TITLE: Post Apartheid Politics and Issues of Race - The Views and Position of Political Parties in South Africa on the Crisis in Zimbabwe.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:..

Date:

ABSTRACT

Race has been used as an instrument of domination and separation of the South African population for a long time. The dawn of the democratic dispensation in 1994 marked a shift from the policy of racial separation to the creation of the non-racial democratic South Africa. However, political parties in this country have constantly re-politicised race in the post apartheid era mainly for political gain. The purpose of this study will be to describe, explain and analyse how political parties in South Africa use the crisis in Zimbabwe to racialise politics in this country.

The study will show that the dilemma facing political parties in South Africa is that they cannot avoid focusing on racial issues. The focus is on four main political parties, the ANC, the PAC, the NNP and the DA. The study specifically looked at the following issues in Zimbabwe: the Land crisis, the 2003 March presidential elections and the economic crisis to see how they have influenced political discourse in South Africa. As anticipated, predominantly black parties have shown some empathy with Robert Mugabe's government, while predominantly white parties have called for a more confrontational measure against Mugabe's government. Nonetheless, this study found no conclusive evidence to suggest that the crisis in Zimbabwe has fuelled race conflict in this country. But that race is politicised by parties in South Africa for political gain.

Opsomming

In Apartheid-Suid-Afrika was rasse verskille gebruik as 'n instrument van onderdrukking en skeiding van die bevolking. Met die totstandkoming van demokrasie in 1994 het 'n verskuiwing van 'n rasse-beleid na 'n nie-rassige, demokratiese Suid-Afrika gelei. Politieke partye politiseer egter steeds ras in post-Apartheid Suid-Afrika vir politieke gewin. Die doel van hierdie studie is om te beskryf, verduidelik en te analiseer hoe politieke partye die krisis in Zimbabwe gebruik om politiek in Suid-Afrika steeds gebonde ras te hou.

Hierdie studis al aandui dat politieke partye in Suid-Afrika nie die fokus van ras identiteite kan vermy nie. 'n Moontlike rede hiervoor is dat politieke partye in Suid-Afrika 'nsolidariteit met hul kiesers wil behou. Die studie fokus op vier van die mees prominente politieke partye in Suid-Afrika naamlik: ANC, PAC, NNP en die DA. Om elke party se stand-punt op hierdie onderwerp te verstaan, gaan die studie fokus op die volgende punte in Zimbabwe: grondhervorming, die 2003 Presidensiële verkiesing en die impak wat die ekonomiese krisis in Zimbabwe op die politieke gebied gehad het.

Soos verwag, het partye met histories oorheersende swart oortuigings empatie met Robert Mugabe se regering betoon. Mugabe word gesien as 'n slagoffer van onsimpatieke wit settelaars wat vasklou aan hul eertydse voorregte. Terwyl oorwegende wit partye vra vir strenger optrede teenoor die regering van Robert Mugabe. Nie te min, het hierdie studie geen uitsluitende bewyse gevind wat aandui dat die krisis in Zimbabwe konflik rasse in Suid-Afrika aangespoor het nie. Dit is egter belangrik om in ag te neem dat die politisering van ras grootliks deur partye gebruik word om ondersteuning te werf.

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ACRONYMS:

ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian Peoples Organisation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
DP	Democratic Party
NP	National Party
NNP	New National Party
MDC	Movement of Democratic Change
NLM	National Liberation Movements
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.

OPENING REMARKS

Politicisation of race has been the main issue in South African politics for a long time. The dawn of the new South Africa in 1994 meant that race was no longer to be employed as a means to deny other groups access to resources as the apartheid regime did. Subsequently, racially based laws have been repealed. However, Wilmot and Lever (2002:53) argue that what remains is the phenomenon that some scholars referred to as "modern racism", which include sporadic everyday incidents and rear-guard actions in association and community life. Everyday in South Africa we are confronted with the issue of racism. Barney Pityana concurred with the above notion when he said that "racism confronts us daily in news reports and in the experiences we have in our neighbourhood and in the market place" [www.aardvark.co.za/cgi-bin/cb/AfricaSearch.cgi, 14 October 2003].

However, it is very difficult to ascertain exactly how insidious this racism is. Nonetheless, Wilmot and Lever (200:53) warned that we would be eluding ourselves if we conclude that racism and racial hostility have disappeared in South Africa. As a result race became the main issue in South African politics in 1999 during the campaign for elections. Most political parties employed race as a means to gain support. In reference to the above statement, Taylor and Hoeane (1999: 136) argue that prior to the 1999 election there was a need to strategise by opposition parties in terms of the logic of racial arithmetic. In turn the 1999 election results were widely interpreted to conform to racial and ethnic bloc voting. Parties such as the New National Party (NNP) and the Democratic Party (DP) intuitively worked with a model of party identification, which saw politics as being determined on a group basis. Both parties prioritised their campaign issues in relation to how particular issues

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correlate to the interests of their specific racial and ethnic group support (Taylor and Hoeane, 1999: 136).

Opposition parties in this country framed issues in such a way that they became racially informed. As a result concerns of the white South Africans-crime, policing, and public order, were placed at the forefront, closely followed by the promotion of the interests of other minority groups, Coloureds and Indians (Taylor and Hoeane, 1999: 136).

The African National Congress' (ANC) two-third majority was used as a means to gain support from minority races who feel marginalised under the ANC led government. The DP with its policy of exclusion consciously appealed to those afraid and pessimistic about the future under the ANC led government. The implication was that the ANC could not be trusted as it strived for the promotion of the interests of black South Africans (Taylor and Hoeane, 1999: 136). However, even inside the ANC race is the problem. Rafiq Rohan (Southern Africa's Muslim Newspaper, 08 August 2000) wrote that there are individuals inside the ANC who come from an Africanist background and who remained in South Africa during the struggle years, who have not moved from the position of ensuring that the ANC is seen to represent the aspirations of the majority black membership organisation.

Therefore, suffice to note that the issue of racialisation of politics is not confined to the opposition parties only. The ANC has been accused of playing on the racial divide. The observation by the South African Commission on Human Rights (HRC) is that "levels of racial prejudice are entrenched in all sectors of South African society" [[www.aardvark.co.za/cgi-bin/cb/AfricaSearch.cgi, 14 October 2003]

Tony Leon also concurs with this notion when he argues, "Philosophically and practically we are a nation that is struggling to overcome the legacy of our racist past" (Leon, 1998: 176). However, Leon only accuses the ANC for

not doing enough to arrest the situation. Consequently, the DA accuses the ANC of delaying the de-racialisation of the South African nation, while the ANC sees this criticism by the opposition as being racially motivated. This is the new dilemma facing South African politics now, political parties accusing each other of being racist when they do not share their sentiments.

The issue of politicising race became more apparent again when the crisis in Zimbabwe erupted. As a norm in South African politics currently, political parties could not agree on how the crisis should be handled. Consequently, the crisis in Zimbabwe has been used to racialise politics in South Africa. The crisis facing Zimbabwe is a genuine one, it is a tragedy that transcends race, however, political parties in this country have failed to see that.

The Zimbabwean crisis began when Robert Mugabe's government confiscated land from white commercial farmers for redistribution to black Zimbabweans. What followed was a bitter struggle between white farmers and the government because farmers did not want to hand over their land to the government without compensation. The outcome was that most farmers were physically attacked and were forcefully evicted from their farms. Mugabe's argument according to Meredith (2002: 121) was that it was unfair to black Zimbabweans that most of their arable and ranching land was still in the hands of their erstwhile colonisers, while the majority of his people still live like squatters in their own God-given land". The outcome, therefore, was the outbreak of massive violence and gross violation of human rights.

As the crisis in Zimbabwe unfolds, South African political parties were constantly levelling accusations and counter- accusations against each other. On one hand predominantly black parties are reluctant to criticise Mugabe and his government, while on the other white parties are vehemently criticising him. The crisis in Zimbabwe is seen as a black versus white issue.

The main reason for this is that Zimbabwe, like South Africa has a history of racial oppression.

This study seeks to investigate how political parties in South Africa interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe. This study is motivated by South African political parties' stance that demonstrated an inherent bias on how the crisis in Zimbabwe should be settled. Consequently, the ANC led government is being accused of failing to adopt strong measures against Mugabe's regime. According to Raymond Louw (2001: 07), the ANC has failed to act despite appeals from all quarters for South Africa to adopt a firm and strong critical stance towards the disastrous policies of Mugabe.

As noted above President Mbeki has been criticised, both here and abroad for his stance on the crisis in Zimbabwe. With the magnitude of the turmoil prevalent in Zimbabwe at the moment, more and more people in this country expect South Africa as the most important country in the Southern African region to play a leading role and condemn the government of President Mugabe. Political parties have expressed disappointments about what they termed President Mbeki's silent diplomacy. To most political parties silent diplomacy is detrimental to this country and the region as a whole as it has failed to produce desired outcomes.

Most South Africans more especially the white farmers are very vocal and critical of the lack of urgency on the part of the South African government in as far as Zimbabwe is concerned. They (farmers) have accused the ANC led government of failing to intervene in Zimbabwe to protect white farmers who are being victimised, harassed and forcefully evicted from their farms by the supporters of ZANU-PF.

President Mbeki's response has been that, South Africa would not dictate policy to Zimbabwe, neither will it be "dragooned" into overthrowing President Mugabe (Sunday Times, October 2002). President Mbeki defended

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his country's stance by levelling counter accusations against the whites in this country accusing them of being racist for thinking that the ANC government does not care about white farmers in Zimbabwe. Mbeki's stance is that the crisis in Zimbabwe should be settled by the government of Zimbabwe and the British government. He also blamed the western countries for exacerbating the crisis in Zimbabwe. He stated that the notion by the West that "the worst crisis in the world is Zimbabwe" is not helping to solve the nation's problems (Sunday Times, October 2002).

Based on the above interpretation, Corrigan (1999:103) argues that "the president finds it difficult to accept that conflicting political views are not the product of narrow self-interest, of racism or hostility to the ANC and the government". Nonetheless, President Mugabe is seen by most black people as attempting to redress the imbalances in that country which emanated as a result of years of injustice and oppression. The catastrophe in Zimbabwe has been turned into a race war. Political parties such as the PAC and AZAPO openly embrace Mugabe, while on the other hand the predominantly white parties like the DA and the New National Party are backing the white farmers.

Alluding to the crisis in Zimbabwe the president of the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU) Mr Gert Ehlers stated, "What Zimbabwean Mugabe is currently doing to white farmers is in the least shocking, criminal and deplorable, it is not only racist tyranny and callousness but speaks of absolute foolishness and lack of responsible leadership". (Mail and Guardian, May 2002). This shows a distinct understanding and interpretation between white farmers and predominantly white parties on one hand of the crisis in Zimbabwe, and the predominantly black parties on the other. The crisis shows that black parties have their own understanding of the crisis and how it should be solved while white parties also have their own interpretation.

The dilemma facing this country is that race continues to dominate politics in the post apartheid South Africa. The South African government in an attempt to allay white farmers' fears stated that South Africa is a democratic country where the rights of every citizen is protected in the constitution. The government went as far as assuring white farmers that it would not expropriate their land without compensating them and that a system of "willing seller willing buyer "would be adhered to. Despite these assurances by the government, there are people who are still not satisfied with the government's position regarding Zimbabwe.

Accordingly, White farmers and their advocates have long maintained that South Africa's majority black government was failing to protect them from racial backlash after the end of white rule in the early 1990's. While, DA's response to farm attacks is that the ANC led government is failing to protect them. According to NewsMax.com (29 September 2003) DA's spokesperson Paul Swart was quoted as saying to white farmers "You are on your own, the government will not protect you" [http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2003/9/27/121637.shtml, 17 October 2003].

The insinuation by the DA is that the ANC government like the government in Harare does not care about white farmers. However, the report released by the government on farm attacks shows that farm attacks in South Africa are neither racially motivated nor politically motivated. Accordingly, the Guardian Newspapers (25 September 2003) noted in reference to the government report that "An epidemic of farm attacks in South Africa which has left 1,500 farmers dead over the past decade was largely carried out by gangs of thieves and did not amount to a Zimbabwe-style assault against a

racial minority [http:// www.buzzle.com/editorials/9-25-2003-45862.asp, 17 September 2003]

Based on the above information it is thus the purpose of this study to look at the issue of racialisation of politics in the post apartheid South Africa. Consequently, a systematic literature review on this matter would be followed to provide us with the reasons for this state of affairs. Hence, in the following chapter I review some of the literature on this issue.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we look at how race has been used as a political tool to further the interest of the politicians. We begin by reviewing how the apartheid regime employed race as a means to divide the country along racial lines. A trend in South African politics has always been that race was employed by the politicians to further their interests. The term politicisation of race refers to the notion that "race" was being used during apartheid by politicians to further the interests of certain race(s) at the expense of other race(s) in the country.

