

Interest Groups in South African Politics

P. B. Harris

A Methodological Survey

Political sociology is a new science in South Africa; indeed it is true to say that the subject is almost completely neglected in the Republic, where political studies are still conditioned by historical, legal and philosophical attitudes.¹ Teaching and writing and thinking in political science is still beset with discussions about "sovereignty", "parliamentary supremacy", and "philosophy of law", as may be instanced in the debate over the disenfranchisement of the Cape Coloureds in 1951.²

To those who see political science as a living subject, closely related to sociology, psychology and economics, this is a sad state of affairs, for there are very many other rich fields of political investigation in South Africa. Empirical analysis of political data in the Republic of South Africa could yield many fruitful results, not only for the political sociologist, but also for the serious student of affairs who seeks to understand some of the motivations in one of the most ebullient of modern political situations.

"Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner", may not quite apply in the South African situation, but at least, some need is felt to escape from the perennial and frequently arid discussions about ideology whether emanating from circles close to, or opposed to, the government.³ An understanding of political forces should precede any final, or indeed, interim judgment. There is considerable need to elucidate the ingredients of the South African political formula, to consider problems like those of access and group politics.⁴

Any survey of political behaviour in South Africa, ought to begin with a consideration of the role of pressure groups or interest groups. The term "interest group" is to be preferred to "pressure group" because the latter has tended, *inter alia*, to become a term of abuse, consequently losing some of its scientific potency.⁵ Once the interest group analysis has been made, it then becomes possible to judge the party system, and, finally, the reaction of global governmental authority to the various pressures.

There is no account of the origin of interest groups in South Africa, indeed there is little upon that aspect of behaviour at all.⁶ What is perhaps one of the earliest examples of interest group activity in Natal is given in the *Natal Guide*. A group of so-called businessmen set themselves up in opposition to the proposed introduction of customs duties designed to protect colonial industries in 1867.⁷ None the less, the duties were imposed. Pressure, however, continued and in the year 1884, the victory went to the interest group. The report for the year modestly adds that the Bill was ultimately withdrawn.⁸ Here a pressure group had acted like a "fire brigade", putting out a fire which had already started.

If we scan through the pages of South African history, we can observe the growth of pressures on, firstly, the colonial government and, secondly, the Union government. As the wealth of South Africa became to be revealed, so interests were created which sought, from time to time, to obtain concessions from the various governments of the

day. The missionaries, the gold miners, the diamond producers, the wine, sugar, wool, wattle manufacturers and, later, the industrialists, all these have striven to gain the ear of the government. We are, however, less interested in the history of groups but rather more in their impact on modern South African government, particularly under a Nationalist government, now in its second decade of power. Yet, before studying the characteristics of interest groups as these obtain in the South African scene, it is worth defining interest groups in general terms. An interest group consists of persons of like-mind, who, while refusing to accept direct responsibility for government, will yet make claims upon government for concessions which rebound to their own benefit.⁹ South African interest groups appear to have certain general characteristics which must first be considered in order to understand the peculiarities of the South African scene. In the first place, some types of interest groups are inoperative, restricted, or even forbidden. There is no existence for them, let alone a question of access. The position of trade unions is noteworthy in this context. Trade unions require by law to be registered. Employment itself is subject to restrictive legislation, such as that passed in 1956 reserving certain trades for white persons alone.¹⁰ The policy of job reservation has, however, produced a new set of pressures amongst those who consider the policy to be indefensible.¹¹ From the standpoint of 1965, it would appear that the policy of job reservation would become increasingly subject to these pressures. In the second place, some interest groups are (consciously or unconsciously), influential at the highest levels in the land. In South Africa these are the Dutch Reformed Church and its subordinate committees as well as organisations like the Broederbond—a confidential inner group—devoted to the Afrikanerisation of South African society. At the time of writing, an investigation under the single scrutiny of Mr. Justice Botha, had revealed no subversive threat from such "secret societies" as the Broederbond, Sons of England, and the Free Masons. The clue to the understanding of organisations like the Broederbond is not the ethical issue of whether inner groups should or should not operate at the very centre of power, but whether these, consciously (rather than unconsciously), stimulate certain types of activity of purely governmental nature.¹² There are, of

course, few governmental regimes in which the majority's party machinery has not captured the machinery of central government. Further, most political parties depend upon an inner "ethos" which serves as a cohesive force. Norms must inevitably be established which, independent of any formal machinery or constitution, serve as a set of rules of conduct acceptable to all members. The influence of Eton upon British Cabinets is notorious.¹³ Other similar influences in other countries may be mentioned. The American "New Frontier" of Kennedy was frequently attacked as being composed of Harvard professors, while de Gaulle has not unnaturally chosen sympathisers of a *politique de grandeur* to advise and surround him. Michels apart, from Venice to Viet-nam an oligarchy has traditionally held sway over the minds and actions of the many.¹⁴ The Broederbond (as a pressure group) might really be a "philosophical society" as these were understood in the eighteenth century. Such societies, have, at certain periods, exercised an important influence upon the leadership of political parties. The best example of this is perhaps to be found in the French Radical Party in which the influence of free masonry in the period 1900-1910 and later was very widespread.¹⁵ The Broederbond is effective because it presents a picture of a closely integrated group of about 6,700 self-perpetuating oligarchs, operating through local divisions. The words of Duverger relating to the interplay of ideology and institution, mason and French Third Republic may be useful to throw light on the Broederbond. "It is undeniable that at that time, Masons formed the leading strata of the party, that Freemasonry provided the party with its framework, its unity and its general lines of policy; that its influence was dominant in the Party Congresses, in its Executive Committees, and over its leaders; and that, thanks to Freemasonry, the party acquired an effectiveness and a power such as it has never since recovered."¹⁶

