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1. CORRUPTION : DEFINITION AND EXTENT

My dictionaries give a wide spectrum of definitions of the word corruption. They include the following words: rotteness, impurity, bribery, dishonesty, fraud, shady dealings, wickedness, immorality, sinfulness, debauchery, vice, wrong-doing, degeneracy, decadence, looseness, etc.

In a political context the word corruption is normally used in a rather narrow sense. When reference is made to corruption in this context, it usually refers to the misuse, for personal benefit, of public funds, information or status by people endowed with public authority. Such actions are normally regarded as corruption even if they are not illegal but nevertheless undermine the ethical standards of society. Corruption, however, is not necessarily limited to those endowed with public authority. Any person unduly favoured by public action can benefit from corruption or can use his influence to be protected or favoured in an improper or corrupt way.

For the purpose of this lecture I will use the term in a broader sense than to denote only illegal activities of individual persons. I will also regard as corruption all unethical or immoral attitudes and actions closely related to, or imbedded in, or caused by a political system, or any other social structure.

When corruption is defined in this broad sense of the word, it is of course difficult to quantify it. What really matters is its qualitative nature.

The present interest in the phenomenon of corruption has been

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stimulated by a sudden increase in illegal forms of alleged corruption by people in high public office. Since the beginning of the year two ministers and two members of parliament have resigned and investigations into alleged corruption in all four cases are taking place or have been completed. In the Transkei a former Prime Minister was sentenced to gaol. Several one-man commissions have been appointed to investigate alleged cases of illegal forms of corruption. Of these, the Harms Commission is the most important. A few weeks ago, two senior ministers testified before the Harms Commission about their relationship with Mr Vermaas.

One could reasonably accept that the proven cases of illegal corruption are only the small tip of an iceberg. In the cases already investigated there is evidence of attempts to cover up the wrong-doings. Since the Watergate scandal in the USA, we have all begun to realize that cover-up activities have become a temptation for all modern governments. The opportunities and necessity for cover-ups increase rapidly the more extended the bureaucracy becomes and the longer a government remains in office. Given the huge bureaucracy built over the last 40, but especially over the last 10 years, the opportunities and necessity for cover-ups in South Africa are in all probability very large. To this we must add the cult of secrecy in government circles that has developed during the last 10 years. This cult developed when the government began to claim that secrecy was necessary in the struggle against economic sanctions. This secrecy and the large bureaucracy created opportunities for people to obtain benefits from the system without being seen. It also created opportunities for cover-ups.

But we also have reason to suspect that the unethical forms of corruption that are visible, also form a tiny tip of an iceberg. These forms of corruption are usually committed by people in quite a "refined" and sophisticated society. In this kind of society, the dividing line between ethical and unethical (or corrupt) actions - and even between legal and illegal actions - is often very thin. It is characteristic

Corruption

of refined and sophisticated people that they have "refined" their public actions to such a level of perfection that they succeed in creating the impression that their actions are always on the right side of the thin line. Or, to put it differently, in a typical bourgeois society, a strong allegiance exists towards the eleventh commandment. If a person is not careful in his devotion to this commandment and is caught out, it is regarded as proof of a lack of bourgeois efficiency. Bourgeois people are very sensitive about not being found guilty of such an ugly thing. Consequently, trouble is taken by the bourgeoisie to make sure that these illegal and/or unethical actions remain hidden from the public eye. We have reason to suspect that this kind of bourgeois-morality has developed in large sections of the White society in South Africa.

2. A POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ETHICS

As stated above, the phenomenon of corruption is not only a legal matter, but mainly an ethical or moral one. If widespread corruption becomes noticeable in a specific society, it could be blamed on the moral weakness of the individuals in that society. But it could also be blamed on the political and/or economic system. The following question could then arise: to what extent are individuals to be blamed and to what extent is the system to blame for the moral weakness in society?

One school of thought takes the line that only individuals can take responsibility for their actions and that only individuals can act in an illegal, unethical and/or sinful way and that a system (for example a political system) cannot be guilty of illegal, unethical and/or sinful activities. Supporters of this school of thought claim that a system cannot be classified as good or bad, but is always ethically neutral.

Until a decade or two ago the "fiction of neutrality" was rather strong in the social sciences. This fiction was maintained in the intellectual marketplace of positivism on the assumption that values (and value judgements) can and ought to be suspended for the sake of (scientific) "objectivity". During the last

two decades the tide has very much turned in favour of the school of thought that regards the evaluation of political and other systems not only as desirable but also as indispensable. Not only have the possibilities of value-neutrality itself been challenged effectively, but the demands of institutions (in both the economic and political fields) have required the systematic introduction of evaluations.

