioner General of South West Africa; Dr W J (Wimpie) de Klerk, managing editor of the National Party's Transvaal mouthpiece, *Die Transvaler*, a 60 000-circulation daily

morning newspaper; Mr Gabriel Krog, director of Indian Education; Professor E J Marais, Rector of the University of Port Elizabeth; Mr S A S Hayward, Nationalist MP for Graaff-Reinet; Professor H J Samuels, retired chairman of the South African Armaments Board; Dr C W H Boshoff, head of the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (a Broederbond front organisation); Mr Eben Cuyler, a former Nationalist senator; Mr D P de Villiers, head of the giant oil-from-coal corporation, Sasol; Professor B Kok, chancellor of the University of the Orange Free State; Professor W A van Niekerk of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Stellenbosch; and Mr S W van der Merwe.

It is the fusion of these two bodies, the Cabinet and the Broederbond Executive Council, and the forces they individually and collectively represent, that gives the National Party its present position of extraordinary power in South Africa.

From this rarified summit of political influence the Broederbond's authority is disseminated through the other ranks of society. The President of the Senate, the upper house in South Africa's present Westminster-type constitutional arrangement (under the new constitutional proposals the Senate will disappear) is a Broederbonder, Mr Marais Viljoen. The National Party's Parliamentary caucus of 135 is dominated by Broederbond members, among them, of course, Mr Hayward of the organisation's Executive Council. There are 186 full-time politicians on the Broederbond's membership lists, according to one of their secret documents, *Professions and Ages Breakdown*, compiled in 1977. These include Administrators of South Africa's provinces: Mr Sybrand van Niekerk, the controversial rightwing Administrator of the Transvaal (member number 2296), the Administrator of Natal, the amiable Mr Ben Havemann (Broeder number 4405); Mr A C van Wyk, the Orange Free State's Administrator (member number 3108). There is every likelihood that Dr L A P A Munnik, the Cape Administrator, is a member, although this has not been established beyond all doubt.

Most of the members of the Provincial Executive Committees in the Transvaal, Cape and Free State are Broeders. In Natal the ruling political party in the Provincial Council is the New Republic Party, an opposition party, so there is no Broederbond representation in that Executive Committee.

It is not only the policy-makers, but also the policy-executors

that are to be found in the Broederbond's ranks. Examples from the former Prime Minister's Department were his private secretary, Mr Johan Weilbach, the liaison man, Mr Neville Krige, and the secretary to the department, Mr Wessel Meyer. It is significant that Mr Krige, who was recruited to the Prime Minister's Department from the South African Broadcasting Corporation, was brought into the Broederbond at the recommendation of the Executive Council itself soon after his appointment had been announced. The clear implication is that one of the qualifications for the job was membership of the organisation.

Many of Vorster's top advisers were also members of the Broederbond. His economic adviser, Dr P J Rieckert, is a member. His Security Council was made up almost entirely of Broederbonders. It included the Minister of Defence, Mr P W Botha, the Minister of Justice and Police, Mr J T Kruger, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr R F (Pik) Botha, and the former head of the secret service, General Hendrik van den Bergh.

Other notable members include the Secretary for Coloured, Rehoboth and Nama Relations, Mr J H T Mills; the Secretary for Sport and Recreation, Mr B K de W Hoek; and the Secretary for Plural Relations, the department which controls every facet of life for South Africa's 18-million blacks, is also a Broeder. So is Mr P T C du Plessis, Nationalist MP for Lydenburg and Chairman of the Plural (formerly Bantu) Affairs Commission, an important post in terms of South Africa's Bantustan policy.

Among the Bantu Administration Boards under Broederbond control the most important are: the West Rand Administration Board which controls the brooding giant black city of Soweto just outside Johannesburg, the East Rand Administration Board under Mr S van der Merwe, the Vaal Triangle Board under Mr C H Knoetze and the Cape Peninsula Board under Brigadier J H van der Westhuizen. The chairman of WRAB, Mr Manie Mulder (brother of the Minister of Plural Relations, Dr Connie Mulder) is a prominent Broeder. These administration boards play a vital role in the execution of South Africa's apartheid policy. Through a baffling system of permits they control every aspect of black urban dwellers' lives.

