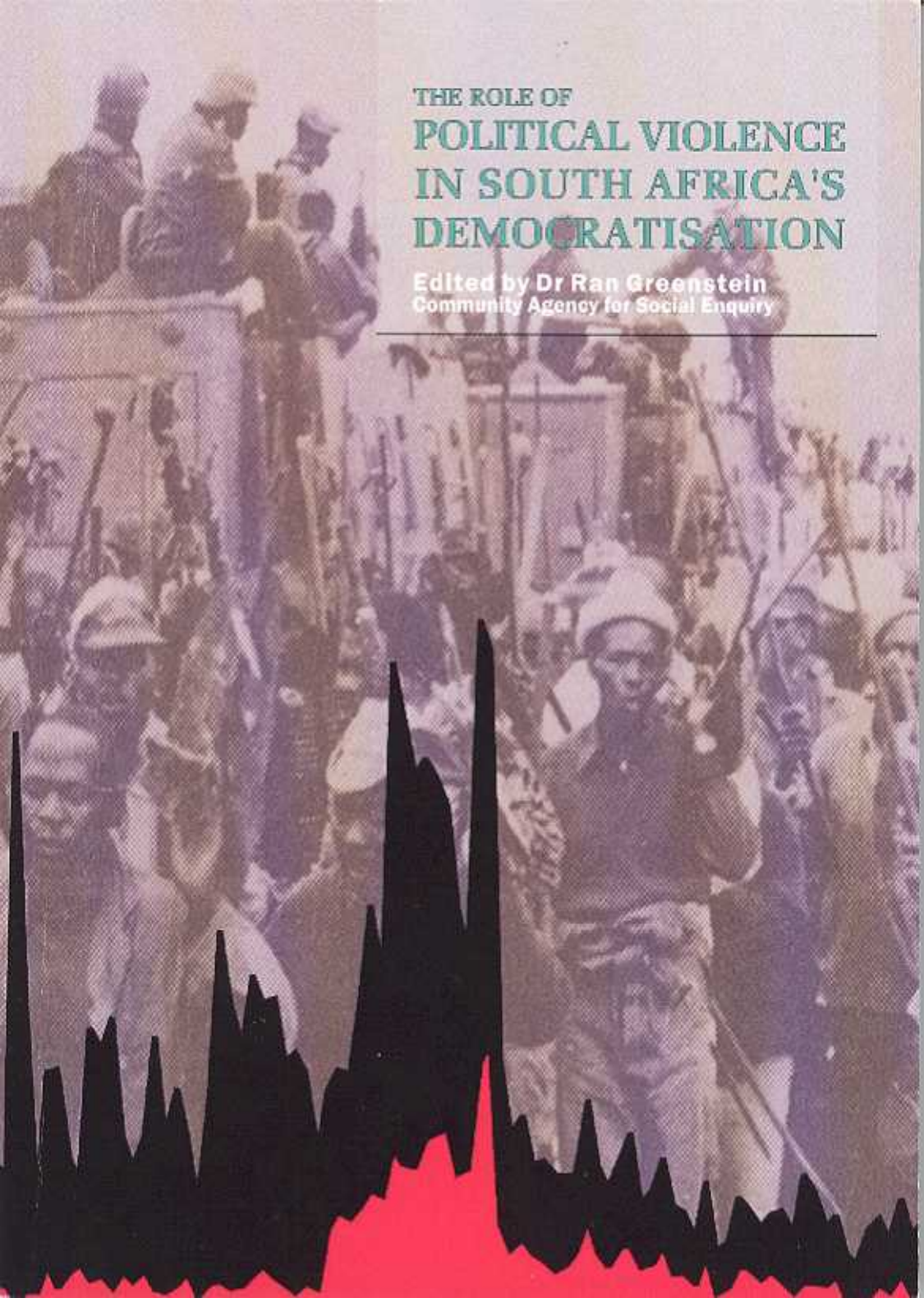

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA'S DEMOCRATISATION

Edited by Dr Ran Greenstein
Community Agency for Social Enquiry

The role of political violence in South Africa's democratisation

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Introduction

John Aitchison

In late 1987 the Board of the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) heard graphic reports about the escalation of politically related violence in the Natal Midlands, where CASE had established a project in partnership with the Centre for Adult Education of the University of Natal. The Board agreed to devote some of these project resources to help monitor these developments and over the next six years the Centre for Adult Education became a major source of information and analysis about the deadly conflict. The unbanning of many political organisations in 1990 and the liberation of imprisoned political leaders, though, as we know, led in due course to the democratic elections of 1994 and the new constitution, did not see the end of the violence. Indeed, the birth pangs of this new dispensation saw bloodshed on an unprecedented scale, much of it now centred on the industrial heartland of South Africa around Johannesburg, where the headquarters of CASE also became deeply involved in numbering the dead and interpreting the patterns in these fatalities. CASE documentation played an important part in exposing the nature and origins of this violence that for a time seriously threatened South Africa's transition away from apartheid.

With that transition secured, CASE's attention, as with most other research agencies, was now directed more at the problems of reconstruction and development, but a small project was undertaken to write into a more coherent account our analysis of this violent period. The project itself was then somewhat overtaken by the Truth and Reconciliation hearings and the reports that emanated from the Commission (though its final report is still awaited). However, CASE believes that this book, that brings together a distillation of CASE's research done on the violence together with a number of pieces that reflect on its wider implications, is still of considerable value to those interested in both the history of South Africa's political transition and in understanding the nature of the forces that pushed it towards, and continue to influence, that transition's current trajectory.

The volume starts with Jackie Dugard's account of Low Intensity Conflict

(LIC), the theory and practice of which can be seen explaining many of the phenomenon evident in a number of conflict ridden societies in the 1970s and 1980s as Western powers sought to stave off revolutionary threats to their Latin American, African and Asian allies. Though low intensity wars did indeed smother revolutions and inflict severe damage on mass organisations, they did little to transform the relations of society which they were designed to defend. What they did most successfully, particularly in the late 1980s and 1990s, was to prepare the way for 'guided democracies' and the pacification of liberation movements during political transition. Dugard then describes the influence of Low Intensity Conflict thinking on the South African security forces of this period, firstly in their attempts to maintain a buffer zone around South Africa in Angola, Mozambique and Namibia, and, secondly (in her second chapter) in South Africa itself. Dugard identifies three phases of internal LIC policy. First, the total strategy phase, between 1980 and 1986, which coupled reform with repression. Second, the counter-revolutionary war phase, between 1986 and 1990, which utilised the Win Hearts and Minds (WHAM) strategy. This phase witnessed an LIC trial run in KwaZulu-Natal. Thirdly, the LIC-proper phase, between 1990 and 1994, which employed the dual strategy of negotiations and destabilisation, whose prize lay in securing during negotiations a set of basic conditions, which would limit fundamental reforms to the socio-economic order and deny the ANC the two-thirds majority necessary to renege on the 'deal', while at the same time accelerating socio-economic divisions among black South Africans.

The Low Intensity Conflict in South Africa is conventionally seen as starting in the Natal Midlands in the mid and late 1980s and John Aitchison's two chapters provide a detailed history of the spread of the conflict in KwaZulu-Natal in the pre and post-April 1990 periods, together with an analysis of the statistical data that illuminated the hidden hand of the state forces (or at least a significant portion of them) in fuelling and fanning the conflagration that was ostensibly between the Inkatha movement and the United Democratic Front and its ally the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

David Everatt's chapter examines the nature and causes of the pre-election period violence in what is now the province of Gauteng. He argues, on the basis of a close analysis of monitoring data, that the commonly held view that the violence was multi-causal, involving elements of poverty, ethnicity and political contestation is wrong and that, though the violence indeed drew on a range of socio-economic and political factors, it was deliberately formented;

and that the security forces played a key role, beyond that of favouring Inkatha, in trying to affect the negotiation process and protect their own futures. He identifies a close correlation between the surges of violence and the various stages of political negotiation about the transition to democracy, that is best explained by the efforts of state embedded forces to derail the transition or to steer it in ways more to their liking. The first of these goals was not achieved, despite the support of the security forces and the mainstream media, Inkatha failed to win the hearts and minds of the mass of Reef residents and consequently lost the war. The second goal, their goal of weakening the ANC was in part achieved, and hence the double agenda of negotiating while destabilising paid off. The socialist tenets of the ANC programme were dropped and enough federalism was put into the interim constitution to satisfy the National Party. In the global context where oppressive regimes were tumbling in the face of mass protest on the streets, the then South African government's security forces pulled off quite a feat, negotiating its way out of power but into an environment safe for capitalism - and safe for former oppressors.

The remaining chapters examine in a more thematic way the relationship between the political transition and the violence.

In Chapter 6, Dugard looks at the mechanisms instituted by the Nationalist Party government in response to public (and international) demands that it take action against the violence. She examines the role of the 1991 National Peace Accord and the Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation (the Goldstone Commission) which, despite their massive resources and a high media profile, never managed to lower the levels of political violence or to publicly reveal those responsible for it, and concludes that it many respects these bodies were effective only as diversionary tactics that allowed the negotiations to continue against the backdrop of continued violence. They played the transition game from the outset.

In another chapter Dugard details that field of forces that drove the various parties to the negotiating table and settlement and the various deals which were struck in the course of the settlement, particularly in relation to the issues of indemnity, amnesty and the threat of non-participation by Inkatha in the 1994 election.

Heine Marais revisits some of the issues about the interpretation of the violence and shows that the violence is a not easily separable part of the

broader influences on the way we now are, though understanding contemporary South African society and what is to be done is illuminated by the political violence of 1987 to 1994 and its role in ensuring that the democratic movement was assimilated into the South African state rather than taking it over. Marais argues that the LIC strategy coincided with several socio-economic changes that played an equally important role in countering the values systems once advanced by the main resistance movements. The state sponsored violence of the late 1980s and early 1990s at most exacerbated emerging fault-lines and encouraged existing conflicts that arose as much from structural (political, economic, social and ideological) trends in society as they did from the acts and omissions of individuals, organisations and state institutions. Since 1994, South Africa's integration into the global economy has amplified some of those trends and left the country vulnerable to new violence-spawning ones.

Piers Pigou closes the study with an evaluation of the extent to which the Truth and Reconciliation findings throw sufficient light upon this period of violence and provide an adequate closure upon it. Analysing its findings on the roles of the parties to the conflict and the security forces in particular, Pigou finds the TRC's attempt to expose the truths of the past both admirable and flawed. As the product of political settlement it is probable that it was never intended to secure full disclosure, and quite probable that it has revealed more than some of its sponsors would liked it to have done.

John Aitchison

Chairperson
Board of the Community Agency for Social Enquiry

1 November 2002

Chapter one

Low-intensity conflict[1]

Jackie Dugard

> I do not wish to spread the alarm, but I must state unambiguously that for a long time already, we have been engaged in a war of low intensity and that this situation will probably continue for some considerable time to come.
>
> *—PW Botha, Minister of Defence, 1973*

Low-intensity war, usually called low-intensity conflict (LIC), has a long history, born of colonial oppression and wars of conquest and liberation. In South Africa, LIC was practised by the apartheid regime in the 1980s and early 1990s as a tool in its struggle against mass resistance and liberation movements.

Although it differs from context to context, LIC is characterised by the use of covert action and non-conventional methods of warfare, that serve to spread fear, insecurity and internal divisions among target populations. For its practitioners, LIC has the benefit of being cost effective and less internationally visible than conventional war. In the words of a former LIC 'warrior', Dirk Coetzee, LIC is a 'twilight war where everything goes'.[2]

The International Experience

Mao's image of a revolutionary as one who moves among the people as a fish swims in the sea lies at the heart of LIC theory. LIC theorists believe that the way to defeat insurgency is to remove the revolutionary fish from the sea and make the sea uninviting for additional revolutionary fish.

The modern form of low-intensity conflict strategy has its roots in the counter-revolutionary strategies developed during World War II by the British in Kenya and Malaya, and the French in Indochina and Algeria. The British 'win hearts and minds' campaign in Malaya, which defeated the communist-led Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA) through isolating them from their 'sea' of Malayan supporters, was of particular relevance to LIC theorists.

Confirmation of the efficacy of the British strategy came from the American-supported suppression of the Huk rebellion in the Philippines in the early 1950s. America's role in crushing the Philippines' revolution was described by Allen Dulles, the former CIA director, as 'one of the first major attempts at secret warfare by the agency's covert operations department established in 1948'.[3]

After World War II, cold war ideologies infused the LIC concept to produce a comprehensive military, social, economic and political offensive against communism. During this period LIC strategy made significant inroads into the official military doctrine of the United States. In terms of the Truman doctrine (1945–1950), the containment of communism became the focus of US foreign policy. To lend muscle to this policy, US troops were stationed in 56 countries in 1946. By 1949 the US had established 400 major naval and air bases across the world.[4] North Korea was invaded by the US in 1950.

But LIC strategy in its late twentieth century form was born of American experience during the Vietnam war. Vietnam taught the Americans that military superiority alone was not sufficient to defeat an organised popular movement and that the more firepower they used, the more the civilian population sympathised with the nationalist struggle. It also showed the Americans that most insurgency movements in the post World War II period were primarily political rather than military in nature, in that their supporters were seeking to change unjust, often colonial, systems. For this reason LIC attempted to destroy people's hopes for a more just society by undermining and de-legitimising progressive alternatives.

From 1974 to 1980 a wave of revolutions swept the world in Cambodia, Laos, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tome, and Cape Verde. In particular, the Iranian revolution (1978–1979) and the revolutions in Granada (March 1979) and in Nicaragua (July 1979) sent shock waves through American society and sparked a crisis that culminated in the election of an LIC champion, Ronald Reagan, as American President in 1980.

Throughout the 1980s, LIC was used to back paramilitary conservatives, to prop up right-wing governments, and to wage counter-insurgency campaigns against left-wing guerrilla movements or governments. In the Philippines, the US-backed Corazon Aquino government used it against the New People's Army (NPA). In El Salvador, the United States backed President José Napoleón Duarte's government against the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (FMLN) fighters. In Nicaragua the US supported counter-revolutionaries (Contras) against the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Sandinistas), which had led a successful revolution in 1979.

What does LIC entail?

There is no set formula for LIC war, and each case has its own specifics. Nonetheless, LIC strategy has some universal features, which are discussed below.

Controlling the population

Because LIC's goals are primarily political rather than military, controlling the population is of paramount importance. This is carried out in order to mobilise support (or at least get the acquiescence) of the population, and to separate those who cannot be controlled from their mass support-base. A more sinister side to controlling the population is instilling fear and insecurity through vigilante and hit-squad activities. It also involves creating a sense of uncertainty and confusion through the demonisation and criminalisation of the opposition forces, while elevating and glorifying the US and its surrogates. In El Salvador the US-backed government incessantly broadcast its political message in an almost mantra-like chant: 'all opposition to the regime is masterminded by the FMLN; opposition equals terrorism equals destruction equals death.' Conversely the state and military were portrayed as representing 'peace, humanitarianism and patriotism'.[5]

Controlling the population also involves waging psychological media warfare to win people's hearts and minds. This includes disinformation and censorship. President Reagan's speech to the American public on the issue of Nicaragua on 16 March 1986 is typical of this approach. In his speech Reagan described Nicaragua as a 'Soviet ally' which was closely associated with 'Arafat, Gaddafi and Khomeini'; in contrast, he described the Contras as being analogous to the 'French Resistance that fought the Nazis', and stated that getting rid of the Sandinistas would 'cure the drug problem and solve illegal immigration'.[6] At the same time Reagan 'disclosed … hard evidence' that the

Sandinistas were smuggling arms to insurgents in El Salvador. When asked for the evidence, Reagan told Republican Edward Markey that it could not be found.

Removing the revolutionary climate

The lessons of the anti-Huk campaign in the Philippines suggested that revolutionaries' grievances often relate to the material conditions of their environment. Accordingly every LIC campaign since 1953 has incorporated economic aid and humanitarian assistance as weapons of war:

> Over the years there was a growing call to bring humanitarian assistance into defence policy. Aid is extended to foreign countries in support of a national policy, first, to halt the spread of communism and second, to bolster the internal strength of US allies.[7]

Aid is aimed at pacifying the masses through giving them a stake in the system. For example, extensive financial grants were made between 1968 and 1971 by the US Agency for International Development (AID) to El Salvadorian agricultural commercial unions, in order to bolster rural areas against 'the insidious dangers of Communism in the countryside'.[8]

Giving people a stake in the system includes the provision of material upliftment and may also involve some reforms, but the structural economic and socio-political problems are rarely confronted. Material upliftment is usually conducted through highly publicised endeavours, often administered by the army (or the surrogate army). The upliftment is aimed at removing some of the immediate grievances of people and at bolstering the image of the armed forces while extending its influence. The use of economic aid to alleviate the conditions that fuel popular uprisings is the 'carrot' of LIC warfare that aims to win people's hearts.

Repression or removal of opposition

The LIC 'stick' is the repression or removal of those sections of society that cannot be controlled. This also includes the stifling of popular resistance. Repression is effected through mechanisms that include bannings, restrictions, detentions, assassinations, disappearances, kidnappings, and torture. These LIC methods have been employed with devastating effect throughout Central America.

The repressive element of LIC includes forming pacts with dissatisfied and marginalised elements of society, resulting in hit-squads and right-wing vigilante groups: so-called third forces. Typically, vigilantes and death squad members are not arrested, despite the government being able to identify and apprehend the revolutionaries.

An important component of LIC is the military aid and training provided to surrogate forces. Surrogates are utilised to minimise the casualties among own forces, and to advance 'divide and rule' tactics. The best known example of US support of an anti-communist insurgency group is its financial aid to the Nicaraguan Contras, which was first publicly admitted to by Reagan in 1983.

Support of centrist alternatives

Once the revolutionaries have been removed from society, and their support base has been subjected to a psychological war of attrition, a political alternative is offered to the population. The alternative is usually a centrist political party, militarily and economically supported by the US.

The classic example of the US supporting a 'centrist' party over a right-wing or left-wing one is its support for Corazon Aquino over the dictator Ferdinand Marcos on the right, and the New People's Army (NPA) on the left. It is interesting to remember that only a few years previously, then Vice President George Bush toasted Ferdinand Marcos after his 'victory' in the rigged presidential elections in June 1981: 'We love you sir … We love your adherence to democratic principles and democratic processes.'[9]

Why 'low intensity'?

From the perspective of the superpower, LIC is differentiated from other forms of conflict in terms of the following spectrum of conflict:

Level of intensity	Level of interaction
Peace	cultural, political and economic competition
Low-intensity conflict	political and economic conflict: propaganda, military assistance, terrorism and counter-terrorism, assassinations, sabotage, border incidents and seizures
Mid-intensity conflict	war: regular forces engaged, declaration of war and invasion
High-intensity conflict	war: full mobilisation, nuclear war

Table 1

The term LIC and its position in the spectrum of conflict are misleading, since they describe the levels of violence from the military stance of the aggressor nation. LIC was described by Colonel John Waghelstein, a US military strategist who operated in El Salvador, as:

> total war at the grass-roots level – one that uses all the weapons of total war, including political, economic and psychological warfare, with the military aspect being a distant fourth in many cases.[10]

Affected populations do not experience LIC as the lowest scale of war. For them the wars are protracted and dirty, engender fear and insecurity, and have claimed the lives of thousands while worsening the burdens of poverty. For many of them, LIC warfare is the price they have had to pay for attempting liberation from foreign domination.

Has LIC been successful?

A number of examples from Central America show that LIC has often been able to create only temporary stalemate:

The main flaw of low-intensity strategies is that they do not address the real questions of exploitation and domination in these societies. They may succeed in bringing about temporary improvements in living conditions, and they seem able to inflict damage on mass organisation, but they are unlikely to transform the relations of society which they are designed to defend.[11]

In the words of a mayor in the Philippines:

> I cannot count on the help of the civilians against the NPA. We have not provided any reason for them to help. How can we enlist the aid of the civilians when we cannot even provide them with basic needs — potable water, school houses, a municipal building?[12]

However, LIC has been credited with slowing down the revolutionary offensive in Guatemala, El Salvador and the Philippines.[13] However, where LIC has been most successful has been in preparing the way for 'guided democracies' and the pacification of liberation movements through negotiated settlements, which guarantee favourable conditions for the free market and capitalism.

The demise of LIC?

The reforms undertaken by Gorbachev in the mid-1980s in the Soviet Union, and the collapse of the Soviet Empire towards the end of the 1980s, transformed the context in which LIC operated. The thaw in the cold war meant that communism was no longer perceived as a threat, as it had been between 1945 and 1985. By the end of the 1980s the US and the Soviet Union had embarked on a process of procuring negotiated settlements in areas of international dispute.

However, it is arguable that the US/USSR *rapprochement* witnessed not the demise of LIC but merely a change in its character. In recent years observers have noted a new phenomenon which complements LIC strategy: low intensity democracy (LID). LID involves the 'pacification' of progressive forces during political transition (what is called 'guided' democracy), rather than the consolidation of liberal democratic institutions under popular democracy.

With the changes in East-West relations, liberal democracies based on free market capitalism were proclaimed as the most stable systems, as well as the best protectors of human rights. In this context, 'democracy' is used to pre-empt progressive reform or revolutionary change. It has been argued that 'today, the particular forms of democracy promoted by the West in the Third World are specifically tailored to serve the interests of global capital in these countries', and that 'this 'crusade' for democracy is the new ideological agenda of global capitalism'.[14] This is achieved through incorporating popular forces in electoral processes, while enhancing economic reforms conducive to the spread of market relations.

Internal LIC

LIC is not only perpetuated by a foreign power against another country. Since the 1980s there has been an alarming increase in internal LIC, in which

> Governments secretly employ surrogate agencies, such as ethnic or religious militias, to attack supporters of opposition political parties or government critics. Thereby they perpetuate at a local level the restrictive structures of one-party rule, while proclaiming their fidelity to democratic principles at a national level.[15]

During the 1970s a number of governments in Latin America, under pressure from human rights agencies to end formal repression, organised covert death

squads to effect the 'disappearance' of political opponents. A similar phenomenon has developed in Africa, particularly since the 1990s. This has usually coincided with the transition to multiparty democracy, when governments resorted to covert and surrogate means of repressing their opponents while being subject to international scrutiny, and thus have maintained their power.

Although it covers a broad spectrum of human rights abuses, this internal form of LIC has usually entailed the employment of covert tactics by the government to exploit existing social divisions or to incite fresh conflicts, all the time denying involvement in the violence. Because the violence is characterised as 'ethnic, 'cultural', 'traditional' or 'primordial', Western governments have often been reluctant to intervene, allowing the perpetrators to consolidate their power and justify the existence of authoritarian government. In many cases, such as in Kenya, this has allowed the government to 'alter' electoral demography in favour of the ruling party.

Lessons for South Africa

The internal LIC experienced in some African countries bears a striking resemblance to the tactics used by the South African state and anti-ANC groups between 1985 and 1994. For example, President Moi's attempt to consolidate political power in Kenya for the Kalenjin and Maasai in the Rift Valley – an approach known as ethnic federalism – closely resembles the federalist stance adopted by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in South Africa. Similarly, the altering of electoral demographics by engendering fear and insecurity within communities was an approach widely used by the security forces on the Reef between 1990 and 1994.

Other lessons from Africa include the labelling of violence as 'traditional', 'tribal' or 'black-on-black'; the exploitation of rural-urban divides; the manipulation of genuine grievances; and the utilisation of gangs or vigilantes. Perhaps the most direct exchange of experience was provided in the course of South Africa's counter-insurgency wars with its neighbouring countries, which in many respects were regarded by Pretoria as an extension of its military jurisdiction.

South Africa's low-intensity conflict

From as early as 1967 South African security forces experimented with elements of LIC strategy by helping the Rhodesian Army against the

Zimbabwean liberation movement. During these years, South Africa formed the first 'Contra' army when, together with the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), it formed the Mozambican National Resistance Movement (Renamo) in 1974. The Rhodesian government used Renamo to counter rebel forces and their Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo) allies based in Mozambique. At Zimbabwean independence, South Africa inherited Renamo and used it as a surrogate force to challenge the Frelimo government and ANC support in Mozambique.

South Africa's LIC strategy was extended to Angola and Namibia, but its real LIC was waged against the liberation struggle *inside* South Africa. The apartheid government's engagement with LIC on external as well as internal fronts is a unique application of the strategy. It witnessed the entire spectrum of devices in the LIC toolkit, from total war and direct military contact in Angola to supporting alternative financial institutions in Namibia; from murdering South African activists to financing clean-up campaigns in townships; and from supporting Inkatha and vigilante groups to detentions, bannings and disinformation campaigns.

The history

The apartheid military had a long standing attraction to LIC theory. During the 1960s, many South African Defence Force (SADF) officials were sent to the United States to study LIC theory.[16] Among them was Magnus Malan who became Minister of Defence in 1980. Other security force personnel, including Lieutenant Swanepoel, Major Brits and Colonel van den Bergh, had been sent to France for special training during the Algerian war. They returned to form the police's Security Branch.[17] The LIC exposure and training experienced by Malan and other SADF and South African Police (SAP) officials had a great impact on the South African defence establishment.

Despite this training, during the BJ Vorster years, when much government energy was expended in trying to gain support from conservative African governments, no coherent political-military strategy emerged. In many respects such a strategy was not yet necessary, since internally the liberation movements had been crushed in the 1960s and the SAP – with their brutal methods – was able to maintain control. However, the rise of PW Botha in the late 1970s marked the advent of a new comprehensive security policy.

Under Botha security policy became precise and co-ordinated: it evolved into a 'total strategy' to address the 'total onslaught' which was supposedly

directed at South Africa. As Minister of Defence under Vorster, Botha had been instrumental in making South Africa self-sufficient in respect of most of its arms requirements, through the establishment of the Armaments Development Corporation (Armscor). It was under his leadership that South Africa first invaded Angola in 1975. His military background, together with his National Intelligence portfolio, placed him in a strong position to influence South Africa's security forces and to restructure the government's power base. As Prime Minister he shifted the focus of state power away from parliament and the National Party, and centralised executive power in the cabinet and in a more streamlined military. The rise of the military during this period took the monopoly on coercive power away from the police for the first time in apartheid history.

As an initial move to consolidate the military's dominance, Botha downgraded the Bureau of State Security (Boss), a branch of the security police headed by Colonel Hendrik van den Bergh, and placed more emphasis on military intelligence.

Under Botha, the restructured security establishment consisted of several components, including: the Department of Defence and the SADF; specialised training institutes; the intelligence community (including the Military Intelligence (MI) section of the SADF, the National Intelligence Service, and the Security Branch of the SAP); the intellectual community, including the Institute for Strategic Studies at the University of Pretoria and other think-tanks; the armaments and related industries; the SAP.

All these were overseen by the State Security Council (SSC). The SSC was a supra-cabinet agency through which security policy was determined and its implementation co-ordinated. First and foremost, its members subscribed to and propagated 'the necessity of a total national strategy to combat a total onslaught aimed at South Africa'.[18]

Over and above the formal bodies of the security establishment, at various times during the 1980s and early 1990s, semi-autonomous institutions and groupings 'operated in a grey area of limited accountability', including vigilante groups, hit-squads and proxy forces such as Unita in Angola, Renamo in Mozambique and Inkatha in South Africa.[19] This included covert operations executed by security organs such as the Directorate of Special Tasks (DST) and Special Forces of the SADF, and the Security Branch of the South African Police.

Under Botha the SSC, which aimed to identify and evaluate security threats

and ensure a co-ordinated response to them, became the 'focal point of all national decision-making and governmental power'.[20] The SSC contained a fixed group of politicians and government officials in charge of the key line-function departments (Defence, Law and Order, Foreign Affairs, Justice and National Security) under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister and later State President. Decisions of the SSC were implemented through the Secretariat, an *ad hoc* body of about 100 officials seconded from government departments. The Secretariat translated 'the dictates of the SSC into coherent inter-departmental (or 'total') action'.[21]

Botha's restructuring of the polity and security establishment observed a basic LIC principle:

> A government must establish joint control machinery (political, civil administration, police and armed forces) under single command at all levels, for the implementation of the strategy laid down by the cabinet.[22]

The politico-military strategy that first emerged under Botha was called 'total strategy'. The 1977 Defence White Paper incorporated a developed concept of total strategy into a unified National Security strategy embracing all aspects of governance, and beyond:

> political action; military/para-military action; economic action; psychological action; scientific and technological action; religious-cultural action; manpower services; intelligence services; security services; national supplies, resources and production services; transport and distribution services; financial services; community services; telecommunication services.[23]

This was the first time defence was seen to embrace key aspects of societal relations. However, it was only when Botha was elected Prime Minister in 1978 and the military became central to the policy arena that total strategy could be implemented as a comprehensive politico-military policy. Total strategy had become the government's LIC policy agenda and the SSC was the co-ordinating mechanism through which it was to be implemented.

South Africa's external low-intensity conflict: Mozambique, Angola and Namibia

South Africa's external destabilisation and aggression, its 'destructive

engagement', began in 1975 with the ostensibly secret and much covered-up SADF invasion of Angola. South Africa had long relied on the buffer ring of 'white' states to separate it from 'darkest Africa'. This protective border was necessary to bolster South Africa's position as a minority white regime and to limit the external threat posed by the ANC. As such, South Africa's foreign policy concentrated on forging alliances with neighbouring colonial regimes. The independence in 1975 of two key 'buffers' threatened South Africa's regional autonomy and provided the ANC with potential allies among the frontline states.

The fact that Soviet-aligned political parties spearheaded resistance in Angola and Mozambique made their decolonisation even less desirable for the apartheid government. As with the US rationale for its war in Vietnam, Pretoria was concerned about the 'domino effect', that if one neighbouring country became communist-dominated, all of them would. It is significant that the SADF's Special Forces were established in 1974, largely in response to the April 1974 coup in Portugal and the consequent independence of Mozambique and Angola.

The nature of South Africa's destructive engagement differed from country to country, but there were some common LIC elements throughout the region. In each case, South Africa attempted to use surrogate forces to do all, or at least a sizeable proportion, of the fighting. As Rob Davies observed, this was because:

> the deployment of force is cheap in terms of both direct SADF casualties and resources; and the level of violence and brutality can be raised at a lower diplomatic and ideological cost than would be the case if the state's regular security forces were directly involved.[24]

In order to secure local support for its surrogate forces, Pretoria manipulated existing societal divisions in its neighbouring countries. For example, the SADF was able to capitalise on the inability of Frelimo in Mozambique to capture the allegiance of many rural areas and religious communities (since certain Frelimo policies antagonised religious and traditional communities), allowing Renamo to mobilise support in these areas. Similarly South Africa's involvement in Angola was strengthened through the inability of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) to capture many northern areas of Angola. By either inciting or exploiting internal conflicts South Africa

was able to improve its position to the detriment of liberation forces. When South Africa's own forces were used, black conscripts and units (such as the 32 Battalion) were often deployed.

South Africa's involvement in the wars was, on the whole, undeclared and was characterised by covert action. The government consistently denied its role in regional destabilisation until overwhelming evidence to the contrary surfaced. Once exposed, the South African government claimed that its involvement was justified in terms of the total onslaught of the communist threat. Attacks were perpetrated ostensibly against ANC bases, but often the motive was the destabilisation of government in the host country. The attacks included economic and civilian targets[25] with the intention of causing maximum socio-economic and political damage, and bolstering South African regional economic dominance.

As with LIC elsewhere in the world, South Africa's external LIC strategy was the product of years of experiment in the context of evolving international and national conditions. It emerged as a variegated and sometimes contradictory policy response to the perceived threats of the cold war years. Although no neighbouring country was spared the impact of South Africa's external destabilisation policies, Mozambicans, Angolans and Namibians suffered most from the savage wars that South Africa waged either directly and/or by proxy in their countries.

Mozambique

The Popular Republic of Mozambique was established by Frelimo on 25 June 1975, and was almost immediately catapulted into years of armed insurgency with Renamo. Renamo was formed in 1974 'as a pseudo-terrorist squad or a fifth column by the intelligence services of the illegal Rhodesian regime'.[26] It was managed by the Directorate of Psychological Warfare under the Rhodesian Ministry of Information until March 1980.

When Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, control of Renamo was handed over to the SADF. Direct operational responsibility was undertaken by the Directorate of Special Tasks (DST), which fell under the Chief of Staff (Intelligence). Many of the Rhodesian CIO officers moved to South Africa, to help the SADF with the management of Renamo. Throughout this time the South Africans were able to capitalise on Frelimo's inability to consolidate its support base in many rural areas, particularly among religious groups, including Christians and animists. South Africa's support for Renamo

included conventional and low intensity military training, as well as financial support, training and weapons.

South Africa had many reasons for destabilising Mozambique. It sought to neutralise the 'red threat' posed by the socialist Frelimo government. It wanted to undermine any viable, competing economic power in the region. And it sought to prevent the ANC from gaining a stronghold (and bases for the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe) in the region.

The Mozambican war was particularly savage. A senior United States State Department official described Renamo as waging 'a systematic and brutal war of terror against innocent Mozambican civilians … one of the most brutal holocausts against ordinary human beings since World War II'.[27] The costs of the war were appallingly high: over 100 000 people lost their lives in the 17 years immediately after independence. The 1997 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index rated Mozambique the 166th poorest nation of 175 in the world.[28]

By the mid-1980s the brutality of the war caused even the US to distance itself from Renamo, although it tacitly supported destabilisation elsewhere in Southern Africa. This, along with South Africa's desire to reduce international isolation, compelled Pretoria to follow a strategically diplomatic line that resulted in the signing of the Nkomati Accord between the South African government and the Mozambican government in March 1984. In addition to providing some room for manoeuvre on the Mozambican front, Pretoria hoped that signing the Nkomati Accord would 'spike the guns of the ANC and dampen the struggle inside South Africa'.[29]

The signing of the Accord, however, neither put an end to destabilisation nor achieved Pretoria's home-front objectives. Accusations of continued South African involvement in Mozambique mounted. South African officials speculated that this may have been the work of 'rogue' elements within the military acting without authorisation. This was refuted in August 1985 during a Frelimo raid on a Renamo base at Gorongosa, and the recovery of documents revealing continued South African involvement in Mozambican destabilisation. The 'Gorongosa documents' revealed instances in which arms, communication equipment and medical supplies were provided for Renamo by the SADF. They also revealed that the highest echelons of the SADF hierarchy knew of or were involved in the continued action. Subsequent evidence demonstrated that South African involvement continued until the signing of the cease-fire agreement between Renamo and Frelimo in October 1992.

The SADF/Renamo link resulted in 'an undeclared, low-intensity, covert war waged by the SADF through surrogate forces'.[30] However, the war in Mozambique was unusual in that Renamo neither provided an alternative political doctrine nor attempted to mobilise the support of civilians. A report commissioned by the US State Department found that 'there are virtually no reports of attempts to win the loyalty – or even neutrality – of the villagers ... Instead the bandits have relied on terrorism and intimidation in their relationship with the people'.[31]

Renamo failed to win much support among Mozambicans. As a result, after 1985 Frelimo began re-gaining ground. In combination with its disinclination to take on responsibility for further supporting Renamo, South Africa initiated the negotiation process which culminated in the first democratic election in Mozambique in October 1994, at which Renamo fared much better than was expected (although it did not win the elections).

Lessons for South Africa from Mozambique

South Africa's support for Renamo was its first LIC experiment. This trial run appeared to suggest that in order to control its proxy fighters, Pretoria might have to involve the SADF more directly in combat zones. Nevertheless, the engagement in Mozambique did provide useful lessons for the apartheid government. It gained experience in utilising surrogate forces and learnt that relatively lightly armed men were able to destabilise whole regions.

Angola

South Africa first mounted an invasion of Angola in 1975 and withdrew in 1988, having lost the battle of Cuito Cuanavale against combined Angolan and Cuban forces. Its intervention in Angola was greater and more sustained than in any other country in the region. South Africa's initial goal was to stop a pro-ANC/South West African People's Organisation (Swapo) political party coming to power. Having failed, its subsequent objective became the overthrow of the MPLA government and the destruction of support for the ANC and Swapo in the region.

South Africa was particularly intent on undermining the MPLA because it had gained power with Soviet and Cuban support and was regarded as a highly dangerous threat to regional stability. In addition, Swapo insurgents had first entered Namibia in 1961 through Portuguese Angola. Since then South Africa had regarded Angola's shared border with Namibia as an

Achilles heel that must be defended. Another strategic concern was Angola's oil reserves, which threatened Pretoria's ambitions for regional economic dominance, and provided the Southern Africa with its only alternative oil supply. Oil installations were bombed by the South Africans throughout the war, forcing Angolan resources to be diverted from reconstruction to defence.

South Africa's primary mechanism for destabilising Angola was to resurrect and support the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita). Unita had been formed in 1966 by Jonas Savimbi to fight the Portuguese, and by 1975 it was suffering from regional isolation and political bankruptcy and was looking for a new partner. Although it used Unita as its main vehicle for destabilisation in Angola, between 1980 and 1988 South Africa's involvement intensified to the point where it increasingly took on the characteristics of conventional war, with the SADF permanently deployed in certain areas.

The US supported South Africa's initial involvement in Angola. Even after the US Congress banned military funding for Unita between 1975 and 1984, the US contributed monetary, military and moral support to the South African destabilisation efforts. The Reagan administration's 'constructive engagement' with South Africa after 1980 turned a blind eye to its activities in Angola and linked Namibian independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. The withdrawal of South African troops in 1988 took place with protection provided by United States forces. After the defeat of the SADF, Unita was only able to consolidate its military presence in Angola under the cover of US support.

The Angolan war was brutal, resulting in countless casualties and in Angola having the highest per capita number of limbless people in the world (it has been estimated that 70 000 civilians have had either a leg or both legs amputated as a result of stepping on landmines).[32] Destabilisation involved savage covert attacks, assassinations, kidnappings, destruction of villages and economic sabotage of transport and oil installations. Conventional warfare provided a major testing ground for SADF weapons and strategies.

The war continued until 1988, when a cease-fire was signed, in terms of which South African and Cuban forces withdrew from Angola, and UN Resolution 435 Namibian independence was implemented. Although eventually successful in evicting South African forces from their territory, Angolans have had to pay a high price. Almost 20 years of war decimated Angolan society and destroyed its economy. In 1997 the UNDP's Human

Development Index rated Angola the 157th poorest nation of 175 in the world.[33]

Lessons for South Africa from Angola

Having learnt from Mozambique that direct SADF involvement was probably necessary to wage war by proxy successfully, Angola brought home the dangers of involving the SADF too directly. One of the greatest failures of South African involvement in Angola, as Mozambique, was its inability to mount a successful psychological offensive against Angolans and Mozambicans.

Namibia

Namibia's struggle for independence was intricately linked to developments in Angola. The MPLA victory in Angola meant that the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN, Swapo's army) had a direct route to attack SADF bases in Namibia. In later years PLAN was able to enlist the support of Cuban and MPLA troops to back their struggle for an independent Namibia. Alongside military involvement, a key factor in South Africa's destabilisation attempts was the formation of the 'indigenous' South West African Territory Force (SWATF) in 1980, which became the first line of defence against Swapo. The establishment of SWATF was an important part of LIC strategy, although Namibian civilians regarded the SADF and SWATF as one and the same.

Pretoria's offensive against Namibians included the use of 'divide and rule' tactics in the selection and deployment of SWATF troops. The use of blacks in SWATF was in line with the South African strategy that 'the best way to fight blacks is with other blacks'.[34] In 1981 military conscription became compulsory for all black Namibian males and increasingly the burden of fighting South Africa's war fell on Namibians themselves. In addition, the proportion of blacks deployed in SADF units in Namibia was disproportionately high. In typical LIC practice local units were divided along ethnic lines to cause maximum social dislocation. For example, an extremely high proportion of contacts with Swapo were made by 32 Battalion (mainly former members of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola FNLA)[35], the Ovambo Counter-Insurgency (COIN) unit, and various San units.

Apart from the ravages of conventional war, South African destabilisation of Namibia involved sophisticated psychological warfare against the Namibians. A 1978 study found that 95 per cent of Namibians were religious and suggested that the total strategy should involve manipulation of

Namibians' religious sentiments.[36] To this end, churches, bible groups, Sunday schools and hospital religious groups were established and emphasised a conservative, anti-socialist Christian doctrine to combat liberation theology, though without much success.

Similarly, education was used as a tool of the soft war. Afrikaans was the medium of instruction in many schools and SADF soldiers in uniform often took part in teaching. The SADF was involved in other civilian functions such as building schools, houses and community centres as gestures of goodwill. Economic levers were also utilised, including the establishment of the *Eerste Nasionale Ontwikkelings Kooperasie* that aimed to ensure a market for South African goods in Namibia and to protect white businesses against black enterprises.[37]

Extensive use was made of South African control over the Namibian mass media. South West African TV and radio became conduits for South African propaganda. They emphasised the role of the family and of culture, and cultural centres focusing on ethnic differences were established. One of these quasi-cultural organisations, *Etango* (sun), was established as a 'christian, anti-communist, non-political, cultural organisation', and *Etango* 'aimed at motivating the Ovambo people to resist Swapo and any form of 'communist' infiltration'.[38] The divide and rule agenda also involved the sponsoring of vigilantes to foster ethnic divisions.[39]

Various *Gesamentlike Interdepartmentele Teeninsurgensiekomitees* (interdepartmental counter-insurgency committees) were established by the South Africans to co-ordinate the counter-insurgency strategies in Namibia. These served as a model for the National Security Management System (NSM) that was established inside South Africa in the early 1980s.

As in Angola, the conventional aspect of South Africa's war with Namibia had devastating effects, involving forced removals, security force atrocities, over 10 000 deaths (1 per cent of the population) and over 100 000 people becoming refugees (10 per cent of the population). The intensification of conventional war in Namibia was probably related to Pretoria's growing insecurity in the region, as its intervention in Angola proved problematic. Increasingly, Pretoria realised that its external wars were diverting too much money, energy and resources from its troubles at home.

The defeat at Cuito Cuanavale signalled the end of South African military engagement in Angola and the beginning of Namibian independence. It did not, however, end South African destabilisation of Namibia. A former SADF

Major, Nico Basson, revealed that the imminent election in Namibia marked the beginning of a new destabilisation drive in Namibia. As is shown below, this was also a dress rehearsal for a new phase of destabilisation within South Africa.

Lessons for South Africa from Namibia

Basson was called to Namibia in January 1989 to run the communications strategy for Operation Agree. This was a campaign established by Section D of the security police to destabilise Swapo in the run-up to the first democratic elections. It included a secret operation known as Victor to sponsor opposition parties. The South African Cabinet had taken a decision between late 1988 and early 1989 to assist all the political parties that were opposing Swapo at the polls. This support included the provision of funding, personnel and infrastructural assistance, as well as the use of hit-squads, the use of agents and front organisations, and the use of propaganda and disinformation campaigns.[40]

Prior to the election in November 1989, a special visit to Namibia was organised for then Education Minister FW de Klerk. According to Basson, during the visit 'a deliberate effort' was made to inform De Klerk, in detail, of the double-agenda being executed in Namibia. This was 'in order to prepare him for what was still to come in South Africa'.[41] Basson argued strongly that Operation Agree was a dress rehearsal for De Klerk's subsequent 'double agenda' in South Africa.

De Klerk was appointed State President towards the end of 1989. After his watershed opening speech to Parliament on 2 February 1990, De Klerk was asked three times whether he had funded the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) and other political parties in Namibia during the election phase of 1989. De Klerk used the *Protection of Information Act* (84 of 1982) to avoid answering the question each time. By this stage, however, a strategy for a new South Africa was being developed, informed by experience of Namibia. Namibia revealed the importance of political destabilisation, and also the merit of combining psychological soft war with conventional hard war. It was a trial run for a new form of LIC: destabilisation during political transition.

Lessons from South Africa's external LIC

South Africa's external wars not only ensured that Pretoria maintained regional dominance, but provided invaluable lessons for its internal war of

destabilisation. Although riding on the back of existing societal divisions, the wars in Mozambique, Angola, and Namibia were not 'civil wars' but wars of aggression and destabilisation by apartheid South Africa. These wars served initially as LIC trial runs and subsequently as testing grounds for Pretoria's main LIC: inside South Africa.

A significant focus for South Africa's internal LIC was the use of neighbouring countries as targets for hit-squad activity. Evidence of South African external hit-squad operations first surfaced in 1981 when a Boss agent, Gordon Winter, exposed his former masters in his book, *Inside Boss*. According to Winter, a five-member hit-squad known as Z-Squad was formed in the late 1960s and engaged in the killing of ANC activists in Botswana and Zambia. There is evidence that the Z-Squad was involved in the assassination of the ANC's representative in Paris, Dulcie September, in March 1988 and the injuring of another ANC official, Albie Sachs, in a car-bomb in Maputo in April 1988.[42]

South African hit-squads conducted operations in Swaziland, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Botswana. There was apparently some attempt to demarcate jurisdictional areas between the external missions of the various hit-squads. Swaziland was the preserve of Unit C10 whose head, Dirk Coetzee, regarded Swaziland 'as a playground in which [the hit-squad] could operate freely and virtually without interference from the peaceful Swazis'.[43] Most operations in Zimbabwe and Mozambique were carried out by the hit-squad that was finally called the Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB). However, both Unit C10 and the CCB operated in Botswana and Lesotho.

The role of hit-squads was most clearly illustrated in Zimbabwe. At independence many Rhodesian intelligence and military personnel moved to South Africa and joined the SADF, usually Special Forces or Military Intelligence. Over time a Special Forces unit comprising mainly ex-Rhodesians was formed, eventually becoming known as the CCB. In 1987 a Zimbabwe region of the CCB was created to destabilise ANC activities. Together with some Rhodesian security agents worked for Pretoria from within Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwean African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU)/Patriotic Front (PF) government, a range of operations against ANC and Zimbabwean targets ensued.

The assassinations of ANC activists and the attacks on ANC bases by hit-squads in Zimbabwe and in other neighbouring countries became the blueprint for the operation of hit-squads inside South Africa. Hit-squads

proved effective at destabilising political organisations, as well as engendering fear and confusion. They had the additional benefit of obscuring the apartheid government's involvement (unlike SADF missions). By the mid-1980s, the South African government realised that these aspects could aid its internal LIC.

Chapter two

South Africa's internal low-intensity conflict[1]

Jackie Dugard

Beginning in the late 1970s, the South African government embarked on a momentous campaign of political and economic manoeuvring in a bid to hang on to power. On the political front the government internalised its low intensity war, and on the economic front it implemented widespread privatisation and deregulation. The two processes were part of an overall strategy designed to ensure the survival of white supremacy in South Africa. Two days after the 1977 Defence White Paper was presented to Parliament, Lieutenant-General JR Dutton, Director General of Army Operations, announced that there was 'no longer a distinction between an internal and an external threat, or a military or non-military threat', and that even labour strikes could be seen as guerrilla actions. Furthermore, the role of the military 'could no longer be confined exclusively to the employment of armed force'.[2] Rather, it had to percolate through all aspects of government policy to form a total strategy against the 'total onslaught'. Just before he became Prime Minister in 1978, PW Botha stated:

> The Republic of South Africa is experiencing the full onslaught of Marxism and it must not be doubted that the Republic enjoys a high priority in the onslaught by Moscow.[3]

By weaving anti-communist rhetoric through its security strategies and policies the apartheid government was able, up to a point, to justify its continued repression to the international community. In a TV interview on 14 March 1981 Ronald Reagan offered this qualified support for South Africa:

> As long as there's a sincere and honest effort being made, based on our experience in our land, it would seem to me that we should be trying to be helpful. Can we abandon a country that has stood behind us in every war we've ever fought, a country that strategically is essential to the free world? It has production of minerals we must have, and so forth. I just feel that if we're going to sit down at a table and negotiate with the Russians, surely we can keep the door open and continue to negotiate with a friendly nation like South Africa.[4]

Total strategy, when it emerged in 1980, was the first phase of a comprehensive LIC policy inside South Africa. The application of LIC strategy internally grew out of South Africa's declining political, ideological and economic situation. The strategy was neither constant nor uniformly effective. Rather, it went through changes in response to shifting internal and external conditions, and undertook a range of largely covert actions within quite fluid and flexible parameters.

Three phases of internal LIC policy can be identified. First, the total strategy phase, between 1980 and 1986, coupled reform with repression. Second, the counter-revolutionary war phase, between 1986 and 1990, utilised the Win Hearts and Minds (WHAM) strategy. This phase witnessed an LIC trial run in KwaZulu-Natal. Thirdly, the LIC-proper phase, between 1990 and 1994, the process of guided democracy, employed the dual strategy of negotiations and destabilisation. The latter is the focus of this book and is discussed in detail elsewhere.

In theory the common theme across the three phases was the notion that South Africa's war was, in the words of an SADF official, 'only 20% military and 80% political, social and economic'.[5] This gave rise to a sophisticated strategy that did not require constant security force involvement but could rely on sparks, triggers and catalysts to carry the LIC momentum forward. However, as is discussed below, between 1980 and 1990 the South African government relied too heavily on the military and was able to follow the LIC maxim effectively only between 1990 and 1994.

The political-economic context

By 1980 the apartheid state was experiencing a severe crisis of legitimacy. Externally the wars with its neighbouring states were draining its resources. Internally student protests and industrial action, along with the ANC's armed struggle and the rise of the black consciousness movement during the 1970s,

posed a significant threat to state domination. In addition, the South African economy, which had enjoyed a fairly sustained period of growth since 1945, had entered a protracted depression by the mid-1970s. Underlying this depression was a declining gold price, which made capital and equipment imports very expensive, and the racial structuring of society which meant that the domestic market was too limited to support expanded production. The result was growing unemployment at the unskilled level, juxtaposed with an increasing shortage of skilled labour.

The escalating economic and political crisis posed specific challenges to big business because of the need to move to technologically advanced and capital-intensive industry, which was compatible with the traditional apartheid system. Within the state and society there was growing recognition of the need for reforming grand apartheid, to allow adaptation to new circumstances.

The solution to the problems facing South Africa was the formulation of a total strategy. Apart from constituting a security framework, total strategy also established the basis for an alliance between the military and monopoly capital, with blacks for the first time being offered a stake in the capitalist order. Big business, in its turn, leapt at the opportunity for the creation of a black middle class that would 'have a stake in stability and provide a counter to radicalism'.[6] In the words of Mike Rosholt, chairman of Barlow Rand, 'If we don't give blacks the opportunity to share we make that omission at our peril.'[7]

Total strategy: reform and repression (1980–1986)

The imperatives of total strategy were to destroy community-based political action, and at the same time to remove restrictions on black economic mobility. The strategy, informed by low-intensity theory, involved a combination of reform and repression. In order to implement total strategy it was necessary to restructure the state along more streamlined lines. Crucially, the State Security Council (SSC) was transformed into the key strategy and decision-making body in the state. Related to this centralisation of power, various state departments were collapsed to create a new mega-department – the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning under Chris Heunis – to manage black affairs and implement the reform side of the total strategy formula.

Reforms

In 1979 the Botha government appointed two commissions to examine possible socio-economic reforms. The Riekert Commission investigated urban policy and the Wiehahn Commission examined the industrial labour relations system. In line with the recommendations of the Riekert Commission the permanence of blacks in 'white' urban areas was afforded legal recognition. This involved the relaxation of pass laws (which enabled blacks carrying a pass book to live in urban areas), the extension of freehold property rights to blacks and, finally, the abolition of the influx control legislation 1986. Following the recommendations of the Wiehahn Commission, black trade unions were legalised.

Total strategy also attempted to shift the financial liability of township administration onto blacks. To this end Black Local Authorities (BLAs) were established in terms of the *Black Local Authorities Act* 102 of 1982, and replaced the Community Councils and Black Town Councils as autonomous, self-financing branches of local government. This opened additional avenues for co-opting blacks into the system.

These limited reforms of local government were followed by the establishment of the tricameral Parliament in terms of the new Constitution of South Africa (Act 110 of 1983). The new constitution provided Indians and coloureds with limited access to participation in government, thereby deepening racial divisions within black communities. The franchise was withheld from Africans, exacerbating already existing differential privileges and creating tensions among and between Indians, coloureds and Africans.

Repression

At the same time as it implemented reforms, the government made full use of its newly-consolidated repressive capacity to clamp down on political dissidents. Security legislation – namely the *Internal Security Act* 74 of 1982, the P*ublic Safety Act* 3 of 1953 and the *Criminal Procedure Act* 51 of 1977 – was used to detain, interrogate and intimidate the state's opponents. Between 1980 and 1986 approximately 43950 people were detained.[8] In June 1984 the *Protection of Information Act* 84 of 1982 was invoked to prevent the press from publicising certain detentions, and figures about detentions released by the police were always hopelessly conservative.

During this period repression was focused, usually aimed at political leaders and community activists, and involved torture and abuse of detainees,

and the extensive use of bannings to disrupt meetings, gatherings, funerals and movement of individuals. In addition, police made use of the informal 'call-in' card, when a note was slipped under the door of an activist's home at night and they were required to present themselves to the appropriate police station the next day. Invariably the visit to the police station involved interrogation for a period of between several hours and a day.

Total strategy brought about the intimidation and harassment of activists through informal repression such as death and bomb threats, throwing bricks through windows, killing pets, confiscating documents, changing meeting venues, and generally disrupting the daily lives of activists. Many black South Africans suffered some degree of security force abuse, but repression of members of the United Democratic Front (UDF)[9] was particularly marked. As the UDF emerged as the main internal political force, it became the victim of concentrated state repression. Thousands of UDF members were detained and its leadership was specifically targeted:

- twelve of the 16 members of the UDF National Executive were detained;
- nine of the 18 members on the Transvaal Regional Executive Committee (REC) were detained;
- two of the six members on the Eastern Cape REC were detained, and a third member was assassinated;
- ten of the 16 members on the Natal REC were detained; one was assassinated;
- six of the ten Border REC members were detained; and
- thirteen of the 14 Western Cape REC members were detained.[10]

During this period there was ever-increasing integration of the roles of the SAP and the SADF. As the conflict intensified so the distinction between the SAP and the SADF became blurred, with the military assuming increasing responsibility for internal security. This was aided, in December 1985, by an amendment to the Defence Act which extended all police powers to the SADF, including the right to search, seize, disperse crowds and man road-blocks. By 1986 the army was seen in the townships as part of a single coercive force, colloquially labelled the *boere*.[11]

Assessing total strategy

Although total strategy had some initial success in preventing political mobilisation, ultimately it reinforced solidarity through offering too little

'carrot' and too much 'stick'. Some divisions were apparent in the initial total strategy period, such as between the employed and unemployed. It was also envisaged that the legalisation of trade unions would perpetuate a rural-urban divide among employed blacks, with migrants initially not included among those with the right to form unions. In reality, however, black workers organised across rural-urban lines to incorporate migrant and urban workers into single industrial trade unions. For the most part total strategy failed to undermine community unity, and shared exclusion led to greater political mobilisation and resistance.

From the early 1980s, unions became increasingly involved in broader community and politically-related issues. Protest over the death in detention of the Food and Canning Worker's Union organiser, Neil Aggett, in 1982 was one of the first instances of industrial action of a political nature. It demonstrated that trade unions could, and would, lend their organisational strength both to community grievances and to broader political grievances. It also made unions and union leaders the target of increased state repression.

BLAs were one of the main targets for protest action throughout this period. BLAs were seen stooges of the apartheid regime and were not financially viable. Because councillors were unable to extract taxes from residents they levied huge rent and service charges. For example, between 1977 and 1984 housing rentals rose by 400 per cent in the Vaal area. In addition, councillors were often corrupt and antagonised the population by using strong-arm tactics against their opponents. Rather than provide opportunities for co-option, the BLAs increasingly provided a focus for protest.

The development of BLAs became an impetus for the nascent civic organisations, which played important organisational and political roles, and often attempted to take over some administration and service functions. In the early 1980s the civics became arenas for the expression of a wide range of grievances from youths, parents, women, the unemployed and workers, and moved from organising around local issues to mounting substantial campaigns against the state.

The decision to exclude African people from the tricameral parliament in 1983, through what obviously amounted to a 'divide-and-rule' tactic, led to the establishment of the UDF – a coalition of youth and student groups, trade unions and civic organisations. The UDF co-ordinated local community action and gave national salience to civic structures.

The UDF's success in mobilising across racial lines was evident in the low

turnout for the 1984 'general' elections among coloureds and Indians, and the scale of the protests it mounted. Importantly, trade unions supported the UDF call for the election boycott, mounting a national campaign that involved door-to-door visits, pamphlet distribution, rallies and marches. This was followed by the 'Vaal uprisings' of 1984–1985. The uprisings were community responses to a range of grievances, from bad school results, through corrupt municipal authorities, to worker stayaways. Importantly, the Vaal uprisings marked the first time that people from informal settlements added their action to township protest. Eventually the protest was suppressed by the government calling the army into the townships for the first time in 25 years.[12]

Total strategy was South Africa's first attempt at systematic internal destabilisation and was largely unsuccessful. It was neither well planned nor well implemented and was not characterised by any of the usual LIC tactics (such as psychological and proxy warfare), beyond an attempt to diffuse the revolutionary climate through selective reforms, juxtaposed with brutal repression. Reforms had been designed to win over sections of black society and to satisfy the business sector's economic aspirations. Repression was aimed at weeding out revolutionaries. Instead, reforms created opportunities for mobilisation, and repression solidified opposition to the state.

By the mid-1980s total strategy's failure to alleviate rising political dissent and worsening economic conditions had prompted fresh debates around state strategy and sparked new divisions within the state alliance. Growing divisions emerged between Botha and his 'securocrats', and Heunis and his 'constitutocrats' over strategies to consolidate political power. Whereas 'Heunis and the political reformers were extending reforms and supporting negotiations between senior government officials and UDF leaders around the country, Botha and the security establishment were defending the detention of political leaders'.[13]

In May 1986 the internal struggle was resolved in Botha's favour, by the scuttling of the Eminent Person's Group (EPG) visit. The EPG delegation of Commonwealth mediators had come to South Africa to discuss negotiations between the government and the ANC and other opposition groups. During the week of their visit simultaneous attacks were launched by the SADF on alleged ANC targets in three Commonwealth countries: Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The motive for the raids was a clear 'gesture of defiance and a rejection of the Commonwealth mission'. This marked the abandonment of the reformist drive and the advent of counter-revolutionary war.

Counter-revolutionary war strategy: WHAM and repression (1986–1990)

The year 1986 saw the rise of the military's WHAM counter-revolutionary war strategy. In terms of the WHAM strategy, reform became a security rather than a constitutional objective, and power was consolidated within a security power-elite headed by PW Botha. A vital element of the strategy was the full activation of the NSMS at regional and local levels. The NSMS – a network of over 500 national, regional, district and local Joint Management Committees co-ordinated through the State President's Office and the SSC – took direct responsibility for all strategies aimed at countering rising internal dissent.

The NSMS operated through an extensive network of operational centres called Joint Management Committees (JMCs). These comprised three sub-committees: a joint intelligence committee; a political, economic, and sociological committee, which was responsible for service provision; and a communications committee, which was linked to the Department of Information and provided the official unrest reports and disinformation for the public and the media. The JMCs sought to co-ordinate the actions of the welfare and security counter-revolutionary strategies to mount a comprehensive socio-military security response to community cohesion. They were used 'to rip communities apart, remove their leaders and put together the pieces in the state's image'.[14]

The WHAM campaign aimed at pacifying South Africans by giving them a stake in the system. This was complemented by strong-arm tactics aimed at 'weeding out' the dissidents. In the words of Major-General AJ Wandrag (head of the counter-insurgency (COIN) unit in the SAP) in 1985:

> We have studied counter-revolutionary tactics in Malaysia, Chile, El Salvador. We're using the same hearts-and-minds techniques here. First we neutralise the enemy, then we win over the people so they will reject the enemy … The only way to render the enemy powerless is to nip the revolution in the bud by ensuring there is no fertile soil in which the seeds of revolution can germinate.[15]

Where total strategy had attempted to work through top-down reforms, counter-revolutionary strategy implied a more subtle attempt to shape the 'moral, cultural, religious, political and material underpinnings of civil society in the black townships' and build up new foundations from below.[16] Under

total strategy there could be no security without reform, while under counter-revolutionary strategy there could be no reform without security.[17]

WHAM

The South African WHAM strategy was developed in Namibia and transferred to South Africa in mid-1986. In the words of Major-General Charles Lloyd, former commander of the SWATF and then secretary of the SSC, 'We want the national servicemen to teach the black man whilst his rifle is standing in the corner of the classroom'.[18] Using LIC-speak an SSC General was quoted as saying:

> These people have their aspirations of course, but they are really concerned about bread and butter issues – housing, schools, motor cars, the 'good life'. And if you want their support, you can buy it.[19]

Between 1986 and 1990 the South African state identified 34 townships for infrastructural upgrading. This initiative drew the state into partnerships with the private sector to build houses in townships and create employment. To this end the government increased by R500 million the R100 million it had already assigned in 1985 for the purpose of job creation. To finance this increase, a 10% surcharge on imports was levied.[20]

Apart from the upgrading of townships, WHAM led to limited local government reform (replacing some corrupt and non-viable local authorities with Regional Services Councils), and a massive propaganda campaign to 'sell' the government to the people. State control over television and radio provided the platform for public relations bids and reinforced the notion of the 'good', law-abiding, rent-paying, citizen.

Within specific townships, JMCs sponsored the establishment and distribution of newspapers and comic strips to enhance the effect of programmes such as *Izimbali Zesiwe* (Flowers of the Nation). In Alexandra, *Newsletter to the People of Alexandra* and *Alex and Friends*, produced by the Alexandra JMC and distributed by the Bureau of Information, were underpinned by the motto 'through development we reach the sky'. As with TV broadcasting, printed media emphasised the desirability of residents paying rent.

Typically, WHAM campaigns involved every aspect of the NSMS LIC network, using violence against those who refused the carrot held out to them.

In true LIC-speak Major-General Charles Lloyd explained that 'sometimes you have to take out the revolutionaries if they are controlling the people'.[21]

Formal repression

While the government expressed its desire to reduce formal repression, this period witnessed heightened human rights abuses at the hands of the security forces. The state's continued reliance on violence was explained by the Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, as follows:

> Violence *per se* cannot support reform. But if the communities who seek peace do not find that the systems in which we want them to live function properly, then the security forces must create a situation in which this is possible. Therefore in the current circumstances, the state must in the interests of reform resort to forceful action.[22]

During this period the South African government made full use of its barrage of security legislation in order to effect a clampdown on civil disobedience. As a pre-cursor, a partial state of emergency was declared in July 1985 and the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) was banned in August of the same year. To consolidate the initiative, a full state of emergency was imposed in June 1986, to be renewed each year until June 1990.

The imposition of a full state of emergency gave the government enormous powers of repression. Until 1986, only specific activists had been targeted. After that, the second phase of LIC saw unprecedented detention, banning, forced removals and harassment. It also saw the emergence of black JMC enforcement agents, the *kitskonstabels* and the municipal police. These groups were created to act as local-level agents of repression and were deeply feared by township residents:

> These hastily trained black policemen were deployed in large groups in all areas where resistance was strong. From the beginning they used excessive violence. Their brutality created an atmosphere of fear that was not only aimed at activists but at intimidating entire communities.[23]

Formal repression resulted in 22 347 people being detained between June 1986 and March 1990.[24] LIC phase two also witnessed the emergence of informal repression, in particular the use of vigilantes and hit-squads.

Informal repression: vigilantes

By late 1985 it had become apparent that formal repression had not achieved its objectives and that an additional disorganising strategy was necessary. Vigilante groups, utilising the tensions between collaboration and resistance that occur in societies under siege, were ideally suited to sow discord in black communities. The encouragement of vigilante groups was a solution to one of LIC's fundamental dilemmas: how to destroy popular movements 'without appearing to be directly waging war on the populace'.[25]

The use of vigilantes is common in countries engaging in LIC warfare, and has characterised LIC in Central America and the Philippines. The purpose is to foment divisions within communities and to perpetuate attack-and-retribution cycles of violence without having to engage directly with the communities. In 'The art of counter-revolutionary war', a paper distributed to South African government officials and MPs, US LIC expert John McCuen explains that after the establishment of self-defence units in Algeria, 'it was found to be much easier to control the population'. He consequently maintained that:

> The most important part of counter-organisation of the masses is the establishment of self-defence units ... During the early stage of a revolution, the establishment of an auxiliary police service and a military militia must receive high priority.[26]

Internationally the encouragement of vigilante groups has the following positive effects for the perpetrators:

- It obscures the relationship between internal conflict and state machinations.
- By portraying the violence as tribal, cultural or 'black-on-black', it justifies further state repression and diverts attention away from human rights abuses perpetrated by the state.
- It exploits real grievances within communities and ruptures communities from within.
- Vigilantes are cheap to sponsor, only require occasional input and can be left to their own devices.