The apartheid regime went all out to promote the interests of the white minorities at the expense of the black majority. During apartheid, race was politicised to protect and maintain white hegemony. The white race was portrayed as more superior and civilised than the so-called non-whites (Coloureds, Indians and the Africans). Alluding to this issue Colin Legum (in Franklin, 1968: 205) wrote that color was the sole determinant of power in South Africa. South Africa's power structure was specifically designed to ensure that total power remains exclusively in the hands of whites. This in turn, did not only provide whites with security, but also enabled them to retain their position of economic and social privileges over the so-called non-whites.

What was obvious during apartheid was that blacks and other races were regarded as foreigners in the country of their birth. Laws were enacted that entrenched the apartheid system. Legislation was an attempt to separate races by outlawing racial integration and association. The white race was to live in towns where they would not mix with the non-white, except in their respective places of employment. Even then, whites were always granted higher-ranking positions and some jobs were specifically reserved for them

alone with the use of the job colour bar. They were paid much higher wages than non-whites who were to compete for unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Apartheid outlawed marriages between various races. This was an attempt to keep the white race pure. According to Mahomo (1968:61) the Immorality Act 2/1950 prohibited all "carnal intercourse", even with consent, between a white and a non- white". UNESCO (1970:5) refuted the notion of the pure race by noting that, there is no evidence for the existence of the so-called "pure" races. UNESCO argues that skeletal remains provide the basis of our knowledge about earlier races. Concerning race mixture, the evidence point that human hybridization had been going on for an indefinite but considerable time (UNESCO; 1970:14).

In the next section, we focus in detail on some of the legislation that was passed by the apartheid regime to protect the interests of the white minority.

2.1. APARTHEID AND PERCEPTIONS ON RACE:

Adam and Moodley (1986:15) wrote that during apartheid racial and biological criteria for group membership were institutionalised. South Africa was the only country in the world with legalised racial stratification. According to Adam and Moodley (1986: 15) while all societies with a multiracial population practice racialism to some extent, they do not officially endorsed racial distinctions as criteria for differential rights. What apartheid strived for was the complete territorial separation of whites and blacks. The white population had their own areas and the blacks theirs. There was a complete separation of whites and the blacks (Buskes, 1965 50).

On the other hand the so-called Reservation of Separate Amenities Act 49/1953 provided for the segregation of racial groups in all public places, transport, etc (Mahoma, 1968:63). All government and private buildings had

two separate entrances, one for the whites and the other for the blacks. This was the trend throughout the country including the beaches and the sport arenas. Therefore, what I would like to demonstrate here is that race was politicise to further the interests of the white minority by dividing different races. The idea of the National Party government was that racial groups could be accommodated as pretermined political entities into a South African system (Van Zyl Slabbert, 1987:3).

Accordingly, during apartheid South Africa's conflict potential was extremely high. Race was the key factor used to discriminate against what they (the white regime) considered as inferior races. Races that did not resemble what they considered features of the superior race were subjected to all types of humiliation and degradation. The Group Areas Act, the first of the National Party's legislation became the centre of apartheid. Deegan (2001:23) notes that this Act provided for the extension throughout the country of areas of land that were designed for the exclusive occupation by each racial group: whites, Blacks, Coloureds and Indians

In 1950, the Nationalist government enacted the Population Registration Act 30 of 1950 (Mahomo, 1968:62). This act was an attempt to entrench apartheid even further. It required that all citizens be registered in the national registry in accordance with their respective races. This Act, separated families and friends. For instance, people who were not white but possessed features of the white population were classified as being white. While those who were white but had features of the coloured population where classified as coloured. Basically, this meant that apartheid affected almost everyone, including the white population.

The array of inequalities that is prevalent all over the country could be viewed as a legacy of apartheid. Adam and Moodley (1986:16) noted that the black labour market was constrained by influx control and bureaucratic

tyranny. Non-whites especially blacks were not permitted to settle in urban areas except if they could demonstrate that they were employed. Black education compared to that of other races suffered what Adam and Moodley (1986:16) referred to as "cross comparative under funding" as the apartheid regime channeled most resources towards the education of white children thus ignoring black children. The era under apartheid was not normal therefore, the oppressed majority vehemently opposed it, as it violated basic human rights and was viewed as a crime against humanity.

What this review of the Apartheid system indicates is that politicisation of race in this country goes back a long way. It cannot be confined to one episode in our history only. It stems from the fact that the ruling elites at the time wanted to promote the interests of their own people. Apartheid was finally dismantled in 1994 when the first non-racial elections were held. In 1996, the first constitution drafted by representatives of all races was adopted. The constitution stated that South Africa was now a non- racial, non-sexist democratic country. However, does that mean that the problem of politicizing race is finally over? In the next section will look at the reasons for all this.

2.2. POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA AND PERCEPTIONS ON RACE:

To be able to understand the current situation I would first review the second democratic elections that were held on 2 June 1999. Here we focus on the study by Anand Singh who reviewed the 1999 elections in detail. To be able to grasp the pattern of voting during the 1999 elections, there must be understanding of two issues, viz ,(i) the issues that led to the first general elections that took place on 27 -28 April 1994, and (ii) the manner in which the electorate was targeted (Singh ,2001:01).

A number of expectations among the country's competing political parties guided campaigning for the 1994 elections. On one hand, the National Party (NP) that was dominated by Afrikaners and now called the New National Party (NNP) attempted to acquire almost sole credibility over the transformation process in the post-apartheid politics by trying to make it look as though it was their initiative alone. On the other hand, the ANC also acted in the same manner, by referring to its role in the protracted struggle to dismantle apartheid as the main reason for the changes in the country. The motive behind all of this was a ploy to gain more support from the voters. However, what is interesting is that each party has a background of representing the interests of a particular racial and ethnic group in this country.

Robert Mattes (in Burgess, 2002:85) discovered that substantial proportions of South Africans still primarily identify themselves in terms of apartheid –type categories despite the fact that apartheid is long dead. Alluding to this fact Harold Isaacs wrote in (Franklin, 1968: 75) that nothing marks a man's group identity more visibly or permanently than the colour of his/her skin and his/her physical characteristics. The reason may be that, man has used these primary symbols of what has been called "race" as a basis for their self-esteem or their lack thereof. Central to this notion is that skin colour has served as the badge of master and subject; of enslaved and the free, the dominators and the dominated. Isaacs argued that of all factors involved in the great rearrangement of human relationships taking place today, skin colour is the main issue (Franklin, 1968: 75).

In reference to the above argument, it is well known that political parties in South Africa were divided along racial lines. The old National Party had traditionally focused on the needs of the whites, more especially that of the Afrikaners who are more affluent, while the ANC has been more concerned

about the welfare of the disadvantaged majority, especially the Africans. The Democratic Party (DP), which is the official opposition party in parliament currently, has a history of being largely an English party. Other smaller regional parties such as the Inkatha freedom Party (IFP) and the Minority Front (MF) also took part in the national elections. However, they only managed to draw more voters mainly among the Zulus and Indian communities in Natal.

Consequently, due to our past and our racial diversity during the 1999 elections the media in this country focused on how political parties were targeting racial and ethnic groups throughout the country to attract support (Singh, 2001: 2). What Singh discovered in Natal was that all parties in the 1999 elections viewed the Indian vote as being crucial. The DP proved to be the most effective party in as far as Indian vote was concerned. This could be attributed to the fact that it (DP) campaigned on issues that were of main concern to the minority races. A "minority race" is described as " a group whose members share a common ethnic origin, language, culture or religion and is interested in preserving its existence as a national community or at least in preserving its particular distinguishing characteristics (Thompson and Embrer, 2001: 94).

In this country Whites, Coloureds and the Indians are regarded as the minorities. The DP's mission was to capture as much support from these groups as possible. Consequently, what transpired was that most Whites and Indians who voted for the NP in the 1994 elections voted DP in the 1999 elections because they felt that DP was the only party that will protect and promote their interests. The DP's success was linked to its campaign against affirmative action. For instance, the DP took over the case of an Indian matric pupil who passed with six distinctions but was denied a place at the

University of Natal Medical School in favour of lesser qualified African students (Singh, 2001:2).

What happened here is that the DP exploited this issue and laid the blame solemnly on the ANC government for neglecting such a gifted student and suggested to the Indian community that the ANC was actually incapable of acting impartially towards them. Its "fight back" campaign was a protest and appeal for the minority races to fight against crimes that the ANC is failing to end. Minority races were encouraged to wage war against the government that is neglecting them. Because of this the ANC came up with its own campaign slogan of "don't fight the blacks". This was an attempt to show the African population that the DP is spreading the notion that blacks are not fit to rule this country (Mail and Guardian, 1 November 2002).

The DP with its campaign managed to gain more votes from the anxious minority races. African led parties were portrayed in a negative way, the same way the apartheid government used to portray them. Due to this, most whites and the Indians turned their backs on African parties fearing the "swart gevaar". The ANC also played some part in alienating the minority groups. For instance, its spokesperson of Indian origin was quoted as saying, "we cannot molly-coddle Indians. They constitute a sophisticated part of our electorate and they made a deliberate choice to vote for minority parties, thereby contributing to their own marginalization" (Singh, 2001:3).

The next section focuses on other reasons for the racialisation of our politics in the post apartheid South Africa.

2.3. PERCEPTIONS OF THE MINORITY RACES ABOUT THE ANC GOVERNMENT:

Most African dominated parties did not anticipate making any significant inroads into the support of minority races and so did the minority parties

with black electorates. This may be attributed to their perceptions and responses to post-apartheid South Africa are predicated on a complex set of factors that go beyond the mere "swart gevaar" (black danger) tactics of white dominated parties. Accordingly, Robert Mattes (in Burgess, 2002: 84) noted that due to apartheid manipulating racial and ethnic identities, it would be very difficult for most South Africans to dismiss the consequences of forty years of social engineering and the previous history of racial separation so easily.

The fact that South Africa is under the control of the black majority has alienated some of the minority races. The response of the minority groups to the ANC is based on at least three issues, viz , their personal experiences with issues such as violence, education and perceived cultural alienation since April 1994. The other is the performance of the government during the same period or lack of it. The last issue is about the political instability in the rest of Africa. Just prior to the 1999 elections, there was a rumour that the ANC was contemplating amending the constitution if it gets a two-third majority in the 1999 elections. This really succeeded in instilling fear among the minority races in this country. It reminded the minorities about the images of African authoritarianism as it manifested in the rest of the continent (Singh, 2001:4).

Ramatsindela's (2002:09) riposte to all this is that it is true that the record of state building in the African continent is not impressive. According to Ramatsindela (2002:09) to the racists, the analytical framework seems simple: under black majority rule, the post apartheid state will become just like other states in the black Africa. This is what President Mbeki is also complaining about, that South Africa is being judged on what happened in other African countries. However, Singh's (2001:4) argument is that most African states after obtaining independence have held only one free and fair election. On the other hand, if elections were held they were riddled with tribal factionalism,

vote rigging, accusations, and counter-accusations that gave rise to political instability.

Singh's argument is that our neighbouring countries have confirmed his suspicion. For instance, in Botswana the constitution does not place any limit on the term of office of the state president, who is elected by some forty people in parliament. In Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe has become a law unto himself. His rule has produced more political tension than freedom and he is unlikely to step down as president in the near future (Singh, 2001:4).

Therefore, if one looks at all the issues it is not surprising to see that the minority races have produced constantly felt insecure and sometimes helpless in the post apartheid South Africa. Accordingly in Natal Singh noted that Africans have invaded Indian dominated areas and that local authorities are reluctant to condemn their actions, which include burglaries, thefts and unsolved murders, poor policing, deteriorating conditions in the education system, growing unemployment and affirmative action, have made a strong impact on a large section of minority races (Singh,2001:4).

An argument put forward by Singh may be refuted as being driven by racism. Consequently it is confirmed by Beningfield (1993) who argued that racism is by no means dead it has come back to haunt us even in the twenty first century. This is emphasised by the importance each race (i.e., white, black, Indians or Coloured) attaches to racial appearance in the conduct of their everyday lives. Some whites fear and despise blacks simply because associated with them are social evils such as crime, drugs and the degradation of neighborhoods (Beningfield, 1993). This may be happening in South Africa.

When minority races draw a parallel between what is happening in other parts of the African continent simply because it is the black led government that is in charge. When Idi Amin of Uganda came into power in 1971, his government confiscated all businesses of the Asiatic populations. On the other

hand, in Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe has embarked on the programme of appropriating white farmer's land. Accordingly, it is the personal and collective experiences of many minorities generally produced by scenarios of instability, the breakdown of civil service and lack of respect for alien cultural forms in Africa, which inevitably determines the individual and collective responses to identify, national consciousness and patriotism. This is the factor that is rife in contemporary politics and is instrumental in reshaping constitutional politics all over the world (Singh, 2001:4).

