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ABOUT

TURN

THE TRANSFORMATION
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE

Edited by
Jakkie Cilliers & Markus Rechardt
CONTENTS

PREFACE 1

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS 4

ABBREVIATIONS 5

Mark Shaw
NEGOTIATING DEFENCE FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA 9

Jakkie Cilliers and Markus Reichardt
THE NATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE: THE TRIUMPH OF POLITICS OVER SECURITY 35

Markus Reichardt and Jakkie Cilliers
THE HISTORY OF THE HOMELAND ARMIES 63

Tsepe Motum
THE SPEAR OF THE NATION - THE RECENT HISTORY OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE (MK) 84

Tom Lodge
SOLDIERS OF THE STORM: A PROFILE OF THE AZANIAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY 105

Bill Sass
THE UNION AND SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE - 1912 TO 1994 118

Robert D'A Henderson
SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW INTELLIGENCE ENVIRONMENT 140

Kevin A O'Brien
TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE AND CO-OPERATIVE SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE OAU AND SADC 194

Jakkie Cilliers, Bill Sass, Tsepe Motum and Charl Schutte
PUBLIC OPINION ON DEFENCE AND SECURITY ISSUES 223

Markus Reichardt and Jakkie Cilliers
SWORDS AND BUSINESS: THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY 251
The transformation of the South African military is an intriguing process. As sworn enemies, the South African Defence Force (SADF), long perceived as the embodiment of white racial oppression, together with its sometime offspring, the armed forces of Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda, initially locked horns in an armed struggle against their ‘opponents’, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA). But this was less of a war, than conflict by proxy. In the years preceding the April 1994 elections, both major protagonists, the SADF and MK, were overtaken by the rising tide of resistance which engulfed South Africa during the eighties, the dramatic changes in the geo-strategic situation of the apartheid state following the coup in Portugal in 1974 and the decolonisation of Mozambique, Angola, the former Rhodesia and eventually Namibia. Although South Africa did not experience the armed conflict which characterised the decolonisation of most other African countries, the agreement between the armed forces in the final months prior to the April 1994 elections, proved crucial to the success of the South African transition.

This book is the first to sketch the military actors and trace the security agreements that facilitated the South African transition. In the first chapter, Mark Shaw, a senior researcher at IDP, presents the backdrop to negotiations over the years 1990 to late 1993. During this period, on cabinet instruction, the SADF started by avoiding engagement of its enemies. Eventually, when the National Party (NP) decided that it would be opportune, the first tentative meetings and negotiations rapidly followed. To the bemusement of observers the ‘opposing’ military personnel subsequently ‘found’ one another with remarkable speed. This was a process in which the Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) was intensely involved.

But this process was not without its sacrifices and shortfalls. One such scapegoat was the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF), ill-fated from its inception around the negotiating table in 1993, to its humiliating collapse in Katorus during March 1994, and its subsequent disbandment. Utilising an extensive research project, IDP director, Jakkie Cilliers, draws the conclusion that the NPKF in retrospect was both victim and evidence of the intensive struggle for power that underpinned the ostensible speed of the negotiations. This was made evident by the political callousness and managerial incompetence in dealing with the NPKF. Rather than a serious attempt to forge a new approach to stabilise violence-torn South Africa, the NPKF was used to score political points and was eventually disbanded.

Co-authored by Jakkie Cilliers and Markus Reichardt, a further chapter in this volume explores the background of the ‘forgotten armies’ of the homeland governments of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei. This chapter illustrates the degree to which military form alone, without ethos, purpose and legitimacy, remains a hollow shell. Two subsequent chapters, the first written by IDP researcher Tsepo Motumi on the history and
Complementing the focus on the transformation of the military, are two chapters on the evolving South African intelligence environment. The first by Robert Henderson, editor of the Newsletter of the Canadian Association of Security and Intelligence Studies (CASIS), tracks the evolution of the South African intelligence community from the era of Prime Minister P W Botha and the dominance of the National Security Management System (NSMS), through the dramatic changes introduced by President F W de Klerk during 1990 and beyond. The second chapter on developments since 1994, analyses and presents the structure and focus of the post-April 1994 intelligence community in South Africa and the environment within which it is expected to operate. This chapter is also written by a Canadian, Kevin O'Brien, an international defence analyst from Toronto, Canada.

A chapter by Jakkie Cilliers on developing regional security relations and architecture presents an analysis of the evolving debate on preventive diplomacy, peace support operations and regional security co-operation, including the OAU, Southern African Development Community (SADC), the proposed Association of Southern African States (ASAS) and the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC). This chapter is timely, with South Africa recently becoming a member of the OAU’s Conflict Prevention Mechanism, having hosted the SADC Heads of State meeting, as well as having assumed chairmanship of the ISDSC during August and September 1995. It is written against the backdrop of an intensive local debate on the contribution that South Africa can make to preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping in Africa.

Other chapters in the book include an analysis of public opinions on security related issues drawing on a national opinion survey conducted by the Institute for Defence Policy and the Human Sciences Research Council during May 1995. This is the first time that South African public attitudes on issues such as women in the military, unionisation of the security forces, attitudes to the defence industry, etc. have been surveyed comprehensively. The survey demonstrated the divide between public opinion makers and the grass roots attitudes of their constituencies. Against this background, Reichardt and Cilliers’ chapter deals with the past, present and future of the South African defence industry. It documents the lack of political leadership and general apathy from Government at a time when Armscor, Denel and South African defence exports are at a critical cross-roads.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADMC: Arms Development and Manufacturing Corporation
AECI: African Explosives and Chemical Industries
ANC: African National Congress
APLA: Azanian People's Liberation Army
APMC: Area Political Military Councils (MK)
ARMSCOR: Arms Corporation of South Africa
ASAS: Association of Southern African States
AZANYU: Azanian National Youth Unity

BCMA: Black Consciousness Movement of Azania
BCP: Basotho Congress Party
BDF: Bophuthatswana Defence Force
BI: Bureau for Information
BMATT: British Military Advisory Training Team
BNS: Bophuthatswana National Guard
BNSU: Bophuthatswana National Stability Unit
BOSS: Bureau of State Security

CASIS: Canadian Association of Security and Intelligence Studies
CCB: Civil Co-operation Bureau
CCF: Ciskei Combined Forces
CCI: Crime Combating and Investigation Unit
CCSD: Cabinet Committee for Security Affairs
CSCI: Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence
CDF: Ciskei Defence Force
CF: Chief of Defence Force Staff
Citizen Force

CISM: Conseil International du Sport Militaire (International Military Sports Council)
CNO: Council of National Unity (Venda)
COD: Congress of Democrats
CODESA: Conference for a Democratic South Africa
COIN: Counter Insurgency Operations
COMSA: Commonwealth Observer Mission to South Africa
COREMO: Comité Revolucionario de Mozambique
CS: Chief of Staff

COSAG: Concerned South Africans Group
COSATU: Congress of South African Trade Unions
CP: Conservative Party (S.A.)
CPA: Commonwealth Peacekeeping Assistance Group
CSADF: Chief of the South African Defence Force
CSCE: Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSIR: Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSAN: Chief of the South African National Defence Force

DCC: Defence Command Council
DHQ: Defence Headquarters
DIP: Department of Information and Publicity (MK)
DLD: Dead-letter Boxes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DMI</td>
<td>Directorate of Military Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>DPG</td>
<td>Data processing group (MK)</td>
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<td>DSC</td>
<td>Defence Staff Council</td>
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<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLS</td>
<td>Front-Line States</td>
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<td>FNLA</td>
<td>Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola</td>
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<td>FFAG</td>
<td>French Peacekeeping Assistance Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDR</td>
<td>German Democratic Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNU</td>
<td>Government of National Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSRC</td>
<td>Human Sciences Research Council</td>
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<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israeli Defence Force</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Institute for Defence Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Independent Electoral Commission</td>
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<td>IFP</td>
<td>Inkatha Freedom Party</td>
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<td>IGADD</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification</td>
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<td>IOR</td>
<td>Indian Ocean Rim</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPC</td>
<td>Internal Political Committee</td>
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<td>ISDSC</td>
<td>Inter-State Defence and Security Committee</td>
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<td>ISU</td>
<td>Internal Stability Unit (S.A. Police)</td>
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<td>ITSF</td>
<td>Industry and Technology Survival Programme</td>
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<td>JCIC</td>
<td>Joint Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee</td>
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<td>JMC</td>
<td>Joint Management Centre</td>
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<td>JMCC</td>
<td>Joint Military Co-ordinating Council</td>
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<td>JOC</td>
<td>Joint Operations Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSMS</td>
<td>Joint Security Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>KATORUS</td>
<td>Katlehong/Thokoza/Vosloorus (area)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEW</td>
<td>Lyttleton Engineering Works</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGM</td>
<td>Light Machine Gun</td>
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<td>MHQ</td>
<td>Military Headquarters</td>
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<td>MI</td>
<td>Military Intelligence</td>
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<td>MK</td>
<td>Umkhonto we Sizwe</td>
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<td>MK-DIS</td>
<td>MK Department of Intelligence and Security</td>
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<td>MM</td>
<td>Mass Mobilisation (MK)</td>
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<td>MLFA</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola</td>
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<td>MPO</td>
<td>Munitions Productions Office (S.A.)</td>
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<td>MRG</td>
<td>Military Research Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCACC</td>
<td>National Conventional Arms Control Committee</td>
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<td>NCM</td>
<td>National Co-ordination Mechanism</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Executive Committee</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-government Organisations</td>
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<td>NIA</td>
<td>National Intelligence Agency</td>
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<td>NICCC</td>
<td>National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee</td>
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<td>NIDR</td>
<td>National Institute for Defence Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>National Intelligence Service</td>
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<td>NP</td>
<td>National Party</td>
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<td>NKF</td>
<td>National Peacekeeping Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>NKFCC</td>
<td>National Peacekeeping Force Command Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSMS</td>
<td>National Security Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUM</td>
<td>National Union of Mineworkers</td>
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<td>NUSAS</td>
<td>National Union of South African Students</td>
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<td>NWC</td>
<td>National Working Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<td>OPF</td>
<td>Organs of Peoples Power</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSF</td>
<td>Office of the State President</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFS</td>
<td>Orange Free State</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan Africanist Congress</td>
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<td>PAM</td>
<td>Pan Africanist Movement</td>
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<td>PASO</td>
<td>Pan Africanist Student Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PJIBASIC</td>
<td>Permanent Joint Board on the Australian Security Intelligence Operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PKS</td>
<td>Peacekeeping Service (S.A.)</td>
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<td>PLAN</td>
<td>People's Liberation Army of Namibia</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMC</td>
<td>Politico Military Council (ANC/MK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMP</td>
<td>Pretoria Metal Pressings</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>People's Progressive Party (Botswana)</td>
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<td>PROF</td>
<td>Propaganda section of MK's Internal Political Committee</td>
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<td>PWW</td>
<td>Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vereeniging (area) now Gauteng</td>
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<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>Research and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAPU</td>
<td>Rear Area Protection Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Council (MK)</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>Republican Intelligence (unit)</td>
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<td>RN</td>
<td>Royal Navy</td>
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<tr>
<td>RNVR</td>
<td>Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Rocket propelled grenade</td>
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<tr>
<td>RFMC</td>
<td>Regional Political Military Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSA</td>
<td>Republic of South Africa</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAAF</td>
<td>South African Air Force</td>
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<td>SABC</td>
<td>South African Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAPC</td>
<td>South African Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACTU</td>
<td>South African Congress of Trade Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACC</td>
<td>Southern African Customs Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADD</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<td>SADCC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference</td>
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<td>SADF</td>
<td>South African Defence Force</td>
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NEGOTIATING DEFENCE FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA

Mark Shaw

INTRODUCTION

While the military would not be determining the nature of the post-apartheid order, the future of the military was the key to compromise and lay at the heart of the transition in South Africa. Compromise between the opposing forces was arguably more important, but potentially more difficult, than that between politicians who had remained ensconced in their offices. Indeed, in the period immediately before negotiations began, both sides had been gearing up for their onslaught on each other.

Equally important, it was the outgoing South African Defence Force's (SADF's) continued strength which gave the ruling minority the power to negotiate a compromise, rather than having to surrender to undiluted majority rule; if those who commanded that strength refused to co-operate in the transition, political compromise might prove to be irrelevant. The military negotiations were complicated by the fact that the country had no less than seven separate armies, as well as several paramilitary groups. As it was, whatever power the majority party might win in the constitutional negotiations would be worthless if it were to preside over a hostile or un-cooperative military.

Striking a compromise between the military and the new order was therefore central to a successful transition. In theory this was achieved, and the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is in many ways the symbolic culmination of the negotiations; but the transition is not complete, and it may be years before we know whether the new order will be served by a loyal and effective military or not.

This chapter will discuss the difficult and complex negotiations which, in less than a year, shaped the outlines of the new military - a process which, because of the secrecy which surrounded the talks, has hardly been aired in public.

FROM BATTLEFIELD TO BARGAINING CHAMBER

The period before the appointment of President FW de Klerk, replacing PW Botha as State President, was a favourable time for the SADF. Perceived threats to the apartheid state from both outside and inside the country had led to an increase in the military budget and lifted it to greater importance within the hierarchy of the state. Botha, himself a former Minister of Defence, was on close terms with the SADF and its senior commanders, opening gaps for the military to manoeuvre for more influence.

A key area where the military was to assert its newfound influence was in the Joint Management Structures (JMS) established across the country to bolster white rule. These local committees, with the military playing a prominent leadership role, co-ordinated the activities of local state departments to act both reactively and proactively against growing ANC influence in the townships. At cabinet level, the State
Security Council (SSC), in which the military played a prominent role, sought to co-ordinate the activities of the Joint Management Centres (JMCs) and provide national direction in the security sphere.

As the internal struggle within the country intensified, military intelligence, in particular, began to play an increasingly important role in covertly countering the liberation movements. This was to lead to atrocities — in the 1980s it was the chief of military intelligence, Joffel van der Westhuizen, who allegedly ordered the ‘removal from society’ of activist Matthew Gonwane. The military were also involved in projects which sought to bolster the government’s black allies over the African National Congress (ANC). The SADF, for example, provided training for members of Inkatha in the remote Caprivi strip in then South West Africa in the late 1980s.

The coming to power of FW de Klerk heralded a change in the strategy of the National Party government — negotiations would entail the use of instruments other than the military and gradually the role of the soldiers was eclipsed. De Klerk moved decisively after an independent judicial probe alleged misconduct among their ranks. The findings of the investigation and a subsequent SADF internal review were never made public. Over time, the De Klerk administration also cut the military budget — expenditure dropped from 4.3% of GDP in 1989 to 2.6% in 1993/94, with drastic cuts in spending on capital equipment. White conscription was abolished and the SADF became increasingly reliant on its reserve components to maintain force levels.

The unbanning of the ANC in February, 1990, was a watershed event for the military. The transition would increasingly position the SADF as the ‘guarantor of stability’ rather than an active participant in the negotiations to bring about a new South African constitutional dispensation. The unbanning of the ANC was related to wider political developments: the collapse of Communism and the success of the transition to democracy in Namibia opened the way for political liberalisation. In turn, these developments downgraded the importance of the SADF: a large force to fight Cubans in Angola could no longer be justified and over time, the National Intelligence Service (NIS) replaced Military Intelligence as the instrument of National Party strategy.

In May 1990, the first formal talks between the government and the ANC produced the Groote Schuur Minutes which contained clarity and agreement on the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles. In August, the parties sought to reach agreement on the difficult question of initiating a cease-fire. The Pretoria Minute provided agreement that the ANC would end armed hostilities although Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), its armed wing, would not disband.

While formally hostilities between the two main protagonists were formally ended, the transition was characterised by increasing levels of violence between the ANC and the Zulu nationalist movement, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The conflict had been simmering since the mid-1980s in KwaZulu-Natal but in August 1990 spread with surprising ferocity to the townships east of Johannesburg, and by the beginning of 1995 over 16 000 South Africans had been killed nationally since 1995. While the SADF and the SAP maintained that they were merely bystanders trying vainly to police the conflict, in reality they were intimately involved in it. Allegations of partisan policing and the involvement of both the police and army in support of Inkatha were widespread and confirmed by subsequent investigations and media reports.

In September 1991 all the major parties, brokered by business and the church, signed the National Peace Accord which sought to end spiralling political violence. The Accord made provision for the establishment of local peace bodies on the ground to bring together opposing parties at a local level, attempted to restrict private armies and provided guidelines to counter police abuse. In February 1991, in a then secret agreement, the DF Malan Accord signed between the government and the ANC, excluded MK from the Peace Accord’s restrictions on private armies. In the meanwhile, De Klerk forged ahead with his legislative reform process.

December 1991 saw the launch of the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) comprising nineteen political parties. Preliminary discussions had reached broad agreement over a future constitutional framework but important issues of dispute remained, relating to the exact process to be followed for a transfer of political power and the form of the new state and its bureaucracy. The ANC argued for an interim government with sovereign powers and a democratically elected constituent assembly which would draft the new constitution. The National Party continued to seek mechanisms whereby the role of minority parties and groups in government could be guaranteed.

The negotiations continued laboriously until mid-1992. The NP accused the ANC of using mass action tactics to bolster its negotiation strategy and of failing to control ‘radical elements’ within its ranks. The ANC, in turn, accused the government of acting as ‘both player and referee’ while attempting to destabilise the country and weaken the ANC-led coalition, through the promotion of political violence. The negotiations ground to a stalemate in May 1992. The issue was the majority required to ratify a new constitution, the National Party in a bid to protect its minority status arguing for a figure of 75%, the ANC for 70%.

The stalemate led to increased bitterness among the parties and restiveness on the ground as talks continued against a backdrop of escalating political violence. The crisis came to a head when forty people were killed in Bolspatong, an ANC aligned area, by hostel dwellers from a nearby IFP stronghold. The ANC withdrew formally from negotiations as radical elements in the leadership proposed and won approval for a campaign of mass popular action to weaken the government and gain concessions. The action brought tens of thousands of ANC supporters out into the streets — the largest gathering being a march on the Union Buildings by 100 000 ANC supporters, and the most debilitating, a successful general strike called by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

The renewal of popular protest did much to bolster ANC legitimacy on the ground but also, ironically, led the way back to the negotiating table. Mass marches on homeland administrations turned ugly from the outset when a march on Bisho, the capital of the
bantustan of Ciskei, led to the death of 28 and the wounding of hundreds when troops from the Ciskei Government fired on demonstrators who tried to bypass their position. This bloody outcome appeared to have a sobering effect on the negotiating partners as they came face to face with the prospect of civil war. Marches on other bantustan capitals were suspended and a tense calm descended on the nation.

While confrontation on the streets had been underway, informal negotiations had continued at national level paving the way for a high profile summit between De Klerk and Mandela in September, 1992. This led to a ‘Record of Understanding’ which produced agreement on a number of sensitive issues related to the ongoing violence. Certain hostels, seen as springboards for attacks on neighbouring townships, were to be fenced off and a ban was placed on the carrying of ‘cultural weapons’. The agreement alienated the IFP, led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Subsequent evidence would indicate that the IFP and the security forces had co-operated in the violence that plagued the transition.

The ‘Record of Understanding’ signalled the onset of a cooler relationship between government and the IFP. The IFP subsequently withdrew from the national negotiations and began cementing an unlikely alliance with components of the white right and the remaining autocrats of the homeland system. This resulted in the formation of the Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG) comprising the IFP, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, and the Conservative Party. The final deals around the shape of the interim constitution (and in particular the provisions relating to the military, policing and intelligence arms of the state) were to be concluded largely without the input of the IFP.

Despite setbacks and continued violence, negotiations reached a head in November, 1992, when an agreement was reached which committed the two major players in principle to an interim power sharing arrangement in the form of a ‘Government of National Unity’. The ANC insisted that the interim arrangement had to exist for a specified time period to prevent the compromise arrangement from continuing into perpetuity. A period of five years was eventually agreed on. The process was aided through the suggestions of pragmatists within the ANC, the most prominent being SACP head Joe Slovo, offering ‘sunset clauses’ allowing the mainly white senior levels of the civil service, including the police and the military, to keep their jobs over the interim period. A constituent assembly – elected on the basis of proportional representation – would be tasked to draw up the new constitution. The result of the compromise clauses was to keep the security establishment of the old apartheid order largely intact in the medium term.

The clauses allowed negotiations around the nuts and bolts of the interim constitution to continue apace; even the assassination of the popular MK chief of staff, Chris Hani, failed to derail the talks. By September, 1993 agreement had been reached on an interim governing structure: the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) designed to bring all parties into the governing process and to allow monitoring of the various security formations. A parallel structure, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), was to pave the way for the country’s first multi-party election in April, 1994. The negotiations around the interim constitution – which were concluded only hours before the 17 November deadline – were crucial in determining the intricate arrangements necessary for the broader settlement. The constitution’s provisions on defence were crucial as they would set not only the nature of the new South African military but also the process of integration to achieve this goal.

FIRST SKIRMISHES
CHOOSING THE MOMENT

Negotiations over the future of the military began in March, 1993, more than three years after formal political negotiations had begun. One reason for the delay was perhaps that it was to the advantage of both sides that they should begin to negotiate once they were no longer formally at war. Once the end of hostilities was resolved politically, it was easier for the parties to focus exclusively on the details of a new military, rather than on principle. But this did not explain why negotiations began so long after MK decided to abandon the ‘armed struggle’.

The answer lay in a 1990 cabinet decision, that the SADF should remain untouched as the “stable core around which the dynamic of change could occur”, and as deeply into the transition as possible. In other words, the South African Government needed to know that it alone would control the military until it was reasonably certain of the outcome of the transition. This meant that military negotiations had to be held over until the very last. As a result, they stonewalled until early 1993, despite angry public criticism from MK that the SADF’s failure to take part in a ‘military Codesa’ raised doubts about its commitment to the transition.

This stance was based on the assumption that the military could remain unchanged while society changed. The SADF, too, was changing, the military could not remain entirely isolated from trends in society; but the cabinet decision was not forced on an unwilling SADF. General ‘Kot’ Liebenberg, Commander of the SADF and Lieutenant-General George Meiring, then Commander of the SA Army, and other officers shared the view that the SADF should serve as a bulwark during a period of change.

What is clear is that when negotiations began, they were initiated by the military, not the politicians: there is strong evidence that at least some of the generals pressed hard for discussions with MK early in 1993. They were supported by the then Defence Minister, Kobie Coetsee and his deputy, Wynand Breytenbach. Their attitude was in marked contrast to that of Coetsee’s predecessors, Magnus Malan (who had described MK as a ‘rabble’) and Roelf Meyer, who had insisted that military integration was out of the question and that MK members who wanted to join the SADF should apply as individuals. The suggestion was well received in the cabinet, suggesting that the National Party leadership believed that the time was ripe, perhaps because political negotiations had resumed, and the September, 1992 ‘Record of Understanding’ had reduced uncertainty about the transition.

Under former State President PW Botha, as has been argued, the power of the defence establishment had grown inordinately: its involvement in the Joint-Security
Management System (USMS) gave it a central role in the Botha administration's political decision-making. Because the SADF's growth in size and influence was closely linked to the Botha era, a key question during the transition was the extent of De Klerk’s control over the military. The question seemed to have been answered in late 1992 when, following an investigation by the Goldstone Commission into allegations of mismanagement by senior military officers, an internal investigation, under the then SADF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Pierre Steyn, led to 23 officers being retired or suspended. None of them were charged, and all received substantial severance pay, but, as in the case of the SAP ‘purge’, the military's attempt to break with its past was less complete than it seemed: neither Mieling (then chief of the army) nor the chief of staff military intelligence, Lieutenant-General Joffel van der Westhuizen, lost their jobs, although both were allegedly implicated by the Goldstone Commission. SADF sources suggested that key strong men were retained to secure the confidence of the (white) leadership cadre, to present a strong front at the negotiating table, and to lessen the controversy. Mieling was later appointed to the top military job in preference to Steyn, who retired (pending his appointment as civilian Defence Secretary to the end of 1994) amid suggestions that he “could not operate under Mieling’s management style”.

For some months before the Steyn investigation was launched, allegations regarding the involvement of the SADF in ‘third force’ activities had tainted the organisation's (self-defined) image of professionalism when, on the eve of negotiations, it was needed most. Nevertheless, the ‘purge’, with other political developments, arguably allowed the SADF to begin preparing in earnest for negotiations. Serious internal discussions on negotiating strategy began at about this time.

On the eve of negotiations, the SADF had been weakened by a declining budget (“We'll become a bunch of infantry,” quipped one officer, reflecting a key concern of the general staff) and less reliable manpower sources, and its reputation among the public was probably at its lowest ebb. Although the cabinet had decided in 1990 to fall back on the SADF if the transition went sour, it was no longer as vital a component of state strategy as it was in the mid-1980s. Those factors had prompted Lieutenant-General Steyn to argue, in 1992, that the SADF should initiate talks with MK; this, he believed, would give it greater control over the negotiation process and the way in which change, both political and within the SADF, was to be managed.

The SADF, then, had incentives to negotiate. It was also willing to do so: while many had spoken of a “creeping coup” during its rise to prominence in the mid-1980s, it seemed to have a deep-rooted culture (outside the shadowy recesses of military intelligence) of bureaucratic submission to civilian control. When the time for change came, the SADF chose not to prevent change or negotiation, but to participate in it and seek to control it.

The SADF's move to negotiate implied that the then chief of the SADF, General 'Kats' Liebenberg and Mieling, had not differed with Steyn on principle, but on timing: they justified talks on the same basis, that they would enable the SADF to manage change (and pre-empt ANC demands). While much of the SADF probably favoured slower change than did Steyn, attempts to formulate a negotiation position had begun in November, 1992, at the highest level in defence headquarters.

By preparing to meet MK, the SADF was making a fundamental concession: it was implicitly recognising it as a fighting formation, and implying that it would be incorporated, and not merely absorbed, into the military. SADF officers suggest that this decision was made easier by a ‘slow shift’ in MK from a ‘political’ orientation “towards a greater concentration on being soldiers”. Early in 1993, it became known that MK cadres were undergoing extensive training overseas “in an attempt to upgrade their competence”, a move which was consistent with the SADF's concern to “prevent low military standards from destroying” an integrated national military. Deputy Defence Minister, Wynend Braynshausen, expressed satisfaction that the countries to which ANC had turned, India and Zimbabwe, as opposed to the former Eastern Bloc, would, given the British influence on their forces, train MK recruits in a similar military tradition to that of the SADF.

While the ANC had resolved at its 1985 Katwe conference that MK should begin to wage a ‘people's war’, this was never fully achieved. It remained relatively isolated from the upsurge of mass protest in the 1980s and its major weakness was that it remained an ‘army in exile’ - with long communication lines - rather than a force fully absorbed into society. From the late 1980s it did attempt to build a more comprehensive internal presence through Operation Vula and, after the ANC's unbanning, the creation of self-defence units. But these efforts did not integrate MK into the towns, as opposed to the hearts and minds, of the majority of the population: it retained its identity as a separate fighting body.

This ensured that it did not develop an overt political agenda of its own, and may have helped MK, after 1990, to decide to prepare itself for integration into a new army. Despite the misgivings of senior ANC leaders, who were quite prepared to offer MK as a bargaining chip, the MK leadership realised that it if it was to win a key place in the new military, its informal and guerrilla status would have to be upgraded. Formal rank structures were introduced and, more significantly, formal training outside the country was stepped up. From 1991 onwards, training concentrated on enhancing conventional military skills.

The key point, however, is that this training was specifically designed to prepare individuals for incorporation into a new national defence force. Some 8 000 - 10 000 MK soldiers are believed to have been trained for this purpose, bringing the estimated number of troops available for integration to 14 000 - 16 000. If estimates of MK guerrilla strength are accurate, more people were trained during this period for the national army than for its guerrilla war. While this still left it vastly outnumbered by the SADF, it made it less likely that military ‘integration’ would lead to MK being absorbed by the SADF.

Whether MK was equipped to enter the national military was another issue. After being unbanned it had developed serious internal problems, it had no clear political strategy, and the ANC itself had no detailed proposals on defence.
suggested that the organisation was driven by institutional and individual rivalries, and that co-ordination between various sectors was weak. Cadres, they say, regarded the leadership, with notable exceptions, as inept and inefficient; this antagonism was displayed at the first national MK conference held in Venda in 1991.

One consequence of the lack of policy was an attempt by ANC-leaning academics to assist policy-making on security issues, just as a set of academics had done on policing. They established a loose group of analysts known as the Military Research Group (MRG), whose aim was to stimulate debate within the ANC on security issues and to provide policy-related advice. Among them were Laurie Nathan of UCT’s Centre for Intergroup Studies, and Jackie Cook of the University of Witwatersrand. In contrast to the policing groups, the MRG also included analysts with practical experience; they had been MK operatives. Two key figures were Rockland Williams, who held a doctorate in civil-military relations from Essex University, and Calvin Kahn, an MK member with close links to MK commander, Joe Modise.

While the policing group dominated policy-making, MRG members have suggested that they played a ‘limited role’ only, and had ‘indirect influence’. This is possibly an understatement: MRG ideas were often accepted simply because there were no counter proposals. Advisors became policy makers; this soon became a source of tension, worsened say insiders, by the fact that most advisors were civilians, and to a lesser degree because they were mostly white. More importantly, key MRG members, Nathan in particular, were distinctly anti-militarist. While this irritated the soldiers, it influenced ANC proposals, which stressed that the defence force should be subordinated to civil authority and foreswear offensive capabilities.

Policy-making within the ANC on military issues was neither always logical nor coherent; in the opinion of one observer, it proceeded by ‘fits and starts’, in response to immediate crises and demands. The position in which MK found itself could not have helped matters; an army half in the country and half outside, with dispersed networks of command, in the process of dissolving itself and yet continuing to train members for a new role in the national defence force. With many of the most competent MK personnel pursuing a political or commercial career, the impression that the army was not the fast track to political advancement was reinforced among rank and file members. Indeed, the outflow of leadership and organisational talent from MK substantially weakened the organisation.

Umkhonto has been characterised as the weak link of the ANC (and the SADF as the strong link of the South African Government). On the eve of military negotiations, it was certainly less prepared than the SADF. It had reason to delay, for this would give it more time to train cadres for the new military. But it also needed to hurry, since idle MK soldiers were dissatisfied and had already, in some cases, reacted violently. Reinforcing this was limited staff capability; despite the increased policy competence provided by the MRG, the minutes of meetings and insiders’ reports suggest that inadequate staff work often left MK grossly unprepared for negotiations. But it brought to the table one bargaining chip which offered it a key advantage: its wide legitimacy.

Two points are worth noting here: first, the SADF seems to have realised that a bargain was inevitable well before it sensed a change in MK. Second, by sending cadres for conventional training, MK was attempting to meet what it perceived, correctly, to be the SADF’s terms for change. Indeed, it is possible that the two parties started sending signals to each other long before the talks began, and that the decision to send MK members abroad was initiated - or approved in advance - by the SADF.

Certainly, members of both forces met informally before the first officially sanctioned meeting took place in March, 1993. SADF and MK sources confirm that six to eight such meetings took place; while apparently officially sanctioned by political principals, they were largely informal and always secret, relating mainly to military issues raised by the Groote Schuur Agreement, which ended armed action by MK. SADF Insiders say they helped to build a degree of trust between the two parties, but no substantive issues were covered and no agreements reached on military negotiation. In February, a statement by an MK representative implied that they were more substantive; it said that the SADF and MK had reached ‘broad consensus’ on a future defence force. But the Ministry of Defence angrily denied a ‘deal’ between the two.

The sensitivity of the SADF over contact with MK before this period is well illustrated by two incidents. The first was the formulation of a code of conduct for the military under the National Peace Accord in late 1991. The Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) played a role in getting a code drafted. However, a jumpy SADF scuttled the whole exercise after the draft code was leaked to the press. Next, when the IDP began to play an increasingly prominent role in the growing debate on military issues, the SADF banned military personnel from attending IDP conferences in uniform and placed the organisation under intensive surveillance. The first time SADF and MK members appeared together on a public platform - with permission from Defence Headquarters - was at an IDP conference on the future of the navy, politically the least contentious arm of service, in March 1993.

The first formal meeting also took place in March between representatives of the SAAF and the ANC, including MK. The issue concerned the proposed buying of Pilatus training aircraft from Switzerland, which, with UN sanctions still in place, was illegal. The air force wanted to enlist MK support on the grounds that “this is as important for you as it is for us”, since a future defence force would be “both of ours”. The matter was not resolved, but this suggested that a new, shared military had been accepted by some military personnel. This meeting addressed a specific issue, and involved only a formal arm of the SADF, but senior officers doubtlessly watched it with interest, and it laid, to a degree, a foundation for bargaining.

With the less contentious SAN and SAAF having tentatively provided stepping stones, the first formal negotiations between the SADF and MK were not long in following; the meeting was held in Simon’s Town in April, 1993. ANC representatives greeted it as a sign that the SADF had conceded that, however great its military strength, it was dependent on MK’s legitimacy.
LET THE SOLDIERS DO THE TALKING

The meeting, held on April 23 and 24, was brokered by Defence Minister, Kobie Coetsee. The SADF delegation consisted of Generals George Meiring, Pierre Steyn, 'Kat' Liebenberg and James Kriel, as well as former National Intelligence Service Director Niels Barnard, later appointed as Director-General of Constitutional Development. The ANC delegation included legal adviser and negotiator, Mathews Phosa, civil rights lawyer and police analyst, Fink Haysom, and MK Commander, Joe Modise.

The first day consisted of a briefing on SADF strength by senior SADF officers, led by Meiring. It was extremely detailed, so much so that the cost of equipping an infantry soldier was explained. Discussions continued late that night and next morning. On the afternoon of the second day, the party boarded a navy vessel in the harbour. After the briefing, the SADF officers asked MK representatives to detail deployments and arms caches. They declined, arguing that it would have been a strategic mistake to expose exact ANC military strength. In any event, they were caught by surprise, not prepared to give a briefing in any detail and felt that the SADF was blatantly trying to co-opt them.

Haysom recalls that “there was no real meat in the discussion,” but, as MK chief of staff Siphiwe Ntshanda noted, their real significance lay in the fact that this was the first official meeting at which the generals rather than the politicians took the lead. This, he said, took the ANC delegation by surprise. But the message was clear: the SADF was ready to talk.

Equally important, the politicians were now ready to let the soldiers do the talking. Deputy Minister, Wynand Breytenbach, was adamant that they should negotiate their own future: “There comes a time when the politicians should withdraw”. He emphasised that the SADF was one of the civil service departments which was most advanced in planning and negotiating its own future; in cabinet meetings, so the rumour went, De Klerk always pointed to the SADF as an example of how negotiating the transitional period should be planned. The cabinet’s go-ahead for direct military negotiations, however, was not simply a reward for good behaviour: it recognised the SADF’s monopoly over force, and the potential for post-transitional destabilisation. Be that as it may, those present at the Simon’s Town meeting agreed that working groups comprising both forces would negotiate a set of key issues.

In theory this boded ill for a new democracy, since it gave the military a role in shaping the constitution and almost total control over shaping the new defence force. But given its strategy for survival, this opportunity would only be useful to the SADF if it used it to distance itself from political decision-making. By subsequently contributing directly to discussions over its constitutional future, the SADF de-linked itself from the ruling National Party to a degree. Negotiation also allowed it to portray itself as a neutral body, and to stress professional standards. Meiring, the general most publicly critical of the ANC, toned down his rhetoric, and the SADF began portraying itself as the guarantor of not only the transition but the new constitution as well. When, in January, the SADF’s loyalty to the transition was questioned by the press, defence headquarters issued a restricted internal bulletin which warned that the impartiality of the SADF was crucial: “This is the key to our professionalism,” it said, “and must remain inviolate”.

Direct participation in negotiations was important to the SADF in other ways. Some negotiations over military issues would continue after the election: a direct role ensured that the generals would retain a say over the military’s future when, as seemed likely, the NP no longer ruled - although the size and power of the SADF would have ensured that it had to be taken into account in any event. A direct role would also allow the military to determine the question of standards - its key concern - and, in the words of one foreign observer, to “use technical issues to fight political battles on its own ground”.

Those involved in the Simon’s Town meeting resolved that the working groups would examine three key sets of issues. The first was control of the armed forces during the transitional phase before elections. The second was the details of an agreement in principle on the need for a national peace-keeping force. The third was the integration of all forces into a National Defence Force.

THE OUTSIDERS: ETHNIC ARMIES

By beginning negotiations alone, the SADF and MK were excluding the country’s other armed formations, in particular the four armies of the ‘independent homelands’.

At ‘independence’, the TBVC territories were given military units - often SADF battalions constituted on ethnic lines. Their combined strength was between 8 000 and 10 000 - MK, let alone the SADF, outnumbered them. Although they were usually initially led by white officers seconded from the SADF, tied to Pretoria by ‘non-aggression’ pacts and trained primarily to counter the ANC, they displayed a surprising degree of independence from the central state. They also did not seem to be committed to civilian political control - all four had staged or attempted coups. Only in Bophuthatswana had SADF intervention thwarted a military take-over. Although the TBVC armies were small and in some cases reputedly badly trained and ill-disciplined, their nucleus of trained soldiers familiar with SADF culture suggested that they were well placed to secure senior positions after integration.

They were excluded from the first stage by implicit agreement between the SADF and MK. The SADF had close ties with Venda and Bophuthatswana and Ciskei, while the ANC had the same with Transkei. The more generous assumption was that the main players would keep in contact with the armies to which they were close, until enough groundwork had been done for them to join the process. Probably much closer to the truth is that the both the SADF and MK deliberately chose to isolate them. Liebenberg had bluntly told the commanders of these forces that they would be brought in when it suited him, and that he would in the meanwhile keep them informed on an individual basis; i.e. they were not allowed to form a ‘negotiating alliance’. MK, on the other hand, was painfully aware that in many respects the technical expertise and formal training of the TBVC forces was a threat to its own role as the SADF’s major negotiating adversary. The underlying issue was, of course, the stabilty and relative autonomy of these four territories. The Transkei and Venda forces joined negotiations first, followed later by the
other two (who initially stayed out because their administrations were refusing to relinquish 'independence'). Even then they took a back seat, with one exception - Transkei.

The Transkei Defence Force, led by Major-General Bantu Holomisa, had staged a successful coup in 1987. Holomisa then began courting the ANC, and also rapidly began to expand his army: the TDF is reputed to have recruited 500 soldiers a year from 1987. It eschewed SADF trainers and turned instead to Israel, former Rhodesians, and eventually India - and ensured that this training was also available to MK and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) army, APLA. Like other 'homeland' armies, the TDF was small, mainly infantry-based, and afflicted with disciplinary problems. Its levels of training though, particularly at senior level, were considered to be superior to that of the other 'homelands', placing its soldiers in a strong position to win places in a new military. It therefore took part actively in negotiations once the 'homelands' were 'admitted' to the process in November, 1993.8

Despite this, the TDF generally supported the MK position: this, together with the low profile adopted by the other 'homelands' forces, suggest that they did not have a different negotiating agenda from that of the main protagonists. The TBVC armies' history ensures that they are suitable for easy integration into a new military - probably as area-bound units under regional commands.9 If they harboured any doubts about civilian leadership, these were unlikely to be allayed by military negotiations: in any event, key officers involved in overthrowing 'homeland' governments, such as Holomisa, have left the military and entered politics. The initial exclusion of these forces did not, therefore, reduce the validity of the negotiations.

TRANITIONAL CONTROL: THE TEC SUB-COUNCIL ON DEFENCE

THE QUESTION OF JOINT CONTROL

According to ANC participants in the Simon's Town meeting, SADF representatives were concerned about multiparty control over the military - an issue which received considerable media coverage at the time. The issue was considered in detail during negotiations around the terms of reference for the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) sub-council on defence: that the politicians really had withdrawn from this area is confirmed by the fact that the TEC provisions on the military were drafted by a committee of MK and SADF negotiators, who submitted them to the planning committee of the Kampot Park talks; the sub-council itself consisted of military experts and politicians. While the planning committee which approved the final arrangement was a civilian and political structure, the military did all the work.

The broad aim of the sub-council was to help level the political playing field before the elections by ensuring that no military force secured an unfair advantage for any party. The key question dealt with in the military negotiations was that of control over the armed forces in the interim period. Participants suggest that MK wanted integration to at least begin before the elections, and any integrated force to fall under the TEC - a form of joint control before election. The SADF vigorously opposed this, since it would greatly have undermined its managerial autonomy and scope for independent action. It wanted to remain under parliamentary control until after the election. Eventually, MK would also delay the assembly of its troops before the elections.

Time was on the SADF's side, since integration might need more than the time remaining before the election. And since the parties could not agree on assembly points, the issue was referred to a committee of experts on which both sides were equally represented, so ensuring that the issue could not be resolved by the time the TEC Act was drafted. The SADF had, therefore, thwarted pre-election integration but had, in the process, probably missed an important opportunity to establish greater control over the subsequent integration process. After elections, the massive victory for the ANC inevitably bolstered the fortunes of MK.

The SADF also insisted that the details of integration must depend on the work of a Joint Military Co-ordinating Council (JMMC), established to assist the sub-council. Among other tasks, the JMMC, which was co-chaired by the SADF and MK, was charged with analysing perceived threats from 1994 to 2004. The SADF insisted that unless possible threats and the structures needed to meet them were determined, integration could not be accurately planned: stressing its favourite theme, it insisted that this was 'the professional approach'. This prompted inevitable complaints that it was delaying integration - which may have been precisely what it was doing. But SADF officers maintained that integration could not proceed in isolation from the general development of the national defence force. Couched in these terms, the argument became more broadly acceptable. The JMMC's planning proceeded fairly smoothly, and plans for each arm of service for the new defence force were accepted literally days before the election.

The implementation of the JMMC was a unique joint planning exercise, involving previously implacable enemies.10 Two chairman, officiating in rotation, were elected: namely Chief of the SADF, Meling, and Chief of Staff of MK, Sibhlwe Nyanda. Two co-directors were also appointed to control the activities of the planning process. Six working groups were established, one each for personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, finance and one for 'non-cardinal issues'. They worked on detailed planning and were staffed by people from each of the seven military forces, plus a facilitator when necessary. The operations work group acted as the guiding element for the others, while the SADF's Directorate of Strategic Management kept the overall process to a set timetable. This was not mean feat, since work groups first prepared position papers on a basis of consensus, which were then referred 'back to principals' (i.e. the various political parties) before a meeting of the JMMC, during which the papers were presented for formal discussion, were they were either accepted, amended, rejected or referred back for further discussion or investigation. Once agreement had been reached within the JMMC, the chairman of the particular session presented the findings, recommendations and decisions to the Sub-Council on Defence. Only after approval by the Sub-Council did JMMC decisions become final. The first two stages of the process produced national defence, arm of service and supporting strategies. A third, and final, stage, planned the implementation of these strategies.
This process ended four days before the elections and the South African National Defence Force came into existence at midnight on 26/27 April, 1994. All the personnel of the forces which had submitted certified personnel registers by midnight automatically became members of the new force. The lists for the SADF eventually included about 95 000 full-time persons, that for MK a massive 28 000, the homeland armies were about 11 000 strong, while APLA failed to meet the deadline with its list of 6 000 persons. Despite the cut-off date, amendments to the lists were made until March, 1995, by which stage there also existed a so-called non-formal list of about 1 300 persons, naming MK members who had been omitted from the previous list.

In a parallel process, the committee of experts met for the first time on 8 September, the day after the TEC bill was passed, to examine the question of assembly points. With one exception, it was exactly the same group as appointed at the Simon’s Town meeting.

All this meant that the Subcouncil on Defence served as a structure within which negotiations on the military could continue. Since pre-election integration had been forestalled, the key issue was the control of SADF deployment before the election. The SADF and the National Party had strong reasons for resisting TEC control. As noted above, the SADF saw itself as the guarantor of negotiations, and therefore wanted to ensure sufficient latitude, particularly if turmoil developed before the election. To be effective in such a case it had to remain under the control of the existing parliament. The ANC, however, needed to ensure that the SADF would not unilaterally intervene. Thus, an ANC document proposing terms of reference for the subcouncil proposed that: “The South African Government and other participants in the TEC shall be required to submit to the subcouncil for its consideration any proposal to deploy a military formation in an operational capacity, and shall not undertake such deployment without the approval of the TEC.” Johan Heunis, a government negotiator, is reputed to have told Hayes that the ANC must be very suspicious of government motives - deployment without consultation would never occur. In that case, Hayes replied, why not support the inclusion of the clause?

The issue was resolved in a compromise which took about three weeks to negotiate. It allowed for insertion in the TEC Act of a clause stipulating that “the command structure of any military force shall remain responsible for the day-to-day management of such a force”. This covered issues such as routine transfers, training, personnel and “any defensive functions relating to the protection of the integrity of the borders of the state concerned.” Should any soldiers in the old order be getting jumpy about the rate of change, a restricted internal SADF bulletin designed to inform troops on the process of negotiations emphasized the main tenets of the agreement: “it is important to note that armed forces would retain the right to day-to-day management and defensive functions relating to border protection.”