There are 518 civil servants in the Broederbond, the most notable being the chairman of the enormous service, Dr P S Rautenback (number 6142), the Secretary, Dr W I Steyn and one of the commissioners, Mr W G Schickerling, who has since been ap-

pointed Auditor-General. There are 61 Broeders in the provincial administrations. A significant proportion of these are in the education departments of the four provinces where they exert particular influence on the 2424 Broeder teachers who in turn “spread the gospel” in the classrooms. The teacher corps of the Broederbond is held in high esteem because of its unique potential for moulding the minds and attitudes of future white generations.

In modern South Africa, fast becoming one of the world’s most isolated pariah states, the military plays an increasingly important role. Its sphere of activity and influence has spread in recent years to include a regular place in the inner sanctums of power, where major political decisions are taken. The Minister of Defence, Mr P W Botha, is a Broeder. The Head of the Defence Force, General Magnus Malan, is also in the organisation’s ranks along with 143 Defence Force personnel, most of them senior officers.

General Hendrik van den Bergh, whose membership number is 6745, is an important member of the secret organisation. He shared internment during World War Two with Vorster, forming a lifelong friendship. In his position at the head of Security Services, from which he has recently retired, he played a vital role in South African politics. Throughout his career he had been a close lieutenant and confidant of Vorster, particularly during the detente years in the early and middle 1970s when he made numerous secret diplomatic sorties into Africa. Information about the other links between BOSS (DONS) and the Broederbond may not be disclosed here because of new legislation in South Africa preventing the publication of any details about personalities and activities of the secret service. In South Africa, where the economy increasingly takes on the look of a socialist state, there are a large number of semi-State corporations, all of which have powerful Broederbond representation in their top echelons. In terms of political influence the most important of these is the State-controlled South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) which holds a jealously-guarded monopoly of radio and television.

Its chief executive, Dr Piet Meyer, was chairman of the Broederbond from 1960 to 1972. For the major part of this period he was simultaneously chairman of the SABC. He is no longer on the Broederbond Executive but remains an important and highly influential member of the organisation. His membership number is 787. At least three members of his SABC board, Mr W A Maree, Professor S J Terreblanche and Professor H O Mönning are Broe-

derbonders. Dr Meyer also serves as chairman of the SABC's Bantu Programme Control Board (the SABC, like South Africa, is divided on ethnic lines with different services for the various language and colour groups). This control board includes at least one other Broeder, Professor E F Potgieter. Television and radio programmes are the responsibility of Dr J H T Schutte, recently promoted to Director General (Programmes) of the corporation. He belongs to the Broederbond's Oom Paul branch in Johannesburg.

Other top executives of the corporation, who influence the viewing and listening of all racial groups, include the following Broeders:

- Mr Jan Swanepoel, director-general of the corporation;
- Mr Steve de Villiers, director of English and Afrikaans radio;
- Mr T van Heerden, who was recently appointed director of Bantu and External Services. Mr van Heerden's new position indicates that listeners to the SABC's African language services, future black TV viewers, and people who tune in to the worldwide Radio RSA service, are likely to have only what the Broederbond wants them to see and hear;
- Mr B J Steyn, recently appointed head of the SABC in the Orange Free State. Before that, he was head of Radio Bantu's Nguni language service;
- Mr L S Seegars, now director of Schools Radio Service. He was formerly head of SABC's South Sotho service.

Other areas of the SABC's administration also have their share of Broederbond representation. Deputy Director General (Administration) Mr Gert Yssel is a member, as is the head of Stores and Supplies, Mr E van H E Mischke. The viewers' watchdog, the Television Programme Advisory Board, includes at least one Broeder, Mr P R T Nel. Mr Nel, a former Director of Education in Natal, is also a former member of the Broederbond's Executive Council.