Such a situation cannot be unexpected; indeed, the social psychologist might welcome any form of group cohesion. Those who accept the group theory of politics must applaud those forces which bind the group rather than those which serve to split it, for if the group constitutes the normal mode of activity, one must welcome coherence rather than division. A difficulty arises, however, with a change of government. Given a particular

party ethos a change in government results in a change in ethos—and this may frequently be a disturbing factor. A removal of the Nationalist party from power might easily result in a loss of purpose, until the new party established and sustained its inner contacts. In Britain, however, the public school ethos in the Civil Service, army and public service generally and even in the upper managerial strata of private industry provides a continuity of outlook which even the advent of labour party rule does not impair. The Public schools are still the most influential norm-bearers in British society, and their Old Boys dominate the upper ranks of the Church, the Bench, the City, the Foreign Service, and the Cabinet. Thus is created the Establishment, defined by Christopher Hollis as "a body of people acting, consciously or unconsciously, together, holding no official posts through which they exercise their power, but nevertheless exercising a great influence on national policy." In the third place, interest groups in South Africa have tended to be grouped according to race. This is not surprising, bearing in mind the nature of South African society. People see the grouping in different ways. There are those who would insist on a rigid grouping according to race, in hospitals for instance, but there are those whose object is to break down barriers—associations and clubs within churches for example.¹⁷ These latter, however, might be described as groups promoted "from above". Yet it is significant that even those groups who originate "from below" resolve themselves into racial categories. The blind, for example, will be organised as the Bantu blind, teachers' associations will be, for example, Indian Teachers' Societies, and the handicapped will be Jewish Handicapped. Of course, it can be argued that the categories permitted are already provided, as it were, by nature. Even political systems must reflect social facts.

In some cases, however, it may be a question of the hen and the egg. Would the group voluntarily develop outside the permitted categories in the absence of a firm government directive on the matter? Some indeed must so develop—for example, the animals of all races must necessarily be the concern of the S.P.C.A. Yet what of a motoring organisation such as the A.A. which has a restrictive entry clause based on race?

In this case, protection of the white motorist is prior to protection of the motorist. So it would

appear that South African interest groups are self-generating normally within the racial context. The fourth characteristic of South African interest groups is that they have peculiar problems of leadership. Leaders of South African society are produced roughly as they are in Britain, that is to say, according to the principles of an "Establishment" rather than a "Power Elite".¹⁸ The latter according to C. Wright Mills, constitutes an "elite in irresponsible command of unprecedented means of power and manipulation", and the suggestion is that such an elite is devoid of traditional ethics and values which may, at times, transcend more monetary rewards. South African elites do frequently place traditional ethics and values above the mere pursuit of power. South African myths are as pervading as anywhere in the young countries of the world. Moreover, as White South African society is a society more on the defensive than almost any other society in the world today—hence its leadership problems are that much more acute. Each of the two white groups subscribes to a psychological attitude peculiarly its own, so that decisions are not the result of the pressures and counter pressures which take place between all the forces existing in society. Afrikaner and Briton are separate sociological groups, and at the top of these groups operate respectively, the Broederbond, and the mores of the public school. Just as the Clarendon public schools in England set the tone for English society, so do the South African equivalents for English-speaking South African society. Yet, as R. M. McIver pointed out, "The power a man has is the power he *disposes*; it is not intrinsically his own. He cannot command unless another obeys."²⁰ Obedience is given to both these sets of leaders in Afrikaner and "British" society, though more particularly to the former. Hence, the concept of leadership in South Africa is fundamentally different from that which obtains in the U.S.A. where, it is confidentially said: "No single trait or group of characteristics has been isolated which sets off the leader from the members of his group." Moreover, in South Africa, it does not appear to be true that leadership is a purely "functional relationship which rules out the possibility that all leaders have in common certain 'traits' that set them off from the followers."²¹ In the U.S.A. where this is true according to social psychologists, it is further possible to say that, "Leadership is not a quality which a man pos-

sesses, it is an interactional function of the personality and of the social situation."²² In a British-type society as is English-speaking white South Africa, leadership is a function of status. There are the pseudo-Clarendon type public schools at the lower academic levels, though no such hierarchy compares with Oxbridge at the university level.

A final point of importance is that South African interest groups are, *a priori*, likely to be less successful in their endeavours than are those in most Western European countries. To put this in another way, the counter-pressures, from above, will be such that an interest group in South Africa will find itself faced by special difficulties created by strong or authoritarian government. South African interest groups need not expect to find warmhearted government reaction to their efforts, unless the efforts of the group harmonise with the policies of the Cabinet. Where the pleas of interest groups for concessions elsewhere are met with sympathy, South African ministers take collective responsibility seriously in that they do not countenance any group purely on its own merits. The group conflict is not, in South Africa, a natural process. A *bellum omnium contra omnium* does not apply precisely, because order has already been imposed upon (or accepted) by the group state of nature.

One important question relates to the relationship between the external influence of a country and its ability to contain interest groups. Certain countries which attempt to cut a figure in world politics may be unable to contain internal pressures, as the case of France under the Fifth Republic amply shows.²³ These pressures are primarily economic, and may usually properly be regarded as a sinister influence (just as Rousseau regarded "partial wills"). Before 1939, economic pressure groups were normally regarded as something sinister in the West. It is interesting to see that since the war, such groups (including trade unions), have tended to be regarded as more respectable hitherto. If they do exist, they are usually exhorted merely to refrain from "restrictive practices"—one of the key terms in political discussions in the past decade.