2.4. PERCEPTIONS OF MOST SOUTH AFRICANS ABOUT THE ISSUE OF RACE:

A study by the political commentator, Lawrence Schlemmer, showed that despite the fact that politicians and the media put racism at the forefront as a problem, the general picture is that for most South Africans "racism" is much less important in everyday life. Schlemmer's study shows that the ratio of South Africans who think race relations are improving is slightly high at nearly 2:1 (48%) compared to those who think otherwise (25%). About 27% of the respondent felt that relations have remained at the same level. Schlemmer points out that the belief that race relations are improving is dominant in the communities such as those who were previously disadvantaged (blacks, coloureds and Indians). Among the white community the study revealed that more English speakers than Afrikaans speakers think that relations are improving (Current Affairs, 2001: 02). This is an indication that despite the hype from the politicians and the media "race" is not viewed as an important issue in the new South Africa by ordinary citizens.

What is interesting however about Schlemmer's study is the fact that his study shows a tremendous decline in trust among adult South Africans. The study shows that 65% trust their fellow citizens less than a few years ago.

However, what is encouraging is the fact that "race" is not a major factor in generating the increased distrust, only less than 10% of South Africans have feelings of mistrust based on "race" (Current Affairs, 2001: 02).

When it comes to questions of inequality in the post apartheid South Africa the study shows that a clear majority of adults think that it is getting worse; 58% in this category against 14% who judge that it is diminishing while 28% sees little or no difference. Again here Schlemmer argues that "race" is not perceived as the primary cause of growing inequality. The blame seems to be directed somewhere else, at the education or educational differences within the population and poverty. Schlemmer concludes by stating that "class and socio-economic factors and not "racism" in its specific meaning are seen as the cause of disadvantaged and inequality".

In the post apartheid South Africa, race is the main issue and it goes along with class that is, wealth, education, housing and health because apartheid benefited only a single "race" to the exclusion of others. These demographics The Star (24 May 1999) notes, are unlikely to change quickly, so race will continue to divide us and politicians will continue to play in that divide to get votes. On the other hand Alesina and Giavazzi (Sunday Times, 12 May 2002) argue that, "the first step to address racial politics is to understand the origin and consequences of racial animosity, even if it means uncovering unpleasant truths". This is precisely what a large amount of research in economics, sociology, psychology and political science has done for America.

Alesina and Giavazzi seem to agree with Schlemmer's finding in as far as trust among different ethnic groups is concerned. Both scholars agree that people of different races trust each other much less. Sunday Times, (12 May 2002) noted that, Whites in most instances are less willing to support welfare spending because it is perceived to favour minorities and that more racially

fragmented communities have less efficient governments, there is more corruption and patronage, more crime and fewer productive public goods per tax dollar.

Looking at the above statement it only makes sense to note that the problem of race occurs all over the world but it is the politicians who seem to put fuel on the fire. Our politicians resort to race all the time. Despite all their protestations, our politicians, both in government and in the opposition, use race as the defining criterion in their electoral campaigns. Adam Habib agrees with the argument put forward by Singh(2001) in the Mail and Guardian (21 April 2003) that "there is no doubt that the Democratic Alliance deliberately went into the last few elections to canvass for a racial vote, and the ANC's campaigns, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, were similarly influenced by racial considerations"

There is, however, very little research on this case in this country. However, Wiser (2001:01) notes, that there is currently an initiative to inquire into the social meanings and cultural politics of race in this country. Questions to be investigated are as follows: why is it that the constructions of racial categories under apartheid could influence the current political scenario and the competing repertoires of race and racial identity?

A simple analysis by the Mail and Guardian (21 April 2003) is that racial and ethnic identities are more politicised now simply because it suits the interests of political and economic elites. This group of people are employing race to project their class interests as national interests.

Politicisation of race therefore simply means that politicians in their mission to get votes and to further their interests associate issues or events with race. For example when the ANC led government suggested that all government departments should use English as the official language for the sake of efficiency and transparency. This was interpreted as a racially motivated

move to marginalise Afrikaans. Most Afrikaners demanded that their language be granted the same status as English despite the fact that there are now eleven official languages in this country. It may be argued that some of the Afrikaans speaking people feel bitter about the fact that their language has been afforded the same status as other indigenous languages.

In response to this Zonke Majodina (City Press, 03 August 2003) noted that "this should not come as a surprise given our unique racially inspired history". The deep rooted prejudices of whites on the one hand and the many recollections by blacks of the injustices sustained during legalised racism lie at the heart of different interpretations of the non-racial democracy and the paths we take to get there (City Press, 03 August 2003).

It is obvious that blacks and whites in this country differ dramatically in their views about racial matters. The same can be said about a country like USA, where Medelberg and Oleske (2000:173) discovered that while most whites in most cases are likely to oppose desegregation African Americans are likely to support it. According to these two scholars, race is highly salient for the African Americans and the African American Press as a result their leaders are likely to scrutinize political communication for racism and to challenge political messages as racist (Medelberg and Oleske, 2000:173).

Thus through political language as Edelman (in Parsons ,1995:181) argues, one can win or maintain public support or consent in the face of other actions that violate moral qualms and typically by denying the premise on which such actions are based while retaining traces of the premise. This is so because in part through the deliberate actions of political entrepreneurs and partly through associations established in the political arena, people can speak about racially implicit issues without referring to race and still convey racial meaning implicitly. The good thing about politics is that language is a key element in the making of a problem and the defining of the solution. Becker (

in Parsons,1995:101) notes that to be able to understand a social problem fully. We must know how it came to be defined as a social problem.

In our case it is only make sense to point out that South Africa experienced a lot of racial tension in the past, for example, there was Hendrik Strydom random shooting spree of people of the darker skin in Pretoria. As if this was not enough another white Afrikaner male who believed that blacks are an inferior race opened fire on innocent blacks on a bus also in Pretoria. This man, Adam de Wet Kritzinger killed three black people and injured four when he randomly shot at them while they were in the bus that was taking them home. Their fault was that they represented what he considered an inferior race. Thus killing them is a divine route because he argued after this dreadful deed he did it for God and his people or race [http:www.iol.co.za/idex/: 27/04/2003].

However, the crisis in Zimbabwe has also helped to racialise our politics. According to the Mail and Guardian (02 August 2003) the responsibility for good race relations in Africa now lies not with whites, but with blacks Africans. Accordingly, the Mail and Guardian argues that if South Africa fails to understand this the country will be condemned to go through what Zimbabwe is currently going through.The crisis in Zimbabwe has been used to racialise our politics. This, however, is not helping the Zimbabweans who have to live with the torture, intimidations and even death on the daily basis while our politicians are choosing sides and playing race cards against each other[http://www.archive.co.za/ntx/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/mg, 02/08/2003]

Mongezi Mngese of the Institute for Healing Memories, notes this after their visit to Zimbabwe, that almost every Zimbabwean they spoke to most of them historically anti-apartheid and pro-ANC, expressed a mixture of incomprehension, anger, frustration and disillusionment at what they

perceived as South Africa's apparent disregard for their plight and its failure to speak in defence of the erosion of basic human rights in their country[http://www.archive.co.za/ntx/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/mg,27 April 2003]

Their anger was directed mainly at President Mbeki for failing to condemn Mugabe. Many people they met were erstwhile supporters of ZANU (PF) and only some now supported the MDC while disillusioned with the ruling party. Mongesi Mngese notes that most Zimbabweans are not expecting either megaphone diplomacy a la Blair or for the SANDF to appear on their doorsteps. However, they did expect that we (South Africa) would publicly distance ourselves from the violations of a range of basic rights, which are enshrined, in our constitution. They expected from us the kind of solidarity they received from Botswana, Kenya, Senegal and Mozambique and which the world gave us during our own struggle [http://www.archive.co.za/ntx/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/mg, 27 April 2003].

Mngese's affirmation is that it is difficult for us as South Africans to have a rational conversation about Zimbabwe – because so often what we are talking about is ourselves and the issues and fears we have as a nation and not at all about Zimbabwe. In the post apartheid South Africa there is a very thin line between authentic politics and race, he asserted [http://www.archive.co.za/ntx/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/mg, 27 April 2003].

2.5 CONCLUSION

To conclude the chapter I would like to note that in this section I have managed to indicate that during apartheid race was employed by politicians as a factor to separate different races. Some races enjoyed special privileges while others were denied such privileges. In the post-apartheid South Africa, what is transpiring is that race is being politicised as a means by the ANC

government to redress the inequalities that emanated because of apartheid. Affirmative action is one of those measures employed to do that. However, the former white minority parties are not happy about the present state of affairs and thus, use race as a means to show their disappointment about government's handling of their situation. This issue will be pursued further in the next chapter in detail.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Political parties in South Africa are faced with a problem of maintaining and keeping the principles of non-racialism. In the post –apartheid South Africa the issue of politicising race is the dilemma faced by almost all the political parties. As early as 1994, Giliomee, Schlemmer and Hauptfleisch (1994: 136) noted that the dilemma facing parties such as the NNP and the ANC was obvious. These two parties, including the DA cannot avoid playing on racial identity, no matter how subtly. The reason for doing this, Giliomee, Schlemmer and Hauptfleisch (1994:136) note is to maintain solidarity of the respective White and African support-bases.

However, the trend in our politics now is that, since all these parties have a stated commitment to non- racialism, the challenge of political communication is very complex. The terms such as "disadvantaged", "formerly oppressed" etc, are often used as euphemism for a "non- white" or African –racial identity. Thus, given the problems of ethnic and race-based reactions to failed political policies in Africa in our case Zimbabwe, the implications here are quite grave (Giliomee, Schlemmer and Hauptfleisch, 1994:136). The crisis in Zimbabwe has been "racialised" here by the politicians to further their interests. Parties know that appeals to "race" would result in immediate success for politicians and their respective parties.

Some commentators have shown how both in the 1994 and 1999 elections parties here used "race" effectively to canvass for support. Lawrence Schlemmer (2002:15) notes that "virtually all parties claim to be non-racial and their intentions in this regard are more often than not genuine- they would all love to maximise their support across all race groups. However, the problem is that some parties such as the ANC, PAC, AZAPO, IFP, all have the image of being predominantly African due to their origins in our divided past

(Schlemmer, 2002:15). What is interesting is that South Africans in general seem to be inspired and influenced by the labels and identities that were used during the Apartheid era. Schlemmer (2002: 15) argues, "The trend in the 1999 election voting pattern showed that these images are made a reality and perpetuated by the patterns of voter's choice".

Schlemmer's study showed that among Africans who make a choice of party they would vote for in a future election, some 92 percent choose a party that has an "African" image and background. On the other hand, ten percent of whites choose an "African" party. This trend is not confined to the blacks only, because among whites the study showed similar results. Schlemmer noted that 86 percent of whites support a party previously seen as white (NNP, DP/DA, former right-wing parties and the federal Alliance. While among blacks, only five percent choose these parties Schlemmer (2002: 15).

Groups such as Coloureds and Indians seem to be caught between the two main groups' of black and white voters. According to Schlemmer, this could be attributed to the fact that these groups found themselves in an "intermediate position" also confirm the racial patterns. However, it is important to highlight here that this patterns does not confirm a correlation between voting patterns and "race". These patterns may be due to different parties representing different interests that are at this stage associated with the social and economic circumstances of either whites or blacks. The outcome therefore, is self-perpetuating because the racial character of the support that parties tend to attract becomes a signal of association. Whether they wish, it or not the parties acquire the image of being the potential homes of particular groups (Schlemmer, 2002: 15).

3.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main political parties had used the current crisis in Zimbabwe here to racialise our politics. The crisis is viewed as the conflict between the

"disadvantaged", that is the black Zimbabweans and the "former oppressors" that is, the white farmers. There is great bias in as far as how political parties perceive and interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe. The predominantly black parties do not see the crisis in the same way the predominantly white parties see it.

3.3. ELABORATION ON THE PROBLEM

It is very difficult for political parties here to be rational about the crisis in Zimbabwe. The whole debacle had been given a racial connotation with African parties finding it difficult to criticise let alone see any evil in Robert Mugabe.

There are several reasons why the crisis in Zimbabwe has been racialised here. Firstly, as South Africans, we still allow ourselves to be influenced by the legacy of Apartheid and we are reluctant to move on and forget about our past. Manganye (1973:5) made this observation regarding how we relate to each other. He noted, "Within our country, there are people representing different racial groups, languages, religion and cultures. In a race-conscious environment like ours, interests groups organised along racial lines develope".

This is motivated by what Manganye described as "Us and Them "connotation used by both blacks and whites in this country. This is mainly due to the question of racial group identity and how we relate with the world around us. "Us and Them" in our environment are "primary words" of relating and distancing, they refer to the in- group and the out-group. These primary forms of relating between blacks and whites are shown to be associated with differences in how both groups relate to their bodies, to other people, to objects and to time. "Us and Them" are expressive of an attitude of considering an individual as being within one's group or outside it (Manganye, 1973:5).