The term 'vigilante', in the South African context,

> connotes violent, organised and conservative groupings operating within black communities, which, although they receive no official recognition, are politically directed in the sense that they act to neutralise individuals and groupings opposed to the apartheid state and its institutions. These features, and the fact that they are alleged to enjoy varying degrees of police support, is all that links the A-Team, *Pakatis, Mabangalala, Amadoda, Witdoeke, Amosolomzi, Amabutho, Mbhokhoto*, and the Green Berets.[27]

Although in existence prior to the mid-1980s (for example vigilantes were used in the Ciskei in 1983 to suppress a bus boycott), 1985–1986 marked the onset of escalated nationwide vigilante activity in South African townships and rural areas. Indeed, as the crisis of 'control over black areas extended geographically, so did the incidence of vigilante activity', the target being those groups perceived to be resisting apartheid.[28]

In some instances vigilante groups were openly supported and in others they were left to their own devices to similar effect: contributing to a climate of fear in townships. The earliest instances of the state sponsoring vigilante action were to protect and restore the position of municipal councillors and traders. In addition,

> emulating their counterparts in Latin America, JMC officials have realised that squatter camps provide invaluable opportunities for co-option. By granting local populist 'warlords', like Johnson Ngxobongwana in Crossroads [an informal settlement in Cape Town], control over the allocation of resources (including employment), and by providing basic urban services, it is possible to buy co-operation.[29]

Another major source of and support-base for vigilantes was provided by homeland authorities. These structures recruited vigilantes from 'conservative 'traditional elements', from criminal elements or the ranks of the desperate unemployed … in fact, vigilantes often served as a recruiting source for homeland and council police, earning them the description of 'vigilantes in uniform'.'[30]

However, in many instances vigilantes enjoyed a genuine support-base provided by people who felt squeezed between the security forces and the

liberation movements. Such grievances often allowed Pretoria to exploit vigilante groups to its advantage. For example, the government embarked on a campaign in the mid-1980s to cultivate 'witchdoctors' in the East London area to undermine the liberation movement.[31] There was also an attempt to 'exploit the alienation of township youth' by supporting anti-UDF gangs such as the Black Cats in Ermelo, the A-Team in Chesterville, the Eagles in Harrismith and the *AmaSinyora* in KwaMashu.[32]

In South Africa as elsewhere, the security forces used societal fractures, which spawn vigilantes to their benefit. Since the late 1970s the police had attempted unsuccessfully to oust informal settlers from Crossroads and KTC in the Cape Town area. During May and June 1986, a group of vigilantes called the *Witdoeke* systematically attacked and burned down the dwellings of the Crossroads and KTC inhabitants. In the worst two attacks 53 people were killed and 7 000 shacks were destroyed. The 70 000 refugees were forced to find accommodation elsewhere, many of them ending up in Khayelitsha, the government's designated location. In a matter of weeks, the vigilantes 'accomplished what the state had failed to do in 10 years'.[33] On this, as well as on other similar occasions, independent monitors claimed that the police actively assisted the *Witdoeke*, and only intervened when the vigilantes were attacked.[34]

In some instances vigilante groups were given official recognition and were formally incorporated into the security apparatus through training and weapons supply. For example, in 1985 a group of coloureds in Queenstown, who supported the local management committee, formed a vigilante group which terrorised the neighbouring African township. In December of 1985 the group was 'given a week's training and absorbed into the Queenstown Commando, thereby becoming incorporated into the state's formal 'law and order' apparatus anywhere in the country'.[35]

In 1988, testifying in the Cape Supreme Court as to why the police did not act against a group of vigilantes burning down houses, Major Dolf Odendaal said:

> If black people decide to fight, there is nothing I can do. You do not know black people when they decide to fight.[36]

Informal repression: Hit-squads

Assassinations of a political nature occurred in South Africa from the mid-1970s, escalating in frequency and efficiency during the mid-1980s. According to the former Human Rights Committee (HRC) chairperson, Max Coleman:

> It became clear that such actions were the work, not of individuals acting on the spur of the moment, but of well organised hit-squads operating with the advantages of expertise, skills, information, equipment, financial resources and, it seemed, immunity from discovery or prosecution. It also became clear that their purposes were the elimination of anti-apartheid political activists by assassination, or their intimidation by harassment of every conceivable kind; and the crippling or disruption of anti-apartheid organisations through destroying their offices by bombing or fire or through burgling or wrecking their equipment and records.[37]

Rumours of official hit-squads within the South African state were fuelled by a comment from the head of the Bureau for State Security (Boss), General Hendrik van den Bergh, in the late 1970s. He stated, before the Erasmus Commission of Inquiry into Information Department irregularities:

> I can tell you here today, not for your records, but I can tell you I have enough men to commit murder if I tell them to kill ... Those are the kind of men I have. And if I wanted to do something like that to protect the security of the state nobody would stop me. I would stop at nothing.[38]

Revelations proving state links to various hit-squads began to surface in 1989. Important sources of evidence have been the statements of Almond Nofemela and Dirk Coetzee, and the trial of Eugene de Kock. Through such sources the existence of at least two shadowy hit-squads that operated within the state's security and military branches during this period were revealed.

One of the hit-squads, the CCB, was located within the SADF (specifically the Special Forces Division), and the other, Unit C10, was located within the SAP (specifically the Security Branch). These hit-squads, along with at least one other – the Johannesburg City Council Spy Ring – aimed to destabilise the ANC and other progressive organisations, such as Swapo, the Five Freedoms Forum, and the End Conscription Campaign.

At the violent end of the LIC spectrum their methods involved

assassinations, kidnappings, arson, intimidation, spying, cross-border raids and theft. However, as with most LIC campaigns they included 'softer' campaigns of disinformation and harassment, as suffered by the Five Freedoms Forum and the End Conscription Campaign. Specific operations often combined 'hard' and 'soft' mechanisms. For example, on 24 June 1984 ANC activist Jeanette Schoon and her six-year-old daughter Katryn were blown up by a letter bomb that had been sent by Craig Williamson to their home in Angola. A day after the explosion, in an interview with journalist Jacques Pauw, Commissioner of Police General Johan Coetzee said that the security police had information that Jeanette and Katryn 'had been killed by the ANC as a result of an internal struggle within the organisation'.[39] The story was published, reinforcing the state's propaganda.

Additional evidence from a variety of sources suggests that the CCB and Unit C10 were only the tip of the iceberg of covert hit-squads. The exposure of units such as the Hammer Unit and the International Researchers – Ciskei Intelligence Services (IR-CIS) provide evidence of a pervasive network of covert counter-insurgency units which operated within state security and military structures across the country.

The full membership and extent of operations carried out by these units have never been revealed. Direct proof of the involvement of senior government officials has not yet surfaced. However, it is highly unlikely that these units could have operated on the scale that they did without the knowledge of, if not direction from, those at the top.

In an interview about the CCB in 1991, Minister of Defence Magnus Malan stated: 'it was a good organisation … they did terrific work … we must lash the ANC, not the CCB who did such praiseworthy work'.[40] The CCB, along with Unit C10, are known to be responsible for the assassinations of 87 people within South Africa and 138 outside South Africa between 1974 and 1991.[41] Only in one case – the assassination of Eric Mntonga of the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (Idasa) – were the killers ever brought to trial and convicted. Even then, this seems to have occurred only because of an internal squabble among the assassins.

While the CCB operated in a cell structure, using mainly white agents, Unit C10's dirty work was largely carried out by black *askaris* or 'turned' activists. The CCB was headed by Major-General Eddie Webb who was also Commanding Officer of the SADF's Special Forces. Webb controlled a network of command structures under the Managing Director, Colonel Joe

Verster. Unit C10, run by C Section of the Security Police, was commanded by Dirk Coetzee for a year. It was taken over by Eugene de Kock in July 1985. Significantly, prior to commanding Unit C10, De Kock had fought with Smith's forces in the Rhodesian bush war and served for ten years with the Koevoet counter-insurgency unit in Namibia.[42]

Dirk Coetzee described the activities of Unit C10 as follows:

> Our operations often spanned more than one country, with illegalities on both sides of the border. The crimes included murder, attempted murder, victimisation, assault, theft, border violations and others. Flagrant violations in the course of duty often gave rise to illegalities outside the call of duty; and illegalities outside the call of duty were condoned as long as they served the ends of security police operations.[43]

On 31 July 1990 the CCB was operationally disbanded. At the same time investigations into the activities of Eugene de Kock and the C10 Unit at Vlakplaas were initiated. This marked the official end of state-sponsored hit-squads. However, according to HRC figures, assassinations bearing the hallmark of professional state-based hit-squads continued until 1993.[44]

Assessing counter-revolutionary war strategy

The material rewards offered by WHAM were minimal and it 'failed to give black participants enough to recruit them as allies'.[45] Although civic structures and trade unions were affected by repression, in 1988 a new strategy of mass resistance emerged under the name of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), bringing together the UDF and Cosatu. This coincided with increased ANC activity witnessed by the growing number of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) attacks on police stations, railway stations and government buildings, as well on civilians.

The real failure of the second phase in LIC terms was the increasingly unmediated and direct involvement of the SAP and SADF in repression and the dominance of the security force establishment over the polity. The role of the South African security and military forces may have signalled the failure of LIC strategy to 'win hearts and minds' and provide an alternative socio-political system, but did not reflect a failure of repression. Rather, like the external wars of the 1980s, it showed the need for a changed strategy if South Africa was to remain a society based on white supremacy.

The failure of the LIC strategy was combined with growing concerns in the business community about the impact of international sanctions. If the economy was to be stimulated, business contended, violence had to be contained. This in turn would require substantive political change, not previously contemplated by PW Botha. 'Having lost the opportunity to be a statesman', the *Financial Mail* opined, 'the State President has no option but to turn his job over to more capable people – and resign. Everyone will cheer'.[46] The rise of a new leader, FW de Klerk, was the outcome of the impasse in which the regime found itself.

LIC trial run: KwaZulu-Natal (1987–1990)

In 1987 events unfolded in Pietermaritzburg (KwaZulu-Natal) which fitted into the government's counter-revolutionary strategy and informed its subsequent LIC strategy. Following a Cosatu call for a stay-away in opposition to the parliamentary elections, Inkatha's trade union wing, the United Workers' Union of South Africa (Uwusa), initiated a recruitment drive. By the end of the year the simmering conflict had exploded into widespread violence, with demarcation of townships into pro-Cosatu or pro-Uwusa blocs. The flaring up of violence was aided directly and indirectly by organs established by the central state to fight off the 'total onslaught'.

It is clear that Inkatha's leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, used the violence to strengthen his hold over KwaZulu-Natal, and to consolidate political power in the region as a whole rather than just in the KwaZulu homeland. The South African government took advantage of Buthelezi's campaign and the ANC's failure to address the situation, and used the province as the trial run for LIC-proper by fanning the emerging divisions between the ANC and the IFP in the region. The alliance forged with Inkatha between 1987 and 1990 was carried through into the new phase of destabilisation in the context of political transition.

LIC-PROPER: DESTABILISE AND NEGOTIATE (1990–1994)

When FW de Klerk took the podium in Parliament on the morning of 2 February 1990, few people were prepared for what was to follow. De Klerk's speech unleashed events which, within four years, gave rise to a democratic order and an ANC-led government. Having propelled South Africa towards transition, De Klerk was aware that there was limited time in which to ensure the National Party's survival and the economy's future. 1990 thus marked a

new phase of LIC. In the words of Nico Basson, a Major in the SADF, who carried out the government's 'dirty tricks' in Namibia:

> On the one hand the plan was to openly dismantle the so-called pillars of apartheid, negotiate with political enemies, unban illegal organisations and release political prisoners in order to end sanctions ... the secret part of the strategy is the destabilisation of the Nationalist Party's political opposition using the security forces, vigilantes and hit-squads to create and sustain violence, as well as creating negative propaganda.[47]

The reality of negotiations with the ANC required a new government strategy. International experience in El Salvador, the Philippines and Nicaragua, and the South African experience in Namibia provided good examples of the gains to be made through negotiated settlements coupled with strategic violence. As the negotiating party in power, the government was able to act as peacekeeper while fuelling the ongoing violence and discrediting the ANC. This dual strategy was aimed at undermining the ANC and preventing straightforward majority rule:

> Acquaintance with the long history of low-intensity conflict as a strategy shows that the violence is meant to complement the government's negotiation policy by discrediting the ANC and blacks in general, and by demotivating, demoralising, destabilising and confusing the war-weary people of the townships who are then supposed to opt for peace at all costs as they did in Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique.[48]

The vision

By 1990 the NP had abandoned its original vision and recognised that it was impossible to maintain political power in white (let along Afrikaner) hands, and that a more important objective was to retain a framework for economic growth and stability. As argued by the Urban Foundation:

> Only by having this most responsible section of the urban black population on our side can the whites of South Africa be assured of containing on a long-term basis the irresponsible economic and political ambitions of those blacks who are influenced against their own interests from within and without our borders.[49]

Thus between 1990 and 1994 the government attempted to negotiate the best possible position for itself and the security forces while retaining the economic *status quo*. What follows is a brief summary of the process, discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the book.

The mechanisms

Political control over security apparatus

At the time De Klerk assumed power the security establishment experienced ongoing tensions and strategic differences. Although for the most part the SADF's influential officers advocated a 'tightly 'managed' transition' that would not compromise 'a set of basic strategic objectives',[50] the SAP was more conservative, and many of its officials tended to support the Conservative Party (CP) or the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB). The National Intelligence Service (NIS) was somewhere in between the SADF and the SAP.

Between 1990 and 1994 the relationships between De Klerk and the various security factions were often testy and sometimes contradictory. In order to manage the transition, De Klerk tried to exert executive control over the security establishment. To this end, in November 1989 De Klerk announced the downgrading of the NSMS and the SSC, renaming them the National Co-ordinating Mechanism (NCM) and the National Security Council (NSC) respectively, and subordinating them to a new cabinet committee on security. In November 1991 the NCM was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Regional and Land Affairs.[51] In addition the roles of the security police and military intelligence were downgraded, and the strategic intelligence portfolio was given to the NIS.[52] Soon afterwards the Ministers of Defence (Magnus Malan) and Law and Order (Adriaan Vlok) were demoted. This subordination of the security apparatus to the cabinet, along with a shift in focus away from the military, reinforced the new primacy of politics in state policy.

However, crucial components of the LIC machine were left in place. By 1990 the security establishment had generated a degree of autonomy that gave it a momentum of its own and to a large extent its workings remained essentially the same.[53] This led some commentators to question the degree of control that De Klerk had over the security establishment and the 'third force' agenda. It is apparent that although he restructured the security apparatus, De Klerk still 'provided the space for zealous securocrats to interpret the security situation and act'.[54]

It is also clear that in order to protect those higher up in the security forces and political establishment, evidence of security force involvement in fomenting violence had to be portrayed as being the work of 'rogue' elements. Thus Eugene de Kock, who in all likelihood provided the IFP with the weapons used to massacre 45 people in Boipatong on 17 June 1992 and who was still 'flooding the townships with weapons' in 1993,[55] was ultimately betrayed by his commanders. In the words of former security police operative and a friend of De Kock, Craig Williamson, 'If Eugene has to be in the dock, if I have to be in the dock, there are a lot of fat cats who should also be there.'[56]

In any event, it may be argued that the advantage of LIC is that it does not require comprehensive and ongoing orchestration in order to be effective. Because LIC relies on local conditions as the catalyst for and perpetuation of cycles of violence, it was not necessary to ensure that all factions in the state were on board. In the end the right conditions were generated to realise one of LIC's most basic goals: to force new elites to accept or surrender to a set of realities that benefit the old elites.

Campaigns to publicly discredit the ANC

In November 1992, Goldstone Commission members raided the offices of a Military Intelligence front company called the Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC). They seized files, which contained details of a covert operation to discredit the ANC by linking MK with crime.

Further evidence of state campaigns to discredit the ANC surfaced in June 1995, when the *Mail & Guardian* revealed the existence of an unpublicised Goldstone report. The Goldstone report related to Operation Romulus, which aimed to discredit the ANC after 1990 and reduce it 'to just another political party'. The operation was run by the Security Police's D Section and operated under the SSC's intelligence network called Stratcom (Strategic Communication).

Use of proxies: government support for Inkatha

In July 1991 the *Mail & Guardian* provided the first conclusive evidence of the De Klerk government's support for the IFP. The expose revealed over R250 000 of funding from the SAP for IFP rallies, in order to 'show everyone that Buthelezi has a strong base'.[57] In the aftermath of the 'Inkathagate' debacle, the Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, was relieved of his post, and the Minister of Defence, Magnus Malan, was moved to the political backwaters of

the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs. Subsequently the *Mail & Guardian* and other newspapers exposed a wider government web of support for the IFP, which involved gun-running and military training.

Further revelations surfaced in the Goldstone Commission's 'Interim report on criminal and political violence by elements within the South African Police, the KwaZulu Police and the Inkatha Freedom Party'.[58] The report provided *prima facie* evidence of the involvement of three senior SAP generals and two IFP officials in a gun-running network to provide the IFP with weapons. It also established that Unit C10 at Vlakplaas had been involved in the organisation of train and hostel violence on the Reef, and that certain IFP Caprivi trainees had been involved in violent activities in KwaZulu-Natal. Subsequent evidence which emerged at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has confirmed these revelations.

The 'third force': security force involvement

Revelations from the Trust Feed case[59] of SAP involvement in a massacre of civilians vindicated repeated allegations that security forces have either directly attacked communities or have aided the IFP in attacks on communities since the late 1980s.

Evidence emerging from the Investigation Task Unit (ITU)[60] in KwaZulu-Natal indicates collusion between the security forces and the IFP 'either through commission or omission', and that in a number of cases the IFP has only played the role of a 'visible' aggressor while the 'hidden hand' was that of elements within the state.[61]

Security force acts of *commission* included attacks on township dwellers, escorting vigilantes to the scene of an attack, collaboration in the planning and execution of attacks, provision of weapons, and training and funding of IFP hit-squads. It has also been alleged by many that the security forces were behind train violence on the Reef. Security forces have been directly responsible for, or directly involved in attacks such as massacres at Sebokeng (4 September 1990), Daveyton (24 March 1991), Swanieville (2 May 1991), Umlazi (13 March 1992) and Esikhaweni (11 April 1992).[62]

Security force involvement in violence has included the following acts of *omission*: absence from the scene of vigilante attacks; failure to respond to forewarning of attacks, standing idly by during an attack, failure to counter an attack or to disarm perpetrator, and failure to prosecute perpetrators.[63]

Testimonies at the TRC from high-ranking officers in the security forces

claimed that those in command and the politicians were not aware of the nefarious activities of various units and members of the security forces. To a certain extent this may be true. In many countries involved in covert activities, politicians and those in command of the security forces, although responsible for establishing the agenda, are deliberately shielded from the details of atrocities committed. In South Africa too, there may be a genuine ignorance of 'the exact day-to-day actions in the campaign of destablisation, the further up the System one went'.[64] However, in the words of Craig Williamson,

> they drew the parameters, the counter-revolutionary strategy. They gave us the budgets, the men, the equipment. And they monitored our effectiveness and they were happy. They gave us the highest decorations this country can give. And yet many turned around at the end of the day and said 'goodness gracious, we didn't know that they were doing such nasty things' ... People couldn't have been surprised about what happened ... those at the top set it up, approved it, blessed it.[65]

Conclusion

South Africa's external wars in Mozambique, Angola and Namibia; its internal tactics between 1980 and 1990, total strategy and WHAM; and its early experiment in KwaZulu-Natal, set the scene for its low intensity conflict between 1990 and 1994. The new war was conducted against the prospect of ANC majority rule, and the prize lay in securing during negotiations a set of basic conditions, which limited radical change to the socio-economic order. The outcome was supposed to be cementing these 'non-negotiable' parameters by denying the ANC the two-thirds majority necessary to renege on the 'deal'.

Between 1990 and 1994 South Africa was racked by political violence. Politically the ANC suffered most from the ongoing violence. Attacks prevented the ANC from building its organisation and undermined its support base. It is possible that some war-weary people opted for peace by voting for parties with power and influence with the security forces, rather than for the ANC.

In his 'victory' speech after the election results were made public, FW de Klerk told the world that 'four years and three months' after making his 2 February 1990 speech, the NP's objectives had been met.[66] Although some

security force members (mostly from SAP units) were sacrificed on the negotiations altar, on the whole the security forces were protected. Most civil servants' positions were secured; the IFP was able to take the KwaZulu-Natal trophy; the NP took the Western Cape; and the ANC did not win a two-thirds majority. Perhaps most importantly, 'the possibilities for fundamental social reform' have been inhibited, ensuring the continued dominance of the existing economic powers.

De Klerk was able to consolidate a process begun under Botha of freeing the economy of restrictions while at the same time accelerating socio-economic divisions among black South Africans and weakening the ANC's base of support. Ultimately, the lesson South Africans have had to learn in the post-apartheid period is that 'political victory and a parliamentary majority ... do not guarantee real power',[67] however that power is defined. The realignments and transitions that are achieved at the top levels of government are not necessarily and automatically translated into control over other centres of social, economic and political power.

Annexure 1

Counter-revolutionary war strategies as appearing in secret SSC documentation between 1985 and 1987

'Veiligheidsdoelstellings', November 1985

- 'Die werksaamhede van die 'Comrades' se area ... moet funksioneel onwerkbaar gestel word deur die leierelemente daarvan deur 'n operasie te neutraliseer of hulle klandestiend die mikpunt te maak van die 'vigilantes' of 'Mabangalala' (Comrades' areas must be rendered non-functional and their leaders 'neutralised' through a clandestine campaign to make them the targets of vigilantes or 'Mabangalala');
- Die optrede teen en intimidasie van anargiste en rewolusionere deur die sg 'vigilantes' of 'Mabangalala', met inbegrip van bv 'n organisasie soos Inkatha, behoort klandestien versterk, uitgebrei en uitgebeeld te word as 'n natuurlike teenreaksie deur gemagtigdes teen anargie. Nadat order herstel is behoort gepoog te word om hierdie element as wetstoepassingsbeamptes te werf en aldus op te lei vir dienslewering binne hulle eie gemeenskappe' (The intimidation of anarchists and revolutionaries by vigilantes and Inkatha must be clandestinely supported as a natural counter-reaction by the promoters of anarchy. Once order is re-established these elements should be promoted as legal authorities within their own communities).

'Strategie Ter Bekamping van die ANC', 25/08/1986

- 'Om die ANC leierskap to neutraliseer' (to 'neutralise' the ANC leadership);
- 'Om die jeug, vroue en werkers op grondvlak te mobiliseer om hul eie maatskaplike knelpunte op to los, sodat die ANC se straatkomitees uitgeskakel kan word' (to mobilise the youth, women and workers at the grass-roots level so that they can resolve their own issues and not have to resort to the ANC's street committees);
- 'Om strukture/grondorganisasies daar te stel wat die werwing, opleiding en aanwending van rekrute vir die ANC in die RSA, TBVC, asook die stigting van ANC-organisasies en die funksionering daarvan te le' (to establish alternative structures to ANC structures in South Africa and the TBVC states that will undermine ANC structures);
- 'Om die magte en invloed van sleutel persone van die ANC en hulle meerlopers to neutraliseer' (to 'neutralise' the power and influence of key people within the ANC and its supporters).

'Vir 'n Strategie teen die Rewolusionere Oorlog', 15/10/1986

- 'Gemagte Swartes moet gehulp word om polities te organiseer vir die ondersteuning van rewolusionere ontwikkeling en die aktiewe bekamping van rewolusioneres' (Moderate blacks must be helped to organise politically to undermine the revolutionary movement and revolutionaries);
- 'Teen-rewolusionere organisasies moet op etniese basis ontwikkel work ten einde te voorkom dat die politieke vakuum deur radikales benut word om hulle eie organisasies to vestig' (Counter-revolutionary organisations must be established along ethnic lines, to take advantage of the political vacuum that radicals have not exploited).

'Konsep Nasionale Strategie Teen Die Rewolusionere Oorlog Teen die RSA: Nr 44', 01/12/1986

- 'Intimideers moet dmv formele en informele polisiering geneutraliseer word' (Instigators must be 'neutralised' by means of formal and informal policing).

'Counter-mobilisation programme', 24/01/1987

- 'Identifiseer en elimineer die rewolusionere leiers en veral die met charisma' (Identify and eliminate revolutionary leaders, particularly those with charisma);
- 'Fisiese vernieting van rewolusionere organisasies (mense, fasilitieite, fondse, ens) binne- en buitelands deur enige overte en koverte metodes ...' (Physical destruction of revolutionary organizations, including people, facilities, funds, etc. Inside and outside South Africa, using overt and covert methods);
- 'Moedig wantroue, etniese en stamverskille en alle ander verdelingsfaktore onder die vyand aan. Diskrediteer hulle en hulle helpers binne en buitelands as individue en organisasies' (Promote insecurity, ethnic and racial conflict and other divisive mechanisms against the enemy. Discredit them and their helpers inside and outside the country as individuals and organisations).

Chapter three

The origins of the Midlands war

The Natal conflict from 1975 to 1989

John Aitchison

'The violence' that preceded and accompanied South Africa's transition to democracy from February 1990 to April 1994 is indelibly associated with the province of Natal (later to be renamed KwaZulu-Natal) and more particularly with the Natal Midlands, of which Pietermaritzburg is the centre.[1]

It was in the Pietermaritzburg region that the many early tussles between the Inkatha movement and the rising power of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) took place and where open warfare broke out in September 1987. It was also in this region that some of the subterranean activities of agents and surrogates of the South African state came to their most deadly fruition as they attempted to reverse or neutralise the democratisation of South Africa.

On 2 November 1995, General Magnus Malan entered a Durban courtroom and was charged with the murder of 13 people in the squatter settlement of KwaMakutha on 24 January 1987. In the dock with him were others, including three generals, nine senior military and police intelligence officers, Chief Buthelezi's personal secretary, and four of the KwaZulu policemen who actually carried out the massacre.[2] Finally, what had been hidden about political violence in KwaZulu-Natal was beginning to emerge, but only after thousands of people had lost lives and homes and a deep bitterness had infected the life of the province.

The homelands politics of Natal province

Although the province of Natal had its share of great figures in the anti-apartheid struggle (most notably Chief Albert Luthuli, the President of the

ANC when it was banned in 1960), it was not a great centre of political resistance during the late 1960s and 1970s. The roles of two important political movements somewhat explain why black resistance politics took a somewhat different and less confrontational form in the province. The one was the Inkatha movement associated with Chief Buthelezi. The other was the independent black trade union movement.

Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha

Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi was the hereditary chief of the important Buthelezi tribe and had, in a principled way, resisted the imposition of all the preliminaries for Bantustan 'independence' for the scattered areas of tribally owned land that officially made up the 'KwaZulu homeland'. He adroitly gained control of the nascent KwaZulu legislative assembly and cunningly avoided any lethal confrontation with the Nationalist government. In 1975 he set up the Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement after receiving the consent, if not outright blessing, of the ANC in exile. Buthelezi had been a member of the ANC as a student at the University of Fort Hare and was friendly with many of its leaders, including Nelson Mandela.

Inkatha was formed at a peculiar juncture, which enabled it to articulate its mission with a variety of discourses. It used the language of black consciousness and black identity in such a way that it avoided head-on confrontation with the white government, which had ruled out the possibility of non-racialism. It employed the para-political language of conscientisation and cultural liberation, which came largely from Paulo Freire's work in the World Council of Churches. And at the same time it legitimated itself as an authentic expression of the (largely ANC) tradition of inclusive black nationalism through negotiations carried out with the ANC and Kaunda in Lusaka, as well as through Buthelezi's connections with the ANC and Mandela. Its language of non-violence spoke to business interests and foreign powers intent on 'constructive engagement'.

It is an interesting mixture. Black consciousness, in spite of its positive identity-building character that did much for psychological liberation, contained within it a wellspring of resentment that later was to develop within Inkatha into a near pathological dislike of leftist whites and Indians and any black radicals associated with them. Cultural liberation as a code word for raising political awareness within a tight and repressive political situation lost any critical edge once Inkatha (or more accurately Chief Buthelezi) had

consolidated control of the traditional tribal structure that became incorporated into the apartheid-structured regional and territorial authorities.[3]

For about four years Buthelezi rode high and indeed excited many blacks, both in Natal and nationally. An opinion poll on the Witwatersrand in 1977 showed him as the most popular black politician in South Africa next to Nelson Mandela. In Natal he had managed to please both independent trade unionists and capital's managers. The latter saw him as a (hopefully loyal) Zulu with whom they could do business and, happy thought (for they all *really* disliked apartheid), maybe he would enable Natal to escape the worst of Afrikanerdom's economically disastrous ideological excesses.[4] Natal is essentially a black province and it is likely that some genuinely thought that a multiracial region free of apartheid could be allowed there.

However, handling the Chief was no doubt a major pre-occupation of a number of security officials and agents (many of them already deeply embedded within Inkatha). Included among the latter would be MZ Khumalo, a government Department of Information agent who rose to become Chief Buthelezi's personal secretary and the link person with the police and the army. In the mid-1960s it was clear that the security police loathed Buthelezi (he had after all been an ANC supporter and Mandela had visited him when underground) and smeared, harassed and tried to frame him. There is some anecdotal evidence that assassination was also planned. But by the early 1980s it was obvious that Buthelezi was being handled by the agencies of the South African state in a different way and with great subtlety they used his own strengths and weaknesses against him.

During the late 1970s Buthelezi gathered considerable support in the province.[5] This helped keep the province stable in the aftermath of Soweto 1976 and inhibited the growth of more radical oppositional politics. By the early 1980s Buthelezi was clearly making less and less effort to be seen as in tune with the liberation movements. A final break is often identified as coinciding with the 1979 meeting with the ANC in London at which Buthelezi quite obviously made a claim for political independence.[6] There are differing accounts of the meeting, with the ANC portraying Buthelezi as being unreasonable and Inkatha claiming that their leader refused to be a pawn of the ANC. In this whole period there were signals that Buthelezi was taking an increasingly hardline attitude towards any black radicals who gave him lip (and many were doing so in a most offensive way – particularly those coming out of the university-based black consciousness tradition).

With the unionists there was also an abrasive tango. Buthelezi disliked being manipulated and some of the intellectuals leading the independent union movement in Durban had schemes for Buthelezi's political role, which they had not run by him first. He in turn seemed to get on famously with white businessmen in a way that did not endear him to the vanguard representatives of the working class. By the time the UDF was formed in 1983 relations were already icy between Inkatha and the left. Some people suggested to Archie Gumede, a prominent national and Natal UDF leader inclined to a moderate variant of the ANC tradition, that it was essential to arrange some sort of concordat with Buthelezi. But already political conditions rendered such a deal impossible and it was never tried.

In the interim Inkatha was going full steam ahead with its own brand of a cause that has had remarkable longevity – 'the Natal option'. It started with quaint efforts by English-speaking colonials to avoid the dominance of Afrikanerdom and be left to run their own feudal paradise in which they could have Zulu royalty to tea unrestricted by apartheid, but still have Zulu retainers serving the sundowners. In the immortal phrase of the United Party it was 'white domination with justice'. Buthelezi's variant of the Natal option posited a non-racial province within a federal South Africa that would be the testing ground to prove to conservative forces in the rest of South Africa that non-racialism was acceptable. Some years earlier, the resulting KwaNatal Indaba (steered by John Kane-Berman of the South African Institute of Race Relations) could have been genuinely progressive, but its inaugural meeting in April 1986 was too late. The National Party was too tardy in its blessings (though by then its constitutional proposals often echoed Buthelezi's), the UDF was already mobilising the youth with extravagant success and the decline into civil strife was rapid.

Inkatha had been unprepared for the massive revival of anti-apartheid mobilisation that occurred in 1983 with the formation of the UDF. The brutal attack on students by followers of Chief Buthelezi at the University of Zululand in October 1983 was an indication of already souring relationships and the 1980s saw a steady erosion in Buthelezi's national support. This enhanced what had always been an ambiguity within Inkatha and Buthelezi himself – a tension between national and regional politics. Inkatha's stress on a 'Zulu' ethnic identity during the 1990s shows that the regional stress became the more powerful force.

Had they been accepted by the National Party government, the KwaNatal

Indaba proposals would have given Buthelezi a considerable base from which to exert power nationally. The bantustans would have been abolished as a cornerstone of continuing political development. As the Prime Minister of a federal state established outside apartheid he would have had a secure staging post from which to enter national politics. But the National Party government simply refused to accept them. If they had, the course of South African history might have been completely different.

The independent black trade union movement

The other remarkable feature of the province of Natal was its generation of the independent black trade movement in the early 1970s. A series of strikes in the Durban area in 1973 laid the basis for modern South African trade unionism. After the strikes ended, a slow and methodical worker support movement grew among a small group of left intellectuals at the University of Natal, including Richard Turner (who was assassinated in 1978), David Hemson, Halton Cheadle, Alec Irwin, John Copeland and others. Initially, Buthelezi gave the infant union movement some support, but gradually the relationship deteriorated. In the short term, the steady building up of a shopfloor base and a 'workerist' avoidance of populist political adventurism saved the union movement from too direct a confrontation with the state or with Buthelezi. By the time conflict became inevitable, Cosatu's predecessor, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu) had managed to gain considerable sway over the black working class, including migrant workers in Natal. Large numbers of Inkatha members were to become loyal Cosatu supporters.

In retrospect, this explains to some extent the need the agents of the state found for violent solutions in the province and the need for a special kind of war. It also explains the infatuation of organised business interests in Natal and elsewhere with Inkatha and its state-funded clone, the United Workers Union of South Africa (Uwusa).

Stress fractures in the Natal Midlands

Prior to 1986, Natal and particularly the Natal Midlands, had the reputation of being 'peaceful'. The reputation, by comparison with many other areas of South Africa, was deserved, although 'peace' was always an ambiguous concept in apartheid South Africa.[7] In the Natal Midlands, Inkatha's impact was somewhat reduced with the movement of many KwaZulu administration

employees previously based in the provincial capital of Pietermaritzburg to Ulundi, the newly built capital of KwaZulu. However, the early and mid-1980s saw stress fractures in the Midlands that were to widen into the chasms of civil war.

After Inkatha's break with the ANC in exile in 1979, the Inkatha and KwaZulu leadership became increasingly condemnatory in their comments about the ANC. Chief Buthelezi launched a number of scathing attacks and in this he was joined by King Goodwill Zwelethini, at that stage controlled by Chief Buthelezi. In 1984 the King told the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly that Zulus were more divided than ever and that this was the work of whites who operated through the ANC. All this further distanced Inkatha from young radicals who revered the exiled liberation movements and the leaders on Robben Island. Much of the anti-apartheid protest in the early 1980s was centred on schools and other educational institutions and as early as 1980 Inkatha-supporting vigilantes broke up a school boycott in KwaMashu near Durban. The rise of the UDF in the region in late 1983 and 1984 completed the process of alienating a significant section of the population (and particularly the youth) from Inkatha.

Apart from this youth radicalisation there undoubtedly was a rise in political tension in the region in the early 1980s as the anti-apartheid struggle intensified throughout South Africa (although the intensity of the Vaal revolt of 1984 against rent increases and black local authorities had relatively limited Natal Midlands parallels). The conditions in townships around Pietermaritzburg exacerbated the growing tensions. These precipitating conditions included:

- housing costs and shortages;
- transport costs;
- the excision of Imbali and Ashdown townships from the Pietermaritzburg municipality so that they came under direct government control;
- the role of Inkatha-supporting town councillors in black local authorities;
- conflict between Inkatha and the UDF;
- school unrest and boycotts;
- the rise of vigilante groups associated with Inkatha;
- conflict between the UDF and the Black Consciousness Movement;
- conflict between Inkatha and the trade union movements; and
- lack of tolerance of any opposition by the KwaZulu/Inkatha authorities.

In a variety of incidents during the mid-1980s the conflicts engendered by the above factors led to skirmishes between Inkatha and a range of people, including UDF-supporting youth, Cosatu members, participants in rent and bus boycotts, and members of nascent civic associations.

The conflict between Inkatha and the United Democratic Front

In October 1983 the UDF was formed in opposition to government proposals for a new tricameral Parliament, which would constitutionally enshrine the exclusion of Africans from the government of South Africa. At the opening rally of the UDF in Edendale (the major black residential area near Pietermaritzburg), a wounded and bandaged student from the Ngoye campus of the University of Zululand told the angry audience that Inkatha supporters had attacked students at the university hostels, killing five and wounding and assaulting many others.

Conflict in Natal blossomed, first in the Durban region where Inkatha and non-Inkatha tendencies polarised from 1983 to 1985 as a result of the violence and intimidation caused by the attempts to incorporate the townships of Hambanathi, Lamontville, KwaMashu and Umlazi into KwaZulu, as well as from resistance to rent and transport fare increases, and school boycotts. In the same period prominent self-appointed squatter settlement leaders[8] in the areas to the north of Durban, particularly in Lindelani and Inanda, became overtly pro-Inkatha and were involved in violent attacks against UDF supporters in the squatter areas and the more established townships.

In 1983 and 1984 a number of youth organisations affiliated to the UDF in the Pietermaritzburg and Hammarsdale areas, and the first Inkatha/UDF skirmishes began. In November 1983 there was a major clash in Imbali involving nearly a thousand people and in Mpumalanga Inkatha Youth Brigade members clashed with UDF supporters and set a bus ablaze. In mid-1985 the initiation of a pro-UDF civic association in Imbali was halted by severe intimidation. The extent of the growing antagonism towards the UDF can be seen in Chief Buthelezi's announcement in December 1985 that the UDF was a front for the ANC and that any UDF members in the KwaZulu civil service would be fired. On Christmas Eve 1985 many township dwellers around Pietermaritzburg turned off all lights as a symbolic protest against the State of Emergency in response to a UDF call (communicated by word of mouth and leaflets). This was a clear sign that Inkatha did not have the popular dominance in the townships that it was assumed to have.

School unrest and the vigilantes

The 1980s were characterised by black schools being seen as a site of struggle against apartheid and there were many school boycotts. Inkatha moved heavily and repressively against such school-based activism in the Durban region in 1980 and this turned many young pupils away from the movement. In 1983 a number of school-based demonstrations and boycotts took place in the Pietermaritzburg and Hammarsdale areas and were generally met with police repression. They also received attention from vigilante groups, set up in Midlands townships with the blessing of local councillors and the police, ostensibly to halt crime and gangsterism. In 1985 student leaders in Sobantu and Imbali were assaulted and in a few cases murdered by vigilantes. There were also isolated attacks on vigilantes. In assessing the extent of the violence between Inkatha-supporting vigilantes and radical youth, it must be noted that it was moderate in the South African context. In Natal as a whole 'unrest' deaths per capita were 50 per cent lower than for the rest of the country which was in considerable turmoil.

On 24 August 1985 100 armed vigilantes, fresh from a meeting at which a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly member, VB Ndlovu, urged the community to get rid of the Federal Theological Seminary which, he said, had fomented unrest and harboured 'criminals', marched to the Seminary. They told Dr Khoza Mgojo, President of the Seminary, that if the Seminary was not empty by the following Friday, 30 August, 'it would be burnt to the ground'. The seminary had long been an object of profound loathing by the security police.

Evidence began to accumulate that the security services were increasingly partisan towards vigilante groups. They pursued their tasks with enthusiasm that continued the erosion of all respect for law, human rights, and ethics, characteristic of apartheid's corruption of South African society. The security and riot police became notorious for heavy-handed behaviour in the streets, prone to assault and torture of detainees, as well as for having friendly relationships with the Inkatha vigilantes who by 1986 were beginning to exercise considerable muscle in the region. They protected vigilantes who had committed crimes against the perceived enemies of the apartheid state, namely UDF and Cosatu supporters. This collusion became more and more apparent as the 1980s progressed.

The conflict between Inkatha and trade union movements

The formation of Cosatu in November 1985 was of immense significance for

the labour movement in South Africa but inspired considerable anxiety among the security sector and white business interests. It led to business ignoring Inkatha's capacity for violence and to state funding (via the security police) of UWUSA, a counter union linked to Inkatha which attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to draw Inkatha supporters out of Cosatu. Because Cosatu inherited a successful track record of organising to deliver real gains to its members, it was able to retain Inkatha supporters, in spite of Cosatu's much more explicit UDF and later ANC linkages, than its predecessor, Fosatu.

The local spark for conflict between the two camps was the strike at the BTR Sarmcol factory in Howick that started on 30 April 1985 after an earlier stoppage in March over management's prolonged delays in recognition of the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU). By contrast, after its formation in May 1986, Uwusa was recognised at the factory. The entire African work force was dismissed. The factory management started to recruit scab labour soon after the strike started. This inevitably led to conflict. A successful Pietermaritzburg stayaway on 18 July 1985, endorsed by Fosatu and the UDF, was called for on behalf of the strikers and was followed by a consumer boycott of white-owned shops in Pietermaritzburg. By the end of August a survey conducted by the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce showed an average fall-off in turnover of black trade of between 60 per cent and 70 per cent, some of it enforced by young UDF comrades. The boycott was denounced by the Inkatha-supporting Inyanda Chamber of Commerce and on 12 January 1986 Chief Buthelezi instructed all Inkatha members and supporters to 'be prepared to mobilise workers' against the newly formed Cosatu. Inkatha attacks on Cosatu members began.

A 200-strong Inkatha group was bussed into Mpophomeni township (the home of the SARMCOL strikers) on the evening of 5 December 1986. They abducted four Cosatu officials and members in Mpophomeni, assaulted them and then executed three of them, one victim managing to escape. The Inkatha group was then escorted out of the township by the police. Within a day or two at least three of the perpetrators were arrested after a professional investigation by the Howick police. But they were ordered to release the accused by a high-ranking police officer. The inquest findings delivered in March 1988 found that nine Inkatha members were responsible for the murders (against whom there have as yet been no prosecutions). One of those named was Vela Mchunu who, together with about 200 other Inkatha/KwaZulu men, had been a beneficiary of SADF special forces military training

in the Caprivi. Mchunu was arrested in the early 1990s and tried under another name for a taxi-related double murder but was acquitted. The Attorney-General of Natal, Tim McNally, refused to bring him to court for the Mpophomeni killings.

The KwaZulu government's inability to tolerate opposition

Another tension-producing factor in the region was the unwillingness of the KwaZulu government to tolerate opposition or any attempts to resist Inkatha hegemony in tribal areas. This is seen in the actions taken against Chief Hlabunzima Maphumulo of Table Mountain (a tribal area about 15 kilometres from Pietermaritzburg), who had a history of disagreement with Chief Buthelezi and who attempted (unsuccessfully at first) to stop Inkatha having meetings at Table Mountain in 1980. Oscar Dhlomo, the Secretary-general of Inkatha, declared that 'the full might of Inkatha will be unleashed' against Chief Maphumulo. Maphumulo was sacked on Chief Buthelezi's instructions as Chairman of the Mpumalanga Regional Authority and replaced by his hostile neighbour, Chief Bangukhosi Mdluli (who in early 1990 was involved in attacks that forced Maphumulo to flee with many of his people to Pietermaritzburg, where he was assassinated in February 1991). In October 1983 Chief Maphumulo was savagely beaten outside the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly by Inkatha Youth Brigade members, allegedly as punishment for his refusal to allow Inkatha members to address his people during previous KwaZulu elections.

The preparation for a secret war

Tension in itself does not lead to fracture, nor does political conflict necessarily lead to murder. Revelations in the November 1995 court indictments against Magnus Malan et al and evidence led during the trial in 1996 show that what had long been surmised as a 'hidden hand' behind the Natal conflict was indeed true. According to the indictment, Buthelezi approached the South African military in 1985 for help with information, protection and military capacity. He needed it because the supporters of the ANC planned to neutralise him (though this threat seems to have been 'discovered' by the security services and may well have been largely disinformation). General Tienie Groenewaldt, chief director of military intelligence, allegedly took Buthelezi's shopping list from a meeting on 25 November 1985 to General Malan and it was eventually agreed that the

SADF would provide him with a 'contra-mobilisation capability', an 'offensive capability' and an 'intelligence capability'.

Some 200 Inkatha soldiers were secretly trained in the Caprivi. One of their first actions was the murder of four trade unionists in Mpophomeni. Another, a month later, was the KwaMakutha massacre when 13 women and children at a prayer meeting in a UDF official's house were murdered by a kombi load of AK-47-wielding Caprivi 'graduates' who, allegedly, had demanded a chance to practise their new skills.

Alongside beefing up Inkatha's military capacity was the development of an even more secret network of bases from which the security police would go out to abduct and then torture, interrogate and execute or turn ANC underground operatives. It was only in March 1997 that TRC investigators, on the basis of evidence from amnesty applicants,[9] began to unearth the bodies of executed victims on farms rented by the police near Pietermaritzburg, Camperdown, Verulam and a number of other sites. The Vlakplaas base of Eugene de Kock in the Transvaal was not an aberration but part of a wider security infrastructure for the elimination of the government's political enemies. The founder of Vlakplaas was Brigadier Jack Buchner, who arrived in Pietermaritzburg to head the security police in 1987. In 1989 he was appointed Commissioner of the KwaZulu Police and moved to Ulundi until his departure in late 1992.

The first year of war – 1987

The beginning of 1987 saw a hardening of the confrontation between the Inkatha vigilantes and the UDF youth organisations, particularly at Imbali, adjacent to Pietermaritzburg, and in Mpumalanga, an industrial township at Hammarsdale, halfway between Durban and Pietermaritzburg. 'Vigilantes' invaded schools and these armed groups were often bussed into areas in 'recruitment' drives. From March to August the death toll began to rise in the Pietermaritzburg region.

On 5 and 6 May, 90 per cent of Pietermaritzburg workers responded to the call from Cosatu and the UDF for a stayaway in protest against the whites-only elections. That seemed to be a considerable defeat for Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi who had urged his supporters to campaign against a stayaway. Inkatha blamed the success of the stayaway on the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) whose striking busdrivers effectively made it impossible for many workers to get to work even if they had wanted to.

Possibly a direct consequence of this were the deaths of 12 TGWU members in the following months and bus stonings by Inkatha youths.

A sideshow in the developing war between Inkatha and the UDF were clashes in some townships between Azapo and the UDF. A major clash in Sobantu Village in June led to the murder of a young UDF leader, France Ngcamu, by Thulani Ndlovu and others. This murder soured UDF attitudes towards Azapo for a long time afterwards.

By July authority in the township of Hammarsdale appeared to have been seized by whose only answer to dissent was violence and intimidation. Local residents claimed that although perpetrators of the violence had been identified and such information passed on to the police no action had been taken. This complaint became a constant refrain over the next four years. The situation in Hammarsdale did lead to the earliest attempt at peace talks. Both the Hammarsdale Youth Congress and Inkatha had started talking about peace but UDF hardliners put pressure on the organisation not to talk to Inkatha. Later on, the youth congress gave UDF co-president Archie Gumede the mandate to talk to Inkatha on their behalf. Gumede agreed and announced that he would negotiate on behalf of UDF affiliates who wanted peace. Four meetings were held and a statement was released pledging support for peace, freedom of association, speech and action. But the talks did not have a lasting effect. August saw a rise in incidents of unrest, particularly in Edendale, Vulindlela and Hammarsdale. A Cosatu leader, Alfred Ndlovu, borrowed an AK-47 from an Umkhonto we Sizwe member and attacked an Inkatha group in Vulindlela, wounding several people. He was later arrested, tried and convicted for the offence. There were regular reports of vigilante violence and the name of a young Inkatha gunman, Sichizo Zuma, was repeatedly mentioned.

In early September there were devastating floods that destroyed hundreds of houses in Edendale and Vulindlela. The relationship of these floods to the violence that followed is a matter of considerable conjecture. Some commentators have suggested that people in the Umsinduzi River Valley were so fed up after the damage and inconvenience of the floods that when Inkatha launched a coercive recruiting drive it was the last straw and they fought back. Another suggestion is that corruption in the distribution of flood relief aid led to anger at Inkatha and KwaZulu structures and in turn led to resistance to recruitment. There were now daily reports of a heavy Inkatha recruitment drive backed by threats and coercion. Apparently in many Vulindlela areas a

final date of 4 October was proclaimed, by which time everyone had to have joined Inkatha. Conventionally, it is here that the Midlands war can be said to have begun.

Initially it was largely a battle for control of Edendale, a large urbanised freehold area which had never been under KwaZulu government control. The heaviest casualties were experienced there (27), but people also died in Vulindlela (16), Hammarsdale (4) and Greytown (3). The violence escalated and deaths rose from 59 in September to 161 in January.

Locally, both parties separately invited the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce to mediate, but the talks held under their aegis foundered under the combined effects of security police detention and restriction of key UDF negotiators, unreasonable Inkatha demands, and heavy escalation in the fighting. A key part of Inkatha's demands involved the attempt to 'nationalise' the talks as a way of getting official recognition from the UDF and Cosatu.

By the end of October the UDF was beginning to gain control of much of Edendale and the centre of conflict moved to Vulindlela where comrades were now making gains. By the end of December UDF control of Edendale had been consolidated and there was heavy fighting in Vulindlela (45 dead) with tribal leadership in disarray. There were large numbers of detentions of UDF youth (nearly 400 in December) and a growing number of reports about Inkatha leaders (dubbed 'warlords' by their critics) who were alleged to have engaged in acts of violence on a large scale with impunity from arrest and prosecution. The only public attempts to halt their activities were the interdicts brought against them by a legal team from Cheadle, Thompson and Haysom acting for Cosatu.

At the end of 1987 many young UDF comrades felt a flush of victory at having beaten off and moreover, apparently beaten, Inkatha. The next year was to sadly disabuse them. There was no way that they could take on both Inkatha and the state, locally personified in the figures of David Ntombela, a KwaZulu Legislative Assembly member from Vulindlela, and Jack Buchner.

The empire strikes back – blue overalls and shotguns

At the beginning of 1988 the Vulindlela tribal authorities were in disarray (with chiefs and *indunas* no longer performing their official functions) and agricultural work was seriously affected. Some 79 people were killed in the area in January. The extent of the disruption and fear in the region can be seen in the fact that at one stage there were no children in the paediatric

section of Edendale Hospital at all – parents were too scared to leave their children there. Large numbers of refugees sought refuge in safer areas or were accommodated in domestic servants quarters in 'white' Pietermaritzburg.

It soon became apparent that an Inkatha counter-attack named Operation Doom or Operation Cleanup had started. The UDF were disabled by the massive detentions and savage police reaction to any gathering. Police provided what in effect was back-up to Inkatha forces who could move and fight with impunity. Inkatha was able to restore much of its control in the Vulindlela area with this support. There are some reports of police handing over captured comrades to Inkatha or tribal authorities who then killed them (as in the well-documented case of 13-year-old Makithiza Ndlovu killed on 1 January 1988). Inkatha also seemed to be increasingly well armed. January ended with an Inkatha invasion of Ashdown allegedly facilitated by the security forces, who allowed an enormous meeting of 15 000 Inkatha supporters to take place nearby, at which the crowd was allegedly incited to attack the UDF and Cosatu.

The police had begun to establish bases in the Edendale and Vulindlela areas. The police complained that the terrain was difficult to control, particularly at night, but that they believed they were now on top of the 'unrest'. Heavy police reinforcements including KwaZulu police in Vulindlela and 150 *kitskonstabels* (rapidly trained 'instant constables' armed with-pump action shotguns and dressed in blue overalls) had poured into the area at the end of 1987 and 289 *kitskonstabels* were deployed at the beginning of March.[10] Many of them appeared to be Inkatha supporters with records of engagement in previous acts of violence. The more notorious were eventually discharged.

In the early part of 1988 a number of interdicts brought by applicants asking the courts for protection from Inkatha 'warlords' received extensive publicity and even led to judicial inquiries to the Attorney-General's representative about the delay in bringing cases to court. These applications were hampered by the assassination of a number of key applicants and witnesses, including two Mthembu brothers (Simon Mthembu on 24 January and Ernest Mthembu on 4 July) and the elderly Johannes and Phillipina Nkomo (on 13 February 1988). Most of the alleged killers have still not been brought to trial. The investigating officer, Frank Dutton, who brought the killers of the Nkomos to trial, was later to feature as the 'straight cop' who would unmask a number of KwaZulu hit-squad members and become head of the special Investigation Task Unit that brought Magnus Malan to court.

As the crisis deepened thousands of displaced people sought refuge from the violence. Schooling was disrupted by the resignations of many teachers, by scholars being refused entry into schools (or being too scared to attend) after a card system was instituted at some Department of Education and Training schools, and by many KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture schools refusing to accept non-Inkatha pupils. There were reports of a large drop in enrolment in schools near Pietermaritzburg. In Hammarsdale estimates were made that only 25 per cent of boys remained in the senior classes. Intermittent interruptions of schools continued in the first six months of 1988.

In February the collusion between the police and Inkatha received official blessing when the Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, presenting a trophy to the Pietermaritzburg Town Hill police station, saying, 'Police will face the future with moderates and fight against radical groups … Radicals, who are trying to destroy South Africa, will not be tolerated. We will fight them. We have put a foothold in that direction, and we will eventually win the Pietermaritzburg area.'[11]

Certainly, by March 1988 Vlok's police had averted the danger of total UDF victory with the *kitskonstabels*, massive detentions and round-ups of youths, as for example took place in Ashdown (259) and Sobantu (218) on 21 March. The media and 'white' Pietermaritzburg were willing to believe that the worst was over when deaths fell significantly in March, but it was a short reprieve. From April to November the death toll averaged 44 people a month.

Regrettably all the peace initiatives in the first half of 1988, including calls from the ANC in exile, church and other community leaders, achieved little, particularly after key UDF negotiators were detained again in February, witnesses in a number of interdict applications were assassinated, and the UDF, Cosatu and 16 other organisations restricted on 22 February.

Monitoring the crisis

In April the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal held a one-day seminar on 'the violence', attended by over 300 people. Among other information presented on the conflict a careful study of death statistics revealed that it was mainly UDF members who were being killed, that it was mainly Inkatha members who were killing them, and that it was hard to understand why only UDF supporters were being detained if the state forces were really intent on stopping the violence. Over the next five years the Centre for Adult Education waged a constant struggle to document what was

happening in the region and, through rigorous analysis discern the forces and factors in the conflict.

As mentioned, one of the first surprises discovered by the Centre for Adult Education and other groups involved in monitoring (such as the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness and the Black Sash in Durban) was the pattern in the UDF and Inkatha casualties.The consistent pattern in the monthly death tolls in the Natal Midlands from 1987 to 1989 was for the UDF casualties to exceed those of Inkatha by far.[12] The ratio of UDF deaths to Inkatha deaths was about 7 to 3 and this was so in each year. The ratio was consistent and solid and was not changed by taking into account a possible skew created by a few massacres of many people.

Year	UDF deaths	Inkatha deaths	Total
1987	128 (66%)	67 (34%)	195 (100%)
1988	184 (68%)	85 (32%)	269 (100%)
1989	172 (68%)	80 (32%)	252 (100%)
Totals	**484 (68%)**	**232 (32%)**	**716 (100%)**

TABLE 1
UDF and Inkatha casualties 1987–1989

The possibility of some kind of systematic error is improbable. Inkatha's own claims as to their casualties do not greatly differ from these figures and continuing attempts to identify the dead of unknown affiliation have not changed the ratio of 7: 3. The imbalance is not corrected by assuming that large numbers of UDF supporters were killed by other non-Inkatha combatants (such as the Police and Azapo) for, though some were, the numbers are insignificant.

What then was the meaning of this imbalance? That one side is more effective in slaughtering its opponents does not in itself prove who is the aggressor, for the defenders against aggression might simply be better armed. The possibilities appear to be threefold:

- Inkatha was more aggressive (but not necessarily better armed);
- Inkatha was not necessarily more aggressive (indeed could have been a victim of attacks) but was better armed. Being better armed would include the possibility that the police fought on their side and defended them against

attacks or at the very least did not confiscate their weapons; or
- Inkatha was both more aggressive and better armed and tolerated by the police. Other evidence leads us irresistibly to this last conclusion.

In mid-1988, a further analysis of the violence statistics exposed a curious anomaly.[13] While there had been considerable revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence in South Africa in the early 1980s, the government's declaration of states of emergency in 1985 and 1986 had soon drastically reduced the death toll (including the death toll created by the police). Detention might be a gross human rights abuse, particularly if you were tortured for information, but it did keep radicals off the streets and alive! Yet in the Pietermaritzburg region, in the middle of harsh emergency rule and with huge numbers of UDF supporters in detention, the deaths kept escalating (as they continued to do in the Midlands until mid 1990).

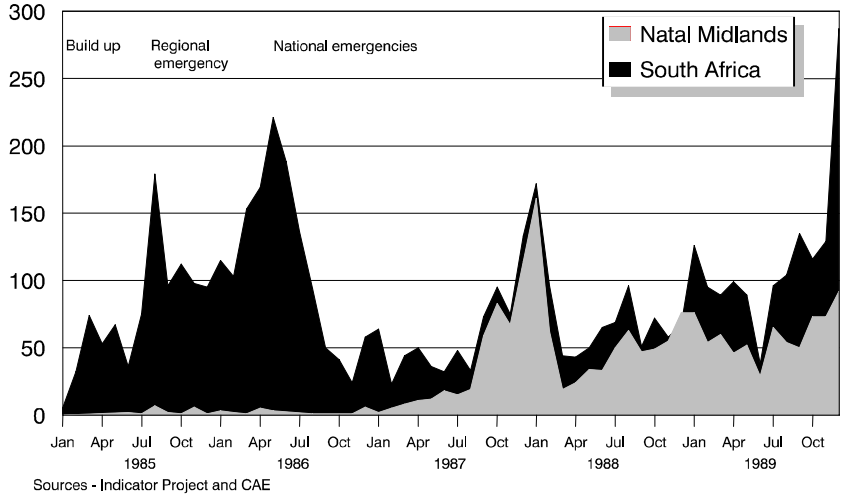


FIGURE 1
Deaths in South Africa and Natal Midlands, 1985–1989

In other words, repression worked in the rest of South Africa, but not in Natal. The deduction was simple. The war in Natal was a different from the general unrest and resistance against apartheid that had been suppressed in the rest of South Africa. It was in fact a different kind of conflict – one about Inkatha and its opponents' ability to command the allegiance of black people in Natal – rather than an overt and direct conflict between white government and

black rebels. The nature of this 'different kind of conflict' seemed to be further characterised by gross partisanship by the security forces on the side of Inkatha.

Again, the detention figures are indicative. In 1987 over 734 anti-Inkatha people were detained but not a single Inkatha member or supporter (although Inkatha members had killed far more UDF members than the other way around). In 1988 a similar situation prevailed with at least 460 anti-Inkatha people detained during the year, while only 21 Inkatha people were detained, most of them very briefly.[14] Understandably this analysis was not well received by the security police and Inkatha. Nor was it accepted by the South African Institute of Race Relations which had developed an attitude of total antipathy to the Mass Democratic Movement (which included the UDF and Cosatu), and could not conceive of Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi as being anything other than the finest exponents of liberal democracy and free enterprise. With support from influential businessmen and their press (the former had been engaged in a long-term affair with Chief Buthelezi because of his known antipathy to Cosatu, sanctions and socialism), this unholy alliance was to some extent able to suppress the conclusions that were obvious to the most illiterate of township dwellers. Inkatha and the state had come together in a partnership to smash the rising force of the Mass Democratic Movement in Natal. Inkatha did the fighting, the police detained UDF youth and engaged in a secret and dirty war.

In 1988 it was clear why Inkatha might want to engage in this war. Inkatha's support in the Pretoria–Witwatersrand–Vereeniging (PWV) industrial heartland had withered since 1977, from about 30 per cent (similar to what the ANC had then) to less than 5 per cent in 1988 (by which time the ANC's support had risen to nearly 50 per cent and with its allies could command the allegiance of more than 70 per cent of the black population of the PWV).[15] Why the state would want to do this was less clear. While its 1985–1986 deal with Buthelezi to set up a covert military force to attack the Mass Democratic Movement had a clear logic and fitted in with its habitual desire to eliminate all opposition, the continuation of this covert war needs further explanation.

It became clear in the 1990s that in 1987 the National Party government made some kind of decision to go for a negotiated settlement with the ANC. Why then did the Natal war continue? An obvious explanation was that it continued because the state (or at least substantial sections of the security

forces) wanted to control the outcomes of impending liberalisation and cheat the ANC out of a electoral victory in the elections that were already apparently scheduled for 1994.

Attrition and polarisation in the late eighties

By mid 1988 the situation in the Natal Midlands was in certain respects one of stalemate. The area was now a patchwork of no-go areas. Inkatha had lost control of the urban townships around Pietermaritzburg (except for a couple of small pockets) but with police support had regained control of the tribal area of Vulindlela. Inkatha was also increasingly heavily armed.

Although emergency rule was extremely repressive and large numbers of comrades were detained, in June there were huge Cosatu/UDF organised stayaways in the region. The first, on 6–8 June, was called by Cosatu and the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu) as a three-day 'national peaceful protest' against the Labour Relations Amendment Bill and the banning of 17 organisations by the government. The second was on Soweto Day, 16 June. During the first stayaway as much as 65 per cent of the black workforce of Pietermaritzburg was absent. The Soweto Day stayaway was even more effective.

By mid-year it was clear that Mpumalanga and associated areas such as Shongweni to the south had become the most violent areas in Natal. Much community protest over the next year was directed at the *kitskonstabels* who were major sources of violence. The extent of the crisis was shown when the International Committee of the Red Cross opened a base in Hammarsdale in November. From then to 28 May 1989 they helped 438 families whose houses had been destroyed or breadwinners killed.

In the Pietermaritzburg area attacks continued in the township of Imbali, in the outlying areas of Vulindlela and on the township of Mpophomeni. There were also growing signs of strife within the comrade refugee groups – the debilitation of two years of war was beginning to show. It was a factor that also had its impact on Inkatha warlords. In the second half of the year there were signs that the conflict was spreading into the more remote rural tribal areas with a politicisation of what may originally have been tribal factionalism.

The sorry story of the Complaints Adjudication Board

In September 1988 there was an apparent peace breakthrough with the setting up of a Complaints Adjudication Board jointly agreed to and financed

by Cosatu and Inkatha.[16] A number of pending interdict hearings against Inkatha members were dropped and a simple code of conduct agreed upon to end violence. It forbade forced recruitment and intimidation and promised free political association and participation in political activities. Both parties agreed to discipline offenders against the code, oppose bail for those charged with political violence, and condemn forced removals. The Complaints Adjudication Board jurisdiction was limited to the Pietermaritzburg and Vulindlela region although it could be extended elsewhere by joint agreement of the two parties. However, Inkatha members against whom complaints were laid (such as Chief Shayabantu Zondi from Vulindlela) refused to appear before the Board. The Inkatha organisation as a whole appeared unwilling to apply pressure on these people to do so or to discipline them in any way. The murder of Nicholas Kwilili Duma of Imbali, a witness to the Complaints Adjudication Board, led to Cosatu's withdrawal from further use of this mechanism on 8 May 1989.

The Trust Feeds massacre

December 1988 is notable because of the infamous Trust Feeds massacre of 11 people, after days of Inkatha and police collusion in attempts to drive UDF supporters out of the area. The local Inkatha Chairman, Jerome Gabela, and the New Hanover Police Station commander, Brian Mitchell, had earlier solicited the help of the Riot Police Captain in Pietermaritzburg, Deon Terblanche, to eliminate the UDF in Trust Feeds. Terblanche deployed a number of *kitskonstabels* in the Trust Feeds too. On 3 December 1988, four *kitskonstabels*, together with Mitchell, attacked a house (in all probability not the one they had intended to attack) and murdered a group of mourners at a funeral vigil. Subsequently, in 1991 and 1992, the conspiracy between a number of policemen and regional and local Inkatha leaders to kill UDF supporters in the area was proven in court and Mitchell and the *kitskonstabels* convicted of murder. In late 1996 Mitchell applied to the TRC for amnesty, which was granted. In his submission he unveiled more details of the extent to which high-ranking police officers covered up for him after the massacre.[17]

1989 – a period of localised struggles

January 1989 began with what can only be described as nightmare conditions in Mpumalanga, the township of Hammarsdale half way between Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Though the unpopular and partisan *kitskonstabels*

had been removed on 30 December 1988, the mayhem continued with murders and arson attacks – in the first 9 days of January 35 houses were destroyed. Nearby Fredville (Inchanga) appeared to be under the control of youthful comrades who broke into factions and generally intimidated the area.

Meanwhile in Imbali, a large and relatively new township in Pietermaritzburg which had a strong pocket of Inkatha loyalists (though largely populated by UDF supporters), a reign of terror was unleashed by an Inkatha group led by Skweqe Mweli. Subsequently Mweli was arrested and was detained for a time, before being charged and ultimately tried and convicted of murder in 1990. Many incidents were documented in a Cosatu dossier on Imbali released in March 1989 which made a number of claims about police assaults and collusion with Inkatha supporters and detailed incidents where Inkatha vigilantes helped police detain, interrogate and shoot residents of Imbali.

In Vulindlela, the attempts by chiefs and Inkatha to regain effective control of the whole area continued. A series of incidents starting on 27 February were documented in a series of affidavits that formed part of a successful interdict application against the Minister of Law and Order and the police launched on 28 April 1989. Residents of central Pietermaritzburg were made aware that the conflict was coming closer with regular deaths and gang-war-like skirmishes in the Retief Street area of Pietermaritzburg that had traders in despair.