One of the standard graffiti of the 1960's was: "God exists - He just doesn't want to get involved". Now we know that even if God is indifferent to values, human beings cannot afford to be indifferent towards the moral effects their political and economic institutions have on the attitudes and inclinations of the people in the relevant systems (See Frohock, F.M., Public policy - scope and logic, Prentice Hall, 1979, Ch. 6).

It is my task tonight to evaluate the political system created and maintained by the National Party government over the last four decades and to establish to what extent this system could be blamed for the strong tendency towards corruption. When we talk about a phenomenon such as corruption, we all know that people in all societies are guilty of it. There can be no doubt that the sinfulness or moral weakness of all human beings is a major reason for it. Even if we agree on this, there is no reason why we should not also look for "system" or "structural" reasons for corruption - especially when corruption suddenly become a rather widespread phenomenon in a specific society.

When we get to the point of evaluating a political system, I am Aristotelian in my approach. Aristotle invested the political order with three responsibilities:

- (a) to inculcate virtue in its citizens,
- (b) to establish or define what the good life (i.e. the common good or the bonum commune) of the city-state or community is or ought to be,
- (c) to promote this (common) "good" of not only a part of

the city-state or nation, but of the city-state or nation as a whole - it has therefore the responsibility of promoting the national interest, the public good (i.e. the good of the whole society), it must promote the social welfare (i.e. the welfare of the total society).

In my evaluation of the South African political system, I will concentrate on these three responsibilities Aristotle invested on a political order:

Firstly, I will concentrate on the ethical qualities of the political system itself, in an attempt to determine its ability to inculcate the necessary virtues in the citizens.

Secondly, I will concentrate on the nature of the decision-making processes to determine its ability to establish or define the "good" in a concrete way, i.e. to determine the system's ability to give content to the concept of the common good (= the national interest) in a satisfactory manner, and

Thirdly, I will concentrate on the way the political system is functioning to determine the extent it succeeds in promoting the "good" of not only a part of the society but of the society as a (collective) whole.

(a) THE ETHICAL QUALITIES OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The kinds of ethical qualities normally expected from a political system in Western countries are, inter alia, values such as order, freedom, equality (or equity), justice (or fairness), maintenance of human rights, openness and respect for the truth.

I am aware of the fact that none of these ethical qualities or values can be attained in an absolute sense of the word. Everything is relative. Some are complementary to each other, others are in conflict with one another. Consequently, important and on-going trade-offs have to be made between them. It is part and parcel of the function of a political system

to bring about this trade-off in a proper and balanced way. The function of a political system is often defined as the authoritative allocation of values.

When we evaluate not only the ethical qualities of the South African political system (i.e. the system constructed by a series of NP governments) but also the way the system allocates values, we are confronted by a rather dismal picture. The whole system is to an alarming extent deprived of almost all the above-mentioned ethical qualities.

The extent of this deprivation of ethical qualities in the South African system is so large that the issue of their relativity and the need for trade-offs between them is not really relevant for the purpose of this paper.

Over the last 40 years, a satisfactory level of "order" and stability was maintained but at the cost of many basic freedoms of the majority of the population. Since township unrest has become endemic it is no longer possible to govern the country without the imposition of a state of emergency.

A serious lack of freedom exists - especially if the freedom of the total population is considered. The majority of the population has only limited freedom of movement, limited freedom of choice as far as residential areas and public amenities are concerned; it has only minimal freedom of entry, and no freedom of participation in the political system, etc.

The situation is even worse when equality (or equity) is considered. The distribution of income and property is extremely unequal. According to the Gini-coefficient, the distribution of income in South Africa is the most unequal of all countries in the world. Three-quarters of the population together possess less than 5 per cent of all property. On top of this, the entry individuals have to opportunities, to education, to the vote, etc. is also highly unequal. For every R1 spent in per capita terms on welfare services (broadly defined) of

Blacks, at least R6 is spent on the welfare services of wealthy Whites! The very unethical nature of this large gap in "welfare expenditures" is so much the more appalling if we consider the discriminatory measures and the structural exploitation of Black people over the last 100 years by both the political and economic systems, and especially in the first 30 years after 1948, by way of statutory discrimination. While the structural inequality and exploitation of the past ought to be used as an argument for confirmative action, structural inequality is perpetuated by the astonishing large welfare-expenditure gap.

Given all this lack of freedom and the extreme inequalities, the system can only be described as unjust, unfair and dehumanising. If we measure the system against the 28 clauses of the Declaration of Human Rights, all but a few are seriously and even blatantly violated. South Africa is one of a handful of countries that did not sign the 1948 Declaration. The fact that it is not only the civil and political rights that are violated, but also the socio-economic human rights - in spite of the relative wealth of the country - gives reason for serious concern.

The lack of "openness" and the curtailment on the flow of information have become alarming features of the system. Over the past few years, the situation has worsened as the "openness" of the system has been undermined even further. We have reason to suspect that the flow of information is not only curtailed but also slanted and manipulated in an enormous "propaganda onslaught". This onslaught not only represents a desperate attempt to justify the system but also to restore the pretence of legitimacy.