In return for non-interference in ‘routine’ activity, the SADF softened its stance on deployment. The TEC was authorized, in consultation with the Defence Minister, to make regulations governing the deployment of any defence force unit. Both sides exercised a veto over the deployment of troops, which needed “the concurrence of both the minister and subcouncil.” Thus both the South African Government and the subcouncil had to agree to the deployment of troops in Bophuthatswana in April, 1994.

An SADF attempt to extend TEC control over MK was less successful. It suggested a clause giving some power to the subcouncil to inspect MK weaponry. It soon realised, ANC negotiators say, that the clause could not be one-sided, and would have allowed the TEC to “send in spies to examine their missiles”. The clause was softened: the subcouncil was to ensure “the audit of the arms and armaments of any military force, by that force.”

THE NPKF: INTEGRATION BY OTHER MEANS

The TEC Act also provided for a National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF) designed to provide neutral policing during the transition. Stanley Mogoba, head of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and vice-chairman of the National Peace Committee, first mooted this idea publicly in May 1993, in the turmoil after the killing of Chris Hani. The ANC adopted the concept: in late July, secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa urged that a joint peacekeeping force be formed to prevent “democracy from being drowned in blood”. He suggested that it comprise the SADF, MK, APLA and the KwaZulu and Bophuthatswana police - it should take over from the army and SAP who had virtually no legitimacy in the townships.

The government responded with mixed signals. After NP negotiator, Leon Wessels, supported the idea, De Klerk said he supported it in principle, but the force could have no combatant status and would not replace the security forces in the run-up to the election. The call for a peace-keeping force was reinforced on the same day by the Goldstone Commission’s panel of international experts appointed to investigate the curbing of violence during elections: it found that the SAP was unable to serve all South Africans in an accountable way during the election, and added that the advantage of a multi-party peacekeeping force outweighed the ‘very real difficulties’ which would face its creation. It said the SAP’s Internal Stability Unit (ISU) should be retrained and incorporated in the new force, which should fall under the authority of the TEC. The proposal was soon hotly debated. Those who joined the debate were not to know that the force had already been approved in principle at the secret Simon’s Town meeting and that a working group was already examining means of implementing it.

In retrospect, it was clear that this agreement had sprung from a number of considerations. First was the legitimacy crisis facing the SAP, and in particular the ISU, in the townships. A multi-party force would also silence calls for an international force, a notion which was not popular with the South African Government, the ANC, or, for that matter, the UN. For the SADF, the creation of the NPKF would allow the army to be removed from the townships - where it might become embattled and lose legitimacy. Lastly, by creating a single command structure, it would impose a measure of control over some armed formations during the transition.

In the context of the negotiations, the SADF had a more central motive for supporting the idea - by creating a new force under TEC authority, it removed the need for...
The NPKF proved to be an inauspicious test for integration. Originally intended as a force of 10,000 men, it initially comprised some 4,500, drawn from the SADF, SAP, MK and personnel from Transkei, Ciskei and Venda, as well as police forces of the non-independent ‘homelands’. The IPF excluded itself. This was to weaken the NPKF’s legitimacy and this among other factors led to the force being discredited with its first operational deployment.

The NPKF was ordered into the East Rand to replace a much larger SADF force which pulled out almost completely, leaving the area under the control of the NPKF. Although the SADF had stabilised the area, the recent killing by the SADF of Jeff Sibuya, an IPF member on the local peace committee, had increased tensions - the undertrained NPKF was deployed in a volatile situation. The ‘minimum fire and force’ crowd control tactics in which it had been (briefly) trained were ineffectual when it came under fire. Violence increased in the two days after its deployment, and the NPKF was replaced by the SADF and withdrawn to Bloemfontein. The NPKF command council is said to have decided unanimously to recommend to the TEC that it be disbanded - which it later was.

The SADF was accused - not least by Joe Modise, later appointed Defence Minister - of sabotaging the NPKF by offering inadequate support during the training phase and hastening to replace it on the East Rand. Whether or not this was so, the NPKF occurred did increase SADF legitimacy, which had already grown on the East Rand as a result of an effective peacekeeping campaign which relied on winning residents’ support. It was received back with joy, and a survey showed it to be by far the most popular force ever to have been deployed in the area. This may create later problems for the new military, by creating pressure for it, rather than the police, to take responsibility for public order, but in the short term it helped its bargaining position.

The NPKF affected integration in three ways. It prevented a negotiation deadlock on joint control. It provided a test for integration, and its troubles ensured that more time was allowed for integrating the armies. Also the new legitimacy it afforded the SADF was transferred to the new SANDF. It was a transitional device, and disbanding it was less a case of ‘compounding an expensive exercise in futility’ than abandoning an instrument that had served its purpose.

ONE NATION, ONE MILITARY: CREATING THE NEW DEFENCE FORCE

BARRACK-ROOM LAWYERS: NEGOTIATING THE CONSTITUTION’S DEFENCE CLAUSES

Negotiations on the defence provisions of the interim constitution began the day after the TEC Act became law on 9 November 1993. An experienced ANC negotiator believes these clauses were far the most difficult to negotiate, since transferring the task to the military had its costs: inexperienced negotiators on both sides “made the process more painful and difficult than it should have been.” Haysom, upon returning from an overseas trip, found the talks had bogged down: “came back to rank hostility and suspicion.” Out of this emerged, however, what most commentators see as a good balance between the interests of the military and civilian control.

For the ANC, MRG influence was fairly decisive: key members were influential in drawing up its defence policy, which was aimed at ensuring a legitimate defence force. It urged “civil supremacy over the armed forces (which) shall be accountable through the public to parliament”, adding: “The Defence Force shall respect the ideals of democracy, non-racialism, national unity and national reconciliation while remaining politically non-partisan”. It should remain primarily defensive, with “force levels being adjusted accordingly”. Its internal policing role should be limited to “extreme circumstances” where authorisation was obtained from parliament.

The SADF also had cardinal negotiating principles: they were concerned more with protecting the military than separating it from civil affairs. The two core principles around which any national defence force should be built, the generals argued, were “the retention of standards” - “the nature and character of the defence force should be applicable”. Four goals were laid down: the SADF was to form the core of the national defence force; SADF structures should be retained; the future of all members of the SADF must be assured; and other forces integrated into existing SADF structures.

Teams from each side met to formulate the constitutional provisions, which were regularly referred to principles on each side. Each party wrote a document outlining its proposed provisions: the ANC document - written by Phillips and Haysom - used the principles outlined above as beacons. While there were substantial areas of agreement with the SADF proposal, there were some key areas of disagreement. The most crucial was whether the SADF would combine with all other armed formations to form a new force, or would absorb the other - the ANC the former. Phillips and SADF negotiator, Brigadier Peet de Klerk, worked to resolve all other issues first before confronting this one - because, says an ANC source, both sides hoped this would allow them to place the other in a bad light by claiming later that it was blocking agreement by digging in on the only outstanding issue. In fact, the difference was due more to perception than reality. The size, sophistication and resources of the SADF made it inevitable that MK, APLA and the other forces would be absorbed into the SADF, irrespective of what the process was called.

This ensured some drama at the close of negotiations. As the deadlock continued, Meiring and Modise reportedly left the room. When they returned, they had agreed on
the formation of a new national defence force. The major effect (at least in the short term) would be to change the SADF’s name, which it strongly opposed initially and then relented on, although it did succeed in retaining the names of the four arms of service.

Having agreed on a single force, the ANC was concerned to prevent the SADF from operating as a separate entity until integration was complete, which could take months. The compromise was that the national defence force would come into being at midnight on 26 April, when the interim constitution became law. This was even more of a symbolic gesture, since it was also agreed that until integration, statutory military matters would continue to function in accordance with the laws formerly applicable to them.11 For a time, the SANDF would be the SADF under a new name.

Another key negotiating issue - and inevitably a key SADF concern - was political control over the military. The SADF wanted the new President to exercise powers over the military only with the concurrence of the Deputy Presidents and the cabinet, which would give the NP a continued major say, including a virtual veto, over the appointment of the Chief of the SANDF. It later dropped its insistence that this apply to all military decisions, but sought to ensure that it applied specifically to the appointment of the CSANDF and to decisions to use the SANDF to defend the Republic, or in compliance with international obligations. “This”, an SADF document to the Defence Minister stated, “is a signal example of power-sharing in this interim constitution and will, furthermore, exemplify the apolitical nature of the force”.

The generals did not secure this guarantee. The constitution allows the President to appoint the CSANDF and deploy the defence force without consulting the Deputy Presidents or the cabinet. The appointment must however be subject to provisions which govern the continued employment of public servants, and the President may only employ the SANDF “with the approval of parliament.”31 Consistent with submissions by both parties, a joint standing committee on defence, of parliament, consisting proportionally of all parties with more than ten seats in the national assembly, is empowered to advise on the budget, functioning and organisation, of the SANDF.23 The SADF had wanted this committee to make recommendations on all appointments from the rank of Lieutenant-General upwards, but later dropped this. Minority parties such as the National Party, then, have little formal say over military decisions.

However, a provision calling for affirmative action in the SANDF was dropped; to the probable relief of the SADF, the ANC decided that enough guarantees existed in the bill of rights to ensure this.

The SADF also hoped to use the constitution to buttress its concern for standards. It urged a provision that the SANDF be a “balanced ... force capable of exercising its functions...”; and one providing that “shall be a technologically advanced military force which complies with international standards of competency.”32 Behind this lay a concern to halt the funding cuts which limited development of high-tech weaponry - a key SADF worry. Some of its critics suspect that this is not prompted simply by professional pride; given that most black SADF soldiers and MK cadres are infantry, high technical capacity implies a white hold on military power, at least in the medium term. While the SADF proposals were accepted, it was discovered, on the night of 17 November, when the constitution was being debated, that the word ‘balanced’ had been removed from the first provision, and ‘will be’ in the second had been replaced with ‘shall strive to be’. The changes deprived the SADF of the guarantees it sought; it approached the drafting committee, and when the constitution went before parliament the original was reinstated. The SADF’s sensitivity to the standards issue had been accommodated.

A related difference centred on conscription. One of the ANC principles declared that “there would be no conscription” save in “exceptional and extreme situations”, subject to parliamentary authorisation. The SADF proposed that any shortage of volunteers for its part-time component could be supplemented through selected call-ups using a ballot system. The dispute was resolved by dropping the ANC proposal, since the parties agreed that the issue need not be settled in the constitution. Also unresolved were apparent ANC reservations about the SADF’s part-time Commando force, since this force was predominantly white and seen as a means to allow whites who might be hostile to the new order (often in rural areas) to acquire arms.32 Dropping the issue suited the SADF: in an internal memo dated 15 November - two days before the constitution was adopted - it asked the Defence Minister not to raise the continued existence of the Citizen Force and Commandos, thus preventing a prolonged dispute in the negotiating council.

Finally, the parties agreed on a provision which could dramatically change defence force culture - it allows soldiers to disobey orders if obedience would breach domestic or international law.33 This is an important provision, given the country’s recent history and the fact that the military code of conduct proposed earlier was not implemented.

The negotiations saw much mutual suspicion and manoeuvring over relations between the military and the first fully elected government. The SADF’s chief concern was to ensure that its professionalism was protected from what it saw as political ‘interference’. Its interest in doing so was clear, but a desire to reduce the impact of minority government was perhaps not its only motive. An SADF brief to the Defence Minister in the last days of negotiations urged: “Do not attach unnecessary political ‘colour’ to the defence force. In the past the SANDF has been referred to as the ‘armed wing of the National Party’. Let us not create the same problem for the future defence force. Stress the apolitical nature of the force.” In fairness, the SADF was often more concerned to ensure that political control rested with more than one party than to avoid it altogether. It succeeded only partly in retaining formal control of its affairs, despite a clause prohibiting full-time soldiers from belonging to political parties. What was arguably political interference in the view of the SADF, however, was enhanced (civilian) control over the military to the ANC. The debate did not end with constitutional negotiations - it shifted to the fledgling Ministry of Defence, and centred on proposals that a civilian secretary of defence be appointed and that the ministry’s civilian component be expanded and given greater powers.34

Indeed, part and parcel of the negotiations at the JMCC was to establish a civilian Defence Secretariat. On 21 February, 1994, the JMCC of the TEC invited a number of interested parties and institutions to contribute to “the shaping of the new defence...”
establishment ... [by] ... submitting in writing your proposals on the composition, structuring and functioning of the Ministry of Defence as well as on the subject of civil control over the military forces.” The letter was signed by the co-chairs of the JMCC, Meiring and Nyanda. The sub-council eventually adopted a so-called ‘balanced-model’ closely following submissions made by IDP according to which the Defence Secretariat would be appointed at the same level as the Chief of the SANDF. At the head of the Secretariat was the Secretary of Defence, a senior civil servant, with his personal staff. Former SADF Chief of Staff, Pierre Steyn was subsequently appointed to the post of Defence Secretary during November 1994.

ENTERING THE ENEMY CAMP

By late November, 1993, the completion of negotiations on the TEC Act and the constitution allowed negotiators to turn their attention to the mechanics of integration - in particular the issue of assembly points. The committee of experts had been working on the issue, but had made limited progress. Now that issues of principle had been resolved, ‘homeland’ forces were invited to join the working groups.

The discussions showed that, despite agreement in principle, the SADF’s commitment to integration, rather than absorbing other forces, was still an issue for its negotiating partners. It was accused of delaying integration by not identifying all the military facilities which could be used as assembly points for MK guerrillas on their way into the SANDF; it counter-argued that it had suggested various army installations but that MK had turned them down, arguing that its security would be compromised if cadres were ‘penny-packed’ into small groups in a host of assembly areas. Thus three areas only were agreed. The small number of points may have also suited the SADF, which worried at the time that assembly points might cause concern to neighbouring white communities.

The security of the points also showed lingering mutual suspicion. While both sides feared right-wing attacks on the points, MK initially added that they would not allow the SADF to “put [cadres] in concentration camps and turn your guns on them”. The SADF responded that local and international pressure would prevent this, even if it was considering it. For its part, the SADF initially alleged that MK would use the assembly points to establish its own bases. By 1994, MK had accepted that the SADF did not intend to derail the transition, and the accusations ended. Nevertheless, concerns on both sides prompted a complex mutual security arrangement, giving both the SANDF and MK responsibility for securing aspects of the assembly process. A joint operations centre was to be established, providing a first opportunity (barring the NKFO) for practical co-operation.

Equally sensitive was the question of arms. Originally, SADF sources say, it felt that MK guerrillas should not bring arms to the assembly points, although some in the military argued that this would remove the weapons from the streets and prevent them from “falling into the wrong hands”. MK wanted to keep the arms. The issue was apparently resolved by agreeing on each military executing an arms audit, the results of which would be handed to the Sub-Council on Defence.

A key feature of the process was that it would include direct foreign involvement. The original rationale was that since it was agreed that the new force be technologically advanced, overseas help was needed to determine which MK cadres were up to the standards of the SANDF - in reality, presumably, those of the SADF - and to train them to meet these. The British Government was asked to provide impartial assistance, since Britain had helped integration elsewhere and its service tradition was generally compatible with that of South Africa. The British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT) would not only evaluate SANDF training but also assist in over-seeing the training process itself, which apparently caused the SADF some disquiet. More importantly, it would help to assess criteria against which individuals were to be evaluated prior to placement in the SANDF, acting in some ways as a neutral arbiter of integration.

On the disbandment of the JMCC, which controlled the process of integration an Integration Committee under the chairmanship of Lieutenant-General Nyanda, now Chief of Defence Force Staff (CDFS), was constituted. But the beginnings of the assembly process hardly ever went according to plan. The physical assembly and integration of members of MK and APLA commenced even before the elections and included MK and APLA members from Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia, but was hampered by the requirement for a massive call-up of part-time SADF soldiers for the election period.

Whereas it had been expected to complete the assembly by the end of 1994, it soon became clear that this would not be possible, but would have to be spread over a period of some three years. In the meanwhile logistic and administrative inadequacies at Wallmannsthal, the major assembly point, boilled over. Mass walkouts of former MK members occurred and President Mandela had to intervene personally as MK cadres ganged up against their former commanders, Modise and Nyanda in particular. Eventually Mandela read the SANDF command structure the riot act, demanding that they streamline and speed the integration process up, which they subsequently did.

The men and women on the Certified Personnel Register from the ANC and PAC were called up in batches of about 1 500 each to report at three (later reduced to two) assembly points where they were mustered into the SANDF. Three intakes at De Brug and four at Wallmannsthal were completed in 1994. The following intakes were scheduled for 1995: Wallmannsthal (former MK); May, August (which would include women), September and November, and in the case of former APLA at De Brug, two intakes during September and November respectively.

The process at the assembly points provided for a period of bridging training (up to 42 weeks in duration) to reduce the expected differences in training standards and military knowledge, various tests and selection boards and eventually integration into the SANDF at the level appropriate to knowledge, potential and individual preference. In the case of a dispute, the assistance of the BMATT was called in. BMATT served to certify to all the parties to the integration process that the procedures and standards applied in any individual case and to the process as a whole, were fair. To achieve this their role extended much further, since they also had to evaluate SANDF training curricula and selection standards in relation to international standards and advise with regard to any improvements which might be required. BMATT also had to assess and validate the
criteria against which individuals were to be evaluated, prior to placement, during placement and during bridging training.

Before entering bridging training each cadre had to be ‘placed’, i.e. be assigned to an arm of the service, to a corps (such as artillery), to a mustering and receive a rank in the SANDF. This was done on grounds of education, military training, experience, age, evaluation reports and from a pre-screening interview which is done by a Placement Board. Following the recommendation of the Board, an offer was made to the candidate who had a month to decide whether to accept or not. On acceptance, the individual was generally posted for bridging training or employment.

A large number of the 34 000 former guerrilla’s, possibly some 40% eventually, opted not to report to the assembly areas. Others, a much smaller portion, did report but were found unsuitable for Integration for reasons relating to age, lack of education, poor health, and the like. By 24 May, 1996, a total of only 15 416 (43%) of the guerrilla forces had reported to the assembly points and a total of 10 427 letters of appointment had been accepted. A large number of former guerrillas, therefore, still remained outside the integration process, although some had found other, more lucrative employment.

A Service Corps has been established for those who are not up to standard, or who have been retrenched from the SANDF, the idea being to provide eighteen months of vocational training for persons wishing to demobilise. Once off the ground, this will enable recruits to return to civilian life, while at the same time provide an ongoing service to the broader community. While expensive, it is a crucial part of integration and demobilisation as it serves as an outlet for those who will not meet the standards for joining the SANDF, and it may forestall the impression of a large number of MK cadres being rejected out of hand.

At a time when unemployment figures approach 50% of the employable population in the country, the demobilisation of soldiers with limited skills and employment capabilities could have far reaching implications. Most of these men and women are former members of the armed wings of the ANC and PAC (although there are also increasing numbers of ex-SADF soldiers), who often lack the necessary skills to find alternative employment in an economy desperately short of job opportunities.

An additional leadership problem also developed. Many leaders from the former guerrilla movement, who initially backed at the impending process of absorption into the former SADF, had already been integrated, thereby contributing to a leadership vacuum amongst the remainder of those forces. A divide has therefore developed between the former guerrilla leadership, now part of the SANDF, and the rest of the guerilla cadres still outside, of whom a large percentage only joined the movement during the two or three years before the elections.

Another potential area for future dispute relates to the integration of the officer corps of the SANDF. Despite a number of senior appointments, the command and control of the SANDF was still dominated by the former white defence establishment. Maling, for instance, was appointed Commander of the newly created SANDF, confirming that the old order would remain a power in the new force. Many former MK officers were disappointed with their placement in the new SANDF, leading to some disillusionment with the process. By July 1995, ex-MK members are more likely to have been placed in the junior and middle level officer ranks - of 438 have been appointed as lieutenants, 336 as captains, 224 as majors and 102 as lieutenant-colonels - than as senior officers, where 45 colonels, 16 brigadiers, 9 major generals and 2 lieutenant-generals have been appointed. As the military downscales these officers will assume increasing prominence as the officer corps becomes increasingly representative.

CONCLUSION: SOLDIERS TOGETHER?

To some degree the successful integration of the past was attained by putting off difficult decisions on demobilisation and downsizing - problems that cannot be ignored for much longer and that imply solutions which are bound to lead to dissatisfaction among important sections of the ANC-dominated electorate. Having successfully weathered the transition, the ANC can no longer delay the demands for power and influence from within its own ranks. More importantly, until the SANDF reflects both the political and racial composition of the wider society, ANC politicians will not completely trust the military.

Ostensibly, demobilisation and rationalisation will consist of ‘downsizing’ the bloated SANDF from a peak of approximately 125 000 soldiers, civilians and bureaucrats, to an affordable 90 000 or less. This process is complicated by the integration process which has further increased the size of the officer corps, already disproportionately large for many years, and the need to restructure and redesign the SANDF in accordance with its new role and defensive posture.

South African defence policy is, therefore, approaching a belated crisis of transition. Despite the fact that the South African military has undergone dramatic changes in recent years, the transformation of the SANDF as a whole is still incomplete. Strong political leadership will be required to restore morale, to direct the formulation of defence policy and place the military squarely within the democratic model. Yet, there is no consensus on defence policy neither in cabinet or parliament nor within the wider South African population. At present, little improvement appears possible under the leadership of Modise, while the nascent civilian Defence Secretariat, established to ensure civilian control of the military and ostensibly tasked to perform both policy and financial control, seems to be floundering.

These problems are not in themselves serious enough to threaten the South African transition, but they impact on the internal law and order situation. Since the late seventies the military have been deployed both in support of the police and in border security duties, a role with which the SANDF will have to continue, given transformation problems and the legitimacy crisis still being experienced by the police. It is therefore vital that the ongoing changes to the SANDF be dealt with.

Contrary to the expectations of some of its critics, the SADF did not seek to derail or prevent the transition. Rather, it sought to secure its place within it. By stressing neutrality and ‘professionalism’, it hoped to distance itself from the outgoing political
order, and to signal its willingness to serve in a new order. This willingness to live with majority government and military integration was made easier by the knowledge that its power, and the technical competence of its senior officers, ensured that it would remain a force which the new civilian authorities would have to respect, whatever formal arrangements were agreed.

The compromise was greatly helped by the approach of MK and its principal, the ANC. If MK ever did seek to overthrow the state and establish sole ANC power, it soon adapted to compromise and put more training effort into readying itself for a role in an integrated national military than it had to the guerrilla struggle'. The unexpected propensity for compromise on both sides suggested that they might soon develop common interests in civilian matters, such as increased budgets and new weaponry - there was evidence of this not long after the 1994 election. Whatever the future holds, it seems probable that the new order will be buttressed by a loyal and undivided if less efficient military.

It would be premature to insist that bargaining over the nature of the military ended once the SANDF was formed. Like military leaders in other transitions, the former SADF leadership attempt to insulate themselves from pressure to tailor promotions or appointments - and standards - to the desires of the new civilian elites. Whatever the formal outcome of the negotiations, the SANDF remains the SADF with modifications. This suggests that tensions will inevitably develop between the old military leaders and the new political ones, with the TBVC officers split between them. As a result, the final judgement on the military compromise may have to wait for some years, and will depend on how both challenge to this respond.

If SADF and MK soldiers do find each other in the new military, might this not presage new threats to civilian control over political life, this time from a united military? This is unlikely. The bargaining strategy of the SANDF demanded that it renounce this option, while the primacy given by the ANC to the political over the military has ensured that, on its side of the divide, military officers are not seen as a swift route to political power. And while former 'homeland' soldiers may have participated in coups, they would find attempting to take over the country a far more difficult enterprise than seizing a small and undeveloped 'homeland'. There is no evidence that they are addicted to coups - and even if they are, they might find little support from their fellow soldiers, who emerge from different traditions. Then too, however much the new military elites may unify, SADF and MK graduates are unlikely to agree sufficiently on political issues to agree on the need to override civilian authority, let alone on what to do once this was achieved.

Nevertheless, the future requires a tight-rope act from both politicians and the military, since the delicate process of integration allows greater opportunity for dissatisfaction within the latter. Restraint and political skill on both sides could, however, yet ensure a united military constrained by civil authority, in society in which this would once have seemed unbelievable.

Endnotes
This is an expanded and edited version of Ruling the Bullets, in Steven Friedman and Doreen Atkinson (eds), A Review of The Small Miracle, Johannesburg, Raven, 1995.

3 See Mark Swilling and Mark Phillips, The Powers of the Thunderbird: decision-making structures and strategies in the South African state, in South Africa at the End of the Road, Policy Perspectives 1995, Centre for Policy Studies, Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand.
5 For a useful description of this, see Ronelle Haasbroek, Armed and Dangerous - my undercover struggle against apartheid, Oxford, Heinemann, 1993.
6 Williams, op. cit. Paper VII.
7 Williams, op. cit. Paper V.
8 This estimate is probably still too high: MK might have inflated its membership figures to strengthen its hand during the negotiations.
10 In discussions around the new structure for the police, one of the arguments for the granting of a greater role for the police structures was that it would allow police officers in the lower ranks to work in their home regions without being transferred around the country.
15 (ibid).
16 (ibid).
17 (ibid).
18 16 (ibid).
19 16 (ibid).
20 16 (ibid).
THE NATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE: 
THE TRIUMPH OF POLITICS OVER SECURITY

Jakkie Cilliers and Markus Reichardt

INTRODUCTION

By now in 1995, it has become customary for observers to talk about the South African miracle - the peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy. The new South Africa and its Government of National Unity (GNU) is indeed something of a miracle when one considers the preceding conflict and polarisation that had characterised South Africa for decades. This miracle, however, has tended to create among South Africans, and in particular South African politicians, a self-congratulatory mood which all too easily ignores the setbacks and failures experienced along the road to the new South Africa.

One of the more spectacular failures was the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF) - a novel concept for addressing the spiralling violence in the country which was instead hijacked to serve politically expedient priorities of the day.

As South Africans attempted to control the escalating spiral of violence during the transition period, the concept of a new policing or peacekeeping force was born. It offered hope to those who called for a new approach to domestic public order policing. Initially it seemed to offer the prospect of guaranteeing a peaceful election campaign. In the end, however, it proved a disaster; political priorities bedevilled its creation and operations at every step of the way. Eventually, at a total cost of more than R 400 million, only a fraction of the force would be deployed for less than 10 days, where instead of addressing the violence, its presence contributed to even more bloodshed.

The KATORUS (Kathlehong/Thokoza/Vosloorus) area, including the Phola Park informal settlement on the East Rand, where the NPKF was eventually deployed, had experienced extremely high levels of violence combined with efforts for peace, during the period 1990-1994. Levels of violence were linked to an unofficial and undeclared war between hostel and township residents, encompassing ‘battle lines’, ‘no man’s land buffer areas’, night patrols and guard duties. While hostel residents believe that township residents want to expel them from the area, township residents feel that they are under constant attack from hostel residents. It was into this volatile cocktail that the NPKF would be thrust and subsequently fail.

ORIGINS OF THE IDEA

The idea to establish a ‘new’, neutral peacekeeping force originated from several quarters within South Africa during 1992. Publicly, various general proposals were received regarding the creation of such a force, from for example, the former chief of MK staff, the late Chris Hani, and a number of religious leaders such as Bishop Stanley Magoba.1 It was a notion which was very attractive to the African National Congress (ANC) who were reluctant to be solely dependent upon the South African Defence Force (SADF) and the SA Police in the run-up to and during the elections. Prior to 1980, both the latter forces had been at the forefront of the campaign against the ANC, and were
Understandably suspected of being involved in ongoing attempts to discredit and undermine the ANC thereafter.

Formally, the concept of establishing a Peacekeeping Force received a huge boost when the Technical Committee on Violence at the World Trade Centre recommended the creation of such a force in its fourth report to the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum, on 2 June 1993. This hugely ambitious recommendation reads as follows:

"The Committee proposes the establishment of an independent peacekeeping force with a multi-party composition to function as the primary peacekeeping force for the election. Its functions thereafter should be determined by the elected Government in consultation with relevant parties. The force should be specially trained, should be constituted in such a way as to have legitimacy across the political spectrum and should fall under the control of either the Independent Electoral Commission or under multi-party executive control."

Considerable debate apparently preceded the wording adopted by the committee on the function of the NPKF. The recommendation of the working group was, in fact, based on two bilateral agrements: on the one hand between the South African Government and the ANC and, on the other, between the South African Government and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Soon thereafter the IFP walked out of negotiations and their crucial involvement in the NPKF (which would have been provided from the Kwazulu Police Force) did not materialise. The lack of IFP involvement in this process cut to the very essence of the NPKF, for, as a primary source of legitimacy it was dependent upon its inclusive nature. Logically, the fact that the IFP did not participate in the force should have precluded the deployment of the NPKF in areas of IFP and ANC rivalry such as Natal and most townships on the East Rand, including KATORUS. This was not to be the case.

The proposal of the Technical Committee was not without its opponents, many of whom argued for the presence of a UN-peacekeeping team to stem the violence and supervise the April 1994 elections. However, an international peacekeeping force of any kind was never a realistic option. The Government opposed it as an encroachment upon its sovereignty, the ANC was divided over the issue, and the United Nations was already overstretched in Bosnia, Cambodia, Somalia and elsewhere. The manpower commitment required for effective peacekeeping in South Africa - around 30,000-60,000 soldiers - was simply beyond the capacity and will of the international community.

PEACEKEEPING, PEACE ENFORCEMENT OR PUBLIC ORDER POLICING?

Following the recommendation of the Technical Committee in early June 1993, various organisations submitted memorandums on the NPKF to the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum at the World Trade Centre during June 1993. However, having made the recommendation to establish the NPKF, the Technical Committee on Violence did not pursue the matter further. The implementation of this recommendation was left to the major political parties, where the matter of the NPKF had to compete with a host of other issues - all urgent and all dependent upon the

laborious process of legitimation through detailed, multi-party negotiation. Any progress on the implementation of the NPKF now became hostage to the national negotiation process. Delay in progress at national level therefore inevitably delayed progress with the NPKF. Once the date for the election, 28-29 April 1994, had been cast in stone, time to establish the NPKF was considerably reduced.

Consequently, a vigorous, if ineffectual, debate on the merits and demerits of details regarding the NPKF now ensued outside the World Trade Centre. Issues relating to its composition, doctrine, training and so forth were discussed.

The crux of the debate revolved around the nature of the NPKF, in other words its doctrine and composition, as well as the inclusion of the Internal Stability Unit (ISU) of the SA Police. Both the Goldstone panel and the Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) had urged that the NPKF virtually replace the ISU as an instrument of public order policing, taking great care to ensure a high calibre of constituent troops, who would then be trained for a considerable period of time. Since the task of training the NPKF was a massive one, both recommended that outside help be sought from member states of the European Community and the Commonwealth at an early stage and that training of senior officers should begin immediately (i.e. August 1993).

In contrast to the arguments in favour of a public order police approach, the Sub-Council on Defence, and the public at large, allocated to the NPKF the task of ‘peacekeeping’ in accordance with the United Nations concept of the term - at that stage a vague notion in South Africa. To this end, the bulk of the training was based on emulating United Nations practices in international, so-called ‘blue-baret’, peace-keeping along the lines of the United Nations operations in Namibia, Somalia and Cambodia.

The NPKF was designed with an emphasis on a holding (military) action rather than the restoration of law and order in areas such as the East Rand upon which the NPKF was built. Instead of looking at a means to legitimise the function of public-order policing and taking a strategic perspective on the problem, South Africans were adding to their existing problems. The reason why this occurred related closely to the political agreement which was struck between the ANC/MK and the SA Government/SADEF and the hostility of the ANC and much of the general public towards the ISU.

The fact that the NPKF would inevitably serve (at least in some areas) to replace the discredited ISU was practical, but politically incorrect in the South Africa of 1993. Rather than discuss specifics, analysts sympathetic to the NPKF resorted to vague distinctions regarding peacekeeping - emphasising the fact that the NPKF would (somehow) bring to South Africa a ‘new ethos’. How this ethos would fare when shot at by an AK-47 was never explained. South Africa was not a foreign country into which dispasionate international forces were going to be deployed. In fact there was little difference between the function of the ISU which was defined as "The combating of riots ... combating of violence and unrest in the Republic of South Africa," and the subsequent Transitional Executive Council Act (No 151 of 1993) (TEC Act) which stated that the Sub-Council on Defence "... shall budget for and be allocated the necessary resources to establish and maintain a force, to be known as the National Peacekeeping Force, the functions of which shall relate to the maintenance of peace and public order in South Africa."
The opposition of the ANC to the inclusion of the ISU in the NPKF was politically expedient but strategically inept, as, for that matter, was the opposition of the SA Police to the idea of the NPKF. The ANC argued that the ISU had, through its actions, "... come into direct conflict with many communities." The SA Police argued that the ISU was, in fact, a highly trained, disciplined elite force which merely suffered a bad press. Both ignored the real problem that South Africa was and remains a very violent society which would require a strong public order police force or acceptance of the permanent deployment of the then SADF in support of the police internally. The fact is that the NPKF was a political creation and not a definitive answer to a violent problem - although it clearly had the potential to make a substantial contribution to conflict management and resolution.

The TEC Act mandated the Sub-Council to do a number of things ranging from determining "... the philosophy, doctrine, syllabi and training policy of the National Peacekeeping Force to make regulations regarding ... the powers and duties ... the circumstances under which the National Peacekeeping Force may be deployed ... the conditions of service and remuneration of members of the National Peacekeeping Force ..." and establish "... a disciplinary code, including a code of conduct, for members of the National Peacekeeping Force"

The TEC Act did not link the NPKF directly to the elections. This appeared to leave the door ajar to establish such a force as a permanent organisation and not to limit its role to the elections only. Yet, in practice, the very raison d'etre of the NPKF was to help ensure free and fair elections. As a result, all planning and preparations were clearly affected by and aimed at deployment before the elections, scheduled for 26-28 April 1994. Eventually, the determination of the TEC and its Sub-Council on Defence to train and deploy the NPKF before elections, necessitated by the lack of any long term vision concerning the NPKF beyond April 1994, would spell near disaster.

In retrospect it would appear as if the requirement for a South African Peacekeeping Force arose from the following considerations:

- the legitimacy crisis confronting the SA Police (the Internal Stability Unit in particular) and SADF in the provinces at that stage, the level of distrust and mistrust of these forces at a political level, and therefore the requirement for an all-inclusive but non-partisan force in the run-up to and during the elections coupled with the fact that such a force would not be provided by the International community. (Such a notion was not favoured by either the ANC or the National Party);

- the desire to remove the various armies, the SADF in particular, from their role in support of the police in law and order duties, particularly in the run-up to elections;

- it obviated the requirement for full multi-party control of the Security Forces (the SADF in particular) as well as all other non-statutory forces and those of the homelands by the TEC - something which the SA Government had strongly resisted; and

- it could serve as a preparatory experiment in the integration of military forces - an issue about which the SADF was particularly enthusiastic.

Right from the start the SA Police were decidedly unenthusiastic about the idea of the NPKF, as was evident from their submissions to both the Technical Committee on Violence and the Goldstone Commission. This also partly explains why the NPKF was set up under the auspices of the Sub-Council on Defence and not the Sub-Council on Law, Order, Stability and Security of the TEC. But there was a second, more cogent reason. Only the SADF had the logistic and infrastructural capacity to assist with problems of the establishment of the NPKF in the time available. Placing the NPKF under the law and order Sub-Council would, therefore, have compounded coordination and assistance. On the other hand, the SA Police were aware that the new constitution made them responsible for public order policing after elections.

COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMITTEES

Once the decision to establish the NPKF had been taken, its formal inauguration was made dependent upon the passage of the TEC Act which authorised the establishment of the Force.

The TEC Act was eventually passed by parliament in September 1993. On 18 November 1993, the plenary session of the multi-party negotiation process endorsed the provisions of the Act and authorised its implementation. The TEC started functioning on 7 December 1993, with seven Sub-Councils. The truly daunting responsibility for establishing the NPKF rested on the eight-member Sub-Council on Defence. Despite the problems that the NPKF soon ran into, the Sub-Council also had a vast number of other responsibilities regarding the planning for the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

On 5 January 1994, the Sub-Council on Defence established the Joint Military Co-ordinating Council (JMCC) to plan the integration of military forces, as well as create a new, national, defence force for South Africa. It also had to institute the National Peace Keeping Force Command Council (NPKCC) to establish the NPKF. The co-chairpersons for the NPKCC were Mr. Lambert Moloi from MK and Lieutenant-General JH Pretorius from the SADF. All military, police and non-statutory forces who contributed to the NPKF were represented on the NPKCC which was, therefore, a much more disparate group than the JMCC.

The proposed establishment of the NPKF was greeted enthusiastically in the media. An editorial in The Daily News of 5 January, 1994, said that "... it is a remarkable achievement. South Africa has proved not only that its people can decide their own political and constitutional future, they can bring it into effect as well without United Nations, Commonwealth or any other external Peacekeeping Forces."

The intention was to establish an initial force of some 4 500 strong, divided into four battalions; three at De Brug and one at Koeberg. Each battalion would consist of five companies of 190 men. Each company was composed of five platoons with three sections per platoon. The initial size of the force was, therefore, slightly less than that of a brigade without the trained staff officers, the support services or heavy equipment normally associated with such a formation; but shortages in key personnel, such as headquarters administrative personnel, existed right up to the end.
The obligation on the Sub-Council to effect command of the NPKF through a large Command Council, although perhaps a ‘politically correct’ decision, was to prove a fatal flaw. Management by committee was bad enough. Command by committees would prove disastrous.

Instead of delegating its responsibilities to the commander of the Force, the NPKFCC was forced to adopt this cumbersome method in the interests of inclusivity and political balance. Various work groups were established under the NPKFCC - all of which were politically balanced - such as one each for personnel, logistics, training, international assistance, operations, telecommunications, intelligence, etc. The working groups worked for the NPKFCC, who in turn presented their recommendations to the Sub-Council, for reference to the Management Committee of the TEC, for approval by the TEC, so as to instruct the commander of the NPKF. At the end of this chain of command, the commanding officer of the Force had an unenviable task.

The first and crucial task had to be the appointment of a commander for the Force, but on this the Sub-Council on Defence deadlocked between Brigadier George Krus of the SADF, a conventional soldier with wide experience, and Brigadier Derrick Mgwewi of the Transkei Defence Force, a special forces commander. Crucial days passed before, after consideration of the appointment of an international commander, the Sub-Council decided in favour of a compromise candidate in the form of Brigadier Gabriel Ramushwana, then the Head of State of Venda and Chief of the Venda Defence Force. Brigadier Ramushwana was appointed by the Sub-Council at its meeting on 24 January 1994, i.e. the same day that training was to have started. Technically, he only assumed duties on 7 February, with the rank of major-general and was replaced on the Sub-Council, representing the Venda Defence Force, by Colonel NG Ramaremezi. For four crucial weeks a force without a commander was yet another innovation of transition politics.

Ramushwana subsequently vacated his seat on the Sub-Council but gaps in the command structures of the NPKF existed for weeks after the establishment of that Force - even up to its deployment in KATORUS, when the NPKF found itself unable to deploy an operational tactical headquarters. The controversy surrounding the Commander of the NPKF did not end there and the press pointed to an alleged financial scandal related to a pension pay-out to the General in Venda. The fact that Ramushwana was an ANC election candidate did not, of course, endear the NPKF to the IFP, although he withdrew his candidacy upon his appointment as Commander of the NPKF. Again IFP supporters would point to the alleged bias in the composition of the NPKF not including, as indeed it did not, any IFP component.

There were also other problems. For political reasons, the command and support staff of the NPKF had to be ‘balanced’ in their composition. i.e., if the chief of logistics was from the SADF, his deputy usually had to be from either MK or the Transkei Defence Force - since the latter was perceived as being close to the ANC. In the absence of his own contingent of an integrated staff organisation, and in some cases a lack of capable staff officers, Ramushwana bore an inordinate work load and had the unenviable task of having to command the NPKF with the Sub-Council on

Defence and NPKFCC constantly looking over his shoulder. As time passed the lack of competent staff officers at De Brug, in Pretoria, and eventually in KATORUS became a virtual nightmare. None of the signals officers, for example, at any of the three De Brug battalions, were making the grade.

Finally, instead of locating the NPKF headquarters at the major training base (De Brug), the Sub-Council for Defence decided that the headquarters for the Force was to be situated at Kasteel Park, Pretoria. This decision ensured that the Commander of the Force was removed from the physical location of the object of his command at De Brug and Koosberg, but it gave the NPKFCC direct and easy access to the Commander of the NPKF. Given the speed with which the NPKF was being set up, this was simply stupid. The solution to this problem, the appointment of a capable deputy commander at De Brug, was never adopted.

**COMPOSITION OF THE NPKF**

According to the TEC Act, the NPKF had to be comprised of members of:

*(i) all* military forces, as far as practicable in equal numbers, except in so far as any such force prefers to contribute fewer members to that Force; and

*(ii) every policing agency which falls under the authority and control of a participant in the Council, wishing to be represented in that Force.*

Originally the SADF and MK would have contributed to the NPKF in equal numbers, making up some two thirds of the Force in total, with the rest provided by various other military and police forces. The KwaZulu Police Force, the Bophuthatswana Defence and Police Force and Ciskei were not part of the NPKF planning and preparation process, although the latter eventually did subscribe to the TEC Act and participate in the NPKF. As a result, the NPKF would eventually be composed of members of the SADF, the SA Police, MK, armed and police forces of Transkei, Ciskei and Venda, as well as members of the police forces of five of the six non-independent ‘national states’.

**TRAINING**

The assembly and training of the NPKF was expected to consist of two phases. First the selection, integration, orientation and training of the leader group, followed by the same for other ranks. A selection process (both for leader group and other ranks) typically extends over two weeks in a country such as France, depending very much on the preparatory work and numbers involved. Using international comparative standards,junior leaders (platoon leaders) could be crash-trained in two months, but if this is to be achieved, they require five to eight years of appropriate experience. Company commanders and more senior officers could be trained in a month, but require at least ten years appropriate experience. In sum, the selection process for all leader groups would take about two weeks, followed by either one or two months of training (for senior and junior leaders, respectively) and a further two weeks of evaluation and examination. The minimum training requirement for the troops was estimated at sixteen weeks.

None of these schedules caters for or allows any time for the integration of forces - in itself an equally demanding task. Nor does it allow for the special training requirements...
for drivers, signallers, medics, clerks, storekeepers, etc. The South African planning for the NPKF would set new standards in shortened training schemes - with predictable results.

In fact, no preparatory selection process was established for either the leader group or the other ranks of the NPKF. As a result, there were major differences in standards. Some of the MK members who arrived at De Brug were, in fact, not trained cadres, but members of local SDF’s who had apparently been recruited a few days beforehand. Others were distinctly rusty in their level of training and some had very limited reading and writing skills. Many SADF members, on the other hand, had apparently been ordered to volunteer in the age-old tradition of military discipline, and tempted with better pay. Such incentives do not necessarily attract the cream of the crop. Nor, for that matter, was there necessarily a common standard between the members of military and police forces from some ten police and military forces and a Soviet-organised and trained liberation army.

At De Brug and Koeberg instructors of the NPKF underwent a two week training course (which was often shorter due to logistic and political problems) after which they in turn had five weeks to train the NPKF recruits. This period of training was later extended by one week - a crash course in anyone’s language. As discussed below, Commonwealth and French observers were called in, in an advisory capacity to assist and provide some expertise on the training of the NPKF, but even this assistance would prove insufficient.

Eventually the training for the troops was divided into three main training modules, all with their specific sub-topics. Module 1 started with the ‘aim of the force’ and its structure, the code of conduct and lectures on the peace accord. Module 2 focused on drill, musketry, communications, negotiation skills and first aid. The final module concentrated on more detail regarding peace force training, namely crowd control, road blocks, cordon and search operations, etc.

Then there was the problem of different military cultures, particularly between that of the SADF and the TBVC armed forces, on the one hand, and MK on the other. And finally, the differences in culture between the participating military and police forces. Severe problems were to arise when police culture had to match up to military culture in addition to all the other challenges. The police tend to work in small groups and mostly individually. The duties of a police warrant officer, for example, differ vastly from those of a military sergeant-major, often the individual who organizes food and clothing, is responsible for general discipline, guard duties, etc. In contrast to the publicly held perception, integration is a multi-faceted affair.

All of these problems compounded the demands on the overworked, understaffed and ill-prepared training teams at De Brug and Koeberg, suffering as they were from poor logistics, unsure of the doctrine they were to teach and without a commander. There was little chance that they could succeed in the time available. Tragically, a good idea had come to suffer the consequences of inappropriate political demands.

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THE (LACK OF A) LONGER TERM FUTURE

For the members of the NPKF at De Brug and Koeberg the longer term future of the Force would remain unsure. As IDP had warned “Without a clear longer term career prospect, people of calibre and skill will not join a Peacekeeping Force.”