Edendale was now clogged with young refugees from Vulindlela whose main hobby was to stone buses containing their persecutors passing through on their way to work. Community leaders complained about the lack of action by police to stop it or by tribal authorities in Vulindlela to create a climate in which the refugees could return without being killed. In April there was trouble in Swayimani near Wartburg, a sign that the violence was spreading into more isolated rural areas.

The renewed peace attempts

Peace initiatives began to gather momentum in spite of numerous setbacks. On 13 April 1989, Chief Buthelezi and the Inkatha Central Committee released news of an intervention by Archbishop Hurley and a group of conveners (including religious, university and business leaders). However, the Inkatha Central Committee rejected the attempt and Velaphi Ndlovu (a KwaZulu MP for Vulindlela) denounced Archbishop Hurley's 'dictatorship' in

presenting a list of conveners. Chief Buthelezi questioned who would represent Cosatu, the UDF and the ANC, and whether the ANC supported the plan. He urged Cosatu to withdraw the dossier alleging collusion between the SAP and Inkatha in Imbali.

On the 20 April it was reported that Inkatha also now demanded a high-level consultation with the ANC but Hurley's initiative drew support from Elijah Barayi of Cosatu and Archie Gumede of the UDF who said they had a mandate to do so. The ANC in exile also gave full support.

On 23 April Inkatha held a number of 'prayer meetings' all over Natal, including at such Midlands places as Nxamalala, Mafunze, Inadi, Mpumuza, and Imbali, at which a speech from Chief Buthelezi was read, revealing his own peace proposals. In a letter to Archbishop Hurley released on 20 April, Chief Buthelezi said his proposals included collecting international funding, making use of high tech media to broadcast peace and a Marshall like plan for development. There would be local peace-keeping field units and joint monitoring structures. He said he was willing to work out a compromise with the Cosatu/UDF plan. But he also demanded an end to 'mudslinging'.

On 26 April Cosatu and the UDF responded reasonably warmly, if not desperately, and agreed to work towards some kind of compromise peace conference. They also released a document, *An End to Violence and Peace in Natal – the Position of Cosatu and UDF Affiliates*, which provided a clear summary of all the peace proposals and efforts so far. Their plan was rejected by Inkatha on 29 April when Chief Buthelezi gave a very negative response to both the Hurley and Cosatu proposals at a meeting of the Inkatha Central Committee. However he promised that he would 'go to the ends of the earth' to bring about peace. He also called for a summit of the Presidents of Inkatha, the ANC, UDF and Cosatu. This attempt to gain a national profile was to become a recurring obsession with the Inkatha leadership.

The renewal of peace moves received much publicity in the first half of 1989 (as did the attempts by Chief Mhlabunzima Maphumulo to get the state to institute a judicial inquiry into the violence and the police role in it). On 7 April Chief Maphumulo petitioned the State President to set up a judicial inquiry. Chief Buthelezi refused to comment to the press on the issue. Also on 7 April Chief Buthelezi had attacked Maphumulo in the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly for being part of attempts by the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa), a UDF ally, to infiltrate traditional leadership in Natal and to 'prostitute the offices of chiefs'. He spoke of the 'so-called

petition' (of which he seemed to have had advance knowledge). He said the party politicisation of chiefs was a threat to all members of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and that Contralesa was out to 'clobber' him. The government turned down the idea of an inquiry.

On 24 April Adriaan Vlok in his budget speech promised 'to grab them with an iron fist', 'them' being the ANC/SACP/UDF/Cosatu and misguided clergymen. Vlok said that underground structures in the Pietermaritzburg and Durban areas backed by the ANC/SACP alliance were clearly responsible for the violence. At least it was an admission that things were in a terrible state. He conceded that the power struggle between Inkatha and the UDF was the main cause of township violence in Natal. He also blamed socio-economic factors and tribal feuds.

The 'iron fist' announced by Vlok was an operation headed by an SAP general with extra manpower (including teams of detectives) and equipment to stop the violence, and the placement of semi-permanent police stations in trouble spots. The army would assist if necessary. Vlok made clear that the new move had been discussed with Chief Buthelezi at a meeting the previous week: 'We are going to grab [*vasvat*] them. They will again make a huge fuss. We know it already. But we cannot allow ourselves to be put off our stride.... We will root them out ... we know they will make a big noise, but we are prepared for it ... we will grab them with an iron fist ... we are going to use the iron fist regardless.'[18]

Vlok also claimed that the new peace negotiations were on instructions from the ANC to Cosatu and the UDF that they should come to a new peace initiative under cover of the churches: 'Like innocent lambs to the slaughter, these good but naïve clergymen are again being inspanned by the ANC/SACP to do their devilish work.'

Although Cosatu suspended its use of the Complaints Adjudication Board on 8 May, it appealed for a peace conference. On the same day 15 Pietermaritzburg church leaders joined an appeal for a judicial inquiry into the violence. Vlok rejected such requests on 16 May, saying on behalf of State President PW Botha that such an inquiry would not solve the problem and could become an additional cause for dispute. He laid the blame for the violence on 'revolutionary agents of the ANC/SACP alliance, namely the UDF and Cosatu' who were engaged in a leadership struggle with Inkatha. He added that 'there is absolutely no question of a breakdown of law and order in the Greater Pietermaritzburg area' (as had been alleged in Maphumulo's

petition). He also said that the government had no intention of instituting an inquiry 'as the main causes of the ongoing violence have been ascertained through research and investigation'. Causes were identified as the poor socio-economic circumstances caused by unemployment and the population explosion; the internal struggle for leadership within the ranks of Inkatha and the UDF; family and tribal disputes; and criminal elements. The criminal elements consisted mainly of 'comrades' who, during the initial unrest, were responsible for intimidating the population and who now 'continued to make a living from crime'. Inkatha and KwaZulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi were being blamed by the leftist radicals for having started the violence, but 'he and Inkatha are prepared to work for peace and maintenance of law and order ... they did not start the violence'.[19]

On 10 May the ANC in exile offered to play a direct role in the peace talks. Peace moves finally seemed to be making progress when Chief Buthelezi agreed to a meeting on 20 May with Cosatu and the UDF. However, he insisted on an Ulundi venue and a series of interchanges began. Two initial meetings between Cosatu/UDF and Inkatha delegations took place in Durban on 19 and 23 June that led to joint press statements. This seemed to be the breakthrough that had happened against all odds, including the more severe restricting of UDF leader Archie Gumede on 12 June by Vlok a few days before peace talks (but subsequently relaxed on 16 June).

But what happened in July showed that the optimism was premature. In Mpumalanga alone there were 21 deaths on the weekend of 14 to 16 July. According to informants heavy machine guns were used and vast quantities of ammunition expended. According to the same informants the KwaZulu Police deployed in Mpumalanga in February 1989 were successful and non-partisan. Local KwaZulu Legislative Assembly members had then complained and a new unit of KwaZulu Police arrived and generally created havoc. The SAP then took over again and these Riot Police sided with Inkatha. Prior to this things had been getting more peaceful. Efforts to patch up a cease-fire by local Cosatu and Inkatha leaders were short lived.

Meanwhile significant violence re-emerged in Mpophomeni/Howick. Perhaps even more significant is that violence was taking root in rural areas, in Swayimani (near Wartburg), Ehlanzeni (near Camperdown) and Emosomeni (near Richmond). The Ehlanzeni conflict which escalated in later months was between two chiefdoms which now appeared to have, at least nominally, become Inkatha and UDF areas respectively. The Richmond

conflict, though apparently more tribal in origin, led to at least 20 deaths and a similar politicisation.

In September the Mass Democratic Movement started a mass defiance campaign to coincide with the parliamentary elections. Pietermaritzburg saw the arrest of 356 university defiance campaign marchers, a march by Mpophomeni residents to complain about the police, and a 7 000-strong legal march in Pietermaritzburg on 21 September. The elections took place on 5 September, accompanied by a stayaway on 5 and 6 September, which was fairly well supported in Pietermaritzburg. On 23 September, at a meeting of the Inkatha Central Committee in Ulundi, Chief Buthelezi described various obstacles to the peace talks, announced a moratorium on peace talks and made various demands about any future peace negotiations. An example of the hardening Inkatha line was a meeting of chiefs in late September, at which King Goodwill made a vitriolic attack on Chief Maphumulo: '... let us bury Chief Maphumulo in yesterday's problems ... Politically speaking, if he goes [overseas] all we can say is rest in peace, Maphumulo.'

On 4 October Cosatu and the UDF claimed that they would go it alone in efforts to make peace, in spite of the Inkatha pullout from negotiations. They described the many stumbling blocks that Inkatha had put in the way and said that after two years of effort they had severe reservations as to whether Chief Buthelezi and the Inkatha Central Committee 'want to use peace talks to end the violence or to establish a national political position'.

In mid October Chief Buthelezi released a statement to the Natal Chamber of Industries responding to the Chamber's concern at allegations that Inkatha was responsible for the breakdown of the peace talks. Buthelezi claimed that as early as March 1989 the ANC/Cosatu/UDF were 'going to mount a peace initiative to trap me politically'. He said that at an ANC meeting in February 1989 a peace initiative was discussed as a 'means of consolidating the UDF/Cosatu as organisations'. He further alleged that this peace 'initiative would be pursued knowing that I could not resist their call for peace because if I did so, I would be rejected by my international friends'.

On 17 November Oscar Dhlomo said he did not hold out much hope for the resumption of peace talks unless the problem of the vilification of Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi was resolved. The alleged 'vilification' of Chief Buthelezi became another constant Inkatha refrain over the next few years.

On 19 November an *imbizo* (convention) rally was called by King Zwelethini in Durban. Speaking to a large crowd, the king said 'the Zulu

people' had been 'excluded' from welcome home celebrations for the recently released Rivonia trialists.[20] His speech and that of Chief Buthelezi contained some sharp references to the ANC, the UDF and Cosatu. 'I speak now as King of the Zulus and I say: let no party attack my people. I say to the leadership of the ANC, Cosatu and the UDF: leave my people alone and let them do their Zulu thing.' Chief Buthelezi said the king was always above party politics, then added: 'You know that the UDF and Cosatu have come into your midst to turn you against Inkatha.' He said one of the reasons for calling the convention was to urge an end to a 'campaign of vilification'. 'The killing-talk, the hurling of insults, the singing of vile songs about the leader of the Zulu nation, all make up a recipe for killing.'

Some buses returning from the rally were stoned by comrades in the Pietermaritzburg area. Soon after the rally there was the beginning of a series of attacks that continued for more than a week on UDF areas in Mpumalanga by Inkatha supporters and special constables, in which several people were killed and many houses destroyed. In early December an interdict application relating to these attacks in Mpumalanga had statements from highly reputable witnesses (lawyers, social workers) alleging police collusion. Some respite came on 30 November when the local leadership of Inkatha and the UDF signed a cease-fire agreement. This process was facilitated by local industrialists and was welcomed by Oscar Dhlomo, the police and, on 4 December, the national leadership of both the UDF and Inkatha. On 29 November the township manager, Mr Bheki Nzimande, claimed that 1 000 houses had been damaged in Mpumalanga since the beginning of the year.

Heavy violence continued in Ehlanzeni in early December and there were allegations by a Cosatu leader that Chief Buthelezi opposed the peace talks held at the end of October between Mlaba and Mdluli because of the moratorium Buthelezi had imposed on peace talks. December also saw a large offensive from Inkatha-dominated areas in informal settlements in the Durban region against neighbouring townships that led to many deaths.

The Imbali Support Group[21] reported that in December a number of people living in corner houses in Imbali were evicted for no reason and subsequently razor wire would be placed around the house and then *kitskonstabels* would move in. It was these houses that were used as shooting points during the so-called Seven Days War in March 1990. Somebody was clearly making preparations for the new South Africa that would be ushered in by President de Klerk's announcement on 2 February 1990.

Chapter four

KwaZulu-Natal: The pre-election wars of the 1990s

John Aitchison

On 2 February 1990 the foundations of many South African certainties were shaken when President FW de Klerk announced the unbanning of a whole range of political organisations and the imminent release of Nelson Mandela. On 25 February a huge and mainly youthful crowd of over 100 000 people welcomed their released leader to Durban. In his speech, Mandela was conciliatory towards Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi and urged a cessation of all violence. He urged all to throw their pangas and other weapons into the sea. There was much press acclaim for his remarks and in some communities near Durban there were spontaneous peace gatherings. There was also anger from some at the call for peace with Inkatha.

But the events of late March disabused all of the idea that the people of KwaZulu-Natal (and particularly Inkatha) had taken Mandela's advice. On 25 March, exactly a month after Mandela's speech, and at the same venue, Chief Buthelezi could only muster a crowd of about 10 000 people to rally financed by the security police.[1] Two days later massive Inkatha attacks started on non-Inkatha areas in Vulindlela, Edendale, Ashdown and Imbali that led to over 200 deaths in the so-called Seven Days War. Political violence in South Africa over the next three years[2] would show the Midlands war of 1987 to 1989 to have been but a prelude.

The Seven Days War[3]

The scale of the Seven Days War was indicated by the first press release from an *ad hoc* crisis committee that notified the world that it had started. The committee hurriedly gathered early in the morning of Thursday 29 March in the

Cathedral of the Holy Nativity in Pietermaritzburg. It was made up of trade unionists, church workers, and human and political rights support groups, who had heard graphic accounts of what had happened during the previous two days and of the continuing attacks that were unfolding as they met. At least 30 people had already been killed and a large number of people were wounded. As many as 12 000 Inkatha *impi* members had, over the previous two days, attacked a number of areas in Vulindlela (in particular KwaShange, KwaMnyandu, Gezubuso and Vulisaka), Caluza in Edendale and Ashdown. They appeared to have logistical support and large lorries had been seen ferrying platoons of armed men, including people in blue special constable overalls, from one place to another, unhindered by the police or army (which were present in full force). That Thursday another major attack was already in progress and more houses were in flames. How could this be happening in the new South Africa?

Preludes and precipitating factors for the Seven Days War

Wars are generally considered to have causes or precipitating factors and the Seven Days War is no exception. That there had been a *de facto* civil war in the Natal Midlands since late 1987 is a leading 'cause' of these events, and state collusion and partisanship in this conflict is another important factor.

Other possible precipitating factors or events that have to be considered are:

- the behaviour of young refugees from Vulindlela who took shelter in Edendale in the late 1980s;
- the meeting between Chief Buthelezi, King Zwelithini and the KwaZulu chiefs (*amakhosi*) on Friday and Saturday 23 to 24 March 1990; and
- the Inkatha rally at King's Park, Durban on Sunday 25 March 1990.

The stoning of buses by young refugees from Vulindlela

From the mid-1980s there were various influxes of young non-Inkatha refugees into Edendale from Vulindlela, notably after the successful police-aided Inkatha counter-attacks of early 1988. At various times stoning of vehicles travelling through Edendale from Vulindlela to Pietermaritzburg took place. This was the young refugees' way of hitting back at their persecutors but it also meant that innocent commuters and workers from Vulindlela had to run the gauntlet on a daily basis. This situation was not eased by any significant security force action, either to guarantee the right of

the young refugees in Edendale to return in safety to their homes in Vulindlela or to stop them stoning transport vehicles.[4]

On 20 February 1990 there were two attacks on vehicles between Edendale and Vulindlela in which two people were killed. That evening David Ntombela called a meeting and a large number of people gathered at his house. A van carrying a loudspeaker was sent out, telling everyone not to go to work the next day, and calling on all young men to come to the tribal court the next morning with their weapons. By the next morning the police were aware of the situation and they appeared to have talked the crowd of about 5 000 people out of the attack. Ntombela reportedly had quite a task, having worked everyone up to attack and wipe out a number of non-Inkatha areas, to calm them. This meeting on the morning of 21 February 1990 is particularly interesting because it was attended by Lieutenants Meyer and van den Heever of the Riot Unit and Commissioner Jack Buchner from Ulundi. According to Meyer, the vehicles had been attacked because of a rumour that Ntombela had been arrested and that anti-Inkatha forces were going to attack. Van den Heever opined: 'This morning they were on their way to Esigodini to attack, but Chief Ntombela[5] and I were stopping them and telling them to turn back. Yes, they were proceeding on foot. But these people are disciplined. When he [Mr Ntombela] said turn back, they listened to him. They would not attack if he did not say so.' *The Natal Witness* reported that police said afterwards that had the group proceeded, the ensuing bloodletting could have reached a level unparalleled in the history of Natal's violence, as hundreds more people were likely to have joined the warring party en route.[6] This raises the obvious question of why did the police not make a plan in anticipation of further such crises.[7]

The possible incitement to violence at a meeting in Ulundi on 23–24 March 1990

On 23 March Chief Buthelezi and King Zwelithini started a two-day meeting with the leading KwaZulu chiefs (*amakhosi*) in Ulundi. In his address, after stating that the position of the *amakhosi* was under dire threat, King Zwelithini reminded his listeners that 'I know what my forebears would do in similar circumstances. Whenever there was a threat to the Nation they acted swiftly and decisively.' After denouncing militant youth and trade unionists he stated, 'I want to know as your king whether you approve of these patterns of behaviour so foreign to our society. If not, what are you doing about it?

Must we allow this fire to destroy the future of our children and their children's children? Do you mean to tell me that you cannot mobilise your people in your area to stop this raging fire of anarchy?'[8] The South African Press Association reported that after the meeting Chief Buthelezi issued a statement which called on the ANC to recognise that King Zwelithini was a king and should be afforded the dignity of a king: 'An insult to one Zulu is an insult to all Zulus, an insult to His Majesty is an insult to the whole nation and an insult to the Chief Minister is an insult to the whole body politic.' Given this invitation, the hostilities that broke out within a few days are hardly surprising.

The Inkatha rally at King's Park, Durban on Sunday 25 March 1990

The poorly attended Inkatha rally on 25 March in Durban was subsidised by the security police. Organisers said the crowd would have been larger if it had not been for the weather and incidents of intimidation involving buses. David Ntombela and KwaZulu representative VV Mvelase said a number of buses were badly damaged and had to return home. Ntombela was a speaker at the rally and he issued a strong warning about the stoning of buses, 'I warn these people. It is for the last time now. I warn them, if they continue doing that, I will defend anyhow. If they stone the buses, my people will protect themselves.'

The course of the Seven Days War

Day 1: Sunday 25 March 1990 – to and from the rally

On the 25th buses passed through Edendale from Vulindlela to the rally in Durban. Differing accounts have been given of provocations, stonings, shootings and attacks by either the bus passengers or people on the route which runs through Edendale. During the day a number of requests were made to the police by community members in Edendale not to allow the buses back through Edendale.

That evening a large group of returning buses stopped at the entrance to Edendale and people got out, possibly in preparation for some kind of march through Edendale, and chased people at a nearby soccer stadium. The Riot Unit was in attendance. Simultaneously there was a clash between local youths and police on the main road in Edendale itself. There was some

confusion and shooting and it is difficult to establish who attacked or provoked whom. KwaZulu Transport claimed later that R25 000 damage was done to buses after the rally. Most of the buses drove back to Vulindlela via an alternative route through Sweetwaters. At KwaShange three buses stopped near a shebeen and a man was stabbed to death and at KwaMnyandu another returning busload attacked people and two young people were shot dead.

Day 2: Monday 26 March

Monday was relatively quiet, except for stoning of some Inkatha vehicles and the gathering together of a large number of people around Ntombela's place at Mncane near Elandskop. The Deputy Minister of Justice, Danie Schutte, said on 29 March that the commander of the unrest unit, Colonel Fourie, had done his best to defuse the situation by urging Inkatha supporters not to retaliate for the attacks on buses carrying Inkatha supporters on the Sunday.[9]

Claims were made that Chief Nsikayezwa Zondi's vehicle was stoned or petrol bombed and a child injured in Edendale on the Monday. Later reports indicate that this alleged attack (and even rumours of the chief's death) were used the next day to mobilise support for the attack on Caluza in Edendale by the Chief's adherents from the Mpumuza/Sweetwaters section of Vulindlela.

Day 3: Tuesday 27 March

Caluza was attacked several times during the day by groups of people from Mpumuza/Sweetwaters totalling about 2 500 to 3 000 combatants. Many of the attackers had firearms and people in *kitskonstabel* uniforms were among them. Reports were received that Philip Zondi was leading the combatants. The attacks appeared to be co-ordinated with groups of about 300 men peeling off from the main body of attackers and heading for specific targets such as nearby Ashdown township. A number of people were shot, including an off duty policeman who later died. Houses were burnt and looting took place. Police vehicles were present but the police did not halt this movement of forces, several thousand strong (although a number of roadblocks and a sense of determination could easily have done so), and tended to merely scold and urge the warriors to withdraw. At Caluza armed warriors filed past police to move on to attack nearby areas. By contrast, defensive actions by residents were dispersed by the police. Residents claimed that some police were seen handing over ammunition to the Inkatha forces.

Later in the day some of these forces withdrew, encamping in the Mpumuza

area north of Edendale. That night Ashdown youth launched a revenge attack on a section of Mpumuza, killing one person and burning 19 houses. In Edendale there were a number of confrontations between police and youth, notably in Georgetown where a person was shot dead by the police. Vehicles were attacked by anti-Inkatha people in Gezubuso in Vulindlela and two people died.

Day 4: Wednesday 28 March

The events on Wednesday took place in two main sectors, Inadi (which was the part of Vulindlela immediately to the west of Edendale and which contained large pockets of non-Inkatha people) and Caluza (which is part of Edendale adjacent to the Mpumuza section of Vulindlela to its north).

The Inadi sector

Early in the morning Inkatha members from a number of settlements along the main roads through Vulindlela began to gather at central points. Some of them marched towards a KwaZulu government meeting place near Taylor's Halt called Eshowe. Others were picked up by trucks and other vehicles. David Ntombela appears to have been a key supervisor of this process. The scale of this mustering must have been obvious to the police who were present. Reports were received that the fighters had been called out at daybreak but action was delayed as there was a meeting with an Ulundi official, a Mr Mthethwa, at Eshowe sometime between 8 and 10 am.

At Ntombela's homestead at Mncane several thousand people had already gathered. Police were also present there in SAP and KwaZulu Police vehicles and must have been aware of what was happening at Ntombela's base. While the men were being sprayed with *intelezi* (war medicine), all the women were ordered into a building where they had to take their clothes off and then put them on inside out (they then had to march up and down the road outside the whole day singing incantations). Meanwhile, a number of blue unmarked lorries, together with a range of smaller vehicles, all with their number plates covered with cloth or mud, arrived with a large number of warriors from the amaNyavu area 70 kilometres away by road.[10] The arrival of these men certainly indicates a degree of advanced planning and logistical support for the attacks.

At 9:30 am about 20 trucks with covered up ZG (KwaZulu government) number plates drove through Taylor's Halt. They went up towards groups of

Inkatha supporters waiting for them, who were then taken to the Eshowe depot. Other people arrived there on foot.

This convoy of lorries and trucks, followed by a large crowd on foot, travelled down the road towards Gezubuso, KwaShange, Vulisaka, KwaMnyandu and Edendale and dropped armed men at various spots so that communities could be encircled. They were joined by Inkatha people from the local mustering points. In all the force is estimated to have been about 12 000 strong. Attacks then took place. With their superior firepower the Inkatha attackers routed the defenders, killing numbers of them. Homesteads were destroyed, properties looted and cattle driven off.

The attacks were observed by police who had also watched the mustering of the morning. (During an aerial survey undertaken by the Democratic Party and *The Natal Witness* over the areas where the attacks were taking place, at least 25 police vehicles were seen and no SADF vehicles.) There are numerous reports of attacks and shootings taking place in the presence of the police. The police generally seem to have ignored the Inkatha attackers and only took action when the youth in attacked communities tried to defend their homes. There are also allegations that police on some occasions participated in the attacks. Certainly a number of people in *kitskonstabel* uniforms did. Sometimes towards the end of attacks, police on the ground or from the police helicopter circling overhead fired teargas. During this period of mayhem, observed by the police, a totally underemployed SADF convoy of six armoured vehicles was lethargically driving up and down the main road in Edendale.

At Gezubuso early in the morning an Inkatha group gathered and was seen walking through Gezubuso towards Taylor's Halt. David Ntombela arrived with vehicles, collected people and returned with them towards Taylor's Halt. Minor damage was caused by this group. Later the convoy of trucks, cars and lorries arrived from the Taylor's Halt direction, followed by the big crowd on foot. Some of these moved on to attack KwaShange and the remainder attacked Gezubuso. Then the group returning from KwaShange attacked Gezubuso as well. After a first group of attackers routed the defenders another group looted the houses and carried the goods back to the lorries on the road, while a third group destroyed and burnt the homes (using petrol, as the thatch was wet, and of which there was soon a shortage).

At KwaShange by mid-morning people were expecting an attack as a large group of Inkatha had mustered early in the morning at *induna* Guvaza Khanyile's place and they had seen the movement of Inkatha people across

the valley on the main road. The road to Sweetwaters (and thence to Pietermaritzburg) was blockaded, so there was no escape route. Varying accounts have been given of a variety of skirmishes and attacks by different groups. However there appear to have been three main assaults.

The first group of attackers came from Chief Shayabantu Zondi's place and was led by Zazini Zondi, the chief's brother. It was small (about 200 strong) but well armed and included a group of *kitskonstabels*. The second group had first assembled at induna Guvaza Khanyile's homestead on the border of KwaShange. The first and second groups combined and later attacked Henley.

The third group came last from Taylor's Halt via Gezubuso and comprised about 16 ZG trucks and smaller vehicles, as well as many people on foot. This group was led by David Ntombela. This group may have been joined by other attackers who came over the hills from other Inkatha-supporting areas of Vulindlela. This group attacked parts of KwaShange and burned houses. According to a police witness to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing on the Seven Days War in November 1996, a well known white rightwinger and former security police and military agent, Philip Powell,[11] accompanied Ntombela.

Both the first and third groups approached KwaShange via the main road and had to cross over the only bridge over the flooded Msunduze River. There was apparently some resistance to the attackers crossing the bridge but according to a number of witnesses the police who were accompanying the third group then went in front and helped the attackers cross this point, the one place which could have been an effective block to most of the attackers reaching KwaShange.

In KwaShange over 120 houses were burnt and property looted. The cattle were driven off by the attackers. At least 11 men and women were murdered. The KwaShange people fled towards the Msunduze and tried to cross it to safety. Injured people could not cross the river because it was full from the heavy rain and at least one person drowned.

At Ezibomvini attacks also took place and houses and vehicles were burnt and a shop looted. A number of people were killed. Some of the attackers came from *induna* Guvaza Khanyile's place and some arrived in vehicles from Taylor's Halt. Police also observed these attacks. Later some police shot at attackers. At Vulisaka ten men were killed and mutilated and houses burned.

At KwaMnyandu attacks took place by a group which came over the hill from Chief Shayabantu Zondi's place whilst at the same time attackers fresh

from devastating KwaShange and Ezibomvini arrived in trucks on the main road at the bottom of the hill (they may have come to trap the KwaShange people who had fled across the river and were moving down towards refuge in Edendale). KwaMnyandu was thus effectively surrounded. Police were present and the police helicopter circled above. The attackers themselves were accompanied by *kitskonstabels*. Notable attackers included Chief Shayabantu Zondi and his brother. Two attempts by youth to defend the community failed and they fled towards Edendale. At least 11 people were murdered, including a 75-year-old woman, Rose Mtolo. After the attacks a railway lorry carried looted goods away.

The Mpumuza/Caluza sector

Meanwhile in Mpumuza/Sweetwaters Inkatha forces continued to muster and make forays into Caluza and areas next to Caluza – Smeroe, Siyamu, Esigodini and Ashdown. Police were shot at by defenders on a number of occasions. Police opened fire on comrades defending Caluza and a number of people were killed with R1 bullets. Some houses were burned. The situation calmed down when army vehicles arrived.

Day 5: Thursday 29 March

Before dawn police and *kitskonstabels* shot up a household at KwaMnyandu which in mid-morning was again attacked by Inkatha forces from Chief Shayabantu Zondi's place. Police and *kitskonstabels* and possibly KwaZulu Police were again present. A number of people were killed and wounded and more houses were burned and looted, and cattle driven off. More police finally arrived and the attackers withdrew.

However, the police were more active in Edendale, where they stopped a march by 500 unarmed women protesting against police partisanship and inaction against the attackers and told them to disperse or force would be used. Eleven women were arrested by the security police. This hard line on peaceful women demonstrators was in stark contrast to their soft line on armed *impis* wreaking mayhem in the region.

That evening Inkatha forces were seen returning to Ntombela's place at Mncane. Ntombela had been interviewed during the day by *Natal Witness* reporters.[12] He denied that anybody from his area had been involved in violence. He said he was in contact with other Inkatha leaders in the region and that he had no knowledge of punitive raids being launched in retaliation

for stoning of buses on previous days. He said he knew of only one Inkatha person killed during the week.

That night a group of men, alleged to have included Ntombela and special constables, attacked four homes at Khokwane and murdered two people.[13] A notable feature of these attacks and of many during the day was that women received no mercy.

On the Caluza/Mpumuza front there were occasional skirmishes as an Inkatha force of about 1 000 men probed the boundaries. Police were active searching and disarming youths who were going to defend the borders. One youth was shot dead. At one stage the police came under fire from defenders. In Ashdown there were clashes between police and residents in mid-afternoon. Later the township was attacked by Inkatha from Mpumuza, who arrived there in buses. At 6 pm it was reported that much of the force had withdrawn but that a group with *kitskonstabels* were shooting at people in Caluza. Later they returned to Chief Nsikayeswa Zondi's homestead and encamped.

About midday Mpophomeni near Howick was attacked by a 500-strong force of Inkatha people. They were repulsed but the police then opened fire on the Mpophomeni counter-attackers and allowed the Inkatha force to regroup at a local chief's household, from whence they attacked the Catholic Church that evening and slightly damaged it.

In the evening there appeared to be almost continuous shooting in Imbali and a number of houses came under attack from Inkatha groups which roamed the township on foot and in vehicles. At least two people were killed. Calls to the Riot Unit to help were not acted upon, as in the case of the attack on the house where three white members of the Imbali Support Group were staying (whose car was shot up by a group including two white men and later petrolbombed). Allegations were made of police involvement in some of the attacks. Repeated attempts to get the SADF to deploy forces were frustrated by the police. A six-vehicle convoy waited fruitlessly outside Imbali for the police to call them in at the height of the shootings. The police never came and they returned to base and played volleyball.

A significant development on Thursday was the setting up of a 24-hour monitoring service by mid-morning. Apart from monitoring the violence, this exposed the police force's inability to respond speedily to calls for assistance. A number of African callers to the emergency service number 10111 claim that they were told 'to ring FW de Klerk and Mandela'. Police consistently refused

to call in the SADF, who were under-used. The SADF was not allowed to intervene except under police orders.

Day 6: Friday 30 March

There were a number of minor Inkatha attacks in Imbali and Slangspruit with one report of a large lorry manned by about 15 people firing rifles and shotguns at residents while driving through Imbali. There was also a skirmish at Mpophomeni.

Day 7: Saturday 31 March

In the morning Mpophomeni came under attack again from a 200-strong force encamped nearby at KwaShifu and when it was repulsed the police took action in Mpophomeni and killed three people and wounded 35.

In Vulindlela two meetings attended by about 1 000 people each were held, one at Chief Ngcobo's place and a second one at Ntombela's. According to informants the situation was verging on hysteria as the realisation had dawned that Edendale had not been captured and the western part of Vulindlela no longer had access to Pietermaritzburg and food supplies and work. There were reports of people attempting to buy goods in Howick and Richmond but comrades were beginning to defend these places against anticipated Inkatha attacks.

An Eminent Persons Group visited Edendale and Vulindlela during the day. They met a heavily armed David Ntombela near Taylor's Halt. He blamed the stoning of buses by youths for the current strife and said that Inkatha people were only defending themselves.

There were a number of minor clashes on the Mpumuza/Caluza border. At Imbali sporadic shooting continued during the early morning and day and at night increased in intensity. A number of people were killed and wounded and houses burnt. Virtually every street in Imbali was barricaded with burning tyres, cars and rubble. There are many eyewitness accounts of Inkatha vehicles, including a six-tonne truck manned by about 15 people with rifles and shotguns, driving through the area and firing at residents. There were a number of reports of police providing weapons and ammunition to Inkatha people. UDF reinforcements also entered the area. Between 6 and 8 pm an Inkatha force moved around, allegedly accompanied by police. Later in the evening some army vehicles entered the area and it became quieter.

The aftermath of the Seven Days War

In reality, the Seven Days War comprised three days of large-scale attacks and then a month of skirmishes, particularly in Imbali township. For the next year Pietermaritzburg and Edendale had to deal with a large-scale accommodation crisis – with 20 000 refugees crammed into church halls, backyard rooms, and eventually in makeshift squatter settlements (which up till then had hardly existed in the Pietermaritzburg region). Only a massive infusion of aid from the South African Council of Churches and the International Committee of the Red Cross enabled people to survive. So-called Civil Defence refused to help the refugees for fear of being 'partisan'. The government did not offer much help. Deputy-Minister of Provincial Affairs, Tertius Delport in a statement of breathtaking inhumanity said that not a cent would be spent in the region until violence ended.[14] Thus were the refugees punished further. No disaster area was declared.

In Imbali the battle continued for months until finally it burned itself out with the ANC as the main victors, although Inkatha retained a pocket of support and there were ongoing skirmishes and deaths. The army was called in to stabilise the situation, which it did after a fashion, and the death toll dropped to a regular 35 or so a month in the Midlands. One of the most notable of these deaths in 1990 was the assassination of an Anglican priest, Victor Africander. An Inkatha gunman, Toti Zulu, was later arrested and convicted but released on appeal.[15] Possibly in retaliation for Africander's death, Umkhonto we Sizwe latter assassinated the Inkatha warlord, Jerome Mncwabe, whom many believed had given the order for Africander to be killed.

Police investigations into the Seven Days War period can at best be described as derisory. Unpublicised informal inquests did not suggest that anybody in particular should be prosecuted. Nine years later, the murderers seem to remain immune from justice, although the names of most of the ringleaders were published as early as 1991.[16]

The Seven Days War did not achieve real gains for Inkatha on the ground.[17] Whilst thousands of its opponents had fled the attacked areas, the people of Edendale, Ashdown and Imbali had defended their homes and, at some cost, beaten off the attackers. In spite of considerable police collusion in the whole affair, the fighting was so visible and the monitoring groups so well organised that there were limits to what gains Inkatha could manage. The state was compelled to send in troops and by June 1990 the death toll had been reduced

to its lowest for nearly three years. In addition, Inkatha was otherwise occupied. In the middle of the year violence erupted on the Witwatersrand. The international journalists returned to Johannesburg and the Natal Midlands was forgotten, though what had happened in the Seven Days War offered many clues to the origins of the violence on the Witwatersrand.

FW de Klerk and the cultural weapons fiasco

In the midst of the general mayhem in both Natal and from mid-1990 the Witwatersrand there was a rising chorus of complaints from unrest monitors, lawyers, the press and church leaders. These asserted that at the very least the police should seize the weapons that large groups of Inkatha supporters and vigilantes insisted on toting around and which had clearly been put to deadly use in events such as the Seven Days War. The response to this was astounding. The police were not instructed to do their job and seize weapons carried by people in flagrant contravention of existing law in the province (and of course the State of Emergency). Instead on 31 August 1990 President de Klerk issued a proclamation amending the so-called Natal Code to allow any Zulu person in the province to carry weapons, as long as he was 'able to prove that he had the *bona fide* intention to carry such dangerous weapons in accordance with traditional Zulu usages, customs or religions'.[18] The code – enacted as legislation by the provincial government as far back as 1891 – had made it an offence for any black person to carry 'an assegai, swordstick, battle axe, stick shod with iron, staff or sharp-pointed stick or any other dangerous weapon'.

On 31 January 1991 the Durban Legal Resources Centre took the issue to court on behalf of Sotho-speaking Natal resident Lechesa Tsenoli. Eventually, on 13 December 1991, Judge John Didcott ruled in Tsenoli's favour, finding the amendments void because they were vague and indeed discriminatory and *ultra vires* as they applied only to Zulus, while the code applied to all blacks in the province. He noted that for the previous 100 years at least, there had been a ban on all dangerous weapons being carried in public and yet, in the midst of a time of serious conflict and tension, the State President had decided to make changes which allowed these weapons to be carried in public.[19] In the interim, on 10 May 1991, the pro-Inkatha Zulu chiefs decided to defy any ban on the carrying of traditional weapons. In response, Mandela put the ANC's engagement in the peace process on hold with an ultimatum to President de Klerk to address the issue. In June the KwaZulu Minister of

Justice, Celani Mtetwa, changed KwaZulu regulations to reduce the penalties for the criminal use of traditional weapons.[20]

Although legally rebuffed, the National Party government refused to implement the Code, arguing that to do so would aggravate violence. The more carefully worded Government Notice 719 of 28 February 1992, ostensibly aimed at controlling weapons in situations of political conflict, effectively legalised the carrying of traditional weapons. It certainly did not reduce the prevalence of violence and for the next four months the death toll rose again in Natal. Police continued to tolerate the provocative carrying of weapons in public by Inkatha and continued to justify this on grounds of tradition, custom, usage or an unwillingness to provoke Inkatha.[21]

Apart from being a revealing insight into the supposedly reformist government's continuing support for Inkatha on the ground, the traditional weapons affair accompanied an escalation in Inkatha's use of a discourse about Zulu ethnic identity and weapons. At times this verged on the bizarre – the prohibition on the public display of lethal weapons was described by Inkatha spokesman Ed Tillett as the 'psychological emasculation of Zulu men' – and was backed by vast quantities of ethno-historical hokum and bad statistics.[22]

The spread of the conflict in Natal

After mid-1990, violence in the province of Natal subsided (possibly because Inkatha was now otherwise occupied on the Witwatersrand) – if that could ever be the right word to describe a steady 50 or 60 politically related deaths a month. There were small peaks and troughs reflecting some particular clash in a particular town or area but the overall rate had stabilised.

What was more alarming was that as a semblance of peace was restored in the major urban areas of Durban and Pietermaritzburg (partly through a consolidation of ANC-and Inkatha-controlled no-go areas), it was balanced by a rippling out of the conflict into previously peaceful rural towns and areas. By the time of the national elections in April 1994 some of the worst violence had reached the heartland of Zululand itself in the Umfolosi area.

In retrospect the period between the Seven Days War and the build up to the April 1994 elections exhibits its own clear patterns and trends which can be summarised thus:

First, Inkatha slowly but surely lost control of the urban areas. This tendency saw even small towns in the Natal Midlands come into ANC hands

– places such as Richmond, Mooi River and Greytown. Other townships long dominated by Inkatha became battlegrounds, as for example did Wembezi near Estcourt.

Second, this process was often accompanied by periods of intense violence in which both sides participated and in which accusations of police partisanship towards Inkatha abounded.

Third, attempts by the ANC to make inroads into rural areas, or by Inkatha to retain control in rural areas, notably the South Coast, the Richmond area, the Bulwer/Impendle area and the Drakensberg locations, were also accompanied by intense violence and there were notable atrocities on both sides. Massacres of whole families, and of women and children, became more commonplace. The role in Richmond of Sifiso Nkabinde, a security police agent who became what can be described as an ANC warlord in Richmond is a separate story. The escalation of violence was accompanied by massive increases in the number of firearms available (Inkatha gaining supplies both openly and covertly via Eugene de Kock of Vlakplaas and Philip Powell) and the ANC continuing to get weapons via Swaziland and Mozambique and from a now friendly Transkei.

Fourth, Inkatha came increasingly to rely on the most conservative of rural chiefs to hold back the ANC tide. This was particularly clear in the Port Shepstone area on the South Coast, where out-of-control ANC comrades were routed by an even more savage Inkatha backlash, culminating in the horrific Shobashobane massacre of Christmas Day 1995.

Fifth, high-profile assassinations continued, notably of Chief Hlabunzima Maphumulo of Contralesa and of Reggie Hadebe and S'khumbuzo Ngwenya of the ANC in Pietermaritzburg. Investigations in these cases appear to have been less than enthusiastic.[23] It became apparent that hit-squads were operating with seeming impunity in places such as Esikhawini in Zululand.[24]

Sixth, in both Inkatha-and ANC-controlled areas[25] there was evidence of internecine conflict, some of it clearly related to criminal and resource accumulation activities.

Seventh, the Peace Accord that was finally signed by all parties was peculiarly ineffective, probably because its formal structures that were imposed in each region included political representatives who were themselves the agents of violence in the first place.

Lastly, information about the role played in the violence by the KwaZulu government, the KwaZulu Police and of training of hit-squads and

paramilitary forces associated with them became more and more evident. This process had started with the Inkathagate revelations of July 1991[26] and continued with the Goldstone Commission investigations. On the positive side, there was a gradual change for the better in the SAP in their handling of political violence after 1992.[27] The more professional approach within the SAP was not reflected in the KwaZulu Police, soon to be led by Jack Buchner, previously head of the Security Police in Pietermaritzburg.

The battle for the small towns

That Inkatha had lost control of urban areas was supremely illustrated in October 1996 when the party won only one seat in the local government elections in Pietermaritzburg. This phenomenon was already apparent in 1990 as most of the smaller towns in the Natal Midlands came out in support of the ANC. Ironically the horror of the Seven Days War speeded up this process as residents in townships such as Bruntville at Mooi River and Enhlalakahle at Greytown went into a state of siege in preparedness for possible Inkatha attacks. In places such as Wembezi near Estcourt, where the balance of allegiance was more even, low-intensity war erupted and in Wembezi's case continued until 1996. Generally the process was accompanied by periods of intense violence in which both sides participated, made all the more horrible and personal by the small sizes of the communities involved.

In 1990 and 1991, Bruntville at Mooi River was the classic example of the battle for a small town. The actors in the innumerable battles there included ANC supporters (in this case most of the residents from the township), Inkatha supporters (mainly migrant workers lodged in a factory hostel right next to the township), the textile factory which was a major employer and allegedly supportive of Inkatha (it provided a storeroom for Uwusa members' weapons and assisted Uwusa to recruit members), and of course the police (with a police captain notorious for his extreme partisanship). Lastly there were the hit-squads.

There were regular and increasingly violent clashes between township dwellers and the hostel inmates. The residents claimed that the police sided with the hostel inmates and did not protect the community when it was attacked. The hostel people claimed that they were harassed by the township people. In the hostel a number of unemployed men escorted workers to the factory, defended the hostel from attacks and led attacks on the residents of the township. On 8 December 1990, after a day of skirmishes, the hostel

group attacked and killed ten residents. A year later, in December 1991, a similar hostel led attack which was not interfered with by the police left 18 people dead. Residents claimed they were attacked in revenge for holding a march to demand that the police enforce the prohibition on public bearing of weapons. This event resulted in a Goldstone Commission hearing in July 1992, which found that the Mooi River police were biased towards Inkatha and that their evidence gathering procedures were shoddy. Of the 175 hostel dwellers arrested by the police after the massacre not a single one was charged, not even for public violence, even though IFP leader David Sosibo openly admitted to the press that the Inkatha group had killed the people. In April 1991, the ANC leader in Bruntville, Derrick Majola, and his wife were gunned down by a four-man hit-squad hired by another IFP hostel leader, Walter Mchunu.

Havoc in the contested rural areas

If the contest for the towns was bloody, what happened in contested rural areas was far worse. In some areas, notably the South Coast and the Richmond area near Pietermaritzburg, atrocities were committed by both sides. Massacres of whole families, and of women and children, became more commonplace with at least five taking place in 1994, all of them of ANC supporters.[28]

In the South Coast youthful and clearly undisciplined and politically untrained comrades conducted a reign of intimidation against what were seen as reactionary traditionalists. However, a vicious-counter attack led by a number of chiefs stiffened with KwaZulu firepower led to a reign of even greater terror which brought most of the area back under Inkatha control by the end of 1991. Port Shepstone and other coastal towns were flooded by refugees, many of whom told tales of gross police partisanship. The finale for this sorry region was the Shobashobane massacre of 18 ANC supporters on Christmas Day 1995. This led eventually to several convictions in March 1997 and an enquiry in 1998 into the allegations of police complicity.

Richmond and the adjoining semi-rural and rural areas, a patchwork of mission (and pro-ANC) areas such as Ndaleni and Magoda, and more rural and tribal (and pro-Inkatha) areas such as Smozomeni, Mkhobeni and Phatheni, had been the scene of some fighting in 1990. Full-scale violence only erupted in January 1991, triggered by a bizarre controversy over an R-4 rifle, which was captured by ANC supporters in Magoda from an attacking

Inkatha group. What happened to the rifle is somewhat unclear, but the ANC leader Sifiso Nkabinde received a formal request from Mkhobeni residents demanding its return as the original attackers had used this 'community weapon' without permission. A series of attacks and counterattacks then devastated the region with scores of people killed and hundreds of houses razed. Thousands of people fled to Pietermaritzburg and into Richmond itself. By the end of March 1991 Magoda was a wasteland and only about 40 per cent of the population remained in Phatheni. Schooling ceased. Inkatha seemed to have the upper hand, helped, it was claimed, by both the police and Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging supporters. Peace talks collapsed, partly because Inkatha had no intention of giving up its territorial gains and partly because Nkabinde claimed that a chief on the Inkatha delegation, Mzwandile Majozi, was not recognised by either Magoda or Ndaleni.

On 27 March, hundreds of comrades who had sought refuge in Edendale were ordered back to Richmond by Pietermaritzburg's ANC leader, Harry Gwala. Apprehensive of their fate, the comrades dug up a number of buried Umkhonto we Sizwe arms caches and dug themselves a fortified position in a nearby timber plantation. Inkatha attackers arrived and on the morning of 29 March 23 of them were shot to pieces in the Battle of the Forest (an event that never made it into the police unrest report). The comrades then went on a killing spree, executing over 30 people who had joined the IFP or who had shown no enthusiasm at the comrades' return.

ANC and IFP areas soon became entrenched and attacks between them continued for the rest of the year, punctuated by failed peace initiatives and a massive ANC boycott of Richmond in November 1991. This put enormous pressure on the town because Ndaleni, totally controlled by the ANC, straddled the access routes. Ndaleni became one of the most notorious no-go areas in Natal (as illustrated by the shooting of three policemen in 1996 by Nkabinde's bodyguards).

Nkabinde himself rose rapidly within the ANC, driven by popular support for a man perceived to have long last held Inkatha and police at bay and gained outright victories, in comparison with the lacklustre support from the national ANC leadership and Umkhonto we Sizwe. At the 1994 elections he gained a seat in the provincial legislature and became mayor of Richmond. However, he was being described as a warlord and became implicated in the executions of some young ANC leaders from Ndaleni (possibly because they had claimed that Nkabinde was involved in the killing of youth leaders and

was a security force agent). The Investigation Task Unit made strenuous attempts to build up a case against Nkabinde. This led to an odd coming together of Nkabinde and David Ntombela of Vulindlela in attacking the Unit and other attempts to investigate their actions in the past, as well as in supporting a KwaZulu-Natal peace or amnesty deal that would have reconciliation but no truth.[29] Ntombela argued that attempts to prosecute Nkabinde would hamper 'peace efforts'. In April 1997 both Nkabinde and Ntombela were exposed as long-time police agents and Nkabinde was expelled from the ANC. He was arrested later in the year for 18 murders but was acquitted. He joined the new United Democratic Movement and was assassinated in 1999, with the suspicion falling on ANC members.

Similar accounts could be given of the escalation of violence in previously quiet rural areas such as Bulwer, Impendle, Creighton, the Drakensberg locations and Nqutu in the hinterland and on the North Coast and in Zululand itself. Many of the North Coast and Zululand areas shared a notable characteristic with Richmond, namely the close abutment of rapidly urbanising and increasingly modern working class areas to rural or semi-rural areas still controlled by traditional authorities. Amongst the latter there was a steady rise to prominence of warlords who could be called upon to sort out the enemy and come to the aid of threatened areas. David Ntombela had already laid the foundations of this practice during the 1980s and he was now joined by Chief Khawula and others. Coinciding with this was the growing political rhetoric from Inkatha and the KwaZulu government about traditional leadership, the rights of the *amakhosi*, and the undesirability of elected local government in rural areas (the latter controversy leading to the delay of local government elections in KwaZulu-Natal until October 1996).

The KwaZulu Police connection

During the conflict in the Natal Midlands in the 1980s the KwaZulu Police had played a minor role (partly because many areas including Vulindlela were still under the control of the SAP. Indeed, by the end of 1992, in these areas relationships between non-Inkatha people and the SAP began to improve, although they were still complicated by the inability of the police to comprehend the need to disarm Inkatha followers of 'cultural weapons'. The position was not so with the KwaZulu Police.

As the conflict spread more directly into areas that were part of the KwaZulu homeland, more evidence began to accumulate of the existence of

trained hit-squads associated with the KwaZulu Police and of the continued and growing production of armed fighters by Inkatha/KwaZulu government training schemes, the graduates of which were alleged to have been involved in assassinations of ANC leaders (such as that of Reggie Hadebe on 27 October 1992).[30]

A June 1992 report from the Legal Resources Centre (Durban) and the Human Rights Commission (Durban), *Obstacles to Peace: the Role of the KwaZulu Police in the Natal Conflict*, aptly sums up the charge:

> As stated in a memorandum submitted by church leaders to President de Klerk on 11 April 1990, it is difficult to convey the shattering loss that characterises great numbers of these displaced persons who have lost loved ones, houses and belongings and who now face the prospect of having to rebuild their lives from nothing. The evidence supports the view that the conflict would never have reached the current proportions had the security forces (SAP, KZP and SADF) acted energetically and impartially from the start.
>
> The violence cannot be explained in terms of political rivalry only. Ineffective and biased policing has allowed and encouraged the escalation of the conflict into gross and increasingly violent proportions. Although the security forces are not generally the principal protagonists in the conflict, their actions, and particularly those of the KZP, have been an important factor in the increase of violence to the present proportions.[31]

Justice N van der Reyden's remarks of 29 August 1995, when sentencing two hit-squad members for the murder of six ANC supporters in the Esikhawini area, are also instructive. He found that they had taken orders from IFP officials to eliminate political opponents and noted that 'civilised society shall not tolerate the assassination of political opponents by members of a police force which is duty bound to serve and protect society, irrespective of political persuasion.' He also stated that, 'All indications are that what was viewed as KwaZulu Police incompetence was, in all probability, a deliberate attempt to frustrate a proper investigation.'[32]

In July 1994, General Roy During, who had a short two-year spell as head of the KwaZulu Police, admitted that he was almost certain of the existence of KwaZulu Police hit-squads, and said his attempts to clean up the force had been frustrated time and time again by senior officers. He said he believed the instructions for the hit-squads came from 'higher officials' but that he could

not say whether this 'higher authority' was within the KwaZulu Police, the KwaZulu Government or Inkatha (his confusion on this latter point is understandable, the distinction between the three being academic).[33]

Apart from the partisanship and deliberate 'incompetence' shown by the KwaZulu Police, the 1990–1994 period saw a systematic development of Inkatha's military capacity in which, after General Buchner's departure in late 1992, white police spy and rightwinger Philip Powell played a star role. Powell, currently an IFP MP, was employed to train and lead 'self protection units'.[34] This he did with considerable enthusiasm and it is estimated that between September 1993 and April 1994 up to 8 000 paramilitary fighters received six weeks of intensive training in camps in Zululand. The money for this was illegally procured from public funds. In the 1994/95 financial year R8 881 347 was spent on this militia (some R2 million of which disappeared without trace). The weapons to arm the recruits were obtained *inter alia* with the aid of Eugene de Kock who had been a long-time supplier of weapons to Inkatha.[35] In October 1993 De Kock and Powell collected truckloads of weaponry from Armscor subsidiary Mechem, including hand grenades, light machine guns, land mines, ammunition and assault rifles (including AK-47s).[36] Powell narrowly missed obtaining a further thousand LM4 assault rifles from Eskom at a cost of R2,1 million (a deal authorised by SAP Commissioner General Johan van der Merwe).[37]

Trainees at the camps were instructed in such 'self-protection' activities as constructing homemade bombs, sabotage of vehicles, how to set a bus alight so that the passengers could not escape, how to take a firearm off a policeman, and how to ambush vehicles.[38] The trainees were apparently destined to join the KwaZulu Police as special constables.

As pre-elections tensions rose, particularly as Inkatha held out until the last minute before participating, the KwaZulu cabinet ordered in the final weeks before the elections that at least a thousand trainees be incorporated into the police, a ploy that might have enabled KwaZulu to bypass the legal restrictions on setting up its own army. In early April, Buthelezi instructed Roy During to speed up the incorporation process and to skip any screening formalities. Although During appears to have ignored this instruction, some 1 200 trainees were reassembled at the Mlaba camp a week before the elections and During asked the KwaZulu government for an additional R14 million to employ extra policemen. This plan came to a grinding halt as the elections started and the special constables were paid off and sent home.

The prelude to the 1994 elections

Coinciding with the paramilitary build-up of the Inkatha forces in the province, the build-up to the national elections saw a rapid rise in the death toll in March and April (a particular surge in a generally rising trend in the fatalities since early 1992) with some 649 fatalities.[39] The Reef, in spite of a magnitude of police hit-squad and dirty tricks assistance, had been lost to Inkatha. Inkatha was now set on retaining control of the province of KwaZulu-Natal at all costs. As the first democratic elections drew near Inkatha engaged in a series of moves to hamper the elections and only after a period of dangerous brinkmanship did Buthelezi agree to participate.

The actual reasons for the sudden agreement by Buthelezi to participate are unknown (although one might suggest that the official story of mediation by a Kenyan clergyman is not terribly convincing). What deals were made, what guarantees assured and what promises were given still await revelation.[40] The official Independent Electoral Commission announced after the elections that the Inkatha Freedom Party had gained the majority support in KwaZulu-Natal.

On 26 April the Transitional Executive Council's Investigation Task Group and the South African Police raided the Mlaba camp, where Inkatha 'self-protection units' had been trained since October 1993 and where 5 000 people had been trained in the previous five months (perhaps a classic case of closing the door after the horse had bolted). The camp was deserted and in disarray. They found a few weapons and medical supplies. These included 26 M36 hand grenades, five rifle grenades, 49 shotguns, 11 cases of 7,62 mm rounds of ammunition, 12 cases of shotgun rounds, a big box of 9 mm ammunition and a bag of 19 spent AK-47 cartridges. But the men and their weapons had gone. Presumably to play their part as good citizens in the new democratic South Africa.

Chapter five

Analysing political violence on the Reef, 1990 to 1994

David Everatt

Introduction

This chapter describes the changing nature of political violence on the Reef from July 1990 to July 1994. The analysis of monitoring data leads to the conclusion that the violence was manipulated by elements from the security forces of the apartheid state to guarantee their position under a new democratic dispensation.

Understanding the violence

From July 1990 to July 1994, a total of 8 747 people were killed in political violence on the Reef.[1] Thousands more were injured. This chapter seeks to explain how this was possible on the eve of the democratic transformation of South Africa. Before political violence spread from KwaZulu-Natal to the Reef, four explanations for the violence had become dominant there:

1. 'Black-on-black' violence was the term favoured by state officials to disguise the complicity of the security forces in the violence.
2. Socio-economic conditions were seen as a primary cause of violence, whether by making unemployed and alienated youth available for violent activities, or by encouraging a violent expression of competition for scarce resources.
3. Political manipulation by the security forces to destabilise opposition forces had taken place.
4. There was a contest for control between Inkatha and the United Democratic Front (UDF) alliance in the province.

When the phase of political violence under discussion here began on the Reef in 1990, the same categories were initially used to try to explain it. Over time, however, competing explanations boiled down to two widely held views:

1. The first held that the violence was multi-causal, involving elements of poverty, ethnicity and political contestation.
2. The second, argued here, held that the violence indeed drew on a range of socio-economic and political factors, but that it was deliberately fomented; and that the security forces played a key role, beyond that of favouring Inkatha, in trying to affect the negotiation process.

From the day the Reef violence began, journalists and analysts offered competing versions of what was happening. The violence began after a rally called by Inkatha in Sebokeng on 22 July 1990, when police were reported to have escorted Inkatha supporters across the township to Sebokeng hostel, which they attacked. Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (Cosatu) members from the hostel reported that the Inkatha rally had been for 'Zulus' only. Those attending the rally were told that they had to defend themselves against the ANC alliance, which was Xhosa-dominated and anti-Zulu. Inkatha put its ethnic stamp on the violence from the outset.

The mainstream media initially adopted an ethnic or tribal explanation for the conflict, seeing it as more deep-rooted and salient than political affiliations: 'It was total war yesterday ... Zulu impis swooped. Spears and pangas flashed and the dead, mostly Xhosas, piled up amidst the cries of wounded and dying men'.[2] Community members who turned on the police, believing them to be favouring Inkatha, were 'black rioters' or 'a mob of armed attackers'.[3] Many reporters were happy to fall back on notions of irrational, 'barbaric' action stemming from a pent-up and embattled Zulu or Xhosa nationalism.

Tribal war?

The notion of 'tribal war' was salient at the outset of the violence, where attackers were strongly identified by their victims and other township residents as 'the Zulus'. This remained the case for a long while, and in some areas which suffered from violence all Zulu-speakers were forced to leave, regardless of their political affiliation. However, no ethnic counter-force emerged. The ANC and its allies remained publicly committed to non-

racialism. Journalist Carmel Rickard noted that this had its dangers: 'After decades of Government obsession about ethnicity, the African National Congress and Inkatha are responding to this emotive subject very differently: the ANC ignores it and seeks a non-racial, supra-ethnic identity; Inkatha uses it as a powerful mobilising force'. By so doing, according to Rickard, the ANC had 'left the [ethnic] field open to Inkatha'.[4]

But the Reef is a massive multi-ethnic area, where multilingualism, marriage across ethnic boundaries and multi-ethnic households are common. A greater ethnic slant may have emerged if victims of the violence were ethnically identifiable. However, all township residents, including Zulu-speakers, seemed equally at risk.

Despite this, some commentators characterised the violence as an ethnic conflict between Zulu and Xhosa, which was conflated with political lines of difference. Where Inkatha played on notions of Zulu identity, the ANC was described as a Xhosa nationalistic organisation because of the large number of Xhosa-speakers in its leadership. For example, Patrick Laurence claimed that 'the ethnic skewering of Inkatha generally, and of the ANC at the leadership level, means that Inkatha/ANC rivalry degenerates all too easily into inter-tribal conflict'.[5]

As Inkatha moved from KwaZulu-Natal to the Reef in an attempt to create a new support-base, its natural starting point was the hostels which housed migrant labourers, many of whom were from KwaZulu-Natal. The first few months of violence witnessed the ethnic cleansing of hostels. Where Inkatha was the victor, only Zulu-speakers not opposed to violence remained; where Inkatha was defeated, all Inkatha supporters – and often all Zulu-speakers – had to leave. Hostels, which resembled prisons from the outside, became the armed fortresses at the heart of political violence on the Reef.[6]

Hostel-dwellers were an embattled group. Physically separated from the townships, they had clashed with students in 1976, and again in the 1980s with UDF supporters over the enforcement of stayaways and boycotts. This derived in part from the fact that very few township structures had organised within hostels: they often merely informed the residents of resolutions to be endorsed.[7] Segal and others have noted that hostel dwellers were not entirely separated from the townships, with ties of friendship, work and sexual relations.

Nonetheless, many migrants retained a rural identity. They came to the cities to find work, but kept their families at home. In research undertaken by CASE, hostel dwellers from KwaZulu complained of the dirt of city life; of the

'cheeky' younger people who did not show respect to their elders; of the cramped space and lack of freedom, and so on. 'Home' was rural KwaZulu; the city was something that had to be tolerated.[8]

For KwaZulu-based migrants, a rural identity was inextricably linked with their ethnic identity, as Gerhard Mare noted, 'anyone who is forced to have contact with a homeland is forced to have in part an ethnic identity'.[9] Mare also pointed out that in the late 1980s and early 1990s, while migrancy from other homelands was increasingly characterised by the movement of whole families to the cities, KwaZulu-Natal was an exception to this trend.

Finally, Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi was a master at conflating ethnic, geographical and political identities. In 1990 Buthelezi said he hoped that:

> the Zulu people, whatever their political affiliation, will realise that the ANC campaign of vilification is no longer just against me and Inkatha, but also against the Zulu people, as Zulu people are being singled out by the ANC/SACP/UDF/Cosatu alliance for vilification, intimidation and killings.[10]

This was the basis on which Inkatha initially sought to mobilise Zulu-speaking hostel-dwellers – by claiming that they were to be the victims of a week of action called by Cosatu and its allies, against which they had to arm themselves. Cosatu in turn alleged that telexes had been sent from Inkatha headquarters in Ulundi warning local leaders in the Transvaal to defend themselves and prepare for armed conflict, thus providing 'the war paranoia which acted as a signal for Inkatha's warlords to go on the offensive.'[11]

Pamphlets appeared calling for a Zulu revolt against the 'Xhosa and Indian' leadership of the ANC. Oscar Dhlomo, who had just left Inkatha, having been its secretary-general, warned that by 'ethnicising' political differences, Inkatha was transforming an ideological debate into a 'highly charged' ethnic war.[12]

Police reports on the violence initially talked of ethnic conflict. In mid-August the South African Police (SAP) described the violence as 'a faction fight between Zulus and Xhosas'.[13] Within a few days the police stated that 'the one faction was Inkatha, the other is difficult to identify – whether residents or ANC'.[14] Two days later, however, when the police themselves were accused of attacking Phola Park residents alongside Inkatha supporters, they reverted to ethnic categories: 'Police said … that the clashes were a result

of faction fighting between Zulus and Xhosas and dismissed allegations of partiality.'[15]

As time went on, however, no ethnic counter-force of any significance rose to match Inkatha. An ANC spokesperson told the press that the organisation 'rejects with utter contempt the misguided reports in the press ... that seek to portray the carnage as a factional wars between Zulus and Xhosas'.[16] The Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) stated that the violence was 'not tribalism as they have put it ... it is political'.[17] Independent newspapers such as *The Weekly Mail*, *New Nation* and *Vrye Weekblad* reported the violence in very different terms from their mainstream counterparts, linking the violence directly to Inkatha's push into the Transvaal. While Inkatha-supporting Zulu-speakers seemed to populate one side of the conflict, the other side remained ethnically and politically indistinct.

Over time, most mainstream newspapers dropped the language of tribalism, as it so clearly failed to describe what their journalists were reporting. After the hostels had been secured, the violence was turned at random against residents of all ethnic backgrounds (including Zulus) and of any political persuasion. In August 1991, a year after the violence began, an editorial in *The Star* noted that 'twenty-four people were shot and hacked to death in the latest burst of savage fighting between ANC and Inkatha forces, amid allegations of police bias in favour of Inkatha'.[18] Notions of ethnicity had vanished: new battle-lines seemed to have been drawn.

The meaning of the violence

A common thread in explaining the meaning of the violence was to see in it a direct result of the socio-economic conditions in which hostel-dwellers and those living in informal settlements found themselves. This, combined with the collapse of an authoritarian state and the spiralling rate of criminal violence, led to competition for resources, which rapidly became violent. Human and political agency were absent from this view. As Aitchison noted with regard to Natal:

> Common sense assures one that there must be something in this interpretation, though it seems singularly unhelpful in explaining why a lot of people took it upon themselves to kill over 1 800 people in three years and systematically worsen everybody's socio-economic position in the process.[19]

Most of versions of the violence describe the conditions in which violence might occur, or which might sustain violence. Ethnic identity was clearly the basis for Inkatha's Gauteng mobilisation, and seems to have successfully won many Zulu-speaking, Natal-based migrants into a violent anti-ANC stance. It does not explain why violence should have started in July 1990 rather than earlier; why it peaked and fell away at key moments in the unfolding negotiation process and then died away – in Gauteng at least – rapidly after the 1994 elections.

The socio-economic circumstances in which hostel-dwellers lived, their rural and ethnic identities, and their feelings of alienation from the surrounding townships were contributory factors to their being available for violence. The same goes for the high levels of poverty in the informal settlements, which may help explain why violence was started with relative ease in many such areas, and why it could be re-started when necessary. But these statements beg more questions than they answer.

Analyses of the violence which were not based on incident reports, affidavits, sworn statements, eye-witness accounts and other data received from fieldwork monitors and other available sources, failed to grasp the nature of the Reef violence. Rather, they applied more or less plausible conjecture to what was assumed to be happening.

Most commentators focused on political competition, or ethnicity – but failed to analyse them in the context of ongoing violence which rose and fell at particular political moments. Many of them did not question the systematic failure of the SAP to act against killers; the mobility of attackers, the source of the resources required to maintain the violence, the apparent immunity of its perpetrators, and the ease with which a terrifying range of weapons was made available to aggressors.

Violence as a negotiating tool

The position argued here challenges the other explanations of violence described earlier in the chapter. It is derived from an analysis of the nature and function of the violence, using patterns in monitoring data revealing 'winners' and 'losers'. In other words, some political players benefitted from the violence by disrupting the attempts of the liberation movements to establish themselves in the country, while the liberation movements themselves had to struggle to create legal structures and begin legal political activities while being called on to arm their supporters.