As part of this propaganda onslaught, the government has developed a so-called reform rethoric to create the impression that it is concerned about the ethical qualities of a political system such as freedom, equality, participation, human rights, democracy, etc. In this reform rethoric, phrases such as "power-sharing, without domination", "differentiation instead of discrimination", are used freely. Even a declaration of human

rights is currently under consideration. Unfortunately, a large gap has opened up between the government's rethoric and its policy measures, between words and deeds. It has gone completely overboard with its reform rethoric and has in fact debased the original meaning of the relevant phrases. In doing so, the government has not only undermined even further its own credibility but has become guilty of what I like to call "word corruption".

Given the widespread deprivation of the normal ethical qualities of the South African political system, we can conclude that the system has become a corrupt system. Another aim of the "propaganda onslaught" is to perpetuate the National Party's term of office. As I will show below, such actions must be branded as the corrupt action of a corrupt system. Some people even question the legality of the system, claiming that it has become illegal. This is a judicial issue and I am not competent to decide on it. But what cannot be disputed is that the system has lost its legitimacy.

It is unlikely that a system that has become as deprived of ethical qualities and legitimacy can inculcate the necessary virtue in its citizens. It is more likely that it will inculcate unethical attitudes and corrupt actions. We should therefore not be too surprised by the unethical attitudes and inclinations displayed by many people. The government has made a long and systematic leap over four decades to undermine the ethical qualities of the political system. We should therefore not be surprised when many individuals take all kinds of short steps towards unethical and corrupt activities. The government tries to justify its long leap towards an unethical system using doubtful ideological arguments and by debasing the meaning of words. Consequently we ought not to be surprised when individuals also try to justify their selfish and corrupt actions by means of all kinds of ideological and racist rethoric.

A good example of how extreme selfishness can be justified, is the promise of the Conservative Party that not a single

cent of the white man's money will be spent on Blacks after the CP has become the government. What prevents selfish Whites from "plundering" Blacks by employing the argument that they are only taking back the white man's money? When we reach this stage, corruption has permeated the mentality of many Whites.

As I have stated above, it is not possible to determine exactly the extent of the unethical attitudes and corrupt actions that have permeated our society. There can be no doubt that a sound core of integrity still exists in large sections of the whole community. This may be regarded as the fortunate remains of a less materialistic and morally much sounder political and social system. Within the present system important sub-systems can be identified that have fortunately remained entrenched against the corrupting influence of the larger system.

To conclude this section, a wrong system and a wrong rhetoric are in all probability inculcating corrupt values in the citizens. It is sad but true. After sowing the dragon's teeth of selfishness and racism for many years, the government cannot complain when it has to reap the ugly monsters of corruption.

(b) THE POLITICAL PROCESS TO DECIDE ON THE COMMON GOOD

As I stated above, it is the function of a political process to bring about an authoritative allocation of value. To succeed with this in an orderly way, the political process has to reach consensus on a regulative IDEA (or ideas) about core values. The consensus reached could be redefined from time to time.

In a time of war, the regulative idea is to win the war, to protect the sovereignty of the nation, to maintain a certain way of life, certain human values, etc. During a war - but also in peace time - the regulative Idea operates as a strong unifying force, as a magnetic core. All the citizens of a country can relate to such an idea, can orientate themselves towards it, can discipline their individual actions in terms

of such an idea. In a well-integrated society with an effective political system, the regulative idea (or the common good = bonum commune) has an educative and civilizing effect. In such a society people are prepared to sacrifice some of their selfish and individualistic inclinations on behalf of the common good. A strong notion about the public good makes it possible for citizens to develop a sense of social responsibility, a social awareness. Then it becomes possible to develop a social conscience and a social consciousness about, say, the quality of life of the poorest third of the population. A strong notion concerning the public good and a well-developed social conscience are in the long run important ingredients of public morality. Or, to put it differently, a strong notion about the public good is a precondition for a strong conscience about public morality. This is particularly important in a heterogeneous society. For such a society, a clear consensus of the common good is indispensable for nation-building.

The South African political system and the processes operational within it, are deliberately constructed to make it impossible to define the common good of all 37 million people. Apartheid is built on the "divide and rule" principle. This, per definition, undermines the emergence of a regulative idea. The whole purpose of the Apartheid system is to make sure that there cannot emerge a regulative Idea to which all 37 million people can relate. If such a regulative idea should emerge in one way or another, it will throw the Whites in a serious identity crisis. It will immediately destroy their assumption that they are superior human beings and that their interests must have preference over those of blacks.