More recently, it would appear that social pressure groups (e.g. the "Establishment"), have been regarded as more significant by students of the subject. In South Africa, interest groups

appear, on the whole, to be contained to an extent unthinkable in France.

In setting out the interest groups themselves, recourse must be had to some conceptual framework. None has been formulated with regard to South Africa, indeed, many even of the discussions of theory in America and Europe have yielded little besides booklists of theories.²⁴

Without wishing to enter into the arguments about theory—whether interest groups are something different from pressure groups, whether categoric groups are non-political, whether the term "Lobby" is a more accurate term than "pressure groups", or any other groups—it is proposed to analyse a few interest groups without any overall attempt to reduce the analysis to a preconceived pattern, though following Finer and Blondel, a distinction will be made between what are called "promotional" and "protectional" interest groups.

Promotional groups seek to appeal to the broad mass of the population, because they have a "cause", most frequently philanthropic or "moral", as Finer says of them, they are, "the societies for improving this and pulling down that". Protective interest groups have the task of assisting members of an association or organisation to improve their material advantages, or, at least, not to suffer diminution in these.

South Africa contains examples of both varieties of group, but because of the racial divisions within the country, it is difficult in fact for promotional groups to make a generalised appeal as might be the case in a relatively more homogeneous population. Protective interest groups are, consequently, more active, as they must be to protect interests in a country whose tendencies towards division have been more marked than the tendencies towards unity. Yet, irrespective of such divergency, in almost any situation, there will be divided opinion regarding means, if not ends. Choosing at random any issue, this might seem to be the case. For example, building a railway line must inevitably involve clashes of interest based on mere economic interest alone which become inevitably more acute if the problems of race are encountered with regard to service or labour. The position was well put in a debate held in the House as Assembly on 27th May, 1963, when the United Party Member of Parliament for Simonstown (Mr. L. C. Gay) declared (of a proposed railway venture),

"in a job of this magnitude, there are naturally many different interests at stake, interests which do not always see eye-to-eye"²⁶ Economic and racial interests abound.

Interests do not have to be created, as it were, in South Africa, they exist *a priori*. Nevertheless, the pattern of powerful interest groups in the economic field so much in evidence in Britain and in the United States continues to dominate the South African scene. There is a geographical variation in the disposition of the groups in the Republic—thus the K.W.V. (Co-operative Wine-growers Association of South Africa Limited), and the various wine interests are relatively more active in the Cape Province than is the South Africa Sugar Association and the attendant sugar interest whose activities are centred more in Natal. It is proposed, therefore, to analyse protective interest groups, industry by industry, in order to assess the extent of their operations in so far as these are pertinent to political science. Before this is done, however, it is worth asking what sort of picture of the South African political scene might be expected to emerge. A study of the activities of the various groups might be expected to produce a picture of Hobbesian conflict, group against group, all involved in a vicious competition for power. Life becomes, in Finer's words, "a rubber-stamping of compromise from the push and pull of a swarm of competing groups", were it not for the compensating factors of constitutional democracy.²⁷

The instinctive reaction of the observer of the political scene in South Africa is to embark upon an examination of ideology. The concept of *apartheid* has become something of an invitation to a slanging match, an ideological shibboleth and this at a time when, as Lipset puts it, "serious intellectual conflicts between groups representing different values have declined sharply."²⁸ What remains in the West are myths rather than profound ideological clashes. "Interests" then, dominate politics, at least as much as ideas, as Home suggested nearly two hundred years ago. In a classic study, Thibaudet had warned however, "No hope for a party which writes on its banner 'interests'. If this is so, then it is reasonable to look at South Africa as a nation which is an exception to the general Western trend. "Ideas" are still as important as "interests", and the *idea* of *apartheid* would appear to dominate the scene to

the exclusion of all else. Values still appear to fly in the face of facts. The Afrikaner clings to his vision of a society of White Christian nationalism, steadfast and unchanging—dogmatic and unyielding.

Political theory in South Africa can spurn sociological evidence. The moral beliefs of the Afrikaner are impervious to such evidence "not because their proponents do not adduce any in support of their position, but because the conclusions argued from the evidence rest upon an interpretation which, if consistently maintained, can be guaranteed in advance to cover any fact which the observer might bring back from the sociological study of the contingent world."²⁹ We may, of course, succeed in controverting such people on grounds of consistency (this has been done time and time again—*apartheid* can be shown not to be working—the influx of Africans to the towns is an unreversible process). Yet political beliefs are, as Runciman points out, not amenable "to the adducing of logical or empirical evidence". Political argument in South Africa, therefore, frequently consists in an exchange of boos and hurrahs. Thus those in the Nationalist Party who cry "save the state" are accused by their enemies of having shouted "destroy the state" before 1948 when the Nationalists came to power.

In understanding the clash between different interests as part of the pattern of normal political activity, one needs to consider some other questions.

Is there firstly an interest of the nation—which all groups might agree to uphold? Is it universally and invariably held, standing apart from and superior to those interests of the various groups included? Will people be content, once they understand, rationally, what is involved, to take what a "given" political situation offers them? Is it possible to find the highest common factor of all the different lobbies in South Africa, the wine "lobby", the sugar "lobby", the gold "lobby", the mines interests, the A.A., the S.P.C.A., not to mention a host of other groups.