According to the post-April 1994 Constitution (Act no 200 of 1993), the function of public order policing is constitutionally allocated to the police (section 218). In fact, chapter 14 of the Interim Constitution provides for only two distinct Security Forces under a newly elected Government: a National Defence Force and a National Police Service, the latter with the responsibility to “establish and maintain a national public order policing unit” allocated to the National Police Commissioner. The post-election Police Service is also tasked with border control. No mention was made of the future of the newly established National Peacekeeping Force in the Interim Constitution. The implication was clear - the NPKF would not be a permanent, separate force, but would have to become part of either the SA National Defence Force or the SA Police Service, after elections. The members of the NPKF were apparently not informed as to whether or not the NPKF would survive as an organisation. Such uncertainty about the most basic job security could not have contributed to motivation and morale.

Given these facts, the continued planning about the longer term future and size of the NPKF by the Sub-Council and NPKCC, presents an intriguing mystery. During early February, 1994, the Sub-Council on Defence recommended to the TEC that the NPKF should continue to exist for at least three months after the general elections before being integrated into the yet to be established SANDF, i.e. during August 1994. The Sub-Council still continued to plan for a second and even third intake at De Brug, the first of which would only be ready for deployment during mid July (eventually mid August), i.e. just in time to be integrated into the future military.

It was also obvious that differences of opinion existed about the future of the Force. General Ramushana, for example, saw it as the embryonic South African contribution to International peacekeeping operations; a force that could participate in UN initiatives in areas such as Rwanda, etc. The SA Police appeared to think that there was a chance that the NPKF would be absorbed into the ISU.

Although from the start the prevalent idea seemed to be that up to 10 000 men and women would be trained for the NPKF, this remained an elusive goal. The target figure of 10 000 appears to be an arbitrary one, possibly drawn from the average SADF force levels deployed in the townships during the preceding months.

In fact it would appear as if even the 4 500 member force presented considerable problems in the procurement of large numbers of body armour, riot shields, riot batons, shortage of instructors, etc. A first intake of 4 500 men and women at De Brug (three battalions) and Koeberg (one battalion) would, therefore, either have to be followed by a second and even a third intake at the same bases, or additional facilities would have had to be found for the additional 5 500 men and women required to bring the force up to 10 000 members. Although both Venda and the Transkei offered additional training facilities, closer inspection revealed that these did not meet requirements and the Sub-Council eventually decided in favour of successive intakes at De Brug and Koeberg.
Yet the full contingent of the NPKF, i.e. 10,000 troops, could probably have been housed and trained at one of a number of SADF locations. In fact, a large number of SADF bases and facilities stood half-empty or were under-utilised following years of post-Hamiltonian War downscaling. Some of these now serve as assembly areas for MK prior to integration into the SANDF.

It was this that made MK suspect that the SADF was not assisting the further expansion of the NPKF. This caused Ronnie Kasrils to make a detailed submission to the Sub-Council, spelling out the extent to which many SADF facilities were under-utilised or empty. By implication, Kasrils was accusing the SADF of restricting the expansion of the NPKF. Although the SADF responded in detail to Kasrils’ accusations, the suspicion lingered. Relations between separate, independent, self-accounting government security agencies are never easy but seemed here to reflect competing objectives.

Eventually the Sub-Council decided that two more battalions were to be trained at De Brug, that the main intake would commence on 18 May and that the initial six week training period would be extended for thirty days. By then the various establishments which were to contribute to the further intakes were a little reluctant to provide these forces. Apparently, at the time that the NPKF deployment was starting, only the SADF and MK had promised to provide contingents.

**THE DE BRUG INTAKE**

In accordance with a media release by the Sub-Council on Defence (dated 19 January 1994), the training of the first NPKF contingent at De Brug was to commence on 24 January, 1994, and would consist of five to six weeks of training so as to enable the NPKF to be deployed before elections on 26-28 April, 1994. This compressed training schedule, one needs to emphasise, was forced upon the NPKF through no fault of its own. In fact, the original training schedules which the SADF recommended were considerably longer.

The acting Officer Commanding De Brug was Colonel Fred Burger of the SADF who, in the absence of a TEC appointed Commander of the NPKF, had to fend for himself. The prior training for the training team of some 47 members at De Brug commenced on 9 January. The command group arrived at De Brug on 16 January and received orientation training from 16-23 January. The main force, scheduled to arrive on Monday, 24 January, arrived two days early, catching the De Brug preparations on a wrong foot. These problems were compounded by a stream of visitors to the De Brug area, including the NPKFCC, the Sub-Council and the media, who resorted to any and all means to gain information about events at the base.

The De Brug training camp had, at a stretch, accommodation for 3,350 persons, which was the number originally expected. Instead, the camp had to deal with some 3,740 trainees - a situation largely caused by the arrival of the camp of an additional 440 policemen from the Transkei who were neither expected nor planned for. As a result, the NPKFCC decided to reduce the Transkei contingent (both Defence and Police). When 439 Transkei Police and military persons were sent back home, another 55 members of the Transkei Police accompanied them without permission. This pattern was apparently not restricted to members from Transkei.

The first of many administrative problems arose when it became apparent that some MK cadres were using their ‘battle’ (nom de guerre) instead of their real names. Without identity documents, no bank accounts could be opened. Without bank accounts, salary payment had to be done by hand in the camp. A comparison between the remuneration of persons from different armed forces, but with equal rank, was inevitable under these circumstances.

Various other problems also surfaced in the De Brug intelle. The Transkei Defence Force, for example, sent 240 lance-corporals - a vastly expanded number - which implied an additional financial burden. Only the SADF supplied any signal officers and there was a deficit of logistic personnel which was to remain a thorn in the side of the NPKF until the end. Another problem was the fact that MK cadres did not function within a formal rank structure, as did the SADF. The problem of a lack of uniform standards or criteria for ranks was compounded by the overnight changes in some MK ranks.

When training commenced at De Brug, the SADF had provided 927 persons, the Transkei Defence Force 863, the Transkei Police 440 (not planned for), the Ciskei Defence Force about 250 (32 persons more than planned for), MK 830 (59 persons less than planned for), the Venda Defence Force 168 (23 less than planned for) and the SA Police 197 (23 less than planned for). A nominal number of policemen from Qwa Qwa, Kangwane, Ciskei, Venda and Gazankulu (29 in total) also reported. Similarly to the additional recruits from the Transkei Defence Force, they were not expected.

Right from the start, command and control problems arose in the distribution of clothing, such as boots, to the lowest level. While De Brug expected that all the members were medically fit, this was soon found to be incorrect assumption. Within a week or so sixteen members had to be discharged with various illnesses, such as tuberculosis.

Time marched on but the NPKF did not. Troops were reported as being undisciplined. Shortages of uniforms developed. In a very highly publicised event on 29 January, MK members threatened members of the SADF and SA Police, danced and sang into the small hours. This incident damaged the image of the NPKF. The problem was defused, but seven MK members were subsequently discharged at their own request due to the fact that they were not free to carry on with political activity on the base. The already low morale of many SADF members, which stemmed from the fact that not all of these were volunteers, plummeted further. On 17 February, a SAMIL truck overturned. One member of the NPKF was killed and several others injured. The cause of the accident appeared to be drunkenness on the part of the driver and the truck was apparently overloaded. Soldiers went absent without leave (about thirty men were absent without leave at any given stage during the first few weeks), went on strike over their salaries and no sooner had this matter been resolved than some became involved in a drunken brawl in the centre of Bloemfontein. During the third week of March it was reported that one of the battalion commanders and the chief of staff were being charged. Members of the Transkei Police accompanied them without permission. This pattern was apparently not restricted to members from Transkei.
were also tardy in returning from leave and, in some cases, took NPKF vehicles for this purpose. The media soon labelled the Force the “National Peace Keeping Force”.

All of these events, and the adverse media coverage, undermined morale. Low morale meant little motivation. Resignations from the force increased, reaching 187 by 8 March 1994, with reasons ranging from conditions of service to the strike over pay or domestic problems.

By early February the TEC had not yet passed the NPKF legal support plan. There was simply insufficient time for all the legal and other preparations, but without legal powers there was no proper basis for the conditions of service of the members of the NPKF, nor a disciplinary code. It was only after the troops had been absent without leave (and their commanders legally powerless to stop them) that a code of conduct and disciplinary code were finalised by the TEC and published in the Government Gazette on 21 February 1994. A normal military relies more on ‘esprit de corps’ than on the threat of legal proceedings for its internal cohesion. In the absence of an integrated military culture, only coercion remained. Members of the NPKF had to sign the code of conduct and obey military commands. This had an immediately positive effect.

In a briefing to the Sub-Council on Defence on 11 March, Commonwealth Observer Mission to South Africa (COMSA) Chairman, Russel Marshall, was blunt. He summarised the problems in the NPKF at De Brug as follows:

- "Integration of a force from 13 different groupings, in some cases previously opposed to each other."
- "Resentment among elements of SADF, SAP and homelands forces at the circumstances of their recruitment - some of these soldiers have left."
- "The pay issue, now resolved."
- "Inappropriate grading of some officers to senior rank."
- "An impression that the SADF either wishes the NPKF to fail*, or is ambivalent (a) foot-dragging over the supply of equipment, such as armed vehicles. (b) an impression that neither SADF nor SAP have sent their best trainers. (c) poor provision of logistical support - shortage of drivers, cooks, technical support, armours. No gas masks for training...."
- "...what seems to be an orchestrated campaign to undermine confidence in the NPKF through the media."

All these problems were vigorously reported by the hungry pack of media representatives which descended on De Brug. The attention was not unexpected, nor should the various disciplinary problems have come as a surprise. Eventually additional media liaison personnel were appointed and a comprehensive media strategy was prepared by the NPKF during March, but it was not implemented - probably a wise decision if one reflects on the ensuing results.

The evaluation of the De Brug contingent was conducted over the period 21-25 March 1994, and the evaluation team was a politically balanced one under the co-ordination of the Director, Training, of the South African Army. It included members of the Commonwealth Peacekeeping Assistance Group (CPAG) as well as the Transkei Defence Force, South African Army, MK, South African Police and Venda Defence Force. During evaluation, weaknesses emerged in the command element of the NPKF which were attributed to the requirement for “politically correct” appointments. In fact, the verdict of the evaluation team was mostly negative. It attempted to soften the blow by vaguely indicating three "strong points": “Although the integration went well there is still place for improvement.

- a. Despite restraints and few guidelines from Brigade HQ the Battalions carried on with training.
- b. Impact from CPAG members on the training.
- c. Willingness to learn by most of the troops.”

These three points were followed by 22 “weak points”, ranging from “Poor or no guidelines from Brigade HQ” to “Lack of Basic Leader knowledge”, to “poor initiative”. “Members of some delegations do not have the affinity for military discipline”, etc. In sum, the evaluation team found that One and Three Battalions (with the exception of two companies which could be deployed) needed considerable re-training. Two Battalion, under its commander Lieutenant-Colonel Q. B. Pointer, was ready for deployment after some re-training. As a result, Two Battalion plus two companies of Three Battalion would be deployed in KATORUS on 11 April. One battalion and the rest of Three Battalion would be re-trained and possibly deployed on 23 April.

The re-training of Two Battalion was delayed because the troops were slow in returning from their leave. This in turn cut into the available time for re-evaluation prior to deployment. The re-training of One and Three Battalions occurred from 11 to 16 April, but was apparently not followed by re-evaluation.

THE KOEBERG INTAKE

On 25 January the NPKFCC approved that the force at Koeburg would consist of a single Battalion (Headquarters and five operational companies), a total of 1 062 (later 1 200) persons. Due to the limitations of the available abution facilities, the Koeberg intake included only 22 women, the majority belonging to the medical unit.

The detailed composition was eventually as follows:

- SADF (251);
- Transkei Defence Force (188) and the Transkei Police (161) i.e. more than a company each;
- MK (246);
- SA Police (36);
- Venda Police (20); and
- Police forces of Kangwane (5), KwaNdebele (25), Lebowa (39) and Gwa Qwa (32).
Yet a number (about 120) of police force members of Lebowa, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele, Kangwane and Gwa Qwa left the base soon after reporting.

The Koeberg Base Commander was Lieutenant-Colonel M Dhadhiya from MK. The MK contingent which reported at Koeberg apparently all came from Tanzania, and in contrast to the situation at De Brug, they were well disciplined, trained and organised. This in itself alleviated and even avoided many of the problems that De Brug had experienced. A second reason for the higher morale and apparent standards at Koeberg, compared to De Brug, could be found in the excellent facilities, both military and recreational, at Koeberg. Rooms, not tents, were the norm. Perhaps a third reason is that Koeberg did not have to suffer the media scrutiny inflicted on De Brug.

The original training schedule for Koeberg was as follows:

- Training team preparations at Koeberg: 7-14 February
- Command Group preparations: 14-21 February
- Main Force intake: 21-28 February
- Main Force training: 28 February - 11 March
- Evaluation: 11-12 April
- Possible re-training: 13-14 April
- Possible leave: 15-20 April
- Preparations for deployment: 21-22 April

The Koeberg Instructor cadre was some 14 men strong, i.e. much smaller than that at De Brug, with the SA Police providing the larger contingent (as opposed to the SADF in the case of De Brug). Similarly, the French training contingent at Koeberg were from the police and did not include a military contingent, as did the Commonwealth team. An inevitable problem was anticipated when the two forces, the military-trained De Brug and the police-trained Koeberg contingents, were deployed together. To this end some care was taken to ensure uniform standard operating procedures between the two contingents.

The evaluation of the Koeberg Battalion took place from 8-9 April. Overall, the results were slightly better than those of De Brug, with the evaluators agreeing that the battalion could deploy following limited re-training. These better results, one can accept, stem from the fact that the training team had more time to prepare themselves for their intake, as well as the higher quality of the MK contingent. Following evaluation, re-training was scheduled for the Koeberg Battalion as from 12 April but did not commence on the stated date.

Eventually, the Koeberg Battalion was not deployed, but stayed at its base as a reserve force for the De Brug Battalions.

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

The involvement of the international community in the training of the NPKF was obligatory in terms of the TEC Act. In an earlier article Cilliers and Mille argued that such assistance should ... include four elements, namely: expert policy advice; assistance with the selection of members for the Force; the provision of training for the South African training contingent; and, finally, ongoing oversight and refresher courses (including overseas visits and courses) for some period afterwards.

The participation of foreigners could have provided an unbiased source of expertise in a much more effective manner than a 'politically balanced' South African effort. It could also have served a crucial arbitration function for the selection of personnel. Assistance with determining and adjudicating standards of admission to the Peace-keeping Force would have been particularly useful. The TEC Act specifically mandated the Sub-Council on Defence to: "... establish criteria for the recruitment, training and selection of members of the National Peace-keeping Force."

As discussed earlier, this was not done, with detrimental results, particularly as manifested at De Brug.

Following exploratory discussions, the Commonwealth and the French Government offered training assistance in mid-January. The Netherlands also offered assistance but the offer was not taken up. The Commonwealth was originally requested to provide a contingent of 25 members for both De Brug and Koeberg. The subsequent arrangement with the French largely confined the CPAG to De Brug.

France originally agreed to send a training team composed of 10 trainers from the French National Police in February, with the purpose of training 100 instructors for the NPKF. This proposal presented a problem since the time available was insufficient to allow for this training. In fact, instructor training had to be done virtually in parallel with the training of the NPKF themselves. The eventual request to France was reduced to only 8 instructors. They arrived at Koeberg on 4 March, accomplished their mission, and quietly left for France on 11 April. The French, it appeared, did not want too close an association with their surrogate child.

The Commonwealth, on the advice of Britain, were less than enthusiastic about French involvement, as were the French with the presence of a Commonwealth liaison contingent at Koeberg. There were obvious problems in having a mixture of French (police) and British (military) doctrine - apart from language and other more practical differences. The first group of COMSA trainers from Britain, India, Canada, Botswana and Zimbabwe, for De Brug, was to arrive on 6 February. This group was under the command of Colonel Nick Cottam from the UK with Deputy-Inspector General Arun Gupta from India as deputy co-ordinator. They led a team of 20 advisors.

Both the FPAG and the CPAG made substantial and positive contributions to the training. They were professional and perceived as such. However, being restricted to an advisory role and very limited time, theirs was a frustrating experience.
LOGISTICS, FINANCES AND SALARIES

The **TEC Act** stipulated that the Sub-Council on Defence

"... shall -

(i) in consultation with the National Peacekeeping Force Command Council and after consultation with the South African Defence Force, determine the requirements of the National Peacekeeping Force in respect of uniforms, transport, accommodation, equipment and other logistic support; and

(ii) budget for and allocate funds for this purpose.

(iii) The uniforms, transport, accommodation, equipment and other logistic support shall be supplied by the South African Defence Force, either from its own resources or from the resources of any other defence force or policing agency or any other source, for the account of the Sub-Council.

The NPKF was virtually totally dependent on the logistic support of the SADF. Practically, Orange Free State and Western Province Commands were to provide logistic and other support to the De Brug and Koebberg Intakes, respectively. The feedback from the NPKF leadership seems to suggest that it was only the support of these organisations that prevented the collapse of the NPKF project at various stages. But survival does not imply progress. The political requirement for consultation, representation, etc. meant that the SADF could not proceed with prior planning for the NPKF. In fact, any such preparations were often viewed with suspicion. The delays in establishing the NPKF also meant that when a final decision was taken to go ahead, little lead time remained.

Low morale within the NPKF was compounded by the lack of clarity about pay scales for the first few weeks. The original finances stipulated that seconded members would retain all allowances as stipulated by their force of origin, as well as a service allowance per month according to rank. Members of MK were particularly concerned because they did not have an existing system of remuneration such as applied to seconded members of the other armies and police forces. In the absence of personnel files and registers, all MK members were paid on the lowest notch of their rank. It would appear as if the initial planning for the NPKF by the NPKFCC entailed paying all members at the top salary notch of the participant forces. It would also appear that the high salaries which the Sub-Council wanted to pay to all members of the NPKF were intended to improve morale and provide an incentive for personnel to remain in the Force.

When it became apparent that the troops from the Ciskel were paid at higher scales than any of the other forces, the Sub-Council and the NPKFCC recommended that the Ciskel scales be used as a "highest common denominator". For once the TEC balked at such an obviously expensive and inappropriate suggestion and resisted, fearing that such a decision would set a precedent for members of the SADF and SAP. The recommendation to accept the highest common denominator approach was subsequently revised downwards by the TEC who decided that all members of the Force would be paid according to SADF scales. In the case of a private (the level most severely affected) this meant, for example, that he or she would receive an effective 33% less.

The salary problem, foreseen for some weeks, built up. The TEC did not want to budge as it was concerned about the problems that could arise when the NPKF was deployed alongside the SADF and SAP, both of whom were doing the same job, but at much lower salaries. The issue soon started to affect morale and a crisis was anticipated with the first payment of salaries on 25 February 1994. Personnel felt that they had been recruited under false pretences. The fact that persons of the same rank performing the same tasks would receive differing salaries was a problem. At De Brug, members of the NPKF were apparently aware of the recommendation that all be paid at Ciskel levels. Then, as feared, the NPKF went on strike.

In reaction and as a first step the TEC agreed that a special daily allowance amounting to $25,50 per day was to be paid to members from 1 March 1994. Salaries were also revised. Once again bad management decisions were to be bought off.

There were also long delays in the approval by the TEC of a budget for the NPKF, with the approval being given 'in principal' only during the last week in January. Eventually, the TEC approved a substantially reduced 1993 budget of R130 million, i.e. for the financial year ending on 31 March 1994, during the third week in February. The 1994/5 NPKF budget for R255 million was also subsequently approved by the TEC.

PLANNING FOR DEPLOYMENT

At an early stage, possibly during early February 1994, three areas were identified as possible deployment sites for the NPKF. These were the Western Cape, Natal and the PWV, more particularly the East Rand. Given the lack of any IFP participation in the NPKF and the low-intensity war being waged in a large part of that province, the inclusion of Natal as a possible deployment site is inexplicable, as was the East Rand. Apparently the plan was to 'penny packet' and deploy a company of troops in the Western Province, two battalions of NPKF troops in Natal and three battalions in the PWV region. The NPKF had already commenced with deployment drills when the Sub-Council recommended to the TEC, during early March, that the NPKF deploy only in the Gauteng area.

At the end of March, the Sub-Council again changed its mind and now decided that the three De Brug Battalions should be deployed in the KATORUS area and that the Koebberg Battalion would be deployed in the Greater Inanda area (comprising Kwa Mashu, Bhambayi and Entreuzona) in Natal. Then, in the third week of April, the Sub-Council, acting upon an appeal from the Management Committee of the TEC, directed that the NPKF not be deployed in Natal, but only on the East Rand.

It is difficult to understand what value could have been achieved by the deployment of a company of troops in the Western Province. Nor does an explanation readily present itself for the insistence to deploy the NPKF in the country's most volatile areas, such as the East Rand and Natal, where the Force was virtually assurred of failure given its limited training, the lack of IFP representation and the high levels of violence in those areas. In fact, a number of commentators had publicly advised against such deployment.

By the end of March, Major-General Ramushwana could indicate to the NPKFCC that he planned to have the best of the three De Brug Battalions deployed in the KATORUS area.
Because of re-training, the deployment of the three battalions into the area was to be phased in as they became ready, but to be completed before the elections. The NPKF was to be responsible for Kathlehong, Thokoza, Vosloorus and the following informal settlements: Phola Park, Mandela View, Holomisa Camp, Tambo Park, Crossroads. No additional powers were granted to the NPKF in relation to those of the SADF.

**DESIGNED TO FAIL - THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NPKF IN THOKOZA**

The KATORUS (Kathlehong/Thokoza/Vosloorus) area had been experiencing extremely high levels of conflict and violence on an ongoing basis since mid-1990. One of the clearest indicators of the scope and extent of this conflict on the East Rand has been the high incidence of massacres. (Defined here as the killing of five or more people in a single attack.) Of the 136 massacres which have occurred in the Gauteng region for the period 1990 to 1993, 35 took place in the KATORUS area. This figure represents just more than 25% of the total, by whatever standard. It is a disproportionate number for the size of the KATORUS area. In these 35 massacres 311 people were killed. At one stage, the KATORUS area accounted for about half of all the violent incidents reported across South Africa.

This violence has formed a considerable part of the so-called ‘Reef Township War’, generally said to have started in July 1990. The most easily identifiable participants in this violence are the migrant workers living in the many hostels in the area on one hand and on the other, the inhabitants, from the townships, mostly youths, particularly the informal squatter settlements.

The conflict in the KATORUS area has been likened to an undeclared and unofficial war. It is a war in which there are two opposing and armed sides who protect and hold on to territory in a ‘War Zone’. People die on a regular basis and the lives of ordinary residents are disrupted. In this unofficial war there are ‘battle lines’ with ‘no-man’s land buffer areas’, night time patrols and guard duties. There is a proliferation of armaments, from the more traditional spades and pokers to homemade guns (lqwashes), shotguns, to automatic assault rifles like AK-47s and R1s. There are even light machine guns (LMGs) while grenades, mortars and rockets have on occasion been used in attacks. Both sides claim to be justified in arming themselves and repulsing any attacks.

Various approaches have been adopted to stabilise the East Rand. The first effort was that of the National Peace Accord which was followed by the deployment of the ISU in the East Rand who in turn were replaced by the SADF and eventually, for a very brief period, the NPKF was deployed in the area.

The NPKF Brigade Tactical HQ commander was Colonel Vic Walker (appointed to this post on 15 April, three-weekend before deployment), with Quinton Painter as the Battalion commander.

**FIGURE 1**

KATORUS - NUMBER OF INCIDENTS AND DEATHS JANUARY 1993 - APRIL 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTHS</th>
<th>INCIDENTS</th>
<th>DEATHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>July</td>
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<td>August</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>October</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Human Rights Commission, Johannesburg

The cards were stacked against the NPKF. In the first place, they were ordered to replace a much larger SADF force which pulled out altogether, with only one company being left behind, leaving the area in control of the NPKF. The Peace Keeping Force was at the time not ready to deploy its men with only one of its battalions in the area.

Although the SADF had successfully stabilised the area, a recent incident - the killing of Jeff Sibuya, an Inkatha member of the Peace Secretariat, by SADF troops at a hostel shoot-out, had served to increase tensions on both sides. Reports at the time suggested that hostel dwellers were preparing to attack residents of Kathlehong, who had moved back to their homes in areas surrounding the hostel, in the days before the official handover. In turn, ISU units appeared to have redeployed in the area and were reported to have been firing randomly at residents. To compound matters, heavily armed SDU members moved back into the area in anticipation of renewed outbreaks of violence.
An advance team of NPKF soldiers was deployed on 11 April 1984, on the East Rand. A report in The Star dated 11 April quoted the IFP central committee as saying that “it was alarmed to hear MK members within the NPKF were moving into the East Rand and warned of grave consequences.” In the week of the 15 and 16 April the rest of the battalion was deployed and promptly came under fire from hostel dwellers. The IFP said they were not welcome and preferred the ISU and SADF. The evening news of 17 April, reported an exchange of fire between the hostel dwellers of Thokoza and the NPKF. Running gun battles developed between hostel dwellers, residents and NPKF soldiers. In three days fifteen people had been killed, including a well known photographer Kon Oosterbroek. According to photographers and journalists at the scene, an NPKF soldier had panicked and started to shoot wildly - resulting in the death of Oosterbroek.29

The SADF was eventually called in to restore calm - a move which was welcomed by residents. By 20 April, sixteen people, including one NPKF soldier, had died and forty were injured in unrest-related violence. Later reports put the death toll at nineteen. The ANC called for the dismissal of the head of the NPKF unit on the East Rand after the SADF had to be called in to end a bloody battle. On the streets, SDU members were calling the force the ‘National Party killing force’ and demanded they leave, while those in the hostels accused it of assisting Umkhonto we Sizwe. Amid all the chaos the South African Police claimed that police vehicles and policemen had come under attack by the NPKF in Thokoza on at least three different occasions in two days.30 The IFP called for the withdrawal of the NPKF from the East Rand. At the time of the events in KATORUS, only a battalion had been deployed, with the remaining two De Brug battalions preparing to move to the area.

Less than a week after the integrated force replaced the SADF in the violence-torn region, the NPKF was withdrawn from the East Rand and operationally restricted to certain areas as the SADF moved back to restore peace.

WINDING DOWN

Following the clashes in KATORUS, the NPKF was placed in support of the SADF, despite the press statement referring to joint operations and shared responsibilities. The NPKF would henceforth serve as back up to the SADF. On 21 April Colonel Vic Walker of the NPKF announced that: “... we have agreed that the SADF will resume its previous role in maintaining stability in those areas which have seen the most violent clashes in the past week whilst the NPKF will conduct the more routine tasks of escorts, protection of certain schools and similar areas and establish itself as part of the community ...” The division of tasks was as follows:

- SADF: roadblocks/vehicle control points; mobile/foot patrols; liaison forums; search operations.
- NPKF: escorts; school protection; protection of essential tasks; protection key points; water provision; protection of polling stations after hours; liaison with community.
- Joint SADF/NPKF: roadblocks on main entrances; manning of observation posts.

On 9 May it was announced that the NPKF contingent which had been deployed, would return to De Brug, re-group and commence re-training pending a decision on their future.
by the incoming government. On 16 May 1994 the JMCC recommended that the NPKF be disbanded. The 1 200 MK members would be allowed to apply, through the assembly area at Wallmannsthal, to join the SANDF. Members of the statutory armed and police forces (i.e., former SADF, Transkei Defence Force, Venda Defence Force, etc.) would rejoin their various organisations and be integrated from there into a central military or police organisation.

A formal demobilisation parade was held at Kooberg but the De Brug contingent proved incapable of even this task as discipline had decayed beyond control and a substantial number of troops had gone absent without leave. Not even the NPKF service medal which the TEC had authorised on March 31, 1994, could be handed out in time. Those eligible were expected to receive them through the mail during the course of 1994.

It is unfortunate that the NPKF on its first tour of duty did not succeed. Inexperience and a lack of sufficient training is partly to blame. The overriding cause, however, was the lack of time, and political expediency. Politicians were in too much of a hurry to get the NPKF off the ground. It was politically expedient to create the Force at the time. "By pressing for the deployment of hastily trained soldiers in an area notoriously difficult to police, the TEC has exhibited classic symptoms of political conceit and myopia" [2].

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE NPKF

In conjunction with the IDP, a telephonic survey on the public's perceptions of the NPKF was conducted on 18 to 21 April, 1994, by Markcite of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and analysed by the Division for Socio-Political Analysis in a random sample of residents of the KATORUS area.

In contrast to the 'national' public sentiment and certainly that of the media, the people in KATORUS had a more positive assessment of the NPKF than was expected. Admittedly, the survey excluded hostels and informal settlements, i.e. it was done in areas with generally high levels of ANC support.

The highest single proportion of the respondents (43%) in KATORUS felt that the presence of the NPKF in the township did not add to their feeling of security. In Thokoza, where most of the violence occurred during the deployment of the NPKF, almost two thirds of the respondents indicated that the presence of the NPKF did not add to their feeling of security.

Although the overwhelming majority of the respondents (89%) were aware of the deployment of the NPKF in their area, there was some confusion as to the main purpose of the Force. Of those who stated that they felt the NPKF was not needed in their area, the greatest proportion (26%) expressed the view that it was not well trained. The events at De Brug and the media focus on the many problems which were experienced at that base had clearly affected the expectations of the residents of KATORUS.

More than three-quarters of the respondents indicated that the NPKF should be allowed to do the following: crowd control, riot or unrest control, arrest people, mediate in conflicts, search people, search vehicles and search hostels. More than two-thirds of the respondents felt that the NPKF should be empowered to search people's homes. The greatest single proportion of the respondents (45%) felt that the NPKF should be allowed to trash people. More than half the respondents stated that the NPKF should not be allowed to shoot or hit people.

The results of the survey, on perceptions of neutrality, showed that impartiality enjoyed high priority among respondents. Once a public order policing organisation has been accused of impartiality (with or without reason), as has happened to the ISU, that body will not be able to restore order and keep the peace. It should be mentioned here that only 11% of the respondents thought that the ISU was neutral enough to ensure peace before, during and after the election in April. The image of the regular police has been seriously affected by the negative image of the ISU. Although it was not possible to test this perception during the survey, the significantly large MK contingent within the NPKF and the lack of IFP representation created the expectation that the NPKF would be sympathetic to the ANC. This expectation was borne out by the reaction to the NPKF by a number of MKU members during its deployment who wanted to 'join up' with the NPKF 'against' the hostels.

Perceptions that the NPKF was needed, declined once that force had been deployed and violence escalated. Although the NPKF clearly had a large degree of legitimacy, the majority of residents seemed to realise that the Force was not very well trained, had done little to stop the violence and, in some cases, may even have contributed to it. To some degree, therefore, the track record of the SADF as an effective (and increasingly legitimate) force in stabilising the area, overrode the initial acceptance by the community of the NPKF. Therefore, the more unsafe the residents felt, the more inclined they were towards the SADF.

The surprisingly high acceptance and legitimacy of the SADF was reinforced by the perceptions of respondents as to how the NPKF should be composed. A clear preference was expressed for the SADF (26%), MK (9%), the SA Police (8%), Peace Monitors (5%) and the Civics (3%). A large proportion (35%) of respondents were uncertain in their response. These views on the SADF are reinforced by the perceptions regarding the neutrality and capacity of various organisations involved in combating violence. Close on 80% of respondents believed that the SADF was both neutral and effective in maintaining peace during the elections. Just over half of the respondents (56% and 51%) felt that both the NPKF and the Peace Structures had a similar capacity.

In contrast, the ISU scored very badly on all counts. It is perceived as neither effective nor legitimate. The NPKF, by contrast, had an initial legitimacy which was inevitably undermined by its lack of effectiveness and method of operations. The SADF, an initially illegitimate force, through the support it publicly received from the ANC at the time of its deployment and its effective operations in the eyes of the community, thereafter, succeeded in earning legitimacy over time. In sum, legitimacy bestows authority. In itself it is insufficient if not supported by effective and impartial execution.
CONCLUSION

Only one of the three battalions of the NPKF was ready for deployment in April, a small force considering the KATORUS area and its requirements. For its part, the SADF, which is better trained, equally or better equipped, has much more experience and had operational experience in the area, deployed three battalions on the East Rand, but withdrew two of these at the time the NPKF was being deployed. Allegations of deliberate sabotage of the NPKF have been levelled at the SADF, not least by the Minister of Defence, Joe Modise. These have ranged from failure to provide sufficient logistical support at the De Brug base, to where the force was deployed on the East Rand. Others have also added that the SADF did not want the NPKF to succeed as it would have upset the SADF. These allegations, whether true or false, are fuelled by comments from SADF official spokespersons denying vehemently that the NPKF was a lesson in integration of the armed forces, or that it was in any way linked to the SADF.

The question that presents itself is why the NPKF concept was not abandoned or modified when it became clear that there would be insufficient time to forge a new effective policing unit; i.e. that its contribution to the curtailing of violence prior to the elections would be insignificant. At the very least, the purpose of the Force could have been shifted away from its focus on the election to a broader public policing role which would have existed beyond the transition period. The answer, it seems, is that the creation of a mixed unit prior to election served the political interests of some of the major players, regardless of whether this unit would eventually function effectively or have an impact on pre-election violence. Indeed, the creation of the NPKF offered the SADF and MK a way out of a number of intractable problems connected with integration of forces.

Although the SADF accepted the need for eventual integration of MK cadres into its ranks, it had approached this issue with the view that integration should occur prior to a new dispensation and election; in other words, MK should be absorbed into the SADF. Although some commanders harboured concerns that this would lead to a drop in standards in a way which would ultimately weaken the entire force, they recognized that such a move would lead to the elimination of MK from the political landscape at a critical time - it would deprive the ANC of some of its most dedicated cadres prior to the election campaign. Another concern was that without integration prior to the elections the liberation movement would insist on and possibly be granted its demand for multi-party control of the security forces.

For MK leadership this presented a problem; they clearly wished for integration after the election. As the new government the ANC's political leverage would be sufficient to ensure that integration then would indeed be integration and largely on their terms. At the same time the organisation was being drawn in a different direction, for the rank and file in the camps outside South Africa, as well as those within the country, had expectations that would be dashed if integration were to be delayed. Clearly, the cadres wished for integration on terms not entirely of the SADF's choosing, but what was of far more immediate concern to them was a job and income. In the depressed economic climate of the early 1990s this was a very real concern. Delaying integration until after the election meant delaying a stable income for at least another year. Throughout 1992/3 there were rumblings of rank and file dissent about the "failure of the leadership to deliver" which remained a cause for concern for MK commanders. They also had to consider that having armed cadres without any occupation or meaningful distraction could easily lead many of them to choose a life of crime.

The creation of a new force prior to the elections, comprising members from different organisations, offered a solution that both the SADF and MK could live with. The creation of the NPKF would serve as a preparatory exercise in the integration of military forces. Since participation in the Force would bring with it a salary, the NPKF offered MK commanders a chance of demonstrating 'delivery' to their cadres. At the same time, participation in the Force would not prejudice the future employment prospects of MK cadres. The SADF, on the other hand, could take comfort in the fact that the creation of the NPKF obviated the requirement for full-scale multi-party control of the Security Forces by the TEC - and suspicion must linger that the SADF deliberately undermined the NPKF since, by demonstrating the unreliability of MK cadres and the problems of an integrated force, the advantages of relying on the professional SADF would be obvious to any new government.

The fact that it offered a chance at side-stopping the military integration issue turned out to be a mixed blessing for the future NPKF, for while it gave the major players an interest in its creation, their motivation for doing so made the combating of violence and the Force's effectiveness at best a secondary objective.

The real tragedy of the NPKF is that it was all predictable and expected. Nothing that happened at De Brug and in KATORUS should have come as any surprise to the informed observer. The blame does not rest on the members of the NPKF or their commanders. They tried their best against virtually insurmountable odds. A greater degree of realism in the political guidelines regarding the establishment of the Force and the effort required, would have been appropriate.

Besides all the logistical problems the NPKF experienced, added to the short period they had for training and preparation for deployment, it is evident that even if they had been sufficiently trained, they most likely may not have been able to cope with an area as volatile as the East Rand. Suggestions by experts, including the Commonwealth Group and defence analysts that the force be deployed in a "soft" area were scoffed at. Alternatively, they could have been deployed in support of the SADF, and not left on their own. It is noteworthy that even the force commanders' recommendations to the Sub-Council and TEC about a desirable area for deployment were not heeded. The decision, therefore, for deployment of the Force lay with the politicians in the TEC, and the NPKF principals on the NPKFCC.

In retrospect the crux of the problem at De Brug was:

○ insufficient time for selection, training of the leader group, training of the troops, evaluation, re-training and deployment drills. Allowing only eight weeks for all these activities was a mistake. It takes years of training and expertise to create a coherent and effective force. SADF training for the most basic recruit takes 9-11 months - and that occurs within an established training organisation.
Endnotes

1 This chapter is an edited version of Jakkie Cilliers' article, "The National Peacekeeping Force: Violence in the First Band and Public Reaction", in the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Institute for Defense Policy (IDP), How Thay Hauss, May 1994.

2 Here, for example, quoted as saying: "We need to build a broad peace corps within our townships and prisons of work. Should we not have township-based, non-partisan SLUs funded and trained by a future democratic state? I am thinking of paid or voluntary services, let us say 500 people from a township like Soweto doing a two year stint assisted with crime control, paroling, clean up campaigns and general service to their township". (Gburne, A., Keep the Peace, in Work in Progress, no. 69, July/August 1993, p. 19).

3 The members of the Technical Committee on Violence were Mr. W. Felipe (later replaced by Mr. S. Vos, Mr. P. Hatry (Chairmen), Mr. S. Mufhemi (later replaced by Mr. M. Phillips), Mr. G.B. Myburgh, Mr. V. Mxolisi, Adv. P. Caskhulukhe, Prof. A. Stieg, Prof. H.W. Wijkstra. The HIP later withdrew from the Committee.


7 Major-General Rantah Holomela, amongst others, did call for an international peacekeeping force to come to South Africa, see Aanj, Focus on Defence September, 15 July 1993.


9 Dated 21 June 1993.

10 The members of the Sub-Council were Mr. W.W. Bryne, Jannek, General R.A. Lough, Mr. P. Kallis, Walter Muscari, Adv. A.S. Moodie, Mr. D.M. Muscatelli, Mr. B. K. Price, and Dr. R.A. Stoeckel.

11 The co-chairman of the JCMM were General George Meining, Chief of the SAF, and Mr. Shafikha Nkobada, Chief of Staff of the MFR. It included as its members representatives from all the other political parties and was ad hoc.

12 The TEC Act stated that: "The Sub-Council shall establish a National Peacekeeping Force Command Council, comprising of representatives of all the military forces and policing agencies participating in the National Peacekeeping Force and wishing to be represented on that Command Council.".


16 The planning for a second Intake at De Brug (two battalions strong) was for the training team preparations to commence on 18 April and the main force to start on 8 May. Deployment would occur by 19 July but following the evaluation results of the first De Brug intake in April, prior to deployment to KATOTUS, training was extended by 30 days with deployment re-scheduled for mid-August.

17 A platoon, a training team of 10 members per company, is required. It is led by a platoon of 1000 men (four companies) simultaneously would require a team of 40 full-time trainers. The first De Brug intake would therefore have required a training team of 120-150 instructors to meet these criteria.

18 This was also the view of Minister of Defence, J. Moodie. See P. de Lange, Former Mk leader given to prison, in The Sunday Times, 22 May 1994.
INTRODUCTION

The history of the defence forces of the independent homelands - Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (also known as the TBVC states) - represents an interesting episode of South African military history, the legacy of which might be with us for some time to come. Created as part of the trappings of independence for the homeland leaders, these forces were set up, trained, equipped and initially commanded by South African Defence Force (SADF) personnel. Lacking the inherent objective of national armed forces, i.e. the defence of territorial integrity, they became over-equipped internal stability units; a role for which they were eminently poorly trained, and for which the homeland populations paid the price.

Superficial analysis of the homelands has produced the impression that their structures acted primarily at the behest of Pretoria, as the National Party sought to implement its grand, and later neo-apartheid, vision. Given the amount of money Pretoria was spending on these territories - a total of nearly R 6 billion (nearly US $ 2 billion), with almost R 500 million (or US $ 150 million) for the armed forces alone in 1993/4 - this seems a reasonable assumption. However, the homelands had their own dynamics and their regimes developed priorities of their own. As with other African security establishments whose governments lacked popular legitimacy, the homeland forces were drawn into domestic politics as active participants and eventually as coup-makers. This politicisation which eroded their professionalism, seems likely to be carried forward as members of the forces became integrated into the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

This article presents an historical overview of the TBVC armies. Rather than place the facts into the broad context of events, the focus is on the organisational development of the armies and their involvement in domestic political issues. Quantitative overviews and defence expenditure figures are provided for each force.

BACKGROUND

Arming non-whites to defend white supremacy had always been a controversial issue for South Africa. Although historical practice showed that loyalty was rarely a problem for those who became active combatants, the South African defence establishment preferred to limit non-whites to auxiliary roles until the rise in guerrilla activity in Namibia and Southern Africa made it obvious that the white manpower pool alone would prove insufficient to counter this.

Separate development offered one way out of this dilemma. In 1970, the Minister of Defence announced that blacks could only serve in the auxiliary services, but: "If the bantu wants to build up a Defence Force, he should do it in his own eventually independent homeland".
By 1972, however, fully-armed black policemen were serving in the Caprivi strip in Namibia. The following year a group of Africans began training as security guards for the SADF, and later as instructors for the first black Permanent Force members at the new 21 Battalion base at Lonz near Johannesburg. Over the next decade, manpower shortages led to black expansion into combat roles in the SADF. Despite the real need, there was continued opposition to this development.

Under Prime Minister PW Botha, the homelands plan was pursued more vigorously, and as a result black members of combat elements of auxiliary units were divided into regional, or ethnic units in 1980. In line with separate development, the SADF was to assist in ‘designing and setting up’ national security systems for the new states. This involved the training of a regional battalion for each national group, later to be handed over to the new ‘independent’ state. Although it was obvious by the mid-1980s that the homeland system was a failure, the 1986 White Paper on Defence stressed that the SADF’s primary emphasis with respect to African soldiers, remained on the “development of ethnic regional units of the various national states”, where “after independence, such units are absorbed by the Defence Force of the independent state”. The failure of this grand plan ensured that at the time of integration the SADF, in addition to its coloured and Indian members, possessed a substantial number of trained black members at the lower and middle ranks, organised in ethnic battalions. Only those battalions, whose ‘ethnic government’ accepted the ‘independence’ bestowed by Pretoria, grew into nominally autonomous defence establishments.

TRANSKEI

At the time when Transkei was moving towards ‘independence’, the SADF was still debating the issue of armed black soldiers and was initially ambiguous about providing the territory with any armed force other than a home guard. However, Transkei’s Prime Minister, Chief Kaiser D Matanzima, recognising the benefit of an additional security organisation to his regime’s stability, pushed for his own defence force. Following a visit by an SADF selection team to Umtata to assess the officer training potential of recruits, the South African Government agreed to set up the Transkei Defence Force (TDF) in late 1973.

One Transkei Battalion was established and work began on a military base prior to the territory gaining ‘independence’ in 1976. The first intake of about seventy volunteers was trained at the colour-coded Cape Corps Service Battalion at Eerste River, near Cape Town. By the time of ‘independence’ on 26 October, 1976, the battalion numbered 254 men, commanded by SADF officers. Of these, 71 were NCOs and seven Candidate Officers. Chief Matanzima also announced the introduction of a voluntary six-month national service scheme aimed at building up a reserve force, but little came of this. After independence, the SADF continued its training of TDF personnel and donated the equipment for the establishment of an infantry company to the force.

Despite its chronic financial dependence on South Africa - the territory has rarely been able to meet more than 35% of its annual expenditure from own sources -

Transkei’s relations with Pretoria fluctuated from the start. Seeking greater international credibility, Matanzima used South Africa’s refusal to hand over additional territory as a pretext for severing diplomatic relations. This move had an impact only on the military level, with the termination of the services of the Commander of the TDF, Brigadier Pretorius, and all seconded SADF staff. To prevent the TDF from disintegrating Matanzima turned to the government of Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the then Rhodesia-Rhodesia for assistance, and over the next two years small groups of TDF personnel received training from the Rhodesian military. South Africa did nothing to interfere with this as it, too, had an interest in seeing the TDF survive.

When Transkei and South Africa patched up their formal relations in 1981, Matanzima turned to former members of the Rhodesian elite units - Rhodesian Light Infantry, Rhodesian Special Air Service and Selous Scouts - who found themselves unwelcome in President Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe, for expertise in expanding the TDF. In May 1981, Lieutenant-Colonel Ron Reid-Daly, the founder of the Selous Scouts, and some forty
EXTRADITION OFFICERS were hired to "restructure and train the TDF to neutralise internal unrest and external aggression." The SADF donated equipment to the value of R1 million to the TDF to replace (4-5 year old) equipment which had been badly run down.