We are living at the end of the 20th century. In this century, no system can attain legitimacy in the long run if it is not based on a kind of democracy. Over the last 40 years, the Whites have monopolised the process of political decision-making. During the last election only 52 per cent of the White electorate voted for the National Party, which means that in the South African political system at best only 8 per cent of the potential electorate decides what the "common good" or the "national

interest" is. This is an absurd situation. This political process can decide what is the "selective" or group interest of the Whites, or of some of the Whites. But it can never give content to what the common good is, or ought to be.

The limited or selective version of so-called democracy in South Africa cannot decide what the public good of all 37 million South Africans is or ought to be. Consequently, it is nonsensical to talk about the "public good" of 37 million South Africans. A notion about it does not exist in South Africa because it is not possible to give definition or content to it.

The implications of the absence of a regulative Idea about the common good of all 37 million people are quite far-reaching. We also have no unifying symbols in South Africa. In the absence of a regulative Idea and unifying symbols, there is nothing to which individuals can relate. There are no common values to scale down individual selfishness. There is no common cause for which people will be prepared to make sacrifices. There are no common values that can exert a civilizing effect, that can change selfish individuals into more civilized citizens. In the absence of any notion about the public good, it is almost impossible for a social awareness and a social responsibility to develop. Consequently the public conscience of many (White) South Africans is far from what it ought to be. It is also not surprising that Whites display so little social consciousness about the poverty and squalor of millions of Black people.

The fact that no clear notion of the public good (or public interest) exists in South Africa and that the fragmented political process cannot give content or definition to such a notion, has as consequence the existence only of conflicting group interests. This state of affairs has two very negative effects on the public life of the country. Firstly, it destabilises the social order and secondly it undermines public morality.

In the absence of a strong notion about the public good, no magnetic core exists to act as a unifying and stabilising force.

In persisting to use the statutorily defined racial groups as building blocks of the political system, the NP government is in effect building group conflict into the body politic. By persisting with this policy the government is giving structural content to group conflict. By means of its group-based constitutional models the government has institutionalised structural (group) conflict.

The absence of a strong notion about the public good also undermines public morality. The widespread corruption in South Africa is part of a more comprehensive and a multifaced breakdown of public morality. This should not surprise us. Let us instead be surprised that this breakdown of public morality did not occur earlier. In a situation where only group interests exist, it is not surprising that individuals and groups operate as if they are egotistical, calculating machines. The government has created a situation in which a notion concerning something bigger or something more important than groups or individual interests cannot develop. The only thing that counts in this situation is the interests of the individual or the group. This is not only undermining social stability but also public morality. Let us therefore not be surprised about the widespread corruption after four decades of NP government. Let us therefore not be surprised about the many shady dealings, the dishonesty, the decadence and other examples of a deep moral crisis occurring in what are supposed to be respectable White circles in this country.

A discussion about the ability of the South African political system to define the public interest of all 37 million people would be incomplete without a reference to the shocking way in which the National party spokesmen misuse the word "national interest" or "landsbelang" in their propaganda. During the leadership crisis in March, there were often references in the Nationalist Party newspapers stating the importance of the Party's being able to solve its internal problems because the "landsbelang" requires a united National Party. This attitude reminds me of the remark made by Charles Wilson of General Motors when he was appointed secretary of defence in

1940: "I cannot conceive of a conflict of interest with General Motors. What was good for our country was good for General Motors and vice versa".

Let us grant the NP a single point. From the point of view purely of propaganda, it was rather clever and effective of them to play the General Motors trick on the electorate. By equating the National Party with National Interest, they got away with proverbial murder for many years. It is possible to fool some of the people some of the time. It is not possible to fool all the people all the time. To equate NP-interest with the national interest is fundamentally false. It has become part of the Big Untruth. A moment's reflection is enough to convince a concerned person that it is technically impossible for a sectionalistic government such as the NP to know what all 37 million people want and to formulate the true National Interest of South Africa. As long as the NP continues with this big fallacy that it represents and defines "landsbelang", respect for the truth - especially truth about public matters - will be seriously undermined. This cannot but have a demoralising effect on all the citizens of the country. It cannot but undermine any attempt to build public morality. (In an editorial in Die Burger of 10 April it is categorically alleged "dat dit nie in landsbelang is om op loop te sit met gerugte van korrupsie nie". I suppose that when Die Burger writes about "landsbelang" it in fact means the interests of the National Party.)

(c) POLITICS AND THE PROMOTION OF THE "GOOD" OF SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

We defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values. A government needs power. It needs power to do what it is supposed to do. Politics is concerned with means (power) and ends (i.e. public good).

We can classify a political system as a good one when the government uses its power efficiently and effectively to promote the real or authentic interest of the whole society. A bad government is, inter alia, not only an inefficient one, but

one that misuses its power to promote sectional or group interests, one that misuses its power for sectional favouritism, one that misuses its power to prolong its own term of office, and one that misuses its power to "restructure" the system to enhance its own power.