The cancellation of the plusses and the minuses might not result in a basic balance or harmony, what Finer calls the "Benthamite" solution. Cohesion depends then on the basic attachment to the nation, more particularly to the South African nation, so that the Benthamite solution is

not particularly appropriate to the condition of South Africa, it is rather the notion of Rousseau that there is a "higher law" than that of merely adding together the selfish interests of competing groups. The addition of such groups would not in itself produce a body politic. It is the search for something greater than the mere synthesis of conflicting components which bedevils South Africa today. Bantu, Boer, and Briton or Indian, these are the basic ingredients within which groups develop and over whose strictly ethnical lives they frequently stray. Superimposed over the question of "what is the state" is the secondary question of "what is the nation". It was Rousseau who saw in the nation the salvation for the disunity and disloyalty of mere sectional interests. The "human atom" could directly understand the call of the nation whereas he despaired that mere aggregates could ever claim separate moral validity. The South African politician makes frequent references to "our nation", "our country", "the volk", as the fundamental authority to which all individuals must and will render allegiance. For White South Africans this is a call which transcends all other divisions, so that they can quite unselfconsciously, defend their country from external attacks, verbal or otherwise, in spite of their antipathy to government politics.

Most interest groups are eager to point out that they are, what they call, "non-political". In this case, it would appear *prima facie*, that the interest group analysis would not belong to political science because the interests themselves disclaim any connection with the political process—recently the South African Chamber of Industries declared itself to be "non-political" as well as the Chambers of Commerce and the Institute of Race Relations.

In fact, groups desire to remain innocent of the political taint, but their interpretation of political is particularly restrictive. They might rightly claim that they are not party partisan, in the sense that they support or finance a particular political party for its own sake. A Bottle Store Association does not a *priori* support, for example, the United Party. Certainly some groups clearly see their salvation in supporting particular parties—particularly in the Afrikaans sector of South African society. "Non-political" can only mean that an interest group does not wish to leave the shadows of pressure-grouping and enter into the sunshine of the party arena. All interest groups want to gain

as much influence in the legislature as they can, which involves the placating, rather than the non-alienation, of the major parties. Thus they will not align themselves permanently with one party as against another. When this happens and such a permanent alliance is effected, then an interest group has become a mere party affiliate. Hence, interest groups must carry on political flirtations on the largest possible scale, or remain aloof from the whole exercise. The alternative to loose living is complete celibacy. A permanent liaison can only lead to a loss of identity. No interest group wishes to nullify its efforts hence, to use the somewhat picturesque words of Finer once again, . . . "All that 'non-political' means in such a context is that an organisation reserves the right to look a gift horse in the mouth and bite the hand of the party that feeds it."²¹

In South Africa groups are more interested in "government" than in party politics. It is within the governmental process that the interest group can most effectively operate. In discussions and deliberations with ministers, one does not face the open glare of publicity and polemics over principles; rather one depends upon gentlemen's agreement, adjustment, compromise and the avoidance of acrimonious controversy.

Government in the abstract is a "neutral", a set of practices and institutions within whose framework "politicians" operate. Its characteristics are anonymity, complexity, elementality and, frequently, delay, the time-curing tranquilliser of bitter conflicts.

Government, the constitutional apparatus of the State, is an impartial arbiter, an administrative mechanism which mediates interests by implementing the demands of various pressure groups. This does not imply that even in general terms government is totally unresponsive to group activity. Indeed it has recently been argued that "it is impartial among a limited number of contestants in a limited conflict between the precise application of a general rule, principle, or policy. Apart from such cases, a government would be regarded as totally unresponsive if it were 'impartial'".²²

While it is true that, in South Africa, even the machinery of government is responsive to its environment in a high degree, it is none-the-less passive in comparison with group activity. It would not, therefore, be correct to see South

Africa as, for example, D. Truman sees the government of the U.S.A. or as J. D. Stewart sees the government of Great Britain as mere administrative bodies which mediate between interest groups by implementing their various demands wherever possible. The South African minister is very well aware of the ethos which he would wish to see established in the Republic.

His image will be that of the Afrikaner National party defended in Parliament as well as outside with complete devotion as the pages of Hansard testify.

In his everyday dealings, therefore, even in purely administrative affairs, the minister of State is responsible in terms of the Afrikaner *Weltanschauung*. None the less, even he, for much of his time is a passive instrument of policy which interest groups will try to manipulate to their own ends. Many complaints will be noted, in the pages which follow, from ministers who feel themselves hounded by one form of pressure after another.

To the student of interest groups there is much to discover in the operations of these social pressures. In South Africa, as everywhere else, interest groups are capable of exerting considerable power through their constant campaigns at the weak spots of the government machine. Yet in South Africa too, the government can frequently exert counter pressure. There are possibly two special reasons for this. In the first place, the central government in South Africa possesses a remarkable degree of cohesion unusual even in a system where collective ministerial responsibility normally exists. It is conceivable that external pressures assist or have even produced the high degree of cabinet solidarity typical of most of the last two decades of South African history. The motto or device of South Africa (seen on all coins), is *Eendrag maak mag* (Unity is Strength).

In constitutional terms, South Africa's unity is produced by the parliamentary system, by the convention that "winner takes all", the leader of the majority party becoming Prime Minister and the party, the guardians of government and state. Hence, while there is a two-party system operating in the Republic, the majority party holds firm control over the machinery of the state as it must do in a parliamentary type system.³³ It might be said, however, that there is no sign of the electorate's wishing to transfer its allegiance to the major

Opposition party (particularly bearing in mind the change in the electoral representation in the Transvaal).

Further, the South African constitutional system appears to be developing a state of mind known to the early Boers as the "laager mentality"—the spirit of union and defiance reminiscent of the old dangerous days when the Boers contrived to defend lives, homes, property and families against all enemies. The combination of this laager mentality (which is Boer) and the principle of collective responsibility (which is British) is a unique mixture of the earthy and the sophisticated which greatly assists governmental cohesion.