The importance of the SABC to the Broederbond-National Party alliance and the extent to which it is manipulated for party political ends is indicated in two secret Broederbond documents.

The first, *Masterplan for a White Country: the Strategy*, explains the importance of having Broeders in control of the so-called Bantu Services. The masterplan calls for the use of organisations, including the SABC and its Bantu Services and the planned black TV service, to "compel" compliance with the plan whose main

purpose is to see that overwhelming numbers of the black population live and work in their own homelands, or Bantustans, as soon as possible. The second is a secret circular to members, number 5/70/71 dated August 3 1970, which deals with the introduction of television in South Africa, a hot political issue for many years. The document shows that while Dr Meyer was simultaneously head of the SABC and of the Broederbond, he headed the Commission of Inquiry into television in South Africa. More important, he informed the Broederbond on his findings *before* passing them on to the Government and Parliament.

After the *Sunday Times* published information about the SABC's Broederbond connection there were two fascinating reactions. The first was official, in the form of a letter of complaint to the newspaper from the SABC public relations department's Mr Andre Walters. Among other things he wrote: "The SABC, in the selection of the nature and contents of its programmes, is under the control of its board as determined by the Broadcasting Act and we challenge you to prove that its programmes are subject to consistent influence by ominous, menacing, subversive or collusive outside persons, organisations or pressures."

The first point to make is that the Broadcasting Act, by the nature of the Broederbond's position of power in the South African Cabinet, is a Broederbond-sanctioned piece of legislation. Whether the Broederbond's undeniable influence in the SABC's affairs is ominous, menacing, subversive or collusive can only be a matter of subjective judgement.

The second reaction came in the form of telephone calls and conversations with other SABC employees who were disappointed that more names of members in the corporation were not exposed. The authors were told that many more people, particularly in top positions in the radio and television news services of the corporation, were Broederbonders. Altogether there are, at latest count, 49 Broederbonders involved in broadcasting in South Africa.

The South African Railways, the largest single employer in South Africa, is also under the control of a Broederbond general manager, J G H Loubser. The SAR's Financial Manager, Dr E L Grove, is also a member. There are 221 railways and airways Broeders.

Dr Ampie Roux, chairman of South Africa's Atomic Energy Board, is an important Broeder. With constant speculation that

South Africa is technically capable of developing nuclear capability, Dr Roux's position takes on added significance. In any event, his position is a major one in South African affairs. Iscor, the semi-State Iron and Steel Corporation, also has tremendous strategic importance for South Africa. Six of its board members are Broeders. They are the chairman, Mr Tommy Muller, Mr J P Coetzee, Mr P K Hoogendyk, Dr M D Marais, Professor H J Samuels and Mr J J Vermooten. The top position in the Electricity Supply Commission (Escom) is also held by a Broeder, Dr R L Straszacker. Mr T W de Jongh, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, is also a member.

As we have mentioned, another leading member of the Broederbond is Mr D P de Villiers, managing director of Sasol, the corporation that produces oil from coal – an organisation of enormous importance to South Africa facing constant threats of oil boycotts.

Afrikanerdom's large business undertakings are also generally under Broederbond patronage. The big Afrikaner financial combine of Sanlam is headed by Broeder Dr A D Wassenaar. The former managing director, Mr Pepler Scholz who retired recently, is a Broeder and so is his successor, Dr Fred du Plessis. Dr P E Rousseau, chairman of another Afrikaans finance house, Federale Volksbeleggings, is also a Broeder.

Afrikanerdom's Press barons are also members of the organisation. They are Mr Marius Jooste, the head of the huge Perskor group which, apart from its newspapers, handles a large slice of the South African Government's printing contracts and Mr D P de Villiers, the head of the Nasionale Pers group.