I think we must be careful not to be too utopian about governments. All governments in all the countries of the world are inclined to be bad. The only difference between all the bad governments of this world is that some are worse than others. This difference can, however, be crucial. All governments are inclined to favour that section of the electorate that put them into power.

Very much aware of the inclination of all governments to favour their own supporters, Karl Popper asked the following question in an article in The Economist of April 1988: "How can we best avoid situations in which a bad ruler causes too much harm?"

If there was ever a question relevant to the South African political situation in 1989, then it is Popper's question. The only solution Popper can offer for this question is "a (democratic) constitution that allows a majority vote to dismiss the government". He made this choice not because the (new) majority will usually be right. He made this choice because "this very imperfect procedure (of a two-party democracy) is the best so far invented". He explains his choice with the following sentence: "We do not base our choice on the goodness of democracy, which may be doubtful, but solely on the evilness of a dictatorship, which is certain".

If Popper had been confronted with the so-called democratic system in South Africa, he would in all probability have framed his original question as follows: "How can we best avoid the situation in which a bad ruler - who has already caused far too much harm - be prevented from causing still more harm for not too long a period?" I have little doubt that his answer would be "a democratic constitution that allows a true

majority to dismiss this bad government as soon as possible.

We have said enough to justify the statement that the NP government is not only a bad government but a very bad one. It is a very bad one because it has been doing too much harm to too many people for a far too long period. When considering the ill effects of its too long period in office, we must not forget that the government manipulated the political system in 1956 to make this excessively long term of office possible. When considering the ill effects of this excessively long period in office, we must also not forget the manner in which this government has misused for too long public funds to favour a very small section of the potential electorate, and that to the disadvantage of the majority. And let us also not forget that public money is also used to justify and to propagate party political interests and that it plays an important role in perpetuating an unrepresentative government.

As Popper indicated, all governments are inclined towards favouritism. The NP is therefore no exception. What is exceptional is the very small size of the group or section favoured, the extent of the favouritism, the size of the groups damaged and the extent of the damage and above all the duration of it all. In the South African political system, the favouritism of the NP government is openly directed towards Whites but mainly towards Afrikaansspeaking Whites, while the Blacks have to take the brunt. Four kinds of favouritism towards certain groups or sections of groups can be distinguished: (i) Afrikaner favouritism, (ii) the co-option of Black, so-called Coloured and Asian leaders, (iii) the co-option of large parts of the Englishspeaking business community and (iv) the development of a network of patronage.

(i) Afrikaner favouritism

Almost immediately after the NP took office in 1948, it started to implement a three-prong programme. Additional discriminatory laws were enacted and also extended towards so-called Coloureds and Indians; the bureaucracy was systematically enlarged and additional parastatals were developed to create lucrative

opportunities mainly for Afrikaners; and a variety of welfare (or redistributive) programmes were launched to uplift the mainly Afrikaans-speaking poor-Whites.

During the greater part of the fifties, these measures were easily justified as temporary measures to solve the alleged (undeserved) poverty of the Afrikaners. When this moral justification became very questionable at the end of the fifties, Dr Verwoerd removed almost all moral discomfort by offering an ideological justification in terms of Grand Apartheid, i.e. the idea of separate freedoms and national self-determination for every ethnic group.

After Verwoerd, Afrikaner favouritism was perpetuated not because the Afrikaners were still poor and needed upliftment programmes, but simply because it was then regarded ideologically expedient to continue with it. It was regarded as part of the birth right of Afrikaners in their country of birth. Through this ideological propaganda, it was blatantly alleged that the greater part of the country did not belong to Blacks and that they have no claim to it.

The improvement in the relative economic position of the Afrikaners over the last forty years has been quite dramatic. In 1946 the per capita-income of Afrikaners was less than half that of English-speakers. It is now three quarters of the (now much higher) per capita-income of the English-speakers.

This embourgeoisment of the Afrikaners happened too quickly. To claim that they pulled themselves on their own bootstraps is simply not true. The party political "lever" made a major contribution. Apartheid is, to a large extent, a well-developed welfare-state for Whites and especially for Afrikaners.

The too rapid embourgeoisment of the Afrikaners has had unfortunate side-effects. Not only have the Afrikaners become as materialistic as their English-speaking counterparts, but they have also become spoiled. (To what extent the strong materialistic attitudes of English-speaking Whites can also

be blamed on the NP government is hard to explain. The easiest way to handle this thorny question is to allege that the government has not weakened but strengthened this attitude.)