Put simply, political rivalry, competition for scarce resources, spiralling domestic and criminal violence and other factors discussed above contributed to a climate for violence and conditions for its longevity. However, it is crucial to realise that the violence peaked and fell at certain key moments in the negotiation process. While the victims of the violence were picked largely at random, the peaks and troughs of violence were far from random.

Primary sources of data are essential in analysing the violence. The database at CASE comprised 5 640 violence-related incidents which took place between 22 July 1990 and the end of July 1994. The data was statistically analysed, yielding patterns across the Reef as a whole and areas within it. These local and regional level patterns pointed to violence being deliberately promoted at key moments, while an ongoing low level of violence continued.

One of the first articles dealing with violence on the Reef which set out the parameters within which the violence should be approached was produced by the Project for the Study of Violence, a Johannesburg-based NGO. According to the authors:

> the violence we are witnessing is not a spontaneous outbreak of ethnic conflict. It is organised, orchestrated and planned ... If we are to see the hand that lies behind the violence, we need to understand which organised political interests are being served by it.[20]

Violence and negotiations

The violence was manipulated by elements centered in the security forces to suit their particular political agenda. Where the interests of such security force members were championed by or similar to the National Party (NP), the violence rose and fell at key moments in the negotiation process which suited the NP. However, the NP were no longer reliable allies as they were looking for their own survival in the new conditions in South Africa. The violence also peaked in response to the tide of events in 1990 and 1991. Although formal negotiations took a long time to begin, the dismantling of apartheid went ahead, as expressed in the removal of the legal cornerstones of the system, the release of political prisoners, the return of exiles, exempting Umkhonto we Sizwe from restrictions on private armies in the National Peace Accord, and so on. These developments indicated that the NP government was not controlling the pace of change, and that the balance had swung in favour of the ANC and the anti-apartheid forces.

While the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s saw little public outrage outside the province, violence on the Reef in the 1990s was initially met with widespread media coverage and calls for peace. As we have seen, this soon faded away. Violence became the expected 'background noise' to more important political events.

However, two turning points in the negotiation process and broader political relations derived directly from massacres carried out by Inkatha supporters on the Reef. Both involved attacks emanating from Inkatha-controlled hostels on nearby settlements. The first was at Swanieville in May 1991 and the second took place at Boipatong in June 1992. These were by no means the only savage massacres of innocent people, or involved the largest number of victims. Massacres, carried out by Inkatha and ANC supporters, had occurred on many occasions in Natal without national or provincial impact. They had also occurred elsewhere on the Reef with little effect – barring the losses suffered by victims and their families. In both Swanieville and Boipatong, however, Inkatha and its supporters were seen to have gone too far, and local and international opinion was mobilised against Inkatha. This strengthened the hand of the ANC in negotiations. It also led to an intensification of local-level hostilities, as public anger turned on already embattled hostel-dwellers and other Inkatha supporters.

We argue that senior members of the security forces, deeply implicated in apartheid's violent and bloody past, sought to secure their future in South Africa. This they tried to do, in part, through manipulating political violence. Their natural allies were the NP government and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The latter, of course, was not in a position to offer much assistance beyond foot soldiers (many of whom had been trained by the SADF) and some leverage on the NP. The NP itself, however, the sitting government, was in a very powerful position.

By early 1991, the ANC and NP were deeply divided about the future constitutional process. The ANC favoured an elected constitution-making body, while both the NP and IFP rejected this because the ANC would clearly dominate such a body. The ANC was trying to create a legal infrastructure, and had yet to hold its first representative national conference. With the changes taking place in the country, the question facing senior figures of the security apparatus created by PW Botha, which remained well-resourced and powerful, was how to ensure that their interests were catered for during negotiations and under a democratic dispensation.

While powerful, senior security figures were also vulnerable. Their past was littered with illegal actions in Africa, Europe and elsewhere. Their political masters in the NP appeared to be losing control over the political agenda, and events seemed to have gained a momentum of their own. The question arose in their minds as to whether politicians would offer members of the security forces as sacrifices in return for politicians' own indemnity or political future. They had to find a way of signalling to the ANC that accommodation with the security forces was a prerequisite to a national political settlement. At the same time, they could use violence as a means of ensuring that the needs of the security forces were considered by the NP as well. Until their own future was secured, the dependability of the security forces could not be assumed.

The argument put forward here is not a simple equation of the NP government with the security forces and the manipulation of the violence by the latter in the interests of the former. Violence was indeed being manipulated for political ends, with a clear link to the negotiation process. Once the ANC made concessions – amnesty for security force members, guaranteed employment for civil servants for five years, and post-election power-sharing – the shape of the political future was largely settled.

Once the political game was essentially over, the violence no longer required the same level of support, and the supply of weapons from the security forces to Inkatha began to dry up.[21] The result was a peaceful election, with Inkatha taking part, and a Government of National Unity formed. That government, led by President Mandela, continued to embargo sensitive reports into alleged SADF and security force involvement in political violence. The security forces, whose acts of barbarity had been recorded by the world media for decades, had done remarkably well out of the negotiations.

22 July 1990: the violence begins

July 1990 began as a relatively peaceful month on the Reef. During the first three weeks of July, police clashed with dwellers in a number of informal settlements as they tore down shacks while women from the settlements stripped to the waist and taunted the police. Extreme right-wing white organisations were accused of planting bombs at black taxi and bus ranks. UDF leaders continued to receive death threats, as they had during the 1980s. The ANC and Azapo held secret talks and local gangs such as the Jackrollers, the Black Cats, and the Gadaffi gang continued to clash with local youth structures.[22]

The only point at which Inkatha played a visible role in Reef politics was in lying at the centre of a week of action in early July (from 2 to 9 July) organised by Cosatu against the war in Natal. A counter-rally called by Inkatha in Soweto mustered some 2 000 people. In what was to become characteristic, Inkatha members and supporters were urged to arm themselves, as embattled supporters of an organisation standing up to the strong-arm tactics of the ANC. Evans Sebiso, Inkatha's regional secretary, reported that 'our leaders said we must arm ourselves against the possibility of the ANC trying to force us not to go to work'.[23] Apart from this incident, Inkatha remained absent from grass-roots politics in most Reef townships.

However, on 20 July, Cosatu issued a press statement which claimed that Inkatha organisers had moved from Natal to the Transvaal, where they were operating in the single-sex hostels largely populated by migrant workers. Cosatu claimed that its members in the hostels had been told to pay an IFP membership fee and to attend a 'peace rally' organised by Inkatha, to be held on Saturday 21 July. Both Inkatha and the Vaal Civic Association had applied for permission to hold rallies at Evaton Stadium, but, in a pattern repeated for the next four years, permission was given to Inkatha – three days after the local civic organisation had been refused the right to use the stadium.

The Inkatha rally, Cosatu warned, would be the signal for attacks on Vaal residents. The press statement argued that Cosatu members in the hostels 'were given [the impression] that the attack on Vaal residents would be planned in Ulundi and would be launched from the rally'.[24] Cosatu's lawyers wrote to the Minister of Law and Order, warning that attacks from Inkatha supporters were expected. Sebokeng's SAP Commander, Colonel Mazibuko, gave assurances that no one at the rally would be allowed to carry weapons. SAP spokesperson Eugene Opperman took a harder line, claiming that the police could not respond to rumours.[25] The press also disregarded the rumours.

After violence broke out, newspapers spoke to Sebokeng residents and reported that 'for over a month now, mention of the date July 21 has brought fear to Vaal residents'.[26] The 'rumour' became a reality when 27 people were murdered as

> Inkatha members armed with assegais, pangas, knobkerries and other weapons attacked the hostels when coming back from the rally. Police vehicles accompanied the marchers, but no attempt was apparently made to disarm them.[27]

Despite Mazibuko's assurance that Inkatha supporters would be disarmed, police now claimed that they could not do so because 'it is Zulu custom to attend meetings armed with assegais, shields and knobkerries'.[28] Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi argued, however – in contrast with the police interpretation of Zulu custom – that 'given [the] actions and utterances of certain ANC leaders and supporters, and in these circumstances, one can understand Inkatha supporters feeling the need to defend themselves and carry arms'.[29] Buthelezi went on to blame deaths on the 'taunting and jeering' directed at Inkatha by township residents.[30]

The Inkatha supporters were escorted to the Sebokeng hostel complex, a Cosatu stronghold, which they attacked. The attacks were repulsed by non-Inkatha inmates, and Inkatha supporters who had lived in the hostel were not allowed to return. This was seen by both sides as a 'defeat' for Inkatha, and eye-witnesses to later violence reported hearing Inkatha supporters declaiming: 'Sebokeng won't happen again'.[31]

The day after the Sebokeng carnage, 13 people were injured in Wesselton, in the eastern Transvaal, when attacked by members of the Black Cats gang. The gang was later revealed to comprise Inkatha members who had received military training by the SADF in the Caprivi Strip, and whose task, in their own words, was 'to make conflict in the community'.[32]

A day later, 24 July, seven buses carrying Inkatha supporters arrived at the Sebokeng hostel, and in the ensuing clashes, six people died. On the same day, the first incident of train violence took place, in Soweto, as a 'large group of Zulu warriors entered the train at Ikwezi Station looking for *mzabalazo* people'.[33] The same thing happened the next day on a Soweto train. On this occasion, the attackers, shouting 'Usuthu' (a traditional Zulu war cry) and brandishing iron bars, knobkerries and pangas, injured many commuters and threw a woman to her death from the moving train. As the train slowed down and entered the next station, commuters turned on their attackers and began to stone them. The attackers then fled to nearby Jabulani hostel. When the police arrived, they tear-gassed the commuters. The attackers disappeared.[34]

Violence continued in Wesselton, where the Black Cats attacked ANC and local civic members and their houses. On July 28th, two inmates of Jeppe hostel in Johannesburg were murdered, allegedly for refusing to join Inkatha.[35] The following day, the bodies of three Soweto residents were found outside Jabulani hostel, which provided refuge to the train attackers when stoned by commuters. The message of retribution seemed clear.

In all, 51 people died in July following the first attack in Sebokeng. The pattern was already clear: hostels had to be cleared of non-Zulus and of Zulu-speakers who would not participate in violence. The hostels became armed bases from which attacks could be launched. Thereafter, the surrounding areas became no-go zones, and fear and confusion was sown through savage random attacks such as train violence. Criminal gangs were being used as proxy fighters in attacks directed at ANC members. Some of the key elements of low intensity conflict were becoming evident on the Reef.

Inkatha's strategy

At the launch of the Inkatha Freedom Party on 4 July 1990, Buthelezi stated:

> I also say today that no power on earth and most certainly nothing that the ANC can do will shake Inkatha's resolve to come out as a new Inkatha and as a political party to claim a right and to claim its rightful place at the negotiating table. No power on earth will stop us being a powerful force at the negotiating table.[36]

Buthelezi went on to list 'derogatory epithets' used to describe him by the ANC. The supposed ANC-led 'campaign of vilification' was frequently cited as the reason for attacks by Inkatha supporters, casting them in the role of defenders of Buthelezi's honour. Themba Khoza, for example, while disclaiming Inkatha responsibility for train violence, nonetheless noted: 'The only thing we can say, is not to humiliate Chief Buthelezi by singing derogatory songs about him because that creates tension and subsequently leads to conflict.'[37] Buthelezi on the occasion of the IFP launch merely asked 'if Dr Mandela is aware of the extent to which this vilification campaign fans the flames of this hideous violence'.[38]

Violence was Buthelezi's major tool in trying to ensure Inkatha control in KwaZulu-Natal. The same tool was used to force Inkatha from a regional and ethnic particularity onto the national political stage. As in KwaZulu-Natal, political violence on the Reef followed violent membership drives by Inkatha. Cosatu claimed that 'certain Inkatha officials have been travelling from hostel to hostel mobilising hostel dwellers for war'.[39] Within a month of the launch of the IFP, political violence broke out after recruitment drives in Sebokeng and then spread via hostels to Soweto, Kagiso on the West Rand (5 August) and to Tokoza, Katlehong and Vosloorus on the East Rand (13 August

onwards). In August 1990 alone, 860 people were killed in political violence.

The similarities with KwaZulu-Natal, and the expectation of more violence as Inkatha sought to create a political support-base, were not missed. David Breier, writing in *The Sunday Star* commented that 'Inkatha's high-profile meetings, especially in hostels in the PWV area over recent weeks, preceded ... [the] orgy of death on the Reef which mirrored the mass violence in Natal over the past four years'.[40] A Johannesburg-based monitoring agency, the Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression (IBIIR), was more direct:

> The violence appears to have been precipitated by a brutal and aggressive recruitment campaign initiated by Inkatha which compelled certain hostel dwellers to leave the hostel and join the community with whom the hostel already had strained relations. Thereafter the conflict escalated along political and ethnic lines.[41]

It is important to recall the context in which these events occurred. The Inkatha recruitment drives took place in a situation where opinion polls reflected not only a minute level of support for the organisation outside Natal — at 2 per cent but also the fact that Inkatha was widely viewed with loathing on the Reef. Buthelezi's response to that was a blend of bravado and insecurity. Claiming that he did not give 'two hoots in hell', Buthelezi stated,

> I am a major player, whether the Press vilify me or not. I am one of the major players, just as the ANC and NP are major players ... I am not one of the smaller ones. I am a major one.[42]

Cosatu's Information Department, which played an important role in monitoring and analysing the Reef violence, produced a discussion paper which noted that 'Inkatha has come to the conclusion that it can only make itself a national political factor through the use of violence'. The first step for Inkatha was to establish territorial bases on the Reef, and then to systematically move through nearby areas to establish a support-base through the use of violence. Although initially the strategy seemed to be successful, it ultimately failed, with Inkatha securing only secured 3 per cent of the Gauteng vote in the 1994 elections. However, the short-term gains of the strategy of using violence as political leverage, which came in the form of

concessions by the ANC and its allies in the negotiating halls, were considerable.

Patterns of violence

Our basic premise is that in studying any local incident of political violence, a complex web of relationships and tensions will be involved. The players and their roles may differ from incident to incident or from area to area, depending on the socio-political and economic make-up of the area. Nonetheless, examining aggregated incidents across the Reef through the entire period throws overall patterns into clear relief. The rest of this chapter seeks to illustrate through primary data how political violence, in its many forms, served the cause of retarding the onset of democracy in South Africa while trying to secure the safety of perpetrators in the new dispensation.

After the whirlwind of violence on the Reef in July–August 1990, pitched battles continued, though less frequently than previously, while a low-level war of violent attrition became evident. Trains, buses and taxis were attacked. Funerals, beer halls and social events became targets of attackers from nearby hostels, or small, highly efficient but unidentifiable killing units. People walking past hostels suffered sniper fire or abduction into the hostels, frequently followed by the victim's body being dumped at the hostel gates a few hours later.

Prominent community activists, as well as ANC and Inkatha leaders, were assassinated – particularly those who seemed to be on the verge of negotiating peace in their locality. When relative quiet returned to the Reef, or to particular townships, a sudden conflagration would be sparked by a particularly savage incident or series of attacks. It was not a simple issue of Inkatha supporters attacking ANC supporters, or vice versa. Known Inkatha areas were also open to these attacks, alongside residents or ANC areas. The goal seemed clear: to maintain a level of violence and thereby to keep fear, insecurity and the desire for revenge sufficiently close to the surface so that when needed, smaller areas and then the whole Reef could swiftly be turned into war zones. Inkatha supporters may have been foot soldiers for much of the violence, but they were clearly regarded as expendable, and were turned on when necessary.

The violence seemed to move freely across the Reef and to change form as it moved. At critical political moments, however, many different forms of violence, across different areas, were synchronised. The violence also changed

scale over time. The end of 1990 saw massive battles, with thousands on each side, fighting over large territories. This could not be sustained, and smaller and smaller battles took place. These too died down over time, and small, highly mobile units of attackers moved from area to area, stoking conflict and moving on. In some instances, such as the attacks on Phola Park, they were able to spark off widespread violence; in others, no such response was forthcoming.

Through all of this, according to reports from victims, eye witnesses, reporters and monitors, the SAP were active participants in the violence or defenders of Inkatha supporters. Victims frequently alleged that attackers were escorted to their place of attack by the SAP, and then escorted back with the loot taken from their victims. These acts of collusion were widely reported and photographed by journalists. Large numbers of Inkatha supporters – over 1 000 marched more than over 10 kilometres before laying the Swanieville informal settlement to waste and then marching safely back to their hostel base at Kagiso – seemed able to participate in violence while immune to arrest and prosecution. The Reverend Frank Chikane of the South African Council of Churches asked:

> How can the government allow hundreds of people to march – heavily armed – and raid, plunder and murder on their way and then march away, and then not arrest them? If the same group of people marched on state interests they would not last 10 minutes.[43]

Police responses

The most frequent response of the SAP was an outright denial of any possibility of police misconduct, frequently accompanied by on-the-spot attribution of blame to others. Colonel Frans Malherbe spoke truer than he knew when he stated: 'we categorically, again and again, deny these allegations'.[44] He and his colleagues seemed to have spent the four years of violence doing little but denying allegations of partiality or misconduct. Investigation rather than denial may have been a more appropriate response. His colleague, Eugene Opperman, claimed that the SAP was 'used to these allegations being made – in fact ... they were becoming bored with them'.[45]

Many of the policemen who were involved in fomenting violence later admitted their role in TRC hearings and other forums. One of them told the Goldstone Commission that 'large quantities of arms and ammunition were

supplied to the IFP', and stated that 'Mr Themba Khoza had under his control thousands of IFP members who were able to cause violence and chaos in Johannesburg.'[46] Witness *Q*, 'Chappies' Klopper, confirmed in court that he had been present when two of the most senior Inkatha officials in Gauteng, Themba Khoza and Victor Ndlovu, had received weapons from the Vlakplaas-based death squad.[47] The Goldstone Commission reported: 'That large quantities of arms and ammunition were supplied to the IFP is confirmed on oath by van Heerden, Nortje and Klopper' (all of Unit C10 at Vlakplaas).[48]

A Goldstone Commission report noted that according to Unit C10 member 'Chappies' Klopper, the Unit 'was involved from 1989 in violence aimed at the destabilisation of South Africa. It was involved, *inter alia*, in the organisation of train and hostel violence' under the overall command of Lieutenant-General Basie Smit and Major-General Krappies Engelbrecht.[49] The *Sunday Times* reported that the IFP leader in Gauteng, Themba Khoza, was on the police payroll as an informer, as was the MEC for Safety and Security in KwaZulu-Natal, Reverend Celani Mthetwa.[50] Willie Nortje, a member of the C10 hit-squad unit based at Vlakplaas, told a court that C10 paid for the services of prominent Inkatha officials, and that C10 as a whole 'was sympathetic to the IFP but not the ANC. In terms of the provision of weapons, this was only to the IFP and not the ANC'.[51] Many more examples could be quoted.

Reporting the violence

Mainstream media coverage of the political violence of the early 1990s left much to be desired and tended to take police claims at face value. One of the few newspapers to query such behaviour, and to keep investigating political violence long after mainstream newspapers had deemed it as not newsworthy, was the independent newspaper, *The Weekly Mail*, which noted:

> As soon as the police bar the media they signal that they want to act without public scrutiny. There can only be one reason for this move: they want to do things they don't want South Africans or the outside world to know about.[52]

The Weekly Mail editorial went on to complain that 'we cannot rely on the police media liaison officers. They function as no more than a Department of Denials, habitually saying the word 'no' before they have even heard the question'.

This was scarcely new behaviour for the police. Prominent journalist Jon Qwelane covered events near Merafe Hostel, one of the worst centres of violence in Soweto, and noted that the Inkatha supporters from the hostel were not disarmed or tear-gassed; and when the *impi* attacked residents from the area, police tear-gassed the residents, not their attackers. The alliance between police and hostel dwellers had its roots in the Soweto uprisings of 1976, as Qwelane reminded readers, 'when police openly instructed Meadowlands Hostel inmates to kill township residents.'[53]

Some journalists pointed to the eerie familiarity of the violence. Philip van Niekerk, writing in *The Weekly Mail*, noted that a brutal attack at Denver station in Johannesburg 'had all the hallmarks of a Renamo attack – random brutality, striking terror into the hearts of ordinary black people.' This attack and others like it, van Niekerk argued, were 'too concerted, too reminiscent of state-sponsored vigilantism elsewhere, to be coincidental'.[54] Such claims were swiftly denied or ignored by government and police spokespeople.

Despite its scale and brutality, the violence soon began to slip from the front pages of newspapers towards less prominent sections, unless accompanied by gory photographs or vivid descriptions of a particularly savage act. Even these seemed to become less and less newsworthy over the months and years after 1990, as the death toll continued to rise. Newspapers occasionally reported 'landmarks' in the violence, such as when the rate of killing overtook that in Beirut, or as the number of dead overtook the total number of people killed in the violence in Northern Ireland. Finally, only numbers of dead were mentioned, in point-form, hidden deep inside newspapers. Investigative reporting was left to a handful of independent publications.

Violence seemed to have become part of life on the Reef, not least because it was restricted to black areas and black victims. To this extent at least, the mainstream media found the habits of apartheid difficult to shake off. For much of the time, violence provided a backdrop to the 'important' events of the period, namely the negotiation process taking place a few kilometres from the sites of violence.

Warlords and weaponry

Ordinary black citizens of the Reef lived in deep fear, with no apparent recourse to the law or escape from random violence, and a media that seemed to find the deaths of thousands of South Africans of little interest. This opened space for the emergence of local leaders or structures, which did not hesitate

to use force to defend local communities. This frequently meant that communities were left in the hands of local warlords, most of whom operated from hostels. This was not restricted to Inkatha-controlled areas.[55]

The natural response for many residents was to turn to the ANC, the most widely supported liberation movement, and request defence or weapons. Neither was forthcoming. The ANC suspended its armed struggle in 1990 in order to kick-start negotiations, and could not respond to such requests. The South African Communist Party issued a handbook on the structure and role of self defence units (SDUs). Beyond that, little was done. Within a year or so, many SDUs controlled areas through brutality and were alleged to be heavily involved in criminal activity, in part the result of their lack of accountability. A resident of Alexandra township, north of Johannesburg, complained:

> Police are not willing to protect us from the carnage that has fallen on our township, and neither does the ANC defend us. The only option left for us is to defend ourselves.

A colleague added:

> We are not protected here in Alex. We don't even have guns. We use petrol bombs, sticks and stones against people who [are] armed with rifles, shotguns, pangas and spears … we don't see what the ANC is doing to protect us. They must give us guns.[56]

Ramshackle township defence structures which had operated during the States of Emergency of the 1980s as local defence units while the security forces occupied townships, now sought to re-organise themselves into defensive bodies. In Soweto, youth marched to the Mandela house. They demanded weapons to defend themselves and rejected the advice that they should wait for defence units to be formed.

The ANC's main response to the ongoing political violence took place in the negotiating halls. The ANC's public approach was to focus on negotiations and the future dispensation, and not to be side-tracked. This approach, although appropriate in terms of the long-term transformation of South Africa, may have cost the ANC some support on the ground where day-to-day survival was at issue.

By refusing to resume the armed struggle, the ANC left the field open to

local leaders or structures prepared to defend communities with force. In some areas, this had disastrous effects. For example, in Phola Park, an informal settlement near Tokoza, the original members of the self defence unit were assassinated one by one. This left the Unit in the hands of criminal elements who allegedly waged a reign of terror and extortion against the community itself.

Graeme Gotz has described another form of pro-force leadership stepping into the vacuum created by the absence of an armed ANC response.[57] The local ANC leader in the Vaal area, Ernest Sotsu, had had members of his family slaughtered, allegedly by the 'Vaal Monster', Victor 'Khetisi' Kheswa, who operated from the Inkatha base at KwaMadala hostel near Boipatong. Following the murder of his family, Sotsu moved into the Sebokeng hostel complex, where he called repeatedly for effective SDU to be formed and to protect residents in the area. However, his efforts to recruit and train SDU members led to divisions among the ANC and Cosatu members at the hostel, which in time became violent. Other examples of similar situations exist.

The ANC response

The ANC and its allies were obliged to negotiate with those they accused of sponsoring violence by commission or omission. It took the savage attack on Boipatong in June 1992, which saw inmates from KwaMadala hostel, a known Inkatha stronghold, attack the town at night and slaughter 48 people, for the ANC to finally respond to popular anger by breaking off negotiations and instituting a campaign of 'rolling mass action'.[58] The number of people killed on the Reef in the sudden intensification of political tempers rose from 233 in May to 314 in June, a monthly toll not exceeded for 13 months. In the gloomy days that followed, ANC President Nelson Mandela warned all political parties:

> History will not forgive any of us if the search for face-saving formulae prevents us from finding the correct responses which allow negotiations to be successfully resumed.[59]

When the ANC returned to the negotiating table, it had secured the Record of Understanding with the government, which led to the release of political prisoners, restricted (on paper, at least) the carrying of traditional weapons and proposed sealing off a number of hostels with razor wire. Inkatha was excluded from signing the Record, signalling a shift by both the NP and ANC

from considering the three parties as equally important. The Record is widely seen as a turning point in the negotiation process.[60] Soon thereafter, according to evidence given in Eugene de Kock's trial, the supply of weapons from security forces to Inkatha began to dry up; their value to the security forces as foot-soldiers was rapidly diminishing.

It is testament to the deep level of popular support for the ANC, and the veneration of Nelson Mandela in particular, that the movement was able to maintain popular loyalty throughout the period of violence and during the 1994 elections, despite the ANC's official refusal to support retaliatory moves. The organisation included members and local leaders who became involved in crime and violence. Overall, however, in the face of deep provocation, ANC leaders managed to maintain considerable discipline.

The Reef war presumably had as an initial goal the aim of driving the ANC to a violent response, thereby simultaneously stripping the movement of its moral authority and giving the government free rein for a security clampdown on the ANC and others. Another goal was to weaken the ANC, a goal that was achieved in part. Many branches were launched very late, leaders were assassinated, meetings had to be held in secret in violence-torn areas, and many ordinary citizens preferred to stay far away from politics. As we have seen, ANC branches in areas such as Sebokeng suffered internal conflict as a direct result of the violence they were caught up in. The ANC was, to some degree, tainted by the violence of some members. The refusal of the ANC to arm members or defend them with force put further strain on relations with supporters.

The ANC leadership operated at a sophisticated level of national negotiations, keeping the 'grand prize' of liberation as their overarching goal. To expect people terrified by drive-by shootings, train murders or township massacres to keep their gaze fixed on this long-term goal of a democratic South Africa rather than defending themselves against those who attacked them on a near-daily basis seemed to many to be asking too much. Ultimately, this was a short-term problem. Despite the support of the security forces and the mainstream media, Inkatha failed to win the hearts and minds of the mass of Reef residents and consequently lost the war.

Understanding political violence on the Reef

In the remainder of this chapter, we place the violence on the Reef in context. The CASE database of political violence on the Reef between July 1990 and

1994 records a total of 6 007 incidents. These resulted in 8 747 deaths. The majority of incidents occurred in 1992 (2 071 incidents) and 1993 (1 898 incidents). The worst-hit area was the East Rand, where 51 per cent of incidents occurred; this was followed by Soweto, where a fifth (21%) of incidents took place, the Vaal (10%), Alexandra (8%), Johannesburg (6%) and the West Rand (4%). The East Rand and Soweto house the majority of Reef inhabitants and suffered almost three quarters (72%) of all incidents of political violence. The East Rand is also a centre for the manufacturing industry and provides much of Gauteng's formal employment.

Incident numbers varied dramatically across the Reef, as the following graph reveals. The number of incidents of political violence that took place in 1990, 414 in all, cover the period 22 July to the end of the year. Many of these, however, were large-scale battles, while those recorded in 1994 are mainly small incidents involving limited numbers of people (drive-by shootings and so on). The incidents recorded for 1994 (288) end in July, three months after the 1994 elections. The massive number of incidents in the East Rand in 1993 reflect the total chaos and near-disintegration in that area, which was the closest any part of the Reef came to total collapse.

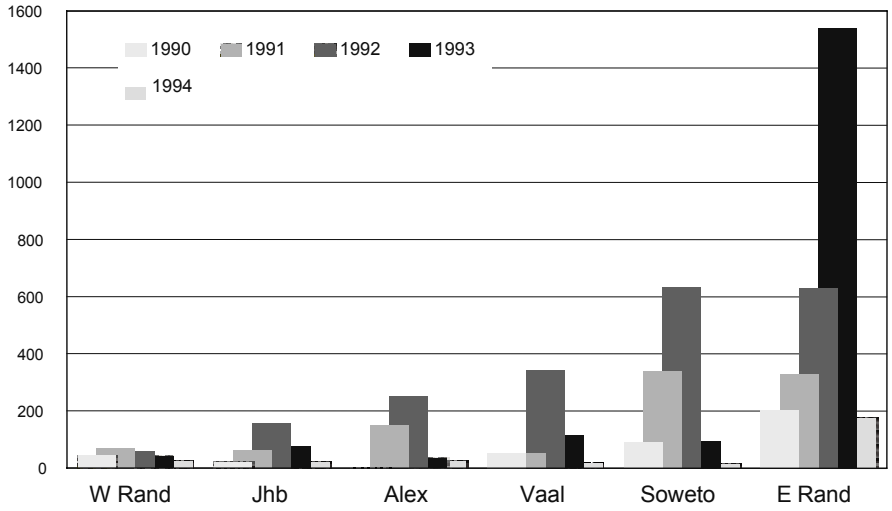


FIGURE 1
Incidents of political violence by area by year

Identifying aggressors and victims

One of the features of the violence is the large number of victims who did not know who their attackers were, where they came from and why they attacked. Table 1 shows this:

Reported identity of primary aggressor	Percentage
Unknown	63
Unidentified, organised	13
Hostel-dwellers	9
SAP	6
Township residents	4
Organisation member (e.g. union)	2
Informal settlement dweller	1
Gang	1
SADF	1

TABLE 1
Reported identity of primary aggressor

The figures in Table 1 record not the political affiliation of the attacker, but whether or not they were identified in any way by the victims. (A subsequent field recorded the political affiliation of both aggressors and victims and is reported below.)

In slightly less than two thirds of cases (63%), the attackers were unknown and unidentifiable. In a conflict popularly described and widely understood as a battle for territory and support between Inkatha and the ANC, this is quite remarkable. The category includes incidents where the victims, eye-witnesses, monitors or journalists (depending on the sources) could not identify the attackers in any way.

We noted earlier that the mainstream press spent limited space reporting the violence, which diminished further over time. This is reflected in this category, which includes an enormous number of incidents where monitors or media merely recorded that a body or bodies were found. These were sometimes accompanied by a description of the means of death (shot, stabbed, hacked) and occasionally other factors, such as the incidents that led to their death.

In a further 13 per cent of incidents, the attackers were unknown but

described by eye-witnesses or monitors as well-organised. This category is perhaps best described through an example. It includes the attackers who entered a house in Alexandra in March 1991, where a funeral vigil was taking place for a member of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas), an ANC-aligned student organisation. In the early hours of the morning, attackers burst through the door shouting 'You are ANC and we are Inkatha!'[61] and killed 15 people, injuring a further 18. Commentators pointed to the professionalism of the attack, noting that almost every bullet had hit a human target – very few were found lodged in or having passed through walls, floor or roof. Many of those who survived or escaped the initial gunfire were attacked with pangas as they tried to protect themselves or escape. The attack occurred despite Alexandra having been declared an unrest area, and in the midst of what the SAP claimed were regular SAP and SADF patrols throughout the township.

The police issued a statement almost immediately, claiming that 'the people who were attacked have no links with any political organisation',[62] patently inaccurate in view of the prominent role of COSAS members in the vigil. The ANC leader in Alexandra, Popo Molefe (later Premier of North West Province), stated: 'For us, this is clear Renamo-style violence', noting that the SAP and SADF appeared to have withdrawn from the township 'in order to allow space for massacres of this nature'.[63]

The four years of Reef violence under study are littered with incidents such as the Alexandra massacre, smaller (and, on occasion, larger) in scale and less well-covered by the media, but equally powerful examples of highly organised brutality. One can only speculate about how often similarly planned operations took place but the details of which went unrecorded.

Political affiliation of primary aggressor	Percentage
Unknown	81
Inkatha	10
State	7
ANC	1
Zulu	1

TABLE 2
Political affiliation of primary aggressor

Because the attackers were unknown in so many incidents, their political affiliation was also widely unknown (though widely suspected). Fully 81 per cent of aggressors were of unknown political affiliation, as can be seen from Table 2. The table reflects the understanding of victims, eye-witnesses, monitors or media as to the identity of attackers. It is not a statement of fact but an aggregation of perceptions collected over four years. The trend is clear. In one in ten incidents, the political affiliation of attackers was alleged to be to Inkatha; in 7 per cent of incidents, attackers were identified with the state (police, army and 'third force'). ANC supporters were identified as attackers in 1 per cent of cases.

These perceptions indicate that Inkatha supporters were ten times more likely to be identified as attackers than ANC supporters. However, what is important about Tables 1 and 2 is the widespread absence of knowledge about who was attacking. Suspicions of state involvement were widely held and aired, and an enormous amount of *prima facie* evidence was secured. Very few arrests ever took place, and even fewer convictions were secured. It is only now that security force members are admitting to their role.

This absence of detail is not surprising since the police, whose investigations should have provided the information to fill the gaps, were an interested party and made few serious attempts to investigate the violence or uncover the killers.

We have seen that attackers were able to remain largely undetected. This is mirrored in the status of their victims, many of whom were similarly unknown.

Identity of victim	Percentage
Unknown	49
Township or informal resident, train commuter, etc.	34
SAP	8
Hostel-dweller	4
Organisation (e.g. union)	3
Unidentified organised	1

TABLE 3
Identity of victim

Just under half (49%) of those killed in the violence were 'unknown', meaning that the violence monitors or press listed them merely as bodies found, with

no other identifying characteristics. Another third (34%) were identified as residents of this or that area, or were identified by their context (this category includes people who were killed on trains, in beerhalls and so on). In 8 per cent of cases the victims were police. Hostel dwellers were twice as likely (9%) to be aggressors in the violence as they were to be victims of it (4%).

While we argue that residents at random were the main victims of violence, this is not entirely true, since only 6 per cent of those who were killed were women, while 3 per cent were children. This suggests that some degree of target selection was made by attackers. If we look at the political affiliation of victims, the following emerges:

Political affiliation of victim	Percentage
Unknown	82
State	9
ANC	5
Inkatha	3

TABLE 4
Political affiliation of victim

The data overwhelmingly indicate that this was a faceless war, carried out by unidentified attackers against unknown residents of the Reef. Only one in 20 victims of the violence were known to be ANC members – the main losers in this war were the African population of the Reef. Almost one in ten victims was either a member of the police or defence force, who were identified as attackers in 7 per cent of incidents. The vast majority of victims of political violence had no known political affiliation.

The overall pattern is clear: faceless attackers killed anyone in the areas they selected as targets. The main characteristic shared by victims of the violence is that they were likely to be African and not members of any particular organisation. When attackers were identified, they were most likely to be alleged Inkatha supporters or members of the SAP or SADF. The fact that attackers could wage such a 'successful' war and yet remain largely unidentified and avoid arrest or prosecution, suggests that a far more sophisticated body was at work than merely ANC and Inkatha struggling for turf.

The nature of the violence

What the numbers we have seen do not reflect is the way that violence changed over time. The initial months of Reef violence were marked by vicious attacks on residents, and the ethnic cleansing of non-Zulus from hostels. Those acts in turn provided 'triggers' for a series of set-piece battles between thousands of red head-banded Inkatha supporters from single-sex hostels on the one hand, and residents of townships, informal settlements or non-Inkatha hostels on the other. At the same time, train and taxi commuters were attacked by Inkatha-supporting hostel-dwellers.

The large pitched battles of late-1990 soon gave way to smaller sorties by Inkatha supporters, most often emanating from hostels, attacking surrounding areas; and a growing number of incidents involving unidentified but highly proficient killers.

It is also important to recall the swiftness with which the violence spread across the Reef. The graph below shows the dramatic speed with which violence engulfed the Reef. It shows the first incident of political violence in each area (not the subsequent incidents). Having started in Sebokeng, the violence had touched Soweto, Wesselton and some Johannesburg hostels by

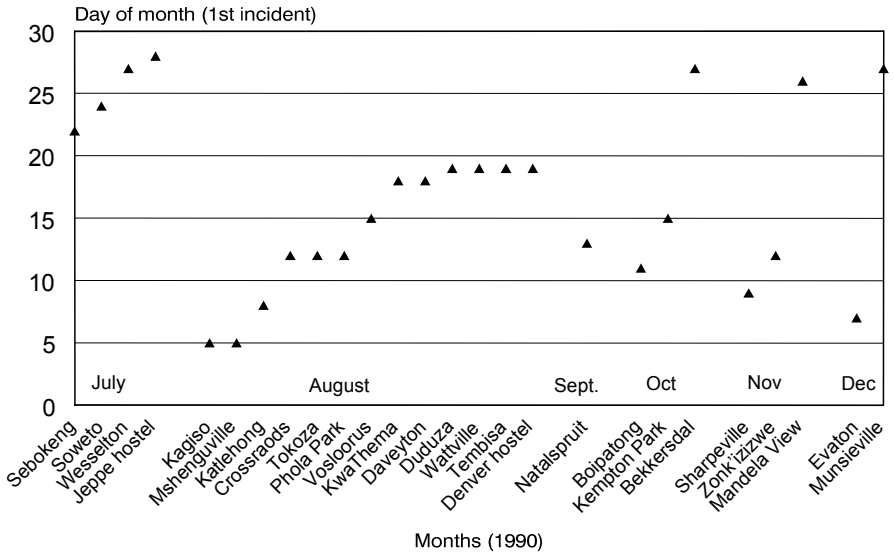


FIGURE 2

First incident of violence in different areas of the Reef, 1990

the end of July; early August saw the violence reach Kagiso on the West Rand, which was joined during the month by Katlehong, Tokoza, Phola Park, Vosloorus, KwaThema, Daveyton, Duduza, Wattville, and Tembisa, alongside new suburbs in Soweto and new hostels in Johannesburg.

The graph also shows how in August 1990, violence flared up in areas tens of kilometres apart on the same day. The scale, co-ordination and organisation involved suggest that forces with easier access to manpower and weapons than Inkatha must have been involved.

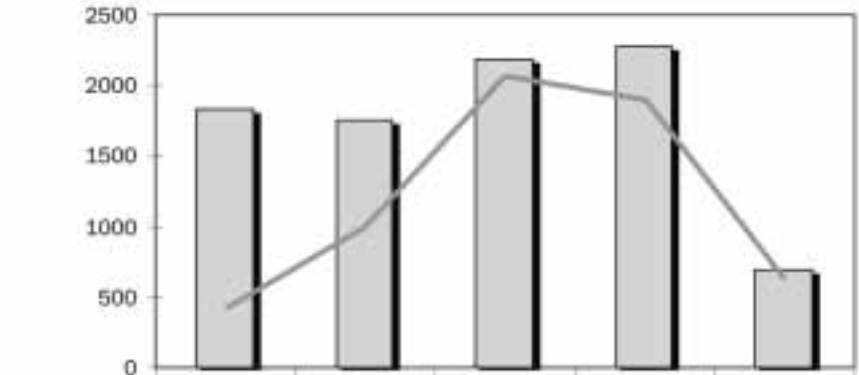
Before the end of the year, Sharpeville, Zonk'izizwe, Evaton, Munsieville and Bophelong joined the list of areas affected by violence. Alexandra, a densely populated black township on the edge of Johannesburg's wealthy northern suburbs, was one of the last-affected areas, for reasons discussed below. Within five months, political violence had broken out in 26 different areas.

The violence was not just swift in spreading, but also savage. In Sebokeng, a 2-month-old baby died of teargas poisoning, and a 9-year-old boy was shot; one hostel-dweller was shot while dancing to music on the radio, another while eating his supper. In Tokoza, in the same month, violence between hostel-dwellers and Phola Park residents began when 'one Xhosa – who had a drinking problem – stayed behind. When the Zulus came they attacked him, shot him dead, and burnt his clothes.'[64] Violence in many areas began with rumours such as this – that 'Zulus' had killed a Xhosa, or that 'Xhosas' had killed Zulus. The source of the rumours was never evident; the truth of the claims was frequently made irrelevant by the subsequent violence. In the Crossroads informal settlement near Katlehong on the East Rand, violence led to people leaving the area. The owner of a shack 'wanted to take her clothes across the railway line. When she came back, the shack was burning [and inside was] a three-month child.'[65] In Kagiso, a four-year-old was axed through the head. In March 1991, nine members of the Ramakgola family were murdered in Alexandra, including a 6-month-old baby shot in the stomach.

After the conflict broke out in mid-July 1990, August saw 860 people murdered in acts of political violence. By the end of 1990, 1 838 people had been killed in 414 incidents of violence. The situation is shown in the graph above. The brutality of the initial phase of violence is reflected in the high death rate per incident in this period, which dropped away over successive years. An average of just under five people were murdered in each incident, reflecting the scale of the confrontations taking place. By 1993 the rate had dropped to

two deaths per incident, and by 1994 to an average of one death per incident.

The graph also shows that 1992 saw a massive 2 071 incidents of political violence on the Reef, over 1 000 more than the preceding year and almost 200 more than in the following year. We argued earlier that the key period in the violence/negotiations nexus was that between the Swanieville massacre in May 1991 and the Boipatong and Bisho massacres in June 1992, resulting in the Record of Understanding in September 1992. During that period, 3 029 people were murdered in political violence on the Reef, more than a third of all people murdered in political violence on the Reef between 1990 and 1994.



	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Deaths	1838	1757	2186	2275	691
Incidents	414	997	2071	1898	627

FIGURE 3
Deaths and incidents in political violence, 1990-1994

Weapons

We have seen how the violence of the early 1990s was categorised as an ANC versus Inkatha struggle, leaving space for the NP government to stand back and appear to play the role of non-involved peace-broker. This was a role which De Klerk exploited to the full. The violence kept attention focused away from the governing party and the state apparatus it controlled, but also created space for actions which, in the words of a journalist, 'systematically served to increase the potential for violence'.[66]

For example, a month and a half after the violence began, and in the midst of the huge pitched battles of late 1990, De Klerk reversed a century-old

prohibition against Zulu men bearing dangerous weapons in public. As the Durban branch of the Legal Resources Centre noted, 'in times of widespread violence this is a strange way to respond to the problem'.[67] The KwaZulu government followed suit, and repealed legal provisions which imposed an automatic penalty on anyone convicted of assault with dangerous weapons. In the same month the Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, amended the Dangerous Weapons Act to apply only in declared 'unrest areas', leaving people free to bear weapons in other areas.

The ease of access to weaponry was considerable. Reporters from *The Weekly Mail* reported that factory-made fold-up spears were being sold by unidentified white men to Merafe hostel-dwellers at R12 each. They reported allegations that the whites involved were police, ritually denied at the time but subsequently corroborated by the police involved in the practice in testimony to the Goldstone Commission. Unit C10 from Vlakplaas also sold weapons to Inkatha on a regular basis, according to witnesses in the trial of Eugene de Kock.

The Zulu monarch, King Goodwill Zwelithini, enflamed the passions of his followers when he addressed a rally at FNB Stadium in Johannesburg and claimed:

> The call to ban the bearing of cultural weapons by Zulus is an insult to my manhood. It is an insult to the manhood of every Zulu man.[68]

'Traditional weapons' became, in the language of Inkatha spokespeople, 'cultural weapons'. The rights of non-Zulus were ignored by the NP government as it sought to retain Inkatha support, as the Johannesburg daily newspaper *Business Day* noted:

> Government tried hard to persuade Chief Buthelezi and his Inkatha Freedom Party to accept a ban on spears, but they refused – perhaps partly out of pride and partly for fear of leaving Inkatha hostel-dwellers vulnerable to attack. While government's reluctance to force a decision on potential allies in constitutional negotiations was understandable, the 'traditional weapons' argument just did not stand up when spears were being used to kill people.[69]

The debate over traditional weapons overshadowed the need for weapons control across the board, and drew attention away from the proliferation of

firearms in the area. Figure 4 shows the extent to which different weapons were the cause of death in the Reef violence. Over half of all those killed or injured in the Reef violence were shot, while less than 20 per cent were stabbed or hacked, by traditional weapons among others. For Inkatha, this widespread use of firearms was evidence of the ANC 'trying to enforce their beliefs on a large proportion of South Africans … Nowhere have we seen them call for a ban on AK-47s and the other sophisticated weaponry they have in their possession'.[70] Inkatha successfully deflected attention in this way throughout the Reef violence. The ANC played the same game by focusing on traditional weapons, and allowed gun use to be obscured behind media spats.

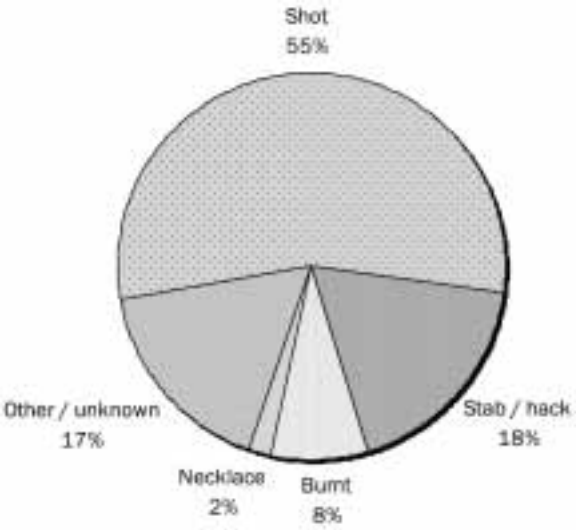


FIGURE 4
Main method of killing in the Reef violence

Looking at the use of weapons in all incidents (not just where they were the cause of death as above), we find that firearms were used in 58 per cent of incidents, and traditional or stabbing weapons in 20 per cent of incidents. The complete failure of the government to stop the movement of weapons – at which it was extremely successful during the uprisings of the 1980s where stones and petrol bombs were the most frequently used weapons – coupled with easing laws which restricted the carrying of certain weapons, remains one of the most damning indictments of the NP's role in the *interregnum*.

Hostels

One of the pillars of apartheid was the migrant labour system, under which most Africans were regarded as temporary sojourners in 'white areas' who were allowed there only to sell their labour and then return to their homes in the rural areas. Single-sex hostels were constructed to house migrant labourers in structures that were meant to be inhospitable and barrack-like for ease of control. The majority came from KwaZulu-Natal. Although hostel dwellers were regarded as different by township residents, many hostels were well integrated into township life. People could collect firewood on hostel property, take showers in the hostels, and children used to watch films when they were shown there. Many hostel-dwellers had partners in the surrounding townships.

Nonetheless, hostels were also Inkatha's only significant support-base in the province. Where they were not Inkatha-supporting, hostels were attacked and emptied. Tensions between hostel dwellers and township residents grew after the 1976 rebellion, when hostel-dwellers attacked students. This was worsened during the uprisings of the 1980s, where hostel inmates were expected to abide by boycott and similar strategies, despite almost never being consulted. By 1990, hostel inmates were volatile, and suspicious of (and frequently hostile to) township residents and township politics.[71]

Lloyd Vogelman of the Project for the Study of Violence noted that hostel-dwellers had a shared identity as well as a strong sense of grievance deriving from their perception of being treated poorly by township residents. They were also easy to organise and could assemble very quickly, thus making 'planned attacks much more easy to execute'.[72] The *Sowetan* noted that hostel-dwellers were made by the hostels 'aliens in their own country'.[73] In late 1990, monitors in KwaZulu-Natal and Johannesburg reported buses transporting many hundreds of unemployed Inkatha supporters to the Reef, swelling the numbers of hostel inmates with newly arrived and non-integrated Inkatha supporters, who were sent to the Reef to take part in violence.

In most instances of violence in 1990, hostels provided either the immediate source of conflict (as in Sebokeng) or acted as armed fortresses from which attacks could be mounted and to which attackers could retreat. Hostels had to be cleared of non-supportive elements – whether Zulu or not – and turned into safe areas for planning, training, and regrouping. In most instances, hostels were first ethnically cleansed of non-Zulus, and then of Zulus who would not support Inkatha or would not participate in the violence.

Those driven from the hostels frequently took up residence in nearby informal settlements, hardening the lines of conflict between hostel-dwellers and surrounding communities.

In other hostels such as the Sebokeng complex, where Inkatha failed to take control of the hostel, Inkatha supporters and their families were driven from the hostel to surrounding areas. Lines of conflict between these communities and the hostels in their midst were rapidly drawn, and in the latter half of 1990, the Reef area resembled a war zone.

In battles between residents of hostels in Tokoza, Tembisa, Soweto and elsewhere, and the surrounding communities, thousands took up arms against each other, with hundreds of dead and thousands of injured. Eye-witnesses claimed that in the vast majority of incidents, the SAP either allowed the battles to rage, or intervened only if the Inkatha forces were being defeated.

When police finally mounted raids in mid-1991, after months of pressure, they claimed not to be able to enter Denver and Wolhuter hostels in Johannesburg because inmates were 'drunk, armed and highly belligerent'.[74] During the uprisings of the mid-1980s, the police had no fear of large crowds hostile to them; this 'sensitivity' was learned in the 1990s.

Although they seized a limited number of home-made weapons and drugs, 'the police were under the impression that information about the raids had somehow leaked to the hostel-dwellers'.[75] The same thing happened when police tried to raid Soweto hostels. None of the hostels they raided were those where the ANC had claimed weapons training was taking place, using weapons that SAP members were delivering to the hostels, an assertion ritually rejected by the police.[76] With the benefit of hindsight and evidence given to the Goldstone Commission, the TRC and in court, the closeness of the relationship between many police and IFP officials makes these leaks entirely explicable. The same sources have also confirmed that police were indeed delivering weapons to Inkatha-controlled hostels, often in exchange for money spent on raucous parties.

Hostel-related violence peaked in 1992, when 41 per cent of all incidents took place. These incidents were primarily located in the East Rand (39% of all hostel-related incidents of violence) and Soweto (35%), followed by the Vaal (9%), Alexandra (9%), Johannesburg (5%) and the West Rand (3%).

Where aggressors were identified in hostel incidents of violence, hostels were the aggressors in 74 per cent of cases, followed by the police (8%).

Township or informal settlement residents were the aggressors in 7 per cent of hostel-related incidents. Where affiliations of aggressors were reported, a massive 80 per cent of incidents were ascribed to Inkatha, 13 per cent to the SAP or SADF, and 5 per cent to ANC supporters.

Two thirds of hostel-related incidents of violence resulted in one or more deaths. Women were killed in 5 per cent of such incidents (49 cases), and children in 2 per cent of incidents (19 cases).

In light of the debate about 'traditional weapons' it is worth noting that firearms were used in 61 per cent of all hostel-related incidents of violence, and that the AK-47 – described by NP and Inkatha politicians as a hallmark of the ANC – was the weapon most commonly used by hostel residents.

Sebokeng hostel

Hostels – in the initial phases of the violence, mainly those occupied by ANC/Cosatu-supporting inmates – were also the victims of attack. The Sebokeng hostel complex is an example. The hostel complex was attacked nine times in August 1990, resulting in 30 deaths, as Inkatha supporters sought to reverse the 'defeat' of July when they had been repulsed by hostel inmates. On a number of occasions white men were seen among the Inkatha supporters attacking the hostel. Bombs were planted in the hostel, shots were fired through windows, and hostel residents were ambushed at the nearby station.

The police seemed to do nothing to stop the attackers, who assaulted the hostel complex on each of the first seven days of August. On 2 August, the police raided the hostel and confiscated weapons, thereby leaving inmates without defence in the face of on going attacks. While searching the hostel, the police were accused of 'various unlawful acts including destruction of property, theft and assault'.[77] No charges were brought against the police alleged to have carried out these acts.

On 4 August, at approximately three o'clock in the morning, the hostel was attacked by some 150 men wearing red head-bands. White men in balaclavas were said to be among the attackers, who moved into the hostel complex using guns, grenades, and stabbing weapons. They were eventually trapped by hostel inmates. Suddenly, however, the police arrived in time to rescue them. A stalemate developed, broken by the arrival of the SADF at nine o'clock in the morning. Faced by the combined SAP and SADF forces, residents – disarmed by police two days earlier – sat on the floor. In response, the SADF opened fire with live ammunition. Among the dead were three

hostel residents shot in the back. A subsequent SADF inquiry cleared military personnel of any wrong-doing. This pattern – of police partiality in support of Inkatha supporters and their attacks – was repeated and reported frequently in the ensuing months and years.

Hostels in Soweto and the Vaal

Hostels were centres of violent destabilisation for the areas surrounding them. A case study of hostel violence in Soweto (prepared for submission to the Goldstone Commission) in the first two years of violence found that a violent hostel-related incident took place in Soweto almost every 48 hours, on average.[78] The weaponry used in hostel-related incidents in the first two years of violence covered the full range from AK-47, R1 and R4 automatic rifles; shotguns, pistols and handguns; hand grenades, petrol bombs and home-made bombs; 'traditional' weapons, including assegais, axes, spears and knobkerries; knives, pangas and machetes; and home-made weapons, including sharpened iron poles and sticks, tomahawks and others.

The study found that the largest single category of incidents of violence associated with hostels were those where hostel-dwellers were held to be directly responsible for acts of violence. These ranged from sniper fire emanating from hostels through to full-scale attacks on the surrounding community. Hostels were also attacked on a number of occasions. Hostels or sections of hostels strongly associated with a particular political or social organisation were attacked. Hostels where members of Cosatu resided were frequently attacked by supporters of rival political groupings.

Hostels which were perpetrators of violence were also attacked, usually in retaliation for earlier violence, or in 'pre-emptive' attacks following threats that the hostel would soon attack the local community (township or squatter camp).

Frequent reports throughout the Reef cited bodies found at or near hostels, attacks on train stations immediately next to hostels, and on beerhalls and taverns near hostels. The savage attack on the Gobizitwana beerhall in Sebokeng, which left 13 patrons dead and 11 injured, was alleged to have been carried out by Inkatha supporters living in KwaMadala hostel near Iscor, the state-owned steel manufacturer. The same hostel was given as the address of those arrested for an equally savage attack on a funeral vigil in Sebokeng. None of the accused, all of whom were resident at the hostel run by Iscor, were actually employed by Iscor.[79]

KwaMadala hostel was also the springboard for the attack on nearby Boipatong, which left 48 dead and temporarily scuppered negotiations. Cosatu stated at the time: 'We once again warn the government and the management of Iscor who owns the hostel that we will hold them responsible both criminally and civilly for any future attacks which are launched from this hostel of death'.[80] The attacks continued regardless.

The role of the Iscor parastatal in allowing its premises to be used in this way has yet to be satisfactorily explained. The story of KwaMadala hostel in the Vaal could be repeated for many others in Soweto, on the East Rand, in Alexandra and Johannesburg, and elsewhere. They were seemingly beyond any police action.

Violence also took place within hostels. The initial months of violence witnessed conflict breaking out at a number of hostels, as one section of the hostel attacked another. Most frequently, the 'Zulu' section attacked the 'Xhosa' section, and sought to force the latter out of the hostel. Violence also flared if the hostel *induna* refused to support violence, or when hostels based on clan lineage chose not to support Inkatha leaders but to wait for word from their traditional leaders in Natal.[81]

On average every 48 hours Soweto experienced one violent incident associated with hostels, and an average of 2.6 casualties a day in hostel-related violence. Two out of three instances (64%) of hostel-related violence in Soweto resulted in the death of one or more people. Almost one in ten incidents (9%) of hostel-related violence in Soweto involved 10 or more casualties. Finally, the case study found that 308 hostel-related incidents were recorded in Soweto in the first two years of the violence. On only 11 occasions (less than 4%) were the police recorded as making arrests.

Inkatha and hostels

We have seen how political violence was inextricably bound up with the politics of the time. One of the results of this political overlay was that in the 1990s, Inkatha became a virulent supporter of single-sex migrant hostels, a remarkable turn-around on a system had been deplored as inhumane and exploitative for many years. The ANC response to hostel violence moved from calling for hostels to be abolished[82] to demands for their transformation into family units, a notion that in a different political context would have won widespread support.

Calls for the abolition of hostels led an IFP supporter living in Dube hostel

in Soweto to state that if this occurred, 'thousands and thousands of people will die on that day'. He went on to explain that if hostels were abolished, hostel inmates would 'have to live among the hooligans, tsotsis and criminals in the townships. There's no crime in the hostel; the people from the rural areas are disciplined, whereas those born in the township are very rude'.[83]

Official Inkatha spokespeople were equally clear. Suzanne Vos, then a member of Inkatha's Central Committee and now a Member of Parliament, stated:

> The ANC has a hidden agenda and an ulterior motive in wanting to abolish the hostel system. They know the hostels are Inkatha strongholds, and they want to get our people out ... By calling for the hostels to be converted into family units, what the ANC really wants is to get the present occupants out – to dislocate and disperse them, and then decide who is going to get family units. It is a clever tactic to get our people out. After they have been upgraded, how do our people get them back again?[84]

Recruiting Alexandra into the violence

Alexandra township is a small area, densely packed with people living in the small matchbox houses that characterise townships, and in informal dwellings. It is tucked on the fringe of Johannesburg's wealthy northern suburbs, fenced in by a main road and a belt of light industrial plant. Alexandra was one of the last townships in the centre of the Reef to be drawn into the violence, and a brief examination of events there is illustrative of what took place in most townships in 1990.

In mid-August 1990, when violence has already spread to much of the Reef, armed Inkatha organisers arrived at Alexandra's Madala hostel, claiming to have come to defend inmates against attack. Importantly, Zulu-speaking hostel inmates turned the Inkatha organisers away. The Alexandra Civic Organisation was one of the few in Gauteng that had extended its organisational work into the hostel itself, and had members inside the hostel. The hostel was also part of an Alexandra-wide campaign for better housing. Moreover, living arrangements in the hostel were multi-ethnic, unlike in many other hostels.

While violence raged on through the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991, Alexandra remained untouched. Not a single incident of political violence was reported during the next six months. This changed dramatically in March

1991, however, when on the 7th and 8th, Inkatha bussed in scores of supporters and took control of the main hostel in Alexandra. By the end of March, 115 people were dead and scores injured, and the movement of thousands of newly created refugees out of their homes had begun. In advance of the attack, according to the evidence of Paul Erasmus to the Goldstone Commission, the police 'dirty tricks' staff had printed and distributed 100 000 leaflets designed to discredit the Alexandra Civic Organisation, which was organising hostel-dwellers across ethnic lines.[85]

One of those bussed in from Natal, 'Sipho', stated:

> There were about five executive members of the hostel council, Inkatha men, who were giving instructions to go to fight in the townships. We were told that the kids in the township had sent a message that they were going to burn down the hostels. So they said we had to go and attack to defend the hostel.[86]

A street committee meeting in Alexandra's informal settlement was attacked in what was the first of many confrontations. As Inkatha tightened its grip on Alexandra's hostels, so attacks increased. Allegations of police complicity soon surfaced. In response, the SAP raided hostels and seized some weapons. Two days later, the ANC was denied permission for a rally, while Inkatha was given permission. Three IFP members were killed *en route* to the rally, after which Inkatha supporters attacked the informal settlement. Ten people were killed and 47 injuries were reported. A week later, hostel residents began abducting township residents into the hostel where they were tortured or killed; one man was beaten to death, another thrown from the window, while others were released because they were Shangaan. The ethnic issue was initially evident in Alexandra, as it was at the onset of violence in most parts of the Reef, although it soon disappeared.

Thulani, an IFP supporter from Madala hostel in Alexandra, claimed: 'We were not fighting residents, who are mostly ANC members. What we knew was that we were fighting the Xhosas who are against the Zulus'. Fellow inmate Samson added: 'We were told that Xhosas were going yard to yard looking for Zulus, especially Inkatha leaders, to kill them'. The power of these rumours of ethnic violence – often baseless – was enormous. Five days later, a funeral vigil was attacked, within metres of police security patrols, and 15 mourners were killed and 16 injured.

Once they had established a footing in the township, Inkatha's strategy was

to clear the nearby area of non-Inkatha supporters and to recruit residents through violence. Monitors reported that residents of the informal settlement and later the formal township were obliged to sign up as Inkatha members, pay membership fees and buy Buthelezi T-shirts. A similar strategy of recruitment had preceded Natal's Seven Day War. The IBIIR described it thus:

> Much of the fighting in Alexandra related to a geographical struggle for control of certain areas. In January [1991], Alexandra was an ANC stronghold and had no or very little Inkatha presence. Members of the IFP now control at least two hostels in the area. From there they have moved into the community gaining control of streets which are situated near the hostels. Blocks which previously were crammed full of shacks are now empty. New shacks are being erected with the word 'Zulu' daubed on them.[87]

By the end of March 1991, Alexandra had been transformed from a relatively peaceful urban township that had avoided political violence, into just another site of violence. By July 1994, Alexandra had been the location for 8 per cent of all incidents of political violence on the Reef. In 1997, Alexandra still has many displaced people living at churches or community centres, without the homes and belongings they had before the violence broke out.

The South African Police

The behaviour of the SAP throughout the period of political violence was reprehensible. Despite their remarkable ability to infiltrate the ANC and its underground structures with regularity during the years of apartheid, the police suddenly seemed incapable of the most rudimentary investigative or security work. By late 1992, almost 4 000 people had been murdered in incidents of political violence. Only one conviction had been secured.[88] The police managed to make arrests in only 6 per cent of incidents where monitoring data exist, frequently arresting members of the public defending themselves.

From the outset, the police adopted a stance of passivity in the face of violence. Early in the conflagration, an Inkatha meeting was followed by spear-wielding Inkatha supporters running through Soweto, instilling widespread fear. Lieutenant Bester of the SAP stated that Inkatha supporters 'will not be disarmed if they do not commit any crime'.[89] By 9 September, 99 people had been killed in five days; Captain Ida van Zweel reported that the townships were 'relatively quiet'.[90]

The police offered many explanations for the violence, most of which laid culpability at the feet of the ANC. Speaking of violence on the East Rand, the police claimed that it was caused by the ANC strategy of service payment boycotts – loyal 'Zulus' were paying their bills and became resentful when electricity was cut off. This, according to the police, was the spark for the violence, which then spread.[91] No evidence was produced to support this assertion.

Beyond partiality towards attackers, active complicity by the police was alleged as well. When a group of township residents attacked Inkatha-controlled Khalanyoni hostel in August 1990, the police formed a 15-vehicle convoy, marched the township residents to a nearby sportsfield, and disarmed them at gun-point. Nothing of this nature took place with Inkatha supporters. Rather, police were alleged (and filmed and photographed) in many instances to escort Inkatha supporters to their place of attack, and then to help them retreat with stolen goods piled onto police vehicles for ease of transport. Inkatha marchers were escorted through townships to rallies and back again afterwards.

John Matisson reported an incident outside Dobsonville number two hostel in Soweto, where 'policemen sat in their vehicles chatting while flames came out of windows and looters carried off supplies of food and drink'. He went on to state: 'I have stood next to General Erasmus [Divisional Commander of police] as troop carriers have escorted group and group of Inkatha supporters, armed with so-called traditional weapons as well as knives, clubs and axes, to a political meeting'. When asked why the crowd was not being disarmed, the police general's reply was: 'Go on, you take their weapons'.[92]

While Inkatha were consolidating their grip on Reef hostels in July and August of 1990, police were particularly hesitant to act. Colonel Frans Malherbe agreed that hostels provided springboards for attacks, but claimed to be unable to launch any pre-emptive action because of insufficient manpower, never a problem when much of the country was in revolt in the 1980s. He also claimed not to want to 'harass people living peacefully' in hostels.[93] When police finally raided Tokoza hostel in mid-August of 1990, after a series of attacks and the murder of a township resident by hostel inmates 100 metres away from police, the hostel had been vacated by a pre-warned Inkatha, and only five men were found inside. Police campaigns such as 'Iron Fist', which were intended to clamp down on violence and which were given considerable media coverage, commonly targeted and affected mainly non-Inkatha residents. Mary-Ann Motloung of Soweto noted: 'They [police]

have come many times to our houses and disarmed us. Directly afterwards, the Zulus come and kill us.'[94]

It is safe to summarise the issue by quoting a non-Inkatha hostel-dweller from KwaThema, whose comment captures the views of countless other eye-witnesses or victims of violence: 'Our problem', he stated, 'is not the Zulus, it is the police.'[95]

The inactivity of police forced monitors and NGOs to act as investigative officers while the police did nothing. When sworn statements were submitted by two important NGO monitors, the Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression and Lawyers for Human Rights, they were rejected by the Minister of Law and Order as 'fabrications' because they were not affidavits. When affidavits were submitted, the police responded with silence. Prominent lawyer Nicholas Haysom noted that whenever detailed allegations had been submitted to the police, 'at best we are pressed to prove that we had good reason to release the memorandum. At worst there's no response at all'.[96] Another lawyer noted: 'You end up becoming the policeman and the police turn into judicial officers investigating your claims.'[97]

Findings of monitors and of the Goldstone Commission repeatedly went against the police. The Goldstone inquiry into shootings in Sebokeng, which left 12 people dead, found that the commanding officer had no control over the men under his command and that that was 'the direct cause of the shooting into the crowd'.[98] In a judicial hearing on the SADF massacre in Sebokeng, Judge Stafford found security force members criminally responsible on four counts of murder, ten of grievous bodily harm, all against people who he said posed no physical threat. He also found that SADF witness Commandant Stefanus Lombard had committed perjury by lying to the court, while Sergeant Major Martinus le Roux had given false evidence. The internal military inquiry was rejected as a whitewash. While no Inkatha members were found guilty by the inquiry, Stafford noted that the probability existed that Inkatha supporters were responsible for the other deaths and injuries that had occurred.