The second reason why government in South Africa is able to withstand external social pressures derives from the structure of government itself. The South African governmental system, like the British, has relatively few points of access.³⁴ Indeed, it may be asserted that, the minister of the state is the unique point of access. The pre-eminence of the minister's position is explained in two ways: in the first place, South Africa is a unitary and not a federal state (despite all evidences to the contrary), and there are no subordinate federal units with sovereign powers in duly specified areas of activity, as there are, for example, in the U.S.A. In the second place, there are only seventeen cabinet ministers (as of early 1965) excluding the Prime Minister, many of whom hold an amazing array of portfolios.³⁵ One deputy minister might be responsible (in a deputy capacity) for four "deputy" portfolios.³⁶ This reduces the points of access still further, so that when a Minister says "no", much discussion is perforce terminated which might otherwise have continued for some time.

What caps the whole structure is a remarkable general homogeneity of outlook which persists from the dedicated National party worker at the bottom to the topmost levels of the Cabinet. Backbench revolts are rare if not non-existent. In short, what obtains in the party-government structure in the Republic of South Africa is a nearly complete ideological consensus. In consequence of this, the government is able to present a united front to the world at large outside. Hence any study of interest groups in South Africa will have to record many struggles and many failures and only a few victories.

Some Aspects of South African Interest Groups

Protective groups indeed dominate the scene in South Africa. The Chamber of Mines, for example, has been described as "one of the great influences in South Africa".³⁷ The concessions which such an interest group can obtain from the government may be gauged from the fact that the Chamber of Mines has obtained for itself the particular privilege of special access (a concept beloved by political sociologists), to the parliamentary lobby in Cape Town, so that it may lobby Ministers at any time. This is a privilege which it shares with the Chamber of Industries, the Afrikaansesakekamer and the Afrikaansehandelsinstituut. Lobbying, is of course, a basic right which exists in a parliamentary type of government, but large and powerful interests frequently make full use of it. No doubt this was in President Truman's mind when he made his famous, if somewhat question-begging comment, ". . . we must get politics out of the hands of pressure groups and into the hands of the people".

The clue to understanding what passes for much of the political activity in South Africa, lies in knowing that neither pressure groups nor people are in control. South African Ministers have trained themselves to turn a deaf ear to the pleas which come from many quarters. Sport is an important case in point.³⁸ South Africans are great lovers of sport, but the policy of apartheid in sport in South Africa itself, has not been modified, in spite of moves by the Government, in mid-1967, to relax certain stringent rules about racial mixing in competitive sport outside the country.

Another example consists of television, which has for long been prohibited in the Republic. The campaign to introduce television has been intriguing, in all senses of the word. For a variety of reasons, ideological, economic, and social, the South African government has been implacably opposed to the introduction of television, in spite of the fact that 81 countries in the world now possess this particular means of communication.³⁹ There are technical reasons why television should have not yet been introduced into South Africa, for example, the important consideration that the centres of largest population concentrations are widely dispersed.⁴⁰ Yet one who studies the statements put out by the various Ministers, both in the House and outside, must come to the conclusion that television is withheld from the South African

public for ideological reasons. Television is regarded with grave suspicion by the leaders of Afrikaner thought and opinion. It is seen as a purveyor of a way of life inimical to Afrikanerdom.

The observer from Britain or America must be amazed at the quiescent nature of the South African public with regard to television, or the lack of it, in the Republic. There is no public clamour for television, there is no campaign mounted for its imminent introduction, there is no "lobby".⁴¹ In truth, the campaign of the South African government against television is stronger than the campaign for its introduction. From time to time the question of the introduction of television into the Republic has been raised in Parliament. A thorough discussion took place during a debate on 27th April, 1964.⁴² The Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd, found himself involved in heated exchanges with the Leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff. The Opposition had intimated that the Government wished to protect the Afrikaans press (in which the Prime Minister was a commanding influence), by opposing the introduction of television.

Dr. Verwoerd announced that "it would be the easiest thing in the world for us to use television to enrich our undertakings". Yet he emphatically denied that such a thought had ever sullied the philosophy of the National Party. The Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr. Albert Hertzog, whose right-wing tendencies had attracted considerable comment, and who set himself up against television on grounds of principle, pointed to the deleterious effects of television upon young persons.⁴³ Reference was made to various studies which "proved" his contention. Others, less prone to rely on more academic viewpoints, saw television as a Trojan Horse, bringing highly undesirable influences into the country. The member for Pretoria East, Dr. J. C. Otto, felt that, when television was introduced, "we shall find communists and liberalists sneaking in". He went on to say that, "we dare not sell our national soul and that at the high cost of the introduction and maintenance of television".⁴⁴ These arguments were, however, a useful smokescreen for those who had most to gain from the prohibition of television, among which may be numbered drive-in cinemas and cinemas generally. It was clearly to their

advantage that the Minister repeated, up to 1965, that television was a "permanent non-starter".

The television debate in South Africa, in fact, can tell us a great deal about the nature of the governmental process. A stand may be freely and frequently made on the grounds of principle.

All types of groups, in so far as they exist to exert pressure upon the political process, are of concern to the student of political science. While promotional groups are largely inhibited by race legislation regarding "mixed gatherings", it is clear that there is no shortage of protective interest groups. Yet even Afrikaner groups are not necessarily able to influence government thinking on any and every issue as the cause of the gambling lobby has shown.⁴⁵

Among the more powerful protective groups in the Republic are those connected with the alcohol and hotels lobby. Research shows a vast and intricate network of interests and sub-interests operating in the Cape in the orbit of the grape.⁴⁶ The major interest within the alcohol lobby are the Cooperative Winegrowers' Association (K.W.V.) situated at Paarl, and the various brewers' interests (with the ubiquitous Dr. Rupert in the latest venture, that of introducing Whitbreads into the Republic).