If the favouritism of the Afrikaners had continued for only 10 or 15 years after 1948, its damaging effects may not have been as great or as permanent. But continuing with it almost unabatedly for more than 40 years, has not only spoiled the Afrikaners but corrupted many of them in at least the following ways. Firstly it turned them into typical nouveaux riche. After being pampered for forty years by the Apartheid government, many Afrikaners today behave in a very avaricious manner. For them, observable status symbols are of the highest importance. But in many cases these symbols only serve the purpose of displaying to the world the typical petit bourgeois-values of a newly rich.

A second unfortunate characteristic of the White nouveaux riche in this country is its inclination to display a very pejorative attitude towards so-called Coloureds and Blacks who have not been as successful as they have been. This is an alarming example of a sick and corrupt value orientation. When displaying a pejorative attitude towards the Blacks, many Whites are either unaware or unprepared to take into account that they were heavily pampered while Blacks have been the victims of exploitation.

A third consequence of 41 years of favouritism is the unreasonable demanding attitude of large sections of the White electorate. The advent of the extreme Right-wing in Afrikaner circles over the past ten years can, to a large extent, be ascribed to the fiscal inability of the government to maintain the high level of patronage.

I am of the opinion that it is wrong to regard the extreme Right-wing in Afrikaner circles as mainly an ideological phenomenon. We must remember that South Africa has been experiencing a decline in its real per capita-income since 1974. During the seventies, it was still possible to shift the larger portion of the "creeping poverty" on to the lower economic strata of

the Black population. But since the early eighties it has no longer been possible for the government to protect all Whites against the impoverishing effects of the low growth rate or to compensate for this impoverishment. When many members of the White electorate - in both the NP and CP circles - put forward their very high demands on government for all kinds of financial support and protection, they display very little (if any) sensitivity of (or awareness for) the alarming poverty of Blacks and are not prepared to consider for one moment the much stronger case of Blacks for financial support. This is the attitude of a people that has not only been spoiled for too long but that has become very much corrupted by it.

As I said above, the most shocking example of a corrupt attitude to life, is the claim about the "White man's tax money". For a people that has been enriched by a corrupt and exploitive system to turn around and talk about "White man's tax money" is indeed very sad.

We can hardly condemn the National Party strongly enough for the abovementioned side-effects of its policy of Afrikaner favouritism. It not only persists with this favouritism in spite of the growing poverty and deprivation in Black circles, but it also persists in using favouritism as a method by which to recruit electoral support. Instead of re-educating the White electorate about the difficult and deteriorating situation in South Africa, the Nationalist government is still using its fiscal authority and its propaganda machines (some supported by tax money and/or bureaucratic favours) to strengthen the racist and ethnic prejudices and the corrupt value orientation of many Whites.

We can make a strong case for a rather close link between prolonged favouritism on the one hand, the decline in economic growth on the other hand, and the sudden emergence of legal forms of corruption. During the period of high growth and artificial Afrikaner upliftment, a very conspicuous rich man's cult developed in White areas. But given the economic

stagnation of the past decade, it is no longer possible to satisfy the spiral of rising expectations generated by this kind of cult. Attempts to meet these spiraling expectations in spite of the poor state of the economy, are undoubtedly an important reason for the existence of legal forms of corruption and for the breakdown of public morality.

It is perhaps not good enough to refer to a rich man's cult. What we are experiencing should be described as a get-rich-quick cult. When some people succeeded conspicuously in becoming rich very quickly, others want to outdo them. I still remember the heading of a report in "Die Burger" : "Disinvestment may not be such a bad thing. It created a large number of instant millionaires". To boast in this way about a high misfortune, is not only in bad taste but reveals a value orientation that puts a high premium on the get-rich-quick cult.

The get-rich-quick cult is perhaps also related to the growing siege-economy. It is as if many Whites realise that the opportunity to make easy money is not going to last for too long. Consequently, they try - in all corrupt kinds of ways - to make as much money as possible as soon as possible. It is as if a kind of Saigon mentality is developing: take the swing as long as it lasts, without any moral scruples. We are witnessing a moral crisis. We are witnessing the break-down of public morality.

The get-rich-quick cult is also in another way related to the growing siege-economy. This kind of economy necessitates the financial rand system. This system offers very tempting, and for many, irresistible opportunities for getting rich quickly.

(ii) Co-option of Black leaders

During the seventies the government started to supplement its policy of favouritism, with a policy of co-option. The motivation for it was an attempt to broaden its support to include other population groups. Over the past 20 years a leader corps of almost all the non-Afrikaner population groups

has been co-opted in one way or another. As one could have expected, this policy of co-option - in all its ramifications - has opened up Pandora boxes of corruption. We must remember that the word "geko-op" and the word "gekoop" in Afrikaans is spelt in almost the same way. Perhaps their meanings in Afrikaans have become almost similar.