The media began to report police denials with greater criticism as time went on. *The Star* noted in an editorial that 'complaints of security force partiality are made nearly every time there is a riot. It is hard to imagine how such a campaign could be orchestrated when the damning witnesses are, very often, ordinary people happening on the event'.[99] This did little to change the way in which police dealt with or reported on political violence.

The actions of the police were on occasion so crass that little press comment

was needed. For example, a month after violence broke out in Alexandra, police confiscated piles of weapons from Inkatha supporters – only to return them a few days later. SAP spokesperson Opperman claimed that after a meeting with the IFP, the police decided to return 'genuine traditional weapons'.[100] At the time it was far from out of the ordinary for the SAP to act in such an outrageous manner and get away with it.

On other occasions, police excuses were so lame that they would be laughable were they not so lethal. For example, in Chiawelo, township residents gathered together in fear of an attack from a busload of Inkatha supporters returning from a funeral. The SAP and those in the bus fired on the crowd, killing three and injuring 30. The police justified their action by claiming that the bus was being attacked. When the police stopped and entered the bus, they 'found numerous weapons but did not arrest anybody because the weapons were under the seats.' Therefore, the police claimed, 'no individual could be implicated'.[101]

In the midst of the cycle of accusation and denial, Nico Basson, formerly a senior security force member, broke ranks and talked about Operation Agree, a plan to destabilise South Africa as had occurred in Namibia.[102] According to Basson, the first stage of the plan involved sparking ethnic conflict between the two largest ethnic groups, and limiting the visibility of the newly unbanned ANC by making public or visible allegiance (by wearing T-shirts, for example) a potentially fatal act. Basson claimed that in Namibia the SADF had recruited soldiers from Renamo and Unita, trained them in game reserves and rural areas and sent them to specific areas 'to start paramilitary units, protect hostels and start violence'. The second stage was to construct a broad alliance 'on the basis of Christian norms and values', with the NP at the head, to fight the elections, as the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) had done in Namibia with considerable success.[103] Just two months earlier, De Klerk had stated:

> I have no doubt that when the real electoral process is in the offing, alliances will be formed and that there will be a moderate alliance in which the National Party will play an important part. It's quite possible that the Inkatha Freedom Party and the National Party can move into an alliance but I don't think that they will be alone if they decide to do so.[104]

A month later, the *New Nation* reported on a Mozambican named Ndimende who had been abducted by the SADF and taken to Phalaborwa for training in

the use of AK-47 rifles and pangas, getting on and off moving vehicles, all the while wearing the red head-band that became associated with Inkatha in the early 1990s. After the February 1990 speech, according to Ndimende, 'we were told that we would now have to fight a different kind of war'.[105]

Subsequent revelations made to the Goldstone Commission have confirmed the use of foreign-born soldiers, the use of military areas for training Inkatha troops as well as others, and the role of the security forces in fomenting precisely the kind of violence Basson and Ndimende described. Paul Erasmus, formerly a security policeman, testified before the Goldstone Commission that the 'Covert Collection of Intelligence' section had been involved in misinformation and dirty tricks on an *ad hoc* basis in the 1980s; in the late 1980s these became 'more organised and nationally co-ordinated'.[106] Erasmus testified to being part of Operation Romulus, aimed at spreading misinformation about the ANC alliance.

The fact that no piece of paper has been discovered with Operation Agree on it (presumably stamped 'Top Secret') does not disprove these allegations. There seems to be enormous circumstantial evidence supporting them, and now participants are openly admitting to their and their colleagues' role. Reviewing the available material covering the violence between 1990 and 1994, and the subsequent admissions by key police and army personnel, it is difficult not to conclude that the security forces were the major player in the political violence that attended the birth of the new South Africa. Inkatha may have provided the foot soldiers; the security forces, appropriately, provided the generals.

Attacks on trains, taxis, buses, funerals, beerhalls and social gatherings

One of the key tenets of LIC, as we have noted, is to instil fear among the general population. The randomness of the violence perpetrated against the local population is key to this, warning everyone that they are potential victims and through randomness denying them the ability to work out how to avoid becoming one. Attacks on commuters, funeral mourners, drinkers in taverns and others in similar situations were a marked feature of the Reef violence. They became increasingly widespread after the initial phase in which Inkatha established footholds in the community through hostel take-overs and pitched battles. In other words, as the violence became characterised by smaller, mobile killing units, so attacks on places where people gathered increased. Across the four years under study here, there were:

- 417 attacks on train commuters;
- 223 attacks on commuters at train stations;
- 305 incidents involving taxis;
- 95 attacks on funeral or funeral vigils;
- 61 attacks on social gatherings (e.g. parties); and
- 38 attacks involving buses.

In other words, attacks on social gatherings of one sort or another accounted for a fifth (19%) of all incidents of violence on the Reef.

Train attacks began almost as soon as the violence itself, with an attack at Ikwezi Station. The next day commuters were attacked by men shouting the Zulu war cry '*usuthu*', leaving one dead and 29 injured. These two attacks were followed by four in August 1990, seven in September, three in October, two in November and so on. Most months, from 1990 to the end of the violence, witnessed attacks on train commuters. By July 1994, 742 people had been killed in train violence, and a further 1 894 injuries had been reported.

Many attackers made for the *mzabalazo* or 'struggle' coach, where politically-inclined commuters gathered to sing freedom songs and discuss political events. Others were less discriminating and attacked any coach, including those used for prayer meetings. Victims were killed by guns (in 30% of cases), traditional weapons (6%), other weapons, or by being thrown off or jumping from fast-moving trains. Fully 92 per cent of victims had no known or visible party affiliation. In 60 per cent of cases, hostel residents were involved in the attacks. In many instances, attackers would flee from trains to hostels located near stations.

An editorial in *The Star* noted: 'Well-armed, well-trained gangs knowing exactly what they are doing have hacked, shot and generally brutalised ... never claiming to represent any political party or faction, never discriminating, and never saying a word.'[107]

The only response from the government was to establish a Commission of Inquiry, under the auspices of the Goldstone Commission. Fully 429 people died and 1 407 were injured before the Commission began; 56 were killed and 77 injured while the Commission was working, and 128 were killed and 261 injured between the interim and final reports of the Commission. A further 129 people died and 149 were injured after the final report.

The Commission report was a weak document, which seemed concerned with obscuring the political dimension behind the 'specific coach' theory.[108]

The destabilising effects of train violence were avoided. A later Commission report noted that Unit C10 based at Vlakplaas had been directly involved in organising train violence, making use of members of C10, black policemen and Askaris, as well as members of the IFP employed at ABSA bank.[109] The contradiction between the two reports, produced by the same Commission, was not explored.

The same brutality was evident in attacks on other commuters (in taxis and buses) and at social gatherings. Attacks on funerals left 254 dead and over 700 injured. Of these, 40 per cent were ANC supporters; 4 per cent were Inkatha supporters. In all, 205 people died in attacks on shebeens and beerhalls and 270 injuries were reported. Fully 84 per cent of victims had no known political affiliation. A few examples will suffice:

- 13 people were killed and 11 injured when gunmen toting AK-47 rifles attacked a beerhall in Sebokeng in May 1991;
- 10 were killed and 4 injured when the Twelepele Bar Lounge was attacked in October 1991. Gunmen disappeared in two waiting minibuses;
- 9 people were shot dead at a party or shebeen in Vosloorus in June 1992;
- 6 people were killed and 2 injured in July 1993 when attackers, allegedly accompanied by police, entered a shebeen and opened fire; and
- 3 people, including a woman, were killed and 10 injured in the Funisi Tavern in Vosloorus when gunmen opened fire in April 1994 (three weeks before the elections).[110]

If we look at these forms of violence graphically, it is apparent that they peaked and fell at particular points in time. This suggests either that as political tensions rose so taxi, train, bus, funeral and beerhall killings increased in tandem; or, that those who were fomenting violence used these in a concerted attempt to raise political temperatures. As with all forms of violence at the time, the police seemed helpless. Commuters, drinkers, revellers, mourners – all were potential victims of roaming killer units, attacking and disappearing long before police arrived, or, on many occasions, with the alleged support of the police or white men with blackened faces.

In short: in almost every type of violence which afflicted the Reef between July 1990 and 1994, the hand of the police was seen and spoken about at the time by eye-witnesses; ritually denied by the SAP; and subsequently admitted to in various courts and Commissions by the security force members

responsible for it. The South African Police Service (as it is now called) has maintained a stoic silence as revelations continue.

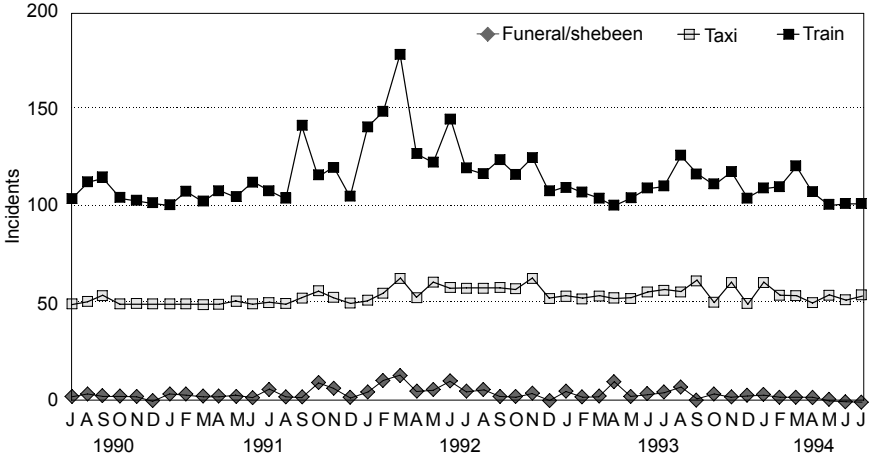


FIGURE 5
Attacks on taxis, funerals, shebeens and trains

CONCLUSION: KEEPING VIOLENCE ON THE BOIL

Writing with hindsight can be misleading. If it seems from the foregoing that the role of the SAP was clear; that suspicions of 'dirty tricks' department involvement were widely shared; and that Inkatha's role as destabilising foot soldiers was visible, then that should not be ascribed to the ease of writing after the event. It was commonplace among township and informal settlement residents on the Reef. It was that clear at the time, and made so by the ongoing reports from violence monitors (including CASE).

A host of agencies and commentators threw up a series of smoke-screens about what was happening. The media duly reported them, assuming a posture of 'neutrality'. The whole government apparatus worked hard to dis-inform about events, backed by the SAP, SADF, and Inkatha with their media machines. With the ANC still battling to develop relationships with the media, those who described the violence as a destabilising exercise, and who cited many of the facts and figures used in this book, were written off as ANC stooges.

This was particularly true because the mainstream media and the business community behind them were involved in a love affair with Buthelezi. During the 1980s, the media presented Buthelezi and Inkatha as the acceptable face of black emancipation, widely reporting the anti-sanctions, anti-socialist,

anti-armed struggle and anti-ANC rhetoric of Inkatha leaders.

As the role of Inkatha in the violence became more and more apparent, so business began to back off. More importantly, it was obvious that the ANC was the major player and destined to win power, and had to be wooed. Gavin Woods, director of the Inkatha Institute, noted:

> The business community does not seem to be showing the interest in Inkatha that it did at the time of the Indaba. Since the unbanning of the ANC, Buthelezi is no longer considered to be such a major player – and business doesn't throw its money away. So Inkatha is being ignored, while the ANC is being courted, even adulated.[111]

In a different vein, political analyst Gerhard Maré wrote:

> The media is making a concerted effort not to link the day-to-day atrocities in which Inkatha is involved with Buthelezi's plans for the future. If the two were linked, the contradictions wouldn't hold. But by describing the violence as 'black-on-black' and not tying it to Inkatha, Buthelezi can be elevated as a visionary national saviour who will protect white interests, even as his supporters continue a bloody war.[112]

This could not be maintained in the face of growing evidence of Inkatha's role and the broader agenda of the NP government. According to a businessman formerly in the Inkatha-organised Indaba: 'The general feeling now is that it is not in our interests to be too closely associated with Inkatha, because of its involvement in the political violence.'[113]

For much of the violence, Buthelezi's main goal seemed to be to meet with Mandela, and then in a troika with Mandela and de Klerk. Despite evidence to the contrary, Inkatha spokespeople tried to keep up the pretence that their party was a major rival to the ANC, and that the real cause of violence was the ANC brooking no opposition. Gavin Woods claimed: 'Inkatha is a bigger national threat than anyone else, so we are suffering more.'[114]

After 140 people had been killed in two days of fighting in August 1990, Buthelezi commented: 'If I read the public mood correctly, then they will at this time be demanding to know from the ANC why they have been so tardy and have not responded to my invitations to ANC Vice-President Mandela to meet me for talks in a bid to find solutions to the conflict.'[115] In an interview

for television news, Buthelezi asserted that there was no hope of stopping the violence until joint rallies were held.[116]

As a homeland leader who had refused 'independence' because it was tokenist, and had won widespread acclaim for this stand against grand apartheid, Buthelezi now claimed that the demand that homelands, including KwaZulu, be dismantled, had 'caused very deep anger – not only among IFP members but among all Zulus'. He went on, in a belligerent tone, that 'if you ... think that the future of this country can be determined by a deal between De Klerk and anybody else regardless of the Zulu people, then you must go and reread your Zulu history ... I am one of the major players, just as the ANC and NP are major players ... my organisation is the largest in the country based on membership. It is a fact.'[117]

The call for banning traditional weapons was described by Buthelezi as 'a declaration of war', belligerent language that he was to use with increasing frequency as the 1994 elections approached and Inkatha maintained its boycott stance.[118] Successive proposals brought to the negotiating table were rejected by Buthelezi. For example, he stated: 'The prime danger of a constitutional assembly is that it will escalate the likelihood of conflict and violence. It could even precipitate a civil war.'[119] This was a veiled warning that proposals not approved of by Inkatha – which seemed virtually impossible to find – would lead to an escalation in violence.

Successive apartheid governments had centralised state power enormously. De Klerk inherited a powerful state system, which under PW Botha had maintained a tight grip on the security forces. They, in turn, had huge slush funds available and easy access to a huge arsenal of weaponry. The mainstream media were critical but far from hostile, afraid as they seemed to be of an ANC government. The NP government was able to keep the Reef and KwaZulu-Natal in a state of war and flux; to retard the political work of the ANC on the ground; to provide sufficient bluster, with allies such as Inkatha, for 'black on black', Zulu versus Xhosa, and finally 'ANC violence', to buy them time.

In the final analysis, De Klerk was in a powerful position, and the double agenda – negotiating while destabilising – paid off. The socialist tenets of the ANC programme were dropped. Enough federalism was put into the interim constitution to satisfy the NP, which went on to win control of the Western Cape; and the ANC conceded ground on a host of smaller issues. NP strategists may feel that more could have been won, and attacks on De Klerk

in the Afrikaans press for selling out the Afrikaner suggest that this feeling is prevalent.

Nonetheless, in a global context where oppressive regimes were tumbling in the face of mass protest on the streets, the then South African government pulled off quite a feat, negotiating its way out of power but into an environment safe for capitalism – and safe for former oppressors. Some had to be sacrificed to the judicial process – De Kock is the most obvious example – but they were presumably sops thrown out to appease a nation's appetite for truth and (very mild) retribution. How many more gross violators of human rights, whose names we do not know, are still being hidden?

Finally, to repeat our basic assertion: beneath the welter of attacks across the East and West Rand, the Vaal, Johannesburg, Soweto and Alexandra, lay a high degree of planning. Although we have asserted this for many years, it is only now that some of the planners and perpetrators of the violence are giving evidence in court, that those who consistently rejected monitoring and media reports are now (without apology) being obliged to give it serious consideration.

The key role of security force members has become clearer over time through a number of media exposés, the admissions of other security force members, and in particular as former members of Vlakplaas, the covert action unit of the police, turned on their former commander accused of 122 charges including murder, Eugene de Kock. High-profile trials of former security force operatives and ministers, coupled with the public hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, have put the notion of a security force conspiracy to use violence to thwart democracy, or at least to win the best possible protective settlement for themselves, at centre stage. No one can seriously doubt any longer that the events we have described took place. The question is: how high did the conspiracy go?

In a long-running trial, a sequence of witnesses have testified to murdering opponents of the apartheid regime, planning violence on trains, hostels and elsewhere, setting up weapons-manufacturing factories, supplying senior Inkatha leaders from the then Transvaal with weapons, falsifying evidence when they were arrested, and other forms of assistance. The witnesses have detailed their own and each others' brutality and complete disregard for human life. It seems that they are living out the accuracy of an African proverb:

> Human blood is heavy: the man that has shed it cannot run away.

Chapter six

The 'government's dustbin'[1]?

Official responses to political violence, 1990 to 1994

Jackie Dugard

In May 1991 the ANC withdrew from talks with the government. It alleged that the government was complicit in the violence and it demanded that the government take measures to restore confidence in negotiations. By that time, over 10 000 people had been murdered in political violence. It was clear that the government had to be seen to be taking action against the violence.

The mainstay of the government's formal response to the escalating violence was the establishment in 1991 of the National Peace Accord and the Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation (the Goldstone Commission). Despite their massive resources and a high media profile, neither body managed to lower the levels of political violence or to publicly reveal those responsible for it. In many respects the NPA and the Goldstone Commission were effective only as diversionary tactics that allowed the negotiations to continue against the backdrop of continued violence.

The National Peace Accord

The National Peace Accord (NPA) was signed by 26 political parties and organisations on 14 September 1991. The Accord, which laid the foundations for negotiations, was a formal agreement in which political parties and interest groups committed themselves to a joint peace effort, agreed to submit to disciplines imposed by the Accord, and to establish structures to monitor it.

The NPA was not a cease-fire agreement, but a document that reflected parties' commitment to codes of conduct. The signatories agreed on 'the basic democratic principles of freedom of movement, peaceful assembly and

political activity'[2] to steer South Africa through the transition. Its ultimate contribution to peace making was limited. Perhaps its greatest achievement was in the fact that it was the first formal multiparty accord, and that it managed to build confidence among the parties and persuaded them to proceed with the negotiations.

Despite this agreement, the signing of the Accord was controversial. While thousands of heavily armed IFP supporters chanted outside the peace convention venue, inside Mangosuthu Buthelezi refused to shake hands with Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk. Buthelezi's grand-standing at the outset of the peace initiative was indicative that for some players the signing of the Accord was a result of political expediency, rather than a genuine commitment to ending political violence.

The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian Peoples' Organisation (Azapo) were accused of 'playing politics with the lives of black South Africans' for failing to sign the Accord.[3] Both parties refused to sign it on the grounds that it did not recognise the orchestrated nature of the violence and therefore glossed over its real determinants. Ultimately it can be argued that, throughout, the NPA's primary concern was to keep political parties at the negotiating table.

The NPA structures

Chapter 7 of the text of the Accord allowed for the establishment of a National Peace Secretariat (NPS), whose function was to establish and co-ordinate the various Regional Peace Committees (RPCs) and Local Peace Committees (LPCs). Chapter 8 enabled the establishment of a National Peace Committee (NPC), whose primary function was to promote and publicise the NPA.

In terms of the Accord, RPCs were established in 11 regions across the country. The RPCs were charged with dealing with any matter referred to them by the Goldstone Commission, the NPS, or an LPC; monitoring local and other peace initiatives; and identifying appropriate sites for the establishment of further LPCs (by mid-1993, 90 LPCs had been set up). The network of national, regional and local peace structures was aimed at providing mechanisms for the resolution of community and broader conflict, through liaison with the concerned parties and the relevant authorities.

The LPCs attempted to involve all local actors, including political groupings, business, church and local government, in the peace initiative. The LPCs were seen as the cutting-edge of the NPA, as they aimed 'to bring

divergent parties together at the micro-level in violence-torn communities across the country in order to create trust and to foster reconciliation'.[4] LPC functions included: bringing parties together at a local level to resolve potential and actual conflicts; fostering a spirit of tolerance and reconciliation; and monitoring political meetings, rallies and events likely to lead to violence. LPCs were also intended to facilitate various development functions in an attempt to alleviate some of the economic determinants of violence. Referring to this latter function in 1993, NPC chairperson John Hall stated:

> [LPCs] should be peace *and* development committees, with greater emphasis on development ... the over-arching goal is development, job creation and [the] recovery of [local] mini economies.[5]

This quotation reflects the position adopted by the NPA: born of a multiparty agreement, the NPA shied away from commenting on cause and effect with regard to political violence, other than to locate both in socio-economic conditions. By 1993, however, the NPA could no longer ignore the evident planning behind the violence.

Evaluating the NPA

The NPA did not really stand a chance of succeeding. On 14 September 1991, 26 leaders committed themselves to 'peace, harmony, and prosperity'.[6] This commitment was the cornerstone of the NPA, and was essential for the success of its structures. It is now apparent that not all signatories honoured their commitment, preventing the NPA from resolving violence at a national level. Commenting on the NPA, which it did not sign, the PAC noted that 'signatories to the Accord are the main perpetrators of the violence'.[7]

Achievements

The Accord represented an important multiparty attempt at local conflict resolution, and had some successes at that level, however. The Wits–Vaal RPC was arguably the most successful NPA structure, particularly in its facilitation of the Daveyton Peace Corps.

Generally, the NPA was most effective at local-level monitoring of planned events such as rallies and political meetings. Although having no effect on the core of political violence, the deployment by LPCs of groups of trained monitors to observe political events made a significant contribution to the

peaceful nature of meetings, rallies and marches during the run-up to the elections. However, the deployment of monitors remained controversial. Existing monitors (mainly from NGOs such as the Human Rights Committee, Independent Board of Inquiry, Peace Action and Black Sash) felt that NPA monitors were not sufficiently trained and were not always sure of their role. One monitor described a general perception that NPA monitors were impotent because they stood on the sidelines and watched while police shot at residents.[8]

Although it has never been properly evaluated, the establishment of Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) on the East Rand and in Natal may have boosted the monitoring function of LPCs in regions affected by political violence. In some areas JOCs afforded closer co-operation between the police, parties at grass-roots level and peace structures at the local level. Unfortunately, the NGOs that were already monitoring political violence in these areas were often ignored.

Instead of utilising the existing monitoring and conflict resolution agencies, the NPA often rode roughshod over them and some complained that the NPA denied them access to information.[9] In some areas independent monitoring agencies were established to counter the harm done by NPA structures. NPAs did make some long-term contributions to socio-economic development, such as the identification and subsequent upgrading of 50 hostels by the Wits–Vaal RPC.[10]

Inherent problems

An inherent problem with the NPA was that while many of the causes of violence were specific to local-level actors, the solutions frequently were beyond the scope of individual LPCs. Real reforms (such as security force restructuring) could only have been carried out by the existing government, but were not.

Throughout, the NPA shied away from actions with political implications and employed a conflict resolution model that assumed political violence could be dealt with at local level. This meant that the Accord was unable to deal with the root causes of political violence and was only able to 'throw water on fires once they were already blazing'.[11]

Contrary to the experience of most NGO monitors, the NPA regarded the security forces as part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Azapo, on refusing to sign the Accord, had pointed out that the Accord legitimised

various structures of oppression, the very structures that people were fighting against.[12] Others, such as the Ecumenical Task Force on Violence, suspected that the NPA was a window-dressing exercise that allowed the carnage to continue unabated.

A recurring problem encountered by LPCs was that they were usually set up in communities already wrecked by violence. In such situations monitoring is least effective, actors are not likely to want to discuss peace, and communities are suspicious of political initiatives. On the other hand, there were little enthusiasm and limited resources to establish LPCs in the areas where violence was not yet endemic. Thus the NPA was unable to deal with aspects of the violence such as drive-by shootings and targeted attacks on communities by organised groups where there was no overt conflict as such.

Structural problems

One of the most fundamental flaws with the NPA was that its structures had limited mandates and powers. In the words of one commentator, 'it is crucial to recognise that the function of the [NPA] is neither to prohibit nor to police the violence'.[13] This left the NPA with limited local government and policy powers. The Accord was not politically accountable and lacked adequate problem-solving mechanisms with the police. Critics maintained that because the NPA was not tied to enforcement its effect was watered down.

The South African Council of Churches (SACC) criticised the NPA for its lack of political autonomy and neutrality, pointing out that 'through its funding connections [the Department of Home Affairs] the Accord remained closely tied to government structures and interests'.[14] The National Association of Democratic Lawyers (Nadel), suggested that one reason the NPA was unable to halt violence was the preponderance of whites and business interests in its leadership. Certainly, the chairpersons of the NPS, Antonie Gildenhuys, and the NPC, John Hall, were white business executives.

Specific problems

The establishment of many NPA structures was hampered by political rivalry and indecision over who should serve on committees, and often it was difficult to find community representatives who were willing to sit on committees. Many leaders were not willing to sit on NPA structures and those willing were not always accepted by the communities.

Once established, many LPCs were unable to deal effectively with prior

warnings of attacks, and rumours of attacks. Most insisted on proof before acting on the news of an impending attack, as the SAP did throughout the Reef violence. This approach often resulted in non-action in situations where LPCs were in a position to reduce violence. Initially people in violent areas had high expectations that the Accord would deliver peace. However, most experienced early on that if they went to their LPC with information of an impending attack no action would be taken. This heightened community hostility to the NPA.

Although the NPA launch received massive press coverage, and the peace logo was on T-shirts, badges and bumpers around South Africa, there was never enough public awareness of the functioning of the NPA. This was exacerbated by the fact that most of the information and advertising on the NPA was in the form of print media, in English and Afrikaans only. This posed obvious problems to the vast majority of South Africans, for whom English and Afrikaans were not first languages, and also for the thousands who could not read. At a basic level, many people were not even aware whether or not their political party had signed the Accord.[15]

Summary

The NPA was a product of the multiparty negotiating process and as such was bound by political compromise. By bending over backwards not to implicate political parties or find their leaders accountable, the Accord stood back from the real issues. This 'neutral' role permitted perpetrators a free rein and often rendered the Accord ineffectual.

Political parties were able to take advantage of the Accord's lack of political responsibility and use the NPA structures to further their own non-peaceful ends. In some instances the architects of political violence worked within the NPA and were given logistical support and funds.[16] For example, it is alleged that the notorious 'Vaal monster', Khetisi 'Victor' Kheswa, was used by the IFP as an NPA peace monitor, during which time he had free access to the Vaal townships. Not surprisingly, the NPA was often distrusted and regarded with suspicion by township residents. One monitor recounted how he was nearly killed because residents thought he was from the NPA, which they regarded as contributing to the violence.

Ultimately, the NPA provided a facade behind which the perpetrators of violence could hide. A case in point was the establishment of the system of Police Reporting Officers (PROs). This was envisaged to bring a measure of accountability to the police force. According to critics, however, the system was

designed to fail. The police controlled the cases which were referred to the PRO, there was only one PRO per region (often a part-time post) without staff, and PROs did not have full access to police dockets. The system gave an impression of transparency but afforded protection to police who feared full investigations, evidenced by the low levels of prosecutions from PRO investigations (for example, for the Soweto region there was one prosecution in two years).

The NPA's great success lay in not upsetting the balance of the negotiating table. However, as the PRO system failed to harness the police force, the NPA failed to halt political violence or address its causes.

The Goldstone Commission

The (Goldstone Commission (GC)) Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation – was established in October 1991 out of the process around the National Peace Accord. The functions of the Commission were set out in Chapter 6 of the National Peace Accord, and its statutory basis lay in the Prevention of Public Violence Act 139 of 1991. In terms of the Act, the GC was to sit for three years, between October 1991 and October 1994. The rationale behind the GC, at a time when violence marred the transition process, was that 'violence and intimidation declines when it is investigated and when the background for it is exposed and given media attention'.[17]

Being a product of the multiparty negotiations around the NPA afforded the Commission a greater degree of credibility than previous judicial commissions (such as the Harms Commission) appointed by the apartheid government. The functions of the GC were to investigate the causes of violence and intimidation; recommend measures capable of containing and preventing cycles of violence, including the passing of legislation; and initiate research programmes for the establishment of empirical data on violence.[18] The Commission was empowered to investigate issues on its own volition or at the request of individuals, groups or organisations.

In addition to the legal powers of search and seizure, the GC was afforded powers to subpoena and question witnesses. However, the Commission had no powers of arrest or prosecution. On completion of an investigation the Commission handed the matter over to the relevant authorities. For example, if a GC investigation uncovered criminal activities, the case had to be handed over to the appropriate attorney-general. At such time, the Commission's inquiry could only continue if it did not affect the judicial procedure. This left

the GC as a fairly weak body with few powers of enforcement. Its mandate was limited to incidents after its establishment, 'save in so far as it might be directly relevant to the prevention of future violence and intimidation'.[19]

In November 1992, after a raid on a building used by Military Intelligence (MI), the Commission applied to the government for wider powers, more resources, and greater co-operation in order to investigate security forces inside and outside South Africa. In a move that appeared blatantly obstructionist, the Commission was refused both greater powers and broader terms of reference. Instead of congratulating the Commission for exposing a covert operation, President De Klerk admonished Justice Goldstone for making the revelations public and for taking foreign observers into the MI building.[20] This step following the GC's most important find to date suggested that government had a stake in keeping the Commission toothless.

In total, the GC released 47 reports. The reports fell into three broad categories: those that examined specific past events, such as at Boipatong and Bisho; those that examined past events with an ongoing and broader relevance, such as the five reports on various taxi conflicts; and inquiries of a proactive nature, that focused on future events. The latter included reports on mass meetings and gatherings, violence against children, and violence in relation to the forthcoming elections.

Evaluating the Commission's work

Judicial commissions suffer from an inability to base their findings on allegations, or on public perceptions, no matter how pervasive or persuasive. Commissions may only make judgements on the basis of proof beyond reasonable doubt. The difficulty of finding conclusive evidence for allegations of involvement in political violence hobbled the GC. In October 1993, Justice Goldstone addressed the Cape of Good Hope Law Society as follows:

> Can any South African be blamed for believing that a third force, or third forces are responsible? ... However, I and my staff have struggled to find credible evidence of the third force and its sponsorship.[21]

Although many of the GC recommendations were never carried out, it is not entirely fair to criticise a judicial commission on these grounds. Most commissions, including the GC, do not have the power to act on their own recommendations. In the end only the government of the day can be held

responsible for a failure to implement such recommendations. More specific comments on the impact of the GC follow:

The good

The GC's contribution to the policy arena was apparent in its panel reports that examined various matters of an ongoing nature from a legal and policy perspective. The reports on the regulation of gatherings (28 April 1993); the multi-national panel to inquire into the curbing of violence before, during and after the forthcoming election (11 August 1993); and the effects of public violence and intimidation on children (27 October 1994) retain their policy relevance. The report on the regulation of gatherings resulted in the drafting of the *Regulation of Gatherings* Act 205 of 1993 (promulgated on 15 November 1996).

Arguably, one reason why these proactive reports were good was that they contained no serious political implications (apart from the section on carrying weapons in the regulation of gatherings report). This meant that they were less controversial, more readily accepted by all political groupings, and less likely to be compromised through political bargaining.

An important contribution of the GC to criminal law and judicial investigations was its focus on the absence of witness protection programmes in South Africa. Prior to the GC, witnesses in need of protection were housed in police cells or prisons, under 'the same conditions as awaiting trial prisoners, in terms of section 185 of the Criminal Procedure Act'.[22] Apart from the fact that many GC witnesses feared police recrimination, these conditions were unlikely to convince potential witnesses of the safety of testifying. In drawing attention to the lack of witness protection schemes in South Africa the Commission was able to pressurise the government into providing funds for the establishment of such a programme.

In August 1992, in a landmark decision, the GC was given permission to appoint a special police investigation unit comprising hand-picked police personnel who would be accountable and responsible to the GC. The subsequent establishment of a number of investigation units gave the Commission unprecedented investigative powers and addressed a key criticism of previous judicial commissions, that they had no enforcement capacity. This was the first time that a South African judicial commission had been afforded its own investigation units, thus establishing a precedent followed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

It has been argued that one of the positive contributions of the GC was that its findings sometimes acted as a catalyst for 'certain decisions that have become politically necessary', for example:

> 32 Battalion would not have been disbanded simply because the ANC had demanded it; rather the Goldstone recommendations provided a neutral basis for justifying the disbanding.[23]

Possibly the Commission's most significant contribution was its exposés of covert activities within the security forces. Although these revelations did not come as a surprise to many South Africans, they were important in that they provided public disclosure, by a 'neutral' government-sanctioned body, of testimonies and press exposés 'now yellowing with age'.[24]

The bad

The GC was criticised on a number of structural and procedural grounds. First, the Commission was criticised for not being representative. In September 1993 an article in *Mayibuye* argued that 'there is still a predominance of those who can be perceived as pro-government or NP'.[25] In addition, of the five permanent commissioners of the Commission, two were white men, one was a white woman and only two were black (males).

Second, UN observer Angela King argued that the GC was 'somewhat overstretched' and that 'some of the reports take too long to complete because perhaps there is not enough personnel'.[26] Related to this was the fact that despite being seriously under-financed Goldstone was not vocal in calling for more funds. Third, the decision by the Commission to 'narrow down the issue of state culpability to direct complicity in or planning the violence'[27] was controversial. Observers noted that 'culpability extends to acts of commission and omission'.[28] This stance hindered the possibility of the GC finding the security forces largely responsible for stoking the violence.

Fourth, monitoring organisations giving evidence at GC sittings were expected not merely to present their material, but to have recorded incidents, taken statements, investigated their veracity and produced eye-witnesses. Even when NGOs did this – for which most were ill-qualified – successive GC reports disregarded monitors' views as conjecture, personal opinion or political point-scoring. Often when witnesses were brought to the Commission they were dismissed without taking down their testimony.[29]

Fifth, the research institute attached to the Commission came under criticism for wasting money. The Institute for the Study of Public Violence (ISPV), or the Goldstone Institute, was established by the GC in terms of the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act 139 of 1991. Its purpose was to 'collect, capture, analyse and publish information relating to public violence and intimidation'.[30] However, the Institute produced few publications and even fewer in-depth analyses. Information produced by the Commission and related to its activities was difficult to come by.

A further criticism may be levelled at the GC's failure to take seriously its absence of a surveillance capacity. For the most part the Commission appeared content to allow its monitoring to be performed by the police.

The ugly

The Commission's reports were sometimes a victim of the politics they were attempting to investigate. A case in point was the 1995 exposé, in the *Mail & Guardian*, of a previously undisclosed Goldstone report on the security forces. This report, which was completed prior to the elections, was the subject of political bargaining between FW de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, with Justice Goldstone playing along. There is speculation that the scuttling of the report – which detailed senior security force involvement in covert and criminal activities after 1990 – was linked to promises by the security forces not to disrupt the elections process.

It is clear is that the Commission lacked the political independence and neutrality hoped for in a judicial commission. De Klerk and Mandela were kept informed of the progress of contentious reports, and apparently could veto them. Perhaps the most disturbing criticism of the GC is that it was appointed so that the government could be seen to be doing something about the violence. Throughout the duration of the GC there was a popular feeling that the government had confined its concern over the violence to the establishment of the GC. The GC was tainted by this approach and responsible for it through the succession of reports which preferred to perch on a neutral fence rather than apportion blame for the killings.

Hence David Beresford criticised the Goldstone Commission for being 'little more than a dustbin for the government to avoid public confrontation with the reality of the rottenness of South Africa'.[31] The GC provided the perfect smoke-screen. 'If we care to remember', writes Joe Thloloe, 'we would have known that whenever the National Party is embarrassed by the excesses

of its security forces and its policies, it has a standard response: appoint a commission of enquiry'.[32] Tied to this is the Commission's failure to take seriously the fact that the security forces were involved in stoking the violence and its consequent reliance on the security forces as surveillance and monitoring agents.

While much of these criticisms may be considered speculative, it is apparent that political power play did affect the writing and release of some GC reports. Arguably the most damaging report produced by the Commission, the report on criminal elements within the South African Police (SAP), KwaZulu Police (KZP) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) (see below), was released a month before the elections (and then only due to a press leak), when the new government already had one foot in the door.

Specific reports

This section examines four of the GC's reports – those that deal with allegations of a 'third force'. In July 1992, the Commission released a statement to the effect that

> no evidence had been submitted to the Commission which in any way justifies allegations of any direct complicity in or planning of current violence by the State President, any member of the Cabinet or any highly placed officer in the South African Police or Defence Force.[33]

It can be no coincidence that this statement was released just when the government most needed it, in the middle of the post-Boipatong negotiation stalemate. Within a year, however, after it became necessary for the Commission to feather the ANC's nest, evidence of a 'third force' fortuitously emerged. The four GC reports detailing third force activities are discussed below.

Allegations published in the* Vrye Weekblad *dated 30 October concerning a third force

On 27 May 1993 the GC released a report on allegations concerning a third force, based on the testimony of a former Mozambican soldier, Joao Cuna. Cuna had told the *Vrye Weekblad* (an independent Afrikaans newspaper, no longer operating) that after deserting Mozambique, he had worked for the SAP and had taken part in a massacre of civilians with members of the SAP.

The Commission dismissed Cuna as an unreliable witness and his

allegations as untrue. However, the importance of the Cuna case lay in its uncovering of a covert operation conducted by Military Intelligence (MI). A credit card which had been used to pay some of Cuna's bills was linked to an MI unit called the Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC). Members of the GC raided the company's offices in mid-November 1992, and five files were seized. Some of these files contained details of a covert operation – led by a Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) operative, Ferdi Barnard – to discredit MK by linking it to crime. Conducting its own investigation, the *Mail & Guardian* found that the DCC was made up of agents drawn from the army's special forces, the police, the National Intelligence Service (NIS), the disbanded CCB and former members of the Rhodesian special forces.[34]

After this raid the GC appealed to the government for wider powers of investigation and seizure. The powers were not granted, and the remaining files have never been recovered. Following the raid, the investigation was handed to Lt-Gen Pierre Steyn who was given a new supervisory appointment to the SADF: Chief of Staff (Intelligence). Steyn was instructed to provide De Klerk with a comprehensive analysis of the SADF's intelligence functions.

Following Steyn's submission, 16 members of the SADF, including two generals and four brigadiers, were placed on compulsory retirement (with full pensions). The head of MI General van der Westhuizen – who had ordered Matthew Goniwe and three others to be 'permanently removed from society' – remained in office. No prosecutions followed.[35] Fuelling rumours that the government was involved in a cover-up, the 'Steyn report' has never been released.

Allegations concerning front companies of the SADF, the training of Inkatha supporters in 1986 and the Black Cats

On 1 June 1993 the GC released a report on various *Mail & Guardian* allegations about SADF front companies, the training of 200 Inkatha members in Caprivi, and the Black Cats gang. The Commission dismissed as unfounded the allegations that members of the Black Cats carried out violent attacks in collaboration with the security forces, despite eye-witness reports to the contrary. It also found no evidence linking the SADF front companies to political violence or intimidation. However, it did shed more light on the issue of the training of the Inkatha soldiers at Caprivi (Namibia) in 1986.

That Inkatha members had been trained by the SADF in Caprivi in 1986 was not in dispute. Their training had been acknowledged by De Klerk and

justified by the SADF, which claimed that the training had been solely for the purposes of security and VIP protection.[36] In contrast, the Commission found that the trainees were recruited by MZ Khumalo, then personal assistant to Chief Buthelezi. It disputed the SADF's assertion, stating that it does not reflect the whole picture. 'The whole picture', according to the Commission, was that

> there is no evidence at all to suggest that the SADF provided the training for the purpose of 'hit squads' being established ... This notwithstanding, the nature of some of the training, the secrecy of the project, the lack of candour when the truth began to emerge and the connection of trainees with acts of public violence, all continue to fuel the perception that the SADF was assisting KZP and IFP leaders build a private hit-squad facility for use against the UDF and later the ANC.[37]

The report revealed that after six months of training by the SADF, 'the SADF continued to pay salaries to the recruits until their incorporation into the KZP'.[38] Yet the Commission failed to find concrete evidence that the recruits had subsequently engaged in hit-squad activities in KwaZulu-Natal. Subsequent evidence from other investigations and the TRC threw these findings into disrepute by providing conclusive evidence of the involvement of the trainees in violence and hit-squad activities. In a hard-hitting critique a *Mail & Guardian* editorial entitled 'The mouse that squeaked' declared the following:

> When the *Mail & Guardian* published, early last year, its account of the secret Department of Military Intelligence (DMI) training and funding for Inkatha volunteers who were subsequently involved in violence, it was the most important story we have ever written ... about covert, offensive, military training authorised by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi himself and fuelling violence in Natal and the Transvaal ... This week, 18 months later [after the commencement of the GC inquiry], this elephant has given birth to a whitewashed mouse.[39]

Some of the evidence not assimilated into the GC reports, which perhaps reflects more accurately 'the whole picture', relates to the militant (and non-VIP protection) form that the training of Inkatha cadres assumed:

• Recruits were trained in the use of AK-47, G3 and Uzi automatic weapons,

Tokarev pistols and RPG7 rocket launchers. They were instructed in urban guerrilla warfare, including the demolition of buildings, and attacks with hand grenades and smoke devices.
- They were taught how to interrogate captured persons, how to abduct people, and how to conduct surveillance.
- Lectures were given on the ANC as the enemy of Inkatha and the KwaZulu government.

The GC was remiss in its rejection of important evidence. For example, the testimony of one of the Caprivi trainees, Vela Mchunu, that he was 'hidden by KZP captain Langeni at the back of MZ Khumalo's shop after a magistrate's finding that he had been involved in the murder of three ANC-aligned trade unionists in Howick',[40] was dismissed by the commission in two sentences:

> Vela Mchunu, one of the trainees testified that he was involved in certain acts of violence. The Commission can however not find that he committed those acts as a direct consequence of his training at the Caprivi.[41]

Furthermore, the systematic attempts by the SADF and Inkatha to keep evidence away from the GC were referred to as merely 'tardiness'[42] by the Commission. It is significant that the two first exposés of a 'third force', and the investigative work around them, came neither from the police nor the GC but from journalists. Almost without exception, when it was confronted with publicised evidence the GC skirted around the crucial issues. Referring to the later GC report the *Mail & Guardian* editorial states the following:

> the report ignores a good deal of evidence ... bends over backwards to exonerate the culprits ... The commission finds almost all the basic facts of our story correct, but slithers around the evidence in a bid to avoid the obvious, hard-hitting conclusions: that DMI stoked the Inkatha-African National Congress conflict.[43]

Interim report on criminal political violence by elements within the South African Police, the KwaZulu Police and the Inkatha Freedom Party

On 18 March 1994 the GC submitted to De Klerk its most explosive public report. It contained the following findings:

- Three senior SAP generals – Lt-Gen Basie Smit (Deputy Commissioner of Police), Maj-Gen 'Krappies' Engelbrecht (SAP Counter-intelligence head), and Lt-Gen Johan le Roux (Crime combating and investigation services head) – along with two IFP officials – Themba Khoza (Transvaal head), and Victor Ndlovu – were involved in a gun-running campaign which provided Inkatha with weapons from Namibia and Mozambique. This 'also involved crash-course training to IFP members in the use of weapons and grenades'.[44]
- These weapons were processed through Unit C10 at Vlakplaas, which was overseen by Basie Smit and Krappies Engelbrecht.
- Unit C10, 'under the command of Colonel Eugene de Kock, was involved from 1989 in violence aimed at the destabilisation of South Africa. It was involved, *inter alia*, in the organisation of train violence and hostel violence. The operations were under the command of Lieutenant-General Krappies Engelbrecht. Lieutenant-General Johan le Roux had full knowledge of, and was involved in, these activities.'[45]
- When the Vlakplaas unit was disbanded in the aftermath of the CCB exposé, 'the members of C10 were transferred to other units of the SAP ... The members were all given false identity documents and passports.'[46]
- When, on 4 September 1990, Themba Khoza was caught in a police roadblock outside Sebokeng hostel with weapons, Unit C10 paid his legal fees. 'His false version as to how the weapons were planted in his car was accepted by the magistrate ... and he was acquitted.'[47]

The report also incorporated the findings of the Wallis Committee (which had been established by the GC on 21 December 1992 to investigate violence in KwaZulu-Natal):

- There is credible evidence of at least one hit-squad operating within the KwaZulu Police;
- Former Caprivi trainees are involved in this hit-squad; and
- Former Caprivi trainees were involved in an increasing number of cases of criminal conduct in KwaZulu, with apparent impunity from the KwaZulu Police.

In the aftermath of the report, the three SAP generals were placed on compulsory leave, and later retired. However, no prosecutions were

instituted. The fact that three top generals should be identified as directly fomenting violence, and that they merely stepped quietly from the spotlight without suffering any consequences for their activities suggests that a deal was made between the generals, the outgoing NP government and the incoming ANC government. It is difficult to understand why, if this was not the case, these men remain unpunished.

Report to the international investigation team (unreleased report, exposed by the Mail & Guardian *in June/July 1995)*

On 23 June 1995 the cover-page of the *Mail & Guardian* contained an exposé by a former hit-squad operative, Paul Erasmus, detailing an as-yet-undisclosed GC report. The report contained *prima facie* evidence supporting the allegations made in the 18 March report (discussed above). It also disclosed additional information relating to the existence of a third force:

- The 'Security Branch of the SAP (renamed the Criminal Intelligence Service – CIS has been involved for many years in the most serious criminal conduct including murder, fraud, blackmail and a huge operation of dishonest political disinformation.'[48]
- 'An unfortunately large number of police officers currently holding high office, including the Commissioner of Police [Johan van der Merwe], were not only aware of some of the earlier criminal activities, but must have approved it and the funds which were necessary to have made it possible. So, too, according to the Commission's evidence, the then Minister of Law and Order, Mr A Vlok.'[49]

The report detailed the testimony of one witness, who stated that Minister Vlok had visited Vlakplaas on more than one occasion, and that he knew about the gun-running operation, and that he had congratulated Vlakplaas staff on successful 'dirty tricks' operations in the past.

It also provided evidence of a hit-squad, named the Covert Collection of Intelligence, which existed under the State Security Council's Stratcom. From its inception in 1984 to the late 1980s, this unit conducted disinformation and dirty tricks (such as blackmail, placing noxious gas in churches, and stealing organisations' chequebooks). After 1990, the unit concentrated on disinformation in relation to the ANC. Its operations included:[50]

- Project Romulus, a programme of 'covert action to put pressure on the ANC/SACP'.
- Operation Gordion 'to minimise the effectiveness of the ANC Youth League and Sayco'.
- Operation Jackal, aimed at 'neutralising the ideological influence of radical organisations ... in secondary and tertiary institutions.' This involved the establishment of the Students Moderate Alliance and the Afrikaans National Student Federation, set up to counter the influence of the ANC-aligned National Union of South African Students (Nusas).
- Operation Ram, which aimed to make full use of the state's continued control over the media, to publicise widely Stratcom propaganda.
- Operation Einstein, which was an attempt to influence coloured education institutions.
- Operation Omega, aimed at influencing labour by countering Cosatu's influence through the establishment of the IFP-aligned United Worker's Union of South Africa (Uwusa).
- Operation Wigwam, the biggest operation, which aimed at countering and neutralising the ANC, SACP, PAC and Cosatu, as well as the far-right wing.

The report concludes that these details are 'only one window into the frightening operations of the Security Police in South Africa'. It registers concern that:

> The whole, illegal, criminal and oppressive system is still in place and its architects are in control of the SAP. It cannot be coincidence that in the most senior ranks of the SAP there is such a predominance of officers who have led the Security Branch over the past couple of decades. It is a bleak prospect that this country enters its first democratic election with this security structure in place. Appropriate steps are necessary and urgent to attempt to neutralise the effect of it before the elections.[51]

In its recommendations, the report advised that:

> Urgent and immediate steps must be taken to neutralise the activities of the CIS. The leadership of the SAP, including its Commissioner, General van der Merwe, are patently unsuited for their positions and should be effectively relieved of their positions forthwith.[52]

This is clearly a very different report to those issued during the negotiations process. In his last two reports – issued just before his Commission reached the end of its existence – Goldstone accepted that a 'third force' existed; that hit-squads existed; that Inkatha members trained by the SADF were involved in violence; and that senior SAP generals and Unit C10 colluded with senior Inkatha members to kill and to pervert the course of justice. The ANC-led Government of National Unity (GNU) scarcely reacted to these reports.

The report was handed to President de Klerk weeks before the April 1994 elections. It was also shown to ANC president Mandela. Yet nothing was done. De Klerk failed to act against Van der Merwe and the CIS. Mandela allowed him to retire gracefully from office in March 1995. The report has still not been made public. The question remains: what deals were made with the security forces in order that the contents of the report were not made public?

Summary

When the GC was established, South Africans celebrated the appointment of an independent judicial inquiry into political violence. Hopes were high that this commission would be different from the rest and would deliver the 'truth', find the culprits and produce the peace that South Africans were praying for. These hopes dimmed as a succession of judgements denied the existence of a 'third force', blamed all political parties equally, attributed much violence to socio-economic conditions, and made very weak recommendations. Meanwhile, people were still being slaughtered *en masse*.

It appears that the GC played the transition game from the outset. Its initial, nebulous reports conspicuously avoided pointing fingers. Until a month before the elections the Commission did nothing but whitewash political violence. For example, despite *prima facie* evidence from eyewitnesses and monitors that police were stoking the taxi violence,[53] the 'First interim report on public violence and intimidation in the taxi industry: Cape Town' found that

> Evidence has been received to the contrary. There has been evidence that the South African Police have tried to mediate in the war on a continuing basis … From the foregoing, it will be seen that the taxi conflict has its roots in commercial competition. At this stage it would be premature to say to what extent politics has played a role in the violence and intimidation relating to this conflict.[54]

By the time its conclusive report was released in March 1994, the negotiations were over. It was apparent that the new government would be led by the ANC. Fortuitously, convincing evidence emerged, linking security forces and senior officers with a 'third force', and showing that the SAP had illegally supplied weapons to the IFP. And suddenly the Commission was able to make strong recommendations with political implications, urging 'urgent and immediate steps' to be taken against the intelligence services and the leadership of the police. Ironically, the report containing these recommendations was never made public. Justice Goldstone did not publicly challenge the suppression of the report and within six months he was appointed as one of 11 judges to the Constitutional Court.

The GC can ultimately be summed up by 'Category G' of its own 'Recommending peace' evaluation kit: 'Dependent on the outcome of negotiations'.

Conclusion

Although being linked with multiparty negotiations conferred a degree of legitimacy on both the NPA and the GC, it also rendered them impotent and allowed political violence to continue. If the NPA had held political leaders accountable for the violence, and the GC had at an early stage revealed the links of state officials to violence, negotiations would have been disrupted. In effect the NPA and the GC functioned as side-shows that diverted attention from contentious issues while enabling politicians to thrash out constitutional proposals at Kempton Park. Because they had to isolate politicians from politically damaging allegations, the NPA and the GC were designed without 'teeth' and were destined to remain without effective powers.

The NPA, despite its good intentions and notwithstanding some examples of limited local-level success, was unable to contain the spiral of violence. The experiment failed, not only because of its own shortcomings, but because political violence could not be contained until the state was restructured.

The Goldstone Commission, too, failed to fulfil its brief: it did not attribute political violence to its source. Critics have asked: 'Was it value for taxpayers' money?'[55] This question may have been inadvertently answered by the man behind the Commission, Justice Goldstone:

> My Commission has never told South Africans anything they did not really know, they knew the causes of the violence – political rivalries, inadequate

> policing, secret funding of a political party and now evidence of the involvement of elements in the police force in promoting the violence.[56]

In the final analysis the NPA and the GC were never intended to stop the violence, and they did not. Neither was able to halt the bloodshed while elements within the government and other political parties continued to benefit from political violence.

Chapter seven

A future settlement

Multi-party negotiations and the 1994 election

Jackie Dugard

In 1986 PW Botha warned progressive forces that he was 'not going to liberate people from jail who are not prepared to tell me beforehand that they won't take up arms against the State'.[1] Yet on 2 February 1990 his successor, FW de Klerk, sanctioned Mandela's release. Why was there such a dramatic change in official government policy between these years?

Why the negotiations route?

In their seminal study of transitions from authoritarianism, Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter argue that, classically, negotiations occur when:

> conflicting or competing groups are interdependent, in that they can neither do without each other nor unilaterally impose their preferred solution on each other if they are to satisfy their divergent interests.[2]

This chapter examines the validity of this assertion in the South African context and asks why the dominant political groupings came to a point where they felt negotiation was the best way forward. By 1989 the South African political terrain was polarised between two power blocs, the South African Government (SAG)[3] and the African National Congress (ANC).[4] In the course of the negotiations process the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) emerged as an important third political party. Why did these political blocs choose to negotiate with each other?

Why did the SAG negotiate?

The international context

The escalation in state repression and the ANC's campaign to expose it had, towards the end of the 1980s, stiffened international resolve against the apartheid government (the most vocal nations being the US, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union):

> The success of the ANC's international and diplomatic offensive has meant that the struggle in South Africa has been internationalised to an extent unprecedented in the history of national liberation struggles.[5]

Added to the growing humanitarian pressure, economic pressure for reform was mounting. In January 1990, a delegation from the US Congress visited South Africa and warned that unless the government acted decisively to meet the conditions for negotiations, sanctions would escalate. This threat touched a raw nerve as, by 1990, it was apparent that sanctions were taking a heavy toll on the South African economy.

International pressure for a negotiated South African settlement was boosted by the changes taking place in the Soviet Union. By 1989 Gorbachev's reforms had fundamentally altered East-West relations. A new world began to emerge with a decline in cold war ideology and practice. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 was the culmination of widening cracks in the Soviet empire, and gave rise to Soviet disengagement from southern Africa. In March 1989, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Anatoly Adamishin, told a SAG delegation in Harare: 'The ANC wants political negotiations, I must tell you. There is no need to push them on that. But it takes two to tango.'[6] In April the Soviet Union sent the first diplomatic mission to South Africa since the suspension of diplomatic relations in 1956, to discuss the implementation of the Namibian peace plan.

Shifts in US and British foreign policy also contributed to the mounting pressure on Pretoria to negotiate. In the US the new Secretary of State, James Baker, emphasised a co-ordinated Congress and Senate approach toward South Africa, relying on closer ties with the Soviet Union. The new Assistant Secretary for Africa, Herman Cohen, was a pragmatist who rejected the previous cold war stance on the region. Britain, on the other hand, used its anti-sanctions strategy as a leverage against Pretoria. Having accepted the

centrality of a negotiated settlement for South Africa, Thatcher was able to use her stance to give credence to the negotiations idea.

Regional context

By the end of the 1980s Pretoria faced demilitarisation on three strategic fronts. The SADF had withdrawn from Angola after its defeat at Cuito Cuanavale; UN Resolution 435 calling for Namibian independence was being implemented; and there were strong indications of a Mozambican settlement. These developments fed into a desire to seek negotiated settlement in the 1990s rather than protracted war. Increasingly frontline states added their voices to those of the international community demanding that the SAG meet with the ANC.

Internal context

Internally, South Africa was facing a political, economic, and constitutional crisis. Repression had failed to destroy popular forces and the costs of propping up a minority government by force in the face of sanctions had become unsustainable:

> The penny has finally dropped and the government has realised that politics and economics are inextricably linked. South Africa can afford neither apartheid nor the sustained international hostility it has caused.... Most people change politically when they perceive that the costs and risks of not changing outweigh the costs and risks of changing. This is what has happened to the National Party.[7]

Politically, concerted and sustained mass mobilisation had proved potent. The mass campaigns, labour action, the collapse of local government and protracted rent and service boycotts had taken their toll. Already the 1989 hunger strike campaign had forced the government into giving up mass detention as a counter-revolutionary means. The government realised it was losing its grip over society and security.

Economically, the state had never been worse off. The gold price was low and the Rand weak; there was a huge outflow of capital, excessive money supply growth, high inflation, restricted export markets and no access to international financial markets. This was combined with high unemployment, high defence costs, high public-sector costs and a mounting foreign debt. In

August 1985 US banks had started withdrawing short-term funds from South Africa, exacerbating the balance of payments deficit.

Business leaders suffering under the sanctions straitjacket were calling for an alternative political scenario. The Consultative Business Movement (CBM), formed 'to create a non-racial democracy and achieve full international relations in a post-apartheid society',[8] began to put pressure on the government to implement more fundamental reforms than those of 1983. For the CBM, the ANC appeared more and more 'reasonable'.

Constitutionally, the real shift in NP strategy had occurred in 1986 at its federal congress, when it conceded that Africans had to be included in its constitutional model. The NP's five-year plan of action (adopted at its Federal Conference in 1989) – which saw power sharing with a 'co-operative' group of blacks under a racially defined state system with the white group retaining the veto – had been rejected by black homeland leaders, let alone more militant leaders. The government also realised that going it alone, or following the so-called Muzorewa option[9] was not viable in South Africa because of legitimacy problems for would-be collaborators.

These factors contributed to a mounting sense of urgency to begin negotiating with the ANC. Enlightened sections of the SAG realised that the NP had no option but to negotiate. For most, mindful of the Smith government's experience of realising too late the inevitability of negotiations in Zimbabwe, this was preferably done from a position of relative strength.

The first steps, taken between 1985 and 1988, were a series of meetings between Kobie Coetsee (Minister of Justice), and Nelson Mandela in prison, which later included other top security officials. In July 1989 Mandela met Botha at his official residence, and two months later a meeting was set up in Geneva between ANC leaders and National Intelligence Service (NIS) personnel. The NP realised that large sections of the government and many whites were not ready to face the ANC. Mandela realised that elements in the ANC leadership and constituency were opposed to formal negotiations. When he smuggled a note to Oliver Tambo explaining that he was talking to Coetsee, the response questioned the wisdom of that step.[10]

In order to separate Mandela from more hardline ANC colleagues who might have dissuaded him from talking to the government, Mandela was placed in a different section of Pollsmoor prison. From this position of isolation Mandela was able to lay the foundation for official talks between the ANC and the government.

Why did the ANC negotiate?

International context

The changes occurring in the Soviet Union had a strong effect on the ANC. The Soviet Union, its chief source of armaments and its ideological support-base, began towards the end of the 1980s, pressurising the ANC to enter into a negotiated settlement.[11] Further pressure for the ANC to moderate its revolutionary stance and talk, was exerted by the US, Britain and France. Reliant as it was on foreign support and funds while in exile the ANC could not ignore such developments.

At the same time ongoing Nato and Warsaw Pact negotiations resulted in an international trend towards military *détente*, nuclear disarmament and the reduction of conventional forces. This provided a new context for liberation movements addressing regional conflicts. The process had already 'in varying degrees, affected such areas as Central America, Western Sahara, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Sudan, Ethiopia, and South Western Africa'[12] and began to affect the ANC.

Regional context

Not unrelated the emergence of peace settlements in the frontline states, which also influenced the ANC to negotiate with Pretoria. Not only was regional peace at stake, but the frontline states were no longer able to carry the burden of hosting ANC bases.

The governments of Angola, which had served as an ANC base, and Mozambique, which had provided logistical support, were now concentrating on internal reconstruction. Neither was able to assist the ANC's external campaign to the extent they had previously. The ANC realised it would have to develop its power-base from *inside* South Africa. This was only possible through some form of co-operation with the regime to secure, as a starting point, the ANC's unbanning.

Internal context

By the mid-1980s the ANC had realised that it did not have the capacity to overthrow the government by force. In 1985, Moses Madhiba, former General Secretary of the SACP, was quoted in the SACP journal, *African Communist*, as saying: 'the revolution cannot topple Pretoria, but Pretoria cannot eliminate the revolution'.[13] The organisation had suffered damaging losses,

financially and in terms of lives lost and leaders incarcerated, and was looking for a viable opening to end hostilities.

In September 1984 Nelson Mandela, realising that the 'time was right for the ANC to take the initiative in trying to open a dialogue with the government that might lead to negotiations', wrote to Kobie Coetsee asking for a meeting.[14] This initial step led to 47 secret meetings over the next four years, all on the subject of future negotiations. Meanwhile, the groundwork for talking to the government was laid in October 1987 through the release of an ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) statement:

> the ANC and the masses of our people as a whole are ready and willing to enter into genuine negotiations provided they are aimed at the transformation of our country into a united and non-racial democracy.[15]

Interestingly, the release of this statement 'predated the collapse of Eastern European socialism and the problems of the Soviet Union'. However the opportunity for the ANC to actively promote the negotiations agenda was only provided in 1989, by the election of a new South African President.

In February 1989 PW Botha had a stroke, forcing him to resign as leader of the NP, but retaining his post of president until August. On 14 September 1989 FW de Klerk, who had been acting president since August, was elected President. The demise of Botha was vital to the negotiations agenda. Although secret meetings had been held between Coetsee and Mandela since 1985, Botha did not have the vision required to take those initial steps to their logical conclusion. In the end he was unable to move beyond the offer made to Mandela in January 1985 for release on condition that Mandela renounced violence as a political instrument.

In contrast other NP leaders such as then National Education Minister FW de Klerk, Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha, and Finance Minister Barend du Plessis were by this stage prepared to negotiate with the ANC.[16] Clearly De Klerk regarded his own leap of faith as the requirement for a negotiated settlement for South Africa:

> Once we had gone through the process of reassessment I took a leap in my own mind, more decisively than many other National Party politicians, that power-sharing with blacks was the right course for a new political dispensation.[17]

Why did the IFP negotiate?

In July 1990 Inkatha changed its name and status from a cultural movement to the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), a political party. In March 1991 it also changed its colours (if not its spots) by adding red and white to the black, green and gold that overlap with the ANC's insignia. These changes sent clear signals to the dominant political parties: the IFP wanted to distance itself from the ANC alliance and to assert itself as an independent political party capable of contesting politics on a national scale.

Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the man behind the party, arrived at this point through his quest for political power and the knowledge that this could only be realised by engaging with the SAG and the ANC. The increasing *rapprochement* between Mandela and De Klerk threatened to leave all other political contenders outside the transition process. Fearing political oblivion for the IFP, Buthelezi embarked on a political campaign to sell the IFP as a necessary third party in a negotiations troika – his leverage was its manipulation of violence and its representation as the only genuine guarantor of a Zulu ethnic identity.

The escalating violence in KwaZulu-Natal and the emerging violence on the Reef were a lesson to political leaders of the potency of the IFP as an opponent. Both the SAG and the ANC realised that political violence in South Africa would never be alleviated without the inclusion of the IFP in negotiations over a future settlement for South Africa.

Negotiations: The bigger picture

According to O'Donnell and Schmitter, the premise of negotiated pacts is a compromise 'under which actors agree to forgo or underutilise their capacity to harm each other by extending guarantees not to threaten each others' corporate autonomies or vital interests'.[18] The ANC and the NP clearly continued to harm each other outside Kempton Park, but *inside* negotiations could not begin before certain guarantees had been secured. The most consequential issues related to the question of amnesty and the future of the security forces.

The amnesty/indemnity question[19]

The amnesty issue was first raised by the ANC in relation to the return of political exiles. From the outset the ANC made it clear that before it was willing to negotiate with the government it required the enactment of

indemnity legislation as a shield for returnees. This became the burning issue at the August 1990 Pretoria Minute meeting between the ANC and the SAG. The passing of Indemnity Act 35 of 1990, which enabled the state president to indemnify persons by publication of the facts in the *Government Gazette*, was critical in driving the negotiation process forward. The act was also crucial to negotiations regarding the release of political prisoners within South Africa.

The ANC's stress on the indemnity issue strengthened the NP's hand once it set about guaranteeing the future of its human rights violators through the unilateral passing of the Further Indemnity Act 151 of 1992. The Further Indemnity Act consolidated the NP position and, tied to the future of the security forces, became one of the central themes of the government's negotiations. Indeed, negotiations would not have taken place at all had these issues not been resolved at the outset. Thus the indemnity issue was used to service different needs and political parties at different times.

The apartheid government, having the most to lose from revelations about the past, was reluctant for disclosure to be a precondition for granting amnesty. Hence the Further Indemnity Act enabled the state president to indemnify any politically motivated crime, 'with the sole condition of review in secret by a government-appointed commission'.[20] In terms of the Act the only public record of perpetrators would be a list of those to whom immunity had been granted. There was even a provision in the act that these records could be destroyed.