The Broederbond has an abiding passion for control of education because of the obvious advantages this holds for any organisation wishing to influence the lives and minds of young people. Consequently its representation in the top echelons of all the Afrikaans universities in South Africa is extremely strong. The list includes the following:

- Rand Afrikaans University – former chancellor, the late Dr Nico Diederichs (former State President of South Africa); rector and vice-chancellor, Professor Gerrit Viljoen (number 6197 and present chairman of the Broederbond); chairman of the council, Dr Piet Meyer (a former Broederbond chairman); vice-chairman of council, Dr R L Straszacker; former vice-principal for business administration, Mr R S de la Bat.



*Mr B J Vorster and Prof H B Thom at Mr Vorster's installation as Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch.*

- University of Stellenbosch – chancellor, Mr John Vorster (the former Prime Minister); vice-chancellor and chairman of council, the Reverend J S Gericke (number 1999 and a top executive in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk); rector, Professor J N de Villiers.
- University of Pretoria – chancellor, Dr Hilgaard Muller (former Minister of Foreign Affairs); principal, Professor E M Hamman; vice-principal, Professor A N Pelzer (number 3381); chairman of council, Dr S M Naude (number 233).
- University of Potchefstroom – chancellor, Mr Jan de Klerk (number 2490 and former president of the Senate); principal, Professor Tjaart van der Walt.
- University of Port Elizabeth – chancellor, Dr Anton Rupert; chairman of council, Dr A D Wassenaar; principal, Professor E J Marais (number 4955 and a member of the Broederbond Executive Council).
- University of the Orange Free State – chancellor, Professor B Kok (a Broederbond Executive Councillor); principal, Professor W L Mouton; chairman of council, Dr S J Naude.

The surviving white rectors of “non-white” universities are members, as were those who have been replaced by blacks. They include:

- The rector of the University of Durban-Westville (for Indians), Professor S P Olivier (number 6991).
- The rector of the University of Fort Hare (for blacks), Professor J M de Wet.
- Professor J A Mare (number 5340), the former rector of the University of Zululand.
- Professor J L Boshoff, former rector of the University of the North.
- The former rector of the University of the Western Cape, Professor C J Kriel.

These are some of the elite, the enormously influential brokers of power in South Africa. It is through the patronage of men like these that, after 1963 and 1964, the two most traumatic years of the organisation’s existence, the chairman, Dr Piet Meyer, was able to report: “The Afrikaner Broederbond continues to show it is still the organisation that exercises the greatest influence among Afrikaners.” He went on to spur the organisation to greater efforts to make a positive contribution to the “security of the Republic of South Africa as a white man’s country.”<sup>2</sup>

Dr Meyer’s proud assertion of the organisation’s influence is revealing. In the secrecy of internal communication with fellow members he placed a value on the organisation’s importance which is invariably denied in public. Its response to accusations that it exerts influence at all is invariably one of injured innocence. When the allegation is made that it exerts political influence, its rebuttals become even more shrill. But a detailed examination of the organisation’s history and record in the public affairs of South Africa will soon reveal that this is very much a matter of “met-hinks she doth protest too much”.

The organisation itself provides ample evidence within its secret documents that it has been closely involved in every major political development in South Africa. These documents also clearly show that its links with the National Party are intimate and inseparable. At the *Bondsraad* meeting held on April 6 1972, the members heard a paper on *Ons Taak op Staatkundige Terrein* (Our Task in the Constitutional Field). The document begins with the peculiar form of “double-speak” the organisation has evolved. This is a cynical ploy whereby the organisation, with pious innocence, al-

ways declares that it is above party politics and may not involve itself in political or clerical matters.

It is, however, nothing more than a safety valve to be used in emergency. If the organisation comes under suspicion, and is under such pressure that it must submit to investigation, it can hastily produce documentary evidence that it has declared politics, among other things, “out of bounds”. But its own documentation exposes the transparency of its claims. “That our organisation stands outside party politics does not, however, mean that our organisation . . . has no task and duty in connection with organised endeavour on the other areas of life. Our members are, and indeed should be, simultaneously active members of their own Afrikaans churches and of their own national-political party and must continue to receive leadership from our organisation – that also goes for our church and party in regard to our cultural field. It is so, and should always remain so, that cultural leaders are at the same time church and political leaders; that political leaders are simultaneously cultural and church leaders; and that church leaders are likewise cultural and political leaders. Although our organisation stands outside organised party politics, there is nothing to prevent it from co-operating with any political party, even a ruling non-national political party, for the promotion of our Afrikaans-cultural ideals. That especially implies that our organisation will continue to remain in the closest contact with the leaders of our own national-political organisation and will co-operate intimately with them . . . thereby ensuring that the Afrikaner’s cultural struggle is also politically assured. While a nation’s form of government is also an inherent part of its culture, it is obvious that a cultural organisation will directly involve itself therewith.