Promoted to the rank of major-general and installed as the new Chief of the TDF, in place of Brigadier Rodney Kesa, Reid-Daly embarked on a programme of rapid expansion, introducing a parachute course in 1983, and playing a key role in the formation of a Special Forces Regiment. The Ceremonial Cavalry unit was upgraded to a fully fledged mounted unit and total TDF strength reached the 1,000 mark in 1983. However, Reid-Daly and his white officers were never popular among the rank and file, nor for that matter with the general population. By 1983, the TDF was being criticised in the National Assembly for the role which the Rhodesians were playing in its leadership structures.

By 1986, Kaiser Matanzima's nepotism and corruption, as well as his increasing reliance on the security apparatus to bolster his rule, forced an embattled Pretoria to insist on his retirement. His brother, George, succeeded him as State President. At the same time, Reid-Daly handed over command of the TDF to a Transkeian, General Zondwa Mitirara, who had attended the SADF army college at Voortrekkerhoogte. Reid-Daly, however, stayed on as an advisor. He and his men soon became embroiled in the tensions between the Transkei and Ciskei, and South African attempts to create a single Xhosa homeland. On 19 January, 1987, groups of TDF soldiers led by an ex-Selous Scout attacked the Bishop's residence of Ciskei's President, Lennox Saba. The attackers suffered one dead and two wounded, without accomplishing their objective. One of the wounded, a TDF Lance Corporal Ndizulu, was captured and after a brief stay in a Ciskei hospital returned to Transkei.

The raid, apparently carried out without the knowledge of the TDF command, together with the behaviour of the Rhodesians, increased rank and file resentment. When one of their officers, Brigadier Bantu Holomisa, criticised their role, he was detained. However, an 'Action Committee' of over 200 soldiers led by Lieutenant-Colonel Craig Dull, the TDF's Director of Intelligence, forced General Mitirara to release Holomisa, on 31 March. The 'Action Committee' was formed as a result of concern about the levels of corruption in the Matanzima administration and the nepotism surrounding the Matanzima brothers, in particular. Holomisa's resentment of the Rhodesian influence in the TDF command structure was also a source of solidarity between him and the 'Action Committee'.

On 4 April, 1987, members of the 'Action Committee' arrested Reid-Daly and expelled him together with 27 white military advisors, from the Transkei. The other white advisors left of their own accord. This action deprived George Matanzima of an important source of control over his armed forces. The State President denied that there had been an indirect coup and argued that the action had been directed at the 'white officers' and not at his administration, but the balance of power had tilted against him. Less than a month later General Mitirara - who had sided with Reid-Daly - was forced to resign and was replaced by Holomisa.

Holomisa disbanded the 'Action Committee' on 8 April and a week later Ciskei and Transkei formally normalised their relations. The following week the TDF issued a statement announcing that the question of the expulsions was purely a military matter with no political undertones, and it emphasised that the authority of Matanzima was not in question. In fact, the Rhodesians had upset the balance of power between the two designated Xhosa states. Their military expertise gave the Matanzima brothers sufficient advantage to attempt the overthrow of Ciskei's Sebe in order to fulfill their cherished dream of a united Xhosa land under their leadership. The botched raid, however, earned not only the enmity of the TDF rank and file but, also, of Pretoria which came to see the Rhodesians as a destabilising force in the region and thus sanctioned their speedy removal.

South Africa and the TDF had also lost patience with the Matanzima's increasingly blatant corruption. On the night of 23 September, 1987, TDF soldiers visited members of the cabinet and forced them to sign letters of resignation, but they missed George Matanzima who took refuge in South Africa. One of the Matanzima's main political opponents, Ms Stella Sigcau, was installed as the new State President, becoming the first female African head of state.

While Sigcau's appointment achieved one of the TDF's main objectives - the removal of the Matanzima from formal positions of power and influence, she disappointed the soldiers by proving unable to address the other main objective - removal of corruption. Indeed, it transpired that she herself had probably accepted bribes from the Matanzimas. On 30 December, while she was on vacation, the TDF took over the administration of the homeland in a bloodless coup and suspended the constitution. Major-General Bantu Holomisa declared martial law and announced that Transkei would be run by a Military Council. He promised to stamp out corruption and hold general elections as soon as possible. He delivered on neither of those promises.

Instead, the Military Council embarked on other ways of enhancing political stability in the homeland. Holomisa initially enjoyed good relations with South Africa which was relieved to see the last of the Matanzimas and clearly hoped that the drain which corruption had placed on their financial support for Transkei would cease. They were to be disappointed. Although a number of commissions of inquiry uncovered corruption and misappropriations to the tune of more that R 120 million, Holomisa's Military Council was unable to do more than curtail some of these practices. Military officers were placed at key points of the bureaucracy but that in itself changed little.

Instead, whatever savings might have materialised for the Umtata fiscus in the wake of the new administration vanished in the spending spree on which the Military Council embarked after barely a year in office: spending on pensions and welfare surged by more than 60%; education and health more than 25%. Holomisa understood that Pretoria had no realistic way of curtailing his free-spending ways without itself undermining the entire ideological basis of the homeland scheme. He also guessed correctly that this would not change even during the negotiations period and the run-up to the 1994 election. The South African development aid bureaucracy was itself riddled with corruption on a grand scale. Brushing aside the weak noises emanating from the South
The TDF benefited from a massive expansion in recruitment. Around 500 new entrants per year were accepted into the Force until by 1992 total strength exceeded 3,500 men. A further 330 men nominally formed the reserves but were never organised into any form of cohesive unit nor were they called up for duty. In the six years following his coup, Transkeian defence expenditure surged from R 40,7 million in financial year 1987/8 to R 100,7 million in 1990/1 and R 167,3 million in 1992/3. Not only was this increase dramatic but the percentage of the total funds spent on salaries and allowances also increased, indicating an unusual number of promotions and increases in pay conditions.

By 1992 the TDF structure was as follows:

Defence Headquarters (about 170 personnel) was home to the acting commander, the chief of staff (in 1993 Brigadier Nshinga) and staff departments such as personnel, intelligence, training, logistics, administration, finance and inspector-general, all commanded by brigadiers. The directors of the Air Wing and Special Forces also formed part of Defence Headquarters HQ.

Combat Units comprised
- One Transkei Battalion, located at Umtata and organised as a light infantry battalion with four normal companies, a support company and a logistics company. The battalion used soft-skinned Mercedes Benz trucks and had a strength of just over 1,000.
- The Special Forces Regiment was based at Port St. Johns with a strength of 3 groups supported by a base group. Its total strength was never clear but apparently grew from around 200 in 1984 to over 500 by 1993.
- The 100-strong Military Police unit also located at Port St. Johns.
- One Mounted Battalion was stationed at Maluti/Matatiele and organised into three squadrons of company strength with a headquarters squadron. Commanded by a lieutenant-colonel, its strength was around 500 men.

Combat Support Units comprised
- One Transkei School of Infantry at Umtata with a strength of about 350.
- One Signal Unit also located in Umtata with about 80 soldiers.
- The Air Wing with two CASA 212 aircraft and two BK 117 helicopters.

Logistic Support Units comprised
- One Maintenance Unit with a light workshop, transport section, construction company, catering company and armouring section. It was about 500 strong and located in Umtata.

The TDF Institute which provided a retail outlet for military personnel.

Since 1990 discussions had taken place concerning the establishment of Two Transkei Battalions as well as a small coastal patrol unit. Neither project got off the ground according to Holomisa, due to budgetary constraints for, by 1991, the military council was using the TDF as a vehicle for patronage and this meant expenditure on salaries rather than new equipment required for the establishment of new units.

Thus the final years of the TDF were marked by a conscious effort to position itself in the most advantageous way for integration into the army of the new South Africa. Training of TDF officers at SADF institutions and the University of the Transkei was stepped up. In 1991, a deal was struck by which TDF personnel were sent for training in the Indian Army. In an effort to cement ties between the TDF and Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), MK members were included in this deal. TDF officers also completed senior staff courses in Ghana. As a result of this increased training, promotions at the senior officer level surged, leaving the Force with more than 2 major-generals, 10 brigadiers and 18 colonels - a top-heavy structure for a force of less than 4,000 men that had never seen active combat duty. Nevertheless, their efforts paid off. Although it was not the largest or most professional of the homeland armies, Holomisa's increasingly formal alliance with the ANC gave the TDF disproportionate clout at the negotiations, when talks about integration began in earnest. Now that integration is underway, these officers seem to present the most readily available pool of qualified personnel from which the new SANDF can draw to make its senior ranks more representative.

BOPHUTATHSWANA

Given the precedent of the TDF, Chief Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana also requested South Africa to create a military force for his homeland in the run-up to 'independence'. In August 1977, the SADF began training the first 125 recruits of the Bophuthatswana National Guard (BNG). This unit, together with some equipment, was handed over to the homeland government when the territory became 'independent' on 6 December 1977.

Initially, the BNG fell directly under the Office of the President and performed largely ceremonial duties while the training of its officers by the SADF continued.

After completion of basic training, BNG officers underwent a specialised counter-insurgency course and, as the force developed, it came to focus increasingly on this function. With this politicised role defined more clearly than perhaps for any other homeland army, it was not surprising that SADF personnel played a disproportionately large role in its command structures. Mangope's first military advisor was Brigadier van den Borg, who went on to become the first Officer Commanding of the National Guard.

When the BNG was re-formed into the Bophuthatswana Defence Force (BDF) on 30 November 1979, Brigadier Fleikert assumed the newly-created position of Minister of Defence, while another SADF officer, Lieutenant-Colonel H Turner assumed the position of Commander-in-Chief. At first the new force consisted of three units - One Infantry Battalion, a maintenance support unit and a logistics section, comprising a total of about 600 men.
Over the following years the BDF expanded steadily; its budget growing from about R2 million for the financial year 1979/80 to more than R 22 million by 1984/85. By the mid-1980s it had reached a total strength of nearly 2,200 men. BDF Headquarters, with a staff of about 350, was located at Mmabatho. It directly controlled the six military regions into which the homeland had been divided. Two other bases were built at Mankwe and at Gopanu, alongside the Botswana border, clearly reflecting the high priority which Mfanko gave to the countering of ANC infiltration into his territory. Due to the importance of this effort, and the fact that Bophuthatswana consisted of ten widely dispersed areas, the BDF also acquired the largest air force of any homeland army. Although the air wing was initially conceived as purely a personnel force in 1982, additional aircraft were later purchased for reconnaissance and transport.

This internal stability objective not only encouraged the growth of the BDF but also helped to create an entire security establishment with a powerful police and riot police force organised on South African lines, an internal intelligence service and a State Security Council - both set up in 1982. In 1985, the BDF also established the Special Forces Unit, which was organised as a rapid reaction force to be deployed from Mmabatho to the outlying districts of the homeland. A similar motivation seems to have been behind the creation of the parachute battalion in 1986. In the same year the BDF structure was re-oriented even more towards internal stability with the establishment of the Bophuthatswana National Security Unit (BNSU) to protect "very important places and installations." Roughly 600 strong, this unit, whose entry requirements were substantially below those of the BDF, was organised into six groups, each with its own headquarters. Although not formally a military unit, it fell under the control and command of the BDF. Empowering the activities of all those increasingly politicised formations was a growing array of security legislation which in some cases even exceeded that of South Africa.

The rapid growth of the security establishment gave Bophuthatswana an appearance of political stability during the first decade following independence. In stark contrast to the other homelands, it also experienced real economic growth, as the benefits from platinum mining and the Sun City casino complex, well as comparatively better budgetary discipline, manifested themselves in state revenues. However, the popularity of Mfanko's increasingly authoritarian regime gradually deteriorated as these economic benefits were not widely distributed among the population. An increase in ANC activity after 1984/85 signalled the first stirrings of trouble, and in 1986 the head of the Bophuthatswana riot police, Brigadier A. Molopo, was assassinated. Mfanko's response was a denunciation of foreign subversives and an intensification of the security crackdown. He failed to see the growing dissatisfaction over alleged corruption and the prominent role of South Africans in his administration. He also failed to detect that it was spreading to his security establishment.

At 2 a.m. on 10 February, 1986, elements from some of the security formations under the leadership of BDF Sergeant-Major Timothy Phiri, arrested Mfanko, several members of his cabinet and most of the second BDF personnel. After an exchange of fire in which three people were killed, the prisoners were taken to the Independence Stadium in Mmabatho or held at the Molopo military base. The coup leaders stated that they were taking over the administration as the existing one was corrupt and had rigged the 1987 elections. They then handed over power to Mr Rocky Malebane-Matsing's People's Progressive Party (PPP). Malebane-Matsing swore himself in as president after the homeland's chief justice refused to conduct the ceremony. However, the plotters committed a cardinal error by failing to secure the homeland's communications infrastructure - given Bophuthatswana's territorial dispersion an admittedly impossible task. Some of Mfanko's ministers fled to Pretoria where they formally requested South African assistance.

The SADF reaction to this coup differed from its response to forcible change in the administrations of any of the other homelands. Following a hastily convened State Security Council meeting, a task force comprising about 30 armoured vehicles under the command of SADF Chief, General Jannie Geldenhuys, entered Mmabatho on the afternoon of the same day. They swooped on the stadium where the prisoners were being held and by 6 p.m. the coup had been put down. Malebane-Matsing fled to Botswana where he later joined the ANC.

In later justifications of this intervention, Pretoria was to stress that the coup attempt in Bophuthatswana was different from those in the Transkei in that it had involved bloodshed and did not enjoy popular support. Yet a more likely explanation seems to be the strategic location of the homeland along the Botswana border and the special relationship which Mfanko enjoyed with the South African Government. Had the PPP retained power, the territory could have served as a springboard for ANC attacks in the Gauteng area.

The coup itself was a confusing affair: undoubtedly dissatisfaction with Mfanko's administration and the prominent role of SADF personnel in BDF leadership ranks played a role - a BDF sergeant-major masterminded the coup. However, of the nearly 240 Bophuthatswana security personnel held in connection with it, only 57 were BDF members while the remaining 182 belonged to the National Guard Unit. It has since been suggested by members of the BDF that rivalry between the BDF and the members of the BNSU had contributed to the coup but this does not seem credible. Of far greater significance is the fact that the majority of the plotters came from the Bafokeng area of Bophuthatswana, where the platinum mines are located. For years there had been a longstanding dispute between the local chiefs and the Mfanko administration over the retention of platinum revenues held in trust by the tribe. It was widely believed that Mfanko was depriving the Bafokeng of their 'fair share'. This suggests that the plotters were motivated more by a desire to redirect the spoils of political power than by ideological opposition to the homeland administration. If this is the case then this attempt fits the pattern of the other homeland coups, with the difference that it was unsuccessful.

As a result of the occurrence, Brigadier Riekert was forced to resign as Minister of Defence and Mfanko personally assumed the Defence portfolio. The BNSU was disbanded and a small number of its members allowed to join the BDF. A defence committee under Minister Rowan Cronje was established to assist the Chief of the BDF in dealing with welfare and social issues, since these were considered the most important factors in the dissatisfaction that sparked the coup. A number of senior BDF
of officers who were implicated in the coup were put on trial and sentenced in 1989 but otherwise the BDF emerged from the débâcle remarkably unscathed.11 It seems rather that the growing threat perception of the Mangope administration - Malebano-Mensing had called for another coup from exile - encouraged a renewed expansion programme. In the financial year following the coup, the defence budget surged by nearly 40%. In part this was due to an improvement in service conditions but the 1990/91 budget which actually doubled Bophuthatswana's defence expenditure made it clear that the BDF was to play an increased role in regime stability. SADF training of BDF members was stepped up and the number of joint exercises increased.12

By 1985, the active strength of the BDF had grown to nearly 4,000 men. BDF headquarters remained in Mmabatho with a staff of over 400 men. The three military areas into which Bophuthatswana had been reorganised in 1990 fell under its command.

- One Military Area with One Infantry Battalion based at Molopo in a counter-insurgency role and BDF Parachute Battalion based at Lehurü on site.
- Two Military Area with Two Infantry Battalion based at Mankwe in a counter-insurgency role, and supported by company groups at Military Base Bafokeng and Oti.
- Three Military Area with company groups based at Military Base Thaba Nchu and Young.

All of these units relied on Buffels (about 50), Nkwe (about 20) and Mamba II and III (about 20) mine-protected vehicles for transport.13

The Bophuthatswana Air Force also experienced substantial growth with the commissioning of a new air base at Mmabatho and the introduction of its first pilot training course in November, 1992. Commanded by a SADF Brigadier, MP Janse van Rensburg, it comprised:

- a Transport Wing operating CASA 212 and 235 as well as Pilatus PC 6 fixed wing aircraft;
- a Helicopter Wing comprising two Alouette III and two BK 117 helicopters; and
- a Training Wing using three Pilatus PC 7 trainers.

With the commissioning of Mmabatho Air Force base the old Mafikeng base was converted into the BDF supply depot.14

Despite this spectacular growth and comparatively high level of operational (counter-insurgency) activity, the promotion of BDF personnel proceeded at a more realistic rate when compared to those of other homeland armies. By 1993, this force of roughly 4,000 men had within its ranks 2 colonels, 7 lieutenant-colonels and 20 majors. Almost all of them had qualified to SADF standard.15

The BDF spent the early 1990s operating as the plant but increasingly ineffective tool of the Mangope administration, its increasing illegitimacy sapping troop morale. Mangope's continued opposition to the ANC, even after the latter's unbanning by

President de Klerk, only worsened an already deteriorating security situation. The regime's anti-COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) position also involved the BDF in anti-union activity, with a company group establishing a camp in the heart of the platinum mining complex in order to 'counter' National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) activity.16

When it came, the end was almost anti-climactic: having been marginalized politically by Mangope's obstructionist stance at the negotiating table, the BDF, despite its good relations with the SADF, played virtually no role in determining the parameters of the integration process; and when popular unrest erupted in early March 1994, the Bophuthatswana security establishment, seeing the writing on the wall, departed from tradition and did not intervene. The unrest had been sparked by insecurity and unhappiness among Bophuthatswana civil servants who feared for their jobs under a new South African Government. Mangope's stubborn refusal to accept reality and seek some form of accommodation, ensured that these sentiments also afflicted his security institutions. The result was a virtual implosion of the homeland's government apparatus. As the unrest spread into the second week of March, the police and the soldiers could see no purpose in suppressing a sentiment they themselves increasingly supported. The last straw for the average BDF soldier must have been the arrival of the armed gangs of the white reactionary Afrikaner Weerstands beweging (AWB) who claimed they had been officially called in to restore 'law and order'. A BDF soldier gained brief notoriety for his execution-style killing of two AWB Wen-kommando members in the course of the latter's fanciful raid into the homeland. This single act, more than anything else, was responsible for breaking the might of South Africa's extreme right.19

The BDF's failure to defend the Mangope administration at the last contributed to what one might call a partial political rehabilitation. Drawing on their extensive contacts with the old SADF, the qualifications of former BDF officers could help them to secure senior positions on merit within the new SANDF.

VENDA

When Venda Chief Minister, Patrick Mphaphu, decided to accept 'independence' for his self-governing territory, an army formed part of his paraphernalia of 'sovereignty', too. In October 1978, he announced that a national army would be trained to 'fight terrorism' after independence. However, the policing, prisons and defence functions were initially combined into the Venda National Force (VNF) at the suggestion of the South African Department of Co-operation and Development which decided that a combined force would be more appropriate, given the size of the territory and the high cost of establishing several structures.20

Commanded by a former South African security policeman, Lieutenant-Colonel T. R. Mulaudzi, the VNF was seen by observers as nothing more than a surrogate force representing South Africa. As it turned out, a number of the original recruits did see active border duty in Namibia.21 The SADF did not have enough confidence in its surrogate, however, to entrust it to the control of a stretch along the Limpopo River bordering Zimbabwe, at the time a source of MK infiltrations into the northern Transvaal. Immediately prior to independence, a 6 kilometre wide strip of territory along the river
The Venda Defence Force (VDF) was formally established as an organisation separate from the VNF on 27 September 1982, when 112 Battalion of the SADF (which comprised mostly Vendas who had seen some operational duty in Namibia) was disbanded within the SADF and re-established as One Venda Battalion at Manenu. As with other homeland armies, this infantry battalion was to form the core of the Force. At that stage it comprised three infantry companies with a total of about 450 men and was organised as a light infantry unit suitable for counter-insurgency operations.  

A seconded SADF officer, Brigadier PG Steenkamp, assumed command of the VDF and retained this post until the coup in 1990. Steenkamp and a number of other seconded SADF trainers and officers dominated the command structure of the VDF in its early stages and the Force attempted to play an active counter-insurgency role as opposed to the internal stability/repression activities of other homeland security forces. In the interests of this effort, the VNF was formally disbanded in 1985 and its policing functions formally taken over by the new Venda Police Force 4.

The VDF's development was beset by disciplinary and organisational problems. An example of this was the formation of Two Venda Battalion in 1985. Set up along the same lines as One Venda Battalion, the troops of Two Battalion initially had to be housed in temporary accommodation before a permanent base could be built. This base was eventually completed at Vuwani at a total cost of over R20 million in 1989. 6 These problems partly accounted for the comparatively large presence of SADF personnel in its command structure - nearly 40 officers for a force that by 1989 comprised about 1 400 men.

Venda was a particularly underdeveloped area of South Africa and did not experience significant economic growth during the 1980s. This, together with the autocratic rule of the Mphephu and Ravelo governments, which ruled over a one-party state, led to tensions which found expression in increased harassment of religious leaders by the security establishment and the prosecution of suspected witches by vigilantes. The unbanning of the ANC in early 1990 heightened political tensions at a time when unions were locked in confrontation with the government. Amid a series of strikes and increased unrest, the VDF second-in-command, Chief of Staff Lieutenant-Colonel (later Brigadier) Gabriel Ramushwana staged a bloodless coup after having secured the resignation of the Ravelo cabinet on April 5, 1990. Brigadier Steenkamp was forced to resign his command and Ramushwana became head of the VDF as well as of the 'Council of National Unity' (CNU) which he formed as the homeland's new government. 46

Fearing that the chaos spreading across Venda could give the ANC the opportunity to assume formal control of a homeland administration at a delicate stage of the negotiation process, the de Klerk government welcomed the coup. Indeed, it was alleged that Pretoria had secretly encouraged Ramushwana. In the weeks prior to the unrest, Ramushwana had been attending the SA Army staff course in Pretoria. He took leave to return to the homeland and stage the coup and never returned to complete the course.

It seems that Pretoria's concerns were not entirely unfounded for the euphoria that accompanied the coup soon evaporated when it became evident that Ramushwana was steering an ambiguous course vis-a-vis the liberation movements. The day after the coup he was jeered by thousands of ANC supporters when giving a speech at Venda's Independence Stadium. 66 On the issue of Venda's reincorporation, however, Ramushwana was more direct than any other of the successful coup makers: his Council of National Unity was merely "an interim government which would restore stability to allow reincorporation to take place properly". 68 Although violence and unrest dropped substantially after the coup, the underlying economic causes of Venda's instability could never have been addressed by Ramushwana's administration. His was truly a caretaker administration which limped along until South African structures took over once more.

A clear indication of this 'caretaker period' is the size of the VDF's budget in the years following the coup, although the figures are somewhat suspect as they do not grow in nominal terms, which means a progressive cut in real terms of more than 30% over the period 1990 - 1993/94. Although this was largely due to the lack of major capital expenditure, which had previously been substantial, it indicates clearly that unlike the TFD, for example, the VDF did not spend its final days positioning itself for advantageous integration into the new Defence Force.

By 1994 the VDF had, however, completed the organisational establishment of its units and had grown to a total of almost 1 800 men. These were organised into:

- a Headquarters Unit located at Sihasa and based on the SADF five-legged staff system;
- One Battalion with a total of 400 men organised in three infantry companies, a support company and an anti-tank platoon, based at Manenu; and
- Two Battalion with about 600 men replete with a support company and a larger medical and technical support element, stationed at Maunavathu.

Both battalions were structured and trained for counter-insurgency duties including area protection, and equipped with Buffel mine-protected vehicles. Both were commanded by former SADF officers who had joined the VDF on a contractual basis. 69

Also located at Maunavathu was the Air Wing under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Esterhuizen. It comprised two Alouette III and one BK 117 helicopter, one CASA 212 and a Cessna Citation for government use. 70

By the end of 1993, Ramushwana had improved his relationship with the ANC to the point where he was placed on the election list. However, in January 1994 he dropped off the list and resigned as head of the Venda Council of National Unity to become 75
Commander of the ill-fated National Peace Keeping Force (NPKF). His departure left the VDF with only eight of its own majors, of whom only five had completed the junior staff course. Due to the strong SADF presence, no Venda had become a warrant officer first class by the time integration began.46

CISKEL

Of all the homelands that were created, Ciskel was perhaps the one with the least legitimacy. Nowhere else was the security apparatus, and with it the Ciskel Defence Force, drawn deeper into the morass of political repression than in this territory which Pretoria created virtually as a personal fiefdom for the Sebe brothers (Charles and Lennox). Their need to exert maximum control was also the reason why Ciskel opted for a combined forces model of independence. The Ciskel Defence Force (CDF) originated from 141 Battalion of the SADF, which was established in March, 1981, as part of 21 Battalion, in Lenz. With the formal ‘independence’ of the homeland on December 4, 1981, it was dissolved and reconstituted as the CDF. At that stage it consisted of 240 soldiers, 40 members of the military band and 38 seconded SADF personnel. For the first two years of its existence the CDF was effectively trained and commanded by the SADF officers.47

The CDF initially formed part of the Ciskei Combined Forces (CCF). The CCF also included the Ciskel Security Force (the CDF’s infantry battalion), a Special Airborne Group, the Ciskel Police Force, the Prisons Service, the Traffic Police and the notorious Central Intelligence Services. The Director-General of the CCF, Major-General Charles Sebe, a former security policeman with only limited military training, was the brother of Ciskel President, Lennox Sebe. Charles Sebe was soon promoted to Lieutenant-General and the CCF became the Department of State Security. In June 1983, the CDF became an independent government department with its own deputy minister, and from April 1986, acquired its own minister.48

During June 1981, the first members of CDF headquarters occupied their offices in Zwelitsha and in December 1981, moved to Itule Convent, later renamed Jong’umosobomvu. One Ciskel Battalion was initially housed in tents at Sandile Military Training Area, but eventually moved, first to Jong’umosobomvu, and during November 1983, to the new Bisho Military Base.49

Right from the start, President Sebe’s relationship with his close advisors was shaky and as a result the various CDF units found themselves spent more time operating against real or suspected opponents of the President than on conventional military training.50 In 1982 a Special Forces Unit, known as ‘Ikhwele we Sizwe’ (Sword of the Nation) was established, apparently with assistance from former members of the Rhodesian security forces. Commanded by a former Selous Scout, and nominally under CDF control, Ikhwele we Sizwe remained dependent on the Force for administrative and logistical support. Operational command rested directly with the President as Head of State. A youth organisation called ‘Pillar of the Nation’ was set up for the same purpose. Though only a paramilitary group, it was trained by SADF members and fell under CDF control.51

Lennox Sebe spent considerable effort in unsuccessful attempts to establish a Ciskel arms manufacturing company known as CISKOR, in Dimbaza, as well as acquiring Mooney 201 aircraft via Israel during 1982 and 1983, creating much scandal along the way. However, his efforts bore fruit when, in 1984, the first batch of aircraft arrived and an agreement was signed with General Bar-David of the Israeli Defence Force, providing for 64 advisors to be sent from Israel to train members of various Ciskel departments, including the CDF. The arrival of the Israelis soon led to tensions between them and the seconded SADF personnel.52

In 1984, after shooting incidents at Sandile Base, and on the advice of Israeli security advisors, President Sebe requested the removal of Ciskel of three seconded SADF officers, including the CDF commander, Brigadier AA Nel. The latter left the homeland in January 1985, and was soon followed by the remaining SADF personnel. Brigadier Nel was replaced by Major-General ND Mlandu as commander of the CDF. The departure of the SADF personnel did not alleviate the CDF’s organisational problems though, and by August that year the Israelis were also requested to leave the territory. Their departure made way for a series of promotions with which Lennox Sebe sought to solidify his control over the force.53

There was little contact between the SADF and the CDF in subsequent years as the efforts of the CDF were increasingly oriented towards countering the political threat posed to President Lennox Sebe by his brothers, Charles and Namba. In 1983 a court had convicted a number of CDF soldiers - among them Namba Sebe’s son, Colin, of terrorism, intimidation and the attempted murder of the territory’s Minister of Foreign Affairs. That year, Charles Sebe was detained together with his deputy, Brigadier Tamsanga. In February, they were both retroactively stripped of their ranks and the security empire was broken up. The Ciskel police force, traffic police and prisons service came under the control of the Ministry of Justice, the intelligence services - long considered to be Charles Sebe’s personal militia - were disbanded. Subsequently, the Ciskel Defence Act made provision for a more clearly focused Permanent Force, Citizen Force and reserves to be set up. However, this opportunity for the Ciskel army to assume a more conventional role was never pursued.54

Charles Sebe was forcibly freed from prison in September 1986, and reappeared in Transkei, where he enjoyed the support of influential members of that homeland’s security establishment. An attempt to install him as President was apparently made in February, 1987, when a group of TDF members unsuccessfully attacked the home of Lennox Sebe.55

In late 1987, Brigadier S Zwelendaba replaced then Lieutenant-General ND Mlandu as commander of the CDF. During the following year relations with the SADF improved and members of the CDF were again allowed to attend SADF courses in South Africa.

The nepotism and corruption of Lennox Sebe’s administration, rampant even by homeland standards, prevented any meaningful economic development from taking place in Ciskel. By the late 1980s, his efforts to maintain his rule had created a state of
almost permanent tension and conflict. With the unbanning of the liberation movements this only increased. Seemingly oblivious to it all, the President departed on a trip to Hong Kong. On the day of his departure he was apparently warned by Pretoria of an impending coup. Believing the reference to be about a coup by his son, Lieutenant-Colonel Kwane Sebe, head of the Ciskei Elite Unit, he continued on his trip. It emerged later that he intended to retire from politics and supported his son's plans to seize control of the territory. However, he had either been warned about the wrong coup or he chose to ignore the message.41

In the early hours of 4 March, 1990, soldiers of One Ciskei Battalion, stationed at Bisho, seized power in a bloodless coup and installed Brigadier Oupa Gqozo as new Head of State. Gqozo had previously been military attaché in Pretoria (until April 1989, with the rank of Colonel). He had returned to Ciskei as Chief of Staff Intelligence in December, 1989.42

Gqozo formed a military council of state dominated by members of One Ciskei Battalion and purged Sebe loyalists from the top ranks of the administration on the basis that they were corrupt. Kwane Sebe’s Elite Unit was disbanded and the organiser of the coup, One Ciskei Battalion’s second-in-command, Lieutenant-Colonel Jamangile, was promoted to brigadier and made commander of the CDF.43

Initially, the Council adopted a tolerant attitude towards all parties, including the ANC. However, on the following day the celebrations of the coup turned into riots which spread across the homeland and threatened to get completely out of hand in Mdantsane. On March 5, Gqozo declared a state of emergency and the following day, at Gqozo’s request, the SADF moved in to restore law and order. More than 30 people had died in the riots and virtually all of Ciskei’s economic infrastructure was damaged. The CDF had proved unable, and partially unwilling, to stop the looting, arson and violence that erupted when the popular anger against the Sebe administration found utterance.44

After a promising start, Gqozo’s relations with the ANC and PAC deteriorated. His rule was followed by a new wave of repression and the chieftainship system was reintroduced. Despite this and other efforts at stabilising his regime, Gqozo, by the end of 1990, had to turn to the South Africans for help. By mid-1991, the majority of the routine tasks of government were being performed by South African bureaucrats.

The CDF initially experienced an influx of SADF personnel and promotions: five lieutenant-colonels were seconded and more were recruited directly. They filled the posts of Chief of Staff Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Finance and Logistics. The Force was run by SADF officers. Although efficiency and control improved, discipline remained a crippling problem in CDF ranks.45

On 28 January, 1991, there was an unsuccessful coup attempt led by Lieutenant-Colonel Zantsi, which had been organised with the help of Charles Sebe. Sebe was killed in the aftermath of the coup, allegedly on the instructions of Gqozo, and a further purge swept through the CDF’s officer ranks. By the middle of 1991, it was apparent that the number of trained, qualified senior Ciskei officers was insufficient to maintain the force. As a result, there was a further influx of SADF officers and in April 1991, SADF Brigadier M. Oelschig replaced the acting commander of the CDF, Lieutenant-Colonel Poyo. Another SADF officer, Colonel DA van der Bank, became second in command. These appointments helped to stabilise the Force. As in the case of Bophuthatswana and Venda, the SADF followed a system whereby it identified a CDF understudy for each of its officers, with a clear programme of affirmative action.46

As Gqozo became increasingly alienated from the liberation movements, he expanded the CDF to bolster his power. By 1993 it totalled more than 2 000 men, up from 1 750 in 1989. Pay rates were raised to the point where CDF members were the best-paid soldiers in Southern Africa and the pace of promotions rose to irresponsible levels. Accordingly, the Ciskei defence budget grew from R 40.8 million in 1989/90 to R 89 million in 1992/93. Pretoria watched these developments with concern and when Ciskei attempted to engage the services of former 32 Battalion commander Jan Breytenbach, for the establishment of a parachute regiment, financial assistance was denied.47

Ciskei Defence Force defence headquarters was moved to the parliament building in Bisho in 1992. What remained at the large Jong’umsobomvu base was the Logistics Depot, the Maintenance and Construction unit and a training centre, being a total of about 250 men. The remainder of the Force was organised as follows:

- One Ciskei Battalion stationed at Bisho with 900 men organised into three companies (two of which were equipped with Mamba mine-protected vehicles), a small support company a large Light Workshop Troop and a signals workshop to serve the entire CDF;
- Two Ciskei Battalion stationed at Keiskammahoek. It comprised 700 men organised into three companies and a small support company;
- a special forces/parachute company at Bulembu; and
- company bases at Alice and Kama/Whittlesea.

The Air Wing was stationed at Bisho airport (Bulembu). It comprised four transport aircraft (Skyvan and Islander), three communications aircraft (Cessna and Piper Cub) as well as three BK 117 helicopters. The Air Wing also administered the military band.48

Gqozo’s increasing opposition to the ANC and alignment with the conservative Concerned South Africans Group (CSAG) brought the CDF into increasing confrontation with the ANC structures in the region, making the CDF focus its energies on domestic repression rather than on improving professional standards. This culminated in 7 September 1992, when ANC demonstrators, attempting to outflank a CDF cordon blocking their progress to Bisho, were fired upon. The confrontation with the homeland security forces had been engineered by the ANC/SACP organisers of the march, and the volatile soldiery of the homeland dictator reacted as expected. Scores of people were killed and injured, and in retaliation the houses of 90 CDF soldiers were set on fire. While the ANC leadership was able to avoid much of the political fallout, the massacre destroyed whatever credibility the CDF had retained up until that point. Brigadier Oelschig resigned over the incident and was replaced by his second-in-command, 79
Brigadier van der Bank, as Chief of the CDF, it was left to Van der Bank to attempt to retain the status quo until the April 1994 elections.64

The CDF's image received a further blow as a result of its participation in the NPKF. Not only did the abnormally high pay rates of Ciskei personnel provoke a crisis within the NPKF, but CDF members also proved to be inadequately trained and poorly qualified for their ranks. This experience, the CDF's poor disciplinary history, as well as its tradition of anti-ANC repression, clouded the future of the Force when it came to integration. They played little role in the technical negotiations. Given this background and their unrealistic expectations about promotions, their inclusion in the new SANDF casts doubt over the apolitical tradition of the future South African armed forces.

CONCLUSION

The history of the homeland armies represents a (hopefully) brief aberration in South African and indeed Southern African military tradition. South Africa's principal conventional military force until 1994 - the SADF - had, by comparison, maintained a tradition of professionalism. Even at the height of the total onslaught period during the eighties, the SADF leadership accepted civilian executive control and generally distanced itself from the day-to-day dynamics of domestic politics. This characteristic made it unique on the African continent where, since the advent of independence, military coups rather than elections, represented the common way of effecting a change in government. Yet, at a different level, the role which the SA military played in the defence of National Party rule was an intensely political one as were the criminal actions which elements within the SADF so willingly committed on National Party Government instruction.

By contrast, all four homeland armies succumbed to coups despite the fact that all four forces were built around infantry battalions trained and organised according to the SADF model and commanded, at least in their initial period, by SADF personnel. The fundamental difference between them and the SADF was, of course, that the defence of national sovereignty was never a realistic mission for the homeland armies. Almost by default this oriented all four forces into the dangerous arena of internal stability; a move made all the more necessary by the persisting problems of legitimacy which their governments faced throughout the homelands' existence. In this sense the homeland armies conformed to the pattern throughout the rest of the African continent.

As is the case in much of Africa, none of the military governments produced by the coups was able to resolve the fundamental problem of any homeland administration - broad-based legitimacy. Transkei, too, a very limited degree, an exception to this rule in that Holomisa was able to establish and maintain a working relationship with the ANC and PAC, while using Pretoria's reluctant offers to buy domestic stability. Though this gave greater coherence to the political activities of the ruling Transkei Military Council (TMC), the Transkei military government failed, as did other Bantustan administrations, to accomplish the principal raison d'être of any government - the operation of a functioning administrative and social service structure. The officers who took control in Venda, Ciskei and Transkei, although in

### Table: HOMELAND DEFENCE EXPENDITURE (FISCAL YEARS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Transkei</th>
<th>Bophuthatswana</th>
<th>Venda</th>
<th>Ciskei</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>1977/78</td>
<td>1,230,330</td>
<td>104,846</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>1,335,176</td>
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<td>2,088,557</td>
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<td>5,622,444</td>
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<td>1980/81</td>
<td>8,722,936</td>
<td>8,522,311</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>17,245,247</td>
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<td>1981/82</td>
<td>6,312,945</td>
<td>8,770,440</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15,083,385</td>
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<td>1982/83</td>
<td>10,144,902</td>
<td>9,078,731</td>
<td>1,922,204</td>
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<td>20,145,837</td>
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<td>1983/84</td>
<td>13,458,104</td>
<td>13,233,239</td>
<td>4,097,226</td>
<td>7,270,100</td>
<td>43,496,669</td>
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<td>1984/85</td>
<td>19,172,144</td>
<td>22,486,938</td>
<td>5,755,110</td>
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<td>1985/86</td>
<td>20,614,491</td>
<td>21,114,977</td>
<td>8,579,558</td>
<td>11,011,729</td>
<td>61,296,755</td>
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<td>1986/87</td>
<td>44,707,000</td>
<td>36,988,674</td>
<td>13,566,204</td>
<td>7,083,000</td>
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<td>1987/88</td>
<td>40,665,000</td>
<td>48,178,622</td>
<td>17,914,672</td>
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<td>1988/89</td>
<td>59,275,000</td>
<td>55,053,317</td>
<td>23,542,281</td>
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<td>138,870,598</td>
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<td>1989/90</td>
<td>69,811,825</td>
<td>74,371,000</td>
<td>49,880,278</td>
<td>17,353,351</td>
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<td>1990/91</td>
<td>106,659,645</td>
<td>116,776,642</td>
<td>45,764,249</td>
<td>17,325,200</td>
<td>386,621,736</td>
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<td>1991/92</td>
<td>95,139,325</td>
<td>137,416,871</td>
<td>42,170,163</td>
<td>17,338,000</td>
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<td>1992/93</td>
<td>157,256,381</td>
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<td>48,347,133</td>
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<td>1993/94</td>
<td>166,500,000</td>
<td>177,782,000</td>
<td>49,180,068</td>
<td>17,322,000</td>
<td>497,984,068</td>
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</table>

**Note:** Amounts include not only the Defence Vote but also funds allocated to other votes for transfer to the Defence budget or to be spent for defence purposes, such as base construction. Funds appropriated for the police and Intelligence votes were not included.

For Transkei and Bophuthatswana, all figures are actual expenditures except for 1986/87 and 1987/88 which are revised estimates.

For Venda, all figures are actual expenditures except for 1988/89 and 1989/90 which are revised estimates.

For Ciskei, all figures are actual expenditures except for 1990/91 and 1992/93 which are revised estimates.

All 1993/94 figures are budgeted figures. None of the homelands bothered to provide final auditor general reports for the monies spent in their final year.
some cases personally more honest, were no better at delivering effective and good
government to their people than the civilians whom they had displaced. Thus their
fores into politics, from an overall perspective, were as unconstructive as those of
their fellow officers in the rest of Africa.

Nevertheless, the fact that the armed forces of the TBVC countries represent a
significant repository of black officers and non-commissioned officers outside of the
SADF, may ensure a place for many of their members in the new Force. Given the
demand for affirmative action, and despite the obviously top-heavy leadership of
some of these forces, their conventional training and organisation gives them a
technical advantage over MK and APL cadres although it will not counteract the
greater political clout which the latter enjoy.

Unfortunately, the homeland soldiers bring to the new SANDF a number of
potentially dangerous legacies to which the new government will need to remain alert.
Most important of these is that their officers have tasted political power as an
effective way of satisfying their demands. Their pay and benefits were in most cases
also substantially above those of the SANDF. Given the experience of the NPFR, this
raises the spectre of further disciplinary problems as the new military teases the
challenge of integration. Similarly, the pace of promotions experienced by the
members of the homeland armies is clearly unsustainable in the SANDF, especially
once downsizing gets underway.

It was lack of political legitimacy as well as an inability to deliver on the economic front
that brought down the TBVC governments and caused constant instability in the other
self-governing territories. A similar inability to deliver the goods was the root cause of
many coups in the rest of the continent. Having built up high expectations around the
RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme), the Government of National
Unity (GNU) and its successors will need to strive hard to deliver the economic gains
which would not only create 'a better life for all' but also banish the demon of coup-
d'état from South African politics.

Endnotes
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2 Greg Mills & Geoffrey Wood, Ethnicity, Integration and the South African Armed Forces South
3 Quote in Geoffrey Wood & Greg Mills, The Present and Future Role of the Transkei Defence Force in a
Wood & Mills 1992a)
13, 1992, p. 4.
5 Wood & Mills, 1992a, p. 256.
1986, p. 126.
9 Cilliers, p. 4.
Prospects of the Homeland Defence Forces, South African Defence Review, no. 5, 1992, p. 4-5, (hereafter cited as
Wood & Mills, 1992b)
THE SPEAR OF THE NATION - THE RECENT HISTORY OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE (MK)

Tsepe Motumi

INTRODUCTION

In writing the history of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) since its establishment in 1961, a number of distinct phases are discernible. Originally a small insurrectionist group, MK expanded dramatically as young men and women fled South Africa in the wake of the Soweto uprising in June 1976, and the violence that started in the Vaal triangle in September 1984. Following some introductory remarks tracing MK's origins and early history, this chapter will focus on more recent developments - i.e., the years from 1984 to 1995. Other areas which are examined concern training, structures, the changed regional context, Operation Vula, and force levels. The article concludes with some remarks on the situation facing former members of MK at the time of their integration into the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), and the inevitable process of demobilisation and rationalisation that lies ahead. Throughout, the focus is on the broader political context within which events occurred inside and outside South Africa, especially in the Southern African region. The intention is also to examine whether MK achieved its goal of bringing about a democracy and if it is forming the nucleus of a new national defence force.

THE EARLY YEARS

Since its inception in 1961 under the aegis of the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), banned at the time but operating under the banner of the Congress of Democrats (CoD), and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), MK has been a political army. Among its founder members were Nelson Mandela, its first Commander-in-Chief, Walter Sisulu, Wilton Mkwayi, Joe Slovo and Raymond Mhlaba. It was established to fight apartheid at a time when all other forms of resistance had proved either ineffective or had been outlawed. The nature of the envisaged armed struggle was mainly that of armed propaganda, the targets for sabotage being electricity pylons and other infrastructure - in other words mostly symbolic targets. On 16 December 1961, MK was launched. Its manifesto was announced in radio broadcasts by Walter Sisulu, speaking from a clandestine station. Sabotage operations were executed by cadres who had rudimentary engineering knowledge and could manufacture explosives devices. At the same time, recruits were sent to receive training abroad, first among these being Nelson Mandela, who underwent military training in Algeria and Ethiopia in 1961.

Shortly after its launch, MK suffered a serious setback with the arrest of its leadership at Lilliesleaf farm in Rivonia, its operational headquarters. The subsequent trial resulted in life sentences for the entire leadership, including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. It was clear that it first had to establish and organise itself outside South Africa before attempting to engage the South African system, a task difficult to achieve. Meanwhile, at the Lobatse Conference in 1963, which comprised representatives from the ANC, SACP and SACTU in exile, MK became an integral part of the ANC and politically accountable to it. The Conference also mandated the ANC to lead the tripartite alliance in exile.