It was argued by some that the passing of the Further Indemnity Act effectively created an obligation to suppress the truth.[21] Indeed, the granting of amnesty without disclosure was strongly opposed by democratic organisations:

> Any amnesty/indemnity arrangement without a parallel obligation to disclose the nature of the crimes perpetrated, however critical it may have been in driving the negotiation process forward, in fact has grave implications for the longer-term prospects of national reconciliation … Equally significant is the fact that in the absence of full disclosure and public knowledge of past human rights abuses, the inherited institutions of the new government may well retain unchallenged their organisational culture of clandestine, unaccountable and covert activity.[22]

Davis et al argued that acts like this should be treated as disguised self-

amnesty laws, passed by an illegitimate government forgiving itself, and that they should not have been treated as binding until ratified by a democratic government.[23] However, just as the NP accepted the conditions of the Indemnity Act in order to kick-start negotiations, so the ANC conceded the Further Indemnity Act to ensure progress at the negotiating table. The Act was a calculated risk on the part of De Klerk, and demonstrated that amnesty had become crucial for the NP. Despite the importance placed on it during negotiations, the first time it was made public that amnesty was crucial to the transition process was in the Interim Constitution of 1993:

> The pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society. The adoption of this Constitution lays the secure foundation for the people of South Africa to transcend the divisions and strife of the past, which generated gross violations of human rights, the transgression of humanitarian principles in violent conflicts and a legacy of hatred, fear, guilt and revenge. These can now be addressed on the basis that there is a need for understanding but not for vengeance, a need for reparation but not for retaliation, a need for *ubuntu*[24] but not for victimisation.[25]
>
> In order to advance such reconciliation and reconstruction, amnesty shall[26] be granted in respect of acts, omissions and offences associated with political objectives and committed in the course of the conflicts of the past.[27]

This last paragraph distilled four years of negotiation into one word: 'shall'. The word 'shall', as opposed to 'might', suggests that all subsequent debates on the conditions of amnesty were redundant because a deal had already been struck. If this was the case, why was the first record of this crucial process placed in a postamble that was written into the Constitution in the final hours before it was passed? Simpson suggests that one explanation might be that the NP deliberately left the issue out of the Constitution until the last minute when all parties were too exhausted to argue.[28] It may also be the case that with this as well as other issues the ANC rushed negotiations, wishing to expedite the election and its assumption of power.

In any event, it is apparent that the government of national unity (GNU) was forged on an agreement over the indemnity issue and, in the words of a senior police officer at a mini-conference on justice and transition: 'the government will stand or fall on the amnesty agreement'.[29]

The future of the security forces

In May 1993 it became clear that negotiations were in danger of being derailed over the issue of private armies. The IFP refused to negotiate a date for the elections until there was clarity on the future of armed forces, in particular the ANC's Umkhonto we Siswe (MK) and the KwaZulu Police (KZP).

Unknown to most negotiators, a secret deal on the future of the SADF and MK had already been negotiated between the ANC and the SAG. The first steps towards negotiations over the future of the military began in March 1993 (at the behest of the SADF generals) after MK and SADF soldiers first appeared together in public at an Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) conference.[30] The first formal negotiations took place a month later in Simonstown.

SAG and ANC delegations defined the terms of control of the armed forces during the transition and the integration of MK into the SADF. The ANC's deal with the SADF was visually represented at President Mandela's inauguration in May 1994 by the SADF generals being seated directly behind the presidential party.

Meanwhile, back at the negotiating table two contestants – the IFP's Suzanne Vos, and the ANC's Mark Phillips – battled out the future of the KZP and MK in the technical committee on violence. For the IFP the main problem was that it regarded MK as being an 'illegitimate' force, while it saw the KZP as being 'legitimate'. Mark Shaw has argued that in this respect the 'technical committee's real task was to bring the IFP and KZP into [the Simonstown] agreement without telling them that it had been made'.[31] The *Sunday Times* also suggested that there were more than two parties to the deal, whose approach was 'identical to the understanding reached in talks between the SADF and MK'.[32]

By May 1993 there was both a political deal (the Record of Understanding) and a military deal (the Simonstown agreement) between the SAG and the ANC. This begs the question why the police did not secure similar guarantees. It may well be that apartheid's police officers felt that they were sufficiently protected by the amnesty provisions and the Constitution's sunset clause. Their relative security was consolidated the month before the elections through the suppression of a controversial Goldstone Commission report and the granting of blanket amnesty to high-ranking police officers.

It is more difficult to explain the ANC's failure to challenge the police establishment and to use the negotiations as a platform to prepare for the

integration of ANC members into the SAP. A key aspect of policing conspicuously not dealt with at the negotiation table was the composition of the SAP. Given that the SAP's upper echelons were largely from the Security Branch – at whose hands many ANC negotiators had suffered – it is astounding that the matter was not dealt with. That this highly emotive and contentious issue did not receive more attention at Kempton Park appears to defy explanation.

The elections

The historic general elections for a representative government marked the official end of the apartheid regime and the beginning of a democratic dispensation for South Africa.

The legislation

During the transitional period the SAG continued in office, although it was compelled to act in consultation with the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), which was drawn from the ranks of all the negotiating parties. Five pieces of legislation which emerged from the TEC and were subsequently passed by Parliament had direct bearing on the running of the elections. These were the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, Act 200 of 1993; the *Electoral Act* 202 of 1993; the *Independent Electoral Commission Act* 150 of 1993; the *Independent Media Commission Act* 148 of 1993; and the *Independent Broadcasting Authority Act* 153 of 1993.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was the basic statutory embodiment of the transition of power agreed upon by the negotiating parties. Notable departures from the 1983 Constitution included:

- Schedule 7 repealed the independence of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and the Ciskei, and re-incorporated them into the national territory of South Africa.
- Section 6 afforded universal adult suffrage to all South African citizens.
- Section 124, read with Part 1 of Schedule 1, created and delineated nine provinces.

The Electoral Act set out the basic regulations for the national and provincial elections, laying down rules of behaviour for political parties and individuals during the campaign, and the period of voting.[33] The Independent Electoral

Commission Act set out the terms and conditions of the organisation the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), that was to plan and administer the elections, and assess whether the elections were free and fair.

The Independent Media Commission Act set out the terms and conditions of the organisation which would act as a statutory watchdog to monitor the airwaves and government print media during the election campaign, the Independent Media Commission (IMC). The IMC aimed at 'levelling the playing field'. In particular it aimed to monitor electronic media, state-financed publications, and state information services in order to ensure that nothing was published that might have a negative effect on a climate for free and fair elections.

The Independent Broadcast Authority Act established the Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA). It aimed to regulate the broadcast industry in South Africa in line with the ideals of democracy and freedom. Unlike the IEC and the IMC, the IBA was never intended only as a transitional institution but was envisaged to take control of the airwaves and continue to exist under a democratic dispensation.

The violence

According to HRC statistics, 501 people were killed in incidents of violence and intimidation linked to the elections. Nation-wide, most of the violence occurred around the franchise issue, disruption of meetings and rallies, and prevention of electioneering in politically sensitive areas. Other widely reported incidents obstructing free political activity included the illegal confiscation of identity documents and the removal of party election posters. The most sustained election violence occurred in KwaZulu-Natal and Bophuthatswana, where political access was restricted. A regional breakdown of the main patterns of election-related violence follows.[35]

Cape Province

In the Western Cape there were two main sites of violence and intimidation. First, there were sporadic clashes between the ANC and the NP. This conflict was exacerbated by perceptions of a racial divide between coloureds and Africans. Second, the Democratic Party (DP) encountered difficulties in campaigning and was prevented from addressing people at the Cape Technikon, the Good Hope College, the University of the Western Cape, and various informal settlements.

Violence in the Eastern Cape was linked mainly to Azapo's boycott of the elections and the illegal confiscation of identity documents by farmers. Only one serious incident was reported in the Northern Cape, when De Klerk was hit on the head with a stone before a scheduled NP address at Kimberley.

Transkei

The NP complained that it did not have adequate political access in the homeland following an incident where Major-General Bantu Holomisa (military leader of the Transkei, and an ANC election candidate) prevented the NP from opening an election office. Most violence in the area was attributed to ANC–PAC clashes.

Orange Free State

There were few deaths resulting from electioneering in the Orange Free State. However, some clashes did occur as a result of right-wing protests, and there were reports of intimidation of farm workers and NP campaigners.

Transvaal

In the Western Transvaal there were reports of right-wing intimidation. In the Northern Transvaal there were clashes between the NP and the ANC and a Department of Home Affairs office was bombed, presumably by the right wing.

Most of the violence in the Eastern Transvaal was a result of NP–ANC clashes. In the worst incident an NP organiser, who had allegedly been harassed by the ANC, was mutilated and burnt to death. In the Pretoria–Witwatersrand–Vereeniging (PWV), the NP, the ANC and the PAC complained of intimidation and harassment. Most violent clashes in the PWV occurred between supporters of the ANC and the IFP. The worst clash involved the death of over 53 people, on 28 March 1994, following a march in Johannesburg's Central Business District (CBD).

Bophuthatswana

Until the last few weeks before the election no political campaigning was possible in this homeland. The Bophuthatswana police prevented voter education and electioneering. The week of 7 March 1994 saw extensive civil unrest over Mangope's dictatorial policies. Some 22 000 civil servants struck over uncertainty about the future of the homeland, and violence erupted in

the capital, Mmabatho, with people looting shops and burning government buildings. On 11 March most of the Bophuthatswana Defence Force mutinied and rallied around the protesters. The SADF was deployed in order to restore order. It was only once Mangope had been deposed, on 13 March, that electioneering could occur in Bophuthatswana.

KwaZulu-Natal

Kwazulu-Natal was worst hit by election-related violence. Almost all the violent incidents related to clashes between the IFP and the ANC. In the worst incident 15 ANC supporters, who had gathered for a voter education workshop, were killed. Three IFP officials were arrested in connection with the massacre. Until the decision by Buthelezi to participate in the elections, the ANC was all but prevented from campaigning in IFP-dominated areas. On at least three occasions the IFP deliberately obstructed mass ANC rallies by occupying stadiums that had been reserved by the ANC.

The threats

Apart from the specific incidents of violence and intimidation documented above, there were three main threats to the elections. These threats emanated from political groupings not taking part in the run-up to the elections: the CP with the right wing, Lucas Mangope and the Bophuthatswana government, and the IFP with its supporters.

The CP and the right wing

In the run-up to the elections South Africa experienced a number of right-wing bomb blasts and other forms of sabotage. These were clearly aimed at destabilising the election process and at postponing a democratic order. During the month of the election, 'whites were identified as perpetrators in a growing proportion of attacks'.[35]

Right-wing violence culminated in a series of bomb blasts in the week before the election:

- The most serious attack occurred on 24 April 1994, when a car bomb exploded around the corner from the ANC's regional headquarters in Johannesburg's CBD. Nine people were killed, including a prospective ANC member of parliament, at least 92 were injured, and damage to surrounding buildings was extensive.

- In Germiston 10 people were killed and 41 injured when a bomb exploded at a taxi rank on 25 April 1995.
- Also on 25 April, an explosive device was hurled into a restaurant frequented by bus commuters in Marabastad, Pretoria.
- On the eve of the elections, a bomb exploded in the parking lot of Johannesburg International airport, injuring 16 people.

Although causing extensive damage and some loss of life, the explosions did not achieve their objective. One reason for the relatively small right-wing backlash might have been the fracturing of the right wing by General Constand Viljoen's decision for the Freedom Front (FF) to take part in the elections. This was the culmination of over 20 meetings between the ANC and the FF that took place after the CP withdrew from the negotiations. Although the FF's attempt to secure a *volkstaat* failed, official links were established between the parties that mitigated the right wing backlash.

Lucas Mangope and the Bophuthatswana government

The Bophuthatswana government remained adamantly opposed to the electoral process. This meant that in January and February of 1994 electioneering and voter education were severely restricted. Throughout this time wide-scale intimidation and incidents of violence occurred. The IEC was also unable to identify and secure voting stations in the territory.

This led to an IEC delegation being sent to meet with President Mangope. Mangope received the delegation on 9 March, but maintained his refusal to allow the IEC operational access to Bophuthatswana. A further delegation was sent (this time comprising the Commission's chairperson and vice-chairperson) on 11 March, but it, too, failed. Intent on allowing electioneering to take place in the region, the South African authorities deposed the Bophuthatswana government on 13 March.

The IFP and its supporters

The IFP originally registered provisionally for the elections, but after the ANC and the SAG failed to meet its constitutional demands, it allowed its registration to lapse. Buthelezi maintained his boycott of the electoral process until 20 April, six days before the day of special voting, when he finally agreed to participate in the elections in return for a promise of international mediation after the election (to date this has not occurred). There are a number

of theories explaining why he changed his mind at the eleventh hour.[36]

One explanation was that all along the IFP was playing 'coup poker': that it was using the *threat* of non-participation, and the ensuing carnage, to pressurise the SAG and the ANC into accepting its demands. According to this explanation, by 20 April the IFP realised that the SAG and the ANC had called its bluff, and was forced to enter the game rather than be left behind.

The popular version, propagated by the IFP, was that the Kenyan negotiator Washington had appealed successfully to Buthelezi's Christian principles and persuaded him to choose democracy over civil war. A more persuasive theory suggested that 'Buthelezi had not changed his mind; that the king had changed it for him.'[37] It was rumoured that days before the decision to participate King Goodwill Zwelithini had told Buthelezi that he would urge his subjects to vote regardless of the IFP's stance. The disclosure, after the elections, that the KwaZulu legislative assembly's 'last act had been to transfer control of all land in the territory to a trust of which the king was sole trustee'[38] suggests that there was substance to this speculation.

A further explanation is that Buthelezi changed his mind about participating in the elections, having realised that continuing his campaign of violent opposition to the ANC would invite a massive clampdown. Considering that the IFP could no longer rely on the SAG's support (as evidenced by the declaration of a state of emergency in Natal and the TEC raid of the Mlaba IFP training base in March 1994), it was clearly suicidal to continue the boycott. Whatever the reasons behind the about-turn, the IFP's indecision up to then undoubtedly contributed to spiralling violence.

It has been argued that in many respects the IFP played the negotiations game better than on first appearance:

> Inkatha and its spokespersons have not, however, stayed out of negotiations – they have just not followed the central route through the World Trade Centre. Through bluster, through ultimatums, through stalling and delaying, and through the threat of violence, Inkatha has gained considerable concessions.[39]

Interestingly, a few weeks before the election, despite the IFP's non-participation, the IFP put up election posters in Natal. Under a large photo of Buthelezi the posters called for people to vote 'When the time comes'.[40] Some have argued that Buthelezi had been 'unofficially campaigning since 1975'.[41]

The voting

Voting took place over four days. Special votes were cast on 26 April, and other voting took place on three subsequent days.[42] Despite the long queues at voting stations, administrative glitches and the violence which had marred the run-up to the elections, almost 20 million people voted at some 10 500 voting points throughout South Africa and in 78 countries abroad.

The IEC acknowledged that 'administratively the elections were flawed', but contended that 'the administrative defects did not materially impair the legitimacy of the voting process', and that 'politically they were a substantial success'.[43]

The results

After the days of voting, a laborious process of counting and attempting to reconcile votes with ballot numbers took place (there were no voters' rolls). The results were finally made public at Gallager Estate (Midrand) on 6 May 1994, and the elections were declared substantially free and fair by the IEC chairperson, Justice Johann Kriegler.

Of the 19 parties contesting the national election, only 7 – the PAC (5 seats), the FF (9 seats), the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) (2 seats), the ANC (252 seats), the DP (7 seats), the NP (82 seats), and the IFP (43 seats) – gained enough votes to qualify for seats in the National Assembly.[44]

The final break-down of votes cast for the three major parties was: ANC, 63 per cent; NP, 20 per cent; and IFP, 10 per cent. Despite the IFP's attempt at a national leading role, its only success was in KwaZulu-Natal. The IFP gained 4 per cent of the PWV vote (largely due to migrant hostel-dwellers), but only 2 per cent in other than KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

The deals?

In the aftermath of the logistical problems and the electoral irregularities experienced, especially in KwaZulu-Natal, there was much speculation that political deals over the final results had been struck between the NP, the ANC and the IFP. Most observers had not expected the IFP to win the 1 844 070 votes (51% of votes) that it was finally awarded for the KwaZulu-Natal provincial legislature.

Because the NP and the ANC were adamant that the elections be internationally recognised, thus paving the way for the establishment of their partnership in the GNU, Buthelezi's trump card was to contest the fairness of

the results. In the first few days after the votes were counted Buthelezi did threaten to declare the elections unfair. In retaliation the ANC lodged a composite objection to the elections and counting processes in KwaZulu-Natal. The party's principal objection was that a number of illegal voting stations had existed and that a number of presiding officers had been IFP officials. The ANC also disputed the validity of 140 voting boxes (amounting to 4 per cent of the total votes cast in the province), where 87 per cent of the votes were marked in favour of the IFP.

In the first week after the conclusion of counting the IEC faced hundreds of party complaints, mainly from the 'big three' (NP, ANC, IFP), alleging fraud. However, within a week all complaints had been withdrawn, fuelling rumours that a deal had been struck. A senior ANC negotiator described (off the record) the details of a meeting in which the ANC agreed to drop its complaint of counting irregularities in KwaZulu-Natal on condition that the IFP drop its complaint of irregularities in the PWV. However, the 'trade-off that characterised the final moments of vote-counting in KwaZulu-Natal remains opaque'[45] and is unlikely to be publicly acknowledged.

Finally, the IEC has admitted that 'it could not ignore the possibility that the inefficiency of its administration had to some extent favoured the majority parties in the Northern Transvaal, KwaZulu and Transkei'.[46]

The outcome

Despite the IEC's failings, the political bargaining, and the predictions of doom, the elections signalled the beginning of a new democratic dispensation for South Africa. It ended 46 years of National Party rule, and established South Africa as a unique democracy in an evolving world order.

In the midst of post-election euphoria monitors have questioned why the elections period was so peaceful and was not characterised by the destabilisation of the negotiations period. Part of the answer may lie in a possible last-minute deal with the security police over the non-disclosure of the Goldstone report mentioned in a previous chapter. Sources close to Mandela have suggested that the explosive report, which corroborated evidence contained in the 18 March Goldstone report (which itself was only released due to a press leak), and was shown to both Mandela and De Klerk, was not released in return for assurances from the security police that they would not disrupt the elections.

While this remains speculative, the failure to disclose covert operations

within the state (both the Goldstone report and the Steyn report had security force implications and were not published) seems related to the fact that during the elections remarkably little violence of the type that had been witnessed in the preceding four years took place.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The shattered mould

Patterns of violence in the post-apartheid era

Hein Marais

INTRODUCTION

Positing a coherent state strategy as a central framework for analysing violence in post-apartheid South Africa carries a risk – by encouraging readings that stitch seamless links between motives and events, and by presuming that deeds are animated by strategies. It also flirts with a reductionism prevalent in South Africa during the apartheid-era: that of situating the state at the hub of reality.[1] In surveying post-1994 trends in violence, this chapter probes the emerging patterns of violence in a country which has earned itself the dubious reputation of being one of the most violent societies on earth.

Much controversy surrounds the precise levels of crime and violence in South Africa, and whether these increased in the 1990s. Public perceptions are that they have risen, while official statistics indicate a gradual drop in most categories of reported serious crimes since 1994. The debates generated by these conflicting versions of reality are convoluted and, ultimately, inconclusive.[2] Indisputable, unfortunately, is the fact that South African crime and violence rates are extremely high.

Police statistics for 1996 showed the country had one of the highest homicide rates in the world – 61 per 100 000 inhabitants. In Brazil, by comparison, the figure was 26 per 100 000 citizens. In 1996 25 782 murders were committed, while 28 516 attempted murders and 12 860 car hijackings occurred. Hospital records showed an average of 2 500 people were treated daily for violence-related injuries. Women, particularly African women, bore the brunt of the violence – 50 481 rapes were reported, a figure women's

organisations said captured only a fraction of the reality. They have estimated that a woman is sexually assaulted on average every 83 seconds in South Africa.[3]

The matrix of factors generating this state of affairs is complex and defies attempts to construct a clear narrative of cause and effect. The notion of 'path dependency' adopted by some economists in analysing the evolution of economic systems seems appropriate to the study of violence in South Africa. In such views, 'The specific outcomes in any given period are contingent on a range of factors, and the ways these factors happen to combine will then set the terms for the next round of indeterminate combinations'.[4] This route of enquiry does not preclude the identification of salient factors and dynamics, but it recognises that they interact with other inconsistent and sometimes indeterminate factors to yield a particular outcome.

In some instances direct causal links can be detected between ongoing violence and the structures and practices established by agencies of the apartheid state during the 1980s – most obviously in KwaZulu-Natal and on the Cape Flats, where remnants of third force activities can still be detected. In general, though, we have been witnessing the operation of diverse agents, a multiplicity of motives and a range of conditions that facilitate and generate violence in post-1994 South Africa. This state of affairs is best understood as the outcome of an entangled and often opaque ensemble of dynamics that extend beyond the orchestrated third force campaign. An understanding of violence in South Africa requires an appreciation of other factors and developments. They include:

- the enforcement and recasting of political and social affinities at local levels;
- widening class contradictions in many black communities, the impact of which is aggravated by slow economic growth and widening income inequalities;
- heightened competition for resources (access to grazing land, water, livestock and housing, as well as development projects) and for control of lucrative activities (such as taxi routes, rent-gathering in informal settlements criminal structures);
- weakened regulatory powers of the state, which stem partially from policy shifts undertaken during the final years of apartheid and from weaknesses associated with states-in-transition, but have been exacerbated by the neo-liberal structural adjustment of the economy since 1994;

- inefficiencies and inconsistencies in the functioning of the policing, judicial and penal systems, caused both by structural factors and deliberate sabotage;
- widespread availability of weapons and their use as instruments of conflict resolution, material gain, political dominance, and access to contested resources;
- the disintegration or weakening of civil society structures normally tasked with reproducing shared value systems and social discipline (principally the family unit); and
- a pervasive ideology of individualism and self-advancement.

The violence that continues to scar South Africa is not a passing phenomenon. On the one hand, pre- and post-1994 violence seems starkly different. The state is no longer the principal agent of violence. With the exception of deaths in custody or due to police action (737 in 1997)[5] and allegations of police complicity in (apparently) politically motivated attacks, the state's role in violence occurs largely by way of omission: its difficulties and, in some cases, reluctance to vigorously perform its duties.[6] On the other hand, we can detect threads of continuity between current and past trends in violence, fuelled by the legacy of apartheid repression, 'revolutionary violence', and a general aversion to peaceful conflict resolution expressed in the use of weapons as instruments of social, economic and political opportunity and power.

The South African experience since the late 1980s has highlighted the convoluted motives and interests that interlock around state-sponsored violence. It is not always clear to what extent the actual deeds unleashed as part of apartheid violence conform to the motives and objectives circulating at the higher echelons of the state. Can we with any certainty say that acts carried out by a covert state structure (such as the Vlakplaas death squad) always reflected a co-ordinated campaign designed by its superiors, particularly when these acts included running brothels, smuggling contraband goods and precious stones, dealing in drugs and indulging in petty strong-arm extravagances?

The answer, it seems, is both yes and no. Yes, because however potentially disabling the specific methods might have been, they did not undermine the overriding aim of destabilisation. No, because we could not confidently link or attribute each specific act to an overarching strategic intent or design. A relative operational autonomy often interceded between the motive and the

deed. This was partially due to the great degree of operational autonomy accorded to covert units (in order to keep intact plausible deniability at higher levels in the state), partially due to the overlap between the state and criminal underworlds, and partially a measure of how state violence can self-replicate and become 'decentred' or dislodged from a single, central command post.

There were, in other words, distinct zones of state violence: a level at which particular projects were conceptualised and resourced, and the level at which specific activities were conceived and carried out. The one did not always neatly conform to the other. In post-1994 South Africa, the discontinuity between strategic conception (if and when it exists) and specific deeds seems all the more pronounced. Casual leaps from destabilising acts (the definition of which is vague enough to encompass a number of phenomena) and alleged third force activities to counter-revolutionary programmes therefore should be guarded against.

Low intensity conflict and political change in South Africa

A counter revolutionary strategy cast in the form of low-intensity conflict (LIC) became glaringly evident in South Africa after 1986. According to SADF General CJ Lloyd, its three main ingredients were 'the countering of planning subversion on all fronts, the elimination of the revolutionaries, and the reform of the environment'.[7] Centring on economic reform, the latter element came to be known as Winning Hearts and Minds (or WHAM) and featured high-profile upgrading schemes in selected townships (where organised resistance was most likely to flare).

The coupling of covert violence and socio-economic reforms marked a shift from the Total Strategy period of the early 1980s and the massive application of state violence between 1984–1986, which effectively thwarted the prospect of revolutionary insurrection. During that period resistance organisations were fragmented, their leaderships removed or on the run, and their organisational cohesion and strategic capacities severely weakened. The detention of thousands of activists and leaders, amid intense insecurity and rampant violence in black townships, made easier the introduction of *agents provocateur*, support for vigilante and criminal gangs, covert assassinations and so-called 'black operations' (attacks carried out by state forces but plausibly attributable to other actors). Leaders and key activists could be targeted for assassination, and their deaths blamed on internecine conflict

between and within political organisations. The fact that those conflicts were *not* simply figments of state propaganda added further potency to covert actions.

More selective interventions were marked by the increasing use of covert and unconventional forms of state violence. Overt violence continued, but there was a clear rise in clandestine versions carried out by apparently 'unknown' persons or groupings. State agencies provided covert and overt support to forces that opposed or undermined anti-apartheid formations. Inkatha and the KwaZulu Police were the biggest and most sustained beneficiaries of this support, which was also extended to vigilante groups, criminal gangs and paramilitary outfits operated by local warlords and chiefs.

One prime effect of this intervention was to discourage organised forms of resistance, and to exacerbate destabilising dynamics in communities. From the vantage point of state agencies, these dynamics would ideally become self-sustaining and require only intermittent outside stimuli. The tactics were most successful where 'authentic' conflicts had taken root, most obviously in Natal and in some squatter settlements around Cape Town. By contrast, in most of the townships of Gauteng province, more persistent interventions were required to set in motion self-sustaining internecine violence – often with limited success.

Many observers and researchers detected evidence of the state's hand in the violence that surged in 1990. Terror attacks multiplied, as gunmen carried out massacres on commuter trains, mobs attacked funerals and residential sections, and bomb blasts rocked cities and towns. In the latter instances the perpetrators were identified with certainty; most belonged to extreme right-wing groups and some were former members of the security forces. Strangely, the train massacres remain shrouded in mystery, and the TRC hearings have not cast new light on the incidents, although the Steyn Report of 1992 allegedly contained information linking train violence to elite reconnaissance units of the SADF.[8] TRC probes, meanwhile, have brought to light the IFP allegiances and anti-ANC motives of attackers in other massacres, notably the 1992 massacre of 48 people in Boipatong.[9]

Also in the public record is evidence of support provided by covert police units to the IFP on the Reef in the early 1990s. According to Eugene De Kock, former commander of the Vlakplaas unit, 'the supplying of arms to the IFP was sporadic at first' and comprised 'Eastern bloc hand-grenades' in 1990. The supplies were subsequently expanded – with the approval of Generals

van Rensburg, Engelbrecht and Smit – to include 'the first consignment of AK-47s to [IFP leader Themba] Khoza and his associates at around the time of the Sebokeng massacre', in which 36 people were killed.[10]

As presented by De Kock, the chronology of these support operations is noteworthy. The first meeting between De Kock and IFP leaders Khoza and Victor Ndlovu occurred in early 1990 at the behest of former C-10 unit member Brood van Heerden (who was then working in a security function for ABSA bank). De Kock began providing them with weapons of his own accord, without clearance from his superiors but confident in the knowledge that he 'would indeed get permission for such actions'. The assistance, according to De Kock, 'was in line with the general feeling among police members'.[11] It was later that De Kock sought and received official (though verbal) approval from security police generals for the supply operations. De Kock's insistence that he acted in the service of his superiors lends credence to his version of events. Rather than representing a strategy hatched at top levels of the security police, the supply of arms to the IFP seems to have originated at much lower levels. It was handled through a series of informal contacts arranged at the request of minor IFP leaders by individuals who were not all in the employ of the security police.

None of this lessens the scale of the subsequent conspiracies and the horrors they produced or unleashed, but it does caution against readings that seek to explain *all* violence as the activation of a grand strategy devised at the top levels of security apparatus. That such strategies and conspiracies existed is a matter of historical record, but De Kock's account shows that a degree of operational autonomy and latitude for 'innovation' existed. The cumulative effect of these activities could, with hindsight, resemble a machine-like operation, with violence 'switched on and off' at crucial interstices. The reality is more complex, however. Dispersed capacities, responsibilities and authority gave rise to activities that, in most instances, derived from common ideological and political motives. At times they could be pushed into the service of a grand strategy; in other instances, they could remain itinerant actions or even undermine such a strategy. We should stay mindful of Field-Marshall Lord Wavell's remark to war historian Basil Liddell Hart:

> The principles of strategy and tactics, and the logistics of war are really absurdly simple: it is the actualities that make war so complicated and so difficult.[12]

This *caveat* seems all the more appropriate when assessing current claims of third force activities and the existence of counter-revolutionary programmes in the post-1994 era. There is no evidence of a specific strategy devised to lend coherence to destabilising manoeuvres in post-apartheid South Africa. Even the role of state-sponsored violence in bringing about appropriate conditions for political negotiations and in helping shape the eventual settlement before 1994 should not be over-emphasised. It was not a singularly definitive factor. Rather it combined with and fed into other domestic and international factors that had converged in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Many of these factors registered simultaneously (but distinctly) in the democratic movement and the NP party and government camps, tilting the balance of forces within them towards the proponents of negotiations. Others helped to establish a context that seemed to have favoured that route. The precise internal dynamics within the two camps remain obscured by a lack of information. Official accounts and even personal memoirs that have emerged offer little insight into the actual debates and struggles that raged within the ANC, NP and government leadership circles. Nevertheless, those debates occurred on the basis of these (and possibly other) factors.

The following ensemble of factors weighed on the minds of the NP and the government:

- Efforts to slow the slide of the economy (which slumped into a deep recession in 1989) were being hampered by international sanctions. The government's options in dealing with internal resistance were influenced by the chances of increased sanctions. At the same time, South African exports experienced an upturn from 1987 onwards, despite sanctions. The main value of sanctions appear to have been their negative effect on foreign investment flows and on the government's ability to secure financial assistance to offset balance of payments difficulties. Those pressures would not be relieved substantially until a political settlement was reached.
- The absurd duplication of state institutions (three chambers of parliament, multiple government departments performing the same tasks for racially defined sections of the population, expensive homeland administrations), as well as the cost of the Namibian occupation and the war in Angola, increased fiscal strains at a point when the economy was slumping into its worst recession since the 1930s.
- Maturing within ruling circles was an understanding that economic recovery

was impossible without social and political stability. The failure of the reforms introduced since the late 1970s to defuse political resistance confirmed that medium-term stability could not be achieved without addressing the political demands of the majority. Increasing repression would have led to ongoing instability and be very costly. Political reform was essential to economic recovery and growth.

- The internal popular forces had regrouped within the Mass Democratic Movement and were still capable of mounting resistance campaigns which, although they did not pose immediate threats to the state, could further raise the costs of avoiding a political settlement.
- Negotiations required the existence of a coherent political force with sufficient legitimacy and authority among the masses to make a deal stick – the ANC had clearly emerged as that force. At the same time, the sweep of its authority and power could conceivably be limited by destabilisation campaigns (of the sort launched by Inkatha in Natal since the mid-1980s).
- A dramatic process of class restructuring had been unleashed within African communities, yielding a small but distinct black elite, especially in the homelands where this stratum was also invested with political and administrative power. The rise of the Inkatha Freedom Party, in particular – and with it organised, politicised ethnicity – raised hopes that the hegemony of the liberation organisations could be reduced during and after a negotiations process.
- The latter developments fuelled exaggerated expectations within the NP that a 'non-racial' centre-right political alliance could be mustered to challenge or hold in check the ANC.
- Militarist hardliners were pushed onto the defensive within the state by the defeat suffered by the South African Defence Force at Cuito Cuanavale in Angola, Namibia's almost anti-climactic achievement of independence, and progress in Angola towards a peaceful settlement.
- The NP had weaned itself from its old multi-class social base, enabling it to free its policies from the ideological straitjacket of apartheid, and transform itself into a party championing the interests of the white middle and upper classes.
- A power struggle within the ruling NP was resolved with the election of FW de Klerk as leader, with the party's 'Young Turks' grouping around him.
- Pressure from Western governments, principally the United States, and their touting of reassuring examples of 'managed transitions' to democracy in the Philippines and Namibia diminished the reluctance to opt for negotiations.

The ANC's options were influenced by the following factors:

- The goal of overthrowing the apartheid state had been dashed by ongoing state repression, as well as by organisational and strategic problems faced by the democratic movement. A lengthy period of rebuilding the internal popular forces lay ahead. This weakened the power of ANC elements that favoured an unremitting confrontational engagement with the state.
- The armed struggle never matured to the point where it posed a military threat to white rule. By the late 1980s its potency had faded to the point where the ANC would later admit that 'there was no visible intensification'.[13] The radical social transformation projects attempted in Mozambique and Angola had been destroyed, in large part through a massive destabilisation campaign by the apartheid state, reinforcing South African hegemony throughout the region.
- After the Namibian settlement, the ANC lost its military bases in Angola and was forced to move as far afield as East Africa. There was no real prospect of re-establishing them in the region.
- The collapse of Eastern Europe and the USSR's shift towards demilitarising its relations with the West (and dramatically lessening its support for revolutionary projects in the South) deprived the ANC of its main backers and effectively curtailed its armed struggle.
- During the 1980s, the ANC had achieved substantial ideological hegemony among the masses and their main forces, bolstering its claim to be the government-in-waiting.

Violence orchestrated or promoted by the apartheid state combined with these developments to spur the main political actors towards the 1993 political settlement. This and the threat of continued destabilisation also helped establish some of the parameters of the settlement. These included acceptance of a five-year Government of National Unity (in the hope that this would defuse counter-revolutionary activities), the 'sunset clause' (creating a strong degree of continuity with pre-1994 state structures and staffing), and the ANC's cautious and, in some cases, conservative approach to socio-economic transformation. On the latter front, however, the spectre of organised destabilisation would appear to have been a minor consideration.[14]

The imprints of LIC in post-apartheid violence

That LIC operations directly and indirectly contributed massively to the violence that rocked South Africa in the decade preceding the 1994 democratic elections is beyond dispute. Less clear is the manner and the extent to which those actions have contributed to the dynamics of violence in the post-apartheid era to this day.

The causes of political and criminal violence are irreducible to LIC actions alone, either before of after 1994. The potency of LIC depends greatly on the extent to which it encourages and amplifies dynamics that already exist or are evolving in society. LIC interventions from the mid-1980s onwards augmented and exploited class differentiation and accompanying social divisions that had been occurring in most African townships since the 1970s. Those developments had already acquired a dynamism that was independent of any LIC operations. LIC-associated socio-economic interventions were too limited in scope to fundamentally alter the character of on-going processes of social differentiation. State-sponsored violence became effective to the extent that it occurred in tandem with other factors, which included:

- The strategic disorientation experienced by cadres and supporters who had to relocate themselves within a negotiations process that was remote, highly technical and elitist – a traumatic task for activists who, only a few years earlier, had been urged along the path of insurrection.
- Practical difficulties of converting an underground, exiled organisation into a legal, above-ground one.
- Decisions to either fold United Democratic Front structures into an ANC whose organisational footholds were still flimsy or, in some cases, to shut down those structures.
- The ideological disorientation caused by the collapse of Eastern Europe, long a compass point for the ANC-aligned opposition.

Although criticised for playing down the role of third force actors, academics Mike Morris and Doug Hindson in the early 1990s attempted to situate the violence in Natal in such an expansive analytical framework. They did that by investigating the structural contexts for the 'clandestine interventions by branches and individuals of the security forces'[15].

Focusing on violence in urban areas, they argued that

> rapid urbanisation has led to a reallocation towards the cities and massively increased pressure on urban social resources. It has sparked off a struggle for space, land and residential resources, leading to the mobilisation of communities along new lines based on emerging social divisions – race, class, age, language and ethnic origin.[16]

Casting their gaze beyond KwaZulu-Natal, Morris and Hindson also alerted analysts to a broader set of dynamics in which the gradual erosion of apartheid institutions linked with the attempted institutionalisation of a new social basis on the foundations of a racially divided society to create fertile terrain for the violence.

Rather than attribute the violence solely to attempts to prolong state control, strengthen (potential) allies of the apartheid regime and destabilise democratic formations, the authors highlighted other developments. In their view, 'the weakening of state control in the aftermath of the township uprisings of the mid-1980s led instead to the formation of competing local centres of power within black residential areas'.[17] Structural dynamics such as these created the terrain on which state violent intervention could occur most effectively, particularly in areas where organised political and social formations existed or were vigorously introduced.

Those trends helped facilitate the carnage between 1990 and 1994, which occurred in a context where repressive state apparatuses had lost all legitimacy and where overt, repressive forms of social control had become deregulated. The state had lost its ability to maintain social control, leaving in its wake contesting ventures to assert control at the local level. In Brandon Harber's view, 'political and criminal violence escalated within the vacuum of state authority created by the very processes of negotiated constitution-making'.[18]

Such readings seem especially appropriate to post-1994 South Africa. Not only has the state ceased to be the principal author of violence and agent of social control, but its capacity to inhibit high rates of violence has been weakened by dysfunctional policing procedures, judicial processes and penal management. These shortcomings are systemic in nature. They reflect attempts to shift the apparatuses away from repressive functions and are aggravated by poor management, low morale and fiscal constraints. This has created fertile conditions for corruption. Compounding the difficulties are lingering antagonisms which compromise the state's ability to control the

actions of some of its functionaries or structures. Pertinent examples are the fabrication by intelligence structures of the Meiring Report which detailed an illusory left-wing conspiracy to overthrow the state, the failure to remove police officers implicated in violence in the Richmond area of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, and frequent complaints of obstructionism by incumbent police officers. The discordant marriage of the old and the new is most evident in state intelligence structures that remain predominantly staffed by pre-1994 officials. Undermining their effectiveness further are the highly competitive relationships developed between these structures during the 1980s.

As a result these apparatuses have been unable to establish the legitimacy necessary for effective functioning. The failure of the apartheid criminal justice system to apply the rule of law to overt state repression (let alone the more furtive versions) compounded the effects of state violence and burdened that system with deep-rooted distrust. The complicity of that system placed it at the centre of apartheid governance, embellishing the latter with a thin veneer of order and due process while actively serving as an instrument of repression.

The capacity to exercise social control has become deregulated and dispersed among a variety of actors in the state and civil society and, consequently, is being exercised in accordance with diverse and sometimes conflicting agendas.[19] Mirroring this state of affairs is the dispersal of organised violence among a range of actors that include residual third force elements, far-right paramilitary groups, vigilante organisations, shacklords and warlords, and criminal gangs. The ambit of state power has been curtailed – *not* to the point of impotency, but to the extent that it no longer monopolises the application of organised force in society. The point is driven home when right-wing groups raid military bases to stock their arsenals[20], entire communities – like Manenberg (Cape Town) or Westbury (Johannesburg) – are restructured by long-running gang wars, and vigilante groups (like People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad)) can routinely fulfil the roles of arresting officer, judge and executioner.

The destabilising impact of these developments and the acts of violence associated with them are manifest. Referring to cash-in-transit heists (which netted R70 million in 1997–1998), Centre for Policy Studies director Steve Friedman noted that 'the sight of well-drilled and armed groups of men opening fire on security vans creates the impression that there are organised, violent groups in society which are more powerful than the state'.[21] The effect

is to undermine trust in the state, although we cannot deduce from this state of affairs that these acts are governed by a conspiracy or overarching goal of destabilising the new order. Instead, they are better understood as compilations of de-centred activities geared at achieving specific objectives, ranging from armed robberies or wresting control of a taxi federation, to contesting the authority of rival political and social forces or defending the institutional power of a particular intelligence structure.

The denuded scope of state power in South Africa is closely tied to the growing pains of the state-in-transition. Characteristic of transitional societies is the temporary inability of the state to 'impose the same degree of order on the population as that achieved by the old regime'.[22] Shifts in rules and norms, the redefinition of goals and objectives, personnel changes, job insecurity, residual distrust of the old guard and deliberate obstructionism combine to sap the state institutions of their effectiveness. Democratic transitions, in particular, encounter a further complication: 'the difficulty of establishing an appropriate balance between respect for human rights on the one side and effective action against criminal (activity) on the other'.[23] Post-apartheid South Africa exhibits all these features, as Morris and Hindson (1992) detected early in the transition, and as the managers of the post-apartheid state have subsequently discovered.

These travails are being augmented by more global trends associated with capitalism's current phase of neo-liberal globalisation, characterised by the development of productive, financial, information and communications systems that transcend national borders, and policy adjustments that spur their operation. In historian Eric Hobsbawm's summary,

> by the end of the century the nation-state was on the defensive against a world economy it could not control; against the institutions it had constructed to remedy its own international weakness, such as the European Union; against its apparent financial incapacity to maintain the services to its services so confidently undertaken a few decades ago; against its real incapacity to maintain what, by its own criteria, was its major function: the maintenance of public law and order [24].

The reality of globalisation should not obscure the fact that political, social and economic management still occurs at the national level, though the link between control in these spheres is weakening. At the end of the 20th century,

the central principle and axis for ordering societies over the past two hundred years – that of state power – is being radically redefined.

By 1998, two years after the introduction of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (Gear) strategy by the ANC government, the process of economic liberalisation was well under way in South Africa.[25] It is marked by caps on fiscal spending (constraining budgetary allocations to state departments, including those tasked with law and order functions), as well as the removal of controls over exchange, capital movements and trade barriers. It has been accompanied by the privatisation of state enterprises and the contracting of state functions to private enterprise. The latter process had been inaugurated in fitful fashion since the late 1980s by the apartheid regime – most notably in the field of housing provision in black townships and by deregulating the transport sector, a move that boosted the emergence of the private commuter taxi industry.

Whether avoidable or not, these policy decisions have exposed a transitory state to many of the destabilising dynamics that afflict its counterparts elsewhere in the world. Economic interdependence and globalisation, Chris Landsberg and Zondi Masiza have noted, 'foster new exigencies in the global system that are conducive to crime' with 'multiple channels of contact between societies hastening the decline of conventional state sovereignty'.[26] According to Hans-Peter Martin and Harald Schumann, in weakened states (such as Russia, the Ukraine and Colombia),

> legal and illegal business activity pass smoothly into each other. No one can tell any longer which parts of the state apparatus still defend the rule of law, and which have been contracted by one set of criminals to wage war on their rivals.[27]

These trends have become evident in South Africa, with criminal activities linking into transnational crime networks while some state functionaries appear to have been drawn into the nexus of organised crime.[28] The apartheid state itself engaged in cross-border crime and the new government's decision to accede to the edicts of neo-liberal orthodoxy (along with the post-apartheid opening of trade, transport and travel routes) has exposed the country to new trends. According to Williams,

> the very developments which facilitate the transfer of goods, people and money through the global economy facilitate the transportation of drugs,

> arms and illegal aliens, the rapid movement of 'dirty money', contract killers and contraband of all kinds.[29]

Organised transnational crime has become the fastest-growing branch of the world economy, with international drug trafficking believed to generate an annual turnover of over $300–500 billion, making it the second largest international enterprise after the arms trade.[30] South Africa has not escaped these developments, which increasingly intersect with domestic political and criminal violence (through gunrunning, smuggling of stolen goods, drug trafficking, money laundering, and the defence and usurping of criminal turf zones). According to Landsberg and Masiza, 'the perceived vulnerability of South and southern Africa creates an ideal window of opportunity for crime syndicates' which have entered the country 'not only from elsewhere in Africa, but also from the former eastern bloc countries, the far east, western Europe and Latin America'.[31]

The Minister for Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, stated that 481 crime syndicates were operating in South Africa in 1996, with about a third of them associated with international networks. The Crime Information Management Centre in 1997 reported that Russian transnational criminal organisations were believed to be acquiring legitimate business in South Africa to act as fronts for the stockpiling and distribution of weapons elsewhere on the continent. The report also alleged that many syndicates had infiltrated state institutions, especially the police, prisons and courts.[32] Their main areas of activity were vehicle and weapons smuggling, followed by financial fraud, and the smuggling of precious minerals. The South African Police Services (SAPS) *Report on the Incidence of Serious Crime during 1995* found that vehicle theft and hijackings were linked to gunrunning and drug trafficking, while the latter was especially coupled with money laundering and fraud. Academic Stephen Ellis has alleged that figures from the former apartheid state and the formal economy are implicated in smuggling operations in southern Africa – a trend common to states in political transition, according to Landsberg and Masiza.[33]

Violence in South Africa has increasingly become linked to a massive rise in transnational criminal transactions, which in turn is facilitated by structural changes in the global economy:

> at the local level, particularly in poor black communities, armed militias or gangs today attempt to control territory from which they derive economic

> benefits. Some reach an understanding with local police officers who are unable to enforce the law fully and who may, in any case, have developed alliances with various unofficial armed groups over many years. Some such groups develop vertical alliances with national political parties and individual politicians who encouraged violence in various ways over many years, or with businessmen who can import the goods which they most require – guns – and wholesale the goods which they offer for export. Prominent among the latter are marijuana (of which South Africa is now the world's leading producer, according to police statistics) and stolen cars (of which there were 98 000 in 1995).[34]

Perhaps more obvious than at any other period this century is the highly porous nature of the boundaries between the state and civil society. In the age of neo-liberal globalisation in particular, the state is best understood as a 'strategic field' that is 'constituted, condensed [and] materialised through a complex ... interplay of economic, political and ideological forces'.[35] Conversely, civil society is located in rules, transactions and contests, which connect it to the state. The enmeshing of state and civil society becomes especially visible around violence, where acts (connivance by individuals or groups) or omissions (weak detection, prosecution and penal processes) within the state combine with factors from civil society to generate or enable specific acts of violence.

The post-1994 South African state is prone to these developments. Internal dysfunctions and inconsistencies associated with states-in-transition are compounded by:

- the fact that the democratic movement did not take but instead became assimilated into the state, which has complicated and compromised efforts at (internal) reform;
- the resulting tensions and distrust between incumbents and newcomers, particularly in those arms of the state that had been entrusted, prior to 1994, with defending the apartheid order;
- the ability of recalcitrant groups to apply their (superior) knowledge of pre-1994 bureaucratic systems in order to conceal certain information or acts, and highlight others;
- deregulatory processes set in train under the apartheid regime (the *laissez-faire* emergence of the commuter taxi industry being one, good example); and

- deregulatory moves as well as spending cuts introduced by the post-1994 government.

The 'democratisation' of organised violence and the advent of contesting agents of social control is closely linked to the developments outlined here and is likely to endure beyond the birthing process of the new South Africa. This likelihood is compounded by legacies inherited from the apartheid era, the persistence of unresolved contests for power (for instance, between the IFP and ANC), as well as the renewed prominence of previously suppressed or sublimated lines of tension (for example, between traditional and modern systems of authority) and new contradictions (between different class layers in communities, and between rural and urban sections of society).

The following sections survey some of these features of post-1994 South Africa.

'Hidden' dimension of LIC

A less transparent consequence of state violence – and particularly LIC actions – during the 1980s has been to discourage the appeal and limit opportunities for collective action. In academic Jacklyn Cock's view, LIC hinged

> on achieving a level of individuation and atomisation from which people's aspirations can be re-directed into privatized, consumerist ends. It is in this sense that the state intends to distract the oppressed majority through home ownership, television and soccer stadiums – a new, more sophisticated version of 'bread and circuses'.[36]

This crucial aspect of LIC – undermining collective oppositional activities and facilitating access to individualised routes for satisfaction or self-realisation – has been overlooked by enquiries into LIC in South Africa. Yet, it could offer a valuable reference point for understanding post-1990 trends in violent crime.

LIC strategy in the late 1980s coincided with several socio-economic changes. The provision of electricity to townships, for example, allowed access to new forms of consumerism (durable goods like stoves, fridges, televisions, VCRs), while 99-year leasehold encouraged investment in the domestic domain (adding rooms to homes and buying furniture). Meanwhile, rising wages among organised workers had enabled many households to enter the realm of consumerism more forthrightly than ever before.

At the same time, conspicuous consumption by whites and the messages generated by the advertising industry functioned as an ideological framework for individualised desire and self-fulfilment – contrasting with the ethos which emphasised collective action. A prime effect of this was the demobilisation and disorientation of many organised, collective activities aimed at altering social relations. To be sure, millions of Africans have continued to sustain organisations such as burial societies, *stokvels* (informal savings schemes) and local church structures, but these initiatives operate at the parochial level and are not directly linked to the goals of broad societal transformation. Trade union organisations remain the most telling exception to these trends. But they, too, have come under mounting pressure that threatens to downgrade their socio-political roles and force them into narrower, economistic modes.

Apparent in the 1990s is the ascendancy of an ethos which conforms to the needs of an ostensibly modernising capitalist system and brazenly contradicts the counter-hegemonic value systems advanced (but fitfully demonstrated, particularly in the past decade) within and around the main resistance organisations. One of the most potent and enduring achievements of the counter-revolutionary endeavours undertaken by the apartheid state and capital rests therefore in the ideological realm: reasserting the dominance of a discourse in which the individual eclipses the collective as the agent of change and self-realisation.

Socially, the scope of communal interests has become truncated into a variety of traditional and 'alternative' family forms (including gangs). Criminologist Wilfried Scharf has argued that state violence contributed indirectly to gang growth in Cape Town townships 'by preventing or impeding informal mechanisms of social control that had previously retarded gang-formation and gang activity'[37], noting that gangs ballooned 'in African townships only when the street committees had been weakened and when the people's courts had been smashed by the police'.[38]

Politically, meaning and worth is achieved through corporatist relations established between the individual and the state (paying taxes and rates), and between the individual and the political system (voting), while collective efforts to alter those relations are increasingly discouraged.

Equally profound is the importance consumptive activities attain in the construction of identity and in the quest for self-realisation. In a country that ranks, in terms of income, among the most unequal in the world, the social

and political effects are grave. With official unemployment levels exceeding 32 per cent and the economy absorbing fewer than seven out of every 100 job-seekers that enter the labour market annually, personal needs and consumptive desires are increasingly serviced within the circuits of sub- and illegal activities, with violence a common feature of such ventures.

In depressed zones like Johannesburg's Eldorado Park, circuits of illegal accumulation have become integral to social and economic reproduction. As journalist Ferial Haffajee has observed,

> in this subverted economy, car theft, drug and cellphone syndicates provide employment and career paths. Its downstream industries are chop shops and specialist stolen goods networks, where it is possible to furnish a home from the pickings of crime. Eldorado Park is not a glitch, but a universal. Economies like these are replicated across the country .[39]

The fruits of criminal and sub-legal activities pass into intricate networks of fencing, re-assembly and disguise, transport and retail, networks that apply levels of innovation and creativity which, if legal, would reap awards for business excellence:

> The typical Gauteng hijacking syndicate was a textbook model of a networked firm, in which specific functions were outsourced and labour markets were as flexible as product demand ... Businessmen dream of honing an organisation this sensitive to market signals.[40]

Many criminal enterprises are exemplars of entrepreneurship. Their most successful representatives excel at innovation, display an uncanny nose for market opportunities, and revel in displaying the rewards of their initiative – acting as living advertisements for their endeavours and determination. At the local level they become icons, observed with a mix of dread and envy. The goods then pass back into the market place, where consumers eager to acquire, replace or upgrade a vehicle, stereo, microwave, cellular phone or pearl necklace at a bargain rate, eschew moral scruples and make the purchase, sealing a chain of complicity in criminal enterprise. In the case of many vehicle thefts, the pattern is the reverse: an order is placed for a particular model and the product is then stolen and delivered to the customer.

The set of values described here represents a victory for the capitalist order

and has been achieved by the fusing of an ensemble of factors. Prominent among them were the specific forms of state coercion and reforms applied during the 1980s. In weakening the links between the individual and the collective, and in demonising the goals and ideals of organised resistance, LIC contributed to the successful containment of an alternative discourse centred on the principles of equality and solidarity. This accomplishment has facilitated the consolidation of social, political and economic relations compatible with and, indeed, necessary for the survival and modernisation of South African capitalism. That this success also constitutes one of the underlying causes of violent crime is a tragic irony and not the outcome of some long-term destabilising objective. LIC was not a scorched earth strategy. It was intended to reshape the terrain for change and set its parameters.

Patterns of violence in post-apartheid South Africa

In scanning post-1994 trends the category of political violence appears increasingly imprecise, with incidents grouped under that heading often exhibiting criminal motives. This overlapping character of violence is not new. Prominent among the more than 8 000 amnesty applications brought before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) were amnesty bids for armed robberies and other property crimes that, allegedly, were carried out to obtain resources to further political objectives.[41] Criminal and political violence also merged in the *comtsotsi* phenomenon of the late 1980s, as petty criminals merged their criminal activities with political activism. The police, too, diligently supported criminal gangs (such as the notorious Black Cats), harnessing them into destabilisation projects in townships. The looting of homes was a common (and highly organised) feature of the pogroms carried out by IFP supporters on the East Rand during the early 1990s.

Purely political violence continues in the guise of right-wing actions and in KwaZulu-Natal where political contestation remains an enduring factor in the violence. Even there, an exclusive emphasis on the political dimension neglects the mix of factors at play. These could include hostility between two political organisations, warlords, leaders of rival organisations who are also engaged in competing activities for private gain (such as taxi bosses, squatter lords, commanders of certain resources such as pasture, residential land or water), or competing criminal outfits. The actors could have links with individuals in the local police force and police members might be directly involved in the activities that trigger the attack (owning taxis, collaborating

with a criminal gang). Weapons, vehicles, intelligence, training or even personnel could be provided covertly by police officers or right-wing activists pursuing a political agenda. Any combination of these elements could intersect also with factors such as allegations of adultery or theft.

Other recurrent acts of violence seem even less easily classifiable. Attacks carried out by the vigilante organisation Pagad have borne a political subtext insofar as they imply a dismissal of the state's capacity to control organised crime and explicitly challenge its monopoly on the use of violence in the 'public interest'. These undercurrents were made overt when a bomb, allegedly planted by Pagad, detonated outside police offices near Cape Town in August 1998.[42]

Also perplexing are attacks on farmers, a pre-1994 feature linked to the anti-apartheid struggle which has re-emerged dramatically since 1997. A 1998 government intelligence report attributed them mainly to criminal motives while acknowledging that some could be linked also to conflicts over tenure and land claims or stem from poor working conditions and maltreatment. The report claimed to have found no evidence of political organisational involvement. Yet the apparently retributive character of some attacks lends them a political gloss. Many of these attacks are characterised by extreme violence, which suggests that the murder of a farmer (and his family) is a salient objective. In most instances, the killers also steal vehicles, weapons and other valuables. But it is uncertain whether this assigns to the attacks purely criminal motives, since the booty gathered could represent a form of remuneration for a 'contracted' killing (by, for instance, serving or evicted farmworkers).

For analytical purposes, the distinction between political and criminal violence therefore has become questionable, especially if we accept the definition of political violence as 'any act of destruction which impacts on the power relations in society'.[43] In the post-1994 context, both criminal and political violence impacts on the political domain – by eroding public confidence in state institutions, apparently confirming the diminishing reach of the state, and encouraging reactions (such as vigilantism) that challenge its authority.

As argued at the outset, more appropriate is a different analytical vantage point, which recognises the de-centred nature of post-1994 violence. No longer the preserve of the state, violence has become embedded in the intersecting social, economic, political and cultural relations that shape South

African society. The regulation of societal engagements, economic activities and political relations increasingly takes place beyond the ambit of the state. In South Africa's case, the situation has been compounded by the demise of the repressive order, which hinged on single-mindedly applied state power. Violence has become both 'democratised' and 'privatised', functioning as an instrument available for *the laissez faire* pursuit of a vast range of objectives.

The tangle of different motives and actors is nowhere more evident than in the war zone of Tsolo in the Transkei, which can serve to illustrate the complexity of factors involved in violence.

The battleground of Tsolo[44]

Between January 1993 and July 1996, 720 attacks occurred in two remote areas north of Umtata in the Transkei. More than 400 people were killed, mostly around the villages of Tsolo and Qumbu. The annual per capita murder rate in the area was in excess of 1 000 per 100 000 inhabitants.[45] Since mid-1996, women and children have become the preferred targets of attacks, accounting for 43 per cent of victims. Attacks are generally well-resourced and well-planned, with the assailants sometimes fleeing in 4x4 vehicles in a manner that suggests intimate knowledge of the terrain. The weapons used are generally AK-47, R1, R4 and G3 automatic rifles. In some cases, attacks have included stock theft, with livestock being removed in large trucks. Motives for the attacks are obscure, perplexing investigators and giving rise to a variety of explanations.

Appointed in February 1995 to probe the violence, the Kroon Commission of Inquiry concluded that stock theft, witchcraft, underdevelopment and marital disputes were the chief causes. Investigations by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) confirmed some of the findings of the Kroon Commission, but concluded that other factors are also at play. Journalists have described the violence as a 'lethal cocktail of clan rivalry dating back 70 years, stock theft and modern-day gangsterism'.[46] The South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) blamed the violence on unemployment and the lack of development in the area, while admitting that some of its members had engaged in stock theft. Political organisations (mainly the ANC and the SACP) have stressed the hand of third force elements bent on undermining their dominance in the area. Those allegations have been fuelled by the apparent breakdown in policing and the administration of justice, and in communication between the various arms of law and order enforcement.

Cases brought to the Attorney-General's office often collapsed because of poor investigative work by the police. Dockets were incomplete or mysteriously went missing – suggesting the complicity of corrupt police officers and court officials in the violence. By mid-1997 (two years after the convening of the Kroon Commission), the Tsolo police were 'nearly inoperable' according to the Human Rights Commission. Police officers had no two-way radios, did not wear uniforms or carry weapons at work and had only four vehicles in running condition. In Qumbu, some refurbishment had occurred (electricity was laid on) and seven vehicles worked. The two armoured vehicles, however, had not been repaired since 1996.

The police's failure to examine the reasons for victims' withdrawal of cases has perpetuated, according to the HRC, 'a culture of fear' in which 'the rule of law is not being respected or enforced'. Statistics lend disturbing credence to the assessment: of the 801 cases of stock theft and violence reported to the police between 1993 and 1995, 788 cases were closed. Only 23 went before the magistrate's court, yielding eight convictions. Corruption, problems with the integration of the army and the police, and the incompetence of justice officials have contributed to the continuation of the violence, according to the HRC. Meanwhile, death threats and intimidation led to a spate of resignations from the Attorney-General's office, further disrupting the judicial process. The resulting failure to protect residents from attack or theft gave rise to suspicions that the police were actively involved in the violence. Not even the Eastern Cape MEC for Safety and Security, Dr Malizo Mphehle, escaped alleged involvement; he was forced to resign after two weapons used in attacks had been traced to him.

The reality, though, seems considerably more complex than third force theories allow for. According to the HRC, the probable origins of the violence lay in rampant stock theft that went unpunished by the police. In response some residents created anti-stock-theft groups whose vigilante activities set in train other developments. These factors, in turn, became intertwined with a host of others – including migrant labour patterns, gender-based tensions and insecurity, various forms of criminal activities, a dysfunctional criminal justice system (due to corruption, incompetence, demoralisation and institutional instability) and interventions by right-wing farmers.

Since the area lacks any industry, many male residents seek work in the Gauteng and Free State provinces, while some of those unwilling or unable to do so have resorted to theft in Tsolo and Qumbu. The migrant labour system

has aggravated social instability in other respects, as well. Disrupted families have spawned allegations of adultery against women staying behind in the area, while the authority roles assumed by women (in the absence of male migrant workers) appear to have fuelled charges of witchcraft. According to eyewitnesses, women targeted by killers are often addressed as *oqhira* (witches) or *izifebe* (prostitutes) by their attackers. In other cases, armed men have persuaded women to allow them to 'protect' their homes. According to the Red Cross, these men are routinely declared stock thieves, while the women are accused of harbouring them. The HRC has concluded that women are caught in a Catch-22 situation, with no way out of the violence.

The Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) felt stock theft 'had become a political issue'. It charged that traditional justice systems were the most effective remedy but had been ignored by the authorities for political reasons.[47] Other information obtained by the Attorney-General's office pointed to the informal involvement of right-wing farmers (who supplied training in arms used in attacks) and linked the violence to gun-running syndicates from KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.[48] Some of the weapons are home-made and have been manufactured from steel believed to be smuggled from an Iscor plant in Vereeniging, where some members of the vigilante group *umfelandawonye* ('we die together') are believed to occupy managerial positions.

The Attorney-General's office uncovered evidence implicating the *umfelandawonye* in the violence. Allegedly enjoying links with the local ANC, *umfelandawonye* operates in the guise of a funeral society, but has spawned a paramilitary unit known as *inkqayi* ('those with shaved heads'). Its headquarters are in Vereeniging where many men from Tsolo and Qumbu work in heavy industry plants. According to the police, names of hit lists would be drawn up at meetings there, and young men (aged 16–20) would then be dispatched to carry out the attacks. Its vigilante activities allegedly have been supplemented by extortion and contract-killing.[49] *Umfelandawonye* was formed in 1994 after concerned members of the Tsolo community received no response from the government to numerous memorandums highlighting the violence. Stock thieves responded by forming their own self-defence unit – *amampondomise* (thieves unit) – which would carry out retaliatory attacks and steal from members of *umfelandawonye* working in Gauteng. Also embroiled in the violence are two other vigilante groups – the *isolomzi* and *masifunisane* units – that allegedly used strong-arm methods

(including torture) to extract 'confessions' from suspected stock thieves.

By 1997, the HRC was insisting that the primary cause of the violence was no longer stock theft, which had declined around Tsolo and Qumbu. Other towns with higher rates of this crime (like MacLear and Matatiele) had not been plunged into comparable violence. According to the HRC:

> It is true that stock theft was the central cause of the violence in the area, but it appears that a range of other factors have found their way into the conflict ... People have used stock theft to settle old grudges by labelling their opponents *umfela* or 'thieves', others have found a market for gunrunning and political parties have claimed that a turf war is being fought to destabilise the area. In essence, these two rural districts and the wider region of the former Transkei provide fertile ground for those with sinister motives. Of continued concern is the fact the beneficiaries of the violence are not easily identifiable.[50]

Contributing, too, has been the inefficient responses of the police. Alleged third force involvement appears to rank low among other contributing factors. These include corruption, institutional disorder, financial crises, managerial decay and staff demoralisation suffered by criminal justice institutions in a province that has had to integrate three government administrations (of the Eastern Cape province, and the Ciskei and Transkei homelands) within a national context of fiscal austerity.

In short, Tsolo and Qumbu represent a perplexing tragedy that resists explanations that rely on linear causal chains. The violence has acquired a dynamic complexity fuelled as much by crime and anti-crime activities as it is by labour market patterns, rural underdevelopment, disrupted social structures, gender relations, disintegrated justice system, and political motives. The upshot is not a situation in which 'everyone' and, consequently, 'no-one' is guilty, nor does it prevent effective remedies from being applied (notably in enhancing the local policing and judicial systems). But it offers an extreme example of the increasing opacity of violence in the transitional South Africa.

Fault lines in the new era

Recognising the diffuse nature of violence does not mean no explanation is possible. Motives can still be detected, agents identified, modes of organisation deciphered and remedies applied. But, in doing so, we very

seldom have the luxury of locating an act of violence in a singular and unilinear narrative – a point to be borne in mind in the following overview of violence-begetting fault-lines.

Most peace monitors were expecting a rise in violence ahead of the 1999 elections, as rival political forces sought to assure control of their domains. Although little violence eventually took place, by mid-1998 those fears seemed to be vindicated when violence engulfed Richmond (in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands) and Lindelani (a massive shack settlement outside Durban), and fighting flared in communities on the South Coast.

In Richmond, victims were largely ANC officials or supporters; in Lindelani, they appeared to have been linked mainly to the IFP. Richmond had long been an ANC stronghold, so much so that its candidates in the 1996 local government elections won unopposed – its dominance having been won and consolidated under the helm of the late ANC and SACP strongman Harry Gwala and former ANC warlord Sifiso Nkabinde. Former IFP warlord Mandla Shabalala, meanwhile, had overseen the purging of most ANC influence from Lindelani. The renewed violence therefore seemed not to fit the standard model of ANC-IFP conflict, a matter to which we shall return.

At the same time, the political stakes in the province had risen dramatically, with opinion polls indicating a possible ANC majority there in the 1999 elections. Successive surveys since 1997 pegged the IFP's national support at one third to one half lower than the 10,5 per cent of votes it had garnered in the 1994 elections.[51] Since the bulk of those votes had been netted in KwaZulu-Natal, the party faced the prospect of losing its 51 per cent majority in 1999 – upsetting the precarious political equilibrium (and comparative peace) achieved in the province since 1995.