“Therefore, it was from the beginning an important objective of our organisation to strive for a peculiar Republican form of government in our country. We are giving constant attention to a greater historical-Afrikaans content to our form of government.<sup>3</sup> Our organisation has, from its formation onwards, had to do with the constitutional-political terrain. It was set as the general duty of our organisation on the political front that our members should continue to strive to combat Afrikaner division in this area, and to achieve and promote the greatest possible national-political unity.

“In the years of fusion, when there was serious political division among Afrikaner nationalists, we began to recruit leading national politicians as members of our organisation, namely Dr D F Malan,

J G Strijdom, Dr N J van der Merwe, C R Swart, H F Verwoerd and others. In these years our organisation propagated clearly and powerfully the Republican ideal as the most important medium for Afrikaner unity on the constitutional domain.”

The document then deals with attacks on it by Generals Hertzog and Smuts until “in 1948, with the change of government by the National Party, under the leadership of Dr D F Malan, a staunch co-operation came into being between the Afrikaner Broederbond and the Broeder-leaders of the party. This co-operation already existed during the war years (1939–1945) with the support that our organisation gave to the attempts to overcome the serious divisions of nationalist Afrikaners.

“The big reunifying gathering at Monument Koppie (at the climax of the 1938 Oxwagon Trek) was organised by our organisation. Our organisation also initiated the Unity Committee (*Eenheidskomitee*). In addition the Executive Council formed a Policy Committee, which drew up a Republican constitution for our country. Our political leaders were also represented in this.

“During the Prime Ministership of Advocate J G Strijdom, we co-operated with the National Party to develop South Africa as quickly as possible towards a Republic. At a special annual meeting, where Advocate Strijdom took part, the basis and form of the coming Republic was thoroughly thrashed out. It was, however, Dr H F Verwoerd, who was for a long time a member of our Executive Council, who called in the active co-operation of our organisation when he, as Prime Minister, decided to call a referendum for or against our becoming a Republic. We not only used our funds to elicit public support for the Republic, but also used the powers of our own members, and of outside supporters, to this end.

“As a result of hostile reaction engendered against our organisation, particularly by Freemasons within the ranks of the National Party, we co-operated with Dr Verwoerd in allowing the establishment of a judicial investigation into the activities of secret organisations. In the report of the judge concerned, our organisation was acquitted of any form of illegitimate behaviour and activity, particularly in connection with interference in party political matters (not strictly true: the commission did not investigate this aspect, see Chapter 17).

“Our staunch and intimate co-operation with our national political leaders was continued when Advocate John Vorster became

our new Premier. We did everything in our power to prevent a small group of nationalists from forming their own party in opposition to the National Party, which is under the leadership of members of our organisation. And where some of our own newspapers tried to wage their own campaign in this matter, we tried to keep the split as confined as possible.

“Our organisation has, as in the case of our former national premiers, closely liaised with Advocate Vorster on all matters of great significance for the Afrikaner and which directly touch our nation as a language and cultural community. Not only his door, but those of all the members of his Cabinet, continuously stood wide open to use in this regard. Requests for support for specific matters have never fallen on deaf ears.