The first groups to be co-opted were the Homeland leaders. As is now common knowledge, the price of this co-option has been quite considerable over the years. When it became evident that Homeland leaders regard all kinds of costly gifts and favours as a normal part of their political remuneration, this attitude was justified with the following excuse: We must remember - it was alleged - that these people are part of the African culture and that gifts and favours are regarded in this culture as symbols of friendship and trust. After a while many Whites - and especially those in close contact with the Homeland leaders - discovered that they (some of them also members of the only White tribe in Africa) are also part of the African culture and that they also need gifts and favours as symbols of friendship and trust. When a government creates sub-systems that deteriorate as easily into all kinds of corruption, one should expect that the corruption will become contagious.

I would very much like to know how many cents out of every Rand allocated for Black upliftment actually reached their real target. The Americans have made excellent studies about the bureaucratic waste of welfare spending. I wonder what the bureaucratic and the corruption waste (in both Black and White circles) is of every R1 allocated for Black upliftment. Is anyone prepared to venture a guess about the small number of cents that reached the poor out of every Rand allocated for Black upliftment? Ten, twenty, twenty-five, thirty-five cents ...? I doubt if it can be more.

The tricameral parliament represents a second example of the government's policy of co-option. There can be no doubt that it also opened a Pandora box of corruption. The findings of the James commission are adequate proof of it. Perhaps

the rumours about activities in and around the two new houses justify a few more James Commissions. Surely the chickens of this clumsy system are starting to come home to roost.

(iii) Co-operation between "Pretoria" and "Johannesburg"

A third but more sophisticated type of co-option, is the close co-operation that has developed over the past say 15 years between the mainly English-speaking business community (symbolised by Johannesburg) and the Afrikaner controlled bureaucratic state (symbolised by Pretoria). By the mid-seventies the NP government had been in office for twenty-five years and had built up an overgrown bureaucracy. This apartheid bureaucracy intruded into almost every aspect of the economic and social life. For many years the English-speakers were highly critical of, and even hostile to, this bureaucracy with its red tape and inefficiency. During the seventies, however, the business community apparently came to the hard (if still unpopular) conclusion that the only way to benefit from the bureaucracy was to co-operate with it. During the prime ministership of John Vorster (1966-78) the government embarked on an economic policy designed to decrease South Africa's international dependency. Large subsidies were made available for import substitution while strategic industries, such as Armscor and Sasol, were developed and/or expanded. Large subsidies were also available for so-called border-industries near the Black Homelands. For many of the English-speaking companies these developments created lucrative investment opportunities.

The relationship between the bureaucratic state and the business community developed (or deteriorated) into an 'unholy marriage' in the 1980s. Three factors were decisive in moulding an even closer relationship: the situation of secular stagflation, the growing international isolation (due to boycotts and disinvestment), and the greater power consolidation on both the political and economic levels. Because of this closer relationship, important sectors of the business community have already become so dependent on the privileges resulting from close co-operation with the bureaucratic state that they cannot operate

successfully without these privileges. It is possible that this dependency is also a function of the extraordinary power already concentrated in the hands of the state and of the readiness of the government to (mis)use its power. It seems, therefore, justifiable to conclude that large sections of the English-speaking business community have 'swopped' their traditional explicit hostility towards the NP government for covert, but growing, economic co-operation because it has become far more convenient and more profitable to share in the 'spoils' of government.

The English-speakers had better take a close look at the close co-operation and the greater dependency of the business community on the favours of Pretoria. The real danger exists that they could also become as spoiled and as corrupted by these favours as has happened with many Afrikaans-speakers. Or am I mistaken in using the future instead of the past tense in this connection?

The different forms of favouritism and co-option have been consolidated over the last 10 years into a comprehensive system of patronage. This very costly system of patronage has developed into an important and indispensable part of the P W Botha-style of government. People of all language- and population groups were slotted into the political, the bureaucratic and securocratic networks of patronage if they indicated that they were prepared to be openly associated with a government that has lost its credibility and its legitimacy. But as a trade-off for the privilege of being part of these networks of patronage, it was expected of the beneficiaries to deliver all kinds of services. Because of these networks of patronage many people became puppets on strings. Whenever the puppets did not perform as expected, the strings were pulled in a rather unpleasant way. Good examples of this are "disciplinary" actions against people connected with the media that dared to be too critical against government policy. People in certain inner circles are aware of hundreds of examples of this kind of "disciplinary" action on beneficiaries.

It has become common knowledge that the network of patronage has become very comprehensive and very lucrative. A large crowd of people have in fact become puppets on these patronage strings. Their large numbers and their subservient attitudes are not only a clear indication of how widespread the questionable forms of patronage have become. The subservient attitudes are an alarming indication of how feeble the moral courage of lots of people in high establishment has become. This very conspicuous lack of moral courage is part and parcel of the more comprehensive breakdown of public morality in a country that has lost its direction and purpose.