In reference to the above observation by Manganye, it is true that political parties are aware of our past and therefore could manipulate it to further their interests. Politicisation of "race" is much more prevalent now under the presidency of Thabo Mbeki. This may be motivated and influenced by a variety of reasons. Firstly, when Mbeki came to power in 1999 there was suspicion and fear among whites in this country. Unlike Mandela who reached out to anxious white minorities, especially the Afrikaners and the right-wingers, Mbeki was viewed, as someone who could not be trusted (Mathebe, 2001:57). Thus, one way for parties such as the NNP and the DA to appeal to white voters was to play "race cards".

Mathebe (2001:57) notes that Mbeki was portrayed as someone who could not be trusted as he was destined to promote the interests of the blacks. Commenting on this type of politicking, Brendan Bruce, the former advisor to the Conservative Party in Britain noted (in Parsons, 1995) that it is important for politicians to use languages which can undermine the enemy's case. This implies in our case, portraying other parties in a negative way. For instance, the ANC has been constantly accused of failing to protect the South African citizens against the criminals and the fact that it is doing nothing to protect white farmers. This tactic was effectively employed here during the 1999 electioneering.

SAPA (11 May 1999) reported that Martinus Van Schalkwyk the leader of the NNP said at the time (1999) that the aspect of the constitution the ANC would like to amend was the property clause. This was a deliberate ploy by the NNP to instill fear among the white voters. This was also going to help the NNP since at that time Mr. Mugabe in Zimbabwe had instituted a programme of land reform and many whites lost their land there as it was confiscated without compensation. Mbeki, just like Mugabe, was portrayed as someone who cannot be trusted. Herman Giliomee (in Moss and Obery, 1987) sums

this up nicely when he perceptively noted, "One of the perennial ironies of history is man's search for security from his anxiety in terms that make its attainment impossible". The opposition parties knew at the time that most whites were anxious, so they played on that fear.

The genealogy of the white fear can be traced back to the time when our media portrayed blacks in a negative ways. Mathebe (2001:148) notes that when blacks appeared as objects of news, it was only in the context of news concerning witchcraft, soccer, alcohol, family infidelity, etc as victims. They also made news when they were perceived as political threats (i.e., as terrorists, murderers and highjackers). This was so because black and white journalists approached news coverage from the perspective of "us" and "them". The media in South Africa contributed a lot towards racialisation of politics.

As a result, in 1998 the Black Lawyers Association and the Association of Black Accountants of South Africa approached the South African Human Rights Commission (HRC) to investigate alleged "subliminal racism" in the media on the part of Mail and Guardian and the Sunday Times [http://www.mweblibrary.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Newspapers/MailGuardian/P rintEdition, 03. August 2002]. However, HRC decided to broaden the inquiry to cover alleged racism in the entire media. In its report, the HRC alleged, among other things, that the media "chose to ignore" its true intentions, gave the public "biased and ill-informed" commentary on it. The report went on to state that the South African media is guilty of being defensive about racism, and that fears that it was a "Trojan Horse" for the government to take action against racism in the media were unfounded [http://www.mweblibrary.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Newspapers/MailGuardian/P rintEdition,03/08/2002]. What is interesting about this inquiry is that despite the protest by the media the inquiry revealed that the South African media

was not neutral in reporting issues. As Mathebe had noted above the media is biased when reporting on issues in the country in favour of other races and this is true also about the current crisis in Zimbabwe. Both the media and the politicians to racialise politics here had used the Zimbabwean crisis.

The other reason for the racialisation of our politics could be attributed to the fact that Mbeki is viewed as an Africanist. What we understand by this term is that an "Africanist" is someone who believes that blacks are the true citizens of the African continent and that other races are just foreigners. However, other commentators challenge this view. Commenting on the notion that blacks were the first people to settle here, Giliomee (in Hugo, 1989:82) argues that we should consider the historical or archaeological facts first. South Africa according to Schalk Pienaar (in Hugo, 1989: 82) is by no means a territory wrested from its rightful owners by the white man. Schalk Pienaar's argument is that there were no established Bantu homelands in South Africa when Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape in 1652. Consequently, what happened is that whites moving northwards and the Bantu moving southwards did not meet until more than centuries later. Schalk Pienaar notes that if a newcomer is the word one wants, then the Bantu are as much new comers to South Africa as the whites (Hugo, 1989:82).

This type of thinking is the main reason why there are appeals for black history to be re-written because what the blacks have is the white man's perspectives of the continent of Africa. Black people did not write their history down. However, what they did was to use old people to tell the younger generations about their history. The term "African" is very broad and there are many definitions for it. Mbeki could be described as an Africanist. According to Frederickson (1995:280), the ANC Youth League accepted as its slogan the old Ethiopianist and Garveyite slogan of "Africa for the Africans". The first affirmation creed was that "we believe in the divine

destiny of nations". The nation in question was defined as all Africans from the Mediterranean Sea in the North to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the South, who were expected to unite and speak with one voice.

What they strived to achieve was that an "African must lead Africans" because "no foreigners can truly and genuinely interpret the African spirit which is unique and peculiar to Africans only (Frederickson, 1995:280). The ANC Youth president at the time, Anthony Lembede, who was a true Africanist "made it clear that white and Indian residents in South Africa were foreigners who should not presume to give leadership to the African liberation struggle. However, Lembede and the ANC Youth League acknowledged the fact that in South Africa different racial groups have come to stay. The goal then was not complete Africanisation but rather the abandonment of white domination and the inauguration of a free society where racial oppression and persecution will be outlawed (Frederickson, 1995:280).

In reference to the above explanation, it is not amazing to find some white South Africans being skeptical about the current government. This perception among whites about Mbeki is further enhanced by his determination and resolve to revive the African continent. Mbeki is one leader who has coined the term "African Renaissance" which aims to instill a sense of pride, dignity and rebuilding amongst the Africans. Locally, Mbeki seems to identify more with exclusive black elites and their organisations such as the Black Editor's Forum (BEF) and the Black Business Council (BBC). Mathebe (2001: 157) notes that Mbeki has been a prime mover in the establishment of the BBC, launched in May 1997. The BBC comprises of NAFCOC, the Black Management Forum (BMF), the Association of Black Accountants of South Africa and the National Black Business Caucus (NBBC).

Mathebe (2001: 157) notes that it is believed that Mbeki set out to promote this idea of "imperial" black business organizations because of his exasperation with black business not getting its act together, particularly the defense of its own interests. For example, in his response to the results of the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB) in 1998, which showed business confidence to be at its lowest in many years, Mbeki referred to SACOB members as " negaholics" because they were warned not to express negative sentiments about the government's economic framework. In his view, SACOB sentiments did not reflect the confidence of black business represented by the NBBC (Mathebe, 2001: 157)

When the remark was made to the president that he is more concerned with black interests at the expense of other races, his response was that we all are interested in the welfare of the blacks. The president's argument is that the whole country is interested in the welfare of the blacks because if we got to address the legacy of apartheid we have to be. Mathebe (2001:161) notes that for Mbeki the concept of black or African connotes a victim of racial segregation and apartheid oppression.

Adam Habib (in Mail and Guardian, 30 May 2003) writes that the other factor contributing to the politicisation of race is our macroeconomic policy, GEAR. The reason for this is that the fundamental compromise of our transition was not in the political sphere, but in the economic. Confronted by the overwhelming power of corporate capital largely because of global developments, the political elites in our society struck a deal to abide not only by a market economy, but also by neoclassical economic policy prescriptions.

The outcome was the acceptance of black economic empowerment. This was a deal to de-racialise the apex of the class structure, while leaving the other levels largely untransformed. The effect of this has been to polarize the economic environment. A shrinking economy meant that it became very

difficult to find jobs. This is so because the neo-liberal model of accumulation has effectively pitted the poor of all races against each other (Mail and Guardian, 30 May 2003).

However, the problem it is not affirmative action but its application in a neo-liberal economic environment. This in a way led us to make choices between various sections of the poor. As such, it robs the poor to benefit the poor. The question then is, should we be surprised at the politicisation of race and its re-emergence? This sad state of affairs can also be linked to the flaws in the Mandela presidency. Mandela's attempt at reconciliation was carried out concurrently with the start of a neo-liberal economic experiment. The outcome is that the two had gone in opposite directions. The one attempted to bring different races together while the other polarized our society by accelerating economic inequalities and marginalising large sections of the black population. That is why most blacks feel that there was too much appeasement of the minority concerns and too little recognition of the plight of the victims of apartheid. The outcome is the politicisation of race and its reassertion on the national agenda.

3.3. THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to describe and explain the extent to which the main political parties politicized race as a means to gain support. The study looks at the crisis in Zimbabwe and how political parties here are interpreting it. The focus would be on the four main political parties, the ANC, PAC, NNP and the DP/DA and how each one of them view and interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe has been chosen because political parties here have used this crisis to "racialise" politics in this country. The motive behind this study was

mainly due to the notion that the land programme in Zimbabwe exacerbated "racial conflict" and that violence there that had a negative impact on South Africa. Most of the Zimbabweans both black and white have sought refuge in neighbouring countries in the region including South Africa. On the other hand, since the ANC led government is also in the process of redressing past imbalances by redistributing land to the disadvantaged populations this study would act as a yardstick for our country and the region as a whole.

There is a great anxiety and uncertainty in this country because of what is currently happening in Zimbabwe. Political parties could not agree on how the crisis in Zimbabwe should be handled. The predominantly African parties such as the ANC and the PAC have been accused of siding with Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF. Parties that have a large following in the white population are siding with white farmers. These parties have as a way of criticising Mbeki and his government accused him of backing a regime that has lost credibility and has launched racially motivated attacks against the white farmers and innocent people.

3.4. RESEARCH QUESTION

The study aims to investigate the following question: *- How the crisis in Zimbabwe is portrayed in racial terms in the media and how it is used to politicise "race" in South Africa.*

3.5. METHODOLOGY

This study is both descriptive and explanatory in nature based on an analysis of sources. The study is also inductive, in that it does not seek to prove or disapprove any theory or hypothesis, but seeks to describe and explain the

interaction between certain concepts (race and politics). The study seeks to analyse materials based on secondary sources.

- Data Sources – for this study, includes secondary data from sources such as the Internet, the media, academic and other functional text. Media materials include newspapers, editorials and magazines produced by both local and international governmental and non-governmental organisations. Most of the academic data is obtained from the archival records of the University of Stellenbosch.

3.6. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The key terms used in this study are defined as follows:-

(a) Race

Duncan, de la Rey and Braam (2003:02) notes that the term 'race' was first employed by Linnaeus (in de Waal Malefijt, 1976) in the eighteenth century to account for the apparent differences between certain groups of people, it has given rise to several ongoing and at times very acrimonious debates. Among those debates the most notable being: (i) the eighteen century debate about whether human 'races' had common or different origins; (ii) the nineteenth century debate about whether these 'races' were equal or not; and (iii) the essentially twentieth century debate which more crucially focused on the existence or non-existence of human 'races' Lieberman, (1975); Montau, (1969) (in Duncan et al, 2003:02).

All three debates concentrated on the same basic question, that is, whether the human species can be divided into discrete categories based on biological and associated psychological criteria or not. Blumenbach (in Duncan et al, 2003: 02) responded to this question by positing, "No variety of mankind exists,

whether of colour, countenance, or stature, etc, so singular that it warrants recourse to the notion of 'race'. Even though many renowned scientists, since the onset of these debates, have supported Blummenbach's position that the use of 'race' as a taxonomic unit classifying humans is inappropriate, because the notion of the existence of human 'races' has prevailed in both lay and scientific discourses for a very long time. The reason for this which Miles (1989) in Duncan, de la Rey and Braam (2003:02) notes "is largely linked to the history of colonialism, slavery and other system of oppression and exploitation".

Previous studies show that the notion of the existence of human 'races' gained increasing momentum at the time when Europeans went on voyages of discovery and colonised large sections of the Australasian, American and African land masses (Miles, 1989 in Duncan et al, 2003: 02). The single most importance of these voyages was the realisation among Europeans that other groups did not necessarily resemble them in terms of physical appearance and customs. As a result of this there was an urgent need to comprehend and explain these differences "one convenient way of doing this was to resort to the concept of 'race'" (Duncan et al, 2003: 02).

The concept of 'race' however, as well as its attendant theories (such as, the supposed physical, moral and intellectual superiority of Europeans) were not only invoked to enable Europeans to deal with the difference of other groups customs and physical features. Different researchers have argued that they also served the important function of enabling Europeans to justify their colonisation of foreign territories and thus subjecting the inhabitants of these territories to slavery and to various other forms of oppression and exploitation (Boonzaier, 1989, in Duncan et al, 2003:03). Sharp (1988) (in Duncan et al 2003:03) argues that "it is vital to note that even in contemporary

society; appeals to 'race' (and related notions) are virtually inevitably linked to processes of oppression, exploitation or marginalisation".

In their final analysis, Duncan et al (2003: 03) argue that "the concept of 'race' as a means of classifying people can be seen as both misleading and prejudicial as far as its implication for the quality of human life is concerned". Leberman (in Duncan et al, 2003:03) notes that, it is for this reason that since the beginning of the twentieth century, social scientists increasingly called for the abandonment of the concept as a means of classifying people or making sense of our social world.