Interests operate on the side of alcohol production which seek the ear of government, but there are extremely tenacious interests on the side of distribution also. The bottle stores and the general liquor distributors have ferociously defended their rights to share in the lucrative trade in alcohol. All potential rivals in the distributive field have been very severely attacked as the interlopers which they undoubtedly were. There is a delicate balance of interest between the forces of production and of distribution, as may be evidenced from the remarks of the then Minister of Justice (Mr. B. J. Vorster), during the debate on the Liquor Amendment Bill, on 10th June, 1963.

The Minister said: "The moment one comes forward with such a liquor Bill there are so many conflicting interests which one has to reconcile with one another, conflicting interests which very often do not even want the sun to shine on the others".⁴⁷ He discounted the view that the Government was the tool of the wine farmers of South Africa.⁴⁸ He went on to castigate "certain liquor interests", in particular, the Bottle Store Owners' Association, for their methods, including the use

of circulars, allegedly to misrepresent the Government's case.

As the debate proceeded, various other interests were revealed, *inter alia*, the hotels, the catering trade, temperance societies, church interests, breweries, bankers, and industrialists of all sorts. Certain promotional groups, in particular the temperance societies, showed themselves just as eager to press the Minister to their way of thinking as did the more obvious protective groups.⁴⁹ One especially interesting alliance is that established between the Dutch Reformed Church and the South African Temperance Alliance which proved to be embarrassing to the government.⁵⁰

A South African interest group of the highest importance is the railway interest. Giving employment as it does to 22,000 workers, it is, in fact, an enormous monopsonist. Yet to question the efficiency of the South African railways is regarded as an unpatriotic act. Such critics are roundly condemned in Parliament and are shown for what they are. Many M.P.'s. of course, have railwaymen as voters and they sometimes frame their speeches with that fact in mind.

The railway interest groups were described in one Sunday newspaper as a "state within a state", and as the "railway empire". The railways in South Africa clearly have the ear of government, they are, indeed, constitutionally entrenched, and the General Manager is one of the two public servants in South Africa who cannot be retired, except by Resolution of Parliament.⁵¹

Opposed to the railway interest is the Road Federation itself, the protective organ of the road, interests, the Federated Chambers of Commerce (in so far as this was free to express an opinion), and those parts of business which are sympathetic to the roads case. There are many facets to this conflict, economic, social, and political, but the fundamental issue was seen as being "freedom" (represented by the roads), as against "monopoly", represented by the railways. The railways have resorted to many different types of tactics in order to ensure the maximum number of difficulties for road competitors. Lobbying over the road-rail controversy took on the nature of a crusade, as the railways interests pleaded "national interest" and depicted the roads group as "un-South African".

The railways have had the ear of government for a long time, but the margarine lobby has not been

so fortunate.⁵² In the case of the conflict between margarine and butter, the margarine interests have been singularly unsuccessful. According to an Act passed in 1918, the sale of margarine containing any milk, fat, or colouring matter is prohibited.⁵³ Hence the butter producers, the South African Dairy Industry Control Board, have successfully managed to frustrate much potential competition from margarine manufacturers.⁵⁴ The Dairy Control Board may be regarded as the voice of the Dairy lobby, and one which has won a successful battle against the encroachments of margarine. In this context of South Africa, it is perhaps worth remarking that something "coloured" should make headway as against something "white".

There is another interest in the Republic which found itself embarrassed in 1966. In late 1964, the Parity Insurance Company went into liquidation and many motorists found themselves to be lacking the legal requirement to be covered against "third party" claims. The Government brought out a Bill in 1966 proposing that only 11 companies should be permitted to deal with the business of Third Party. Accusations were made in Parliament that the Minister had selected his political friends in the insurance world to run his scheme. Moreover, it was alleged by Opposition M.P.'s. that these selected insurance companies had been guaranteed a present of R2,000,000 of public money without any fear of loss. The excluded insurance companies lobbied intensively but without much general success. The Bill became law.⁵⁵

The suggestion is sometimes made that the Government in South Africa has favoured its own political allies and associates on every possible occasion. Representative M.P.'s. and sponsors of the wool lobby actually admitted that Government price policy had prevented the wool farmer from becoming a "poor white".⁵⁶ By way of gratitude votes were presented to the National Party. Those who gained diamond and fish concessions in South West Africa were similarly grateful.⁵⁷

Evidence about South African interest groups suggests that what above all is required is an understanding of the proper relationship between business (for that is where the interest groups are), and Government. Granted, the granite-like desire of South African government to resist encroachment upon its political aims, what, we may ask, can business do to deter or deflect any

unwelcome legislation?. The further question arises, does the political dog wave the economic tail? Can the Government of South Africa contain economic forces, or are these irresistible in the long run? Those who wait for a Marxist-type alignment of economic and political forces assume that the economic facts of life are making nonsense of preconceived social ideology. The usage of job reservation determinations has been frequently cited as an example.⁵⁸

The relationship between business and government is clearly equivocal. While Business is afraid that the Government will "interfere", it is not averse to using Government as a crutch, and as a concession-granting machine.⁵⁹ Business is quite prepared to work as closely with the Nationalist Government as is necessary and desirable.⁶⁰

A government contract may make or mar a business concern, yet Commerce and Industry is prepared to live out its complicated existence in constant dread of government.