The hostility of the colonial administrations in neighbouring Rhodesia, Mozambique, Bechuanaland and Angola, complicated the execution of the armed struggle. As a facilitating measure, an alliance was established in 1967 between the military wing of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), the Zimbabwean People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and MK. As there were no available routes through neighbouring states directly into South Africa, MK proposed to infiltrate by way of Rhodesia's Matabeleland. The Luthuli Detachment, as the MK unit that took part in this campaign was known, had among its members the late Chris Hani, a former MK commissar and later chief of staff. Joe Modise, the commander of MK, and presently the South African Minister of Defence, was involved in providing assistance to the detachment to cross the Zambezi River. The detachment received its early training in Algeria and Tanzania, with the cream of the recruits being sent for further training to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

Two expeditions were launched during these early years: the first in July/August 1967, followed by another in December of the same year. Both operations failed. Despite stiff resistance, MK and ZIPRA suffered heavy casualties in the ensuing skirmishes with the Rhodesian and South African security forces in Wankie and Sipililo. Some of the cadres were arrested by the Rhodesian security forces and the Botswana authorities as they retreated. Inexperience, lack of familiarity with the terrain, and damage to communication equipment (which led to a breakdown in communication with headquarters in Kongwa, Tanzania) hamstrung these operations. The political fall within South Africa, which made recruitment for the ANC and MK very difficult, was an added setback.

In an attempt to address the problem of general political apathy in South Africa, as well as the growing discontent within the ranks of the ANC and MK about the harsh conditions of life in exile, a consultative conference was convened on 25 April 1969 at Morogoro in Tanzania. The conference sought to resolve some problems hindering the execution of the armed struggle, among them the establishment of a firmer base for future operations and the implementation of a strategy to mobilise the South African people. At the conference a Revolutionary Council was established, comprising senior members of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and leading members of the SACR. Among them were Yusuf Dadoo (who became chairman in 1972), Moses Mabhida (SACP general-secretary, who also held the powerful position of secretary of the Revolutionary Council), and Joe Slovo (a leading strategist in the Council and SAPC central committee member). The Revolutionary Council emphasised the need for cadres to be better trained in political and military matters, resulting in the institution of mechanisms to deal with internal reconstruction and propaganda. Most of the resources were dedicated to activities in South Africa. Yet the problem of reaching the front areas still dogged MK. The establishment of communication between external centres and the 'home front' was an attempt to deal with this problem. The Revolutionary Council was also charged with the overall planning, preparation and undertaking of military operations.
After Morogoro, Dadoo became the Vice-President of the Revolutionary Council until his death in 1963. The Council was chaired by the ANC President, a fact that emphasised its importance. MK’s actions were to be guided by the political considerations of the ANC, in conformity with a decision adopted at the Lobatse Conference in 1963. These policies were to be broadly defined in the annual policy statements of 8 January, and also announced on important occasions of the ANC. All armed actions had to fall within the parameters of these policy directives. ANC policy, adopted at the Morogoro Consultative Conference in 1969, characterised the struggle against apartheid as resting on four pillars, namely: mass mobilisation of the South African people; the establishment of an underground network within South Africa; the armed struggle; and the international isolation of South Africa. These pillars were complementary, with the emphasis shifting periodically.

Following the establishment of the Revolutionary Council, concerted moves were made to secure an underground presence within South Africa through propaganda and the infiltration of illegal trade unions. An attempt to infiltrate cadres via the sea off the Transkei coast failed when the cadres involved were arrested and imprisoned. Despite this setback, however, the gradual process of building the underground movement continued, and contributed to the 1973 Durban labour strikes. University students, organised under the banner of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) and the South African Students’ Organisation (SASO), played a pivotal role in the industrial action. This was the beginning of the radicalisation of the student organisations. Whether this development was connected with the Morogoro Conference resolution to “dedicate resources to work in South Africa” remains unclear, but the significance of these labour and student strikes was that they were the first manifestations of mass action since the banning of the ANC in 1960.

Perhaps more importantly, the region was undergoing significant changes after the military coup in Portugal in 1974, an event which enhanced the chances of success for the anti-colonial movements in the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola. The pro-FRELIMO rallies in 1974 subsequently saw black university students demonstrating under the banner of SASO in support of the Mozambican liberation movement, and welcoming the political crisis in Portugal. Little was happening in the armed struggle during these years, while ZANU was actively laying the ground in Rhodesia for the steady intensification of the war for Zimbabwe from 1976 onwards. Therefore, when the student riots broke out in Soweto on 16 June 1976, both the ANC and MK were caught by surprise. They were not ready to exploit the events that followed, although there were limited acts of sabotage in support of the uprisings, mostly on railway lines. As a result of these events, 1976 marked the beginning of a significant outflow of several thousand young South Africans, mostly black, from the country.

The impetus for the Soweto riots developed from the ideological stance of black consciousness, rather than the non-racist ideology of the ANC. The Black Consciousness Movement stood at the forefront of the struggle for freedom since 1972. Many of the students and pupils who fled the country wanted to join the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) and the Pan Africanist Congress’ (PAC) Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA). The two organisations could not absorb the large numbers of youth fleeing South Africa into neighbouring Front-Line States (FLS). This was especially the case with regard to the BCMA, which, unlike APLA, had been established only a few years earlier. Further afield in Tanzania, economic hardships and difficult conditions, particularly from 1979 onwards, resulted in many joining the ranks of MK. The immediate post-1976 period saw MK’s first massive surge in numbers since its formation in 1961. On completion of their training, the detachment that was formed by this particular group was aptly named the “1976 Detachment” by ANC President, Oliver Tambo.

In 1979, proclaimed as the “Year of the Spear”, the ANC and MK intensified their political and armed propaganda campaign. The year marked the centenary of the victory of the Zulus over British forces at Isandlwana. This started a tradition through which subsequent years were to be “proclaimed” and a programme for the year outlined in the 6 January ANC anniversary statement. The dedication of a year to a particular theme was the result of a visit by an ANC and MK delegation, led by Tambo, Slovo and Modise, to Vietnam in 1978, where valuable lessons were learnt on conducting a political and armed struggle from the renowned General Gilesp, strategist in that country’s war against French and American colonialists.

Domestic developments in the 1980s led to increased membership for MK. The most important of these was the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, a coalition of anti-apartheid organisations encompassing labour, education, youth, civic, women’s, religious and political organisations. The UDF soon mobilised internal resistance and popularised the idea of non-racism. The ANC also capitalised on the bankrupt policies of the National Party government that aimed at balkanising the black population and co-opting the coloured and Indian groups by establishing a tricameral parliament and black local authorities. The Vael uprisings, starting in September 1984, and the increasing cycles of mass protest, ostensibly triggered off by the rent and services boycott in the Vael triangle, Eastern Cape and other parts of the country, actually reflected the rejection of local government and of the ‘system’. These factors inspired the second large intake of recruits into MK. Despite the fact that some of the adherents left to further their education and others took up employment within various ANC structures, the majority of MK members joined at this time. It was also a period when the ANC strategy of a ‘people’s war’, with the primary objective of involving the entire populace in the fight against apartheid, got under way. It coincided with the government’s introduction of the Black Local Authorities Act. It called for the isolation of members of the security forces, especially those resident within black communities, and included officials serving on local authorities, or anybody perceived to be working for the ‘system’.

MK grew both in number and in quality during this period. It was a different kind of youth who joined the ANC and MK. They were baptised in the struggles of the mass democratic organisations and they had a higher level of political consciousness than their predecessors in 1975, as a result of their experiences in that context. The increased numbers propelled the ANC into securing and expanding facilities for training its MK cadres. Additional training camps in Angola, mainly north and east of the country’s capital, were opened. Various strategies were used to influence events in South Africa and to make the presence of the ANC and MK felt. These included co-ordinated sabotage
The strategy of a 'people's war' that aimed at 'making the country ungovernable' was reappraised at the Kabwe Consultative Conference in June 1985. Guided by the tone set by the Morogoro Conference sixteen years earlier, which had also identified problems with the execution of the armed struggle, this conference pointed to weaknesses in MK's urban operations. As a result, operations were extended to the rural areas, which were still isolated and had not experienced mass protests as in the urban areas. From November 1985, a notable increase in the number of 'rural incidents' was experienced, particularly through the use of land mines. During the period between November and December 1985, seven land mines were detonated by vehicles. The main targets were the border areas of northern Natal, and northern and western Transvaal. The choice of border areas for the laying of land mines facilitated MK cadres' retreat into neighbouring countries. Selecting white farmers in the rural areas for attack, was premised on their being regarded as 'legitimate targets' who supported apartheid and formed part of the security forces' rural commando system that often thwarted attempts of MK cadres to enter into or depart from South Africa undetected.

While these operations were undertaken, an intensive debate was in progress within MK on what constituted a 'legitimate target' for attack. A direct military engagement of the security forces was increasingly focused upon. Theoretical positions were also formulated that defined the objective of the armed struggle as 'insurrectionary'. The mobilized masses came to be defined as a 'political army', and the armed component as a 'revolutionary army' that included an 'organised advanced detachment'. This was in reference to MK, which saw itself at the time as the 'nucleus of a future people's army'. Yet, the failure to develop activities into a 'revolutionary war' or an insurrection in the classical sense, was a direct result of MK's inability to develop an appropriate internal underground leadership. In this, MK only had limited success in some regions of South Africa.

Pursuing an insurrectionary strategy resulted in a shift in the focus of all training, as well as mobilisation. Within South Africa, mass resistance had been dampened by the harsh provisions of the national state of emergency which was imposed on 12 June 1986. Despite the fact that thousands of activists were detained under the emergency regulations, operations were not halted. The number of operations steadily increased during the 1986-1988 period, and continued until late 1988. It included special operations using car bombs at the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court in May 1987, and outside the Witwatersrand Command of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in the same year. However, when the ban on the ANC and MK was lifted in February 1990, many were caught by surprise and were unprepared for new developments. MK was mainly an 'army in exile', hamstrung by long lines of command from the 'rear' with the majority of cadres stationed outside the country. As a result, MK could not use the evolving situation within South Africa to its full advantage. It failed to establish itself fully amongst the people. The mass protests that engulfed South Africa were not sufficiently reinforced by the armed struggle.

**MK TRAINING**

In the thirteen years between 1975 and 1988 virtually all of MK's general training took place in Angola. The instructors were initially Cuban and Soviet (from late 1976 to mid-1978), followed by ANC/MK instructors taking charge of training and the Cubans and Soviets only providing continuing training under special circumstances. During the latter period, more training facilities were established in Angola. The initial camp, Nova Katanga in the south of Angola, was evacuated after an SADF air raid in 1979. Other camps were set up further north of Luanda: in Quibaxe, and at Funda, Fazenda and later Fango and Caculama. The latter two were started at the beginning of the 1980s. As increasing numbers joined MK in the mid-1980s, the Fango camp was singled out for the preparation of cadres for infiltration, as well as for providing accelerated courses for underground operatives who were returning to South Africa. The negotiations for the independence of Namibia, and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola led directly to the relocation of Angolan training camps to Uganda and Tanzania in 1988/9.

From late 1976, general training of MK soldiers took six months, and was followed by a specialisation course for another three to four months. Depending on their nature, some specialist courses took much longer. Instruction was generally in English, with allowance being made for the use of any other language, especially indigenous languages, due to the educational levels of some of the cadres. This sometimes led to difficulty in imparting the finer points of technical military skills. In an attempt to resolve the language problem, literacy classes were conducted on a daily basis after formal training sessions. The content of training courses was further influenced by MK's military nature. Founded as a guerrilla force, its training was unconventional, and there were no educational entrance requirements, as is normally the case with liberation armies. Prospective MK members only had to be against apartheid and have enough courage to take up arms. It was purely a volunteer army, with ill-health or age the only grounds for exclusion.

General training included the following:

- Firearms training concentrated on the use of rifles, especially AK-47s and other rifles that are standard SADF/SAP issue, like the R1 (7.62mm FN) and R4 (5.56mm Gnad). Training was also provided in pistol shooting, as well as the maintenance of weapons in general. Training was given in the use of both offensive and defensive hand grenades, and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs).
training in limpet, anti-personnel and land mines.

- Political training focused on the history of the ANC, modern South African history, international politics and aspects of Marxist-Leninism.

- Some artillery training was provided on the 82mm mortar, as well as the Grad-P or 122mm rocket launcher. Those who specialised further were instructed in other artillery weapons.

- Training in communications concentrated on the use of military equipment, as well as forms of secret communication.

- Military topography taught map reading, concentrating specifically on topographic maps and navigation. Training in drawing sketches of specific locations was given to enable cadres to sketch targets for attack or specific locations of dead-letter boxes (DLBs) containing armaments or leaflets. The subject also assisted in establishing locations where mine fields were planted.

- Physical training was combined with tactics and dealt mainly with fitness and overcoming obstacles on a mock battle course or strip.

- First aid involved general principles and how to administer it in the case of bullet wounds. Rescuing or evacuating fallen comrades in action was also taught.

- Marching drill concentrated on military discipline, salutes and obedience to orders. It also prepared cadres for parade duties, which were required on special occasions.

- Military combat work focused mainly on aspects of intelligence, counter-intelligence, and the theory of revolution, which included building a revolutionary and a political army. The purpose of the course was to teach cadres how to work in secret and to create underground structures. Successful completion of the course was compulsory for those being deployed in South Africa.

- Anti-aircraft training was provided only for a select few who had to defend the military camp against aerial attacks.

With the exception of anti-aircraft training, the above subjects all formed part of the general course. Advanced training followed for those who performed well in general training, or according to prevailing requirements.

Other special courses were pilot training for a select few, and tank or armoured personnel-carrier drivers. Initially, only a few were trained compared to those in the more general fields mentioned above. It started to change in 1988, when the first group of recruits went for extensive training in conventional warfare in the former USSR. Training periods varied from two to four years. It marked the beginning of preparations for a future national defence force, of which MK regarded itself as the nucleus. At the time, the USSR was one of the few countries willing to provide conventional military training. Other countries, such as the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Yugoslavia, also provided training for short periods of between two months and a year. In combination with the USSR, they catered for most of MK’s specialised training needs. Training of a more specialised nature was provided by Bulgaria, Hungary, Cuba and Algeria. The latter two countries trained special forces and accommodated only small groups at a time. Cuba trained cadres in Intelligence and Counter-intelligence. Bulgaria and Hungary did not offer military training, but provided political (Bulgaria) and agricultural training (Hungary). Other academic courses were also offered by these countries to ANC members.

MK training camps were headed by a camp commander, and was supervised by a commissar. The commissar was responsible for the political training, welfare and organisation of the soldiers in the camp. He was also head of the commissariat, which consisted of all political instructors and unit commissars in the camp. The other personnel were the Chiefs of Staff, Logistics and Intelligence. The number of people in a camp varied from six to ten platoons at a time. The camp command answered to the regional command, and the latter to the military headquarters at ANC headquarters in Lusaka.

Training continued until the beginning of the 1990s. However, political changes in Eastern Bloc countries that provided most of the international training, resulted in Tanzania, Uganda, India, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Zambia becoming involved in training MK cadres. The earlier decision to switch to conventional army training was based on the realisation by the MK leadership that, if it was to become the nucleus of a future South African defence force, it would require soldiers for its leadership with appropriate training.

Training conducted after the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, involved only new recruits and limited numbers of seasoned cadres who were trained as officers, between late 1993 and early 1994, in Zimbabwe, Ghana, Tanzania, and to a lesser extent, India.

**STRUCTURES CHARGED WITH INTERNAL POLITICAL AND MILITARY WORK**

From 1983, various changes were made to structures charged with internal political and military activities. Until this time, military and political structures inside South Africa had been separate, with fusion only at the level of the Revolutionary Council (RC). In the regional command structures in the forward areas, there were separate sections for planning and operations. MK was politically accountable to the ANC’s National Executive Committee (NEC), from which it took directives. The MK commander also acted as accounting officer. It was, however, the Political Military Council (PMC) that supervised the implementation of NEC decisions that concerned the political and armed struggle. Within the PMC, the Military Headquarters (MHQ) had immense power over MK cadres in the field. Pressure to undertake ill-conceived operations into South Africa often resulted in casualties, such as arrests, injury or even death in encounters with the South African forces. It arose mainly from the perceived necessity to demonstrate MK’s presence to people inside South Africa and to MK, whether they were in camps or not. Such operations, however, were not in tandem with internal mass action and defiance campaigns that engulfed the country, especially from the middle of 1987 to 1989. The forward area suffering the most casualties was Swaziland, with the death and abduction of several MK members during infiltration into South Africa and in special operations.
against MK by the South African security forces. Other Southern African countries, such as Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana, were also targets of similar operations by the South African security forces.

The development of separate structures often resulted in the right hand not knowing what the left hand was doing, and little or no joint command and control. To remedy this, a conference of all front commanders and commissars was held in Maputo in 1983. The conference recommended joint planning, command and control of all operations in the armed struggle. Intelligence functions were also included in the new approach. Starting at the top, a process of restructuring began that was to be in line with decisions taken at the conference. By 1985 the ANC/MK command and control had undergone significant changes, some of which are discussed below.

When the RC was replaced by thePMC, it was hoped that the barrier between the political and military structures would be removed, and that co-ordination between political and military activities would be improved. The change in structure was influenced by the operational realities on the ground and the consequent need for more suitable structures. The heightened political activity in South Africa demanded a focus on political and military training of recruits within the country. At the same time, structures of underground leadership were to be developed, drawing on the best recruits from the activist core. The approach required painstaking work and sought to remedy the problem of reaching the home front, where the struggle was to be waged, as well as improving overall communication between external and internal centres. The forward areas' structures gained greater operational freedom in terms of planning, operations, communication and execution of operations. Only special projects would henceforth require the green light from headquarters.

The Political Military Council was given extensive power for overall planning, preparation and implementation of all aspects related to the execution of the struggle in South Africa. It was chaired by the President of the ANC, and most of its members were drawn from the NEC. It had its own budget and could determine needs as they arose, including staffing of all structures dealing with internal work. It minimised problems with co-ordination, and simplified the implementation of strategies. It represented an integrated approach to political and military work that enhanced ANC and MK structures. Through the restructuring, all specialised political-military work was guided by the political command. The Area Political Military Councils (APMCs) provided the necessary integrated leadership.

The diagrammatic presentation illustrates how co-ordination took place, from the top (Secretariat), down to the HQ, the Internal Political Committee (IPC) and NAT (Intelligence, Counter-Intelligence and Security). Each of these structures had smaller sub-structures and were mostly based in Lusaka. The Regional Political Military Councils (RPMC), existed underground in Swaziland, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana and London. Certain areas inside the country had APMCs, while more developed areas in the Western Cape, Border region, Durban, Pretoria and Northern Transvaal, had RPMCs based internally. However, there were only a few of these structures, as it was difficult to develop them under conditions of illegality.

The IPC was charged with internal work and was composed of the following elements:

- Underground (UG) Section: special underground training, infiltration and mission assignment. The section was headed by Ronnie Kasrils, former chief of Military Intelligence.
- Propaganda (Prop) Section: internal communication, such as pamphlets and statements for distribution. This section worked closely with the Department of Information and Publicity (DIP), and was headed by Joel Netshitendzwa.
- Mass Mobilisation (MM): strategies and tactics internally, political briefings and direction. This section was headed by Steve Tshwete.
- Data Processing Group (DPG): processing and action on all reports from internal units, in conjunction with the relevant units within the IPC or FMC. This section fell under MM, but reports were generally utilised by all the other structures within the IPC, or forwarded for attention to the MMQ.

Military Headquarters (MHQ) was organised as follows:

- Chief of Staff (CoS): overall leadership and training needs of MK. The position was occupied first by Joe Slovo, then Chris Hani until 1992, who was succeeded by Siphiwe Nyanda.
- Operations (Ops): actual planning and execution of operations. This position was occupied for some years by Lambert Moloit. It included infiltration of cadre and material and worked closely with Ordnance.
- Ordnance (Ord): mainly infiltration of weaponry or equipment for use in armed operations, especially with regard to bulk supplies of material. The position was occupied by Abu-Baker Ismail from late in 1987, after his predecessor, Cassius Maseke, was assassinated in Swaziland that year.
- Communications: providing units with necessary army communication equipment and performing a signals unit function. It served both external and sometimes internal groups in MK and the ANC. The position was held by Jacqueline Sedibe.

The overall head of NAT was Joe Nhlanhla, who succeeded Mzwai Pillay in 1987. His predecessor was ousted following reports of excesses committed by the department's personnel. Within the department, there was a traditional division between the functions of security and intelligence. It was only in 1980 that a division between intelligence and counter-intelligence was announced. Jacob Zuma took over the intelligence function in 1997, but relinquished the post in 1993 in the run up to South Africa's national general elections.
ANC/MK STRUCTURES

(In Lusaka)

Political Military Council (PMC)

PMC Secretariat

Internal Political Committee (IPC)

U/G Prop MM DPG

Military Headquarters (MHQ)

CoS Mi Ops CC Ord

NAT

INT CI

Regional PMC

PC

Prop Pol Tmg

Area PMC

MI Ord Ops Log

NAT

INT CI

(In one of the Front-Line States, the UK or sometimes in South Africa)

POLITICAL MILITARY COUNCIL (PMC) STRUCTURES

The Political Military Council was composed of the following:

- Chairperson: President of the ANC.
- Secretary: a member of the NEC. This position was first occupied by Joe Nhlanhla until early 1987, when it was taken over by Josiah Jele.
- Military Headquarters (MHQ): MK Commander and Chief of the Army; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; National Army Commissar; Chief of Operations; Chief of Communications; Chief of Military Intelligence.
- Internal Political Committee (IPC): Overall head of the IPC, the Underground, Mass Mobilisation and Propaganda sections.

- NAT: Chief of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence; Chief of Security.
- Secretaries-General of the ANC, SACP and SACTU. This facilitated effective joint planning between these organisations, which functioned as an alliance. Membership of the three organisations overlapped, hence the need for their presence on the PMC, as cadres sent into the country in certain instances also did work for the ANC, SACTU or the SACP.

The full PMC met once a month to plan the overall strategy of internal ANC/MK work, and to assess the state of the nation. Almost half of the NEC members belonged to the PMC, with varying responsibilities, including meetings with delegations from South Africa. The PMC was the most important structure in the ANC after the NEC. It had its own National Working Committee (NWC), charged with implementing NEC decisions. The PMC also had a secretariat with executive functions. The Secretariat met on a weekly basis between PMC meetings. It was responsible for the implementation of PMC decisions, through the MHQ, IPC, NAT and the RPMCs in the regions, as well as for analyses of reports received from inside South Africa and from structures in forward areas. These reports were then forwarded to a specific structure (such as MHQ) for attention and action. The PMC acted as the executive arm of the NEC in matters dealing with the political and military struggle inside South Africa.

The situation of cadres in transit, as well as those deployed inside South Africa, was the responsibility of MHQ, IPC and NAT, acting as sub-structures of the PMC. The Intelligence section had its own lines of communication and control to operatives, with functions overlapping at times; for example, someone charged with political or military work, or both, could simultaneously work as an intelligence operative. The rationale for separating intelligence structures was partly motivated by the traditional role of intelligence services, that simultaneously had to remain accountable to the political leadership.

The PMC possessed, with minor exceptions, general information on the number of units on the ground, as well as their location. This did not necessarily extend to specifics, such as the identities of operatives. In-depth knowledge of units in a particular region was the preserve of the relevant RPMC. Its task was to service specific regions in South Africa, through cadres of MHQ and IPC, by utilising RPMC structures in the 'forward areas' of Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and London. Although London did not border South Africa, the large number of South Africans living there, as well as movement between the two countries, made this an important area to consider for briefings, especially concerning political operatives. Structures in the forward areas provided a direct link between headquarters in Lusaka and the situation on the ground and also reported directly to the PMC. The line of command was thus a lengthy one. Direct communication between a unit in South Africa and the PMC at the Lusaka headquarters was only established in exceptional circumstances.

RPMC structures in forward areas were smaller, but similar to national headquarters. They were an attempt to change the orientation of the armed struggle, with more emphasis on an integrated approach to military and political operations, as well as ensuring better and effective control, command and communication with units on the
The old approach of compartmentalised planning and execution was costly in terms of the poor exchange of information about units and individuals on the ground, resulting in the South African Security Police and National Intelligence Service easily infiltrating these structures. With the adoption of this approach, internal recruitment and training were intensified, and direction given to the mass organisations, in line with the ANC’s strategy of ‘people’s war’ and insurrection. The creation of Organs of People’s Power (OPPs), such as street committees, self-defence units and, in certain instances, people’s courts, were emphasised. Self-defence units were seen as a constituent part of the revolutionary army, that also consisted of guerilla units in rural areas and combat units in urban areas. Initially, the role of self-defence units was to launch attacks against security force patrols in the townships. It was facilitated through training by internal MK structures, as well as advanced training for some members abroad.

Locally based APMC s were structured similar to RPMCs, but were smaller and operated under conditions different from the externally based PMC structures. They were charged with providing political and military leadership at local level, as well as with intelligence gathering. A typical APMC would comprise the commander (in charge of the unit), a commissar (providing political leadership), and cadres responsible for propaganda, military training, weapons’ acquisition, intelligence gathering and logistics (responsible for safe houses and accommodation).

The sensitivity of the work demanded utmost secrecy, and recruits would not be exposed to members of the APMC, but only to those dealing with matters relevant to their purposes. The principle of operation was on a ‘need-to-know’ basis’ to avoid infiltration and detection by the security police, National Intelligence Service (NIS) or Military Intelligence (MI). The APMC, therefore, had to ensure that recruits were thoroughly screened. It was also responsible for planning and execution of operations, communication within the unit and with the RPMC in their area, or in exceptional circumstances directly with the PMC.

**SELF-DEFENCE UNITS (SDUs)**

The Self-Defence Units (SDUs) were mainly formed at the behest of the ANC from late 1984 onwards, at the height of its operation to render South Africa, and especially the townships, ungovernable. SDUs also emerged as a result of people’s reaction to state harassment in the townships, and illegitimate local government authorities. They originated from two sources, namely in reaction to external factors and in response to ANC encouragement.

The ANC’s *For the Sake of our Lives* outlined that these units had to raise demands for the right to self-protection. It also set out guidelines for the formation of SDUs, which it saw as similar to SADF commandos or neighbourhood watches, apart from the fact that SDUs were not legalised by the South African Government, and were party political structures.

At their inception in the mid-1980s, SDUs operated underground to avoid detection by the security forces. As the political climate changed in the late 1980s at the height of the defence campaign, their visibility increased. They operated in communities, as part of emerging street committees, and were accountable to the executive. As OPPs, their function was primarily to defend their areas against the security forces, through setting up barricades and digging trenches to impede the movement of security force vehicles and foot patrols. Their weaponry was rudimentary and unsophisticated. They made petrol bombs for specific ‘operations’, such as bombing the house of a local policeman or councillor, the local council or municipal offices, etc. As they gained experience, increasing numbers were absorbed into underground structures of MK, with some receiving training locally and others being sent outside South Africa for further training.

Attacks launched in areas across Gauteng (the former PWV) showed increased sophistication, as improved training gradually resulted in their assuming a paramilitary role. Targets were mainly security forces on patrol, as well as houses of those perceived to be the ‘enemies of the people’, either councillors or those who dissented, especially during labour strikes or consumer boycotts.

Initially, a fair level of cohesion existed in communities who faced the onslaught of the security forces. The latter, however, were also becoming sophisticated in their counter-measures, and a number of street committees and other community structures were infiltrated.

At the heart of the state’s strategy was an attempt to ‘win the hearts and minds of the people’ that extended to some degree to schools in the townships. The strategy also included attempts to address the grievances of communities, through engaging the security forces in projects in the community to gain acceptance. As these processes were unfolding, the SDUs were experiencing their fair share of problems, but these were not made public. They became accessible to community youths who were not necessarily recruited, as occurred originally, but who saw an opportunity to exert power and influence through membership of the SDUs. These were mainly toritis or thugs, masquerading as or even belonging in some instances to youth organisations. As a result of their dual identities, they came to be known as com-totsie: they were comrades (belonging to and associating with youth organisations and their members), and at the same time totsie (retaining their trade as thugs). This weakened discipline within the structures, and illuminated the lack of cohesion that already may have existed. Previously, political training through discussions and/or lectures, held together. With the com-totsie element prevalent, matters were no longer resolved in a democratic manner through street committees. Arbitrary ‘laws’ and ‘disciplinary measures’ were imposed on members of the community, so that even people’s courts became largely the domain of the undirected youth. Worse was still to come.

The lifting of the ban on the ANC and other anti-apartheid organisations in 1990, presented SDUs with a dilemma, with sudden changes to the political terrain, and the need to change their *modus operandi* in the light of MK’s and other organisations’ newly affirmed legality. When the ANC suspended its armed struggle in August 1990 according to the terms of the *Pretoria Minute*, the question was whether SDUs should continue operating. It was answered by the sudden surge of violence in the Gauteng region around the same period, especially train massacres and other random acts of violence.
Elsewhere in the country, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, the situation was different. What was previously merely perceived to be the 'enemy' became visible, with the battle lines between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and pro-ANC communities openly drawn. In KwaZulu-Natal, mainly between the ANC-aligned UDF and the IFP. In Gauteng it took on a different form. In most instances random attacks on trains could not directly be attributed to the IFP, even though it was commonly believed to be the case. Violence also extended further to communities adjacent to railway stations and to hostels, believed to be IFP strongholds.

The increased tension and political conflict resulted in deaths in the course of the struggle for power in ANC/MK and IFP-dominated areas. The IFP organised itself into self-protection units (SPUs), similar to SDUs, with both structures controlling their own areas. They assumed a purely military character, especially with the infusion of military training and, to a degree, staff. SPUs were trained by the leader group that had already received military and intelligence training in the Caprivi strip in northern Namibia, as well as in certain areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Areas became inaccessible, except if allegiance was pledged. Violence became a way of life.

Rivalry developed in and among SDUs as the ANC and other locally based community structures lost political control. Coupled with a lack of guidance from local communities, it led to increased settling of personal scores through weapons, and the abuse of authority in areas controlled by the SDUs. In addition, loss of political control on either side (SDU/SPU) also enabled elements who were opposed to the political transition to further destabilise communities, especially on the East Rand. These paramilitary formations became a menace to the communities they were meant to protect.

REGIONAL DYNAMICS

Developments during the 1980s also had an effect on South Africa's regional relationships. Increased mass action and armed attacks by MK resulted in the South African Government, with PW Botha as State President at the time, entering into accords with neighbouring states, to cajole them to deny assistance and support for the ANC and MK.

In March 1984, South Africa signed the Nkomati Accord with Mozambique. It was an attempt to curb MK and ANC presence in Mozambique, whereby ANC links with its internal operatives would be severed. South Africa used its economic muscle to strengthen the agreement, and as a result, senior MK and ANC officials were expelled from Mozambique. The trade-off was that South Africa would stop supporting Renamo, who were fighting against the FRELIMO Government. At the time, MK cadres in transit to South Africa through Maputo, were hastily infiltrated into South Africa without the necessary prior arrangements. Skirmishes with Swazi and South African security forces followed, resulting in their arrest and imprisonment by the Swazi authorities. After these incidents, it transpired that Swaziland had secretly entered into a similar accord with South Africa two years earlier. The provisions were almost identical: ANC/MK presence were prohibited. Prior to this, the RPMC structures in Swaziland and Maputo had serviced the Eastern Transvaal, Natal and parts of Gauteng.

In Lesotho, Leabua Jonathan's Government buckled under pressure from South Africa's blockade of its borders. A military coup d'etat followed in January 1986, allowing Major-General Justin Lekhanya to take over, much to the chagrin of the ANC and the delight of the South African Government. It led to the deportation of a number of ANC members and specific MK operatives, whose names were provided by the South African Government. The loss of a sympathetic Lesotho Government was a serious blow to the ANC and MK. Lesotho had been primarily responsible for servicing the Eastern and Western Cape, Transkei and, to a limited degree, Gauteng.

Similar diplomatic pressure was applied on Botswana to achieve the same goal. Although the situation in Botswana did not assume proportions similar to those in Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, the effect was the same: hit squad activities, arrests, abductions and deportation of ANC/MK operatives by the Botswana authorities. These developments severely complicated the RPMC's integrated approach to planning and execution of operations, particularly the one that controlled operations into Gauteng, Western Transvaal/North-West and parts of the Northern Transvaal. Following the coup in Lesotho it also had to take control of the Eastern and Western Cape.

The situation in Zimbabwe was somewhat better than in the rest of the region. Unlike Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, Zimbabwe had resisted South African pressure, albeit superficially, and continued to provide a relatively safe haven for ANC and MK activity. From Zimbabwe, MK cadres could infiltrate the Northern Transvaal, Gauteng, and in certain cases, parts of the Cape. Infiltration was facilitated by the normal flow of traffic between the two countries. However, the activities of the South African security forces continued, as illustrated by the bombing of a safe house for MK cadres in transit, in 1988 in Bulawayo. Swift reaction from Zimbabwe's Central Intelligence Organisation led to the arrest of some of the South African operators.

Under these conditions, MK was seriously limited in its operations and infiltration into South Africa, which inhibited its development inside the country. It also resulted in a sudden increase in the number of MK casualties. Most of these were cadres who were hastily infiltrated, without the necessary preparation, due to the pressure on neighbouring governments to 'cleanse' their territories of MK and ANC presence.

Cadres in transit for operations inside South Africa soon became impatient with the masquerade of MK, and long lines of infiltration. Relying on remote forward areas which were at times weak in terms of command and control, had a negative effect on MK's growth within South Africa. The ideal was to build and lead MK from within South Africa, an objective which resulted in Operation Vula.

OPERATION VULA

Operation Vula was a top secret operation commencing in 1986. Planning and selecting cadres for the operation started soon after the ANC's Kabwe Consultative Conference in June 1985. The operation's main task was to establish and strengthen senior and middle
level leadership of the ANC and MK within South Africa. It involved the infiltration of senior cadres, led by Mac Maharaj and Ronnie Kasrils, and later Siphiwe Nyanda. Conceived by ANC President, Oliver Tambo, its aim was to create a national underground political and military leadership structure inside South Africa.

When Operation Vula started, negotiations over Namibia’s independence had barely begun. Agreements entered into presented MK with more serious problems, resulting in cadres being relocated even further from South Africa, and complicating the execution of the armed struggle. As part of the negotiation terms for Namibian independence, MK was forced to withdraw from Angola, where the greater part of its training was being conducted.

Operation Vula was time-consuming and substantial human and material resources went into the effort, with internal communications conducted from centres in South Africa and co-ordinated by operatives in London. The operation was uncovered in July 1990, following the commencement of negotiations in South Africa in May of that year, which culminated in the Groote Schuur Minute. Its exposure was considered to be ‘unintimate’, in the light of painstaking efforts to establish an internally based organisation for MK.

FORCE LEVELS

Available figures about the exact strength of MK put it at 28 000. This is according to lists submitted to the Joint Military Co-ordinating Council (JMCC) of the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) during negotiations. It remains unclear, however, whom to regard as MK soldiers. Some have been formally trained, generally outside the country, and others received training informally, generally inside South Africa. The latter category also includes some of the SANDF, which have expanded in the post-1990 period. Both categories have increased dramatically in the last few years, but no more than 10 000 to 12 000 members of MK received formal training outside the country’s borders. Both categories regard themselves as soldiers and have acted in such a manner. They have all been influenced by conditions on the ground, and reflect the nature of MK as ‘an army of the people’.

What further complicates the determining of force levels is MK’s nature as a political army. Precise force levels will probably never be established. Furthermore, once negotiations began, some MK soldiers, ANC officials and SANDU members demobilised informally as they found other employment or continued with their studies, having no intention of joining the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

FROM GUERRILLA TO CONVENTIONAL ARMY?

The creation of the SANDF was the political responsibility of the Sub-Council for Defence (SCD), a sub-structure of the TEC, as stated in the chapter by Mark Shaw. For purposes of detailed co-ordination and execution, the JMCC was established to oversee all planning, preparation and training of a future SANDF. The submission of a Certified Personnel Register (CPR) stalled a claim for each armed formation in the integration process. Protracted negotiations also resulted in the short-lived National Peace-Keeping Force (NPKF) which is discussed in a separate chapter.

MK members have been active in the planning of both the NPKF - since disbanded - and the newly created SANDF. At the time of writing, the congregation of MK soldiers at Assembly Points has progressed and is nearing completion. Three locations were originally identified, Wallmannsthal, Hoedspruit and De Brug. Wallmannsthal has thus far absorbed the greatest number of former MK cadres, while the De Brug base, used by the NPKF earlier, is utilised by MPLA soldiers. Following assembly, soldiers are integrated into the SANDF, after being assessed for suitability to follow a career in the defence force. ‘Qualifications’ include good health and falling within the required age limit, with those soldiers already integrated but not meeting the requirements agreed upon at the JMCC, identified as the first to be demobilised.

Now that MK has disbanded as an army, it may be pertinent to ask what the future will hold. Integration into the SANDF will clearly not be a complete solution. Recent reports of alleged racism, and the slow and arduous process of integration, with thousands of former MK soldiers turned away after impatiently waiting to be screened for suitability for the SANDF, should be seen in a serious light.

Other problems originated in MK’s Military Headquarters. They resulted mainly from inaccurate names and details submitted for the CPR. To compound the problem, there are true MK members, among them veterans, whose names do not appear on the CPR. By June 1995, only 11 769 soldiers from the non-statutory forces were integrated into the SANDF, after initial screening for eligibility through the potential assessment tests, and following induction courses in their various mustering. Of this figure, 9 334 are in training, while 17 002 are still to be integrated.

In the period prior to independence in Zimbabwe and Namibia, the armed forces were confined to assembly areas immediately upon return to their country. In contrast, a substantial number of South African soldiers had to wait in their homes for a long period for the outcome of negotiations. Furthermore, they had returned to a country that had changed little in terms of the socio-economic needs of the oppressed people, of which they form a part. It was near impossible for the ANC, which had catered for all their needs in exile, to do the same in South Africa. By the time integration began in earnest, from 27 April 1994, more than three years had elapsed after the return of the majority from exile or release from prison. Many of the soldiers had become impatient. Further problems arose when a few hundred of those who had been integrated were expelled from the SANDF when they went absent without leave (AWOL) over grievances. Their expulsion occurred only after they had defied all orders to return: the first order was by the Minister of Defence, Joe Modise, and the final one by President Nelson Mandela. Their colleagues returned and were subjected to military discipline for being AWOL. After a forty kilometre long march to his offices at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, the President undertook to order an investigation into their grievances and to address them. This march was the first major public indication that problems existed with the integration process in Wallmannsthal.

The problems of former MK soldiers continue, and those who have not been integrated pose a likely security problem for society. This was manifested by the riot and subsequent damage to property in and around the Durban city centre in February 1995, when MK soldiers protested against the lack of action by the military authorities to
address their plight. These soldiers are armed, and have already destabilised certain communities, resulting in the closure of schools in the Umlazi, Lamontville, Chesterville and Kwa-Mashu townships. Across the political spectrum, reactions to their protest were largely negative. In a separate incident in Durban, some 200 former cadre assembled outside the ANC's Durban offices. They, too, were demanding incorporation in the SANDF and had earlier marched on the SANDF's Natal Command offices. Yet, the accompanying acts of vandalism only served to portray the group in a negative light.

During the same period, about 100 former MK cadres marched to Parliament and the ANC's Western Cape offices in Cape Town, in protest against their exclusion from the SANDF integration process. As one of the leaders put it: "they used us for their political gains and then threw us in the dustbins". Others said they had "... been traumatised by being turned away from the SANDF", and that President Mandela must "... have a fresh look at the issue".

On the other hand, there are also problems with the integration process. This became clear in the statement released by the SANDF in November 1994, stating that "there have been, and most likely are, shortcomings in the system, and that members of the Non-Statutory Forces (NSF) did most likely have certain legitimate grievances that have to be addressed as a matter of top priority... It would be an oversimplification to blame the lack of discipline on the part of some of the members of the NSF as the only contributing factor to the present situation." The statement and corrective action followed only after intervention by the President.

The integration process continues, albeit with slower and lower intakes. On completion, MK should have integrated about 14 000 out of a potential 28 000 soldiers, the remainder being 'voluntarily' demobilised or rationalised.

DEMOLITION AND RATIONALISATION - POTENTIAL PROBLEMS, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

While the problems associated with integration have largely been resolved, especially those at the assembly points, there may yet be another problem that will present itself at a later stage. This relates to demobilisation and rationalisation that will follow once integration is complete. The projected figure of those to be demobilised is 10 000, while those to be rationalised are estimated at between 30 000 and 50 000. The necessity to demobilise and rationalise arises from changed strategic requirements and severe budget constraints. The aim is to establish a lean, legitimate and affordable defence force, representing all the people of South Africa. It is therefore important that the reasons for demobilisation and rationalisation are explained to those who will be affected by it.

Given that most of the soldiers to be demobilised possess no skills other than military ones, what will happen to them once they have been demobilised and no longer employed by the SANDF? Programmes to assist them with social reintegration will have to be put in place. The existing structures of the SANDF may have some institutional capacity to aid reintegration of soldiers, but these cannot be regarded as desirable or appropriate organs to perform the task. Looking at the experiences of countries which have undergone similar processes, underscores this. Moreover, directly involving the defence force in the reintegration of former soldiers into civil society does not assist the demilitarisation process, which requires the integral involvement of organs of civil society.

Rationalisation is closely linked to demobilisation. This will occur on completion of demobilisation and will potentially affect all members of the SANDF, irrespective of their force of origin. Rationalisation may be less painful than demobilisation, but it also poses potential problems. Its end result is similar to demobilisation: the departure of members from the SANDF, who will also need assistance. Planning in progress in the SANDF should take these factors into consideration, but other organisations and institutions in civil society will also have to play a role, especially as it is in this sphere that demobilised and rationalised soldiers will have to be received. As with demobilisation, other forms of training will have to be designed to cater for former soldiers with no other skills.

THE SERVICE CORPS

A lasting solution which will seek to integrate former soldiers into society is clearly essential. This may be fulfilled by the Service Corps of the SANDF, established in January 1989. Its mission is to cater for vocational and skills' training for those to be demobilised, or who will not be integrated into the SANDF. Joining the Service Corps represents a step towards departure from the SANDF, as well as an opportunity to acquire skills that can be utilised in a non-military environment. Alternatively, Service Corps members may be employed in the technical units of the SANDF, upon completion of training. Vocational training include motor mechanics, driving, plumbing, bricklaying, building and construction, electricity, and others, and lasts for eighteen months. These programmes will comprise an initial training period of three months, after which trainees will be placed in units at various military bases in South Africa. During the remaining fifteen months, they will undergo induction training. As indicated earlier, members join on a purely voluntary basis. However, employment opportunities on completion of the course are not guaranteed. This may be an explanation for the reluctance of those to be demobilised to join the Service Corps.

THE FINAL TASK?

The integration of all the armed formations, including those of the former homelands, is in line with the future needs of a democratic South Africa, at peace with its neighbours. With no perception of a conventional military threat, the future size of the SANDF will be crucial, especially in the light of pressing social needs in a society with high rates of unemployment and inadequate educational levels. The new defence force is and will be primarily responsible to defend the country's sovereignty. Members from the non-statutory forces add to the SANDF their understanding of the communities they come from. Like all other members of the SANDF, they will have to adjust and make contributions to the development of a truly non-partisan defence force. This also applies to those from the statutory forces, especially the SADF. MK's expertise, gained through training in different countries in guerrilla and conventional warfare, should be seen as a positive contribution to a new national defence force.
After 33 years, MK has come to the end of its existence as a guerrilla army. Whether the ideals of freedom, justice and equality for all the peoples of South Africa that guided its establishment have been achieved, will only be proved by time. It is part of the closure of a chapter in South Africa’s history of white minority domination and the lengthy resistance to it, initially through peaceful means, and later by revolutionary violence. MK’s role in the struggle for independence will live through history, with its achievements placing it in true perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

This article supplies a brief sketch, based upon the publicly available information, of the origins, activity, and organisational structure of the Azanian People’s Liberation Army, the guerrilla wing of the Pan-Africanist Congress. Three sections describe, respectively, APLA’s history until 1991, its organisational structure and force levels, and, finally, its operational deployment between 1990 and 1994.

