

Civil war looms in South Africa, despite the new constitution

by David Hammer

After intensive, months-long negotiations, spokesmen of the ruling National Party, the African National Congress (ANC), and various smaller parties on Nov. 17 concluded a final agreement on a new, one-man, one-vote constitution for the Republic of South Africa. On April 27, national elections will take place, which the ANC is widely expected to win, but it will begin governing on Dec. 6, through the "Transitional Executive Council," a de facto national unity government with the ruling National Party. A five-year transitional period will follow the election, during which a new, permanent constitution will be drafted by the Parliament elected in April.

The interim constitution eliminates the 10 homelands and nominally independent black states established in the apartheid era, and divides the country into nine new states. The central government has wide powers to intervene in the states, and any questions of interpretation will be settled by the new Constitutional Court, appointed by the President.

Though applauded by the world's news media, the "new South Africa," as demonstrated by the accompanying interviews, is plunging toward brutal repression at minimum, and more likely, civil war.

Some of the country's key constituencies boycotted the constitutional talks, including the Inkatha Freedom Party, which represents most of the country's approximately 8 million Zulus, and the Conservative Party and the Afrikaner Volksfront, representing much of the Afrikaner population. These organizations, together with others, had demanded that a permanent constitution which would guarantee strong regional powers be drafted first, with national elections to follow afterwards.

The fear of the Zulus, the Afrikaners, and many other whites and blacks is that without such safeguards, the ANC, which is dominated by the hard-line South African Communist Party, would, once in power, carry out the sort of imprisonment, torture, and murder that it has admitted conducting against its own members in concentration camps in Angola, Tanzania, and elsewhere during exile.

As the enforcers of International Monetary Fund austerity, the ANC will have to repress even its own base. This was acknowledged by the pro-ANC *Financial Times* of London on Nov. 29: "Popular expectations will soon strain the intentions of even the most benevolent government; at that point,

it must either give in to populism, or suppress it. The latter now seems most likely; the new South Africa will start with a hefty dollop of the old."

The April elections themselves will be fraudulent. Even U.S. Project Democracy spokesman Patricia Kiefer of the South Africa Project of the National Democratic Institute admitted to the *Washington Post* on Nov. 29: "I don't think by any standard it is going to be free and fair—there's too much intimidation and violence already in the political culture."

The accompanying interviews are from two of the country's key political figures. Each highlights the urgent necessity of a large-scale, genuine economic development program for South Africa if it is to have any chance of avoiding disaster.

Interview: Mwezi Twala

S. African 'solution' is a U.S.-made sham

Mwezi Twala is a former African National Congress (ANC) commissar, and now the chairman of the Returned Exiles Coordinating Committee, comprising many former ANC members who were put through ANC torture and detention camps in Angola and elsewhere. He is also the regional organizer for the Vaal Triangle region (south of Johannesburg) for the Inkatha Freedom Party. He was interviewed on Nov. 29.

EIR: Could you give us your assessment on how things stand in the country after the agreement on the interim constitution and the scheduled April 27 elections? According to the world's news media, this inaugurates a great new period of freedom, prosperity, and so forth for South Africa. How do you see it?