3. STRUCTURAL CORRUPTION

Let me conclude. In this paper I firstly focussed on the unethical nature of the South African political system. I tried to show that the system is to an alarming extent deprived of the usual ethical qualities of a political system in the Western world. It cannot be expected that this unethical system would inculcate worthy social attitudes in the citizens of the country.

Secondly I concentrated on the complete inability of the system to define and to give concrete content to the public good. In the absence of a clear notion about the public good, the necessary social awareness or responsibility cannot develop. In the absence of a clear public conscience one should expect the kind of moral crisis that has developed. One also should expect the kind of breakdown in public morality that is being experienced at present.

Thirdly I concentrated on the conspicuous ways in which the government has misused not only its political fiscal powers but also the bureaucratic and securocratic systems to favour small sections of the population for decades while the great majority of the population are still the victims of poverty, deprivation and discrimination.

The political system constructed and maintained by the National Party government over the past 41 years can be identified as a corrupt system. The corruption already disclosed and the corrupt attitudes discerned are on such high levels, of such a deepseated nature and ostensibly so comprehensive that we have to identify the corruption as structural corruption. Karl Popper will in all probability regard the way the National Party restructured the system to perpetuate its own term of office and the way the bureaucratic system is often regarded and operated as if it were an extended part of the National Party, as the most important source of this structural corruption.

The methods employed by the National party over the last forty years to justify and to legitimise the unethical political system, served rather effectively as a cover-up for the structural corruption. Perhaps we can coin a concept and refer to these methods as methods of "structural cover-up". When we consider the nature and the intensity of the moral and religious arguments employed by the NP to justify the system, we can discern an interesting pattern: the more the system becomes deprived of its ethical qualities and the more corrupt the structure becomes, the greater the extent to which the NP government and its supporting institutions (like the Afrikaans churches) emphasize the importance of certain "individualistic" dimensions of morality and religion. To put it bluntly: a kind of inverse relationship developed between the upsurge of structural corruption on the one hand and the attitude of moral and religious piety on the other hand. Even the constitutional structure was misused in a rather transparent way to project the impression that the moral purity of the political system of "White" South Africa stands above doubt. While no casinos and brothels were allowed in "White" South Africa - to protect the individualistic morals of all South African citizens - these institutions were allowed to spring up like mushrooms in the so-called independent National States in spite of the fact that their rich customers are in any case mostly White South African citizens.

This kind of hypocrisy and double standards cannot be regarded as incidental. They are part of the desperate attempt to cover up the structural corruption and to lure Whites away towards a complacent feeling of pioussness. The supportive role played by the Afrikaans Churches in institutionalising this moral hypocrisy must not be underestimated. It is also to be regretted most strongly. (For me as an Afrikaner and a Christian the role played by the Dutch Reformed Church in justifying the political system created by the National Party is particularly sad. The NGK understood the structural dimensions of the Poor White problem remarkably well in the 1930's and played an important role in the upliftment of poor-Whites. But unfortunately the NGK became embourgeoised with its members over the last 41 years. As a bourgeois church it has seemingly lost its ability to do structural analysis and its concern for the doubtful ethical qualities and moral effects of the corrupt political system.)

The government cannot get rid of structural corruption by appointing more commissions or by placing more laws on the statute books. The only way to get rid of structural corruption - i.e. corruption inherent in and caused by the political structure - is to get rid of the corrupt system.

Is it possible for the Nationalist government to get rid of the corrupt and exploitive system it has created and allowed to develop? I hope all of you realise that I am only asking a rhetorical question. It is not possible for the Nationalist government to get rid of the system it has created. It has sunk too much ideological capital in it and the leader core has attained too much vested interest in its maintenance. The National Party depends for its very existence on the corrupt system it has created. The NP and structural corruption in its broad constitutional/political/social sense have become synonymous. It would be a contradiction in terms to expect the NP to get rid of structural corruption. The National Party has increasingly become an integral part of the South African political system. The way to get rid of the structural corruption is to get rid of the system. And the first prerequisite

for this is to get rid of the National Party government.

An important reason why the National Party government cannot get rid of structural corruption, is because this government has been trapped in a vicious circle. It is necessary to understand the mutual interaction between the NP government and structural corruption in its dynamic dimensions. As long as the NP remains the government, the growing international isolation will in all probability continue. Consequently, the stagflation, creeping poverty, township unrest and ideological polarisation may be perpetuated and may even become worse. In their turn, these developments (or trends) may provoke an even greater number of influential people and companies to seek protection and/or favours in the bureaucratic and securocratic networks of patronage while the degree of dependency on these kinds of privileges may become much bigger to enable the beneficiaries to maintain their relative economic positions. Both the need and the opportunities for corruption will increase. Moral courage and public morality will decline even further and the NP government will become an even more powerless victim of the unethical racist system it has created. Structural corruption is very much an integral part of a total system in an irreversible process of total decay.