As a result after World War II, the term 'race' increasingly fell into disfavour throughout the world. This was, however, not only due to scientific imperatives, but also to various other factors such as the devastation caused by Nazi 'race' theories and politics, the increasing momentum of decolonisation processes in various parts of the globe, and a growing concern internationally for human rights (Duncan et al, 2003:03).

However, as the term 'race' became increasingly proscribed and its usage consequently less frequent, this did not mean that the notion of ineluctable social group differences and the hierarchies of privilege embedded in the term were abandoned. Brah (in Duncan et al, 2003:03) argues that "the term 'race' was often simply substituted by more (socially) acceptable terms such 'ethnic group' and 'cultural group', with the latter group of terms fulfilling the primary function of the outmoded term they replaced, which was, to serve as quasi immutable markers of social, political and economic privilege, restriction and exclusion".

It is imperative for me to point out here that while many progressive social scientists reject the notion of 'race' and others more culturised substitutes out of hand, other's response to these notions are less clear-cut. In South Africa for example, while a large number of black people today reject the apartheid

labels used to categorise them as 'Coloureds, Indians and African, for various reasons known to them, a significant number of people also accept them, while others constantly move in and out of, these categories and their associated identities. During apartheid, race was employed as a means to deny other races access to resources. This was an attempt to demonstrate their inferiority compared to the dominant white race. The dawn of the new South Africa signalled an end to the system of apartheid and the implementation of non-racialism.

This complex response pattern vis-à-vis these apartheid-created racial categories obviously influences, not only the manner in which racism is reproduced in this country, but also the manner in which we need to respond to the phenomenon (Duncan et al, 2003:03).

From the above exposition it is clear that the problem of 'race' is a reality in nation-states to which South Africa, with its cultural heterogeneous population, cannot just be ignored. Several attempts have been made since 1910 to accommodate this cultural diversity peacefully and it is obvious that these attempts bear reference to the models discussed above.

(b)Racism

The term "racism" is one of those social phenomena which seem to elude clear and concise definition". Duncan, et al (2003:02) argues that any meaningful analysis of racism has to start with an examination of the concept of "race" as applied to humans. The notion of the existence of human 'races' constitutes the basis of the phenomenon of racism.

Ebrahim Harvey (in the Mail & Guardian, 17-23 March 2000) writes that scholars with different political and sociological views provide different definitions of racism. According to Harvey, racism cannot be adequately

defined or eradicated by dealing with it in isolation from the economic and class system within which it is expressed. The argument tabled by Harvey is that in a society where class distinctions' cutting across "racial identity" has been a growing social phenomenon since 1994, there is a great correlation between race and class. However, the argument by Harvey had been disputed by Console Tleane (City Press, 3 August 2003). Tleane writes that people such as Harvey are "race denialists" who want to tell us that inequality manifests itself in class only, rather than race terms.

Tleane (in City Press, 3 August 2003) notes that the hypocrisy of the "race" denialists was quickly exposed when one considers that, a year or so ago there was a fierce debate about ethnicity, within talk about the so-called Xhosa Nostra. Harvey (Mail & Guardian, 17-23March 2000) observation is that the Black Lawyers Association and the Association of Black Accountants are elites groups who are more concerned with removing any obstacles which could hinder their ambition to move into the ranks of the big black bourgeoisie, than with the racism which affects ordinary black working class people.

However, Tleane (City Press, 3 August 2003) argues that such argument is racist. He argues that these people also assume that to raise the race question one has fallen into the mantra of the black elites that of crying racism whenever doors of opportunity are closed. To achieve this they use the very weapon that they often accuse Mbeki of employing, labelling. Those who raise the race question are given all sorts of labels – nationalists, neo-nationalists or defenders of the black elite (City Press, 3 August 2003).

The above statement shows that there is a variety of definitions and understanding among South Africans about the concept of race and how it link up with racism. Ebrahim Harvey (Mail & Guardian, 17-23 March 2000) notes that the concept of subliminal racism is in theory highly contentious and

in practice virtually absurd. It is much more practical and measurable to speak of racism that can be clearly identified. On the other hand Frederick Van Zyl Slabbbert (in <u>Mail and Guardian,</u> 11 April 2000) described a racist "as someone who insists that differences in human behaviour and thinking can finally and conclusively only be understood in terms of race".

Zonke Majodina <u>(City Press,</u> 03 August 2003) writes, "Unlike earlier crude forms of racism, infirmed as they were by notions of physical differences among racial groups, the new racism is much more sophisticated. Its most singular characteristic is its ability to adapt and express itself in response to changing circumstances". This should not come as a surprise given our unique racially inspired history. The deep-rooted prejudices of whites on the one hand and the many recollections by blacks of the injuries sustained during legalised racism lie at the heart of the different interpretations of non-racial democracy and the paths we take to get there (<u>City Press</u>, 03 August 2003).

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main task facing the ANC led government in the post-independent South Africa has been to reconstruct the state. That process as observed by Ramatsindela (2002:09) was/is fraught with difficulties not least because of the colonial legacy and post-independence socio-political conditions. The record of state building on the African continent is not impressive. Consequently, that record is increasingly being employed by observers to frame questions of national reconstruction and nation building in the post-apartheid South Africa. Suffice to state that the issue of race and racism is constantly undermining this. Ramatsindela (2002:09) notes that to the racists, the analytical framework seems simple: under black majority rule, the post apartheid state will become just like other states in black Africa.

In reference to the above information, it is most appropriate that this chapter looks at how various political parties here interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe. The reason for choosing Zimbabwe is based on the similarities these two countries share. For instance, both countries (South Africa and Zimbabwe) have experienced and continue to experience, challenges to order and democracy presented by conditions of scarcity, communal conflict and environmental constraints. Similarly, both countries have responded to these challenges differently, with major implications for democratic viability. Zimbabwe emerged from white minority rule and civil war into a semi-democratic state with questionable political and economic liberty. South Africa, as Pierre du Toit (1995: 1) noted, "Is the closest comparable case to Zimbabwe, has progressed through white minority rule and violent insurrection into a process of democratic transition".

However, currently Zimbabwe is facing both political and economic problems that threatened to derail the democratic progress made since independence.

What this study undertakes is to examine how the crisis in Zimbabwe is influencing politics in South Africa. We focus our attention on four main political parties in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan African Congress (PAC), the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the New National Party (NNP). In the next section, we look at a short history of these four parties.

4.2. SOUTH AFRICAN MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES

The ANC and the PAC are the former liberation movements and have a large following in the black communities. The ANC was formed in 1912, as a protest movement by blacks to the establishment of the whites only Union of South Africa in 1910, and remained an underground organisation until 1990. The ANC was then unbanned by the NP and many of its leaders (including Nelson Mandela) were released. In 1994, the ANC was democratically elected and became the majority ruling party.

On the other hand, the PAC was formed in 1959 after a handful of extremists broke away from the ANC. They had become frustrated with the ANC's lack of progress and wanted to form a party based on what they termed Africanism (i.e. that all people must unite as one and fight for the liberation of Africa and for African pride). A noble cause that was pursed with a horrendous and destructive strategy of militant terrorism aimed primarily at the "white settler "whom they deemed to have stolen their country.

[http://www.home.global.co.za/-tands/opinionz/politics/parties-stay.html. 24 August 2003].

The other two parties the DA and the NNP are predominantly white and most of their supporters come mainly from affluent areas all over the country. The "old" National Party (NP) was the ruling, whites only, party until it was deposed in the 1994 general elections by the ANC. Today's NP is the so-called

"new" NP. It has a new logo, a fresh young new leader Martinus van Schalkwyk, and new supporters. However, it has lost many of its previous supporters both to the left and to the right.

[http://www.home.global.co.za/-tands/opinionz/politics/parties-stay.html. 24 August 2003].

Commenting about the NNP Mattes and Gouws, (1994:08) note that, it portrayed itself as the only party that could safeguard the interests and the values of the white population. As a result, it resisted all attempts at the establishment of a non-racial democratic South Africa.

The DP was formed in 1989 because of a merger of two of South Africa's left-wing liberal parties. Since then, however, it has faced several splits and mergers amongst various liberal parties. In the post-apartheid South Africa, the DP has assumed the role of being the majority opposition party in parliament. As such it has taken over from the NNP, that of protecting the interests of all whites. It is now called the Democratic Alliance (DA) after its alliance with the NNP in 1998. However, the NNP has since walked out of that merger and formed a coalition with the ANC. Based on this short background I would like to argue that the DA is most likely to be more vocal and critical about the ANC's led government stand on the crisis in Zimbabwe.

[http://www.home.global.co.za/-tands/opinionz/politics/parties-stay.html. 24 August 2003]. \

4.3. POLITICAL DISCOURSE

In the previous chapter, I noted that in politics language is the key element in the making of a problem and defining a solution. Most parties use political language to win or maintain public support or even to undermine their opponents. Eldelman (1977: 3) writes, "Chronic social problems, recurring beliefs about them, and recurring language forms that justify their acceptance

reinforce each other". Only rarely, can there be direct observations of events, and even then language forms shape the meaning of what the general public and government officials see. Therefore, language evokes most of the political "realities" people experience. The challenge is to learn how language and gestures are systematically transferred into complex cognitive structures. Therefore, in the next section we look at how political parties in South Africa view the crisis in Zimbabwe. This would be done is such a way that each party's political discourse is described and explained explicitly. To do that the next section is divided into three sub-sections, viz, are (i) the focus on the land issue in Zimbabwe ;(ii) the focus on the 2003 elections in Zimbabwe and (iii) focus on the economic crisis.

4.4. FOCUS ON THE LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE

Before the 2002 elections, Zimbabwe was a country faced with a multitude of problems. Its population was polarised and there was a huge resentment because of historic memories. Cape Times (8 March 2002) notes that the root cause of all this could be attributed to the notion of abiding collective memory of colonial occupation that turned indigenous farmers into menial labourers on their own land. This encompasses colonial conquest that precipitated a century of abuse, exploitation and subjugation. These were issues that were not openly faced at the time of independence, as a result they remained unresolved and bitter memories continue to grip the country, with issues of land being but one symptom of the disease (Cape Times 8 March 2002).

The current national situation in Zimbabwe is compounded by the memory of the slaughter of thousands of Zimbabweans by liberation movements. In the post-independent period, the new regime of Robert Mugabe sent in the Korean trained fifth brigade to subdue the Matebeleland unrest. As a result more than 200,000 civilians, mostly the Ndebele have died (Cape Times, 8 March 2002). More recently, violence again raised its dreadful head as a result

of land invasions by the war veterans. Since then it has spread across the country, leaving few people either immune or safe. To date more than 100 people have lost their lives due to the struggle for land in Zimbabwe (Cape Times 8 March 2002).

Land in Zimbabwe is a contested commodity between the ZANU- PF led government and the white commercial farmers. However, the problem is not confined to Zimbabwe alone since most countries in Southern Africa also have similar problems. O'laughlin (in Ramatsindela, 2001:39) notes that throughout Southern Africa, there is a common historical pattern: the colonial states intervened in rural property relations and limited access of black rural people to land as part of cheap labour policies based on migrant and divided household.

That is precisely why in South Africa, like in Zimbabwe, land was central to the struggle for liberation. Due to the land crisis in Zimbabwe and the fact that those who stand to lose are white farmers the issue has been turned into a political 'race card' here. Pahad and Esterhuysen (2002:118) note that some white farmers in this country are deeply fearful and uncertain about the future. These are people who are frightened that what is happening in Zimbabwe could spill over to this country where landless blacks would emulate their counterparts in Zimbabwe and invade white farms. However, according to Cobus Grobler (in News24, 16 October 2003) "the fears of some South Africans, that the country is becoming a second Zimbabwe, have to a large extent been allayed as the government has adapted the draft legislation to meet the guarantees of the Constitution" [http:www.news24.com/News24?South_Africa.html, 16 October 2003]

Accordingly, President Mbeki (in Pahad and Esterhuysen, 2002:118) has accused people who draw a parallel between the crisis in Zimbabwe and

conditions in South Africa as being trapped in what he termed "the entrenched consciousness of the past". As they cannot define themselves outside the categories of the past, and that they are more concerned and fearful of the future since they do not consider themselves as part of the African continent.

In reference to the above notion Eldelman (1977: 25) states" so far as political beliefs are concerned; the most potent categorisations almost certainly are visions of the future. The typification of a new leader of a powerful rival country as sympathetic and peace loving evokes a future marked by détente and cooperation in the two countries' dealings with each other. On the other hand the depiction of the poor as incompetent or as breeding faster than the middle class, perhaps through a metaphoric reference to rule by mobs, creates a future in which the unworthy dominate the virtuous, such cognition coexist with contradictory beliefs and perceptions".