APLA’S HISTORY UP TO 1990

The Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA) is two years younger than its parent organisation, the Pan-Africanist Congress. The PAC was formed in 1959 by a group which had broken away from the African National Congress (ANC), disinclined with the latter’s advocacy of a multiracial ‘people’s democracy’. The Pan-Africanists believed that the ANC’s alliance with its white, Indian and coloured sister organisations ‘diluted’ African nationalism. In their view, ideological emphasis on racial identity was essential in the formation of a revolutionary popular consciousness. Impatient with what they saw as the ANC’s timidity and convinced that all that was needed was for leaders to “show the light and the masses will find a way” the PAC announced plans for a civil disobedience campaign against passes less than a year after their inaugural conference. The pass campaign revealed the shallowness of PAC organisation, though large crowds waiting to surrender their passes around police stations in the townships around Vereeniging and Cape Town on 21 March, 1960, demonstrated strong local followings in the Western Cape and the Southern Vaal. Police fired into the crowds at Sharpeville and Langa, killing 69 and two people respectively. The government declared a state of emergency and promptly banned the PAC as well as its parent organisation, the ANC. Most of the key PAC leaders were imprisoned for their participation in the pass campaign and on their release in early 1961, they regrouped in Maseru under the direction of acting president Potlako Lebello, a former soldier and schoolteacher, as well as one of the founders of the Basotho Congress Party (BCP), the main vehicle of Lesotho nationalism and at that stage the PAC’s most important ally. The PAC’s personable president, University of the Witwatersrand lecturer, Robert Sobukwe, remained in prison until 1969 and was placed under house arrest immediately upon his release.

The Azanian People’s Liberation Army traces its origins to the formation of ‘Poqo’ cells in migrant worker hostels in Cape Town, in September 1981. The Poqo movement was responsible for a series of local uprisings, attacks and violent conspiracies inside South Africa between 1961 and 1967. Most of its following was captured by the police in 1963 after the South African authorities intercepted letters sent by Potlako Lebello from the PAC’s Maseru headquarters instructing Poqo cells to prepare for a national insurrection. Outside South Africa, small groups of PAC adherents began programmes of military instruction, first in the Congo, alongside Angolan Frente Nacional de Libertacao de
Angola (FNLA) soldiers, and later in Ghana and Algeria. By 1968 around 200 of these
trainees constituted what was formally designated that year as the Azanian People's
Liberation Army. Their first operational deployment was in 1968, when a dozen APLA
cadres accompanied a band of Comité Revolucionario de Mozambique (COREMO)
soldiers into Mozambique with the mission of sabotaging the Beira oil pipeline before
travelling home to South Africa. The PACCOREMO soldiers were intercepted by a
Portuguese patrol and most were killed or captured, although two APLA men
managed to escape and return to their Zambian base. Feuding within the PAC's
leadership, as well as South African pressure, persuaded the Zambians to expelled
the PAC from their territory back to Tanzania where the organisation had its
headquarters. APLA soldiers were then dispersed, weaponless, between different
Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) camps until 1970 when the Tanzanians
relocated and provided them with their own base at Chunya, where they began
courses under Chinese military instruction.

The following year the Zambians allowed APLA to attempt infiltration efforts through
Botswana; in these initiatives APLA worked in conjunction with the South West
African People's Organisation (SWAPO) and the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia
Total de Angola (UNITA). However the PAC was excluded from Zambia for a second
time in 1973 after the arrest of an APLA soldier for assault. In 1974, 100 men from
Chunya were sent to Libya for more training and APLA's efforts to establish a presence in South Africa were given a fresh impetus when the FRELIMO
administration permitted APLA to travel through Mozambique. The first Libyan
trainees included members of the BCP which, in 1974, had led an unsuccessful
insurrection against the Lesotho Government.

Between 1975 and 1976, a small group of guerrillas ran a programme of military
instruction for members of the Mgomazulu tribe, a community straddling the South
African-Swazi border, which was at that time divided by a succession dispute. The
capture of three PAC instructors by the South African police brought this enterprise
to an end but meanwhile the PAC had re-established communications with networks
in Johannesburg and East London, led by Robben Island veterans. From 1975, the
first recruits for a decade began to replenish APLA ranks at Chunya. Soon they were
to be joined by a few hundred refugees from the 1976 schoolchildren's uprising,
attacked by the ideological affinity between the PAC's Africanism and the ideas of the
Black Consciousness Movement.

In 1978 the arrest of three APLA insurgents who had established an arms dump in
Krugersdorp suggested that the PAC was ready to begin guerrilla operations inside
South Africa. This impression was reinforced in 1979 when the Transkei police
captured five APLA soldiers who had crossed the border from Lesotho and managed
to remain operational for four months. The ostensible rural emphasis in APLA's
programme probably reflected the strategic priorities spelled out by Potlako Leballo
at the PAC's consultative conference held in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1978. The "Azanian
revolution", Leballo told his followers, "can develop from a guerrilla type of war in the
countryside, extending its authority and then surrounding and taking over the
cities". It would be "from the ranks of the peasants in the reserves" Leballo
predicted, "that the guerrillas forces (would) find their most eager support".

In 1978 Robert Sobukwe died of cancer, and violent conflict overlapped with over who should succeed
him to the PAC presidency split the exile organisation and its army, bringing military
operations to an abrupt halt. APLA's commander, Tempefot Ntantal, opposed Potlako
Leballo's assumption of titular leadership. He was expelled and he took with him eighty
or so of the older men at Chunya to form a short-lived Azanian People's Revolutionary
Party. Leballo managed to persuade the Swazi and Botswana Governments to imprison
a number of potentially disloyal APLA soldiers, and some of Ntntala's supporters were
subsequently handed over to the South African Police by the authorities in Gaborone.
The younger, more recent recruits in the Tanzanian camps remained loyal to Leballo.
Leballo, though, had had to travel to London for medical treatment and he was
persuaded by OAU and Tanzanian officials to hand over authority to a presidential
troika, one of whose members, David Sibeko, was subsequently assassinated by three
young APLA soldiers. Sibeko's colleagues claimed later that the murder was instigated
by South African agents but they produced no evidence to sustain this accusation.\1

Leballo was genuinely popular with young PAC members, amongst whom he had a
reputation for strategic genius and austerity incorruptibility. During the 1970s, however,
Leballo had frequently quarrelled with the Tanzanian authorities, once in public with
Nyero at an OAU conference. Now the Tanzanians felt compelled to restore order and
their intervention ensured Leballo's permanent removal from the PAC's hierarchy. The
Tanzanian army occupied Chunya after a skirmish which left 9 APLA soldiers dead and
40 wounded. The remaining 500 Chunya inmates were disarmed and scattered among
several settlements under close Tanzanian military supervision.\1 Reports of APLA
mutinies continued through 1982 and 1983 and more than a hundred PAC members
defected to register as refugees or to join the ANC in Tanzania.\1 The resumption of
military operations inside the Republic had to wait until 1986, although a few APLA
soldiers did participate in operations of the Lesotho Liberation Army, the BCP's military
wing. In May 1985, 23 PAC members were expelled from Lesotho after a skirmish in
March between an APLA group and Lesotho security forces, in which 6 of the South
Africans were killed.\1

It took several years for new PAC leaders recently arrived from South Africa, veterans of
the Pop movement and subsequent long prison sentences, to restore morale and
discipline among mutinous APLA units. No APLA attacks were recorded in the first half
of the eighties and the police arrests of APLA soldiers totalled fourteen between 1980
and 1985.\4 By the mid 1980s, though, the PAC's fortunes were reviving. Within South
Africa a new generation of Africanist organisations had appeared, including trade
unions, a youth movement, Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU), and the
Pan-Africanist Students Organisation. Trial evidence suggested that from 1985, one of
these at least, AZANYU, was serving as an effective APLA recruitment agency. Reports
of APLA guerrilla operations began appearing quite frequently in the South African press
the following year. PAC publications claimed that in 1986 APLA units killed ten
police in Sharpeville alone, in five operations. The first APLA attacks to be
confirmed and identified as such by the police were four actions attributed to the
'Alexandra Scorpion Gang' between December 1986 and February 1987, in which two
soldiers and two policemen were wounded and a cafe owner shot dead during a
robbery.\4 Responsibility was attributed to three APLA guerrillas killed after a car-chaos
through the Johannesburg suburb of Bramley.\4 Two of the dead men had been
107
members of AZANYU before joining APLA in 1983. The police claimed that they had arrested or killed altogether 38 APLA insurgents in 1986\(^8\) and by the end of 1987 the annual total had risen to 85\(^8\). In 1987, APLA's journal reported 12 'enemy' killed and another 67 wounded.\(^9\) Most of the casualties were inflicted during a grenade attack on two municipal police platoons drilling at the Soweto Police Training College. Eleven of the men killed were shot in or near Alexandra Township. In general, the PAC's insurgents concentrated their efforts on attacking policemen and soldiers, mainly in the townships around Johannesburg. They were usually equipped with grenades and machine pistols, not limpet mines, Umkhonto we Sizwe's weapon of choice. In the Western Cape, APLA had formed a loose alliance with Qibla, an Islamic fundamentalist grouping. By 1988, APLA operations had extended to smaller towns in the Western Transvaal. In July, an encounter between APLA soldiers and police left four PAC members dead and twelve policemen wounded.\(^5\) At the close of the decade APLA had become a significant participant in South Africa's fledgling guerrilla war.

**COMMAND, ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FORCE LEVELS**

Sceptical South African journalists sometimes characterised APLA's exile establishment as "two men with a fax in Dar es Salaam."\(^6\) Police sources, however, tend to confirm the impression suggested by APLA's own propaganda of a rather complex organisation which by the 1990s had begun to move part of its command structure within South African borders. APLA's command arrangements attempted to embody the guerrilla doctrine of a unified political and military leadership. Right down to the three to eight person local field units or platoons, dual authority rested with field commanders and political commissars, the latter holding national seniority. APLA's nine person military commission, a sub-committee of the PAC's, included several civilian leaders in its membership and up until 1992 APLA's commander in chief was PAC chairman (from 1990, deputy president) Johnson Mambro. The post of commander in chief fell vacant with the return to South Africa of the PAC's main politicians in 1992; this probably increased APLA's effective autonomy. APLA's high command had 29 members, including in the 1990s six regional commanders based in South Africa. The most important posts in the high command were those of APLA Commander, held by Sabelo Phama, Chief Political Commissar, Romero Doniels, and the Chief of Staff, Barney Hlatshwayo (Mzolo).

The APLA headquarters at Dar es Salaam was divided into a number of specialised departments, responsible for operations, infiltration, security, propaganda, logistics, political education, training, and so forth, the directors of which also belonged to the 29 member high command. APLA maintained three base camps in Tanzania, named Humbi, Bogamayo and Wambe. Here recruits underwent preliminary training and here they stayed before their dispatch on operations in South Africa. In the Transkei, APLA's internal command structures were most developed, with the division of the territory into four zones under separate command and a regional political/military council whose officers included a chief of logistics, a chief of security and a commander of training and operations. The planning of specific operations would be done by local commanders, each of whom would control several APLA units within a particular area. Their tactical decisions were subject to general guidelines emanating from the more senior leadership echelons.\(^5\) Supply of guerrilla units was organised separately from operations and specialised military supplies units were functioning inside South Africa from 1987,\(^5\) APLA's 'Year of Arming the Azanian Masses'.

How much of this rather impressive sounding organisational scheme actually functioned is difficult to assess from the evidence available. PAC strategists looked forward to a time when "it will be necessary to organise large mobile units to operate in specified regions", when it would become imperative "as armed struggle intensifies to expand our armed forces to regular divisions".\(^5\) Perhaps in anticipation of this development much of the training offered to PAC recruits in their Libyan camps in the late 1970s was conventional infantry drill.\(^5\) In the 1980s, though, APLA was rather a small force and therefore many of the bureaucratic distinctions between specialised functions may have been more theoretical than real. We know that certain individuals often held more than one post: Romero Daniels Mofokeng, for example, Political Commissar, and after Phama the most senior APLA functionary, also served as Director of the PAC's Intelligence and Security Department. The very rapid ascension through the ranks to the Directorates that some officers enjoyed also suggests that the APLA's 'Reform Command' was really quite a modest establishment. Directors were sometimes directly involved in military operations. For example, Themba Nccayi, APLA's Director of Ideological Education between 1991 and 1992, joined APLA in 1983 as a platoon commander at the age of 22. He became a camp commander in 1988 and attended in 1989 a political training course in China. Shortly after his appointment as Director of Ideological Education he went to South Africa "to reinforce a team of fellow top APLA officers who were already working in the country".\(^5\) He was killed in a clash with South African police in February 1992. The deployment of senior officers in combat roles seems to have been a well established convention in APLA. Director of Operations, Enoch Zulu, was captured in South Africa in 1988 as was his deputy, Jan Shoba, one year earlier. Zulu's operational career began with his participation in the 1968 PAC/COREMO expedition. He served briefly, in 1980-81, as APLA commander. He was later convicted on charges which included involvement in Pogo activity in the Transkei in 1963 and was finally given amnesty in 1992.

As a consequence of the expulsion from the PAC in 1979 of Templeton Ntontala and his followers, who represented at that time the more experienced and more senior APLA generation, APLA Command was generally composed of quite young men. Sabelo Phama was one of the oldest officers. He was born in Umtata in 1949. He joined the PAC as a schoolboy in 1962. Matriculating in 1967, he studied at the University of the Witwatersrand and at Fort Hare, from which he was expelled in 1972. For three years he assisted his brother who ran a building firm and worked 'underground' for the PAC. During this time he became friends with Romero Daniels Mofokeng, six years his junior, an association which was to persist throughout the two men's later careers as guerrilla leaders. He left the country in 1975 and trained in China in 1976 at the Nanking Military Academy. For a while he served in the PAC's publicity department, helping to produce material for APLA soldiers. In 1978 he and four others infiltrated into the Transkei from Lesotho, and in the course of five months attempted to prepare the ground for guerrilla campaigning, establishing arms caches and setting up a network of safe houses.\(^9\) Arrested by the Transkei authorities in early 1979, the APLA men were released on bail two years later. Phama's absence from Dar es Salaam coincided with the worst period
of internecine leadership strife and he returned at the point when the PAC's new
chairman, John Pokela, was attempting to reconstruct APLA's command. Phama was
elected to the PAC's central committee in 1982 and was shortly thereafter made
Defence Secretary and APLA Commander.17

Estimates as to the size of Sabelo Phama's army vary. In the 1980s, police sources
suggested that the Tanzanian-based soldiers numbered between 300 and 750.13 One
hundred and fifty APLA cadres were thought to have trained in Libya between 1982
and 1986.14 Barrell, in 1989, cited anonymous PAC sources indicating a guerrilla
strength of less than 450 men and women.15 By 1991, police-informed authorities
suggested that APLA external force was about 800 with up to 120 operational inside
the country. Three hundred and fifty trainers were believed to have just
completed the Libyan course.16 In 1993, the Goldstone Commission was told by
police and military sources that APLA's Tanzanian establishment numbered 2 700
(allowing women and children) and, again, that about 120 APLA soldiers were
operational. Azania Combat reprinted the operational figure with apparent editorial
endorsement arguing that it demonstrated that their active deployment was three
times that of Umkhonto's in the 1980s.17 Sabelo Phama, in his 1993 New Year's
message, boasted that APLA's strength had then reached 10 000, including internally
trained fighters. He might have been referring to PASO members who had
undergone short one-week weapons handling courses administered by APLA in
Transkei and Botswana and who occasionally undertook operations under APLA
direction. Not to be outdone, in the same issue which printed Phama's speech,
Azania Combat18 suggested that APLA's strength had reached 15 000. In 1994, though,
only 8 000 candidates appeared on the list APLA submitted for enrolment into the
SANDF.19 By August 1995, about 5 500 former APLA combatants were serving in the
Defence Force.20

APLA OPERATIONS, 1990-1994

This period deserves separate consideration from APLA's previous activity. It begins
with the unbanning of the PAC and closes with the PAC's suspension of armed
struggle on 15 January, 1994. It is characterised by a significant expansion of
APLA operations, a consequence of easier access to South African territory as well
as the inception of local training, both of which were facilitated by the PAC's
legalisation.

In the aftermath of its unbanning, the PAC held a meeting in Harare to which it
invited members of the executive of the Pan-Africanist Movement, an Africanist
shadow organisation which had been formed in South Africa the previous year, led
by a mixture of Pogo veterans and a new generation of African trade unionists. PAM
agreed to merge with the PAC which itself decided to relocate to South Africa. At this
point, though, the PAC was determined to keep its external structures intact.
Zimbabwe's Minister for Political Affairs, Edison Zvogbo, warned the meeting of the
dangers of engaging in protracted negotiations with the South African authorities.21
Disputes within the PAC over the merits of taking part in negotiations were to
continue throughout the next two years. During this period the PAC's official position
maintained that any constitutional reforms should be debated by a democratically
elected constitutional assembly and that negotiations to establish such a body should be
held outside South Africa. Growing pressure from African governments as well as fears
among the PAC's leaders of the consequences of being left out of any political
settlement, prompted them to begin attending preparatory meetings for a multiparty

This was shortly after the formation of a United Front with the ANC and ninety other
political organisations. One month later, the PAC withdrew from these talks angered by
'bi lateral' agreements between the ANC and the government. It announced a campaign
of mass action against CODESA and in favour of an elected constitutional assembly.
This undertaking petered out after a comparatively decorous march on parliament by
a few hundred activists and a few anti-CODESA rallies. Meanwhile, the Pan-Africanist
Student Organisation began a programme of assaults on white teachers working in
townships, forcing the closure of five Katerchong schools.

By April 1992, there existed strong compulsions to return to the talks. At the PAC's third
national conference in Umtata, delegates heard arguments in favour of negotiation from
both Major-General Holomisa, the head of the Transkei, and the Organisation of
African Unity (OAU). A series of meetings began with South African Government
representatives and, in November 1992, the PAC announced its readiness to participate
in the multiparty forum. The PAC, announced President Clarence Makwetu, was
"refocusing on the ballot as a route to power''.22 The PAC's formal entry into the
Kempton Park Conference was delayed by a four-month argument with the government
over its refusal to suspend the armed struggle. In the end, with the ANC's help, the
Pan-Africanists prevailed and they became negotiators while APLA units continued
the armed struggle. The PAC's intransigence on this issue effectively diverted the
attention of its militant followers from their leaders' abandonment of the original
demand for an elected constitutional assembly.

These manoeuvrings took place against a backdrop of spiralling political violence.
Between the unbanning of the liberation movements in February 1990 and the election
of a Government of National Unity (GNU) in April 1994, 14 028 deaths were attributed
to political conflict, much of it between ANC and Inkatha supporters in Natal. APLA's
contribution to this carnage, though relatively minor, had a significant public impact
because unlike most of the victims, the casualties inflicted by APLA were, in increasing
numbers, white rather than black.

Precise and accurate statistics for APLA activity in this period are not available. Press
reportage is incomplete and confusing: press attention to APLA was sporadic and, in
any case, there were many other sources of politically motivated violence. Militarised
criminality confused the picture still further. APLA and PAC communiques were
sometimes at odds with each other and were sometimes demonstrably untrue. APLA's
journal, Azania Combat, when reporting military activity, usually confined itself to
reprinting information from South African newspapers. South African reportage tended
to rely on police statements. The following sketch of APLA activity in the 1990s reflects
the limited information available.

*In 1990 at least ten incidents were noted in the press, mainly attacks on policemen
and police stations. These were widely dispersed geographically, occurring in

111
In 1992 APLA insurgency more than quadrupled. Newspaper reports suggest that its members participated in 45 attacks on, or exchanges of fire with, police. The police informed the Goldstone Commission in January 1993 that APLA had carried out 41 attacks in the previous two years. At that time court proceedings against several captured insurgents were still pending and police would subsequently confirm APLA responsibility for more attacks in the period. PAC claims became increasingly inflated: APLA's journal suggested that 200 security forces had been killed by PAC combatants by August that year; and in January 1993, Sabela Phama boosted this figure to 500. Official SAP statistics indicate that 491 policemen died in 1992, a figure which probably inspired Phama's claim, but of these only 175 were 'killed in the execution of their duties'; many were probably murdered by ordinary criminals. Notwithstanding PAC exaggerations, 1992 was a busy year for APLA. There was a shift in emphasis in favour of civilian targets, with 12 attacks directed against farmers and a succession of armed assaults on restaurants, clubs and hotels, sometimes timed to coincide with special functions. An APLA unit was intercepted at a roadblock near the Transkei border after mounting a bank robbery in Mouton and four insurgents were shot dead. A man claiming APLA membership held up staff at the Foschini fashion store in Germiston, escaping with R100 000.

In his new year's address, Sabela Phama promised that 1993 would be 'The Year of the Great Storm'. Police statements confirm a significant stepping-up of the scale of operations with reports of 142 attacks, the great majority of them, 128, directed at farms. Police blamed all the farm attacks on APLA although it is possible that some of them may have been undertaken by other groups of armed activists, acting independently, as well as criminals. Twenty-eight of these farm attacks were in the Eastern Transvaal, a region hitherto unaffected by APLA operations. In some of the attacks, animals were mutilated, a tactic which recalled the style of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) operations in Zimbabwe during the Chirungu. Other civilian targets included hotels in Fort Beaufort and East London, a pub in Cape Town and worshippers at St James Church in Cape Town, 12 of whom were killed and 148 wounded by an APLA unit during a service on 25 July. At least 61 people, including 35 farmers and farmworkers and 3 policemen, were killed. APLA operations remained widely dispersed with an increased incidence of attacks in the Transvaal; APLA combatants appeared in court in July charged with robbing an Irving and Johnston warehouse on the East Rand; in April, gunfire aimed at passing cars in Wolvekruin killed a mother and her child, who, it seems, had originally intended for the occupants of a schoolbus. A four-man APLA unit had questioned local children in the vicinity about when the bus was due but had then failed to fire when it arrived, possibly because it looked empty.

Several characteristics of APLA operations merit comment. Firstly, they do suggest a relatively disciplined force, systematically deployed. The terrorist attacks of 1992 and 1993 were discriminating and methodical: APLA units used grenades and automatic weapons, preferring direct engagement with their targets rather than the more impersonal use of limpet mines which Umkhonto units favoured when attacking civilians. In contrast to Umkhonto, therefore, the majority of APLA's civilian victims were white, intentionally so. Until 1992 most APLA attacks were directed at policemen, or more rarely, soldiers and were usually confined to townships. In many APLA operations there was evidence of careful preparation and intelligence gathering. For example, at dawn on 5 May 1993, a police minibus was ambushed in Dobsonville from both sides of the road while waiting at a traffic light. The bus was carrying 23 passengers, returning to barracks after a night shift. Clearly the vehicle's daily route and programme were known to the attackers who had made their plans accordingly. The hotels which APLA units selected were attacked after reconnaissance, and offenders were timed to coincide with special functions. In the case of the King Williams Town golf club assault, APLA command claimed that the guest list at the banquet that night included off-duty security personnel. The occasion was in fact organised by a National Party MP, Ray Radue.

Police often commented on the evident sophistication of APLA operations; these were frequently two pronged affairs, with one group of men firing guns into the target area whilst other insurgents threw handgrenades from a different entrance. In rural operations, APLA soldiers appeared to have been taught to disguise their tracks, a level of fieldcraft suggesting training of a quite different order to that available to Umkhonto personnel in the 1980s. APLA units were armed with quite a wide range of weapons, including material used by South African security forces. Some guns were obviously obtained locally, either stolen from farms or bought from Umkhonto personnel. Armed robberies may have represented another kind of self-sufficiency: PAC leaders in the Transkei in 1992 exhorted followers to raise money by any means. With its heavy dependence upon OAU funding the PAC was always short of money, which may explain why senior APLA personnel were involved in mandrax smuggling into Zimbabwe. In the Eastern Cape, APLA units were based in the Transkei, where the Holomisa administration tolerated their presence in return for the use of APLA training facilities in East Africa by members of the Transkean Defence Force. Short training courses were offered at small encampments in forested areas along the Transkean border. This helps to account for the concentration of APLA activity in the Eastern Cape but the national distribution of APLA operations suggested that APLA units could function quite effectively without protected havens in independent homelands. Finally, in 1992 and 1993, the great majority of APLA operations were located in the countryside, reversing the emphasis between 1986 and 1991 on township-based activity.

What kinds of strategic considerations prompted these activities? APLA commanders publicly subscribed to Maoist guerrilla theory and were probably influenced by their historical alliance with ZANU, with whom they had shared training facilities in the late 1980s.
Widely dispersed rural attacks on undefended or lightly defended targets certainly conformed to Maoist prescriptions for the initial stage of protracted war. However, levels of APLA campaigning were not matched by proportional increases in militant political protest or industrial action, despite the existence of quite large trade unions and youth organisations sympathetic to, or affiliated with, the PAC. PASO supplied armed auxiliaries in APLA operations, but in general the PAC’s mass organisations did not undertake the kind of urban-based mobilisation which in Maoist theory is viewed as an indispensable companion to rural guerrilla operations. Even so, given the intensity of political violence in townships instigated by ANC and Inkatha supporters, APLA’s rural activity did represent quite a significant challenge to already hard-pressed South African soldiers and policemen. The form of insurgency chosen by APLA’s commanders made good sense if they wanted to maximise the impact of their quite limited firepower.

The overall purpose of APLA’s campaigning during the 1990s was quite simply stated by PAC Secretary-General, Barney Desai, shortly after his return to South Africa when he wrote in the Sunday Star that “we hold the simple truth that what has not been won on the battlefield will never be won at the negotiating table.” In 1991, PAC leadership was ready to acknowledge that the movement had “failed to overthrow the South African State through revolutionary means” and that “the military force of the state (was) intact” and that furthermore the PAC itself did not at that time have the resources to offer a serious armed challenge. CRC Star journalist, Kaizer Nyatumba, met Sabelo Phama in Harare in 1990. During this encounter, Nyatumba recalled later, “Phama emphasized that the PAC’s armed struggle was not war for war’s sake and a time would come when arms would be laid down to give peace a chance.”

Subsequent PAC rhetoric suggested a rather different vision. Phama, for example, in 1992 appeared on Bop TV promising that APLA would “continue striking until the regime is forced to hand over power to the indigenous African majority.” At about the same time the PAC Youth Department issued a statement which suggested that the South African police and army could be “wiped out of existence.” “True liberation will come about principally from the barrel of a gun”, was another Phama maxim which appeared quite frequently in APLA propaganda. The bellicose sloganising as well as the timing of major APLA operations - the attack on restaurants and clubs began just after the PAC announced its willingness to participate in multiparty talks - encouraged press speculation that APLA’s commanders were deliberately trying to undermine a negotiated bid led by their more moderate civilian comrades. This seems unlikely. Rather, from the perspective of APLA’s hierarchy, attacks such as mentioned above served two quite different purposes. First, they enhanced the PAC’s popular stature at a time when it was undertaking a political manoeuvre which risked censure from its most assertive partners: for the previous two years PAC leaders had insisted they would not negotiate for anything other than an elected constituent assembly. Barney Alexander insisted that such incidents as the King Williams town golf club attack reaped immediate political dividends: “in the past nine days we have experienced an unusual surge of membership” he told journalists. Opinion polling later suggested that a substantial minority of young people living in cities strongly approved of APLA’s activities. Secondly, PAC leaders apparently believed that APLA’s killings of whites “had forced those orchestrating conflict in the townships to retreat”, pointing to a decline in political violence statistics in the first months of 1993. This, though, may have been an ex post facto justification of such actions rather than their preconceived strategic purpose.

A statement by Sabelo Phama in July 1993, that he would find it acceptable to lose five million people as the price for true liberation suggests that reducing the numbers of black civilian casualties of political conflict did not rank very high amongst APLA’s strategic priorities. PAC and APLA leaders usually justified killing white civilians by suggesting that in a militarised society they were indistinguishable from the security forces: “even children are taught to shoot in school”, Sabelo Phama asserted in an interview conducted with the Sowetoan in December 1992. However, there were apparently limits to what the PAC’s top leadership was willing to sanction. APLA Information secretary, Johnny Majizi, dismissed responsibility for the St James Church massacre and Desai told reporters that the PAC was not to blame for the Walkerville shootings, offering condolences to those who had died; race war was counterproductive and not PAC policy, he added. On the ground, PAC cadres were less circumspect. A man held up at an APLA roadblock near Alberton was told by one of his assailants: “you must know that 1993 is the year of terror. Old white people and white children will be murdered.” The PAC youth’s subculture was distinctive for the brutality of its discourse. At an APLA anniversary rally in Cape Town children wore T-shirts bearing slogans reading: “Kill them, APLA, butcher them”. PAC regional chairman, Theo Mabusela, told his audience to expect harsh reprisals from the authorities “just because a master has died”, a reference to the recent murder of an American exchange student by PASO members.

Appreciating APLA’s strategic logic in the light of narrow military criteria suggests that as far as its top echelon leadership was concerned, APLA’s campaigning was inspired by quite careful calculations. For a very small operational force, APLA cadres were really rather effective, though their military impact continued to be constrained by the logistical difficulties confronting an externally located command remote from operations. Certainly, before 1990, the PAC’s military made only a minor contribution to a guerrilla insurgency, the historical importance of which was to be chiefly symbolic. In the years which followed, though, their scale of operations and the political impact of these began to rival Umkhonto’s earlier deployment. APLA operations were distinctive for their rural emphasis, their careful targeting, and their ferocity. APLA soldiers were comparatively well trained and disciplined for members of a guerrilla force, and in their preference for direct engagement they often showed considerable dedication. As far as we know, APLA’s command structure remained free of high level police infiltration, despite the involvement and capture of senior officers in the field.

Evaluating APLA’s achievements within a broader political context suggests different and less favourable conclusions. In the 1990s, the politically critical consideration was no longer the successful mobilisation of a militant activist minority but rather the gaining of electoral support. By the 1990s, opinion polls suggested that while guerrilla heros pleased young militants they alienated the older voting majority. In the April 1994.
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THE UNION AND SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE - 1912 TO 1994

Bill Sass

INTRODUCTION

At the start of the negotiations which led to the April 1994 elections in South Africa and the election of Nelson Mandela as President, there was no military 'balance of power' in South Africa or in the region. Nor was there a threat of a major escalation in confrontation between the armed forces of the white led government and those under the broad aegis of the African National Congress (ANC). In fact, the South African Defence Force (SADF) was a veritable Goliath in the region, previously launching raids into neighbouring countries with impunity and apparently invincible. In comparison, the military strength of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the ANC, was negligible and the other resistance movements were hardly considered as armed opposition to the SADF. The belief in the invincibility of the SADF, however, was founded on political sand, for since 1984, South Africa had become engulfed in a rising tide of popular, mass-based resistance to National Party policies and racially exclusive power. Following the decolonisation of Mozambique and Angola, the defeat of white Rhodesia and the implementation of United Nations Resolution 435 in Namibia, the geo-strategic position of the minority government in South Africa worsened steadily. Until the late eighties, the SADF followed a strategy of 'forward defence in depth'. It defended the country against what many in government viewed as an external, communist inspired threat of subversion and terror, through support of its proxy forces such as the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) and the Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique (RENAMO), support for friendly neighbouring countries, punishment in particular for countries harbouring ANC insurgents, and the development of an isolated, siege economy and state.

Three events opened the door to a negotiated settlement in South Africa. The first was the pressure of financial sanctions on South Africa, culminating in the debt-standstill agreement, negotiated by the country in 1985. Both local business and state economists saw the writing on the wall and private sector pressure on the government increased in tandem with the loss of confidence in the South African economy.

The second event was the collapse of communism. For decades, successive generations of South African politicians had warned of the communist threat and proclaimed that South Africa was the last bastion against communism in Africa. With the fall of the Berlin Wall on 3 October 1989 this argument became invalid. The National Party and those who had politically painted themselves into a constitutional comer found that the ground had moved under their feet. The replacement of an ailing P W Botha by F W de Klerk as State President - the supposed conservative 'Crown Prince' of the National Party - was the deciding factor. The baton was passed from one generation to the next. Whereas P W Botha saw the continued development of South Africa subject to gradual change guaranteed by force and military might, De Klerk was wary of the military's power. Within a matter of months after becoming State President, he downgraded military intelligence and restored both the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Intelligence Service to their previous roles. The National Security Management System, used by Botha and the security elements to exercise pre-eminence power, suffered a similar fate, tentatively at first, but eventually through a process that effectively neutered security force influence in national affairs and in the conduct of international relations.

Many analysts outside South Africa were surprised by the apparent boldness with which the SADF accepted their impending loss of power and influence. For months after the announcement in 1990 that lifted the ban on the liberation movements - the ANC, MK, the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) - foreign embassies and their intelligence officers in South Africa would scurry around, trying to find the first signs of the inevitable military threat to the settlement process or worse, evidence of a military coup d'etat that surely had to follow. Gradually, as the SADF became more transparent, observers gradually came to accept the obvious and only explanation for the support that it provided to the settlement process - that over decades the Afrikaner had developed an indigenous professional military culture within the SADF that could withstand the temptation to restore the status quo by force of arms. For years the SADF had preached that a political instead of a military solution was needed. Now its acceptance of change proved its belief in and support for political leadership. Its ability to accept a political decision, no matter how unpalatable, had already become evident prior to the Namibian settlement, when the SADF had withdrawn from a real position of political power.

The SADF was considered as the power base of former State President P W Botha. It must therefore rank as the supreme irony that the SADF, the symbol of racial oppression and regional destabilisation, cemented the transition from white domination when, during the national election of April 1994, it stepped in to assist the Independent Electoral Commission in its administration and ensured the success of the election which would inevitably bring the ANC to power.

At midnight on 27 April 1994 (election night), the SADF ceased to exist and was replaced by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). This chapter presents an overview of the former SADF from its inception in 1912 as the Union Defence Force (UDF) to that date. In tracing its growth, the steady development of professionalism in the Defence Force should be evident - perhaps the most important structural change to contribute to the transition to majority rule in 1994.

Of all the steps P W Botha took to lead South Africa to a peaceful future - the Triangular Parliament, the negotiations leading to South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and with Nelson Mandela - his most lasting achievement was that he imbued into the SADF a disciplined acceptance of the principle that they served the political decision-makers. Senior SADF officers may have disliked it when the political leadership was transferred to De Klerk and then to Mandela, but no overt attempt was made to change this chain of events.
EARLY HISTORY
The UDF was established in terms of the **SA Defence Act**, No. 13 of 1912. At its inception, it was an army only, which included a medical corps. Before World War I, volunteers for naval service served in a local branch of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) or joined the Royal Navy (RN) as full-time members. At that time, the few air forces in existence formed part of either the navy or the army. South Africa had none. Prior to 1912 and the formation of the UDF, each of the Boer Republics (ZAR and OVS) and the British Colonies (Cape and Natal) had developed their own militia systems. Those of the Boer Republics were based on the commando system which originated from the first **Vryburgers** in 1658. In the British colonies, militia regiments - forerunners of the present Citizen Force - were formed. The UDF and later the SADF, built their reputation and success on their part-time forces - their Commandos and Citizen Force, as well as conscripts - who comprised the bulk of the actual fighting men in both World Wars and during the war in the former South-West AfricaAngola. The formation of regular full-time, combat units for the army only got under way in recent times, when conscription was phased out.

No sooner had the UDF been formed than, in 1914, the world was plunged into World War I. For the newly formed UDF, barely ten years after the end of the Anglo-Boer War, participation in the 'war to end all wars' started with crushing an armed rebellion by die-hard independent Boers, seeking to rid themselves of British domination. This was a time of **broedertwist**, brother against brother. Senior Afrikaner officers in the UDF were called on to act against their former comrades - man who had fought side-by-side with them against the British. Thereafter the UDF occupied German South-West Africa (Namibia), thus starting an association with that region which was to last until 1994, when the enclave of Walvis Bay, where Louis Botha had landed in 1915, was finally handed over to the Republic of Namibia and ceased being part of South Africa.

After the campaign in German South-West Africa, the UDF fought in East Africa and the Middle East and on the Western Front in France. Here the 1st Brigade was to earn particular recognition for its valour under fire at Delville Wood. Subsequent to this battle and thereafter, the 1st Brigade had to be reinforced and reconstituted substantially on several occasions, as excessive casualties wore it down. World War I also saw heavy casualties to coloured soldiers during the battle for Sand Hill and to black soldiers with the sinking of the 'Mendi', but until recently the contribution and sacrifices of South African non-white soldiers during both World Wars, remained largely unrecorded.

AFTER WORLD WAR I
Between the two World Wars, the UDF established the South African Air Force (SAAF) in 1920, making it the second oldest independent air force in existence, as well as the South African Naval Services (SANS) in 1922. The UDF was used internally during these years, particularly in the miners' strike of 1922, when J C Smuts, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, used aircraft and artillery against targets in Johannesburg, and Commandos and Citizen Forces regiments acted against the white strikers, led by the Communist Party of South Africa. Actions against uprisings such as the 'Bondeluwat Revolt' were also carried out. However, these years were characterised in general by shrinking budgets and public apathy, to such an extent that the Naval Service was disbanded in 1934.

The outbreak of World War II saw the navy re-established as the South African Seaward Defence Forces (SASDF) and the rapid expansion and re-equipment of the SA Army and SAAF. Local production of weapons, ammunition and other military equipment increased dramatically. South African forces, composed of men and women of all races, served extensively in East and North Africa, Italy and throughout the Middle East. Not only did the SA Army participate in the major battles, for example El Alamein and Tobruk, the capture of Madagascar and the attack on the Gothic Line in Italy, but the SAAF and the SASDF also made substantial contributions in several theatres, such as aerial support to the beleaguered Warsaw. South Africa also provided much of the communication services, as well as extensive medical services, throughout Africa and in the Middle East. Yet the war was expensive, both in material and, more importantly, in human lives. At its maximum strength in North Africa prior to Tobruk and Sidi Rezegh, the 1st SA Corps under the command of General Brink, with 1st Division (Planaar) and 2nd Division (Klopper), was deployed. However, after the 5th Brigade was destroyed at Sidi Rezegh and 2nd Division Headquarters (HQ) and two of its brigades overrun at Tobruk, the UDF could only maintain a single division outside the country. To achieve this, large numbers of coloured and black soldiers volunteered and served with distinction in North Africa, where the 1st Division fought on until after the El Alamein offensive and subsequently in Italy, where the re-formed 5th Armoured Division was to participate until the end of the war. At the outbreak of World War II, practically no modern equipment was available, but by the end of the War, South Africa had developed a respectable armaments industry, producing nearly 6 000 armoured cars, some 600 artillery guns, light tanks, and ammunition of all types.

After the War, the UDF again suffered major budget cuts, although a limited amount of modern weapons (Canturon tanks and Saracen armoured personnel carriers), ships (SAS Proteus, Seyen and Kruger) and aircraft (Vampire/Sabre) were introduced. It was during the Second World War and in Korea that South Africa, established a sound reputation for solid, conventional soldiering and confronted its ongoing problems of lack of men, money and materials required to maintain its standards.

At this stage, Afrikaner nationalism triumphed with the National Party's victory at the polls in 1948. Whereas South African international and internal relations had thus far been dominated by the British versus Boer struggle, henceforth it would be race and colour that were to dominate politics. While not a first priority for the National Party, it was merely a matter of time before Afrikanerisation of the military commenced. To this end, a programme of affirmative action was undertaken, sidelining English speaking officers, renaming military ranks such as second lieutenant to field corporal, lieutenant colonel to commandant etc. In the process, the army in particular, became dominated by Afrikaners, while the navy remained more British oriented both in terms of officers and customs. The Air Force was caught somewhere in between.

After Minister Frans Erasmus took over the defence portfolio in 1948, the UDF increasingly became a low-funded, peace-time organisation with both the SAAF and the...
SAN numbers almost equivalent to the full-time strength of the Army. The small size of the army led to the navy being used extensively to support the police during the 1948/49 Zulu Riots in Durban. By the early 1950s, the army had no full-time operational battalions left and was developing only as a training organisation.

Persons who were bailed and selected for training were initially called up for a three month period, later reduced to two months, before being posted to the Citizen Force.

In 1948 the SAAF participated in the world’s largest airborne humanitarian effort, the Berlin Airlift. During this period, the Flying Cheetahs, an SAAF Squadron - initially flying propeller-driven Mustangs and then Sabre jet aircraft - participated as part of United Nations Forces during the Korean War (1950 - 1953). This was to be the last South African contribution to Western or United Nations operations, before its politics turned the country into a pariah and made the SADF into an unacceptable ally.

In 1957 the UDF became the South African Defence Force (SADF) in terms of the Defence Act, No. 44 of 1957. This set the seal on the 1948 victory by the National Party over the former pro-British United Party that had dominated the Union Defence Force. The new Defence Act replaced the British system of the Military Disciplinary Code and Queens Regulations and established a new South African military legal system. This included the change in name to the South African Defence Force.

British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech in Cape Town heralded the next and decisive decade in South African history. This was followed on 21 March 1960 by the Sharpeville shootings that led to the declaration of a national state of emergency and the first call-up since World War II of major portions of the part-time forces. On 31 May 1961, South Africa became a Republic and withdrew from the British Commonwealth, a move that had dramatic and lasting effects on the SADF’s equipment policy, military strategy and overseas training. Of even more dramatic effect was the deployment of SADF elements in support of the police against Pogo, the PAC’s armed bands and for a three-month period of the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA), in the Cape and Pondoland. On 16 December 1961, the ANC established its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and adopted sabotage as the first step in its armed campaign to induce political change. In less than ten years after the Korean War, the SADF had changed from being a conventional force aligned with the larger Western communities of nations, to the armed force of a state under siege.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE: THE YEARS OF COMBAT

As the National Party pursued its race-based policies, South African isolation increased and its defence focus became increasingly localised. South and Southern Africa became the battlefields of the future, instead of Europe or the Middle East. The surge of anti-colonial wars and the forecast by Macmillan in 1960 that self-determination will sweep across Africa, conveyed the warning that the SADF would in future have to manage by itself. In time, white South Africa would develop and execute its own version of 'forward defence in depth', consisting of a gradual build-up of resources and increased counter-insurgency operations in support of neighbouring governments, until South Africa was recognised as the regional military leader.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd, South Africa prepared to defend itself. For the SADF, the next few years entailed a change in the system of part-time forces, culminating in the two year conscription system and the establishment of numerous new full-time units for white conscripts, as well as separate combat units composed of black, coloured or Indian volunteers. Assistance to the neighbouring Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola and, after 1966, to Rhodesia, as well as a general expansion and improved training and equipping of the SADF, followed. Having left Britain and the Commonwealth, the SADF found new mentors and sources of defence equipment, initially in France, until the imposition of a United Nations mandatory arms embargo on 8 November 1977, and thereafter in Israel. Compared to the early 1990s, the defence budget started to increase and with it the competence of the local defence industry, despite a tightening arms embargo.

Demands for manpower led to the increased recruitment of blacks, both in South Africa and South-West Africa. Although serving an ethnically mobilised state, the SADF nominally involved all races and, to a much lesser degree, both sexes. After World War II, the previous UDF organisations, both white and non-white, were reduced as the army demobilised and became a (white) Permanent Force of instructors and administrators. Non-white servicemen served in support functions (non-combatant) such as drivers. Since the early sixties this started to change and training for combat duties was introduced, initially with the establishment of a unit for coloured members at Eerste River in 1963 (the Cape Corps). They not only supplied all mustering, but also provided officers for their own and other units and served extensively in Ovamboland in northern South-West Africa. South Africans of Indian extraction served initially in the SAN and later in all arms of the Service. The SADF also formed several black or ethnic infantry battalions for its own use, of which some took part in operations in South-West Africa.

In 1973, a black combat unit (21 Battalion and later destined to become the black military college or school) was created. In 1979, a number of ethnic curm regional units were established and attached to regional commands. By 1989, these regional battalions included 111 Battalion based at Amsterdam (Swaziland), 113 Battalion at Letaba Ranch (Shangaan), 114 Battalion at Megan (Northern Sotho), and 121 Battalion at Dukuduku (Zulu). Indian volunteers served at the now disbanded SAS Jassana and Coloured volunteers at Eerste River. More controversial, however, was 32 Battalion composed of Angolan soldiers and led by SADF and ex-Portuguese officers. It was formed in 1979 following the collapse of the Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA) in Angola. By early 1986, the SADF already had an estimated 13 600 black (coloured, Indian and African) members, and was increasingly making use of these groups to satisfy its personnel requirements.
Forces, South African battalions, respectively 112 Battalion and 141 Battalion, were transferred to them to form their nucleus.

At this stage, operations against both MK and APLA were still the concern of the South African Police (SAP) and were conducted both within South Africa and beyond its borders. On 26 August 1986, the police engaged, for the first time, armed insurrects from the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the military wing of SWAPO, that had slipped across the border at Umguumbashe in Ovamoboland. The attack was successfully repulsed and Prime Minister Vorster declared that he had instructed the police to “act against the terrorists as though the country was in a state of war”. More sensational news was to follow. At the end of 1987, Prime Minister Vorster announced that units of the SAP were actively involved in the “struggle against terrorism in Rhodesia”. This led to the deployment of several SAP companies, up to 2000 men at a time, with seconded individual SAP members, particularly medical personnel and helicopter pilots. SADF members attended training in Rhodesia and Portuguese controlled Angola. Logistic aid to these states also started. The “bush war” in Rhodesia and the counter-insurgency operations in Ovamoboland, however, were not isolated historical events. Separately and jointly they were to constitute protracted paramilitary service by the police in Rhodesia up to 1976, and in Ovamoboland up to 1973, and again from 1978 onwards.