“In all the mentioned Nationalist Prime Ministerships, our organisation experienced the closest co-operation and sympathetic support for matters affecting the future of our nation. We name only the important ones: The Afrikaner’s responsibility, role and place in the civil service, or semi-civil service: with the help of our own political leaders, success was achieved in opening the way to the top of these services ... for culture-conscious Afrikaners. There were no longer any obstacles for qualified and hard-working Afrikaners to reach the highest posts in all the State and quasi-State services. With the sympathetic understanding of our political leaders, the good Afrikaans businessman could tackle the road ahead with greater confidence as a result of our organisation’s struggle for complete equal rights. The result of this was greater participation by the Afrikaner in the private business life of our country, although his disadvantage continues to give concern today.

“Perhaps the most important fruit of mutual consultation and co-operation is our progress in the educational field in the interest of the children of our nation. Afrikaans mother-language schools, which, under our Nationalist government, came into their own, indeed form the basis ... of our survival as a separate language-cultural national community. In addition, mutual co-operation also led to the development of a complete national education system for our country – surely one of the greatest national-political achievements of our time.

“Our organisation also placed its resources fully at the disposal of our political leaders for the consistent execution of our policy of separate development. It is not possible, within the framework of

this short exposition, to fully reflect our contribution in this connection. This concerns not only theoretical contributions, but practical actions which are not even yet fully calculable. I mention only two in this connection, namely the contributions of SABRA and of Radio Bantu, in which our members play a large role.

“In the most recent period, concerning our multi-national sports policy, we have made a special contribution in organising this important matter in the interests of our country and all its national groups, and that on the basis of our policy of separate development.

“A matter which also continues to demand the closest co-operation of our organisation and our national-political action, is the need for continued immigrant contributions to the full development of our national economy. Without a powerful expansion of our national economy, our independent survival, as well as the execution of our policy of separate development, will come into serious jeopardy.

“On the other hand, we must be extremely careful that our own national composition, nature and character, as well as our own religious attitude, are not permanently damaged by immigration. Our organisation acts strongly and purposefully in this regard. We also continue to enjoy the support of our political friends in this connection. The naturalisation of immigrants into our own community is, for our organisation, of the highest priority.

“Dozens of other national-political matters in which we keep ourselves busy, are invariably summed up in our annual reports.

“Our current task in the constitutional field flows particularly from the fact that many Afrikaner nationalists recently have begun either to lose their enthusiasm for our language-cultural and national-political action, or are becoming so ensnared in petty personal grudges, that they are losing sight of the greater Afrikaner cause. According to a very reliable calculation, 70 000 Afrikaner nationalists in the Transvaal did not vote for Nationalist candidates in 1970. Of them, 33 000 voted for the Herstigte Nasionale Party, 15 000 for the United Party, while 22 000 abstained. That apart, about 7 to 10 per cent of urban Afrikaners and between 15 and 20 per cent of rural Afrikaners in the Transvaal continue to vote for the United Party.

“It is not the task of our organisation and besides we are not in a position, to analyse this situation correctly and thoroughly – what is our task is to stimulate the enthusiasm of culture-conscious

Afrikaners for our national-political action in the interest of our nation's own and separate survival, and to help overcome political division in our own ranks. It is self evident that any effective co-operation we can give in this regard, can and must be with the leaders of the ruling National Party. Not only are the members of the current Cabinet, with one or two exceptions, members of our organisation, but they are also the purveyors of our close mutual co-operation on the national-political front since 1948.

“As far as the Herstigte Nasionale Party is concerned, the Executive Council made it clear from the foundation of this party, which took place under leadership of certain of our members, that our organisation denies no member the right to have his own opinion on party political matters, or to join a political party of his own choice, as long as he does not, as a result, come into conflict with our Bond's basis, spirit, policy and objectives. And, where the Executive Council took disciplinary action against a member, it did so not on the grounds of his membership of a particular party or group, but because of his own individual actions, if they were in conflict with his personal undertakings of our organisation.

“Our most recent task in the constitutional field was, therefore, also to try to prevent the establishment of a second national-political party. We did not succeed. Thereafter, we did everything in our power to contain this division as much as possible. It was particularly our job to prevent this division from being brought into our own organisation. Here we succeeded to a great extent.