As the land crisis unfolds in Zimbabwe parties such as the DA and the NNP have demanded that the president should take strong measures against the government of Mugabe. These two parties perceive Mugabe's government as posing a threat to the region and to the rights of the white farmers. Peter Stiff (2000:420) notes that Tony Leon the DA leader has accused the president of failing to mention or even condemn Mugabe's "flagrant" disregard for law and democratic rights in that country. The president on the other hand does not believe that condemning Mugabe would help resolve the matter. The appeals by the opposition parties had been interpreted by the ANC as a demand for them to abandon their long-standing friends and take them on as their new allies (Pahad and Esterhuysen, 2002:118).

Due to the pressure imposed on the ANC led government by the opposition parties, Pahad and Esterhuysen (2002:119) note that Mbeki had accused his political opponents of being racists. The president had stated in parliament that some white South Africans have blindly and naively drawn a parallel between the government in Harare and the government in Pretoria. This was in reference to the president's argument that some whites here have

concluded that " here one has a black government across the Limpopo which is perceived to be doing particular things regarding this matter, what guarantee do we have that the black government this side of the Limpopo will not do the same thing"(Pahad and Esterhuysen,2002:119)

Thus, when the minorities express dissatisfaction about how the government is handling the crisis in Zimbabwe this is interpreted as being driven by racist intentions, simply because it is the black led government in charge of the country now.

In response to the land invasion and the anarchy that is prevailing in Zimbabwe Martinus van Schalkwyk the leader of the opposition had noted in parliament that when minorities see what is happening to white farmers in Zimbabwe they also fear for their future in South Africa (P Pahad and Esterhuysen, 2002:119). This fear among the white minorities in South Africa could be attributed to the sufferings that white farmers in Zimbabwe are experiencing and the reluctance of the ANC led government to protect them.

In response to the crisis in Zimbabwe Pan African Congress's, East Rand Secretary Osagyebo Prince Jinika (Pretoria News, 19 April 2000) argued that blaming and lambasting Mugabe for the state of affairs in Zimbabwe is selective and malicious. Jinika's argument is that the crisis in Zimbabwe should be properly contextualised to avoid creating wrong impressions, as it is the case here in South Africa. He concurs with the notion that Britain should be held responsible for the crisis in Zimbabwe. The reason is that the Lancaster House Agreement stipulated that the land question would be settled after ten years, to be precise in April 1990. However the problem emanated when the British government decided otherwise and avoided meeting its obligations with the aim of frustrating the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Zunu-PF under Mugabe (Pretoria News, 19 April 2000).

The impression created here is that it is only white farmers who are suffering or being evicted in Zimbabwe. However, this is not the case since there are black farm labourers and their families who are affected too. Peter Stiff (2000:424) brings in another dimension when he quoted Siphiwe Mqcina of COSATU as saying that the media is wrongly portraying the land redistribution in Zimbabwe as a 'black versus white' issue. Mgcina argue that attacks on Zimbabwean farmers had nothing to do with "race". This is so because farm invaders in Zimbabwe had not only attacked white farmers but black workers as well. The cause for all this crisis is the result of land redistribution that President Mugabe and his Zanu-PF had failed to resolve peacefully (Stiff, 2000: 424).

The media and the politicians had blown the problem in Zimbabwe out of proportion here. According to Peter Stiff (2000:432) President Mbeki had stated that the problem of land in Zimbabwe should be resolved speedily and amicably among both whites and blacks to avoid what he called "negative publicity'" of the region. Subsequently, parties such as the DA and the NNP had been accused of not saying anything when black people are being murdered in Zimbabwe. Their silence is interpreted as meaning that the lives of the white farmers are more important to that of those of the blacks people.

Since South Africa is faced with similar problems like Zimbabwe. In South Africa the majority of the black people do not own land because it was expropriated by the apartheid regime. The current government has embarked on the reconstruction of the country by redressing the injustices of the past, such as land redistribution. However, this has created a lot of uncertainty among white farmers who fear that they may also lose their farms.

Commenting on this issue Ramatsindela (2001:33) said that, the government's intentions to improve the lives of the black people are misconstrued by white-dominated parties (the DA and the NNP) as shunning away from the ideals of

a rainbow nation. For instance, the DP (1998) argued that it was immoral and impractical to try to redress racial imbalances by taking steps that will entrench race consciousness. Ramatsindela (2001:33) noted that the problem of race and nation building is more pronounced in this country than anywhere on the continent because of the large number of whites in the country. Thus, the sheer numerical weight of white settler presence in South Africa sets it apart from settler minorities elsewhere in colonial Africa.

Based on the above information it is the case that the issue of race is constantly used to racialise politics in this country. What parties such as the DA and the NNP would like to see is a situation where the government will protect the interests of the minorities. However, Mbeki has stated several times that South Africa has the constitution and that real provision had been made on how the land issue would be handled here.

One of the constitutional provisions is that there need to be respect for private property. Nevertheless, there is also a provision in the constitution, which says the matter of the land question needs to be addressed so that we redress past wrongs. The president noted that there is a programme that they have been carrying out to address the issue of land here. They have also involved organisations of white commercial farmers who said that they are ready to enter into discussions with the government (Pahad and Esterhuysen, 2002:119).

The South African system of land distribution should not be confused with the land programme in Zimbabwe which is more of a political agenda by the ruling party to win rural votes and stay in power. The South African system has involved all stakeholders and has aimed to be pragmatic and fair in the process. Land restitution was introduced in South Africa in 1994, with the focus on redressing past injustices created as a result of racially based

legislations or practices and it is not an attempt by the ANC led government to gain political support more especially among black people.

The interim constitution of South Africa (Section 121-123) served as the source and embodiment of restitution, whereby the legislature was instructed to put in place a law to provide redress for the victims of dispossession. This resulted in the enactment of the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994. This Act also established the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and the Land Claims Court. So far about 36,000 applications have been put before the Land Claims Court by individuals and communities seeking the return of land originally owned by them or their families. However, the dilemma facing the government according to Tozi Gwayana, chief land claims commissioner, is that farmers were asking too much for their land and that this was making land reform impossible [http:www.news24.com/News24?South_Africa.html 16 October 2003].

4.5. FOCUS ON THE ELECTIONS

Afro News (14 March 2003) noted that local and international election observers agree with the Zimbabwean opposition MDC, that the 9-11 March 2003 presidential elections were neither free nor fair. All observing sources except the South Africans, agree there was lack of transparency, political violence and intimidation and the authorities had manipulated capacity and opening hours in Harare, thus, hindering thousands of opposition supporters from voting.

Despite the fact that elections in Zimbabwe were described as not being free and fair the South African observer mission released a report stating that since the people of Zimbabwe have spoken, countries of the world should respect their verdict [www. iol.co.za, (14 March 2002)]. The South African parliamentary report released after the elections fell short of declaring them

free and fair, it concluded that the election epitomises the will of the people of Zimbabwe. The <u>Sowetan</u> (20 March 2002) noted that the South African government had acknowledged that there were a number of irregularities in the elections during and after the elections. These included allegations of intimidation and violence, the partisan behaviour of the police and the media in favour of the ruling ZANU-PF of Robert Mugabe.

What astounded most people was that it was only the South African Observer mission who believed that elections in Zimbabwe were free and fair. The whole scenario led to debates among political parties about how the ANC led government arrived at the conclusion that elections in Zimbabwe were legitimate, ignoring the fact that they were actually fraught with injustice and intimidation. Ian Taylor notes that the fundamental issue behind all this is that African leaders will rarely criticise their own. This is so because if they allow someone like Mugabe to be ostracised for his behaviour, who would be next on the list? Thus, it is better to show a united front and protects all members of the elite club [http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian/html/, 27 July 2003].

When the western media and the opposition in this country and in Zimbabwe accused the ruling ZANU-PF of rigging the elections this was interpreted by the ANC led government and some African leaders as an attempt by white racists to portray Africa in a negative way. Ian Taylor argues that some African leaders agree with the view that there is a malevolent white racist conspiracy to recolonise Zimbabwe and take it back to Rhodesia led by Britain's Tony Blair and his gay gangsters [http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian/html, 27 July 2003].

President Thabo Mbeki went as far as warning at the Commonwealth meeting in Australia (March 2002) that talk of criticizing Mugabe was inspired by the notions of "white supremacy". President's view is that such moves were

followed because white political leaders apparently felt uneasy at their subordinate position imposed by inferior blacks. This kind of harsh talk by the president is motivated by the belief, that whites in this country do not believe that Africans can decide their destiny without them [http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian, 27 July 2003].

Ian Taylor notes that ironically it was Mbeki who loudly proclaimed at a conference on the African Renaissance in September 1998 that:

"We want to see an African continent in which the people participate in systems of governance in which they are truly able to determine their destiny and put behind us the notions of democracy and human rights as peculiarly "Western" concepts. Thus, would we assume a stance of opposition to dictatorship, whatever forms it might assume? Thus… we say that we must ensure that when elections are held, these must be truly democratic, resulting in governments which the people would accept as being genuinely representative of the will of the people"[http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian 27 July 2003].

Commenting on the above statement Ian Taylor argues that Zimbabwe provided a clear test for such noble sentiments to be measured against, and for leaders such as Mbeki to translate rhetoric into action. Mugabe undermined the principles of democracy by using devious tactics to cling to power. Mugabe's government consistently targeted the judiciary, the independent media and opposition activists for repression and he repeatedly flouted a series of court orders barring the seizure of white-owned farmland by state-backed thugs. In January 2001 the premises of the opposition-inclined Daily News were bombed and several foreign journalists were expelled from the country. One could agree that all these incidents required strong measures from South Africa because at that time Mbeki was also the chairperson of the African Union [http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian (27 July 2003)].

The issue of election rigging in Zimbabwe had been racialised here with the ANC led government adopting a more conciliatory attitude against the regime that has violated basic human rights. Ian Taylor argues that South Africa's support for Mugabe undermines any speedy resolution to the problem as Pretoria's diplomacy was effectively based on a public excuse of Mugabe's human rights record and the playing down or ignoring of any reports to the contrary. As noted above the South African Observer mission was the first to proclaim solemnly that the elections were "free and fair", even while others were opposed to that notion. The ANC openly welcomed Mugabe's victory in the 2000 parliamentary elections as evidence of Zimbabwe's increasing democratic credentials. The ANC in its statement noted that "we congratulate ZANU-PF on their victory as we realised that the election process has underscored the notion that democracy is taking root not only in Zimbabwe but in the sub-region and, indeed, in the whole of Africa" [http//:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian (27 July 2003)].

Ian Taylor notes that some African leaders such as President Joaquim Chissano of Mozanbique and Sam Nujoma of Namibia have argued, "If Zimbabwe had a problem it was that the foreign press had misrepresented Mugabe's policies. These leaders expressed their disappointment at the partisan and biased manner in which a sector of the international media has misrepresented the land policy of the government of Zimbabwe. The plot was viewed as a means to derail a just and equitable redistribution of land in a situation where one percent of the population owns over seventy percent of the best arable land [http:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian (27 July 2003)].

The dilemma is that the ANC led government, backed by regional leaders, has failed to differentiate between colonial legacies in the region and the survival strategies of corrupt and undemocratic autocrats. The only time

when African leaders have shown concern was over the fear that the spillover effect from the Zimbabwe crisis would affect the entire region. In essence, whether a colleague was suppressing democracy, encouraging lawlessness and openly stimulating racism against southern African citizens is not an issue per se. It only becomes an issue when such activities influenced negatively on the region's economies [http:www.aid.org.za/nepad/brief analysis/Ian (27 July 2003)].

The issue of ignoring the crisis in Zimbabwe by the ANC may also be attributed to the fact that South Africa like Zimbabwe is a society based on European conquest and settlement (Giliommee, Schlemmer and Hauptfleish, 1994: 03). To the ANC and a party like the PAC the only way to sustain continued black majority rule is by forming a united front against their former oppressors who are destined to resist any attempt to transform South Africa. When parties such as the DA and the NNP criticised the way in which elections had been handled in Zimbabwe they had been accused of being racists.

The New National Party had stated that Mugabe stole the vote. As a result, the NNP pledged solidarity to the MDC, calling for the creation of the government of national unity in Zimbabwe. The Democratic Alliance (DA) also backed this call (Busines Day, 14 March 2002). In its response to the elections in Zimbabwe the DA leader, Tony Leon, urged the South African government to persuade Mugabe to form a government of national unity. This view by the DA and the NNP was interpreted as a means to put pro-west MDC party in power with the aim of denying black Zimbabweans the right to freely decide their destiny (Business Day, 14 March 2002).

However, it is important to note that all political parties in South Africa would like to see a crisis in Zimbabwe resolved. The main problem is that they cannot agree on how to go about resolving it. Whether the matter should

be left to the Zimbabwean to handle or that South Africa should play a leading role in resolving the crisis in Zimbabwe. Nonetheless, based on his silence, it is obvious that president Mbeki would prefer the crisis to be settled by the people of Zimbabwe not foreigners.