Consequently, the ANC has mooted a provincial merger, a suggestion rejected by the IFP leadership despite the muted enthusiasm of some colleagues.[52] The ANC also offered another olive branch, hinting that the IFP would retain a presence in central government irrespective of the 1999 poll results. Buthelezi meanwhile intimated that the ANC, in one journalist's phrasing, 'should not campaign so vigorously that the IFP's majority in KwaZulu-Natal would be placed under threat'.[53]

These debates and overtures seemed destined to open deeper schisms inside the IFP: only a handful of its leaders would benefit from a national role being reserved for the party, particularly if it lost its provincial majority. A provincial merger, meanwhile, would relegate them into a subordinate

position, while also aggravating the anxieties of IFP-aligned chiefs who fear being eclipsed by democratically elected local councils. Indeed, an enduring sticking point between the IFP and ANC has been the roles and powers of traditional leaders, who remain crucial engineers of IFP dominion in rural areas. The chess games of party political elites are therefore likely to fuel trepidation and insecurity at these lower ranks, rendering even more combustible an already volatile province.

One escape route would entail new concessions from the ANC on the role of traditional structures at the local government level, sweetened with measures to democratise those structures. Any such formula would require inspired precision. Entrenching chiefs' authority potentially reproduces one of the sources of conflict at the local level: struggles to command access to resources.[54]

Overlaying the more obvious fault-line of political tension between the IFP and ANC, therefore, is that between modern and traditional social and political systems. The IFP is particularly riven by this fissure which, unless bridged, could inaugurate the violent implosion of the party.[55]

But similar tensions extend beyond KwaZulu-Natal's boundaries and are likely to become one of the underlying factors fuelling violence in the Eastern Cape and in some peri-urban informal settlements around Cape Town.

Post-apartheid South Africa clearly fits the mould of the 'modern' – constitutionally enshrined political, civil and human rights, a constitutional court and an assortment of statutory bodies protecting those rights, a parliamentary democracy, the attempted regulation of social conflict through multi-actor decision-making and conflict resolution structures and more. However, for millions of South Africans modern institutions and systems – the state, the formal economy, trade unions and political organisations – are distant, often inaccessible features of the new order. Millions of citizens are locked out of these organisational, bureaucratic and regulatory systems. Their livelihoods and security are more closely tied to traditional authority systems that appear vulnerable under the new order.

Living mainly in rural areas and on the outskirts of urban industrial centres, these South Africans occupy a kind of no-man's land between the modern and the traditional. Their survival depends on their ability to traverse these zones, a feat that calls into play multi-stranded (and often subterranean) networks and links with a variety of actors – chiefs, gangs, community organisations, squatter lords, burial societies, and local political leaders. The result is a delicate equilibrium achieved between several nodes of

interest and power. That stability is threatened when the status of any one node is suddenly and drastically exaggerated or diminished. This could take many forms: externally introduced efforts to limit the authority of chiefs, development initiatives that threaten the authority of local powerbrokers, turf wars between criminal networks or squatter lords, concerted mobilisation by weak or new political formations, and more.

That fact that chiefs were historically incorporated into South Africa's colonial and apartheid administrations is overridden by the profound importance of these traditional structures in social systems that operate on the peripheries of the modern democratic order.[56] Yet, their authority is neither necessarily benign nor peace-inducing, an ambiguity aggravated by their location in struggles for political and material domination. The situation is further complicated by the mix of principles and self-interest that fuel their antagonism towards the modern. Until resolved – and the prospect seems distant – this contradiction will constitute one of the many seeds of post-apartheid violence.

The instability of traditional authorities is evident in the growing hostility between the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) and the ANC, which Contralesa supported in the 1994 elections. In late 1997, it expressed its unhappiness with the ANC government's alleged betrayal of traditional leaders by severing formal ties with the party. The Contralesa President, Pathekile Holomisa, said the ANC government had 'disempowered' leaders 'of their traditional authority', and accused it of depriving tribal authorities of their rights to hold title deeds to land.[57] By mid-1998, though, Contralesa had not officially allied itself to any political party, apparently heeding calls from President Nelson Mandela that it refrain from engaging in party politics. But many members reportedly had joined the United Democratic Movement (UDM)[58], a development that could spur violent contests over political loyalties in the Eastern Cape.

Formed in 1997, the UDM was the first new political party of note to emerge after 1994, knitting its populist mantle from anti-ANC rhetoric, right-wing social views and demands for speedier economic upliftment. The UDM appears to draw most of its support from the Eastern Cape – particularly the former Transkei homeland. Prominent in its ranks are former Transkei civil servants and chiefs. There is evidence of support for the UDM in other areas in the Western Cape and Gauteng, though it has not managed to challenge the dominance of the ANC in a significant manner.

To some extent the party's efforts to make inroads into ANC support-bases has taken violent forms in the Eastern Cape, where it feeds into anxieties of beleaguered local chiefs and residual tensions between the Transkei and Ciskei regions. Priming conflict further has been some ANC officials' labelling of the UDM as 'counter-revolutionary'. The label seems hyperbolic, despite the anti-ANC sentiments that unite the UDM's bizarre club of fellow travellers, which include rejects and defectors from the ANC, NP (and to a lesser extent the Democratic Party and IFP as well). This compilation seems weird rather than sinister, despite ANC claims that the 'old bricks which once made up the National Party house' were 'coming together again in a different guise'.[59]

A politically unwieldy formation, the party's unabashed populism functions as a weak gravitational force, attracting a motley array of discontents. Its supporters include disillusioned former middle-ranking NP officials, politically homeless bantustan figures and civil servants, traditional chiefs, supporters of local warlords like Sifiso Nkabinde in the Richmond area of KwaZulu-Natal, and ordinary citizens responding to the party's populist pledges. This tenuous assembly of dissatisfaction is a reaction against the slow pace of transformation, as well as the collapse of other political and institutional vehicles.[60]

Also exposed by the UDM's emergence is the absence of an embracing hegemonic discourse that speaks to the lives of the dispossessed majority. The language of *Simunye* ('we are one') and the 'rainbow nation' – expressing the pursuit of a putative unity – has had an estranging effect, since it contradicts people's lived realities. But the UDM's populism is too weak an epoxy to achieve unity among the contrary interests that have gravitated towards it. Its growth is likely to be marred by internal ructions and splintering, possibly generating violent instability on its own turf as well.

The political discordance introduced by the UDM is set to register mainly in and around the ANC, from which the UDM looks to draw much of its support. In KwaZulu-Natal's Midlands region, it became embroiled in renewed violence in mid-1998, weeks after Nkabinde had been acquitted (controversially) on 18 murder charges. A series of assassinations and massacres – to which Nkabinde himself eventually fell victim – rocked the Richmond area. Most, but not all, of the casualties belonged to the ANC and included several councillors. Even as the death toll mounted to more than 50, the identities of the attackers remained unknown.

Claims of third-force involvement abounded, as survivors reported having heard attackers speak 'English with a distinctly English [read white] accent' and political parties denounced the police's failure to make arrests or protect residents. At work, according to the ANC's Bheki Cele, was 'a third force, a machinery far broader than the politics of Richmond itself'.[61] In a statement, the national cabinet attributed the violence to 'sinister forces and professional killers',[62] while other commentators linked it to 'the warlordism entrenched in parts of KwaZulu-Natal'.[63] Commonly suspected, as well, was the hand of the UDM and IFP which, by Nkabinde's admission, had a 'close relationship' in the area.[64]

Although a precise map of the causes eluded investigators, some features of the Richmond violence seemed discernible, drawing attention us to its multi-layered dynamics. Instability had been heightened by the switched political allegiance of a local warlord (Nkabinde) who commanded a network of supporters and a capacity to engage in planned, organised violence. Introduced were fresh tensions within erstwhile ANC ranks, some members of which had followed Nkabinde's departure to the UDM. A striking factor, therefore, was the relative autonomy of warlordist power. Although usually associated with a political party, warlords generally were able to build independent power bases. In the case of Richmond, one such concentration of power turned rogue. Denied the vehicle of the ANC and outside its disciplinary orbit, its pursuit of political and material ambitions introduced new fault-lines and tempted opportunistic partnerships with an array of other actors (which could include the IFP, elements in the police and local right-wing groups). At the same time, the instability induced by the presence of a rogue powerbroker brought new opportunities for external destabilisation.

It is noteworthy that analogous developments occurred also in an IFP zone like Lindelani, outside Durban. There, Shabalala had for more than a decade violently enforced IFP control while also expanding his own fiefdom which extended into commercial enterprises like taxi fleets. Even before his expulsion from the IFP in 1996, his multiple loyalties had been in evidence: supporters had allegedly set fire to buses and coerced commuters to use Shabalala's taxis, while even former IFP secretary-general Ziba Jiyane had had to flee Lindelani amid a hail of gunfire. In mid-1998, the settlement was hit by renewed violence which seemed even murkier than that racking Richmond.

These phenomena have confirmed the de-centred nature of post-1994 violence even in a province where conflict is generally believed to adhere to

pre-1994 patterns. Key agents of organised violence are lodged in political and civil society – simultaneously, in many instances. Not only has structural instability increased, but peace processes have become more complicated since they require that multiple, overlapping agendas and interests be addressed.

The state of affairs has also multiplied the entry points for destabilisation by external elements. The KwaZulu-Natal police remain replete with apartheid-era police, particularly former security police officers, leading human rights lawyer John Wills to lament that the force 'has not changed one bit since 1994 – there has been no transformation'.[65] Jeff Cromhout, a police officer accused of repeatedly ignoring warnings of an impending attack at Shobashobane (where 18 ANC supporters were massacred on Christmas Day, 1995) was promoted to the rank of Senior Superintendent in May 1998. The head of the province's organised crime unit, Henry Beavon, ran the Empangeni security branch in the 1980s. According to one count, three of the province's six areas in 1998 were being run by apartheid-era incumbents.

As in the Western Cape, the KwaZulu-Natal police are dogged by poor arrest and conviction records around apparently organised acts of violence. There have been exceptions. Chief police investigator Bushie Engelbrecht, for example, acquired a 'super-cop status' when he notched up convictions of 13 IFP supporters in the Shobashobane case. He failed however to compile sufficient evidence of police involvement in the massacre, despite internal findings of police complicity in the attack.

It is impossible to determine exactly what configuration of structural dysfunction (in the police service and court system), intransigence and politically-motivated sabotage is at play in KwaZulu-Natal. But there is evidence that all three dynamics are present in that province and the Western Cape. In one journalist's view:

> The warlordism in KwaZulu-Natal is similar to the gangsterism of the Cape Flats in the Western Cape. As with the case of warlords, the apartheid government has been accused of nurturing the gangsters who wage territorial battles. Police persistently face claims of colluding with them, and the Cape Attorney-General's office is criticised for the low prosecution and conviction rate. In such a climate, violence assumes its own momentum. Leaders lose control of their heavily armed followers while victims take up arms in a desperate attempt to protect their right to life.[66]

A 1997 probe by the Public Protector found that more than a dozen cases against the Cape Flats Hard Livings gang in 1993–1995 had 'collapsed because police investigators lost witnesses and vital evidence, ignored prosecutors and failed to protect complainants or witnesses from intimidation'.[67] In early 1998, two police officers were charged with an apparent contract killing in 1996 of a gang member inside Pollsmoor Prison. The murder triggered a bloody gang war which claimed more than 20 lives. According to another report, 'many frontline station commanders are convinced some of their officers sell information, equipment and arms to warring factions', while 'ballistics tests also show that government-issued ammunition ... is widely used in the fighting'.[68]

Elsewhere in the country, police officers have been arrested for their involvement in taxi violence, including carrying out 'hits' against rival taxi owners.[69] Some investigators have stated that police who owned taxis in Mpumalanga had helped assemble hit-squads from Mozambique.

According to 1996 figures, one in four police officers in Johannesburg was being investigated for criminal activities. Allegations that police involvement in taxi violence, gang conflict and drug-dealing are guided by political or ideological agendas have rarely been accompanied by solid evidence. Yet, TRC and court testimonies have shown that these fields of violence have been seeded by the apartheid security apparatuses. Evidence presented to the TRC in 1998 indicated that the regime's chemical and biological warfare programme had included the mass production of mandrax (the most commonly abused narcotic in the Cape Flats) and ecstasy, raising 'the possibility that the National Party government, whether intentionally or not, literally created an 'army of criminals' which is still in arms'.[70]

TRC investigations have cast little light on the links between old security structures and new criminal networks. There are strong suspicions in intelligence circles that many of the old intelligence/criminal networks have been able to escape detection via alliances and partnerships created with the new dispensation. The ratio of incumbents to newcomers in the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) has made a purge in the service difficult. Estimates are that about 70 per cent of staff were inherited from the old National Intelligence Service (NIS), with newcomers concentrated largely in the upper echelons. Consequently, new officials' access to systems and information has been compromised. The capacity for destabilising actions therefore remains inside some state structures entrusted with countering precisely such activities.

Whether aimed at political purposes or financial gain, police corruption and collaboration with criminals has the effect of heightening social instability and fuelling violence, undermining public trust in the institutions of the state and spawning vigilante responses. The situation is aggravated by the failure of the criminal justice system to perform even rudimentary services in some areas. The system was designed and schooled not to administer justice but to defend apartheid. The widespread inefficiencies that plague the system stem from poor training, demoralisation (a third of police officers considered leaving their jobs in 1997, according to the SAPS), lack of resources, low pay and corruption. In 1997, the SAPS's anti-corruption unit brought 490 cases of corruption to court, while a further 2 000 cases were under investigation.[71] The first three months of 1998 saw 558 complaints registered against members of the SAPS, ranging from assault, theft, torture, rape and corruption, to failure to perform duties and hiding of evidence.

The state continues also to wield an overt, direct hand in violence. In the first three months of 1998, 203 people died in prison or as a result of police action, according to the Independent Complaints Directorate (a statutory body set up to probe such incidents). In the last nine months of 1997, 534 people died in detention or at the hands of police officers.[72]

Such excesses and incompetence encourage both criminal violence and vigilante reactions, two mutually reinforcing dynamics. They also undermine two prime building blocks of public order in a democratic system: the state's capacity to provide security for citizens, and the trust of those citizens in the state. Until 1997–1998, the frailty of many institutions of governance was masked somewhat by the (fading) echoes of post-apartheid euphoria and the towering presence of President Nelson Mandela. In the post-Mandela era, the health of the new democracy has become more closely associated with the effectiveness of the country's public institutions. These are being hampered by fiscal constraints, further weakening public trust – expressed, for example, in the proliferation of private security companies (with more than 3 000 such firms employing about 120 000 people).

Viewed in the abstract, repressive state apparatuses that enjoy legitimacy and function effectively are by no means the most important public institutions in a democratic society. But their importance seems to rise inordinately in circumstances of high levels of crime and violence – where citizens come to regard their functioning as a kind of litmus test for the health of the state system as a whole. Political scientists and politicians may bicker

about the 'irrationality' of this, but it is not surprising that the perceived inability of the police, judiciary, penal system (and army) to protect the physical integrity of citizens should undermine trust in the state.

The rise in vigilantism is one indicator of a disjuncture between citizens and the state. Most spectacular has been the rise of Pagad, which ostracises and violently attacks alleged gang members and drug dealers. Initially based in middle-class, Muslim-dominated suburbs of Cape Town, it has extended its operations into other parts of the country. According to police, it has assassinated suspected criminal figures, staged violent anti-crime operations, and carried out more than 50 bomb attacks against alleged drug dealers (and police units investigating the vigilante group). Pagad members have also explicitly challenged the authority and legitimacy of the state. Smaller-scale vigilante outfits have engaged in violence elsewhere, especially in the Northern Province.

The resort to vigilantism seems understandable when police arrest fewer than one in four perpetrators of crimes and when, according to one estimate, 'the odds of a perpetrator of a serious crime being convicted are about 20 to one'.[73] However, vigilantism not only undermines state control but also promotes increased violence, as vigilante groups and criminal gangs become embroiled in cycles of retribution. Once that stage is reached, the line between vigilantes and criminals blurs, as gangs and syndicates infiltrate anti-crime groups and foment attacks on rival crime networks in order to expand their turf.[74] According to academic Don Pinnock,

> the organisation is consolidating gangs in the Western Cape, and is in effect creating alliances among gangsters that would never otherwise have existed. This leads to better-organised gangs and consequently to more crime, which is what Pagad set out to fight in the first place.[75]

Less high profile but more widespread is a revival at local level of self-styled anti-crime groups and 'street committees' in many townships. Interestingly, women appear to be the most active participants in these structures, reflecting their extreme vulnerability to violence both inside and outside the domestic setting. In many cases, these groups are embedded in broader community structures (such as community policing forums and civic associations), and link with police stations and local government institutions. In others, they lack democratic accountability and spawn mob-style forms of retribution against alleged criminals, prolonging cycles of violence.

Perceptually, crime and violence have become defining features of post-1994 South Africa, despite official statistics indicating 'stabilised' or declining levels in most crime categories. Crime Information Management Centre statistics suggest that reported incidents in almost half of the 20 most serious crime categories decreased between 1994 and 1997, while those in the other half levelled off. According to SAPS figures, the number of murders and attempted murders declined (by 13,8% and by 1% respectively), as did robberies with aggravating circumstances (by 21,3%) and burglaries of businesses (by 5,2%), when figures for the first quarters of 1994 and 1997 were compared.[76] But the decline in murders was registered mainly in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, where the 1994 figures would have included politically-motivated killings (the incidence of which dropped sharply since 1994). In addition, the violent robberies category in 1994 included bank robberies and carjackings (which were disaggregated in the 1997 figures).

Most citizens have drawn little solace from the official numbers. Other reported crimes have increased dramatically, including robberies, rape, child abuse, indecent assault, burglaries of homes and serious assaults. According to SAPS commissioner Wouter Grove, 'an average 52 people were murdered every day, a rape was committed every 30 minutes, a car was stolen every nine minutes, and an armed robbery committed every 11 minutes' in 1995. Police, he told a parliamentary committee in June 1996, had dealt with some two million serious crimes in the previous year. Little wonder that a 1996 survey by the Nedcor group found that 45,6 per cent of respondents regarded crime – particularly violent crime – as the country's most serious problem.[77]

In some respects, the debate as to whether levels of violent crime are increasing, holding steady or dropping is purely academic. South Africa is an extremely violent society. The homicide rate in 1996 was 61 per 100 000 inhabitants – compared to 9 per 100 000 people in the USA, 1 per 100 000 in the UK, and 26 per 100 000 in Brazil in the same year.[78]

Several defining trends of violent crime have become evident. First, while no one is immune from risk, these crimes do not occur uniformly across the country. Township residents are much more vulnerable than people living in wealthy urban suburbs, while inhabitants of the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Gauteng are considerably more likely to suffer assaults or become murder (and attempted murder) victims than residents of the other provinces. Public insecurity is generated largely by the perceived risk of 'random' crime, yet

> the majority of intentional injuries and fatalities occur during inter-personal disputes between people who know each other and not, as it is often commonly believed, in attacks by unknown criminals during pre-meditated robberies and the like.[79]

Domestic violence continues to be aggregated in official statistics, rendering it sta tistically blurred – depending on the type of assault and the weapon used, an attack might be reported as rape, aggravated assault, murder or common assault. Most commentators believe domestic violence and rape are systematically under-reported in official statistics. Extrapolating from available figures, some observers believe African women are ten times more likely than white counterparts to experience violence, with women living in rural and economically depressed areas are the most vulnerable (the largely rural Northern Cape, for instance, ranks highest in reported rapes).

The social and political implications of high incidences of violent crime are disturbing. Trauma caused by emotional proximity to a murder, rape or violent assault undermines some of the basics of healthy social relations – both between individuals or groups, and between citizens and the state. As summarised by Hamber and Lewis, certain basic assumptions are undermined:

> the belief in personal invulnerability ('it won't happen to me'); the view of the self as positive; the belief that the world is a meaningful and orderly place, that events happen for a reason [and] the trust that other human beings are fundamentally benign.[80]

The risk of personal and interpersonal dysfunction is obvious. In violence-prone communities reported instances of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are exceptionally high, with one study of people displaced by political violence in KwaZulu-Natal finding that '87% had symptoms which fulfilled the criteria for the diagnosis of PTSD'.[81] In such a context, the impulse to use violence as a means to ensure personal security and to resolve conflict has become radically strengthened.

In the views of many observers, the continuing high levels of violence are propelled by a 'culture of violence', summarised in the Rev Frank Chikane's 1986 remark that people 'have been socialized to find violence completely acceptable and human life is cheap'.[82] The compounded effect of the militarisation of society since the 1970s, state violence, the legitimation of

violence in the anti-apartheid struggle and the pervasive use of violence to resolve social conflict situations has, in such views, established persisting patterns of behaviour.

Researcher Kerry Gibson has contested the notion that violence begets violence, arguing that 'there is no directly causal relationship between the external occurrence of violence and subsequent violent behaviour'.[83] Rather, trauma triggered by the experience of violence interacts with a set of social or environmental factors that either constrain or encourage resort to violence. Those factors include personal history, behavioural models offered by peer groups and 'alternative families' (gangs, sports teams, social and political organisations), the expected consequences of a particular act (the likelihood of detection or arrest), and the settings in which people act (such as power relations between social or political formations).

In this view, the 'culture of violence' is a complex interplay of psychological and social factors that encourage violent actions. Systematic exposure to violence – while not making any one person necessarily violent – is a profound factor shaping a person's framework for behavioural judgements, particularly in settings where the social inhibitions are frail. The result can be self-replicating carnage, morbidly demonstrated by hospital records showing that, on an average day in 1996, 2 500 South Africans 'required treatment as a result of stabbings, beating and shootings.'[84]

Widespread in South Africa is not only the propensity but also the means to commit extreme forms of violence. In KwaZulu-Natal, 50–60 per cent of the 3 000 political killings between 1993 and June 1995 were carried out with light weapons such as semi-automatic rifles, pistols and home-made guns.[85] Countrywide, there has been a massive proliferation of weapons in private hands, many of them acquired in an illegal arms trade with roots in the apartheid state's arming of surrogate forces in neighbouring countries, its support for Inkatha, and in corrupt elements in neighbouring states' (principally Mozambique's) security forces.

Supplies have been augmented by theft from army barracks and depots, police officers and private homes. A 'home' industry of firearms manufacturing has also developed; in 1994, one in five guns seized by the police was home-made. Cross-border smuggling operations have emerged, running along routes from neighbouring countries into KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Commercial air cargo companies are also utilised in the illegal arms trade.

Comparatively free access to weapons in societies uninhibited by entrenched forms of peaceful conflict resolution is a major contributing factor to high rates of violence, augmented by criminal gangs' and warlords' abilities to control or expand their turf. Meanwhile, as property owners introduce more sophisticated anti-crime devices, criminals increasingly resort to guns when plying their trade (witness the increase in car and truck hijackings, and armed bank and other robberies). Strict state regulation carries political risks, as fearful citizens demand the right to arm themselves – a demand which, in turn, spurs the theft, illegal manufacturing and smuggling of weapons.

It is difficult not to conclude that violence in South Africa, although reconfigured by the society's transitional character, has acquired dynamics that will see it persist at high levels. Although multi-fold, some of its causes can be subject to effective remedy – particularly the institutional dysfunction plaguing state apparatuses, including intelligence structures. But violence has become so deeply embedded in the country's social fabric, political contestation and economic activities, that its pervasive nature is unlikely to wane as South Africa completes its transition to democracy.

A key condition for persistent violence lies in the economic realm. An economy that continues to bar millions of people from formal employment and other legal forms of income generation, while allowing a small and increasingly non-racial elite to make and flaunt its wealth, gives rise to envy and frustration. Extreme income and wealth inequalities increase the temptation to resort to illegal alternatives or to boost legal activities by illegal means. Legal and secure economic opportunities are unlikely to expand significantly in the foreseeable future. The search for economic advancement by extra-legal means is therefore unlikely to recede significantly until economic growth can be achieved on terms that substantially revise the polarised structure of the economy. Indeed, there are strong indications that the informalisation of the economy will instead augment that trend which already has become encrusted with violence.

Concluding remarks

We have attempted to sketch some of the tangled circuit of factors and dynamics that sustain violence in South Africa. Even when the hands of identifiable political or organisational agents can be detected in specific acts, their actions are contingent on a web of other realities, many of them structural and deeply resistant to remedy.

Although more pronounced in the late-1980s, the role of state-sponsored violence in helping concoct this lethal alchemy was not and is not central. At most, it exacerbated emerging fault-lines and encouraged existing conflicts that arose as much from structural (political, economic, social and ideological) trends in society as they did from the acts and omissions of individuals, organisations and state institutions.

Since 1994, South Africa's integration into the global economy has amplified some of those trends and left the country vulnerable to new violence-spawning ones. The country has not escaped the institutional destabilisation and social disorientation that plagues societies in transition. Prudent and diligent interventions by the new state might, in time, steer South Africa clear of some of those complications. Yet, assumptions about the temporary character of pervasive violence hold only if we ignore the extent to which deregulatory trends associated with globalisation and the informalisation and de-centring of economic, social and political life has embedded violence in the fabric of this society.

CHAPTER NINE

The state and violence

What has the Truth and Reconciliation Commission found?

Piers Pigou

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in other chapters in this book, allegations about the involvement of the state and its security structures in gross violations of human rights have been made repeatedly over the years. This chapter examines some of what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) unveiled in this regard. In particular the chapter discusses the extent to which the TRC has been able to verify that the apartheid state sanctioned a variety of illegal actions, such as murder, torture and abductions, as part of a broader counter-insurgency strategy.

The chapter includes an overview of the connections that have been explored by the TRC between political and security decision-making structures and operations that resulted in gross human rights violations, as well as related issues that have not been addressed adequately or at all in the process.

The information discussed in this chapter has already been made public. The TRC presented an interim report to former President Mandela in October 1998. Although frequently referred to as the 'final report', the report and the TRC process as a whole was not to be completed until the end of the year 2000 at the earliest. Hundreds of amnesty applications were yet to be heard in public hearings, and only when that process was complete would the Commissioners reconvene to consider what additions and changes should be made to the current report.

Security Force amnesty applications

Although approximately 350 security force members applied for amnesty it is clear that large sections of the security forces did not come forward. The vast majority of those who did were former members of the South African Police (SAP). Very few members of the military utilised the opportunity for amnesty, and it remains unclear whether any members of the National Intelligence Service (NIS) submitted an application.

Most applicants were members of, or closely associated with, the Security Branch of the SAP. However, violations such as torture and assault were not the exclusive domain of the Security Branch. It remains to be seen how many members of units such as the Brixton Murder and Robbery Unit, the Riot Unit (and its successor, the Internal Stability Unit), as well as surrogates from other policing structures also came forward.

Applications were received from a range of senior officers, including two former Commissioners of the SAP[1] and over a dozen other police generals and brigadiers. The applicants include Security Branch officers from virtually all the former regions, and particularly from areas that witnessed widespread repression, such as the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Northern Province. Applications were also received from members of the Counter-Insurgency Unit (C Section) of the Security Branch, including all the former commanders of the notorious (C1) Vlakplaas unit, as well as Security Branch commanders of the Eastern Transvaal, Northern Transvaal, Eastern Cape and Natal regions. Applications were received from members of other security branch sections, including intelligence and Stratcom units, as well as from technical divisions.

It was expected that these applications would help to throw light on several hundred as yet unresolved apartheid-era cases. The applications also prompted further inquiries resulting in a series of well-publicised exhumations of murdered activists and liberation army cadres on 'death farms' in various parts of the country. The applications threw up a plethora of difficulties for the TRC as it sought to establish the veracity of particular versions and the extent to which there was full disclosure in each case.

Section 29 investigative hearings

Section 29 of the Commission's founding Act empowered its Investigation Unit (IU) to subpoena witnesses to investigative hearings. The TRC questioned members of former police and military units, some of whom

applied for amnesty, and others who had not. Most of these hearings were held *in camera*, and unless the matter was the subject of a public amnesty hearing, the details contained in these hearings were not been released to the public.

Witnesses included former members of the State Security Council (SSC), as well as other security chiefs from the SAP and the South African Defence Force (SADF). In total less than 50 witnesses were called during that phase.

It is not clear how helpful this process was, as most witnesses were not recalled to answer further questions arising from subsequent hearings and amnesty applications. It is also not clear to what extent the testimony of one witness prompted the testimony of others, the extent to which presented versions were contrived, or whether the IU was simply trying to throw a net over a wide area and see what it caught. It is clear, however, that a number of potential witnesses were not questioned and a number of issues were not put to security force members or politicians. The underlying cause for this appears to be a lack of coordination between amnesty and other investigative processes, and the constraints imposed by the investigative strategy employed by the Commission's Investigative and Research Units.

State and security branch involvement in covert operations

The Minister of Law and Order and the head of the Security Branch

Only two Cabinet ministers of the former National Party (NP) government, namely Piet Koornhof and Adriaan Vlok, applied for amnesty. Koornhof's application referred to his role as the minister responsible for a large number of forced removals. It was not the subject of a public amnesty hearing, as forced removals were not interpreted by the Amnesty Committee to be a 'gross human rights violation' as defined by the TRC Act.

Vlok's application, however, is of particular interest as he was the Minister for Law and Order from 1986 to 1994, the bloodiest period in South Africa's recent history. The amnesty application, however, was limited to his role in authorising the bombings of Cosatu House and Khotso House in 1987 and 1988, and the placing of bombs outside two cinemas that were screening Richard Attenborough's film *Cry Freedom*. Vlok was granted amnesty for all three incidents in 1999.[2]

The significance of the Khotso House application is that the operation involved the use of the police counter-insurgency Vlakplaas unit, and importantly that according to Vlok, former State President PW Botha gave the

authorisation for the bombing. The bombing took place during a period in which Vlok had been relieved of certain ministerial functions so he could act full time to direct the counter-revolutionary activities decided on by the State Security Council (SSC). Vlok told the amnesty committee that Botha had congratulated him and that all members of the SSC had supported Botha's praise of himself and the police involved. Botha denied the allegation through his lawyers and for reasons not made public, the amnesty committee hearing of the matter never called the former President or Vlok's cabinet colleagues to verify whether this version was correct.

Vlok's application was the first and only admission of involvement in criminal covert actions by a senior politician of the former government. It appears to have been prompted by the possibility of prosecution, following revelations by Eugene de Kock of his and others' involvement in the attack, at his trial in 1996. Subsequent allegations by former police Commissioner, and Security Branch chief Johan van der Merwe (who was also most likely prompted by De Kock's evidence in mitigation of his sentence) that the SAP had received instructions from Vlok appear to have forced the latter to disclose his involvement.

The question remains as to whether these were isolated cases. Was this the only time that a politician not only knew about illegal operations, but was directly involved in giving the orders and sanctioning subsequent actions? No other NP politician has admitted to knowing about illegal operations. Both Vlok and van der Merwe alleged that De Klerk had been made aware of police involvement in these bombings while he was President but that this was after the bombing, during the negotiation process. De Klerk denied this and took great efforts to ensure that references to his complicity in this regard, and the finding that this made him an 'accessory after the fact', were excised from the TRC's report. The TRC's version regarding his role in this regard remains *sub judice*.

Johan van der Merwe also testified to the TRC in 1996 that he had received authorisation in 1985 from Louis le Grange, Vlok's predecessor in the law and order portfolio, to use Vlakplaas operatives in an operation that involved the handing over of booby-trapped hand grenades to members of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) in the East Rand township of Duduza. In his amnesty hearing Van der Merwe testified that Le Grange had told him that the operation was authorised at cabinet level, with the approval of PW Botha himself.[3] Van der Merwe's subsequent amnesty application for his

involvement in this matter again appears to have been prompted by the possibility of prosecution, following revelations by De Kock and by other Vlakplaas operatives involved in the operation who have turned State's witness. These are, however, the only matters for which the generals have publicly implicated former NP politicians in the entire Commission process.

The military

Unlike the police, only a handful of applications were received from former members of the SADF. These applications relate primarily to actions by members of Special Forces, the South African Medical Services and the Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB).

Once again it is the spectre of possible prosecution following revelations by security police operatives, and investigations conducted by the office of the Transvaal Attorney-General, that appear to have prompted the few amnesty applications submitted by the military. This is almost certainly the case in respect of the 12 murders committed in 1986 by Special Forces in joint operations with the Northern Transvaal Security Branch, as well as that of a senior member of the medical corps who was involved in the military's chemical and biological warfare programme. No applications were received for external operations, although several SAP members, including a number of senior officers, have applied for amnesty in connection with joint SAP-SADF operations in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

An added impediment to senior military figures coming forward was the issue of extradition and the possibility of facing criminal charges in neighbouring countries should they agree to divulge details of cross-border operations.[4]

The Commission had a considerable amount of information available to it about the impact of military operations in neighbouring countries, and support for insurgencies in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho. The Commission did not question many potential witnesses. In many respects, with the absence of documentation, an opportunity was lost to probe for detail on the parameters of these operations and the extent of military officials' complicity.

It is evident that the military also snubbed the Commission with regards to its role in internal operations. Although some senior military figures were called before the Commission during the armed forces hearings in 1997, they accused the Commission of bias and of demonising them. No disclosures were

made about covert operations and the role of Special Forces, outside of the handful of incidents for which certain members had applied for amnesty. They categorically denied being party to illegal actions or covert 'third force' operations as outlined in General Steyn's report to President De Klerk, which detailed his findings about operations undertaken by the SADF's Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC).[5]

There is every indication that the military had much more to reveal regarding their role in committing gross human rights violations, as shown by their apparent desire for a further amnesty deal following the handing over of the TRC report. If such a deal is made, government must not compromise on current conditional amnesty that requires applicants to make full disclosure.

National Party submission

The TRC attempted to test the allegations made by former security force members and numerous victims that there was a well-co-ordinated strategy to target and eliminate people that various government agencies had identified, and about whom they had developed detailed target dossiers. Could the Commission prove that a dirty war that was waged through officially sanctioned state funded structures was done with the (full) knowledge of senior politicians? The Commission's investigation and research units were tasked with exploring the link between political and security decision-making structures and the covert operations that have been publicly acknowledged.

Although the NP has apologised for the immorality of apartheid policies and the hurt caused by it, former President De Klerk was at pains to distinguish between the moral wrongs of apartheid, and any suggestion that it involved a 'crime against humanity' as maintained by the United Nations. De Klerk also denied that his government was involved in criminal conduct or developed policy to eliminate its political opponents. As a member of successive apartheid governments from the late 1970s, De Klerk denied knowledge of criminal acts perpetrated by the security forces, or that the SSC, of which he was a member, sanctioned such acts.

Before Vlok's admissions became public, during the first public political party submissions in August 1996, De Klerk emphatically denied that the government had been involved, had authorised or had knowledge of the violations for which many security force members were applying for amnesty:

> In dealing with the unconventional strategies from the side of the government, I want to make it clear from the outset that, within my knowledge and experience, they never included the authorisation of assassination, murder, torture, rape, assault or the like… I have never been part of any decision taken by cabinet, the State Security Council or any committee authorising or instructing the commission of such gross violations of human rights. Nor did I directly or indirectly ever suggest, order or authorise any such action.[6]

De Klerk said that certain actions such as cross-border raids against legitimate military targets had been authorised by the State President. This included the 1993 SADF raid against a so-called Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) base in Umtata resulting in the death of five minors. He acknowledged that violations had occurred, but that he had no idea who had authorised, commanded and carried out these actions. He said that the government had acted against security force abuses when violations had come to their attention, but that they often did not know about them since unconventional strategies were implemented on a 'need-to-know' basis. He also claimed to have only heard about police hit-squads for the first time when Almond Nofamela and Dirk Coetzee went public about the Vlakplaas unit in 1989, which in turn prompted him to establish the commission of inquiry known as the Harms Commission.

According to De Klerk, far from condoning and supporting illegal covert operations, he had in fact helped to expose them by forming and supporting the Harms and Goldstone Commissions, whose investigations led to revelations that in turn prompted the establishment of the TRC.

By the time of the second party political submissions in May 1997, there had been a rash of amnesty applications from senior security police officers about their involvement in human rights violations. They all claimed they had carried out these actions as part of the 'total strategy' against 'communist aggression', on behalf of the government of the day. De Klerk reiterated his denial, arguing that he was as shocked as everyone else at the revelations of the applicants. He was adamant that security force members such as Eugene de Kock could not claim that the NP government had given them free rein. He said that top policemen, including General Johan van der Merwe, had told him that they did know or approve of what had happened at Vlakplaas. Although Van der Merwe had lied to him, De Klerk argued that he believed what his generals told him.[7] When pressed by the Commission about the

systemic nature of the violations now being admitted to, De Klerk reasoned that those actions were committed by a maverick element.

Eugene de Kock admits in his autobiography that even as the country's 'top' assassin he is unable to prove that De Klerk personally ordered any 'illegal' operations. However, he cannot accept that De Klerk did not know. He asks:

> Who did De Klerk think killed Rick Turner, Ruth First, Katryn and Jeanette Schoon, Zweli Nyanda and David Webster? Who blew up Albie Sachs? Did a shrewd and legally trained man like him really believe detainees were prone to slipping on bars of soap and diving out of windows?[8]

Although De Klerk tried to make clear that there was a distinction even in war between legitimate and illegitimate acts he did acknowledge that 'the traditional distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate targets and acceptable and unacceptable methods of combating resistance were increasingly blurred.'[9]

De Klerk stated that aberrations were apparent in many counter-insurgency operations, but they were not part of any policy, and the government was not to blame for them. The Commission countered with the production of SSC minutes, which revealed discussions about the need to 'eliminate terrorists', and other documents that suggested the use of unconventional methods to deal with the enemy. De Klerk insisted that this simply was not policy: 'I reject the imputation that there was this sort of almost immoral 'everything goes' in a state of war, the end justifies the means.'[10]

Counter insurgency

The former Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, first appeared before the TRC following his acquittal on murder charges in the KwaMakhuta trial in 1996. He had been accused of culpability in the formation and training of Inkatha hit-squads that operated in KwaZulu-Natal. Although he and others involved admitted they had funded military training for Inkatha members, they insisted it was for defensive purposes only, and that subsequent killings carried out by the trainees were neither sanctioned nor supported by them.

Malan admitted that he had presided over the formation of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, a covert military unit connected with several assassinations and other criminal activities.[11] But, he claimed, 'the killing of

political opponents of the government, such as the slaying of Dr. Webster never formed part of the brief of the SADF'.[12] Cross-border operations were approved, but assassination was never discussed in cabinet. Others summoned during public hearings into the role of the SSC and of the armed forces have largely echoed this position.

The State Security Council (SSC) and security chiefs

In October 1997 the TRC turned its attention to the SSC and the senior security force structures. Several former security force members and ministers who sat on the Council were questioned on the basis of information contained in amnesty applications, documentation from the SSC and other sources. The objective was to determine what had been discussed at the apex of the politico-security establishment, to find out what intelligence they received of violations and other matters, and to determine whether the protestations of ignorance and innocence were plausible.

Those called before the Commission were questioned about the decision-making process and actions undertaken by the security forces. Responses were couched in terms of legitimate actions against individuals, organisations and countries that were hosting terrorists. Security force actions were consistently placed in the context of staving off the communist onslaught, and counter-revolutionary activities were described as being self-defensive, albeit pro-active responses.

SSC documentation contained proposals to 'eliminate', 'neutralise' and 'wipe out' the 'terrorists', although there was considerable disagreement about what these terms meant. For example, when asked to explain this terminology, former SAP Commissioner General Johannes Petrus Coetzee stated: [On the bases of various Afrikaans dictionary definitions] 'nowhere does it indicate there that it means that you should go and kill a particular person.'[13]

A former Special Forces chief, Major General Joep Joubert (one of a handful of military officers applying for amnesty), introduced a more nuanced interpretation, and opened up the possibility that these terms might mean kill:

> I can eliminate a person by arresting him. I can neutralise him by arresting him. Each case must be dealt with on its own merits … there may be cases where eliminate or elimination in fact meant killing. I don't think that we must generally accept that the term eliminate means kill.[14]

And according to General Johan van der Merwe:

> If you look at the contents of this document or most documents it becomes clear that certain activities had to follow on this, but if you keep in mind that those documents were put into a system, the joint operations system, whose members from the defence force served on that, people from the grassroots level and many of those members were involved in a struggle for life and death every day. From that viewpoint you would regard it and, yes, it could have meant to kill people. And if you ask me what I understood by that I would say no, at that stage and on that level it was not meant that people had necessarily to be killed. Every person in the State Security Council has to explain what his specific viewpoint was.[15]

However, for others the interpretation and intention of these words was clear, as evidenced in the testimony of two senior operatives: 'I want to emphasise words like *eliminate* and *take out* for members on the ground who were in a war situation referred only to killing people.'[16] And, 'there was never any lack of clarity about take out or eliminate, it meant that the person had to be killed.'[17]

Different interpretations at this senior level appear to reflect the extent to which a particular individual was compromised. The people quoted above all applied for amnesty. Only General Coetzee did not apply in connection with a murder. Van der Merwe and Joubert applied for amnesty for their complicity in the planning and (covering up of) murders in which they have been implicated by former Vlakplaas operatives and subsequent investigations. This was also the case for former SAP Brigadiers Ousthuizen and Schoon, both of whom were implicated for their involvement in abduction and assassination at an operational level.

Even if this terminology was ambiguous, why was nothing done to rectify the situation when it became apparent that enemies of the state were being killed? According to Malan, they had other priorities at the time: 'I agree it's very important if a chap is annihilated, those days I doubt whether you had the opportunity of always discussing it.'[18] When former SSC and cabinet members, Botha (Foreign Affairs), Vlok (Law and Order), Wessels (Deputy Minister of Law and Order) and Meyer (Deputy Minister of Defence) were questioned in connection with the SSC, they suggested that security operatives had misinterpreted instructions. When asked why no action had

been taken to investigate the suspicious deaths and disappearances of people categorised as enemies of the state, Vlok said he was completely ignorant that these incidents were taking place:

> It was a *bona fide* mistake and we will have to live with it. Things went awry … The fact is that I, and probably the police generals were blissfully unaware of the true facts.[19]

In pointed contrast to security force operatives who believed words such as 'eliminate', 'wipe out' and 'neutralise' meant kill politicians, in concert with some senior military and intelligence heads, argued that it was never the intention of the SSC or cabinet to authorise illegal actions. They admitted that the language used was 'ambiguous', and consequently might have been misinterpreted as authorising illegal actions.

The TRC rejected this position and criticised the SSC for employing language that was 'reckless, inflammatory and an incitement to unlawful acts',[20] and for failing to clarify what their intentions were by using this language. Curiously the Commission accepted that other politicians involved in the SSC 'did not foresee that the use of these words would result in killings'.[21] This despite the fact that such actions were the object of both domestic and international protests, which would have been brought to their attention through the media and their attendance the SSC.

The politicians were emphatic that their actions and intentions were entirely legal. Referring to the Khotso House bombing, however, former SAP Commissioner Johan van der Merwe said it was untrue that 'the previous government, specifically the State Security Council, did not have knowledge of certain unlawful actions.'[22] We still do not know what other cases senior politicians had either awareness of or directly authorised.

Apartheid politicians admitted that they were aware of allegations of violations and that they could have done more to prevent them. They claimed, however, that they did not have the required facts to address the situation effectively. Leon Wessels was perhaps the most candid of former politicians to come before the TRC, testifying that 'because I did not have the facts to substantiate my suspicions or I had lacked the courage to shout from the rooftops, I have to confess that I only whispered in the corridors … The National Party did not have an enquiring mind about these matters.'[23]

Despite protestations of innocence the Commission found that politicians,

particularly those who had security-related portfolios, were responsible for developing and supporting a strategy to deal with the enemy by a range of measures, including illegal operations.[24]

The Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee and Trewits

During his first appearance in May 1997, General Malan told the TRC that the cabinet and SSC received security and intelligence information from the Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee (CIC). During his testimony in December 1997, former National Intelligence Service (NIS) chief Neil Barnard said that the CIC was established in 1980 to improve co-ordination between the various security agencies (police, military and foreign affairs intelligence), under the chairmanship of Barnard, as the representative of NIS.[25]

Barnard was questioned closely about Trewits (the Counter Revolutionary Intelligence Task Unit), which was set up in the mid-1980s to co-ordinate intelligence gathered on individuals working for revolutionary forces, in particular the ANC. Trewits was a sub-structure of the covert intelligence gathering sub-committee of the CIC.

The unit was originally part of the Security Branch's counter-revolutionary section, and was known as 'C4'. Based in Pretoria, Trewits included members of National and Military Intelligence, who met regularly with regional and district intelligence structures, as well as with security force operatives (both police and military). Trewits compiled detailed files, described by some operatives as 'target dossiers', primarily on African National Council and Pan African Congress members and supporters. Lists of cell structures were collated and details relating to movement, accommodation and vehicles were collected. Two of the three Trewits founding members, SAP member General Jack Buchner and the SADF's Lt-Col 'Callie' Steyn, had been involved in the identification of targets, resulting in actions that included abduction, torture and elimination.[26]

Allegations were put to Barnard that intelligence received from this body was subsequently used in illegal covert operations. Barnard denied that targeting of this nature could have been the unit's intention and claimed that the CIC was used exclusively to co-ordinate intelligence. Its purpose, he claimed, was to 'counter the revolutionary onslaught', not to kill people. The CIC, he claimed, was in no position to authorise actions that resulted in gross human rights violations and did not do so.[27]

In response to questions Barnard acknowledged that he received stories

and rumours that the police or the military were involved in illegal operations, and that he raised them with fellow CIC members. He said that their response was to ask him to bring evidence of such actions to the table. Unable to do this, he took his concerns to President PW Botha and left it at that, assuming that these concerns 'would be dealt with on a political level'.[28]

The Commission found no evidence 'of any attempt by the SSC to set in motion any substantive or comprehensive investigation into the killing of political opponents once this began to happen.'[29] The Commission acknowledged that the police did routinely conduct investigations, but that 'these were often manifestly inadequate and often took the form of cover-ups.'[30]

Barnard insisted that the objective of the NIS throughout the 1980s was a peaceful political solution to the crisis facing the country. However, he claimed that security conditions did warrant certain actions, and that the SSC was convinced that the actions of the security forces were necessary to bring about stability and make political settlement possible. This position, however, did not mean that strong-arm tactics were precluded: 'giving over was never an option … the South African government had to protect the physical integrity of the state and its citizens, the structures of the Security Management System, and their tasks.'[31]

When Barnard was pressed as to why he did not take measures to find out who was assassinating the very leadership that the country should have been negotiating with, his response was that it was not his responsibility to investigate acts of a criminal nature. This apparent contradiction should be examined in the light of the evidence in other chapters in this book, which shows that it is possible to pursue a political settlement, and at the same time attempt to covertly weaken political opposition through a range of legal and illegal options. In any event, the Commission did not accept Barnard's attempts to shift responsibility to other elements of the politico-security structure:

> Evidence placed before the Commission indicates that from the late 1970s, senior politicians – as well as police, national intelligence and defence force leaders-developed a strategy to deal with the opposition to government. This entailed, among other actions, the unlawful killing, within and beyond South Africa, of people whom they perceived as posing a significant challenge to the state's authority.[32]

Counter-revolutionary strategy

Two former security branch operatives, Paul Erasmus and Michael Bellingan, both worked in the Strategic Communication (Stratcom) section of the Security Branch Intelligence ('D') Section. Erasmus described Stratcom as 'an ultra-secret unit, conducted by all arms of the security establishment at the behest of the State Security Council and with the full knowledge of the cabinet. It permeated every facet of South African society, including education and churches … it was the 'hearts and minds' policy.'[33]

Amnesty applications of former operatives, however, illustrate that illegal operations ranged from general harassment to torture and assassination. In line with other politicians and security force chiefs, Magnus Malan denied that that the military would have been involved in illegal covert operations, as this went against the grain of the Win Hearts and Minds (WHAM) theories contained in counter-revolutionary strategy.[34] Former SADF chief, Constand Viljoen, however, acknowledged that the army had:

> actively begun to study revolutionary wars and we did so because we realised what the opposing side was going to use in South Africa. We used the cases of Malaysia, Kenya, Algeria and we studied the works of Beaufre, C.A. Frazer, John McKewan, Mao Tse Tung etc.[35]

In each of the examples provided by Viljoen there had been varying degrees of illegal covert operations, torture and assassination.[36] Given the significance of the issue, it is regrettable that no further attempts were made by the Commission to distinguish between the theory of counter-revolutionary strategies and its practical applications as experienced in other parts of the world. In that way it could have debunked the sanitised version presented by Malan and others, that their counter-revolutionary plan was essentially benign.

The Commission, however, felt it had enough evidence to make findings in this regard. On the basis of limited disclosures noted that the intensification of the conflict during the 1980s had reflected a shift in total strategy, as the policing of internal resistance became increasingly militarised. This is described in the final report as the 'domestic application of an essentially military counter-revolutionary strategy':

> With the intensification of conflict inside South Africa in the mid 1980s, tactics that had worked externally began to be applied to the domestic front …

> whereas the SADF had previously directed its military operations at external targets, it now began to play an increasing role in support of the SAP inside South Africa.[37]

The creation of a 'third force'

By mid to late 1980s, the South African situation had led to a stalemate. Neither side could conclusively 'win the battle'. Negotiation was the order of the day. Yet this period witnessed the greatest repression and, according to victim statements as well as amnesty applications, also the highest concentration of covert operations, suggesting that these operations, designed to strike and weaken the enemy, were part and parcel of the state's 'negotiation' tactics.

It is clear that the intelligence structures did provide information that was used for illegal covert operations. The Commission rejected intelligence and security chiefs' claims of ignorance regarding the use of intelligence collected, collated and disseminated from the structures they presided over. The Commission rejected the claim that security force actions were purely reactive and defensive and that they were simply trying to create 'the conditions for a political settlement'. Leon Wessels, during his testimony, supported the Commission's incredulity:

> Eugene de Kock's recent claim in his amnesty bid I submit is correct, namely, that any National Party politician and supporter, I may add, at the time who believed that we held power because of persuasion and not through coercion was out of touch [with] reality to put it mildly.[38]

SADF deployment inside the country from mid 1984 failed to quell mass protests, leading some people within security circles to feel that additional measures were required to combat internal unrest.[39] SSC minutes from this period show that consideration was given to the creation of what became known as a 'third force'. Such a force:

> must be mobile and have the have the capacity to wipe out terrorists effectively … It must be prepared to be unpopular and even feared without marring the image of the Defence Force or police. The security forces must work together in setting up the third force in order that those who undermine the state are countered with their own methods.[40]

Although it cannot be denied that the SSC discussed the creation of a 'third force', Barnard, Malan and others have argued that these discussions were never put into action, and that plans in this regard were shelved. They have denied that these plans have anything to do with the current associations of the term 'third force', and asserted that this was merely a call to set up a force to supplement the efforts of the military and police to 'counter the revolutionary onslaught internally'.

Both Barnard and Malan claimed that they personally opposed the creation of such a force. It remains unclear, however, who in the SSC was supporting and actively promoting the development of this capability. Even though the official plans might have been shelved, it is evident that the period after 1986 witnessed a significant upswing in the number of covert operations, which essentially had the same intention of 'countering the revolutionary onslaught'.

There is little information in the available documentation that can *directly* link the SSC and other NSMS structures to illegal operations. The TRC, however, found that the former government was responsible for 'deliberately and systematically' destroying state documentation. This process began in the late 1970s, and by the 1990s the destruction process had become a 'co-ordinated endeavour, sanctioned by cabinet, with the aim of denying a new government access to incriminating evidence and sanitising the history of the apartheid era.'[41]

TRC FINDINGS

Essentially the TRC was presented with two viewpoints. The first, based on the testimony of amnesty applicants and numerous victims, is that there was a co-ordinated strategy to target and take action (including elimination) against identified individuals. This strategy was supplemented by internal and external surrogate structures, which had the added benefit of demonstrating the apparent savagery of 'black-on-black' violence, and the 'inevitability' of chaos with black rule.

The second viewpoint, presented by many senior politicians and securocrats, is that of state structures which had little or no control over maverick elements in the security forces, but whose major concern was to peacefully counter the revolutionary threat and to create conditions for the emergence of a political solution.

Although the Commission uncovered and was presented with a

considerable amount of relevant information, establishing the link between political decision-making and specific operations was not easy. Much of what was discussed in SSC and CIC meetings was not documented. According to Barnard, for example, disagreements in the CIC were not recorded.[42] It is also extremely unlikely that any covert operations would have been recorded in official documents.

Covert actions by their very nature are secretive. As former police and military intelligence agent Craig Williamson, quoting from a report delivered to the National Intelligence Symposium held at the NIS headquarters in June 1982, pointed out:

> when survival is important it is often necessary for a service to resort to secret actions which does not comply with the laws, morality, norms and values … Secrecy both offensive and defensive is important.[43]

Williamson, who applied for and received amnesty for his role in several assassinations, told the TRC that based on his unique experience and insight into security structures, and how they related to political structures, he had no doubt 'that secret, violent and other actions against the revolutionary enemy were accepted and approved procedure in our overall arsenal of counter-insurgency weapons.'[44]

He explained that there was tension between those who accepted and countenanced illegal actions as necessary in the circumstances, and those who were opposed to this. This resulted in 'the state and the security forces maintain[ing] and expand[ing] their secret ability to attack their enemies without necessarily having to accept responsibility for what was done. Specific so-called chains of responsibility will in many instances [therefore] be impossible to determine.'[45]

Williamson alleged that the politicians were so keen to distance themselves from any legal responsibility that they 'abdicated their responsibility to exercise close operational supervision of their actions and so lost operational control'. Senior politicians and securocrats, he asserted, must have known about the killings and the abductions, and 'there was a tacit acceptance that this had something to do with South Africa's counter-insurgency programme'.[46]

Williamson is one of many operatives who were clearly displeased that NP politicians had refused to take direct responsibility for certain security force

operations. Indeed, a number of amnesty applicants felt betrayed by the NP, claiming that it had assured them that provisions regarding amnesty as a substantial right would be obtained during the negotiation process.[47] The failure of the politicians to take more responsibility may also have contributed to the limited disclosures made by former security operatives and their commanding officers.

The credibility of denial remains an integral part of many counter-insurgency campaigns. The TRC felt that the language used in the instructions and guidance set out in SSC documents was a 'perfect illustration of the notion of plausible deniability'. They rejected 'attempts by politicians to phrase instructions in a way that causes their subordinates to take responsibility for acts of which the politicians are the intellectual authors.'[48]

The Commission also rejected the 'rotten apple'/'maverick' theory, and listed numerous criminal activities and admissions that had been presented before it as the basis for its finding that the state was responsible for a range of illegal activities that constituted gross human rights violations, as part of its counter-insurgency strategy. These actions and findings are listed below.

> 'The South African State in the 1980s and early 1990s engaged in or undertook a range of unlawful activities. Other evidence to support this assertion is, in brief;
>
> (a) The admission by both senior security force officers and security police operatives that they were ordered by either the State President or senior members of the government to:
> - commit criminal acts of sabotage by blowing up such public facilities as the diplomatic mission of the ANC in London, the offices of the South African Council of Churches (SACC – Khotso House), the Catholic Bishops' Conference (Khanya House) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions; and
> - undertake a 'false-flag' operation in the form of the placing and uncovering of an arms cache in order to provide a pretext for the state's armed forces to attack targets in an independent neighbouring state, in a clear violation of international law.
>
> (b) Evidence presented to the Commission that certain sections of the security police, such as the Soweto Intelligence Unit, undertook illegal acts such as sabotage and arson, within and outside the country, in order to give credibility to their agents.

(c) Evidence from security police members that, in the latter 1980s, they sometimes deliberately circumvented what they saw as negative or adverse court decisions by, for example, killing alleged political activists acquitted in political trials.

(d) Evidence presented to the Commission under oath and by way of amnesty applications that, on the instruction of their senior officers, security police members abducted MK cadres, executed them when they refused to co-operate and buried them secretly on farms owned or rented by the police.

(e) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission by the former secretary of a state structure, the Joint Management Centre (JMC), that he was instructed by a senior police officer to arrange and facilitate the attack on a suspected UDF house in which eleven people were killed.

(f) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that the South African government authorised and financed the formation of a clandestine security force unit (the CCB) whose objective it was to 'inflict maximum damage to the enemy', including among other actions, the killing of political opponents.

(g) Evidence made available to the Commission that, after 1990, MI devised an official plan to abduct and/or assassinate Mr Chris Hani and Mr Bantu Holomisa.

(h) Evidence made available to the Commission of covert assistance given by the SADF to the IFP to establish, train, arm an pay and offensive unit or hit-squad to be deployed against mutual enemies of the state and the IFP.

(i) Evidence in possession of the Commission that it was state policy to foster division between communities and organisations, and that security force and state officials gave material and other support to conservative groupings which frequently engaged in violent attacks on political opponents of the government.

(j) Evidence made available to the Commission that the South African government armed, trained, financed and in other ways assisted foreign nationals to undertake military operations against neighbouring governments in violation of international law and the sovereignty of those states; and further that these domestically generated foreign wars and military operations resulted in gross violations of human rights of non-South African nationals on a vast scale.

(k) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that the weapons used in a state-planned massacre of alleged government opponents which were given over to a state corporation (Iscor) for smelting in order to destroy the evidence of a crime.

(l) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that high-ranking members of a state corporation (Eskom) attempted to make available or sell a portion of its armoury to a political party engaged in a civil war – in the knowledge that these weapons could or would be used against alleged ANC supporters. This was authorised and done with the knowledge of the Commissioner of Police. The Eskom deal forms only a small part of a wider practice of covert shipment of arms by state operatives to groups engaged in violent activities against opponents of the government.

(m) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that air hostesses of the state carrier, South African Airways, were required or put under pressure to eavesdrop on passengers' conversations and to report those of a suspicious nature to the security police.

(n) Evidence made available to the Commission that state or public vehicles, such as ambulances, were used to transport weapons supplied by the state to surrogates for use against opponents of the state.

(o) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that members of the security police placed explosives in cinemas showing the film *Cry Freedom*, thus committing serious criminal offences. Earlier, the state had tried unsuccessfully to obtain a ruling from another state body prohibiting the screening of the film. This action reflects an attitude that the security police would not be impeded by the law in the pursuit of their objectives.

(p) Evidence presented under oath to the Commission that on a number of occasions and usually at the behest of their superiors, members of the security forces presented false testimony at court inquests, including those dealing with the deaths in detention of Mr Stanza Bopape and Mr Steve Biko, as well as to trials of alleged political offenders and state commissions like the Harms Commission. The Commission also received evidence of deliberate falsification and/or destruction of evidence.

(q) Evidence presented under oath by the former Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and in other amnesty applications, that strategic communication (Stratcom) activities transgressed the law.

> r) Evidence presented to the Commission of a widespread system of covert funding of secret operations, involving the expenditure of more than R2.75 billion in the period 1978–1994 … there is evidence that portions of those funds were used in the pursuit of unlawful activities, such as those undertaken by the CCB. In a report submitted to the Commission on secret state funding, the Auditor-general stated that certain secret projects of the SADF were never subjected to a full audit.'[49]

The Commission found the state responsible for a range of human rights violations during the presidency of PW Botha. Most of the violations mentioned below are closely associated with the State's internal and external counter-insurgency initiatives:

- torture, including not only the intentional infliction of pain but also detention without trial and solitary confinement;
- abduction, including the forcible and illegal removal or capture of people, often from beyond the borders of South Africa;
- severe ill treatment, including sexual assault, abuse or harassment, the imposition of restrictions on individuals in the form of banning and banishment orders, the deliberate withholding of medical attention, food and water, the destruction of homes or offices through arson or sabotage, and the mutilation of body parts;
- the unjustified use of deadly force in situations where lesser measures would have been adequate to control demonstrations or detain or arrest suspects;
- the deliberate manipulation of social divisions in society with the intention of mobilising one group against another, resulting at times in violent clashes;
- the arming, funding and training of foreign nationals for military operations against sovereign governments in the region;
- incursions across South Africa's borders with the intention of killing or abducting opponents living outside of South Africa;
- judicial killings, including the execution of opponents for offences of a political and not a criminal nature;
- extra-judicial killings in the form of state-planned and executed assassinations, attempted killings, disappearances, abductions and so-called 'entrapment killings', where the individuals were deliberately enticed into situations; and
- the covert training, arming or funding of offensive paramilitary units or hit-squads for deployment internally against opponents of the government.[50]

The Commission made a series of findings relating to the State during the presidency of FW de Klerk, but these findings remain *sub judice* at the time of writing. They are believed to contain damning references to torture, abduction and murder.

Many of the violations committed were part of the state's counter-insurgency operations. The Commission's report was unable to provide detail of many of the incidents and topics referred to above, as these were (and in some cases still are) subject to pending amnesty hearings. However, enough evidence was presented to support the report's conclusion that such actions were systemic, and that they were not only tolerated, but actively encouraged. Many admissions were accepted and incorporated into the report on face value. Given the Commission's limited investigative and corroborative capacity, and concerns regarding the falsification and contrived nature of information in amnesty applications, a more thorough evaluation of all the evidence presented is still required.

What do we not know?

The Commission has uncovered and investigated only a small part of the detail relating to the issues raised above. Its findings are based on what it has been told and information submitted by way of amnesty, Section 29 and Human Rights Violation Committee hearings. What percentage of the total this represents is not known, although according to experts in the field it is likely to represent only a fraction of the total violations perpetrated, and only a fraction of the personnel implicated.[51]

The TRC's mandate has inevitably meant that many areas of investigation have not been addressed comprehensively or at all. The following section provides limited detail on some of the areas of concern in this regard. Some of these issues may, however, be addressed in pending amnesty hearings.

The 'third force' in the 1990s

The negotiation period of 1990–1994, described as a period of 'political normalisation', was also a period of unprecedented levels of targeted and indiscriminate violence. The boundaries between criminal and political violence became increasingly blurred in that period.[52] This period also witnessed an unprecedented surge in 'third force' activities, with over 300 people murdered in train massacres on the Witwatersrand and a further 50 massacres with 10 or more people killed.

The ANC, anti-apartheid structures and violence monitoring organisations repeatedly accused the government and its security forces of having a direct or indirect role in supporting covert operations and subsequent actions that resulted in thousands of violent incidents and deaths. Testimony presented during the NP and security force hearings failed to provide an adequate explanation for why they were unable to stop this violence. They also failed to explain why the actions of the security forces in some of the worst flashpoints reinforced widespread perceptions that they were complicit in this violence.

The TRC received many submissions from victims and some amnesty applications related to this period. Its investigative processes, however, did not adequately addressed the nature, dynamics and causes of this violence or the role allegedly played by the security forces during this period. The Commission did not thoroughly examine the nature of the relationship between the SAP and the Inkatha Freedom Party during the 1990s or address the widespread perception that Vlakplaas was not the only unit involved from the side of the security police in providing support for the IFP. Patterns of violence and repeated allegations relating to train and hostel violence, drive-by shootings and other massacres in this period suggest massive involvement of the security forces.

In spite of these limitations, the Commission made a number of adverse findings about the role of the sate and its security forces in violations during this period. More information was available about the SAP which was accused of carrying out 'extra-judicial killings and attempted killings, both internally and externally ... [taking the form of] assassination, ambushed and entrapment killings, killings and attempted killings by way of parcel bombs.'[53]

The TRC also accused the SAP of biased investigations, and acts of omission in favour of the IFP.[54] Regarding many other issues, such as gunrunning and train violence, the Commission was unable to make findings, as related amnesty hearings were outstanding, and in many cases no investigations were conducted and no information was available.

The Commission was unable to determine who was involved in cover-ups around the various commissions of inquiry set up to investigate this violence and the role of the state and other players. This includes the McNally, Harms and Goldstone Commissions. Further revelations before the TRC suggested that the first two Commissions were never designed to get to the truth, and it was only in its last few months of its existence that the Goldstone Commission

found concrete evidence of what had been alleged about the police for several years.

The Goldstone Commission did, however, stumble across potentially vital information, which was subsequently taken away from it following its 1992 raid on the offices of the Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC). SADF General Pierre Steyn conducted the investigation. His report supported allegations from other sources that elements of the military were involved in assassinations, destabilisation, train murders, gun running, illegal training, manipulation of the negotiation processes and general criminal activities into the 1990s. These cases were referred to and have remained 'under investigation' by the office of the Transvaal Attorney-General for almost five years. It is not clear whether information resulting from these investigations was made available to the Commission.

The DCC evidence and the subsequent embarrassment caused De Klerk to force the dismissal of 23 senior military officers. In response, General Viljoen claimed that the allegations were 'unsubstantiated' and that an official police investigation showed that there was not a 'shred of evidence to be found' to substantiate the allegations.[55] Given that the police investigation was conducted by Maj-Gen Conradie, the chief police investigator at the Harms Commission, this may not be surprising. Conradie was never questioned by the TRC and its public processes, with the exception of some revelations relating to the SADF's chemical and biological weapons programme, did not shed more light on these accusations. Subsequent investigations by the Attorney-General's special investigation unit led to the prosecution of the SADF's former chemical and biological warfare chief (and cardiac surgeon), Brigadier Wouter Basson, on numerous charges from conspiracy to commit murder to fraud. He was subsequently acquitted.

