

VUNDLA AND FERREIRA**OPPOSITES FOUND
COMMON GROUND**

By Bremer Hofmeyr

A REMARKABLE man will step out from behind the curtain at the Opera House next week to introduce the play "The Dictator's Slippers."

He is Mr P. Q. Vundla, of Dube Township, Johannesburg.

Until a few years ago he had the reputation of being the most dangerous man on the Witwatersrand. Nor does he deny it. He was at the heart of every turmoil on the Reef for 30 years.

Then a young Afrikaner walked into his life—Nico Ferreira. He was head of the Jeugbond in Pretoria University, an extra-mural student working by day under Dr Verwoerd in the Native Affairs Department, as it was then known. He came from the most conservative background of a Free State farm. Then something happened. He found a revolution in his thinking that took him from a preoccupation with his own people to a passion to bring to all of Africa an idea big enough to enable all men to shape a sane future together.

He thought about Vundla and it occurred to him that though they came from backgrounds diametrically opposed, they might be very much alike.

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HE went to call on Vundla in his home. Vundla growled: "Who are you? The only White men who come here are the police." However Ferreira got in. Vundla let loose a tirade on what he thought of White people, Free State farmers, Native Affairs and the rest.

Ferreira heard him out and then said quietly: "I know a lot of the things you say are

true, because they were true of me." Then he told of the commitment of his life to a new conception for Africa. Vundla says: "I am a proud man. I was touched by his humility and honesty." After Ferreira left he pondered his words and came to this conclusion: "To my dying day I will fight for my people and for the right as I see it. But no longer will I fight on a basis of hatred, division and bloodshed."

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VUNDLA boldly struck out on his new course. Some turned on him. One night they broke into his house and assaulted him. He was stabbed but got away through the window. Ferreira heard he was in hospital and rushed down. Vundla said: "I knew you would come. I knew you would come. This gives me faith."

He came out of hospital and called a mass meeting of his people. "You may kill me," he said, "but you will never kill the idea to which I have given my life." Since that day the two men have fought shoulder to shoulder in this land and overseas.

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TODAY Vundla is the chairman of the advisory board of four of the African townships of Johannesburg. He has held the confidence of his people.

Also he speaks to the world. He and a member of the South African Parliament attended an international conference in Japan. After Vundla spoke the Member of Parliament said: "That man is South Africa's best ambassador to the world."