4.6. PARTIES VIEWS ON THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE:

The Zimbabwean civil right activist, Dr. John Makumbe, in his book Democracy and Development (1998:03) argues that every political institution, once in government, will seek to retain that power for as long as possible. He said that in reference to the experiences in the African continent of autocratic leaders. Most of African leaders have a tendency to devise tactics that would extend their terms of office even if this may entail changing the rules of the game during their legitimate term of office. Based on the above notion it is true that President Mugabe's land policy has led to the collapse of that country's economy. Mugabe in his mission to remain in power had employed various tactics to intimidate his political opponents and to portray them as being opposed to transformation.

This argument about political bickering is undoubtedly backed by Schaffchneider (in Parsons, 1995:130) when he notes that all forms of political organisation have a bias in favour of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organisations is the mobilisation of bias. Some issues he noted are organised into politics while others are organised out. Therefore, an analysis of the economic crisis in Zimbabwe shows that Mugabe's regime had succeeded in manipulating the situation in such a way that he obtains the sympathy and the support of other African leaders. Mugabe had always accused countries such as Britain and the United States of America of trying to re-colonise his country.

The ANC led government had thus, been accused of supporting the regime which has mismanaged its economy and carried-out its racist policies against

its own citizens. As the crisis unfolded in Zimbabwe there were repeated attempts to muddy the water over the real issues, particularly with incessant appeals to the land issue and a desperate playing of the race card. The real problem was the concerted effort by Mugabe and ZANU-PF to retain their hold on political power.

Nonetheless, there is an overt admission by the ZANU-PF led government that the economy is in bad shape a point critics and the opposition have been pressing home for years (Business Day, 05 November 2003). Jethro Goko argues that the economic issue in Zimbabwe had been racialised to allow the ruling elites there to lay blame somewhere else. The ANC and the ZANU-PF have looked for the enemies in the western capitals, and to the degree of stating that these foreigners are funding the opposition and the media with the aim of toppling the legitimate government of Mugabe (Business Day, 05 November 2003).

As noted earlier on by Adam Habib "race has been politicised and kept firmly on the national agenda to enable elites to project their class interests as the national interests."[http//:www.mg.co.za/Content/Is.asp, 30 May 2003)] It is thus, not surprising to see politicians rallying behind Mugabe in solidarity despite the fact that his policies had been disastrous. When parties such as the DA and the NNP called for economic sanctions against Zimbabwe, they were accused of being racists. These parties were not even afforded an opportunity to state their case. DA leader Tony Leon had argued that his party does not support sanctions against Zimbabwe, that the DA and its predecessors have always opposed economic sanctions on the ground that they hurt the people more than the political delinquents of a country. [http://www.da.org.za/DA/Site/ Afr/Affairs/Zim.htm, 28 July 2003]

The DA had recommended a range of diplomatic and political pressures to be considered. Some of the recommendations are, the freezing of foreign assets

and funds owned by individuals, including a number in the ZANU-PF hierarchy, the imposing of restrictions on travel over foreign air spaces by the Zimbabwean government officials and, the arms embargo such as that which was applied to UNITA [http://www.da.org.za/DA/Site/ Afr/Affairs/Zim.htm, 28 July 2003)].

However, President Mbeki has rejected these recommendations outright, because he viewed them as being too harsh and would not help resolve the crisis. Instead, Mbeki had recommended the continued engagement of the ZANU-PF leadership on the matter until a more suitable solution is found. However, be that as it may, Mbeki had acknowledged that the crisis in Zimbabwe affects us as well. Pahad and Esterhuysen argue (2002:212) that the president had warned that if there is instability in Zimbabwe people will cross the border to South Africa.

This is so since Zimbabwe is our largest trading partner on the continent, if they are in a crisis that will also affect us. As noted above the only time when African leaders have shown concern; it is over the fear that the spillover effect from the Zimbabwe crisis would affect the entire region. In essence, whether a colleague was suppressing democracy, encouraging lawlessness and openly stimulating racism against southern African citizens is not an issue per se. It only becomes an issue when such activities affected negatively on the region's economies [http:www.aid.org.za/Nepad/BriefAnalysis/Ian, 27 July 2003].

The problem facing the president is that he is trying not to alienate Mugabe and risk losing the support of the black population. On the other hand, if he sides with Mugabe he is being accused of supporting and condoning all that Mugabe does. Due to the pressure from the opposition parties Mbeki at one point yielded to the pressure, and criticised Mugabe for the breakdown of the rule of law, occupation of farms and violence. Raymond Louw (2001:01) notes that the DA was very delighted and praised Mbeki of finally adopting a

tougher stance on Mugabe. However, this did not go down well with the people in Zimbabwe. As Louw (2001:01) attest to this "Mbeki was viciously lashed by Zimbabwe's government controlled <u>Herald</u> newspaper for making a "shock U-turn" and siding with the country's enemies".

Based on the above statement it therefore makes sense to note that parties, which were previous liberation movements such as the PAC, want the government to intervene in the domestic affairs of Zimbabwe to help find a solution that would benefit all Zimbabweans. These parties do not advocate for the removal of Mugabe since to them he is not a problem. PAC traces the root cause of the Zimbabwean economy somewhere else. It had noted that the National Party government stifled Zimbabwe's economic growth during apartheid. According to Prince Jinika (<u>The Star</u>, 10 May 2000) the apartheid government imposed sanctions against Zimbabwe and thus marginalised it. He said that Mugabe's intervention in the DRC was an attempt to create markets for his country since Zimbabwean companies are heavily taxed here. To the PAC, criticism of Mugabe by the IMF and the World Bank is not justified. He accuses these two organisations of furthering the interests of their white compatriots in Zimbabwe (<u>The Star</u>, 10 May 2000).

Jinika's view is that Mugabe's refusal to accept IMF and World Bank's loans, based on stringent conditions that were to apply, was used by the west as a means of economic strangulation. These interests he said are a broader part of agenda of globalisation. The PAC applauded Mugabe for opposing the white capitalists but lambasted the ANC led government for opting for GEAR to serve the interests of the IMF and the World Bank.

Mbeki's view is totally distinct to that of the PAC; he noted that the policy towards Africa of the government is guided by the pursuit of the fundamental objective of securing a better life for all and building caring societies. In a gesture that some see as a means to prove that not all white South Africans

are against his policy in Zimbabwe, the president applauded some white farmers for their valuable contribution they were making to resolve the crisis in Zimbabwe.

Peter Stiff (2000:427) notes that the president was rather annoyed by the accusation level against his government by the opposition parties. He applauded some white farmers here for not thinking like the opposition. According to Peter Stiff (2000: 427) the president noted that "unlike others (meaning the opposition parties) they are conscious of our common responsibility to contribute what they can to help ensure a better life for all in this country, region and continent and that they have resisted the temptation to assume a counter-productive, holier-than-thou attitude". The president noted that most white people have contributed to the fight against the mischievous effort by others (DA in particular) to create and feed a psychosis of fear in our South Africa, based on nothing else but 'racist' prejudices, assumptions and objectives.

Mbeki's notion is that there are people in this country who are still very reluctant to accept the ANC led government elected by the majority. These people, the president believes, not only oppose the government but find it hard to accept transformation that is taking place in the country. He furthermore believes that they are racists who do not think that a government led by blacks could rule a country as big as ours without ruining it. They are opposed to any move by the government and see no good in whatever the government is doing as they are blinded by racism (Pahad and Esterhuysen, 2002:212)

On the other hand parties such as those who are very vocal about the government's position also view the government's stance as being racially motivated. The DA accused the president several times of employing racial

tactics to advance his policy. To them it seems, if they disagree with what the government is doing they are accused of being racists.

4.7. CONCLUSION

In reference to the above interpretation of the crisis in Zimbabwe by the four main political parties, their views and perceptions are largely based on the racial prejudice and allegiance to their respective constituencies. What this study demonstrated is that politicisation of race here is constantly employed by the politicians to further their interests despite the fact that most South Africans do not view race as the main issue. The NP led government used this system of politicising race during apartheid to discriminate against other races. It is being used in the post apartheid South Africa by the ANC led government as an excuse to redress the imbalances between races and to seek support. That is why the concept of "race" is much more evident in the interpretation of the predominantly black parties such as the ANC and the PAC.

Their interpretation of the land issue shows that they believe that blacks in Zimbabwe are the victims of the white settlers who stole their land. The PAC is the party that viewed white minorities as settlers on the African continent and have accused them of stealing their land. Thus, it is not surprising to see them supporting Mugabe's government on the issue of land redistribution. The PAC has been unhappy about the ANC led government's handling of the land issue in South Africa and demanded a more proactive stance.

The ANC on the other hand faces a dilemma. It would like to see a situation whereby the land is equally distributed between all the races here, as well as, in Zimbabwe, but at the same time it does not want to alienate the white

farmers. Based on that, the ANC stated that it would follow a constitutional procedure in distributing land in South Africa. The policy of willing seller and willing buyer would be adhered to. The problem however is that most farmers are reluctant to sell their farms.

Therefore if one looks at the current problems relating to land in Zimbabwe part of the problem was failure to reach an agreement on compensation to white farmers for land which the Zimbabwean government wanted to repossess for redistribution to the landless. The argument from the government of President Mugabe was that just as the indigenous population, which was pushed off those lands, in the first place, did not receive payment; there was no need for compensation. It was a secondary factor that the Zimbabwean government stated that it did not have the funds to compensate white landowners [http://www.afronet.org.za/theobserver/volume6_8htm, 25 August 2003)].

Mbeki acknowledges the fact that the land was seized from the African people by a colonial power and handed to whites settlers unfairly. That may be the main reason why the president is reluctant to criticise Mugabe's government. His silent diplomacy is being interpreted as being motivated by racism. Lawrence Schlemmer [http/www.hsf.0rg.za/focus_20schlem.html: 27 /04/03)] notes that there are three reasons for Mbeki and the ANC to politicise race. The (i) that he is vulnerable to attack from the left and so uses "Africanism" as a shield, (ii) the manipulative character of all exile politics has left him uncomfortable with opposition criticism in a democracy and (iii) that he is over-stressed by the difficulties he faces in living up to the expectations of his constituency in a limping economy.

Lawrence Schlemmer notes that by emphasising the struggle against racism and accusing his white political opponents of being racist, Mbeki is preparing the rationale for actions that may be needed to defend his own position and the hegemony of his own party. In reference to the above findings political commentator, Jimmy Seepe (The Star, 10 May 2000) notes that it was understandable for black parties to support Mugabe while the white parties would condemn the land invasion because as both groups were looking after the interests of their constituencies. Commenting on Mbeki's lacklustre approach on the issue of land invasion Seepe notes that Mbeki could not condemn it because he might attract attention from local people, since the land question had not been addressed in South Africa.

However what is more puzzling is the fact that the ANC is not the only party that is guilty of playing race cards. Parties such as the NNP and the DA are more concerned with the welfare of the white citizens in Zimbabwe. They are also more concerned about the status of their own supporters here in South Africa. Their biggest fear is that the crisis in Zimbabwe could spill over to South Africa and this would harm the interests of white farmers and capitalists.

Malusi Gigaba the president of the ANC Youth League notes in reaction to DA's criticism of Mbeki, that the DA was opposed to nation building as it has elevated Mugabe rather than the destitute African people to the principal problem [www.anc.org/horizon. 26 May 2003)] . This is so because the DA has failed to speak on behalf of the black Zimbabweans. Mbeki argued in response to the same aspect that the only Africa the DA knows is Zimbabwe. The reason for this assessment by the president is that black people are dying

all over Africa in places such as the DRC, Rwanda, Liberia etc but the DA is quiet about events in other parts of the continent.

The direction of the debates about the crisis in Zimbabwe among parties in South Africa shows the degree of mistrust among them. Black parties are more accommodating when it comes to their dealings with Mugabe. While white parties are more hostile and demand a tougher approach. Commenting on the crisis in Zimbabwe Uys, and Myburgh (2002:03) noted that since the onset of the crisis in Zimbabwe there had been repeated summit meetings of the region's National liberation Movements (NLMs). These meetings they argue were strictly secret: no media, no interviews, no TV and no communiqués.

The National Liberation Movements, according to Uys and Myburgh (2002:03) are the righteous because they represent the masses and as such they cannot be wrong. No further group can succeed them for that could only mean that forces of racism and colonialism had regrouped and launched a counter attack. The reason for this state of affairs emanated from the defeat the Zunu-Pf suffered in 2000 during the referendum. The fear among the NLMs was that they might actually lose power, thus Mugabe's struggle to stay in power became a struggle for their own survival, too. They conclude that this is the reason why Mbeki and the ANC are reluctant to condemn Mugabe's regime.

It is also the reason why the ANC is not wholly moved by all the killings, torture, beatings and rape inflicted on the MDC. Uys and Myburgh argue that such things were prevalent in the struggle against imperialism and the only solution is the final triumph of national liberation.

On the issue of the Zimbabwean elections, it is a known fact that the ANC accepted the recommendation of its observers. In conjunction with the above findings Uys and Myburgh argue that it was only logical for the ANC election

observers not to be bothered by such issues as ballot stuffing by the Zanu-PF. The argument is that the observer mission went to Zimbabwe to sympathise with Robert Mugabe.