To what extent do interest groups constitute a meaningful opposition in South Africa today? Clearly those groups which have the ear of the Government are no opposition at all, and these are, consciously or unconsciously, allies of authority. As for the groups (from student groups to Defence and Aid) which, consciously or unconsciously find themselves in opposition, their activities are kept under constant surveillance. Yet what must constantly surprise the outside observer is the manner in which potential opposition groups fail to form in spite of the strength of the convictions of their advocates. What indeed is surprising about South African life is its lack of spontaneity. In the field of popular entertainment, it is truly remarkable to note the way in which young people accept restrictions. Quarters close to the government maintain a constant hostility to certain modern styles of popular entertainment, particularly when these are associated with supposedly degenerate outside influence. The Beatles, as a popular singing group, were banned from the air on account of a supposed remark by one of their number which was taken to be blasphemous. Their music has not been heard since 1965. Again, great hostility has been shown towards the modern trend to folk-singing, on account of its association with the American Civil Rights movement. While there is no lack of popular music heard on the S.A.B.C., one has the impression that the govern-

ment will strike (sometimes logically, sometimes not) at any agency which it feels to be inimical to

its interests. The Government counter presses the pressure group.

NOTES

1. An examination of the syllabuses for political science in the various universities of the Republic shows that, of seven universities which offered the subject in 1963, not one required a knowledge of political behaviour, and all required some coverage of political philosophy, usually with a historical bias.
2. S.A. 428 (A.D.) Harris versus Minister of Interior (1952). See R. Kilpin, *Parliamentary Procedure in South Africa* 3rd ed. (1955), p. 140 f.n. 29. for detailed (legalistic) bibliography.
3. Dr. C. de Wet estimated in a debate in Parliament, that, in his experience, 85% to 90% of all bills were non-contentious in any case. See Hansard (Republic of South Africa), House of Assembly, Col. 6690 (No. 18) 1963.
4. South Africa could benefit from studies like those made in Great Britain by S. E. Finer, Jean Blondel, Richard Rose and Robert McKenzie, and in the U.S.A. by writers like David Truman, Edward Shils, V. O. Key—and above all the pioneer of all these studies, Arthur Bentley.
5. Natal doctors were described as a "cheap (sic) pressure group", over their efforts to secure Addington Hospital, Durban. The term "cheap" as well as qualifications like "they were only a pressure group" suggests a false distinction between legitimate political activities and improper political activities.
Clinton Rossiter's words on the subject are interesting: "We call them 'interest groups' when we are feeling clinical, pressure groups when we are feeling critical, and 'lobbies' when we are watching them at work in our fifty-one capitals." *Parties and Politics in America* (Cornell) 1960, p. 21.
6. An interesting exception to this is a short piece by E. G. Brookes under "Parties" in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* where an attempt is made to link up social and historical forces with party alignments in South Africa up to 1933.
7. The Official Natal Guide, 1963 edition, p. 177.
8. *ibid.*, p. 177.
9. S. E. Finer *Anonymous Empire*. Second edition, 1962, p. 76, who abstracted the term from the *Financial Times*, 29th April, 1957.
10. See Hansard, 3rd June, 1963 (Assembly), cols. 7109-12 for details of registered unions.
See also D. Hobart Houghton, *The South African Economy*, p. 147 for an explanation of the relevant legislation.
11. Opponents of job reservation include the Progressive and Liberal parties, as well as the more obvious interest groups (the non-European trade unions (South African Congress of Trade Unions)). The Association of Chambers of Commerce, opposes the policy of job reservation on economic grounds. A particular industry's problems in this regard are very clearly set out in the *Memorandum to the Commissioner of Enquiry into the Hotel Industry* (1963) Part I, paras. 20-35.
12. For example, how far would a "confidential" pressure group cause particular types of legislation to be enacted.
13. See H. Laski, *Studies in Law and Politics* (1924), and Sir Ivor Jennings, *Party Politics*, Vol. III. A thorough survey is W. L. Guttman, *The British Political Elite* (1960) and also in H. Thomas (ed.) *The Establishment* (1959).
14. R. Michels *Political Parties* (ed. S. M. Lipset, 1962), *passim*, and the critique by C. W. Cassinelli in *American Political Science Review* XLVII, pp. 773-84.
15. On *societies de pensee* see M. Duverger, *Political Parties* (1954), p. 149, and on the Radicals see F. de Tarr, *The Radical Party* *passim*.
16. Duverger, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
17. One cause celebre involved a European man, injured in an accident who was taken to a non-European hospital (King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban). One European lady wrote personally to the Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd, protesting against this transgression of the principles of apartheid.
18. For the distinction between an Establishment and a Power Elite, see Jean Blondel, *Voters, Parties and Leaders* (1963) chapter 9, and see C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (1957), p. 277. See also A. Sampson *Anatomy of Britain* (1961), and B. Inglis, *Private Conscience—Public Morality* (1964).
19. Clarendon public schools are the nine schools—Eton, Rugby, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, Merchant Taylors', Shrewsbury and St. Paul's—which were the object of a Royal Commission headed by Lord Clarendon in 1864. See Blondel, *op. cit.*, p. 46. The "public schools" in South Africa are, *inter alia*, Michaelhouse, Hilton in Natal, Bishops in the Cape.
20. R. M. McIver, *The Web of Government* (1947), pp. 107-8.
21. Truman, *op. cit.*, p. 189, quoting W. O. Jenkins: "A Review of Leadership Studies with Particular Reference to Military Problems", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (January 1947), p. 74-5.
22. Cecil A. Gibb "The Principles and Traits of Leadership" *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (1947), p. 284.
23. A short account of de Gaulle's conflict with pressure groups may be seen in D. Thomson's *France since Evian*, reproduced in *The World Today*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (1964), particularly the remark "The Gaullist State still has a considerable way to go before the President's authority is asserted over the sectional interests which he claims to override." *op. cit.*, p. 195.
24. The greatest problem for interest group theorists has been to find a universally acceptable theory which will take account of and allow for the collection of data. As each new case-study is made, the process of theorising becomes more difficult. Nevertheless, it must be made, in order to give coherence to case-studies.