“Against the background of the outlined current situation, it is clear that we as Afrikaners, especially as members of our organisation, must fill our own people again with enthusiasm for our exceptionally important national-political action, and . . . in this way demonstrate our own maximum political unity to the internal and external underminers and enemies of our country. We must not only now tackle the next election in a positive manner, but must carry it through under the banner of our unified Afrikanership, to the biggest-ever Nationalist victory.

“To do this in the closest co-operation with our political leaders, our organisation's specific task must include the following:

- (a) We must systematically inculcate into every member, every Afrikaner and especially our young Afrikaners, the national-political responsibility and duty to achieve a massive victory

- in the next election on the basis of united Afrikaner resources.
- (b) We must now inspire the national Afrikaner to give himself a positive national role, and to desist from the hairsplitting search for reasons for the birth of the present situation. Our political leaders know better than us what possible shortcomings on an organised national-political level must be rectified.
  - (c) As a cultural organisation, it is our particular task to start now to plan and organise unifying and inspiring cultural functions on a large scale throughout the country, functions like the Ox-wagon Trek, the Monument meetings, the language festivals and others from the past. In 1974, it will be 50 years since our first National government, with its policy of South Africa First, came to power – a rule which has been of the greatest significance to Afrikanerdom, not only politically and economically, but also culturally. This could, for example, provide good reason for large folk (*volk*) festivals before the next election.
  - (d) We must fight with all our might and completely eradicate all old-womanish slander about each other and underhand criticism of our leaders. To speak frankly to each other means to understand each other and to pool our strengths.
  - (e) We must marshall positively all our communication media to unite and not divide the Afrikaner's national-political power for the struggle for survival. In this our leaders must take the initiative ...”

The most vehement opponent of the Broederbond, seeking to prove its interference in, and influence on, political affairs in South Africa, including party political matters, could hardly have drawn up a more comprehensive indictment than the one which the organisation itself provides in this document. Another such indictment is contained in the Broederbond document *Ons Taak Vorentoe* (Our Task Ahead) which contains the following passage:<sup>4</sup> “The most important and effective manner of ensuring our white future is to support with all our resources the current government, under the leadership of Dr H F Verwoerd, and to help keep it in power for as long as possible, in so doing not only to repel the leftist onslaught on our future, but also to successfully carry out the Transkei undertaking, with which our future is narrowly bound.” The organisation, continues the document, should help establish the public climate for effective government action in the so-called “Cold War”, particularly where this involved unorthodox

methods. It should also support the government in its attempts to strengthen the police and defence forces. There are countless other documented examples of this kind of political involvement by the Broederbond. Many of them will be fully exposed in this book as it related the organisation's inexorable advance on behalf of Afrikanerdom and all its interests.

This ardent purpose presents the organisation with an enormous task, affecting virtually every aspect of South Africa's national life. It is a function the organisation undertakes with grave determination and collective dedication on an impressive scale. No project is too big or too small.

The organisation will apply itself to the problems of why Afrikaans schoolchildren sing English rugby songs (Circular 7/75/76 of August 27 1975) with the same diligence and fervour as it brings to matters of national and international significance. The Broederbond has achieved its position of extraordinary influence over South Africa's affairs by skilful manoeuvring, persistent application to its task, and sheer dogged hard work. Whether or not one agrees in principle that such an organisation ought to wield, from the shelter of absolute secrecy, such tremendous influence on public affairs; whether or not one agrees with the formulae it propounds as solutions to the problems of South Africa, one cannot but feel awed by the scope of its work, the success it has achieved, and the efficiency of its operations.

How does it operate and how has it been able to achieve so much? The current chairman, Professor Gerrit Viljoen, described the methods in his 1976 chairman's address to the national congress. "We are not an executive or governing organisation; we do not have the financial means or the manpower for that. In general, we comprise part-time amateurs and not full-time experts working only for the AB.

"Our task, therefore, is primarily to negotiate and to work through the activation, motivation and preparation of our own members, scores of whom carry high level management and policy responsibilities in their daily lives, and in this way 'do the AB's work' every day.