From 1973, the SADF started deploying soldiers in South-West Africa against SWAPO. Initially these operations were classical counter-insurgency operations (COIN) against rural guerrillas. In time, their scope and intensity increased, leading to “hot-pursuit” operations into Angola. Following the coup in Portugal in 1974, the hitherto anti-colonial liberation struggle in Angola erupted into full-scale civil war. Encouraged by the executive branch of the United States Government, South Africa invaded Angola in support of UNITA in 1976 with Operation Savannah following as the SADF’s first major operational experience since the Korean War. There was no declaration of war and the South African public knew little of what was happening. It was through the lessons learnt along the dusty roads to Luanda with the South Africans eventually turning back within sight of the city, that the modern SADF was born. For, in spite of preparations up to then, Savannah had shown critical shortcomings in the tactics and weapons inventory of the SADF, particularly with regard to artillery.

Operations in Angola were semi-conventional, opposed to the counter-insurgency operations that the SADF conducted in the northern part of South-West Africa. As time passed, a policy of utilising local inhabitants in the war in South-West Africa was applied, with the majority of the troops eventually supplied by the SWA Territory Force (SWATF). In 1974, 1 Ovambo Battalion was established and formed the beginning of what soon became a formidable force. Eventually, the SADF supplied only specialist and conventional troops, and most of the leadership elements. Despite the fact that the introduction of conscription in South-West Africa met with only limited success, sufficient volunteers were available to ensure that the majority of the operations in this campaign were fought by local soldiers. By the late seventies, however, the burden of white male conscription had become expensive for white South Africa.

Against a backdrop of ongoing international negotiations, the fighting in South-West Africa/Angola continued and intensified. South Africa followed the conviction that the war had to be carried to SWAPO, and preferably fought by proxy, i.e. through UNITA. Politically, the military objective appeared to be aimed at either dividing Angola in two - central and southern Angola dominated by UNITA, with the northern part of the country under MPLA control - or establishing UNITA dominance over the whole of the country. It was evident that no settlement was possible in South-West Africa without the resolution of the conflict in Angola.

International pressure was mounting, however, as was Cuban and Soviet support for the MPLA. Inevitably, this steady raised the stakes for South Africa. As the South African forces fanned out into southern Angola, they were increasingly operating under constant threat from the air. The armed confrontation culminated in Operations Modular, Packer and Hooper in southern Angola during 1987 and 1988, against the Cuban/MPLA forces, with the final stand-off at Cuito Cuanavale. Much has been written about the success of each side in these battles where the Angolan/Cuban forces started out, for the second year running, with a major campaign to crush UNITA finally, and where UNITA, with limited SADF support (never more than 3,000 soldiers), intended to halt the threat to its headquarters at Jamba and create a ‘safe zone’. The combined South African/UNITA forces had forced the Cuban/MPLA force back to Cuito, but hesitated long enough to give the retreating forces time to dig in and prepare a deliberate defence. UNITA did not have the heavy conventional forces to take Cuito and the South Africans were not prepared to risk suffering heavy casualties amongst their own forces. For the first time since the start of the war, the South Africans had not achieved their objective. With negotiations proceeding apace, both Cuba and South Africa now found reasons to extricate themselves and leave the two Angolan groups to their own war.

Negotiations and settlements in South-West Africa/Angola had been the subjects of continuing debates at the United Nations for many years. On 29 September 1978, United Nations Resolution 435 was passed, setting out the restriction to bases and eventual withdrawal and/or disarmament of both South African and SWAPO forces. Chester Crocker, the United States Assistant Secretary of State from 1981 to 1989, has recorded how, at the start of his term of office, he took over negotiations which continued in one form or another through all his years of service. This had little or no effect on the war, which continued and escalated. By 1988/89, however, the demise of the Soviet Union and its new attitude of glasnost and perestroika, had created a new negotiation scenario. As part of the political trade-off, the ANC lost their important Angolan training bases where most MK training was conducted.

One of the inevitable results of the settlement was that SWATF was disbanded in 1989. At the time of its disbandment, the force had eight full-time combat battalions, specialist, support and training units, a Citizen Force Brigade (all arms) and an imposing area-force (Commando) system. SWATF was larger than the military of more than forty other African states, and larger than the combined forces of Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland. The final SWATF/SAADF operation in northern South-West Africa occurred in 1989, just before the cease-fire agreement came into effect, when SWAPO tried during the night of 31 March/1 April 1989, in contravention of negotiations, to enter the country in force and establish permanent bases in Ovamoboland, a feat they had never been able
to achieve by force of arms during the war. Demobilised elements of SWATF, such as 101 Ovamboland Battalion (formerly 1 Ovamboland Battalion) were recalled to service and one more bloody battle ensued, with SWAPO suffering heavy casualties and a massive loss of international prestige.

Negotiations in, amongst others, London, Brazzaville and Cairo, led to the signing of the New York Accord at the United Nations headquarters on 22 December 1989, with the SADF withdrawing, first to Walvis Bay and eventually to South Africa. At midnight on 21 March 1990, South-West Africa ceased to exist and Namibia was born. The last country in the region, Angola, South-West Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique - which had isolated South Africa from the rest of the continent - had fallen. From now on the struggle for South Africa would be fought at home.

In South Africa, the SADF found itself involved in increased support for the SA Police, with occasional Special Force or SAAF raids into a neighbouring state against ANC bases. By now, shrinking budgets and rationalisation of personnel started to erode the force's ability, while problems of equipment were surfacing especially in the SAAF and SAN.

MANPOWER PROCUREMENT

The combat capacity of the UDF/SADF rested on its part-time forces. Despite the fact that the Defence Act of 1912 was based on the principle that the defence of the Union was the voluntary responsibility of every individual (white male) citizen, the Act provided for a ballot system to compel certain white male citizens to undergo military training over a period of four years between their seventeenth and twenty-fifth year. This system was, however, only activated in 1953 after the Second World War. Prior to this, the Active Citizen Force was essentially composed of volunteers. From 1953 a selected ballot system was used, calling up a limited number of ballotees for initial training of three months, followed by three camps of 21 days each. In the late 1950s the initial training period was reduced to two months with camps spread over alternative years. By the early 1960s the system demanded nine months of training and five camps, and, with few exceptions, all ballotees were selected to attend training.

Furthermore, since its inception, the UDF/SADF employed auxiliaries. They were mainly males of all races who did not meet the academic or other selection criteria for regular service in the Permanent Forces, and were employed in a lesser but permanent capacity to perform certain guard, maintenance and drivers' tasks. Auxiliaries were divided into a combat and non-combat branch, with some serving as stretcher bearers and medical orderlies, and as counter-insurgency infantry.

Following the recommendation of the Groenewoud Committee, a compulsory national service system for eighteen year-old medically fit white males, was introduced on 1 January 1988. In January 1978, the initial period of national service was increased to a period not exceeding 24 months. From January 1993, the total service commitment period of Citizen Force personnel, subsequent to the completion of their initial training period, was extended to 720 days over a period of twelve years.

In December 1988, it was announced that the initial period of training would be reduced from 24 months to twelve with effect from January 1990. In 1993 it was announced that from January 1994, a new volunteer military system (VMS) of one year initial training and eight camps of thirty days will come into effect. A maximum of 6 000 selected, matriculated, volunteers (VMS) were accepted for training, but the possibility of balloting remained part of defence legislation. A flexible range of terms of service, including short service (2 - 6 years), medium service (approximately 10 years) and long service (up to mandatory retirement age of 65 years), replaced the old Permanent Force system, whereby members had to resign if they wished to terminate their service. In the past, a large number of voluntary shorter service contracts were available and many people were employed by the SADF in a semi-permanent capacity. The new flexible service periods formalised this and abolished a variety of different contract systems and various conditions of short service. Privileges similar to those of other civil servants, such as pensions after ten years service and vacation leaves, were enjoyed by the full-time members of the SADF. Selection for long service attestation was made mostly from medium service members and those previously classified as Permanent Force.

The original purpose of the conscription system was to establish a sufficiently large trained pool of manpower for mobilisation. The abolition of conscription in South Africa made the existing strength of the part-time forces practically unsustainable, resulting in a massive reduction in the availability of forces for mobilisation. The Minister of Defence stated in reply to a question in Parliament in 1994 that, since the introduction of the moratorium on prosecuting part-time members failing to respond to a call-up, the figure had dropped, in some cases, to approximately 10% of the total call-up for a 21 day camp. This contrasted to the 1980s when an 80% response to a 90 day call-up was the norm, and even to April 1994 (at the time of the elections), when close to 40% responded.

By the late 1980s, white conscription provided an annual intake of roughly 20 000 conscripts. This figure already started to decline as a result of a lowered population growth among white South Africans. In spite of anti-conscription campaigns, the reporting figure for both national service and Citizen Force or Commando call-ups remained high (80%) throughout the 1980s. Even towards the time when conscription was abolished, those refusing to comply with call-up orders and willing to face prosecution, or avoiding military service by emigrating, were negligible in number. The change to a Volunteer Military Service (VMS) further reduced the numbers being fed into the part-time forces, while the outflow remained constant.

The maximum number of part-time Force members available for call-up, have been estimated at approximately 500 000, consisting of the Citizen Force (approximately 120 000), the Commandos (approximately 130 000) and the Reserves (approximately 150 000). However, throughout the history of the SADF, the availability of armaments and equipment has always been the main limiting factor. During the Second World War, South Africa had more than 334 000 volunteers serving, comprising members of both sexes and all racial groups. Given these figures, it seems feasible that a fully mobilised strength of 500 000 could have been achieved and maintained in the SADF. Such a figure could allow 100 000 members designated for service in the SAAF, SAN and SAMS; 100 000 manning headquarters, training units and logistics infra-structure; 100 000 supporting the SA Police (something that was also necessary during World War II); and
of approximately 33,000 men, conducting COIN and conventional operations). However, equipment shortages, particularly resulting from the arms embargo, would have left this force without appropriate equipment and would have forced it to rely on obsolete weapons and vehicles, and equipment commandeered from civilian sources.

Female members serving in the SADF were not trained for combat, but served as administrative, medical, logistical, communications and catering staff. The SADF also had a large component of civil servants (non-uniformed members) who were subject to the Public Service Act and not the Defence Act. In the early part of 1984, there were approximately 24,000 permanent and temporary civilians providing essential administrative support. Posts ranged from typists, solitary clerical assistants at Citizen Force units, and gardeners, to doctors, marine engineers and managerial experts. Civilians, however, were not employed as combatants.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NSMS)

The SADF played a major role in the creation and functioning of the National Security Management System (NSMS), as part of the 'total strategy' to overcome the 'total onslaught'. The Security Intelligence and State Security Council Act, No 64 of 1972, provided, inter alia, for the establishment of a State Security Council (SSC) with the Prime Minister (later State President) as chairman, and the Minister of Defence and Chief of the South African Defence Force (CSADF) both as members. Other departments represented on the Council by the minister and the most senior official, were the Departments of Law and Order, Foreign Affairs and Justice, the National Intelligence Service, as well as specific other appointments such as the senior cabinet minister, if he was not already a member of the SSC. In terms of Section 5, the functions of the SSC were to advise the government, at the request of the Prime Minister, with regard to the security of the country, and the manner in which relevant policy or strategy should be implemented and executed. The SSC also advised on policy to combat any particular threat to the security of the country and assisted in determining intelligence priorities.

One of the most significant changes during the 1980s was the militarisation of the country to face the 'revolutionary war', with the armed forces and police beginning to play an increasingly assertive role in the day-to-day administration of affairs. In March 1986, the government acknowledged the existence of the NSMS. Under the system, Joint Management Centres (JMCs) had been set up in major urban areas of the country, based on the Economic Development Areas. The government claimed that the JMCs were created to identify sources of unrest and conflict in the early stages and to co-ordinate the functioning of all government departments below cabinet level. There were also sixty sub-JMCs (sub-committees) and more than 400 mini-JMCs at local government level, spreading the system into the furthest reaches of the country.

Although all government departments were compelled to serve on JMC structures, they were dominated by the police and the army, who were more decentralised in

The much criticised domination of the JMC by the SADF was largely a result of the existence within the SADF, particularly the army, of an effective, national infrastructure, a decentralised command and control authority to use and allocate resources for a variety of purposes, as well as the trained reserve manpower to rapidly translate local decisions into practice. When F W de Klerk abolished the JMC system and its 'dominating securocrats', he found that many decisions requiring urgent action by a combination of government departments were not translated into the same rapid action at the lower levels.

During the State of Emergency declared in 1985 and again in 1986, lasting in some areas until 1990, the JMC in particular, with its regional and local committees, co-ordinated the response of the South African state against the rising tide of crowd and mass violence and terrorism, and in attempts to improve local welfare conditions. If problems could not be solved at lower levels in the JMC system, they were forwarded to the next level, eventually arriving at the National JMC under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister of Law and Order, initially Adriaan Vlok, then Roelf Meyer and eventually Leon Wessels. The chairman occupied a position of considerable power, having direct access to the State President and to cabinet.

CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS

As the 'Total Onslaught/Anti-Apartheid' liberation struggle intensified, it not only spilled over into other countries, but also affected the lives of people far removed from the scene of conflict. With the support and encouragement of Prime Minister P W Botha (later State President), and Defence Minister Magnus Malan, the SADF took the lead in 'educating' the National Party leadership and the civil service bureaucracy in the revolutionary threat facing the country. National Party policies had, by now, reached a constitutional dead-end with the tricameral parliament and OWN and General Affairs divisions, national states and self-governing areas. It was left to the security forces to impose solutions in matters that the politicians could not resolve, or, at best, simply to hold the fort. The international arms embargo, as well as the absence of another government agency to undertake specific activities - in particular after the demise of the former Department of Information - led to the Department of Defence taking on an increasing number of clandestine operations that would normally have been outside its mandate.
In order to circumvent the arms embargo, the Armaments Corporation of South Africa (ARMSCOR) bought and sold arms, equipment and technology on the black market. A large number of front companies were set up, middlemen and agents were commissioned and falsified documents used to describe transactions. A ‘no questions asked’ policy was followed. ARMSCOR performed its task with spectacular success. From 1988 it had assumed the responsibility of meeting the armaments requirements of South Africa and developing armaments for export. Its successes were such that, despite the arms embargo, South Africa became the tenth largest international armaments supplier and developer of sophisticated defence equipment.

Amongst others, ARMSCOR developed prototypes of an assault helicopter (Reoolwak), light turboprop trainer aircraft, twin automatic 35 mm anti-aircraft guns mounted on the stretched ‘Rooklaf’ Armoured Car chassis, long range anti-tank guided missiles mounted on the ‘Rate’ chassis and recently a new main battle tank. Many of these systems were aimed at the export market, as local budget restrictions limited the demand from the SADF. Only major products, such as modern jet fighters and large warships, remained beyond the scope of the local defence industry, mainly because of development costs and a limited market. In effect, the arms embargo served mainly to make South Africa almost self-sufficient in the provision of equipment and weapons for its Army. Operational requirements and the embargo, furthermore, stimulated the development of nuclear devices, an intermediate range ballistic missile and a satellite, and established ARMSCOR as a world leader in anti-missile vehicles. However, the SAAF and SAN, whose main equipment requirements depended largely on foreign sources and involved considerable expense, were hard hit by the constraints of the arms embargo.

Working on the principle that ‘my enemy’s enemy is my ally’, the SADF directly supported UNITA, RENAMO and, to a limited extent, Inkatha. RENAMO benefited from logistic support and training assistance, while support to UNITA covered the full spectrum of logistic and humanitarian aid, through training and provision of specialists and even full operational deployment of CF Units, at large annual expense. At the same time, these movements who were allied to or recognised by the South African Government, also benefited from clandestine aid from a variety of other sources, such as the United States. UNITA further financed its war through trade in diamonds and ivory, the latter with assistance from the SADF.

The Harms Commission revealed in 1990 that, within the framework of the Special Forces, the Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) was set up to conduct clandestine operations within the country. It consisted mainly of ex-police officers secretively, and was allegedly involved in anything from murder to bribery and intimidation. A variety of accusations, disclosures and commissions of inquiry into its activities have been undertaken, but in respect of major actions credited to the organisation, such as the Lubowksi and Webster assassinations, evidence has as yet been insufficient to support successful prosecutions.

Revelation after revolution would eventually fill the newspapers, but it was the Goldstone Commission, appointed by State President F W de Klerk in 1991 to investigate public violence and intimidation, which would provide the catalyst in respect of the existence and activities of the CCB. De Klerk publicly committed himself to end secret projects targeted at his negotiation partners. A raid by the Goldstone Commission on secret Military Intelligence branch offices in Pretoria East in November 1992, eventually forced De Klerk to appoint an investigation under the leadership of Lieutenant-General Pierre Steyn, then Chief of Defence Staff, into alleged activities which had led to the seizure of Military Intelligence files. Steyn’s report was never published, but confirmed the summary discharge of 23 officers by De Klerk in 1990 with suitable ‘golden handshakes’ and without legal action. Steyn, possibly in line to become the next Chief of the SADF, lost the confidence of important sections in the military and resigned when the Chief of the Army, Lieutenant-General George Meiring, was appointed to this post. Steyn was subsequently nominated to the post of Defence Secretary in 1995.

The SADF also conducted Psychological Warfare and Propaganda Operations. These went under a variety of names, such as Civil Affairs, and were aimed at influencing the enemy and its supporters. Where necessary, extensive use was made of front companies. Some of the operations, such as Operation Katzen in the Eastern Cape and Transkei, went beyond the traditional definition of this type of military operation.

Many of these clandestine actions interlocked or were mutually supporting. They were mainly conducted by Military Intelligence, and controlled and directed at a very high level, often without the knowledge of the larger sections of the Department of Defence. Protected by the rules of military security, the ‘need to know’ principle and a hedge of political secrecy, these actions would eventually come as a surprise to the vast majority of serving permanent and part-time soldiers. When De Klerk became State President and introduced his programme of political changes, projects were reviewed and often cancelled or terminated. Between deciding to terminate a front company and the actual winding up of a company, which had acquired a lucrative life of its own, there was often a considerable time lapse. No wonder, that, as time passed, De Klerk would continue to be embarrassed by a number of revelations.

THE MODERN SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE

By 1990, when negotiations with the ANC commenced publicly, the SADF was composed of a Defence Headquarters (DHO) in Pretoria and four Arms of Service, namely the SA Army, SA Air Force, SA Navy and SA Medical Services. These Service Arms headquarters in Pretoria are all supported by the Chaplain Service.

The SADF’s structure was monolithic and integrated. Overall command was vested in an officer designated as Chief of the SADF (CSADF). Appointed from any of the Arms of Service, with appointments effectively dominated by the Army, he was accountable to the Minister of Defence for implementing the defence policy of the South African Government. He was the most senior official in the department, and as such was financially accountable for the SADF, as is any other Director General heading a self-accounting government department.

When the UDF was established in 1912, provision was made for both a Minister and a Secretary of Defence, the latter being responsible, amongst others, for accounting in the department. This system ended in the 1960s when the uniformed personnel of the SADF gradually took over all duties previously undertaken by the civilian Secretary and his staff.
The Chief of each of the four arms commanded his own service and planned, conducted and was responsible for single-service operations during peace or war, within the parameters laid down by the CSADF, the South African Government and the Commander-in-Chief, the State President. Command was exercised by the CSADF through the Chiefs of the Army, Air Force and Navy, and the Surgeon General, or through an appointed Joint Forces Commander. The CSADF was supported by a staff divided into Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Logistics and Financial Divisions, as well as an Independent Directorate of Management Services, that were all part of DHQ and were collectively directed by the Chief of Defence Staff.

The SADF had centralised and joint control systems, the chief organs being the Defence Command Council (DCC) and the Defence Staff Council (DSC). These committees were supported by the defence staff of the applicable division and, where necessary, the corresponding or applicable representative from the Arms of Service. They carried out preliminary and detailed staff work, provided most of the information needed for decision-making and translated decisions into action at corporate level. The DCC was the highest command authority within the SADF and was subject only to Ministerial approval. The DSC was the highest staff co-ordinating level within the SADF and provided the defence staff’s common and co-ordinated solution to multi-faceted problems. A final top level body was the Defence Manpower Liaison Committee, responsible for communication, liaison and co-operation between the SADF, the Department of Manpower and the private sector.

FINANCES
An overview of UDF and SADF budgets in 1993 Rand terms from 1912 to 1994 is provided in the graph. In 1983/84 the South African defence budget accounted for 4.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country. By 1993/94 this had been reduced to 2.5%, and the relationship between personnel, operating and capital expenditure components of the defence budget had worsened dramatically.

Capital expenditure has been cut dramatically in recent years, with inevitable effects on arms procurement and therefore on the South African defence industry. A situation in which only 28% of the defence budget was allocated to capital expenditure, was clearly unhealthy if a modern high-tech force was required. The ever-increasing personnel and operating costs, as a proportion of the total SADF budget, on the other hand, reflected the difficulty in reducing these expenses in the short term, and the costs of the internal deployment of the SADF in support of the SA Police.

ARMS OF SERVICE
The SADF Army has always been by far the largest of the arms of service in terms of manpower. By 1990 it accounted for at least 60% of all full-time force members, including nearly all voluntary military servicemen, contract volunteers and auxiliary members, as well as up to 80% of the part-time forces. The SAAF and SAN, in contrast, were almost exclusively composed of members of the Permanent Force, with some contract volunteers and civilian assistance. Outside of Pretoria, the SA Army with its full-time and part-time force units and headquarters visibly represented the structure of the SADF in most areas.

The SA Army operated on a decentralised basis, while control of operations in the SAAF and SAN, in contrast, was largely centralised. The SAAF and SAN were heavily equipment-orientated and experienced more problems with the procurement and financing of major, new, high-tech equipment, usually only available from foreign sources. The SA Army, on the other hand, could have almost all its requirements fulfilled by the South African defence industry. Furthermore, locally developed equipment was often better suited to regional conditions than those obtained elsewhere. The SAMS supported the other three arms, which in reality meant that its structure was largely adapted to support the SA Army. The SAMS was also mainly dependent on part-time members and, proportionately, had the most female service members.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY
The SA Army comprised a core of full-time force members, with its real strength being the Citizen Force and Commando units. It was organised into a Convention Force and a Territorial Force serving under an Army HQ, situated in Pretoria.

The Convention Force comprised three conventional divisions, drawn almost exclusively from the Citizen Force. These were 7, 8 and 9 Divisions, with headquarters respectively in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. These divisions were a combination of all the arms of service required in modern conventional warfare, with the accent on strategic mobility and firepower. Based on the previous system of six CF
brigades and two CF division headquarters, these divisions were trained and consisted of experienced personnel armed with sophisticated weapons. Not all units within the three divisions were at full combat personnel and equipment strength.

The Territorial Force consisted of ten regional Commands and one Military Area (Walvis Bay which was handed over to Namibia in 1994). These geographical areas were based on the boundaries of the former economic development regions. The Commands were: Western Province (HQ in Cape Town), Eastern Province (HQ in Port Elizabeth), Northern Cape (HQ in Kimberley), Orange Free State (HQ in Bloemfontein), Natal (HQ in Durban), Northern Transvaal (HQ in Pretoria), Witwatersrand (HQ in Johannesburg), Eastern Transvaal (HQ in Nelspruit), Far North (HQ in Pietersburg), and North Western (HQ in Potchefstroom).

The Commander of a Territorial Command exercised authority, over all SA Army operations and activities within his area. He represented the CSADF as the most senior local SADF representative. Via his staff and the units available, he was responsible for the protection of the region. This included assistance to the SA Police, as well as administrative support to all units. Depending on its size, operational requirements and the population of the area, each Command exercised authority over a number of Commando groups. These groups comprised three to eight Commando units. The Command also had at its disposal counter-insurgency CF units, support units, training and full-time operational units, specifically allocated when the need arose.

The Chief of the Army exercised direct command over certain specialised formations and units. He was assisted by a staff divided into Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Logistics, Finance and Planning Divisions, which formed Army Headquarters. Formations and units directly under his command consisted of both full-time and part-time members and included the engineer and signals formations, logistics command, training institutions, such as the Army College, Army Battle School and the various corps schools, and the Special Forces directorate.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE

The SAAF had a totally different command philosophy and structure, being heavily dependent on its full-time force members, particularly its Permanent Force component. This was not only because it operated in a highly technical environment, but also because of the need for speed and concentrated reaction. The SAAF used a system of centralised command and control with Air Force HQ working directly with individual bases, squadrons and sometimes even aircraft.

Rationalisation in recent years meant that many types of aircraft were withdrawn, including the fixed wing Shackleton, Buccaneer, Albatross, Kudu, Canberra and Harvard, and the rotary wing Super Frelon and Wasp. The extensive disposal of aircraft had also led to a reduction in personnel and the closing of bases. However, the withdrawal of Eastern Bloc and Cuban forces, advisors and technical personnel from the Front-Line States, as well as the continuing disruptive wars in Angola and Mozambique had left the SAAF, even in a reduced state, as the only modern military air force in Southern Africa. The SAAF's aircraft inventory, including the Mirage, Cheetah, Impala, C130 and C160, 135
Dakota Turbo-Prop, Boeing, Alouette, Oryx (Puma), Bosbok and the Pilatus trainer, enhanced the capacity of the SAAF to perform its main role of military air operations to counter an air threat, and also to execute airborne operations, mountain and sea rescues, to supply food to refugees, to train foreign pilots and so on. The SAAF was supported by South Africa’s strong civilian aviation infrastructure.

The SAAF accounted for approximately 15% of all available full-time defence force personnel (normally less than 15 000 men and women). It also had a Citizen Force element (although it played a lesser role than in the Army), as well as the Air Commando Squadrains (volunteers piloting private aircraft in a part-time capacity).

The SAAF used two functional commands - Air Force Training Command and Air Logistic Command - both with headquarters in Pretoria, instead of geographical commands. All SAAF commands controlled units and squadrons as allocated. The Chief of the SAAF was assisted by a staff organised into Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Logistics, Finance and Planning Divisions, and also exercised direct control over certain units. The main control was of operations (aircraft and squadrons) from the SAAF Central Command Post.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY

Like the SAAF, the SAN was heavily dependent on its full-time force members, including many civilians who played an important role in the Naval Dockyard at Simonstown. The SAN consisted of less than 10% of the total full-time Defence Force, with fewer than 10 000 members, as well as a limited Citizen Force component. The SAN used a system of centralised control for directing units, flotillas, bases, squadrons or ships. The Chief of the Navy was assisted by a staff divided into Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Logistics, Finance and Planning Divisions, grouped under the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Naval Support, respectively.

The operational strength of the SAN was built around the Submarine Flotilla (three Daphne class submarines), the Strike Craft Flotilla (nine Minister class strike craft), the Mine Countermeasures Flotilla and its major seagoing vessels, the replenishment ships SAS Drakensberg and SAS Outeniqua. The most important and largest base was the Naval Dockyard at Simonstown with its special facilities. There were also a number of tugs, hydrographic survey vessels (SAS Protea), harbour protection launches, etc. When compared to most foreign navies, the SAN was only a coastal force. However, there was no other modern naval force in the sea area from Nigeria around Cape Agulhas to Kenya. The capacity of the SAN was enhanced by the maritime infrastructure of South Africa, including civilian capacity for ship building and repairs, relatively modern ports and harbours, the ability to monitor maritime movement around the Cape and an extensive fishing and commercial fleet.

SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL SERVICE

The SADF, like the UDF before it, placed considerable emphasis on its medical support, including all aspects of medical, dental, hygiene, veterinary and welfare care. This tradition stretched back to before the Second World War and included such legendary figures as Dr. Jack Penn, the renowned reconstructive surgeon.

The core around which the service was built, were the three modern Military Hospitals (No. 1 in Pretoria, No. 2 in Cape Town and No. 3 in Bloemfontein). The SAMS, like the SA Army, also depended on its Citizen Force members, whose experience and expertise in the civilian medical field ensured the availability of modern skills for military medicine.

The SAMS used a system of geographical commands similar to the SA Army, except that Northern Cape and Orange Free State formed the Central Medical Command and Far North and Northern Transvaal formed the Northern Medical Command. The Surgeon General was assisted by a staff divided into Force Application and Force Support Divisions, including the functions of personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, finance and planning, as well as professional services. There were also a number of training and specialised units, particularly dealing with aviation and maritime medicine.

The SAMS, via the Central Medical Depot, was the largest medical supplier to all military and non-military institutions in the country.

CONCLUSION

At the time of its technical disbandment and its re-emergence as the SANDF, the SADF had already undergone dramatic changes. It had moved from being involved in an intensive war effort in Namibia to being the provider of increased support to the SA Police, and then into a demobilisation mode. At present, it is in the process of being transformed into a peace-time military. The SADF returned from South-West Africa with an extended and very large combat force, only to find that it was no longer needed for concentrated counter-insurgency operations or a conventional war in defence of the homeland. Instead, it was called upon increasingly to support the police, while simultaneously coping with a shrinking budget and a rationalisation programme that steadily reduced its experienced manpower. There were no victory parades. From the peak of its military abilities of 1987/88, the force rapidly started losing its fighting edge. The classical problems faced by the UDF after the First and Second World Wars, such as reduced finances, obsolete and non-replaced equipment and reduced manpower, loomed ever larger and demanded a readjustment of defence planning.

However, defence planning for the changed environment was overtaken by the need for detailed joint planning of the integration process that was identified during the negotiation process and that had to precede the establishment of the SANDF. In the months before the April 1994 elections, dozens of joint working groups under the direction of the JMCC - SANDF, defence forces of the TBVC countries and MK - started planning integration procedures, assistance during the national election and the Presidential inauguration, the design and shape of the future Force, affirmative action policies and much more.

By 1994 the SADF was a truly professional military force. Yet, it was also the tool of the National Party which had governed the country since 1948, and as such, showed clear signs of the political patronage inherent in such extended supremacy by a single party. The SADF and its political masters, on occasion, may have overstepped the boundaries of enthusiastic dedication to military duty in the last decade of its existence, as it became involved in various activities for which it was not directly mandated. Ultimately the SADF would pay a price for the activities of certain sections within the military, despite the
political amnesia that would subsequently affect ministers when it came to accepting responsibility for actions and decisions. However, with the arrival of democracy in South Africa, the SADF had an ingrained and self-perpetuating tradition of bureaucratic accountability. Orders were orders, and while the SADF may have been infused with traits which often grated the sensibilities of foreigners or even its own non-white citizens, it remained, overall, external to the party political debate.

At this stage in the history of South Africa, with many new government systems and agencies being formed, it is appropriate to pause and reconsider the organisation, functioning, successes and contributions of previous systems. They have not only provided a basis for future development, but have also set standards, traditions and challenges that will often be used as yardsticks for success in the new organisations. The South African Defence Force leaves the new South African National Defence Force not only with its equipment, bases and training facilities, but also with a rich tradition of discipline, courage, innovation, loyalty and success. Provided it can equal these qualities, the SANDF will earn both international respect and the trust and support of all South Africa's citizens. The SADF also left a legacy of lack of money, material and men. Amongst others, experienced former members of the SADF are now far more inclined to leave, as many regard the effects of affirmative action, namely the rapid promotion of unqualified, inexperienced black members (particularly from the TBVC Defence Force), as well as the appointment to senior and general officer rank of ox-MK leaders to newly created posts, as a direct threat to their own careers. The SANDF is already top heavy and operational experience, in particular, is at a premium.

The SADF ceased to exist at midnight on 27 April 1994. On that date, the basic integration plan had been already been accepted, with assembly areas identified and the integration of the various armed forces proceeding apace. The newly established SANDF is already changing dramatically, even if this is often not visible from outside. It is a large and complex organisation, and the interdependence of its constituent parts means that internal changes affect many other sectors, including the armaments industry. The SANDF is, amongst others, a major landowner and one of the largest government departments and ranks as the strongest military force in the region. In general, the SANDF has moved from centre stage, and seems to be gaining some legitimacy in the eyes of the citizens of the country. But it faces an eroding defence budget, a disintegrating part-time reserve, rationalisation of full-time members, a Defence Secretariat still to be finalised and Service Brigade and possible unionisation, while support for the SA Police Service and border control must continue. Yet, the problems faced by the SANDF are not unique and it is hoped that it will find ways to overcome these in the same way that its predecessors have done.

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SOUTH AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE UNDER DE KLERK

Robert D'A Henderson

INTRODUCTION

As the result of the first all-race elections in South African history, State President FW de Klerk handed over the presidency to African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994, and with it, the ministerial responsibilities for the country's security and intelligence services.

Upon assuming the South African presidency in 1988, De Klerk faced rising political expectations as well as rising fears among both white and black South Africans. These expectations and fears arose from the efforts of his white-minority government to end the apartheid system of racial domination and 'normalize' political activities. But this political normalization was paralleled by an escalating spiral of domestic violence and killings which generated further fear and revenge violence. Although often indiscriminate and without being readily discernible as politically or criminally motivated, this spiral of violence led many anti-government critics - and, in particular, the ANC and its allies - to repeatedly accuse the South African government security forces of either actively perpetrating disruptive acts of political violence or covertly assisting a so-called 'Third Force' in carrying them out. Some of the accusations tying the security forces to the ongoing violence, though not all, have been found to have had a factual basis.

During this period of political transition and bloody violence leading up to the April 1994 elections, what was the relationship between De Klerk and the various South African intelligence services which he inherited from the PW Botha government? To what extent had the South African security and intelligence community been accountable to him? Had media exposures, security leaks, and judiciary findings forced him to make his series of intelligence reforms? And finally, what had been the intelligence requirements of De Klerk as he and his government negotiated the end of the apartheid state?

Current open sources, as well as my extensive field research in Southern Africa, lead me to believe De Klerk's control over his 'inherited' intelligence and security community - the 'securocrats' from the Botha era - was intrinsically weak from the beginning as a result of two conflicting factors. First, De Klerk was heavily dependent upon timely, relevant, and unbiased intelligence on the activities and intentions of his political opponents on both the left and the right - especially those committed to campaigns of violence or threatening to do so - as a prerequisite for pursuit of his political reform agenda. Second, the ongoing covert operations and network linkages managed by his inherited securocrats continually threatened to undermine De Klerk's control over the white-dominated South African Parliament and occasionally derail the fragile negotiation process.

Increasingly, uncovered evidence and testimony from former security operatives, subsequently published in the South African press, supported the view that elements of the South African intelligence community had withheld information from De Klerk about many of their clandestine activities, while apparently remaining institutionally accountable for their actions. While De Klerk himself was prepared to utilize clandestine intelligence gathering and influence operations to support his party's political reform strategy, he was able to institute significant accountability over the South African security forces' clandestine activities only when forced to by public 'smoking gun' evidence, such as leaked or uncovered security services' files ordering unauthorized covert operations and other illegal activities.

A ROCKY PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

In February 1989, De Klerk narrowly won the leadership of the ruling white National Party by nine votes. Then President PW Botha relinquished the political party post of NP leader to De Klerk, but retained the government post of State President, leading to an increasingly tense relationship between the two. De Klerk consolidated his support among the younger and more progressive NP Parliamentary Caucus members by calling for a speeding up of Botha's cautious steps toward reform of the country's apartheid system. Although Botha had initiated some reforms to the racial legislation in 1984, he brought them to an abrupt halt with his fiery August 1985 'Rubicon speech' denouncing continuing foreign criticisms. With his 'retreat from reform,' Botha increasingly relied upon his reorganized security establishment for decision-making and implementing government policies. The government security forces were given wider powers for maintaining 'internal security' from 1986 on, under a series of nation-wide 'state of emergency' decrees.

Botha subsequently clung to the state presidency, refusing to step down in favour of the president-designate. Faced with increasingly visible friction within the NP leadership, the cabinet met without Botha in early August and unceremoniously agreed that De Klerk would take the National Party into the September 1989 general election as both party leader and acting State President. Despite the acrimonious leadership transition, De Klerk inherited from Botha's securocrat establishment all the ministers and key civilian service officials concerned with security affairs.

From the start, De Klerk's reform proposals relied less on the institutional structures manned by the 'securocrats' - seconded personnel from the security establishment - and more on major government departments headed by his own political advisors, particularly Constitutional Development Minister Gerrit Viljoen and Justice Minister Kobie Coetzee, who called for power-sharing negotiations with moderate black leaders. In an interview given prior to De Klerk's assumption of the office of President, his brother Wimkie de Klerk, a political commentator, suggested that, while being unable to totally exclude the military presence from South African policymaking, "he [FW - the president-designate] will be more dependent on national intelligence [services], not on military intelligence" upon becoming president.

In pursuit of his 'reformist' approach to law and order, De Klerk sought to ensure the physical security of the white population during the transition to a new constitution. This approach differed from the traditional NP government approach which, until then, had...
forcibly attempted to maintain white minority rule and privileges. But his efforts to normalise political activities were accompanied by an increase of violence, leaving De Klerk and his inner cabinet advisors with the dilemma of either continuing to rely on the government’s security forces or creating new ‘joint security forces’ which would include non-government paramilitary units to control the violence.6

**BOTHAS SECUROCRAT ESTABLISHMENT**

The key structural elements of President Botha’s ‘securocratic’ establishment were the State Security Council (SSC) and its implementation instrument, the National Security Management System (NSMS).1

The SSC had been established by the 1972 *Security Intelligence and State Security Act* to “advise the government on the formulation of national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the country” and for determining national intelligence priorities. Although not designated a cabinet committee in the Act, the SSC was the only cabinet-level committee, along with its designated membership, created by official statute. The designated membership included the Prime Minister (after 1984, the State President) as chairman; the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Justice and Police (later Law and Order); the senior cabinet member, if not already included among the ministers; the senior officials for Security Intelligence (later the National Intelligence Service NIS), the South African Defence Force (SADF), the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice, and the South African Police (SAP); and such other cabinet ministers and department heads who “may from time to time be co-opted” by the chairman.

Reportedly, under Prime Minister John Vorster in the early 1970s, the SSC was not active. Vorster continued to rely for security intelligence and policy upon police General Hendrik van den Bergh, head of the Bureau of State Security (BOSIS), the security police. Earlier in 1962, van den Bergh had been appointed by then Minister of Justice Vorster to establish a covert unit of security operatives - the Republican Intelligence (RI) unit - within the SAP Security Branch. With the statutory establishment of BOSIS in 1969, which effectively absorbed the RI unit, Van den Bergh was solely responsible for state security and directly answerable to Vorster as his National Security Advisor.2

Having met only sporadically until then, the SSC came into its own with the need to co-ordinate ‘Operation Savannah’, South Africa’s covert military intervention in the Angolan civil war following the 1974-1975 collapse of Portugal’s colonial authority in its African territories. Under then Defence Minister PW Botha, the SSC, as well as senior SADF chiefs, gained greater status and influence over the intelligence process and policymaking.3 With his rise to the post of Prime Minister in the wake of the 1979 ‘Muldergate’ information funding scandal,4 Botha sought to reduce the 20 cabinet level committees - previously created ad hoc to deal with specific issues - by an administrative ‘rationalisation’ of decision-making into four priority committees: Economic Affairs, Social Affairs, Constitutional Affairs, and the SSC dealing with security affairs, with each empowered to make decisions for the cabinet within its area of responsibility.5 As a result, the SSC was upgraded from an advisory committee to the cabinet to become the dominant forum for security policymaking.6 Accompanying this change was a major increase in the number of personnel manning the SSC. Its Secretariat became increasingly dominated by ‘securocrats’ seconded from the SADF. Others came from elsewhere in the security establishment, including other intelligence services, the armaments and related industries, and the defence-related intellectual community. The key post of SSC Secretary-general was repeatedly held by a senior SADF commander with clandestine operational experience.7

Following the 1984 constitutional changes, the new executive State President Botha sought to increase the range of responsibilities of the Office of the President to include co-ordinating secretarial functions of the three ‘welfare management’ cabinet committees, as opposed to the ‘security management’ SSC which had its own secretariat. To manage these growing responsibilities, Botha appointed Dr. Jannie
Roux" as Secretary-general for the President’s Office under a five-year contract, effectively making him the country’s senior civil servant.

The NSMS co-ordinating system was developed in response to the countrywide unrest in the black townships during the 1984-1986 period. This system provided the SSC with a network of regional security committees to implement the SADF’s “Winning Hearts and Minds” (WHAM) strategy, and empowered the security forces with a wide range of arbitrary powers to co-ordinate local political and security policies. Operating from Joint Management Committees (JMCs) headed by the SADF regional commanders, the main endeavour of the system was to placate local socio-economic grievances in the black townships while suppressing emerging protest associations. In effect, the JMCs would oversee improvements to local infrastructure and housing while also co-ordinating the repeated security crackdowns on anti-apartheid activists and political militants.

**ASSERTING PRESIDENTIAL COMMAND**

Following the September 1989 general elections, the new President, FW de Klerk, quickly implemented a series of measures dealing with South Africa’s security and intelligence community. First, he moved the Bureau for Information (BI) and the National Intelligence Service (NIS) under his direct control within the Office of the State President. These government agencies, dealing with both open government media activities and secret intelligence co-ordination, would now be directly responsible to him, whereas under Botha, the NIS had reported to both the President and the SSC. By this point, De Klerk had already decided to utilise the NIS - unlike Botha’s use of the SSC - as his principal source of intelligence and his personal instrument for conducting confidential presidential initiatives. Yet, at the same time, he also renewed the five-year contract (up to 1994) of Botha’s appointee, Dr. Roux, in the State President’s Office. Although Roux had been Botha’s senior administrator and his right-hand man for almost a decade, De Klerk apparently decided not to seize the opportunity of the contract renewal to install a new “chief of staff” of his own choosing.

Next, as SSC Chairman, he ordered the SSC Working Committee of senior officials to conduct a major review of the functions of the SSC and the NSMS, and possibly covering additional government clandestine operations. According to one South African analyst, this assessment was needed to reduce “unnecessary duplication of departmental activities by the NSMS, the hours wasted on NSMS meetings, and the international perception that the state under PW Botha was, de facto, a military state.”

And third, De Klerk and his cabinet “colleagues who were also informed” about the government’s nuclear development policy decided that “it was in our national interest that a total reverse in respect of our nuclear policy was called for.” This meant ending South Africa’s nuclear weapons production. But the government’s decision to close the Pelindaba pilot uranium enrichment plant and to dismantle and destroy the six already-built nuclear devices (of the seven planned) would not be taken until later in 1993 and early 1996 respectively. And at the same time, all the technology and designs related to the devices would be destroyed, and the weapons grade uranium diluted for use as reactor fuel rods.

**INTELLIGENCE HOAX IN NAMIBIA**

The next principal item on the de Klerk government’s 1989 political agenda was the peaceful implementation of United Nations Resolution 435, which provided for Namibia’s independence in April of the following year. Cuba’s expeditionary troops were to be withdrawn from neighbouring Angola at the same time.

Because Namibia’s independence was the essential prelude to beginning his own domestic political reforms, De Klerk had to ensure that the Namibian constituent assembly elections were declared “free and fair” by the United Nations. Even so, the South African Government wanted to prevent the “South West African People’s Organisation (SWAPO) - against whom it had been fighting a low-level counter-insurgency war for over fifteen years - from gaining the two-thirds majority of seats needed to unilaterally draft Namibia’s post-independence constitution. According to Foreign Minister Pik Botha, the South African Government cabinet under PW Botha in February 1989 had approved the clandestine funding of seven anti-SWAPo political parties in the forthcoming Namibian constituent elections. Utilising more than US$40 million in funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs’ Special (secret) Account, the anti-SWAPo coalition was able to campaign successfully to limit SWAPO’s position to that of the major, though not dominant, party in the elected constituent assembly.

In early November, prior to the start of the Namibian elections, South African military intelligence analysts - probably operating from SADF bases in Windhoek or northern Namibia - claimed to have intercepted a series of radio communications sent by the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG). Although subsequently proven to be fake, these UNTAG messages were offered as evidence of a forthcoming major armed incursion by SWAPO guerrillas from their southern Angolan base camps. SWAPO was thought to be trying to establish internal “liberation” areas to strengthen the movement’s presence within the territory, not unlike its disastrous March 1989 attempt to infiltrate 300 guerrillas just prior to the implementation of UN Resolution 435.

South African press reports suggested that SADF military intelligence had passed the telesex to Foreign Minister Botha without ‘authenticating’ them. Botha then offered them to resident Western ambassadors as evidence of SWAPO’s “clandestine” intentions. When the ‘messages’ were subsequently shown to be false, Botha was forced to acknowledge the fact to SWAPO President Sam Nujoma. Although the South African Government has since acknowledged that it covertly funded anti-SWAPo political parties at the same time, the hoax was an obvious attempt to embarrass the new De Klerk government. Nico Basson, a former SADF communications consultant, and Sue Dobson, a one-time ANC ‘mole’ in the SADF public affairs unit, both serving in Namibia at the time, have claimed that the SADF Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), as well as other parts of the South African security establishment, had engaged in a concerted set of “dirty tricks” operations against SWAPO members during the Namibian constituent elections.
Despite the official embarrassment caused by the phone messages and the allegations of DMI 'dirty tricks' operations against SWAPO, there has been to date no indication from the South African Government or elsewhere as to the original 'source' of the faked messages. Yet, this episode of 'renegade' intelligence activities, although conducted side by side with covert Namibian operations approved by the Botha cabinet (which included De Klerk), was to signal De Klerk's next set of measures for asserting civilian control over the country's intelligence services. He had already ordered a major review of SSC and NSMS operations shortly after the September elections, but the resultant public embarrassment over the 'Namibian hoax' marked the start of his security reform efforts through a restructuring of the security forces in order to reassert civilian control over the conducting of national security affairs and ongoing covert activities.