The ANC under Mbeki is destined to portray Africa in the world as an appropriate place for investment. The Southern region is very important to the ANC and to president Mbeki in particular as a start for the revival of the whole continent. The ANC then would like to keep the West influence out of the region since they believed that some parties in the region are conspiring with the West to topple legitimate governments.

Uys and Myburgh (2002:03) notes that Dumisane Makhaye, the member of the ANC national executive council noted that the western countries wants to impose their choice on the region. Makhaye noted that Zimbabwe is only a strategic hill, because the real objective is South Africa. He noted that the gross interference in the internal affairs of Zimbabwe by the western powers is a dress rehearsal for South Africa. Their strategy is to weaken governments and parties of the former national liberation movements in Southern Africa.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSSION

5.1. SUMMARY:

The purpose of this study has been to describe and explain how political parties in this country interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe and how it the crisis is used to racialise politics in South Africa. The focus has been on the four main political parties, the ruling African National Congress (ANC), the Pan African Congress (PAC), the New National Party (NNP) and the Democratic Alliance (DA). Understandably, this process required an analysis of the three aspects affecting the politics in Zimbabwe: (i) **the land crisis**; (ii) **the 2003 election** and (iii) **the economic crisis**. Zimbabwe was selected as the main unit of analysis for this study on the basis that it presents similar features with South Africa. For instance, both countries have large sections of white settlers more than any country in the region and the continent. In both countries, the white settlers have been the most privileged and controls the economic sector, while most of the impoverished people are black.

In the previous chapter, I managed to describe and explain how each of the parties view the crisis in Zimbabwe. I have also indicated that parties such as the ANC and the PAC have showed some bias in dealing with the crisis in Zimbabwe. These two parties have backed the regime in Harare despite the fact that, Mugabe's regime has carried out gross violations of human rights against the Zimbabweans both black and white. On the other hand, predominantly white parties such as the DA and the NNP have been very critical of Mugabe's government and demanded the protection of white farmers. Consequently, as noted above the crisis in Zimbabwe ended up being used to racialise politics in South Africa.

As shown in the previous chapters race was clearly apartheid's primary category of discrimination. All apartheid legislations had a racial connotation and thus, this made race the main determinant for access to resources and

opportunities. The apartheid order was characterised by a marked social schism between an enfranchised and privileged white minority and a disenfranchised, impoverished black majority. Consequently, the enormous racial disparities in socio- economic status have continued into the post-apartheid era (Pimstone, 1999:15).

Chapter one of this study is mainly an introduction to the study about the issue concerning the politicisation of race in the post-apartheid period. The nature of the crisis facing Zimbabwe was described and explained. The second chapter was a review of the literature on race. The main aim was to look at how the apartheid legacy is influencing politics and race relations in the post-apartheid South Africa. What became apparent in chapter two is that race was employed by the Nationalist Party government as a means to separate various races. Various pieces of legislations were enacted to entrench the system of apartheid.

The third chapter introduced the research problem as well as the methodology for this study. A brief introduction was made about the problem of politicising race in the post apartheid South Africa. The research problem outlined is that South African political parties use the crisis in Zimbabwe to racialise politics. The fourth chapter is mainly about the analysis of the discourse on Zimbabwe. The analysis indicated that political parties in this country interpret the crisis in Zimbabwe differently. Predominantly black parties have sided with Mugabe's regime and failed to condemn him while predominantly white parties have been very critical of Mugabe and his cronies. The crisis in Zimbabwe is a genuine issue, which affects all people of Zimbabwe, both black and white. However, parties in South Africa have failed to recognize that the crisis in Zimbabwe transcends race. Consequently, political parties have used the crisis in Zimbabwe as a means to build up support.

The conclusion is that race is no longer a determinant for gaining access to resources, as it was the case during apartheid. However, the ruling party (the ANC) in the process of transforming the country has used race as a means to redress past imbalances. Opportunities have been created through affirmative action and other policies for people who were disadvantaged in the past. Most of the legislations enacted by the ANC led government strived to eliminate all forms of inequalities among various races. In reference to the above observation Adam Habib (in Sunday Times, 28 September 2003) argues that "The post apartheid government's transformation agenda, encapsulate in its programmes and policies is, largely based on race".

5.2. PUTTING RACE INTO THE BROADER POLITICAL CONTEXT:

To conclude I would like to elaborate more on the issue of race in the post apartheid era by focusing on the reasons why the ANC is accused of being the main culprit when it comes to politicizing race. The ANC and the DA have constantly been accused of exacerbating the whole issue about race. Even though South Africa is now a non-racial democratic country, it seems as if it would be difficult to overcome the legacy of apartheid. The fact that South Africa came out of a more recent history of white supremacy should not come as a surprise to find that most South Africans are still driven by threats, fear and anxiety triggered by race.

Wilmot James (in Beningfield, 1994: 3) wrote in reference to a country with multi-racial groups like South Africa and the USA that most whites fear and despise blacks because they associate issues such crime, rape, murder, declining services with them. The belief is that blacks moving into white neighborhoods bring with them overcrowding and all other social evils. In South Africa, it is true that apartheid is no longer institutionalized however; its legacy still lingers on. Barney Pityana wrote that everyday in South Africa we are confronted with the issue of racism. It confronts us daily in news

reports and in the experiences we have in our neighborhoods and in the market place [http://www.aardvark.co.za/cgi-bin/cb/AfricaSearch.cgi : 26 September 2003]

Mail and Gaurdian (02 May 2003) notes that "racism remain alive in South Africa not only because of discrimination or prejudice against individuals, but because it is systemic". The vast majority of people who live in government-built dormitory housing, use over-burdened public health services, cram into third-rate schools, fail to receive social grants, are black [http:// www. archive.mg.co.za/MGarchive/Frameset.asp? 26 September 2003].

The reality is that democracy so far failed to wipe out racial inequality in South Africa. However, parties such as the DA have constantly criticized the ANC for raising the issue of racial inequality. To the DA the issue of race is no longer relevant to the South African situation despite that it was mainly black people who had to endure all the suffering under apartheid. According to Dr. Pallo Jordaan (Sunday Times, 28 septemer 2003) what separates the ANC and the opposition are mutually exclusive conceptions of democracy. The DA and the propertied constituency it represents seem to consider the achievement of formal representative democracy as sufficient. While for the constituency the ANC represent, formal representative democracy is but the beginning of the journey to reverse the legacy of apartheid, (i.e.) white domination and to push back the frontiers of poverty as well as to gain substantive equality (Sunday Times, 28 September 2003).

The above interpretation is widely apparent among the black population. In reference to the above argument AZAPO noted that " race is a South African reality, and it is cynical and perhaps foolhardy for parties like the DA to say that making reference to racial inequality suggested assertion of African hegemony[http:/www.sundaytimes.co.za/Zones/Sundaytimes/newsst/newsst. asp , 26 September 2003].

Therefore, affirmative action is one attempt to redress past imbalance by giving preference for jobs to blacks first. This is not a South African thing but it happens elsewhere. The United States of America has policies that give preference to minority races that were denied opportunities in the past. To the ruling ANC, people who criticize its policies are labeled as being racist and trying to cling to past privileges.

However, the ANC is accused of promoting the interests of black people more than those of other races. Other scholars have argued that despite the non-racial banner the ANC waved during the liberation struggle it was quick to call for "black unity" after the 1994 election, emphasising that black South Africans retain a common interest. This has been the reality of the politics in this country since 1994. The ANC co-opted capable black leaders from both the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) into the government. However, when the DA called for opposition parties to form a coalition of change to fight the forthcoming elections, the ANC Youth League was outraged. They described Leon's call as an attempt to form a "back to apartheid detachment" and went further to suggest that the IFP, which hinted at an alliance with the DA, was part of a "kill blacks alliance" (City Press, 10 August 2003).

The ruling party (ANC) is quick to label other parties as racist when they oppose it (the ANC). Any attempt by opposition parties to strengthen themselves is viewed as an attempt to retain white privilege. What is surprising is that the ANC is now in alliance with the New National Party the party that introduced apartheid in this country. Commenting on this, Leon said, "He found it odd that when the Democratic Party was in a coalition with the NNP to form the DA, the ANC accused them of being an alliance of hatred" (City Press, 10 August 2003). Nonetheless, there is not even a single party in South Africa that can admit that they are racist. Tony Leon like Thabo

Mbeki has constantly denied that his party is racist and caters for the interests of the white minorities only, while Mbeki thinks the ANC is the only party where race does not matter.

However, as noted above, the problem is that since 1997, the ANC has adopted various racial preference policies that severely prejudice the interests of the white minority and advance the interests of black elite .The ruling party has underplayed the widening income differentials within the black population, and stressed the continued (relative) wealth of the white population. For instance, in 1998 the president informed South Africans that they were "two nations, the one black and poor and the other white and well off". The ANC had also labelled the media in this country as racist. It has accused the media of deliberately using racist ideologies to justify and promote the further entrenchment of the unacceptable reality of black impoverishment (Giliomee et al, 2003:163).

Giliomee et al, (2003: 170) argue, "Following 1994, little prospect of the ANC losing power exaggerated the importance of internal party interests and undermined its accountability to the electorate. As the electorate could be taken for granted, the party had now elected a leader who was best able to advance their corporate interests, and subsequently, the ANC elite networks around the party have been the main beneficiaries of affirmative action and black empowerment. Giliomee et al, (2003: 170) argues that policies such as affirmative action and black empowerment have succeeded in placing loyalists in key positions, and simultaneously compensate those who lost out in internal power struggle, through redeployment to comfortable but less strategic positions. This system is not helping ease the racial tension. According to Tim Wood, "Applying racial labels to a market economy is not an easy thing and it is not a sensible thing". This is in reference to affirmative action and other initiatives by the ANC led government to empower blacks.

[http://www.m1.mny.co.za/mgan.nsf/0/85256c3300290CD485256C500008CB60 ?OpeDoc, 02 August 2003]

Subsequently, the ANC's shift towards an Africanist discourse has facilitated rapprochement with the IFP, and thus, enabled it to co-opt (through racial patronage) the emergent black (upper) middle class (Giliomee et al, 2003, 170). This is exactly what the ANC would like to do with parties such as the PAC and the UDM. Offer them job opportunities with the aim of creating solidarity among black people [www. archive.mg.co.za/MGarchive/Frameset.asp? 26 September 2003].

However, this approach has failed so far to keep COSATU quiet as its leadership has declined any offers of jobs from the ANC in the national government. Consequently, the DA leader Tony Leon has argued, "The ANC is engaged in race calling because it does not want the DA to be more black and non-racial. According to Leon, the DA has made significant progress within the black communities, especially in Limpopo and Mpumalanga. " (City Press, 10 August 2003).

The ANC sees itself as the only legitimate party that could discern and advance the interests of the black majority. Mbeki has described the ANC as the only political instrument that the masses of our people have in their hands (Giliomeeet al, 2003:171). The same thing has been happening in Zimbabwe where the ruling ZANU-PF has accused opposition parties of being agents of white minorities. The animosity between blacks and whites in Africa stem from a past of racial oppression and subjugation and it is very difficult for some people to overcome that. Phillip Mason (in Franklin, 1968: 51) wrote that many white people associate blacks with inefficiency and backwardness while most blacks looking at the whites remember colonialism, slavery and oppression.

For instance, Hugo (1989: 9) wrote that in relation to events in the Congo in 1960, Die Burger, which is a predominantly white Afrikaner newspaper, warned its readers that events in the Congo had clearly demonstrated that that black nationalism was not prepared to tolerate any form of partnership with whites. This was after the civil war in the Congo and most whites fled to South Africa to seek refuge. The events in the Congo as does the current crisis in Zimbabwe is seen by other whites as an attempt to drive them out of the African continent. When parties such as the ANC and the PAC support despotic leaders such as Mugabe, this is seen as an attempt to sideline whites. While blacks view the criticism by whites as having racial motives and stemming from the fact that they do not believe that blacks are capable enough to rule themselves without any help from whites.

The other problem is that in Africa as nations are liberated from colonialism and other racial vices like Apartheid; we make the mistake of thinking that legislating against racism is enough. Affirmative action, laws to open up "private clubs" dominated by whites and fair access to employment do not build a race-blind nation. If anything, they tend to have the opposite effect. White Africans in virtually every nation on the continent tend to withdraw into a social laager, and mix with blacks only when they have to (http://archive.mg.co.za/nxt/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/MGP2003/31v00024/41v00025/51, 02 August 2003).

5.3. CONCLUSSION:

It is essential to point out that the methodology adopted in this study has its own limitations, but in similar vein, the approach has also shed us some light in as far as politicisation of race in South Africa is concerned. The study has also indicated that political parties mainly use race as a means to gain support and that to most South Africans race is no longer viewed as the main issue. However, there is still a lot of work to be done to eradicate remnants of

apartheid such as, racial inequalities, poverty as well as unemployment and housing shortages.

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