25. Blondel, op. cit., pp. 14-16 and pp. 160-1. H. Finer in *Anonymous Empire*, p. 112 and also the latter's article *The Lobbies in The Twentieth Century*, October 1957 (Vol. 162, No. 968), p. 372, where he defines the term 'Lobby' "generically" . . . "it means all associations in so far as they go in for influencing public bodies", but yet distinguishes between the two sorts, those which "promote" and those which "protect". A. Potter, *Organised Groups in British National Politics* (1960) distinguishes similarly between *Spokesman Groups* and *Promotional Groups*.
26. Hansard, Col. 6674, 27th May, 1963.
27. Finer, op. cit., p. 37.
28. S. M. Lipset, *Political Men*, Chapter XIII, *The End of Ideology?*
29. W. C. Runciman, *Sociological Evidence and Political Theory in Philosophy, Politics and Society* (Second Series 1962) p. 36, ed. P. Laslett and W. G. Runciman.
30. Finer, *Anonymous Empire*, p. 40.
31. op. cit., p. 44.
32. R. S. Downie, *Government Action and Morality* (1964), p. 64 has a footnote in which the author confesses that he regarded government as an "impartial arbiter" but was persuaded to the viewpoint quoted by discussion with Professor Graeme Moodie of Glasgow University.
33. The essential requirement for a two or more party state is that there should be a pendulum permitting a swing from one party to another and that it should swing. See J. P. McIntosh, *The British Cabinet* (1960) and an article in *The Statist*, June 14th, 1963, by William Pickles. It might be said that South Africa is becoming a "voluntary" one-party state because there is no sign of that essential feature of two-party government, viz. that there should be a pendulum and that it should swing, albeit slowly.
34. The concept of access, now firmly established in political behaviour analysis has been defined by Truman, op. cit., p. 264, as "the facilitating intermediate objective of political interest groups".
The concept of access involves the notion that a complaint is not effective unless the person capable of remedying (or assisting in the remedying of) the complaint is accessible.
35. Examples are the portfolios of Posts and Telegraphs and Health of Bantu Education and Indian Affairs (as distinguished from Bantu Administration and Development). Also bracketed together are Coloured Affairs, Community Development and Housing.
36. He was the Deputy Minister of the Interior, of Education, of Arts and Science, of Labour and Immigration.
37. G. Carter, *The Politics of Inequality*, p. 171. The Chamber of Mines has, however, never been successful in breaking the industrial colour bar.
See *The Political Economy of South Africa* (1967), p. 7.
38. South Africa is not a participant in the Olympic Games.
39. See Hansard (House of Assembly) Question XI Government Policy Against T.V., Column 17, 19th January, 1960.
40. Dr. Verwoerd as Prime Minister, assessed these points in Parliament on 9th March, 1960.
41. In January 1966, the author interviewed the United Party M.P. for Orange Grove who has taken a particular interest in the question of television, and who said that the trouble was that there was, in South Africa, no television "fobby".
42. Hansard (S.A.), Columns 5019-21, 27th April, 1964.
43. Hansard (Assembly).
44. Hansard (Assembly) No. 17, Column 6517, 22nd May, 1963.
45. Some government supporters (Afrikaners as well as members of the Nationalist Party) attempted to lobby the government regarding the institution of a national lottery and legalised gambling. They were met with by a personal rebuff by the last Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd.
46. One M.P. declared that the "'wine lobby' . . . is . . . a lobby more powerful than the oil lobby in Washington".
47. Hansard (Assembly) No. 20, Column 7533, 10th-14th June, 1963. The speech was delivered in Afrikaans.
48. He also said: "It is true that it (the Bill) will rebound to their benefit. I make no apology for the fact."
49. Hansard, op. cit., Columns 7624-25, and, in Committee, Columns 7793-7974.
50. The Annual Report *South African Temperance Alliance*, 1964, gives indications of the close liaison between the two organisations.
51. Many stories are told of the way in which railway authorities move railwaymen into strategic areas in order to tip the balance of votes in favour of the National Party. The railways were being used as a means of trying to solve the "poor white" problem, providing a safe employment for those who could have most to fear from a lowering of the colour bar.
52. G. Marais, *Butter and Margarine, a comparative study* (1967).
53. *Dairy Control Act* as modified in 1918, 1930 and 1950.
54. In the mid-part of 1967, the margarine companies retained the services of a firm of public relations as a prelude to pressing the claims of margarine amongst Ministers and M.P.s. In 1967, Professor G. Marais of Pretoria University produced his book op. cit. which argued the case for a removal of restrictions on the sale of margarine, mainly from social and economic standpoints.
55. The details may be read in Hansard (Assembly) (2) and (3) of 1966.
56. Hansard (Assembly).
57. See *Newscheck*, 1st July, 1966, for details of the career of one important Cabinet Minister in this connection.
58. Exception to job reservation provisions have been made in many sectors of the economy, particularly in the building industry.
59. The words of Lord Snow in *Corridors of Power* are interesting in this concept . . . "There are always going to be some government contracts. For some of our friends that carries its own simple logic." p. 200.
60. Miss G. Carter stated that business was moreover "quite ready to work closely with the Nationalists whether with the Hertzog or Malanite variety." op. cit.