Intelligence Structures

The TRC struggled to determine the parameters and scope of apartheid security force intelligence operations or the relationship between intelligence gathering and field operations. Limited investigations do not seem to have clarified this picture and we remain largely in the dark about the extent and limits of securocrat influence in the Botha and De Klerk eras.

The TRC's questioning of De Klerk and security force chiefs did not thoroughly examine the attempt to reimpose civilian control over security affairs during the 1990–1994 period of political 'normalisation', as well as the

reaction to this by specific security agencies. We do know that covert and illegal operations continued in this period, pointing to a variety of groupings connected to the South African security establishment.

Several amnesty applications were received in connection with the covert relationship between elements in the security forces and the IFP. In spite of these revelations, the Commission did not probe deeply into the relationship and to a large extent failed to untangle this web of intrigue. Consequently a detailed understanding of covert security operations and 'third force' dynamics in the 1990s remains as elusive as ever. It is therefore difficult to assess the extent and parameters of post-1990 covert security operations and the role of apartheid politicians in this regard.

Vigilantes

Much of the political chaos and violence during the 1980s and early 1990s resulted from what has been inaccurately described as 'black-on-black' violence. With the exception of investigations into the relationship between the State and the *Witdoeke* vigilante group in the Western Cape and *AmaAfrika* in the Eastern Cape, the micro dynamics of these conflicts, the personalities involved and the role of the SAP have not been thoroughly analysed by the TRC.

The TRC report, has, however, made findings based on these case studies and additional information received about several other contra-mobilisation movements, such as the 'Eagles' and '*Phakatis*' in the Orange Free State, the 'A-Team' in Natal and the 'Black Cats' in the Eastern Transvaal. The Commission found that the apartheid state pursued a 'policy of contra-mobilisation ... by covert means, to create groupings opposed to the liberation movements and to manipulate social, ethnic and other divisions with the intention of mobilising one group against another.'[56]

Although allegations established a pattern of connections between the security forces and vigilante groups and gangs that proliferated across the country, investigations apparently did not unearth detailed evidence to support allegations and findings of widespread complicity or direct involvement. It remains to be seen to what extent any of the remaining security force (or other) amnesty applications will reveal further evidence in this regard.

Inkatha Freedom Party

The Commission made a series of damning findings against the IFP,[57] on the basis of actions and inaction by the party and its leadership, and in terms of its relationship to the apartheid state. This relationship has been evaluated in the context of the state's contra-mobilisation policies and their unlawful content:

> In pursuit of these unlawful activities, the State acted in collusion with certain other political groupings, most notably the Inkatha Freedom Party.[58]

The IFP criticised the Commission for being biased against it and in favour of the ANC, and in response played a spoiling role in the TRC process. Consequently it did its best to avoid participating and contributing to our understanding of past conflicts. It portrayed itself as a victim of apartheid and ANC oppression, though not without its share of 'rotten apples'. Its role in the violence was depicted as defensive and a matter of self-preservation in the context of United Democratic Front and ANC attempts to destroy it. It attempted to explain its relationship with the apartheid state through these lenses.

This analysis may well contain kernels of truth. The ANC has, for instance, admitted that there were aborted plans to assassinate Chief Buthelezi, and many IFP leaders were killed over the years. The Commission's report made findings against the ANC in this regard. Nevertheless, the 'self-preservation' analysis obscures a number of possible reasons why the IFP would not want to participate and expose itself to questioning and detailed examination about its role in past violence, and in particular its relationship with the apartheid state and its security structures.

The relationship between the IFP and the apartheid police and military is well established. Documentation, allegations, admissions and amnesty applications from both the former security establishment and (former) IFP operatives paint a picture of close co-operation and collusion. Once again, however, limited capacity and poor planning have prevented the TRC from thoroughly probing the nature and parameters of this relationship. This includes allegations of collusion in the perpetration and subsequent cover-ups in numerous incidents in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

The TRC appears to have deliberately steered clear of questioning a number of key individuals from the IFP, such as Chief Buthelezi, as well as Themba

Khoza, Humphrey Ndlovu and Rev Celani Mthetwa, who were implicated by De Kock and other security men in gunrunning between Vlakplaas and the IFP. Section 29 *in camera* investigative hearings involving a former security police operative and the head of Inkatha's Self Protection Units, Phillip Powell, and Buthelezi's former right-hand man, Walter Felgate, may shed further light on this relationship.

External operations

As mentioned above, the military did not provide details of their operations in neighbouring countries and further afield. Limited admissions were made about support for Unita and Renamo, but virtually no information was provided about their support of the Lesotho Liberation Army or Zimbabwean dissidents, such as Super-ZAPU, allegedly co-ordinated by SADF's Directorate for Special Tasks. No details were forthcoming about Special Forces operations in neighbouring states, or explanations for and details of numerous and well-documented illegal incursions in neighbouring states.[59] Only a handful of former military operatives applied for amnesty regarding specific actions, such as the assassination attempt on Albie Sachs in Maputo.

Much of the limited information received about external actions relates to the southern African region and certain frontline states in particular. Investigations into these matters were not properly conducted, and a number of opportunities to examine the detail and extent of certain operations were lost. A number of SAP members who applied for amnesty with regards to external operations were not questioned with a view to identifying SADF members who participated in the authorisation, planning and execution of particular actions.

As with many other issues, the Commission did not focus its attention on this issue. In some areas, such as Europe, this may have been due to the limited number of apparent violations, particularly gross human rights violations, and the limited amount of intelligence and documentation that was forthcoming. Research regarding operations in the United Kingdom, however, suggest that the extent of security force and intelligence activities throughout Europe requires more detailed examination.[60] The Commission was, for example, provided with considerable detail of the Security Branches' agent and informer network in Europe during the 1980s, but did not initiate any follow-up investigations.

In spite of the prevailing opinion that the CCB's illegal activities, including

murder, were sanctioned at a higher level, there has been no public admission to this effect. Several *in camera* investigative hearings with operatives and senior members of the CCB were held. A number of former CCB operatives, including its managing director, Joe Verster, simply refused to answer certain questions put to them, resulting in the TRC requesting that charges of contempt be laid against them.[61]

Conclusion

It remains moot whether the brief of the TRC made it possible to uncover the full truth regarding the involvement and official sanctioning of past violations by the apartheid state. Despite its fundamental importance to understanding conflict in South Africa, this was only one aspect under examination by the Commission. In the 'adhocracy' that characterised much of the Commission's work, a detailed examination of the apartheid state's counter-insurgency policies did not always receive priority status. Consequently much was missed and many opportunities were lost. No comprehensive investigation was undertaken, outside of the process of questioning outlined above.

The Commission did try to go further by subpoenaing former President PW Botha. His refusal to appear before the TRC and subsequent intransigence led to him being found guilty of contempt of commission by the lower courts, a conviction that was subsequently overturned on appeal due to a technicality. To the disgust of many, the primary architect of the State's counter-insurgency policy was not forced to appear before the Commission.

In some quarters, the TRC is lauded as the most successful of its kind and, in the same vein as South Africa's political settlement, is being touted as a model for other sites of conflict. It is true that the Commission had some phenomenal successes, but comparisons with other commissions and processes are not particularly useful or relevant.

The question that must be addressed is: how successful was the South African TRC in terms of its objectives, in the context of both its opportunities and limitations? To what extent did it investigate and establish as complete a picture *as possible* of the nature, causes and extent of past human rights violations?

Undoubtedly windows into the past were opened and a considerable number of unsolved murders and other matters were addressed, some of which were solved. For years, victims and activists have accused the State, its security forces and surrogates, of complicity in a range of atrocities. For years

these allegations were scoffed at and described as propaganda and disinformation. Now, for the first time, some of these allegations have been confirmed as accurate by perpetrators who have used the amnesty option. This information came not only from the foot soldiers and other operatives, but also from senior commanders of rank and reputation.

Despite these admissions, most of the cases were not subject to detailed investigation by the Commission. In this regard, the TRC did has not demonstrate a capacity to dig deep. Its investigative and research components were given unrealistic tasks, within an unstructured framework with largely ineffective and inadequate resources.

The TRC was able to establish several connections between the state and human rights violations. The extent to which it was able to show that this was official policy, and that it was approved, directly or tacitly, by the security and political leadership is more difficult to assess. For the purposes of making findings the Commission was satisfied that gross human rights violations, such as killing, torture and abductions, were an integral part of the state-sanctioned counter-insurgency arsenal. However, if we are looking for a paper trail to link senior security force members, securocrats and politicians to these violations, the evidence with very few exceptions is thin. Williamson pointed out that this should not surprise us. Operations such as these were clandestine by their very nature and were designed with a built-in mechanism to plausibly deny both knowledge and responsibility.[62]

Complicity appears in most cases to have been well covered up. For example, after the handing in of the TRC report, documentation was leaked to the media that revealed the SSC had held discussions in March 1984 proposing the 'removal' of Mathew Goniwe. Testimony to the TRC from Jaap van Jaarsveld, a former Special Forces member, revealed that two days after this meeting he was ordered by Craig Williamson to investigate whether it would be possible to kill Goniwe and what the most appropriate method would be. Van Jaarsveld recommended that he be ambushed on the road. The following year, in June 1985, Goniwe and three colleagues were ambushed and killed near their hometown of Cradock in the Eastern Cape.[63]

The suggestion from former politicians and securocrats that the intelligence services did not have a very clear idea of who was responsible for the mayhem and murder inside and outside of the country is simply not credible. These intelligence services, although not always in alignment, would have kept senior security force members, politicians and most probably the politico-

security structures well briefed. Even if they did not, many of these incidents were public knowledge, broadcast in the media and the subject of numerous campaigns by both domestic and international human rights organisations. It is implausible that they did not know who might be involved and improbable that they believed their own propaganda that many of these killings were as a result of internal feuding in anti-apartheid movements. Revelations before the Amnesty Committee about the Khotso and Cosatu House bombings and the conspicuous silence on these issues in SSC minutes intimate that a lot more was known about this than was admitted before the TRC.

The key question that remains unanswered is the extent to which the strategy to deliver a political objective incorporated the use of illegal covert methods and operations, and the extent to which the politicians were privy to and supportive of these activities. Had they lost operational control, as suggested by Williamson, or did they simply oversee a system that did not require hands-on control, that did not require a 'need to know'? If the latter, to what extent was responsibility and control deliberately abdicated? Did former State President De Klerk inherit a security structure and security forces that had to be reined in? To what extent were he and his cabinet colleagues privy to or party to decisions that allowed this situation to arise and develop apparently unchecked? The NP's failure to adequately explain these concerns is a further argument against their protestations of innocence.

Most of the admissions contained in security force amnesty applications have been prompted by the threat of possible prosecution flowing from criminal investigations. It is highly unlikely that these investigations and subsequent amnesty applications reflect the totality of violations. In addition, revelations are heavily skewed against elements within certain sections of the former SAP and specifically its Security Branch.

The TRC struggled to develop a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the number and precise identity of the overt and covert security structures, their lines of accountability, and the division of labour between them. The information provided by former security force members, although useful at one level, presents a picture of benign structures and personalities who were doing their best in a tough situation. Admissions and acknowledgement of violations were made, but we were told that these matters were 'the exception and not the rule' and they should therefore not cloud our understanding of the past. We were told that although these were violent and difficult times and aberrations did occur, they were never state policy.

Although the TRC may not have conclusively proved that these actions were policy, it has successfully established that it was never state policy to stop and effectively investigate what had happened. The establishment of the Harms and Goldstone Commissions cannot be used as examples of a deep commitment to address these problems. De Klerk's assertions to the contrary cannot be substantiated.

The perpetration of gross human rights violations either formed part of the broader counter-insurgency initiative or it did not. We have evidence that a number of incidents were sanctioned at the highest levels of police and military structures. Although no clear political authorisation of the Special Forces murders in 1986 has been uncovered, it is clear that the head of the unit felt that he could get authorisation over a drink at a social gathering. His commanding officer, the head of the Defence Force, General Geldenhuys, a powerful figure in the military and a member of the SSC, accepted that Joubert's plan at the time could be construed as 'reasonable'.[64]

How then do we explain these cases? Were these attacks which just happened to involve a cabinet minister or two, but which were unrelated to the host of other supposedly unauthorised operations? In other words, can the sum total of these attacks be construed as random acts of terror committed by maverick elements? The failure to secure successful prosecutions in any of these matters before 1994 suggests widespread and systemic complicity by other security forces members and other elements of the criminal justice system, sanctioned (or at least not opposed) by the political authorities. As the threat of prosecution prompted most of the significant security force amnesty applications, it is difficult to know whether this version can be further tested. Much depends on the findings of further applications and investigations.

The full extent of TRC's findings was not to be known until the Amnesty Committee finally closed its doors sometime in late 2000 or early 2001. Further revelations were to be made in the amnesty process and it is hoped that anything of significance revealed in *in camera* processes will eventually be made public by the TRC's final report.

The carrot-and-stick approach of the TRC may well have resulted in many potential prosecutions being abandoned. It may also have provided the opportunity to focus and target future investigations. All the information that has been collected and collated must now be thoroughly examined and evaluated in the light of all other intelligence and witness testimony in the

hands of the Attorney-General, and the various intelligence agencies.

The TRC's attempts to expose the truths of the past were both admirable and flawed. As the product of political settlement it is probable that it was never intended to secure full disclosure, and quite probable that it has revealed more than some of its sponsors would liked it to have done. We must therefore acknowledge and applaud the contribution that the Commission has made to uncovering aspects of South Africa's hidden past, but also recognise that we will almost certainly never know the whole truth. To think that we could is unreasonable given the scale of the atrocities of the apartheid period and the active (and frequently successful) attempts of the perpetrators to cover up their tracks. It also remains to be seen whether and to what extent there will be support for further research and investigation, building on the foundation created by the Commission, or whether political expediency will dictate that South Africa's (official) experiment in truth recovery is now concluded.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER ONE

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56. Television interview with Jacques Pauw, *Prime Evil*, SABC.
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CHAPTER THREE

1. The most detailed account of political violence in the Natal Midlands during the period covered here is Aitchison, JJW. (1993). *Numbering the Dead: The Course and Pattern of Political Violence in the Natal Midlands: 1987–1989*. Pietermaritzburg. University of Natal. This unpublished thesis includes a comprehensive bibliography of publications and documents and includes printouts of the database on political violence in the Natal Midlands maintained at the Centre for Adult Education of the University of Natal. This chapter is heavily dependent on this source.
2. The accused were acquitted after a trial characterised by a lacklustre prosecution led by KwaZulu-Natal's Attorney-General Tim McNally. The best summary of the full (and devastating) case against the accused is the report by Varney, H. (1997). *The Role of the Former State in Political Violence. Operation Marion: a Case Study*.
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Buthelezi's strategy revolved around the need for institutional and white support. He felt he didn't need to do much more to get black support. In 1979–1980 there were more signed-up members of Inkatha in Soweto than the ANC had ever had in the whole of South Africa. One branch in Lindelani near Durban, alone had 90 000 members. Buthelezi set out to displace the ANC believing that it would fail completely and that he would be the one left for the National Party government to deal with. He was really positioning himself for that deal with the National Party and did not want to push them too far. That analysis turned out to be wrong.' (Walter Felgate interviewed by RW Johnson, *Focus* 9, January 1998. p. 20.)

5. Inkatha's membership figures are a matter of considerable dispute, in respect of numbers, renewals and the extent to which membership was coerced. There is, however, no doubt that in the late 1970s Inkatha did have a substantial membership in Natal and on the Witwatersrand. See also Forsyth, P. (1990). *Inkatha membership*. Research Project on Contemporary Political Conflicts, Department of Historical Studies, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
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8. See Aitchison, JJW. (1997). *Historic Origins and Development of Warlordism in KwaZulu-Natal – from Chiefdoms to Warlordism*. Commissioned report for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. pp. 4–5, 32–34.
9. One of these security policemen applied for amnesty for a total of 49 murders. *The Natal Witness*. (14 March 1997.)
10. Evidence given by William Basil Harrington to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in November 1996 and to an amnesty hearing in February 1997 provides a graphic picture of the reign of terror unleased by the special constables working with the Riot Police. Harrington was a police constable based with the Riot Unit in Pietermaritzburg from 1988 to 1991, who was convicted and jailed for murdering an ANC supporter. He estimated that during this period he and his 'specials' on patrol assaulted over 1 000 people. He also testified on the liaison with Inkatha – David Ntombela met with the head of the Riot Unit several times a month. (*Sunday Tribune,* 24 November 1997. p. 15.)
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18. *The Natal Witness*, 25 April 1989. *Weekly Mail*, 28 April 1989.
19. *The Natal Witness*, 17 May 1989. *Weekly Mail*, 19 May 1989.
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21. The Imbali Support Group was formed in November 1989 by a number of concerned volunteers, mainly from the white community in Pietermaritzburg, to provide a small degree of support for harassed families in Imbali township. This they did by staying with families in the hope that a white presence might deter attacks. Although they were willing to stay with people of any affiliation, they were denounced by Inkatha. On 20 November David Ntombela warned whites and Indians 'who are squatting in Imbali to get out as soon as possible or we will be forced to take the law into our own hands'. Local Imbali Inkatha leader Phikelela Ndlovu added, 'We are black people and black people must obey black rules. They are whites and must stick to white rules.'

CHAPTER FOUR

1. One of the 'Inkathagate' revelations of July 1991 was that the security police had financed a number of Inkatha rallies, even after 2 February 1990. The rally of 25 March was subsidised to the tune of R152 169.04. See the South African Pressclips supplement, *The Inkatha Scandal*, for a collection of press reports on Inkatagate.
2. The most detailed bibliography of publications and documents on political violence in the Natal during the first three years of the 1990s is in Aitchison, JJW. (1993). *Numbering the Dead. The Course and Pattern of Political Violence in the*

Natal Midlands: 1987–1989. Unpublished thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Major holdings of documents and submissions from the 1990s are held by the TRC, including Goldstone Commission documents. Monitoring groups, including the Human Rights Committee, and the Centres for Adult Education and Socio-Legal Studies of the University of Natal, have databases of events from 1990 to to the present.

3. The main sources of information about the Seven Days War (until the Truth and Reconciliation publishes its final reports) are: Aitchison, JJW. (ed). (1990). *Political Violence in the Natal Midlands :Reports from the 24-hour Monitoring Group of the Midlands Crisis Relief Committee, 25 March to 28 July 1990*. Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal.
   Aitchison, JJW. (ed). (1991). *The Seven Days War: 25–31 March 1990 The victims' narrative*. Second revised edition. Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
   Aitchison, JJW. (1996). *The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990): Background, Course and Questions*. Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pietermaritzburg. 18 November 1996.
4. Aitchison, JJW. (1996). *The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990): Background, Course and Questions*. Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pietermaritzburg, 18 November 1996. pp. 5–6.
5. Ntombela was not a chief (*inkhosi*) but a headman (*induna*), though undoubtedly the most powerful and charismatic traditional leader in the region.
6. *The Natal Witness,* 21–23 February 1990. *Witness Echo*, 1 March 1990.
7. Aitchison, JJW. (1996). *The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990): Background, Course and Questions*. Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pietermaritzburg, 18 November 1996. pp. 7–8. One can speculate that the mobilisation of 21 February 1990 may have been defused, not for any altruistic reasons but simply because a larger attack plan was afoot.
8. *Meeting with the Amakhosi of KwaZulu: Address by his majesty King Zwelithini Goodwill ka Bhekuzulu king of the Zulu Nation*. Friday 23 March 1990. Ulundi. Mimeograph.
9. *The Natal Mercury*, 30 March 1990.
10. In late January and early February 1990 the pro-Inkatha amaNyavu chief had launched several attacks on neighbouring Chief Maphumulo's area, forcing a migration of refugees into Pietermaritzburg.
11. Philip Powell had been a security police agent whilst a student on the Pietermaritzburg and Durban campuses of the University of Natal, who became involved in the traditional security police game of trying to concoct a 'moderate' student organisation to oppose the liberal/radical National Union of South African Students. He later became a KwaZulu government official in the Natal Midlands and spent most of the 1990s involved in training and arming Inkatha's paramilitary forces (with some help from Eugene de Kock of Vlakplaas). He became commander of Inkatha's Mlaba camp near Ulundi and between October

1993 and April 1994 trained between 5 000 and 8 000 paramilitary fighters (*Mail & Guardian,* 7 March 1997).

12. *The Natal Witness*, 30 March 1997.
13. Smith, T. (1990). *Who's behind the violence in Edendale?* Unpublished document. Smith, a Jesuit priest based at a mission near Ntombela's base, repeated these allegations to the TRC hearings in September 1996.
14. *The Natal Witness*, 26 July 1990. Delport said responsibility for restoring peace to the area lay with 'the communities themselves' and that, while the government would try to put a physical buffer between the warring parties, this was not real peace, which could only come about through the efforts of the conflicting parties.
15. He was subsequently employed as a KwaZulu policeman and reappeared in the notorious incident where Chief Buthelezi's bodyguards assaulted Sifiso Zulu, the spokesman of the king, in the SABC studios in Durban on 25 September 1994. Toti Zulu was armed with an automatic hand carbine and told the press he would have shot Zulu if he had had the opportunity. (*Sunday Tribune,* 26 September 1994).
16. Aitchison, JJW. (ed). (1991). *The Seven Days War: 25–31 March 1990 The Victims' Narrative*. Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal.
17. However, psychologically, the proof of Inkatha's ability (with police collusion) to cause pain and turn the ANC's renaissance in South Africa into a funeral gathering rather than a victory parade must have had an immense impact on the ANC leadership.
18. In the same month Minister Vlok amended the Dangerous Weapons Act, thereby allowing the specified weapons to be carried in 'non-unrest' areas whereas previously they were restricted in all areas.
19. *The Natal Witness,* 25 June 1991; 9 July 1991. *Sunday Tribune,* 15 December 1991.
20. *Weekly Mail,* 21 July 1991.
21. An example was the refusal of the police to disarm a group of armed Inkatha supporters who tried to disrupt an ANC march in Durban on 2 August 1992. Major-General Collin Steyn stated: 'It was decided not to disarm the Inkatha group as this might be interpreted as provocative and an attempt to humiliate the Inkatha supporters in the presence of the ANC marchers.'
22. Inkatha frequently argued that people were not killed by traditional weapons. In fact, police statistics for violent deaths in Natal are in stark contrast to the IFP's KwaZulu-Natal Premier Frank Mdlalose's claims in 1995 that most victims 'are killed by bullets that come from guns, not by spears or knobkerries'. Nearly 60 per cent of all murders investigated by police in the province over the first five years of the 1990s were committed with weapons other than firearms and in 1991 the figure was 69 per cent. (*Mail & Guardian*, 4 April 1995).
23. Recently, Daluxolo Luthuli, the leader of the 200 Caprivi trainees, revealed to a TRC amnesty hearing that Hadebe had been assassinated by Bongani Sithole, another Caprivi graduate. (*The Natal Witness,* 10 April 1998).

24. Daluxolo Luthuli has testified that the Esikhawini hit-squad acted under the orders of the local IFP leadership which included Prince Gideon Zulu, currently MEC for Welfare in the KwaZulu-Natal legislature. (*The Natal Witness,* 10 April 1998).
25. A notable event affecting the ANC side was the suspension of Harry Gwala from the South African Communist Party for six months in July 1994 for allegedly ordered the assassination of colleagues Ben Martin and Blade Nzimande (an assignation which the particular assassins declined to fulfil).
26. The *Weekly Mail* of 19 July 1991 provided evidence that Inkatha had been funded by the State via the security police, which included periods after 2 February 1990. More details were published in the months that followed. See the South African Pressclips supplement, *The Inkatha Scandal*, for a collection of press reports on Inkathagate.
27. The improvement in policing was seriously hampered by the inability of the police to comprehend the need to disarm Inkatha followers of 'cultural weapons'.
28. Human Rights Committee. (1995). *Human Rights Review of South Africa: 1994.* Johannesburg. p. 13.
29. In fact, not odd at all, as the exposure of Nkabinde as a long-time security force agent on 7 April 1997 makes clear. After his expulsion from the ANC Nkabinde appeared at a press conference flanked by Philip Powell and Thomas Shabalala, one of the more notorious warlords from the Durban informal settlement of Lindelani.
30. *The Natal Witness*, 27 October 1995.
31. Legal Resources Centre. (1992). *Obstacle to Peace: the Role of the KwaZulu Police in the Natal Conflict.* Durban: Legal Resources Centre. p. 5.
32. *The Natal Witness*, 30 August 1995.
33. *Mail and Guardian*, 29 August 1994.
34. Amnesty applicant Thulani Myeza, who was trained at a camp in Umfolosi, testified that he was told he was being trained to kill ANC members to secure the IFP's position in the province ahead of the 1994 general elections. He said that his group were given a list of ANC members in the Eshowe region to be killed. He added that the KwaZulu Police often accompanied his self protection unit on attacks. (*The Natal Witness*, 27 March 1998).
35. In his trial De Kock admitted to supplying weapons to Inkatha through Philip Powell, Transvaal Inkatha leaders Themba Khoza and Humphry Ndlovu and KwaZulu minister CJ Mtetwa. (*Mail & Guardian,* 10 January 1997).
36. *Mail & Guardian*, 20 September 1996; 7 March 1997.
37. *The Natal Witness,* 7 June 1994.
38. *The Natal Witness,* 7 June 1994. *Mail & Guardian,* 7 March 1997.
39. Human Rights Committee. (1995). *Human Rights Review of South Africa: 1994.* Johannesburg: Human Rights Committee. p. 13.
40. Apart from the one deal, exposed within weeks, which involved FW de Klerk secretly signing over ownership of vast tracts of state trust land to the Zulu king.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. All statistics in this and subsequent chapters, unless otherwise specified, are taken from the CASE monitoring database.
2. *The Star*, 16 August 1990.
3. *The Citizen*, 6 August 1990.
4. *Weekly Mail*, 30 May–6 June 1991.
5. *Saturday Star*, 4 May 1991.
6. Hostels are discussed in detail elsewhere in this chapter.
7. See Segal L. (1991). 'The human face of violence: hostel dwellers speak' in Journal of Southern African Studies, 18/1. pp. 190–231. One exception was Alexandra township, which is discussed elsewhere.
8. See Everatt D., Lake C., Rapholo G. and Orkin M. (1995). *'Finishing the job?': Deepening democracy and delivering benefits through successful local government elections*. (Johannesburg: CASE).
9. Quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 17 August 1990.
10. Quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 17 August 1990.
11. Cosatu Information Department. 1990. Discussion paper.
12. Quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 17 August 1990.
13. Lt van Rooyen, quoted in *The Citizen*, 15 August 1990.
14. SAP spokesperson, quoted in *The Star*, 18 August 1990.
15. Quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 20 August 1990.
16. Quoted in *The Sunday Star*, 19 August 1990.
17. Zibuse Mlaba, quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 21 August 1990.
18. *The Star*, 15 August 1991, discussing violence in Alexandra.
19. Aitchison JJW. (1993). 'Numbering the dead: the course and pattern of political violence in the Natal Midlands, 1987–1989'. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg). p. 194.
20. Graeme Simpson, Lloyd Vogelman and Lauren Segal, quoted in *The Sunday Star*, 19 August 1990. The organisation has been renamed the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.
21. Evidence from Willie Nortje at the trial of Eugene de Kock.
22. Hudson J. (1993). *Violence in the PWV Area 1990–1992: A Diary of Events*. (Johannesburg: SAIRR). pp. 43–51.
23. *Daily Mail*, 2 July 1990.
24. Cosatu press statement, 20 July 1990.
25. *The New Nation*, 27 July 1990.
26. *The Daily Mail*, 24 July 1990.
27. Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression (IBIIR). *Memorandum on violence on the Reef*. August 1990.
28. Lt-Col Frans Halgryn, quoted in IBIIR. *Monthly report*. July 1990. p. 10.
29. Quoted in *The Star*, 24 July 1990.
30. Quoted in *The Sowetan*, 24 July 1990.
31. IBIIR. *Memorandum on violence in Sebokeng*. 4 September 1990.

32. *The Weekly Mail,* 24–30 January 1992. pp. 2–3.
33. *The Star*, 26 July 1990. Mzabalazo people were mainly UDF/ANC supporters who held political discussions and sang freedom songs during their journey. Trains also had other specified coaches, such as prayer coaches.
34. See *Business Day,* 26 July 1990, and the Human Rights Commission monthly report for July 1990.
35. *The New Nation*, 24 August 1990.
36. MG Buthelezi. 'Presidential Address', launch of the Inkatha Freedom Party, 14 July 1990. p. 5.
37. Interviewed in the *New Nation*, 17 August 1990.
38. Buthelezi. 'Presidential address'. op cit. p. 12.
39. Cosatu. 'Inkatha offensive in the hostels. 3 August 1990.
40. *The Sunday Star*, 19 August 1990.
41. IBIIR. *Monthly report*. August 1990. pp. 34–36.
42. Quoted in *Vrye Weekblad*, 10–16 May 1991.
43. Quoted in *The Sowetan*, 14 December 1990.
44. *The Weekly Mail*, 14 September 1990.
45. Quoted in IBIIR. *Memorandum on Violence*. 15 August 1990.
46. Brood van Heerden cited in Commission of Inquiry regarding the prevention of public violence and intimidation (hereafter Goldstone Commission). *Report to the international investigation team*. pp.8–9.
47. Report of the Eugene de Kock trial, reported weekly by the Institute for a Democratic South Africa (Idasa) (e-mail communication).
48. Goldstone Commission. *Report to the international investigation team*, (nd. 1994). pp.8–9.
49. Goldstone Commission report. 18 March 1994.
50. *Sunday Times*, 15 October 1995.
51. Report of the Eugene de Kock trial, reported weekly by Idasa (e-mail communication).
52. *The Weekly Mail*, 28 March 1991.
53. *The Sunday Star*, 19 August 1990.
54. *The Weekly Mail*, 21 September 1990.
55. Gotz G. (1995). (unpublished). *The failing of the state? violence in the Vaal Triangle, 1990–1995*. pp. 12–15.
56. Quoted in *The Weekly Mail*, 5 April 1991.
57. Gotz. op cit. pp. 12–15.
58. Discussed in detail in the preceding chapter.
59. Quoted in Friedman S. (ed). *The Long Journey: South Africa's Quest for a Negotiated Settlement*. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press). (1993). p. 152.
60. See for example Sparks, A. (1995). *Tomorrow is Another Country*. (Cape Town: Struik).
61. *The Star*, 27 March 1991.
62. *The Star*, 27 March 1991.

63. *The Sowetan*, 28 March 1991.
64. Eye-witness account quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 15 August 1990.
65. Eye-witness account quoted in *The Citizen*, 16 August 1990.
66. *The Sunday Star*, 25 August 1991.
67. *The Sunday Star*, 25 August 1991.
68. Quoted in *The Citizen*, 27 May 1991.
69. *Business Day*, 21 May 1991.
70. Senzo Mfayela in *The Sunday Star*, 19 May 1991.
71. See Segal. 'Human face of violence: hostel dwellers speak'. op cit.
72. Quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 17 August 1990.
73. *The Sowetan*, 21 August 1990.
74. IBIIR. *Monthly Report*. May 1991. p. 17.
75. *ibid.*
76. *The Star*, 8 May 1991.
77. IBIIR. *Memorandum on violence on the Reef*. August 1990.
78. Everatt, D. & Schrier, D. *Hostel violence in Soweto*. (CASE nd., prepared for Nicholls Cambanis and Sudano for submission to Goldstone Commission on hostel violence).
79. IBIIR. *Monthly report*. June 1991. pp. 16–19.
80. *Sunday Star*, 26 May 1991.
81. Press briefing, Neil Coleman of Cosatu. (1991).
82. Walter Sisulu, quoted in *The Daily Mail*, 20 August 1990.
83. Quoted in *The Weekly Mail*, 30 May–6 June 1991.
84. Quoted in *The Weekly Mail*, 17–23 May 1991.
85. Goldstone Commission. *Report to International Team*. op cit. p. 18.
86. *The Independent* (UK), 23 July 1991.
87. IBIIR. *Monthly report*. May 1991. p. 15.
88. Everatt D. 'A nation at war – with itself' in *The state of the nation, Vrye Weekblad/Sowetan*,
89. *The Daily Mail*, 12 July 1990.
90. *The Sowetan*, 14 September 1990.
91. IBIIR. *Monthly Report*. December/January 1990–1991. pp. 1–2.
92. *The Star*, 8 May 1991.
93. *New Nation*, 17 August 1990.
94. *The Star*, 18 September 1990.
95. Quoted in IBIIR. *Memorandum on violence*. 15 August 1990.
96. Quoted in *The Weekly Mail*, 24–29 May 1991.
97. *ibid.*
98. Quoted in IBIIR. *Monthly report*. September 1990. p. 25.
99. *The Star*, 30 April 1991.
100. *The Star*, 26 April 1991.
101. Human Rights Commission. *Monthly report*. May 1991.
102. *New Nation*, 14–20 June 1991.

103. *ibid*.
104. *The Star*, 24 May 1991.
105. *New Nation*, 19–25 July 1991.
106. Goldstone Commission. *Report to International team*. op cit. p. 12.
107. *The Star*, 26 July 1991.
108. See Jennings, R. Dugard, J. & Everatt, D. *Judging the judges*. (Johannesburg: CASE).
109. Goldstone Commission. *Interim report on criminal violence by elements within the South African Police, the KwaZulu Police and the Inkatha Freedom Party*. pp. 14–15.
110. Sources: Human Rights Committee database printout and CASE database.
111. *The Weekly Mail*, 10–16 May 1991.
112. *The Weekly Mail*, 10–16 May 1991.
113. *The Weekly Mail*, 10–16 May 1991.
114. *The Weekly Mail*, 17 August 1990.
115. *The Star*, 15 August 1990.
116. Quoted in *The Citizen*, 15 August 1990.
117. *Vrye Weekblad*, 10–16 May 1991.
118. *The Citizen*, 12 April 1991.
119. *The Star*, 25 June 1991.

CHAPTER SIX

1. In a hard-hitting critique *Guardian* correspondent David Beresford referred to the Goldstone Commission as being a 'dustbin for the government'. *Mail & Guardian*, 25–31 March 1994.
2. Lusaka, P. (1994). 'Planning ahead for peace'. *Indicator SA*. vol. 12. no. 1. p. 13.
3. *City Press*, 22 September 1991.
4. Shaw, M. (1993). 'War and peace: Resolving local conflict'. *Indicator SA*. vol. 10. no. 3. p. 63.
5. Quoted in *Financial Mail*, 9 March 1993.
6. National Peace Accord, Preamble. p. 3.
7. Quoted in Shaw, M. (1994). 'The bloody backdrop: Negotiating violence', in Friedman, S. & Atkinson, D. (eds). *South African Review (SAR)* 7. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press). p. 185.
8. Interview, Piers Pigou, researcher, Independent Board of Inquiry (IBI). 5 September 1995.
9. Interview, Patrick Kelly, director, Human Rights Committee. 4 September 1995.
10. Shaw. op cit. p. 65.
11. Interview, Patrick Kelly, director, HRC. 4 September 1995.
12. Azapo spokesperson quoted in *City Press*, 22 September 1991.
13. Shaw, M. (1993). 'The final countdown: Peacekeeping and the election'. *Indicator*

SA. vol. 10. no. 4. p. 15.
14. *ibid*. p. 14.
15. Shaw. op cit. p. 67.
16. Interview, Piers Pigou, researcher, IBI. 5 September 1995.
17. National Peace Accord, Chapter 6. p. 22.
18. Shaw, M. (1993). 'The Goldstone Commission in the public eye'. *Indicator SA*. vol. 11. no. 1. p. 55. See also *The Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act 139* of 1991, sections 7(a), (b), (c) and (d).
19. *The Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act 139* of 1991, section 7(5).
20. HRC & Institute for the Prevention of Violence (ISPV). (Nov 1992). *Consolidated Reports on the Goldstone Commission*. (Johannesburg: HRC & IPV). p. 57.
21. Quoted in *Business Day*, 5 October 1993.
22. Veriava, F. (June 1995). 'Thrown to the wolves'. *Democracy in Action*. vol. 9. no. 3. p. 9.
23. Shaw. 'The Goldstone Commission in the public eye'. op cit. p. 59.
24. *Mail & Guardian*, 25–31 March 1994.
25. Editorial. (Sept 1993). 'Goldstone's credibility at stake'. *Mayibuye*. p. 14.
26. Quoted in *The Citizen*, 1 February 1994.
27. Shaw. 'The Goldstone Commission in the public eye'. op cit. p. 57.
28. *Business Day*, 7 July 1992.
29. Interview, Piers Pigou, researcher, IBI. 5 September 1995.
30. ISPV. (Oct 1993). *Introduction to the Goldstone Institute*. (Johannesburg: ISPV). p. 1.
31. *ibid*.
32. *The Sowetan*, 10 July 1993.
33. Statement read by Justice RJ Goldstone at the Commission's preliminary hearing into the Boipatong massacre held at Pretoria on Monday 6 July 1992. p. 4.
34. *Mail & Guardian*, 20–26 November 1992.
35. *The Sowetan*, 25 August 1994.
36. *Mail & Guardian*, 2–8 August 1991.
37. *ibid*.
38. *ibid*. p. 12.
39. *Mail & Guardian*, 25 June–1 July 1993.
40. *ibid*.
41. Goldstone Commission. *Report into allegations concerning front companies of the SADF, the training of Inkatha supporters in 1986 and the Black Cats*. op cit. p. 17.
42. *ibid*. p. 19.
43. *Mail & Guardian*, 25 June–1 July 1993.
44. Goldstone Commission. (18 March 1994). *Interim report on criminal political violence by elements within the South African Police, the KwaZulu Police and the Inkatha Freedom Party*. p. 12.
45. *ibid*. p. 2.

46. *ibid*.
47. *ibid*. p. 14.
48. Goldstone Commission. (no date). *Report to the international investigation team*. p. 1.
49. *ibid*. p. 2.
50. The following derives from the *Mail & Guardian*, 23–29 June 1995.
51. Goldstone Commission. *Report to the international investigatin team*. op cit. p. 21.
52. *ibid*. p. 23.
53. Affidavits collected by the Black Sash and the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee contained claims that policemen, white men in camouflage, *kitskonstabels*, or men wearing balaclavas participated in attacks.
54. Goldstone Commission. (27 May 1992). *First interim report on public violence*. p. 6.
55. *Rapport*, 15 August 1993.
56. Shaw, M. (Sept 1994). *The Goldstone Commission: October 1991–October 1994*. Unpublished. p. 60.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Interview with ARD German TV, *Financial Mail* transcript. 5 September 1986. Quoted in Uys, P. (1987). *PW Botha: In his own Words*. (Cape Town: Penguin). p. 85.
2. O' Donnell, G. & Schmitter, P. (1989). *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press). p. 38.
3. During negotiations a distinction was drawn between the state and the ruling party. Hence there were both SAG and NP delegations at Codesa and at the multi-party negotiating process. In many respects this distinction was misleading. As Frene Ginwala (currently Speaker in the National Assembly) argued in November 1991, it is 'difficult to separate the two after 43 years of NP rule' (*Changing orientation of various constitutional positions of political parties and organisations*. (Johannesburg: CASE). p. A60. The term SAG is used throughout this section to refer to the former government headed by the NP. The term NP is used in the context of party proposals.
4. It should be noted that the ANC gained much support from its alliance with the South African Communist Party (which had a separate delegation at the talks) and Cosatu, as well as the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) delegation, during negotiations.
5. Phillips, M. & Coleman, C. (July 1989). 'Another kind of war: Strategies for transition in the era of negotiations'. *Negotiations Package*. (Johannesburg: CPS). p. 10.

6. *The Star*, 11 April 1989.
7. Andrew, K. (April 1990). 'Reflections on a watershed'. *Monitor*. p. 44.
8. *Principles and objectives of the Consultative Business Movement* brochure for the formation of the CBM.
9. In Zimbabwe Bishop Abel Muzorewa (a 'moderate' black politician and founder of the United African National Council) agreed to an internal settlement with the Smith white minority government in March 1978. He won the dubious 1979 election and became Prime Minister in June 1979. But having failed to stop the war, and not having the support of the majority of Zimbabweans, he handed political power back to England six months later.
10. Interview, Nelson Mandela, *Death of apartheid*. SABC television series. 13 June 1995.
11. ANC. (Oct 1987). *Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the Question of Negotiations*. (Lusaka: ANC).
12. ANC. (July 1989). *ANC discussion paper on the issue of negotiations*. Quoted in *Business Day*, 20 July 1989.
13. Swilling, M. & Van Zyl Slabbert, F. (September 1989). 'Waiting for a negotiated settlement: South Africans in a changing world'. *Negotiations Package*. (Johannesburg: CPS) . p. 5.
14. Sparks, A. (1995). *Tomorrow is another country*. (Cape Town: Struik). p. 22.
15. ANC. (Oct 1987). *Statement of the National Executive Committee on the question of negotiations*. (Lusaka: ANC).
16. *Mail & Guardian*, 20–26 January 1989.
17. Quoted in Sparks. *Tomorrow is another country*. op cit. p. 95.
18. O'Donnell & Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. op cit. p. 38.
19. I am indebted to Graeme Simpson, director of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), for assistance in writing this section.
20. Simpson, G. (June 1994). *Proposed legislation on: Amnesty/Indemnity and the Establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Submission to the Minister of Justice, Mr Dullah Omar, MP. (Johannesburg: CSVR).
21. *The Star*, 23 October 1992.
22. Simpson. Proposed legislation. op cit. p. 3.
23. *The Star*, 23 October 1992.
24. A South African word, meaning the spirit of humanity (although not strictly translatable).
25. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993. Postamble. p. 180. lines 40–50.
26. The emphasis is mine.
27. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. op cit. Postamble. p. 180. lines 51–54.
28. Interview, Graeme Simpson. CSVR. 5 September 1995.
29. Quoted by Graeme Simpson. 5 September 1995.
30. Shaw, M. (1994). 'Biting the bullet: Negotiating democracy's defence', in

Friedman & Atkinson *SAR* 7. pp. 239.

31. Shaw, M. (1994). 'The bloody backdrop: Negotiating violence', in Friedman & Atkinson. *SAR* 7. op cit. p. 196.
32. *Sunday Times*, 6 June 1993.
33. For further discussion see IEC. (Oct 1994). *Report of the Independent Electoral Commission: The South African Elections of April 1994*. (Johannesburg: IEC). pp. 9–15.
34. The data for this summary comes from HRC. (Jan–April 1994). *Election Watch*. No. 1–6. (Johannesburg: HRC).
35. Shaw, M. (1994). 'The bloody backdrop: Negotiating violence', in Moss, G. & Obery, I. (eds). *SAR* 7. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press). p. 199.
36. Atkinson, D. (1994). 'Brokering a miracle?: The multiparty negotiating forum', in Friedman & Atkinson. *SAR* 7. pp. 39–41.
37. *ibid*. p. 39.
38. *ibid*. p. 40.
39. *ibid*.
40. Quoted in Hamilton, G. & Maré, G. (1994). 'The Inkatha Freedom Party', in Reynolds, A. (ed). *Election '94 South Africa*. (Cape Town: David Philip). p. 81.
41. Reynolds, A. (1994). 'The results', in Reynolds, A (ed). *Election '94 South Africa*. (Cape Town: David Philip). p. 185.
42. Due to logistical problems voting was extended to 29 April in six areas: the former homelands Ciskei, Gazankulu, Lebowa, KwaZulu, Transkei and Venda.
43. *ibid*. p. 62.
44. For a full break-down of votes cast for each party for the National Assembly and for the provincial legislatures, see *ibid*. pp. 72–77.
45. Hamilton & Maré. 'The Inkatha Freedom Party'. op cit. p. 86.
46. For further discussion see IEC. (Oct 1994). *Report of the Independent Electoral Commission: The South African Elections of April 1994*. (Johannesburg: IEC). p. 73.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. The tendency was not unique to South Africa, neither was it associated only with particular political ideologies. The broad anti-apartheid movement, for instance, tended to connote the system of racial capitalism with the institutional form of the apartheid state (for a critique, see Marais, 1998). Habits die hard, however: the two-year Truth and Reconciliation Commission process, for example, devoted less than a week of hearings to human rights violations that involved South African corporations.
2. South African Police Service (SAPS) crime statistics ostensibly supported claims by government officials that crime levels declined since 1994. But policing experts have cast doubt on the precision of some figures, particularly those tallying rapes

and assaults. They have also questioned the accuracy achieved when quarterly figures are compared (as SAPS statisticians have done), arguing that if you wanted a serious comparison of crime levels across the 1990s, you would release results in 6 months or annual cycles According to Antoinette Louw of the Institute of Security Studies, the three-month comparison tells you very little; see 'Statistics show crime is down', *Business Day*, 16 July 1998.

3. 'Organized crime threatens state's credibility with high-profile heists', *SouthScan*. vol. 13. no. 3. 6 February 1998. According to the Crime Information Management Centre, there were 119.5 *reported* rapes per 100 000 of the population in 1996 (cited in Budlender. (1997). p. 2), of which prosecutions for fewer than one third reached the courts (Baden *et al*, 1997:32).
4. Pollin, R. (1996). 'Contemporary economic stagnation in world historical perspective'. *New Left Review* 219. p. 117.
5. According to figures released by the Independent Complaints Directorate; see *Toronto Globe & Mail*, 7 July 1998.
6. Occasionally, the two factors overlap. In the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, for instance, the absence of lighting saw police deliberately reduce night-time patrols in order to avoid casualties at the hands of unknown snipers. The resulting absence of visible policing made possible recurrent spates of massacres that were then inadequately investigated.
7. Cited in Swilling, M. & Phillips, M. (1989). 'State power in the 1980s: from "total strategy" to "counter-revolutionary warfare"', in *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa*. (Cape Town: David Philip).
8. According to the TRC, which released details of the report in late 1997. The report also documented cross-border smuggling operations run by the security forces, chemical and biological warfare operations conducted by the SADF's 7 Medical Battalion and other clandestine projects aimed at undermining anti-apartheid resistance. Train violence continued until 1994 elections. See 'De Klerk 'knew of third force activities", *Mail & Guardian*, 17 January 1997 and 'Shocks from the Steyn Report', *Mail & Guardian*, 31 January 1997.
9. For more details, see South African newspaper reports during the week of July 13–17, 1998. Other TRC investigations (underway at the time of writing), were expected to provide new insights into drive-by shootings in the Vaal Triangle, as well as IFP-linked gun-running, assassination, armed robbery and arson activities.
10. De Kock, E. (1998). *A Long Night's Damage*. (Johannesburg: Contra Press). pp. 235, 237.
11. op. cit. p. 235.
12. Cited in Holmes, R. (1985). *Firing Line*. (London: Random House). p. 7.
13. ANC National Executive Committee. (November 1992). 'Negotiations: A strategic perspective' discussion paper, Johannesburg.
14. See Chapter Five, 'The evolution of ANC economic policy: A short walk to orthodoxy', in Marais. (1998). p. 146–176.

15. See Morris, M. & Hindson, D. (1992). 'South Africa: political violence, reform and reconstruction', *Review of African Political Economy*. no 53. Sheffield, pp. 43–55.
16 op. cit. p. 46.
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20. In May 1998, two massive thefts of arms (including R4 and R5 automatic rifles, rocket launchers, machine guns, grenade launchers and mortars) occurred at a military base near Bloemfontein; 'Arms thefts from bases', *SouthScan*. vol. 11. no. 13. 29 May 1998.
21. 'Organized crime threatens state's credibility with high profile heists', *SouthScan*. vol. 13. no. 3. 6 February 1998.
22. Williams, P. (1996). 'Transnational organised crime and international security: A global assessment' in Gamba, V. (ed). *Society under Siege: Crime, Violence and Illegal Weapons*, Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 21.
23. *ibid*.
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25. For a critique of Gear, see Marais. (1998) p. 160–176 and Marais, H. (1997). 'The RDP: Is there life after gear?'. *Development Update*. vol 1. no. 1. (June), Johannesburg. pp. 1–19.
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27. Martin, H. & Schumann, H. (1997). *The Global trap: Globalization & the Assault on Democracy*. (London: Pluto Press). p. 120.
28. Thus, police officers have been implicated in taxi violence (providing firearms and offering protection to taxi associations, as well as themselves owning taxi fleets): 'Third force fuels taxi war', *Mail & Guardian*, 14 February 1997.
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31. op. cit., p 12.
32. Reported in 'Organized crime threatens state's credibility with high profile heists'. *SouthScan*. vol. 13. no. 3. 6 February 1998.

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34. *ibid.*
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37. Scharf, W. (1990). 'The resurgence of urban street gangs and community responses' in Hansson, D. & Van Zyl Smit, D. (eds). *Towards Justice? Crime and State Control in South Africa*. (Cape Town: Oxford University Press). p. 244.
38. op. cit., p. 252.
39. 'Crime is the only business providing jobs', *Mail & Guardian*, 15 May 1998.
40. Police investigator, quoted in 'Hijackers "responsive to market demands"', *Business Day*, 11 August 1998.
41. To date, no political organisation has admitted to having sanctioned such acts, although many reports during the 1980s alleged that Pan African Congress officials were involved in drug-running and other crimes in neighbouring countries.
42. The offices housed a police unit responsible for investigating Pagad activities.
43. Hamber, B. & Lewis, S. (1997). *An Overview of the Consequences of Violence and Trauma in South Africa*. CSVR. p. 6.
44. This section relies heavily on two commendable special reports compiled by the Human Rights Committee: *Tsolo Battleground* (1996) and *Dimensions of the Continuing Violence in Tsolo and Qumbu* (1997).
45. The national rate in SA was 61 per 100 000 inhabitants in 1996.
46. 'No peace for the people of Tsolo', *Mail & Guardian*, August 1997.
47. These related to ongoing controversies regarding the roles and powers of traditional chiefs under the new system of democratic local government.
48. HRC. (1997) pp. 7, 12. As we shall see, this contention is buttressed by the central role of residents in the Sebokeng hostel (near Vereeniging), which during the early 1990s functioned as an IFP stronghold and weapons factory.
49. See 'No peace for the people of Tsolo', *Mail & Guardian*, 1 August 1997.
50. Human Rights Commission. (1997). 'Dimensions of the Continuing Violence in Tsolo and Qumbu: Murder, Gunrunning, Stock-theft and Intimidation', *Special Report* No 4 (November). Johannesburg. p. 15.
51. 'Opposition parties urged to join forces against ANC', *SouthScan*. vol. 11. no. 13. 29 May 1998.
52. In July 1998, the IFP's Sipho Mzimela found his public support for such a merger rewarded with the loss of his office-bearing position and his cabinet post (as Minister of Correctional Services) in July 1998.
53. 'Mbeki–Buthelezi show may go national', *Business Day,* 22 July 1998.
54. At the national level, efforts to reconcile the institutions of traditional leadership

with a democratic order were still underway in mid-1998. Awaiting resolution by the Constitutional Affairs Department were 'the status of traditional leaderships .... as well as its powers, privileges, entitlements, functions and duties'. Agreement had been reached, however, that the country's 800 chiefs would receive annual salaries of R72 000 from government. The issue of payment of headmen had not been settled. See 'Traditional leaders' status investigated', *Business Day*, 9 July 1998.

55. It was no coincidence that the IFP in 1998 adopted as its logo the elephant, an animal of deep symbolic resonance among Zulu traditionalists.
56. For a sophisticated and provocative examination of such realities on a broader continental scale, see Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
57. 'New force rising', *Mail & Guardian*, 1 October 1997.
58. 'Passage of bill could erode ANC support in Cape', *Business Day*, 25 March 1998.
59. Eastern Cape premier Makhenkesi Stofile, quoted in 'UDM picks up where the ANC left off', *Mail & Guardian*, 19 June 1998.
60. Principally, the National Party and the dismantled bureaucracies of former homelands.
61. 'Third force just a fabrication – UDM', *Business Day*, 30 July 1998.
62. *ibid*.
63. 'The time for dithering has long passed', *Business Day*, 16 July 1998.
64. Nkabinde had cemented relations with several IFP figures after his expulsion from the ANC, including Phillip Powell, Arthur Kroningkramer, David Ntombela (all whom had allegedly been linked to the apartheid security police). Among his other acquaintances was former IFP 'warlord' Mandla Shabalala, whose Lindelani preserve outside Durban also experienced a surge of violence in the same period.
65. Quoted in 'Fear in the hearts of the living', *Mail & Guardian*, 5 June 1998.
66. 'The time for dithering has long passed', *Business Day*, 16 July 1998.
67. 'Baqwa slates Cape cops for shielding gangsters', *Mail & Guardian*, 6 March 1998.
68. 'Gangbusters busted', *Mail & Guardian*, 20 February 1998.
69. An SABC documentary (screened on 20 February 1997) reported that contract killers stood to earn up to R10 000 or a taxi of their own for assassinating rival taxi operators; while shootings that claimed the lives of ordinary commuters were rewarded with substantially lower amounts.
70. 'SA crime is getting organised', *Mail & Guardian*, 13 February 1998.
71. 'Corruption cases against police', *SouthScan*. vol. 12. no. 2. 23 January 1998.
72. 'Mufamadi concerned about rising deaths in police custody', *Business Day*, 7 April 1998.
73. *The Star*, 23 January 1997.
74. According to press and violence monitor reports, Pagad has been subject to such

infiltration.

75. 'Pagad is helping the gangsters', *Mail & Guardian*, 24 October 1997.
76. Marais, H. (1997). *The Voluntary Sector and Development in South Africa 1996/97*, Interfund & South African National NGO Coalition. Johannesburg. p. 19.
77. South African Institute for Race Relations. (1997). *Race Relations Survey 1996/97.* (Johannesburg: SAIRR). p. 65.
78. Hamber, B. & Lewis, S. (1997). *An Overview of the Consequences of Violence and Trauma in South Africa.* (Johannesburg: CSVR). p. 5.
79. *ibid.*
80. op. cit. p. 9.
81. op. cit. p. 10.
82. Chikane, F. (1986). 'Children in turmoil: The effects of the unrest on township children' in Burman, S. & Reynolds, P. (eds). *Growing up in a Divided Society*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press). p. 344.
83. Gibson, K. (1991). *The Indirect Effects of Political Violence on Children: Does violence beget violence* (seminar No 4). (Johannesburg: CSVR). p. 3.
84. Shaw, M. (1997). 'Crime in Transition', *Policing the Transformation: Further issues in South Africa's Crime Debate.* Institute for Security Studies Monograph No 12. Halfway House. p. 10.
85. Batchelor, P. (1996). 'Inter-state conflict, political violence and small arms proliferation in Africa' in Gamba, V. (ed). *Society under Siege: Crime, Violence and Illegal Weapons.* Institute for Strategic Studies. p. 108.

CHAPTER NINE

1. General Johannes Petrus Coetzee and General Johannes Velde van der Merwe.
2. TRC Press Release, 5 August 1999.
3. 'PW Botha implicated in killings'. *Mail & Guardian*, 16 July 1999.
4. 'Generals seek extradition assurances' – *Business Day*, 1 April 1997
5. See testimony of SADF members at Armed Forces Hearings in October 1997. Steyn's investigation was initiated by De Klerk following the discovery of documentation at DCC headquarters after raid in November 1992 by investigators from the Goldstone Commission. Given the nature of the information discovered during the raid it is not clear why the investigation was taken out of the hands of the Goldstone Commission and placed into the hands of the police and the Transvaal Attorney-general's office. During the course of 1993, Steyn repeatedly raised concerns with De Klerk about the slow pace of these investigations. Despite consistent denials by De Klerk that a report of Steyn's findings had been made available to him, a report was uncovered by the TRC. The report has not been released for public scrutiny and remains classified.
6. 'Official truth fail to answer all the questions'. *Sunday Times,* 25 August 1996.

7. 'And something other than the Truth'. *Sunday Times*, 18 May 1997.
8. De Kock, E. (1998). *A Long Night's Damage – Working for the Apartheid State*. Contra Press. p. 279.
9. Party Political Hearings (1). Truth Commission. Testimony by FW de Klerk, 19 August 1996.
10. Party Political Hearings (2). Truth Commission. Testimony by FW de Klerk, 14 May 1997.
11. CCB operative Ferdi Barnard was convicted in 1999 of the 1989 murder of anti-apartheid activist and academic David Webster and various other crimes. The trial did not establish whether Barnard's actions were sanctioned by the military hierarchy as part of the CCB's mandate, or whether some of them were individual acts committed for personal gain.
12. Testimony and public submission by General Magnus Malan before the TRC, 7 May 1997.
13. Testimony of General Petrus Johannes Coetzee (Former Commissioner of the South African Police and commanding officer of the Security Branch), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 3 – 'South African Police'), 9 October 1997.
14. Testimony of Maj-Gen Joep Joubert (Former Commanding Officer of SADF's Special Forces), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 2 – 'South African Defence Force'), 8 October 1997
15. Testimony of General Johannes van der Merwe (Former Commissioner of the South African Police and commanding officer of the Security Branch), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 3 – 'South African Police'), 9 October 1997.
16. Testimony of Brigadier Willem Frederick Schoon (Former commanding officer of the Security Branch, Counter-Revolutionary 'C' Section), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 3 – 'South African Police'), 9 October 1997.
17. Testimony of Brigadier Alfred Ousthuizen (Former commanding officer of the Security Branch's Intelligence wing – 'D' Section), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 3 – 'South African Police'), 9 October 1997.
18. Testimony and public submission by General Magnus Malan before the TRC, 7 May 1997.
19. Testimony of Adriaan Vlok (former Minister of Law and Order) – State Security Council Public Hearings, 14 October 1997.
20. TRC Report. vol. 5, paragraph 90.
21. *ibid*. paragraph 99.
22. Testimony of General Johannes van der Merwe (Former Commissioner of the South African Police and commanding officer of the Security Branch), Armed Forces Hearings (Day 3 – 'South African Police'), 9 October 1997.
23. Testimony of Leon Wessels, State Security Council Public Hearings, 14 October 1997.
24. TRC Report. vol. 5. paragraph 82.
25. Testimony of Dr Lucas Daniel (Neil) Barnard – State Security Council Public Hearings, 4 December 1997.

26. TRC Report. vol. 2. chapter 3. paragraph 471.
27. Barnard, op cit.
28. *ibid.*
29. TRC Report. vol. 5. paragraph 97 (e).
30. *ibid.*
31. Barnard. op cit.
32. TRC Report. vol. 5, paragraph 82.
33. 'Hearts and minds' secret police set up bogus news agency near Khotso House'. *Sunday Independent*, 26 July 1998.
34. Testimony and public submission by General Magnus Malan before the TRC, 7 May 1997.
35. Testimony of General Constand Viljoen (Former commanding officer of the SADF), Armed Forces Hearings (Day One – South African Defence Force), 9 October 1997.
36. Pilger, J. (1998). *Hidden Agendas. (*Vintage Press).
37. TRC Report. vol. 5. paragraphs 85 & 86.
38. Testimony of Leon Wessels, op cit.
39. Minnaar, A. (1998). 'The 'third force': In retrospect.' in Schutte,C., Liebenberg, I., and Minnaar, A. (eds). *The Hidden Hand: Covert Operations in South Africa*, (Pretoria: Human Science Research Council). (1998). p. 58.
40. State Security Council Minutes, 12 May 1986 Agenda Item 10(e).
41. TRC Report. vol. 5. paragraph 102.
42. Barnard. op cit.
43. Testimony of Craig Williamson– Armed Forces Hearings, 9 October 1997.
44. *ibid.*
45. *ibid.*
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47. 'Amnesty-seeking generals feel their NP former masters betrayed them.' *Sunday Independent*, 30 June 1996.
48. TRC Report, paragraph 97 (3).
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50. TRC Report. vol. 5, paragraph 101.
51. Interviews with researchers of the erstwhile Independent Board of Inquiry and Network of Independent Monitors.
52. Henderson, RDA. (1996). 'South African intelligence under De Klerk.' In Cilliers, J. & Richard, M. (eds). *About Turn – The Transformation of the South African Military and Intelligence*. Institute for Defence Policy. p. 140.
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55. Testimony of General Constand Viljoen. op cit.
56. TRC Report. vol 2. chapter 3. paragraph 607.
57. TRC Report. vol 5. chapter 6. paragraphs 110–122.
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61. *CCB records handed over to the Western Cape Attorney General*. TRC Press Release, 2 September 1997.
62. Testimony of Craig Williamson. op cit.
63. 'The men who ordered Goniwe's death', Mungo Sogget, *Mail & Guardian*, 28 May 1999 and 'Coming clean about dirty hands', *Mail & Guardian,* 4 June 1999.
64. Testimony of General Johannes Jakobus Geldenhuys (Former commanding officer of SADF), Armed Forces hearings on the South African Defence Force – (Day 2), 8 October 1997.

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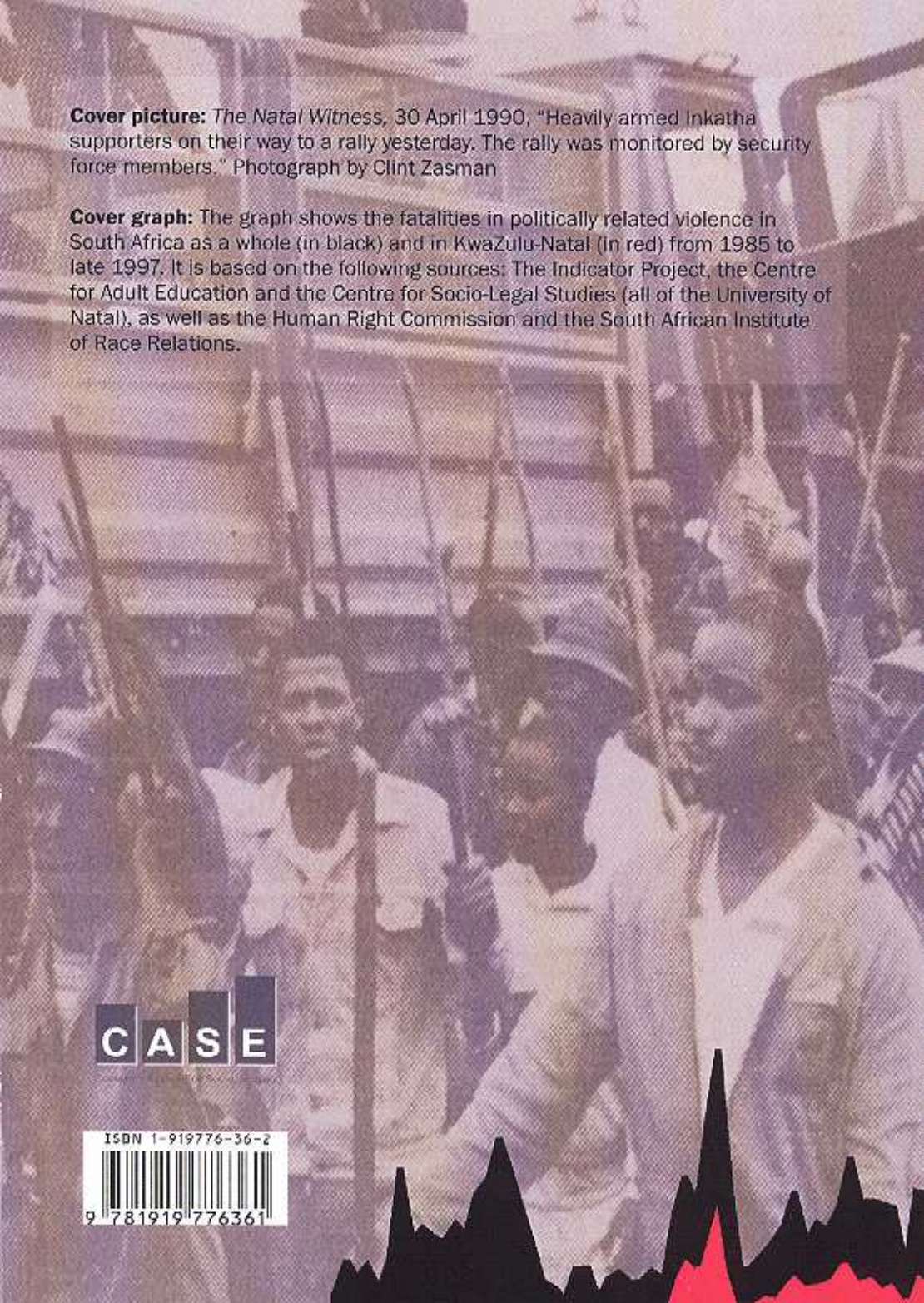
Cover picture: *The Natal Witness*, 30 April 1990, "Heavily armed Inkatha supporters on their way to a rally yesterday. The rally was monitored by security force members." Photograph by Clint Zasman

Cover graph: The graph shows the fatalities in politically related violence in South Africa as a whole (in black) and in KwaZulu-Natal (in red) from 1985 to late 1997. It is based on the following sources: The Indicator Project, the Centre for Adult Education and the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (all of the University of Natal), as well as the Human Right Commission and the South African Institute of Race Relations.



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