"The AB achieves most of its successes, and the greatest of them, not so much by working organisationally as the AB but far more through the daily work activities of its network of responsible, informed and motivated members.

"When expert committees are formed from AB members in

connection with national matters, we usually find that the majority of key figures in the relevant field are already our people, have already taken a lead, and are carrying responsibilities.”

The organisation *has* succeeded in capturing major areas of influence in virtually every sphere of South African life, both in public affairs and in the private sector. These are goals for which it has worked with implacable resolve. It is insatiable in its hunger for influential positions throughout all strata of society, and is a hard taskmaster continually pushing and urging its members to extend that influence. The monthly circular letters are replete with instructions like the following:

1. “A by-election to fill an Orange Free State vacancy in the (South African) Medical (and Dental) Council will be held soon. All doctors can participate. Dr Izak J Venter, a Bloemfontein dermatologist, has been mentioned to us by friends as somebody who ought to be supported. Secretaries must convey this announcement to doctor friends who are absent when this circular letter is read (Circular 77/77/78 of September 1 1977).
2. “The attention of friends involved in education in the Transvaal is drawn to the fact that in the new education structure provision is made for the appointment of a head of department for vocational guidance at each school.  
It is of the utmost importance that these posts which were advertised in August are manned by teachers with the right attitudes, capabilities and motivation, as is the case with all heads of departments.  
In view of the responsibilities of this post, further explanation is hardly necessary: they encompass religious education, youth preparedness, the education programme in the hostels, cadets, and visits to the veld schools. Friends are asked to apply for these key positions (Circular 6/77/78 of August 1 1977).
3. “It is important that Afrikaners working in the newspaper industry are considered for membership. These people, because of their working conditions, cannot always take part in public affairs or serve on public bodies. Their work gives them exceptional opportunities to exercise leadership and influence so they merit consideration, especially as they perform, or can perform, a service to the Afrikaner cause (Circular 5/77/78).
4. “Branches and friends are asked to consider how to attract young people to Afrikaans organisations like Rapportryers.

Various branches have pointed out that promising young Afrikaners are being recruited by alien organisations like the Rotarians, Round Table and the Freemasons when they should have been won over to the Afrikaner cause. Young officers in the Defence Force and the police are often lost to our cause through recruitment by these organisations.

Branches with military bases in their areas, or where there are significant number of police or prisons officers, must give attention to this (Circular 9/76/77 of October 29 1977).

5. "Following requests from branches, we wish to emphasise the importance of the right influence in public organisations like municipal associations and agricultural associations. Friends must strive to ensure that people with the right attitudes are elected as executives of these bodies (Circular 5/75/76 of July 1 1975).
6. "It is important that senior officials of Afrikaner business undertakings and financial institutions render public service in fields where they can help develop and strengthen Afrikaner interests. Here we think particularly of local government, where people with a different outlook from ours often play a major role because Afrikaner businessmen are not available. The Executive Council therefore calls on the appropriate friends to influence the directorates of large undertakings in this direction (Circular letter 4/75/76 of June 2 1975)."

Not only is the Bond's quest for influence insatiable, so is its hunger for information. It is never content merely to postulate theories or solutions. Intense investigation is its hallmark. "Our task is not only the formulation of policy but, even more so, the discovery of the best methods of carrying through proven policy at all levels and in all fields. This demands intensive and co-ordinated scientific research, sophisticated testing of methods, and their expert application" (Extraordinary circular of May 4 1961).

The Executive Council always comprises top people in a diversity of fields, and can draw upon a vast reservoir of highly trained experts on any aspect of the nation's life. They constantly form think-tanks and hold brainstorming sessions on virtually every subject imaginable: "Recently 14 work groups were constituted from 156 members representing the best brainpower, not only in South Africa but in the whole world, on virtually every aspect of life" (Extraordinary circular of June 12 1963).

So, in his last year as chairman, Dr Piet Meyer, head of the