SECURITY RESTRUCTURING: DE KLERK'S FIRST STEP

In mid-November 1989, less than a month after the embarrassing Namibian hoax, the Enquiry Committee looking into SSC's functions and government clandestine operations submitted its report to De Klerk and his cabinet. With its recommendations in hand, De Klerk implemented several structural changes to curb the securcrats' power over policy-making and implementation in three key security areas:

1. The State Security Council and its NSMS implementation structure were to be dismantled from the top down. The initial step was the creation of a Cabinet Committee for Security Affairs (CCSA) as one of four standing cabinet committees. Meeting fortnightly under the chairmanship of the President himself, its membership included the ministers of defence, foreign affairs, justice, law and order, finance and constitutional affairs, as well as other cabinet members who could be co-opted for the discussion of specific topics. The CCSA apparently met separately from or jointly with the SSC, as determined by De Klerk who chaired both forums. The formerly dominant SSC - now operating under the decision-making CCSA in an interdepartmental operational advisory capacity - included all security affairs ministers and other co-opted ministers, as well as all the heads of the relevant departments and security commands. This restructuring restored the cabinet to its constitutional role as the highest decision-making body. Also as a result, the Office of the State President, which had grown under PW Botha to accommodate the increasingly centralised decision-making by his circle of security advisors, was reorganised and scaled down. The responsibility for basic policy generation in many security-relevant socio-economic areas was returned to the appropriate major government departments.

Along with the SSC's downgrading, its vast secretariat was 'streamlined' from its 100-plus staff of seconded securcrats to only the few needed to co-ordinate the information input from the various security services. Its previously accumulated roles of analysing multi-service intelligence input, generating policy options within the Botha government's 'Total Strategy' and then implementing SSC-approved ones through the NSMS committee structure were reduced or eliminated. SSC functions, including the ensuring of interdepartmental co-ordination in the execution of national security strategy, though not in policymaking, were passed to a newly-created National Security Committee. According to former NIS head Nel Barnard,² the problem of effectively co-ordinating and managing the country's intelligence effort was eventually resolved through the creation of this "initially weekly, then bi-weekly and currently monthly" meeting of intelligence department heads. In October 1991, the group came to be referred to as the Co-ordinating (or joint) Intelligence Committee.³ At the same time, De Klerk "abolished" the NSMS structure itself and ordered an inquiry into instituting new "mechanisms to fill this gap".³ The void was reportedly filled by a "new and purportedly demilitarised" structure called the National Co-ordinating Mechanism (NCM). But, within six months, a leaked government document would surround the 'new' NCM in controversy, with accusations that it was simply the 'old' NSMS under a new name.

2. Turning to covert operations and special accounts, De Klerk ordered a full investigation into "covert security force functions" with the declared purpose "to ensure and exercise not only financial control but also cabinet control over such [secret] projects." In addition to "some" secret projects being "immediately cancelled," including a reduction in anti-sanctions activities by the Department of Foreign Affairs, the cabinet decided to restrict all "special secret projects" in the future. Covert actions were to be limited to the "absolutely essential minimum," and there would be a review of the legislation controlling the use of secret funds. As a result of these decisions, legislative changes were made to cancel the Finance Minister's powers to suppress information or unauthorised expenditures whenever he considered it to be in the national interest or to exclude specific amounts from the scrutiny of the government Auditor-General.⁴⁵

Upon completion of the cabinet-ordered investigation in June 1990, De Klerk, speaking in the wake of the subsequent in Kagisangate funding scandal, said that "numerous covert actions were cancelled in an orderly fashion," though some actions "continued in the broad national interest ... subject to cabinet control... are being carefully and firmly managed."³ At the same time, a "standing instruction" for a comprehensive re-evaluation of all remaining projects had been issued "with a view to scaling them down and adapting them to the new circumstances in the country." Even so, secret expenditures could still be requested and utilised in special projects by a minister if his department did not possess a special account. Approval by the minister from whose special account the funds were to come was required, followed by a "funds transfer" authorised by the Finance Minister. The expenditure records were to be available for review by the Auditor-General annually. Under the 1978 Secret Services Account Act, the State President was not required to approve funding of such secret projects before the funds were allocated, according to Peter Worsley, the Auditor-General of South Africa. But the President had to be consulted if expenditure irregularities were reported to the Finance Minister, as had been the case with the Civilian Co-operation Bureau (CCB), the covert SADF assassination unit which targeted anti-government activists.³⁶

3. All government intelligence services - SAP's Security Branch, the NIS, and the SADF's four intelligence branches, including the DMI and those sections of the army, navy and air force - were, at this time, covertly operating within the country, as well as elsewhere on the African continent and overseas. This duplication of clandestine intelligence
gathering and other activities, particularly between the Security Branch, the NIS and the DMI, had led to some inter-service clashes and ongoing rivalries.

De Klerk also sought to 'regularise' the three intelligence services' areas of responsibility by reportedly imposing functional limits on their operations, particularly as numerous covert actions were being cancelled "in an orderly fashion."21 On 10 January 1990, he addressed 500 senior SAP commanders on the need to concentrate on combating rising crime rather than on anti-state political activities, although the Security Branch was to continue its functions of internal field (or tactical) intelligence gathering and detection of militant underground networks. The Security Branch was subsequently, in April 1990, combined with the Criminal Investigation Division into a new Crime Combating and Investigation unit (CCI). But there were continued concerns that the "old" Security Branch was still operating, merely under a new name, for two reasons. First, the new CCI was placed under the command of SAP General Besie Smit, who had commanded the Security Branch prior to the merger. And second, according to the Department of Law and Order press releases, the Security Branch organisation and command structure had been retained within the CCI to facilitate the collection of "criminal intelligence."

At the same time, the civilian NIS was to retain its role of national co-ordination of strategic intelligence assessments for the State President and the new CCSA, though answerable only to the President. NIS was to maintain liaison with 'friendly' intelligence agencies in Africa and overseas - through a combination of information exchanges and, in some cases, provision of training and equipment - while expanding its range of contacts and intelligence collection. The emergence of NIS as the prime inter alia among the intelligence services was 'unambiguously' underlined by De Klerk in an address to its twenty-first anniversary banquet in April 1990, when he praised "the NIS objective reporting while obliquely intimating that the other services had blown their cover-ups by advancing subjective preferences and interests." 23 But even the NIS suffered from leaking security information to right-wing politicians and from media criticism of its retaining perception, dating from the Botha era, of the ANC as the "main enemy."24

4. In the case of the DMI, De Klerk acknowledged that, soon after taking over the presidency, he was briefed on the internal workings of the SADF, including its clandestine Special Forces, "the eyes and ears of the SADF." Although this briefing reportedly included covert operations, he has since declared that the smaller subsections of the many branches of the defence force were not explained in any detail, indicating, too, that "an organisation such as the CCB was never an issue."25 De Klerk has claimed that he learned of the existence of the clandestine CCB (which was found to have operated government 'death squads', and was subsequently investigated by the judiciary commission of inquiry under Supreme Court Judge Louis Harms27) for the first time only in January 1990 when so informed by Defence Minister Magnus Malan. In turn, General Malan himself claimed that he had learned of the CCB's existence only the previous November, apparently at the time that the 'covert functions' investigation committee submitted its report to De Klerk. But, in terms of ministerial authority, Malan would have had to approve any use of

Department of Defence Special Account funding for the CCB's creation in 1986 and its subsequent covert operations.

While the extent of the restrictions placed upon the SADP's intelligence branches remains unclear, De Klerk's apparent intention was to curb the range of SADF covert activities within the country, relative to the Security Branch and the NIS. In line with his January address to senior SAP commanders, De Klerk met with senior SADF commanders on 7 March 1990, pointing out that the armed forces would concentrate on securing the country's borders while providing internal assistance in controlling unrest areas only if requested by the SAP regional commands.27 This outlining of organisational responsibility was also expected to refocus targeting parameters for military intelligence activities, but subsequent events would show how ineffective this presidential directive came to be.

INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS

Prior to assuming the presidency, De Klerk had spoken little about intelligence requirements or his own views on the roles of the various South African intelligence services. After becoming President, De Klerk declared in his 1990 budget speech that he expected that "only information of satisfactory credibility is passed on to the [national] decisionmaker ... I cannot expect that every scrap of information obtained be passed on to the government."28 Nevertheless, the De Klerk government was repeatedly embarrassed by investigative media exposures, false intelligence reporting, 'grudge leaks' of security information, and even ANC-planted 'moles' within the security establishment exposing secret government operations.

From the available public evidence, an outline of the intelligence requirements basic to achieving De Klerk's declared goal of negotiating a new 'political dispensation' (national) constitution for all South Africans is possible. In order to normalise political activities, as well as to control the escalating violence, he had to confront at least four separate sources of disruption to his political reform strategy. This required a substantial revision and broadening of the government's intrusive intelligence targeting, analysis and, in some cases, countermeasures, after the transition from Botha to De Klerk.

First, within his own white constituency, there were a number of disruptive factors. That De Klerk retain majority cabinet support, as well as the support of the NP parliamentary caucus, for his reform process was essential. But retention of such support also meant compromising, during his first two years in power, with those within his cabinet who argued for greater use of state instruments of force to control events during the political transition phase - in effect, an emphasis on the need to negotiate from strength.

With regard to the government security forces and particularly their covert activities, De Klerk and his closest advisors quickly realised that, for political reform strategy to work, a reimposition of civilian control over security affairs was necessary. In a 'reverse-palace coup' significant steps were taken to ensure that authority and responsibility for security activities rested with the cabinet, and thereby limit the influence of the inherited Botha-era security autocrats on national decision-making. De Klerk first took direct
Then De Klerk began incremental restructuring of the South African security and intelligence community with regard to limiting their range of functions and power to act independently (see Figure 2). And, thirdly, he sought to replace the ‘inherited’ commanders in key security positions with his own ‘reformist’ appointees. By naming his supporters to key command positions, he sought to ensure full implementation of cabinet decisions, check unapproved (or rogue) operations, and prevent disloyalty among the security personnel. But, as recent expositions have discovered, the SADF’s Directorate of Military Intelligence - and until mid-1991, the SAP’s Security Branch - continued to determine its targeting priorities based on ‘total onslaught’ theories of a ‘main enemy’, even after the ANC had suspended its ‘armed struggle.’

Another targeted source of disruption was the wide range of black opposition groupings. De Klerk and his policy advisors needed accurate intelligence as to their intentions and support and, in some cases, data on the government’s covert countermeasures against them. These extra-parliamentary groupings had vastly differing degrees of internal and external support and paramilitary capabilities. A prime intelligence requirement was knowledge of these groups were successfully recruiting members, infiltrating foreign-trained militants and arms, establishing internal underground structures and weapons caches, and other potentially subversive activities. Open and clandestine information-gathering, both within or outside the country, concerning the membership, structures and planning by these groupings was essential to meeting the De Klerk government’s need to control political violence and white fears.

But satisfying this requirement locally had become difficult by the late 1980s. The SAP controllers had lost most of their extensive informer networks in the South African townships due to black militant violence. With their aim of making the black townships ‘ungovernable’, militant ‘comrades’ conducted campaigns aimed at driving out or killing all black ‘collaborators’, including civic administrators, policemen, teachers and other designated targets. As a result of the SADF’s role in the NMS regional and local operations, as well as the increasing use of SADF units in township policing, military intelligence was able to replace part of the intelligence loss. But, over the same period, numerous security police and military intelligence agents in neighbouring African countries were captured while spying on exiled political groups and on their links with their host governments.

A third source of disruption was white extremist groups. Consisting mostly of Afrikaners, they fiercely opposed the De Klerk government’s ‘negotiating away’ of their dominant political and social status. As the political violence escalated, intrusive access was necessary into the intentions and planning of the extremist groupings which claimed responsibility for bombings and indiscriminate shootings,
as well as to other groups who had declared their readiness to use violence to prevent any loss of white power and privilege. Despite being reasonably well armed with personal firearms, and claiming memberships in the thousands, these white extremists’ main strength lay with their capacity to violently disrupt negotiations, and with their ‘claimed’ clandestine support among the government’s own security forces.

To counter this threat, De Klerk found it essential to maintain loyal internal security (or counter-intelligence) forces capable of infiltrating the various extremist groups without being infiltrated themselves.

A final source of disruption was a variety of foreign countries and organisations - both within Africa and overseas. Information was needed on their intentions and their levels of political, financial, and/or military support for various South African opposition groups. Included was African, the then-Soviet Bloc, and Western government and non-government support for a variety of black South African opposition groups, as well as North American and European right-wing support for white extremist and black conservative groups in South Africa. As to economic sanctions against South Africa, there was also a need to know precisely which domestic reforms would be sufficient for each Western government, and its domestic constituencies to end its sanctions policy.

Certain overseas incidents after De Klerk became president involved covert South African Government agents and their operatives. These ranged from cases of political break-ins and sabotage to electronic eavesdropping to illegal arms and technology transfers and even to assassination of exiled South Africans. Some of these operations would have been conducted with the authorisation and monitoring of the De Klerk government. But, on the basis of exposed evidence to date, establishing the extent to which such clandestine operations were conducted in response to the government’s broad intelligence requirements is difficult. Also to be considered are those activities conducted by the South African security services according to their perceptions of government needs while cabinet authorities remained uninformed, or simply conducted as independent or rogue operations by individual security controllers.

**COVERT OPERATIONS AND SECRET FUNDING “MARCH ON”**

De Klerk’s main fear with his ‘normalisation’ speech on 2 February 1990 was the response of the white extreme right-wing. It became a major focus of his intelligence requirements, as did a continuing need for intelligence on the active guerrilla operations, principally the MK, and, only nominally, the APLA. The intentions of the Conservative Party and the internal ANC leadership were also of some concern.

In the face of the findings of the Harris Commission into the activities of the clandestine CCB, and to counter opposition of media criticism of his own knowledge of the CCB, De Klerk announced to parliament, in March 1990, his planned steps to bring the funding of the security services’ covert operations under cabinet control. Although he declared that “the security forces were an indispensable element of a safe and stable future,” South Africa had “entered a new phase where, especially, we [the government] have to manage the country’s problems with political and economic steps, not with the security forces as the vanguard.” As such, the security forces would subsequently be keeping a lower profile “but this did not imply a weak profile.”

By mid-1990, the right-wing white extremists were reaching the high point of their security and possibly even political threat, with widespread discussion of a potential security forces’ revolt against the government. The black opposition groupings saw the white extremists as a violent threat to the whole black population, as well as a disruptive factor to the negotiations process. According to ANC leader Nelson Mandela, “We [the ANC] cannot afford to underestimate the threat!” posed by “right-wing terrorists ... whose stated aim is the physical liquidation of the ANC.” Partly as a result, a number of white right-wing extremists were detained by government security forces under the infamous Article 29 of the Internal Security Act. Even so, a year later at the ANC’s paramilitary MK ‘Spear of the Nation’, conference, Mandela would still claim that the right-wing movement had to be ‘destroyed’ if it could not be convinced to change its ways.

Black opposition groups and the media have repeatedly pointed out how accurate the field intelligence of the extremist groups appeared to be regarding the location and movements of their claimed assassination targets, and about those facilities which were to be bombed. Similar suggestions of ‘good intelligence’ have been made of the violent killings by Inkatha supporters in the Transvaal’s black townships. This was usually offered as evidence of the ‘involvement’ of one or more government intelligence services. In October 1990, Mandela met with de Klerk to present witness affidavits which claimed that the NIS was using black agents provocateurs to incite township violence. This was the first time that the NIS had been accused specifically, whereas SADF military intelligence, its CCB unit and the SAP Security Branch had often been accused previously.

‘Intelligence leakage’ occasionally occurs when security information has been passed leader-to-leader, while at other times it has been a ‘grudge’ leak by apparent right-wing supporters within the security forces. President de Klerk reportedly, on several occasions, passed security information to ANC President Mandela and to IFP President Mangosuthu Buthelezi, particularly concerning their personal security. According to De Klerk, “an established tradition of confidential contact existed between the government and recognised political parties on possibly sensitive security information” - which included the opposition white Conservative Party (CP) as well - when it was “in the national interest.” For the historic January 1991 meeting between Mandela and Buthelezi in Durban, both the NIS and the Security Branch assisted in co-ordinating the security arrangements. In a subsequent TV interview, Chief Buthelezi acknowledged that NIS officials had brought “top ranking officials of the ANC to meet clandestinely in Umfuli [administrative capital of KwaZulu homeland] and set through discussions with them.”

‘Grudge’ leaks have also occurred within the government ranks. In April 1990, a secret document purported to contain an ANC plan to assassinate right-wing leaders was leaked through the mail to the opposition Conservative Party by an undisclosed NIS official. When the CP revealed the document’s contents in a press release to the media,
De Klerk reacted by strenuously claiming that the document was an “unverified security report” over which there were “serious doubts” about its contents and even the credibility of the source. He called upon Dr. Andries Treurnicht, the CP leader, to disclose the NIS official’s identity - which he refused to do.41

Then, in July, two further public controversies involved clandestine operations. The first arose from a copy of a government handbook entitled ‘National Co-ordinating Mechanism’ which some opposition politicians and the press had laid their hands on. Interestingly, neither the opposition critics nor the President’s Office in its response were willing to call it a ‘leak’ of security information. Rather, the government claimed that the media had previously been informed that the National Co-ordinating Mechanism (NCM) had replaced the ‘abolished’ securocrat-dominated NSMS structure. The critics countered that the NCM was “only the NSMS under a different name” and still under the control of the securocrats. The NCM structure is understood to have been placed administratively under Dr. Janne Roux in the President’s Office, although the NCM’s interdepartmental National Security Committee later referred to as the Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee, answerable to both the Cabinet Committee and the SSC, may have had its secretariat functions provided by NIS officials.39

The other controversy developed when a Security Branch policy spy in July 1990 uncovered an ANC/SACP underground plot - code name ‘Operation Vula’ (in Zulu - ‘to penetrate’) - to smuggle arms and highly-trained operatives into South Africa. Began in 1987, the operation utilised internationally recruited foreign activists to establish safehouses and arms caches. Using these facilities, the Vula operatives were to establish underground structures and to infiltrate the government security forces. To a certain extent, the operation was successful: a penetration network of over twenty secret facilities was established prior to being discovered, and at least seven ‘mole’ infiltrated the South African intelligence community, resulting in a major and possibly ongoing ‘mole hunt’.42

Initially, Operation Vula was designed to combat the anti-apartheid regime, but after De Klerk’s political normalisation began in February 1990, the action continued against the possibility that negotiations with the government ultimately would break down. While the ANC had agreed on 6 August 1989, to the Pretoria Minute for the “suspension of the armed struggle and related activities,” it claimed the need to retain its own underground structures and militants since the government still had its security and intelligence forces. Also, the ANC refused to halt its domestic recruitment of MK militants and its conventional military training for MK forces based in foreign countries.

For their part, the South African intelligence services continued operating both at home and abroad, gathering information on the ANC/SACP leadership on the MK’s continuing foreign military training and its hidden arms caches within the country, and on a variety of other internal political groupings (black and white). Similarly, they conducted overseas espionage operations to acquire advanced technology from Western industrial countries and others. For example, in 1990, SADF military intelligence illegally bought ballistic missile detection software, originally developed for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in the USA. In the area of conventional arms, Armscor agents, as part of the SADF covert arms procurement operations, sought to acquire MIG-29 jet engines as possible replacements for ageing SADF strike aircraft, from such potential sources as the cash-shy Ukrainian Government and corrupt officials in neighbouring Mozambique. According to top secret intelligence documents, other items of military equipment on the SADF ‘shopping list’ were ‘over the horizon’ radar technology, ‘friend-or-foe’ identification electronic equipment, an onboard air-to-air missile and cannon control system, ‘radar deflecting paint’ technology, and even an effective ground-to-air defence system.43

Partially in response to the increasing demands of intelligence matters, De Klerk appointed Roelf Meyer as Deputy Minister of Information Services in the President’s Office in November 1990, while retaining his post in Constitutional Development. As Deputy Minister of Law and Order from December 1990 to mid-1991, Meyer co-ordinated the NSMS and participated in SSS meetings. In his new post, he was placed in charge of both the government’s public information image and co-ordinating its intelligence assessments, with ‘control’ over the NIS and the SSS. But critics saw the appointment as a move by De Klerk by which Meyer would mould the NIS into an institution able to supply analysis, interpretation and intelligence “more appropriate to a negotiating president,” while “the NIS would retain its hawkish head Dr. [Neal] Barnard and with him hard-line analysis and intelligence reporting to the president.” Even so, secret operations targeted at black militants and anti-government activists continued.

SECUROCRAT SHUFFLE: DE KLERK’S SECOND STEP

The South African Government and its security components were repeatedly described as a division between so-called ‘hawks’, who allegedly included some members of De Klerk’s cabinet and the security establishment as a whole, and the ‘doves’, who constituted the majority in the cabinet as well as the key departments of Constitutional Development, Finance and Foreign Affairs. Another perspective separated these two groups into ‘securocrat commanders’ and ‘civilian politicians’. Often missed in these various views is that the securocrat ‘hawks’ and civilian ‘doves’ tended to share common concerns about what they saw as major threats to South Africa’s - primarily white South African - security. Their differences centred on the issue of the ‘means to be utilised’ to ensure this security - destabilisation by use of force or negotiation from strength. Even so, covert operations uncovered to date point to a variety of groupings connected to the South African security establishment, including hold-over securocrats from the Botha period, De Klerk’s own ‘politics’ appointed to security posts, professional officers in the SADF and SAP, and a ‘mafia’ of covert operatives for contract services, any combination of which could have constituted the alleged ‘Third Force’ of security personnel.

In July 1991, a number of SAP Security Branch documents were leaked to the media, outlining evidence of ongoing secret funding by the De Klerk government to support the predominantly Zulu Inkatha movement and its affiliate the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA). In what came to be called the ‘Inkathagate’ slush fund scandal,6 six government special accounts for secret funding and covert operations were revealed. The government was forced to acknowledge that it had covertly funded
In an attempt to restore domestic and foreign confidence in the wake of ‘Inkhathagate’, De Klerk admitted the secret funding to Inkatha and UWWUSA. But he argued that the secret funds were intended to support black movements opposed to the economic sanctions imposed upon South Africa and which were part of the government’s clandestine anti-sanctions efforts, begun in 1986. Faced with additional adverse media reactions, De Klerk was compelled to issue another set of policy directions concerning government covert activities.\(^5\) First, due to the public controversy, “every special secret project [would be] looked at again.” Next, all such projects which constituted support for political organisations were now “cancelled subject to the speedy conclusion of some contractual obligations.”\(^6\) Third, in order to restrict such projects to a minimum, the government would review all legislation pertaining to secret funding with a view to three amendments: (a) that “secret actions may be undertaken only if they comply with specific norms and principles which are generally acceptable,” (b) that “political parties or organisations which are involved in politics may not be financed from secret funds,” and (c) that there would be “complete termination of the role of all security services in special secret projects falling outside the normal area of their line functions.” And finally, De Klerk established a five-person Advisory Committee on Special Secret Projects, appointed from the private sector, to monitor secret projects and to oversee the clandestine activities of the various government security services.\(^7\)

Defence Minister Malan and Law and Order Minister Vilak, both inherited from the Botha era, had repeatedly been denounced by opposition groups and the media as hard-line ‘hawks’ for their confrontational approach to anti-government activists, as well as their failure to halt the political violence. The ANC, in particular, consistently called for their resignations. Despite continuing evidence arising from judicial inquiries into secret government ‘death squads’, De Klerk continued to support them publicly, pointing out “that the army and the police are not under investigation as organisations.”\(^8\) But, with the July Inkhathagate revelations and the subsequent cabinet reshuffle, Malan and Vilak were demoted from their security-related positions. Although they lost their portfolio secrgiority, as well as their ex officio membership on both the CCSA and the SCS, they remained full cabinet members.\(^9\)

As such, De Klerk, as chairman of both forums, could still co-opt them onto each or both without public notice, as he himself had been co-opted to the SCC in the mid-1980s by PW Botha.

Malan’s replacement, Roelf Meyer, assumed the defence portfolio as well as a new communications portfolio which had been moved out of the President’s Office. Meyer was placed in charge of the government’s media, campaigning for its power-sharing position in ongoing negotiations, as well as the privatisation of the state South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The restructuring of the state TV and radio broadcasting system was initiated by a government task force, chaired by SASC chairman, Christo Viljoen, with security forces’ participation by departmental representation from Defence, Foreign Affairs, NIS, Post and Telegraphs, and Home Affairs.\(^10\)

But Meyer’s control over the SADF military commanders was soon called into question, despite continuing government assurances that SADF internal covert operations, like the disbanded CCB unit, were ended. In the May 1992 budget briefing on the Defence Special Account, the SADF chief of staff for finances, Paul Murray, stated that the SADF was not then engaged “in any covert or special projects beyond its scope of duty,” though its special activities included military intelligence gathering and counter-intelligence.\(^11\) At the same time, De Klerk relieved Meyer of his troublesome defence portfolio, passing it first to Gene Louw and then, a year later, to Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee.

When Meyer exchanged responsibility over ‘intelligence matters’ for that of defence, Deputy Minister of Finance, Theo Alant, was given a second post as Deputy Minister for the NIS. In view of the government’s revelations concerning the Finance ministry’s administration of six special account and secret funding operations, financial activities with which Alant would have been involved, his new joint responsibility in effect made him the cabinet watchdog over the funding of ongoing covert operations - at least those about which De Klerk had been informed. Despite the lack of government confirmation that Alant had been assigned to ‘financially hunt’ for unauthorised covert operations, the government in June 1992 scrapped the special accounts of the SAR, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Information Service of South Africa. All secret activities were to be financed in the future from the Secret Services Account. A secret services valuation committee was to be appointed by the State President to evaluate and annually review all the country’s secret services.\(^12\) But these steps, like the various measures already taken, apparently failed to uncover ongoing covert operations. Similarly, throughout 1992 and into 1993, considerable public doubt still existed about De Klerk’s ability to make the various secret services accountable and to deliver their support as a whole to a transitional government.\(^13\) In any case, Alant was relieved of his NIS responsibilities in the February 1993 cabinet shuffle.

During Alant’s ‘watch’, Dr Barnard resigned, in January 1992, as NIS director and, almost immediately, was appointed by De Klerk as Director-General of the Department of Constitutional Development Services and a member of the government’s team at the CODESA negotiations. Although there were suggestions that De Klerk had ‘sacked’ him, it is equally possible and considerably more plausible that as a political appointee Barnard, still enjoying support from his mentor, Justice Minister Coetsee, was transferred for political advantage. Barnard took his twelve years of intelligence operational knowledge and contacts, within the country and overseas, to his new role in the government’s constitutional affairs department.\(^14\) His transfer also permitted De Klerk to appoint a professional intelligence manager rather than a quickly-fired ‘political’ in charge of NIS when a multi-racial transitional government came to power.\(^15\) After his February 1993 cabinet reshuffle, De Klerk again brought the NIS under the Office of the State President, although Coetsee was given responsibility for its day-to-day management. In effect, De Klerk’s need for direct intelligence reporting had brought
President, the NIS had become essential for compiling covert intelligence collection, furnishing warnings of disruptive elements both within the government security forces and outside and assisting the government and National Party negotiators at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) constitutional talks, which began in December 1991.

The August 1991 cabinet shuffle also replaced Adrian Vlok as Minister of Law and Order with Hennie Kriel, who had no previous links to the SSS/NSMS structures. In a post which he would hold until the 1994 elections, Kriel was tasked with enhancing the SAP's fight against crime, and improving its image in the urban areas and the black townships. Other holdovers from the Botha era included Dr Jannie Roux. In October 1992, in his official capacity as Director-General in the President's Office, Roux assured the former administrative manager of the defence forces' disbanded covert CCB unit, Pieter 'Joe' Verster, that the SADF had arranged for the state to pay his legal costs at the judiciary inquiry into the murder of anti-apartheid activist, Dr David Webster. Within days, the government information services announced that Roux would be resigning his senior post to become South Africa's Ambassador to Austria in December. Similarly, Niel van Heerden, Director-General of Foreign Affairs since the mid-1980s and responsible for that department's Special Account, left his post as the senior foreign affairs official to become South Africa's Ambassador to the European Community in Brussels in 1993.

HUNTING THE ‘THIRD FORCE’: DE KLERK'S UNFINISHED STEP

Despite growing violence since the start of his presidency, the main threat to De Klerk's government was not from a potential mass uprising by either white right-wing extremists or black left-wing militants. A massive clandestine threat from white right-wing groups failed to materialise, despite sporadic bombings by extremist factions and even threats against De Klerk himself and his key advisors. Neither were the paramilitary forces of the ANC, and to a much lesser extent, the PAC, capable of armed disruption of the government. On the other hand, the increased level of so-called 'black-on-black' violence, as well as the repeatedly threatened 'retooling of the security forces' by white extremists, did have the capacity to derail the fragile political reform negotiations between the government and the various anti-apartheid groups.

The major threat throughout De Klerk's presidency was from clandestine units linked to the government's own security establishment, some as part of the security forces and some with only informal or contractual links. Where such units were uncovered, ties were revealed to 'hard-line' security commanders who had fought the 'main enemy' (the ANC) and were responsible for organising destabilisation operations over a twenty-year period. Those clandestine security units threatened the reform process by organised violence, by covert funding and arming of anti-militant groups, and by financial fraud and other criminal activities.

After nearly three decades of active armed struggle between government security services and anti-government militants, the security commanders on each side almost certainly advised that it was best to let the operations proceed “just in case the negotiations process broke down.” De Klerk and his NP government secretly supported conservative black political groupings, including the Inkatha Freedom Party, which acted as counter to the ANC. As a result, De Klerk was repeatedly accused of having done "little or nothing to shake off the culture of clandestine operations and secret funds" inherited from the Botha era. Throughout 1992 and 1993, such public doubts continued as further secret units were uncovered.

From evidence uncovered to date, a number of De Klerk's political department heads and some security commanders pointed to the need for 'reform with security' and supported the use of covert operations to boost non-governmental organisations as a counter to radical black movements. But others undoubtedly argued for a kragdagi (forceful) approach to ensure white security during and after the violets political negotiations. Covert operations would train, organise, arm, and deploy an amorphous 'media-like' network within South Africa which was responsible for much of the indiscriminate political violence - whether by direct action, indirect manipulation or financial commission - and often referred to in the media as a 'third force'.

Most of the Third Force's operational components were products of the 'security and destabilisation' milieu in the southern African region over the last three decades. Composed of whites and blacks, the operational units included serving security forces personnel, former security officials and security personnel, individuals who had financially gained (or lost) as a result of regional upheaval, and criminal elements involved in clandestine activities, like gun-running. Other clandestine units, including parts of various black homeland security forces, extremist groupings (white and black), and some private business concerns - including those from the former Rhodesia and the former Portuguese African colonies of Angola and Mozambique - had benefited from the previously security-dominated policy agenda of the South African Government. Although some of those elements might have been able to claim some political motivation in the past, such as operating with South African Government support, if not actual direction, many subsequently became part of the criminal underground in South Africa, involved in gun-running operations, drug trafficking, diamond and ivory smuggling, illegal immigration, foreign exchange scams and money laundering.

De Klerk had allegedly assured senior security commanders in early 1990 that "he was not planning a witch-hunt," namely, to prosecute them for their past activities. By October 1990, the De Klerk government had legislated the Indemnity Act whereby “any individual who had conducted illegal activities committed for political purposes” up to that time would receive an amnesty. But the prospect of a general amnesty was strongly criticised as giving pardons to hit squads operatives, perpetrators of torture, as well as "unidentified persons who have committed undisclosed acts." Even so, in an effort to contain security force fears of Nuremberg-type trials by a post-apartheid government, the De Klerk government, in a special session of parliament, 'steam-rolled' the Further Indemnity Bill into law in October 1992. This expanded law extended immunity to persons who “had advised, directed, commanded, ordered or performed offences with a political objective prior to 8 October 1990,” whether as a state employee...
While such indemnity legislation was intended as a strong incentive for individuals to stop committing 'political crimes', the indiscriminate violence continued. The public outcry over the rising violence, as well as the Jivraj case scandal, led the government and the major opposition parties to reach agreement on a National Peace Accord in September 1991. Under that accord, De Klerk established a judicial commission of inquiry under Justice Richard Goldstone to hear testimony and investigate any complaints of political violence and intimidation. Functioning under the Department of Justice but reporting directly to the President, the Goldstone Commission was given wide powers to search and seize, subpoena witnesses, and compel testimony. Despite being hampered by narrow terms of reference and a lack of manpower resources, the Commission increasingly found evidence that a so-called 'Third Force', composed of former security force members and contract operatives, was committing many of the acts of political violence.

As a result of the information uncovered by the Goldstone Commission and published in its various reports, De Klerk was repeatedly forced to act. In July 1992, British criminologist Peter Waddington, working for the Commission, produced a confidential report assessing the South African Police investigation the 'unsolved' Boipetse massacres and the SAP as a police force. In his public report, Waddington recommended a phased removal of the more incompetent and controversial staff officers. The following month, the Minister of Law and Order, Hernus Kriel, announced a major purge of senior SAP officials. Of the SAP's 88 generals, 13 were to be dismissed "to heighten its effectiveness" and another 6 were past retirement age. But critics hasly pointed out that none of the SAP commanders "with the most notorious reputations" were dismissed nor were any appointments of black SAP generals announced.

At the same time, Gert Hugo, a former colonel in the Department of Military Intelligence, went public with first-hand background material on a secret network of former and present security force members whose purpose was to intimidate and assassinate anti-apartheid activists and ferment 'black-on-black' violence. Hugo's testimony provided the highest level evidence of a 'Third Force' network operating among the government security forces. Then, in November, Goldstone Commission Investigators, acting on a tip, raided a key DMI covert operations centre outside Johannesburg. From five seized files, a previously unknown DMI clandestine unit entitled the Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC) was uncovered. This unit had secretly re-hired civilian operatives from the CCB unit which had been declared 'officially disbanded' in April 1990. Faced with this evidence, De Klerk ordered the then-SADF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Pierre Steyn, to investigate "all of the intelligence functions of the SA Defence Force". But, in practice, Steyn was limited to investigating only the DMI operations, rather than the SADF's overall intelligence operations or those of the South African police and the other state security services. Apparently in response to Steyn's findings, De Klerk at a surprise press conference on 19 December 1992, announced that 23 senior commanders of the SADF military intelligence establishment had been dismissed for unauthorised
clandestine activities linked to the countrywide political violence. But his action appeared to be just another example of his being prepared to act decisively against senior security commanders only when he was presented with 'smoking gun' evidence, whether from a judicial commission or investigative media reporters.

But, even as he announced the 1992 SADF sacking, De Klerk felt it necessary to declare that,

"We [the government] dare not allow our security forces in general, and our intelligence services in particular, to be crippled in their capacity to work against the evil plans of those responsible for violence and unrest. I stand by our security forces and our intelligence services and am convinced that they will, in fact, be strengthened and encouraged by effective action against the malpractices concerned which have cast a shadow over everyone."2

At the opening of the 1993 session of parliament, De Klerk continued to emphasise the government's need for maintaining intelligence services, even while still attempting to bring their activities under control. He declared that "the work of the intelligence community was not party-political, but genuinely security-oriented," and that "there's no witch-hunt" after individual members.2 When later challenged again about the secret activities of the security forces, he stated that they would "continue to infiltrate or gather intelligence on organisations whose activities were aimed at endangering state security." Pointing out that organisations such as the ANC, PAC and MK were no longer banned, were involved in negotiations and were "not as such enemies of the state," De Klerk declared that "no person, organisation or party" involved in activities aimed at endangering the state security was exempt from attention by the intelligence agencies.2 But his control over the senior security commanders continued to be seen as "tenuous" when he appointed General George Meiring, who had been implicated in the 1992 Project Echoes disclosures, as head of the South African Defence Force in August 1993.11

Even after the highly publicised 1992 sacking of those who appeared to be the principal 'Third Force' commanders, De Klerk was forced to act again less than six weeks before the 1994 elections. Once again, he was caught between maintaining his intelligence capacity and controlling security commanders. On the basis of a released Goldstone Commission report on police involvement in the continuing political violence, he ordered "immediate leave from duties" for ten senior SAP officers, including SAP Deputy Commissioner Lieutenant-General Bosie Smit, for conspiring to foment violence and destabilise the country.9 But he felt it was also necessary to declare that, prior to that latest report, "at no stage did we [the government] have evidence of an organised entity within the security force that could be described as a Third Force."9

The continued uncovering of layers of 'Third Force' activities point out the legacy of the three decade-long clandestine armed struggle in and around South Africa: (1) that previously unknown units of the South African security forces continued, even after President de Klerk's February 1990 normalisation speech, to conduct clandestine operations without cabinet authorisation or notification, and (2) that, as De Klerk attempted to gain control over 'all' clandestine operations, unauthorised operations were increasingly 'hidden' outside the security establishment structures.

INTELLIGENCE RestructURING UNDER DE KLERK

De Klerk's steps to control and restructure the South African intelligence services had considerable impact: on De Klerk himself, on the government security forces, and on the country's political reform process. First, De Klerk, as a cabinet minister and 'co-opted' SSC member in the 1980s, was an intelligence consumer who helped shape intelligence collection requirements, and, to a limited extent, a decision-maker on clandestine operations involving the intelligence services. As such, he shares ministerial accountability for covert operations and violence targeted at anti-apartheid organisations at that time - even if many of those operations were approved and implemented by elements of the SSC and its NSMS structures without his knowledge and possibly that of most of the PW Botha cabinet.

During his four years as State President, De Klerk undertook a series of steps to make the government security services he inherited accountable to him and, in so doing, uncovered apparently further unknown covert operations. But it remains unclear which operations he knew of and, of those, whether he knew of their operational details. The evidence to date indicates that De Klerk and his key cabinet advisors found clandestine operations an essential instrument for their reform strategy, while their control over those who managed the operations was weak. They authorized clandestine operations to track the intentions of black and white extremist groups, to counter campaigns of violence, to lessen the impact of the international sanctions campaign on the national economy and on the security establishment itself. But secret government funds also supported covert projects intended to destabilise anti-apartheid groups in South Africa, Namibia and quite likely in Angola. Even after the government began negotiations with the ANC, the security forces were secretly funding ethnic opposition to the 'main enemy' (the ANC), as exposed in the Inkathagate scandal.9

Second, De Klerk was well aware of the importance of effective and accountable intelligence management in providing analysis and options as his political reform process reached the 'core issues' talking stage. As negotiations began on concrete aspects of a settlement, senior personnel from the NS were transferred to the Department of Constitutional Affairs to provide intelligence/policy support for his government negotiating team. Their intelligence experience and linkages allowed them to be utilised as key planning assets. At the same time, De Klerk's sacking of several SAP and SADF security commanders accused of authorising rogue operations, and retiring other hold-over senior security chiefs, can be seen as an effort to make the government intelligence community more accountable to him.

Third, no 'smoking gun' evidence has been discovered that either De Klerk or his key cabinet advisors 'masterminded' a nation-wide policy of clandestine disruption and violence against opposition activists nor encouraged the indiscriminate killings since February 1990. Yet, despite structural and personnel changes in the South African intelligence services ordered in the effort to control unauthorised covert operations, evidence continues to emerge that a cabal of security commanders, along with a
And fourth, De Klerk repeatedly announced that he had taken additional measures to gain control over all of the secret units of the security forces and their clandestine operations, only to have additional secret units uncovered by media and judiciary investigators. When the security forces became responsible to the Transitional Executive Council's sub-committees dealing with law and order, defence and intelligence, under the 28 November 1993 proclamation setting up the TEC, a number of questions remained. First, whether further covert operations, or even the primary 'Third Force' commanders and operatives themselves, would be uncovered. Next, whether the existing non-government and non-government security services could be successfully merged. And finally, whether the 'New South Africa' security services could be held accountable to a multi-racial, multi-party government, which took power after the country's first all-race general elections in April 1994.

**EPILOGUE (AFTER MAY 1994)**

Even under the TEC, created to oversee government operations until the April elections, the clandestine Third Force network(s), motivated by a combination of individual greed, fear of judicial retribution and possible even a belief in their 'power' to control political events, continued to operate outside government control.

Following the relatively 'free and fair' April 1994 general elections, newly-elected South African President Nelson Mandela appointed a 'national unity' government, including ministers from the African National Congress, the National Party, and the Inkatha Freedom Party. Despite protests by now-Second Vice President (and NP leader) De Klerk, Mandela gave all the security portfolios to his ANC ministers. The defence portfolio was handed to Joe Modise, the military commander of the now-disbanded MK guerrillas. Although IIPF leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi was given the Home Affairs portfolio, ministerial responsibility for the South African Police went to Sidney Mufamadi, an ANC trade union leader and Communist Party interim leader-member, as Minister of Safety and Security. Presumably, responsibility for the National Intelligence Service will remain under the Office of the President. Primary control of the South African security forces rests with President Mandela and his two ANC ministers, Modise and Mufamadi. Whether his 'national unity' government, which includes De Klerk and six NP ministers as well as Buthelezi and two IIPF ministers, can isolate and control continuing 'Third Force' violence remains questionable.

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2. For a review of this relationship up to July 1991, see the author's *De Klerk's Relationship with the South African Intelligence Services*, Ottawa, *Commentary* series no. 15, November 1991.

3. Regarding research sources, this article has been based primarily upon a variety of open material including the public speeches and statements made by former State President PW de Klerk and his key advisors, as well as South African Press Association (SAPA) and South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) news reports, investigative articles by other South African media, and academic writings on the subject. The background research came from the author's file of past interviews in Southern Africa during the 1980s.


6. Interview with Mr. De Klerk, African Business, Washington, DC, July - August 1985, p. 35. Also see Wimpele de Klerk's biography on his "most famous" brother entitled PW de Klerk: The Man and His World, Cape Town, 1980 and 1986 which has been published as an addendum to the present chapter.

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Williams is chairman of the Military Research Group and a former ANC membership. An address to De Klerk, he had been informed of the 1974 decision to develop nuclear weapons within the Department of Energy Corporation (RAC). South Africa avoided this nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in July 1991.  


21 This South African Freedom Movement and co-ordinator is responsible for the ANC's leadership and the main leadership in exile.  


23 Williams, Chong the Guard, p. 17.


25 This is in addition to a co-ordinating joint security committee which was responsible for the coordination of intervention strategies. The 'South Africans in exile' in exile have also had a role in developing intervention strategies, in cases like the Standing Committee on International Security. The non-RSA group is also doing this and it is being done in exile, in exile.  

26 The President's speech at the 1 March 1990 *Successful Struggle of the South African People* as reported by the *Star* (Johannesburg). The principal responsibility for running the South African National Movement seems to have been taken over by the Department of Public Order. The joint leadership had already led that, in December 1988, the President of ANC, Deputy President of the African National Congress and Deputy-President of the African National Congress did not allocate funds to South African activities abroad.  


28 ARA news report. 19 and 21 July 1991;  


30 ARA news report, 1 March 1990.

31 *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, 28 January 1990; *Star* newspaper, New York, May 1990, pp. 23-24; and  


34 For example, in the ARA news report of the BBC, 23 March 1990. The program's primary responsibility for running the South African National Movement Centre had been set up a number of years ago; the Department of Public Order did not allocate funds to South African activities abroad. The joint leadership had already led that, in December 1988, the President of ANC, Deputy President of the African National Congress and Deputy-President of the African National Congress did not allocate funds to South African activities abroad.  


36 The *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, 28 January 1990; *Star* newspaper, New York, May 1990, pp. 23-24; and  


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41 When asked about his cabinet, General Malan replied that "people are underestimating our leaders" and "[we] need to be underestimating ourselves."  

42 The *Guardian*, London, 20 August 1991. An estimated 41 covert operations were subsequently ended as a result. In his 23 March 1992 report to the South African Parliament, De Klerk declared that clandestine projects were limited "to an absolute minimum of essential tools." Indeed, the NSP and the SAP had terminated all special secret projects and confined themselves to "the line of functional tasks entrusted to them by law," and that a commission of military leaders, chaired by the Minister of Finance, had control over the expenditures and content of military policy. This was first published on 23 April 1992.  


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47 The handling and utilisation of funds from the *Secret Service Accounts* - the 1993/94 budget estimate for the *Secret Service Accounts* was $1.5 million, and $1.5 million was allocated to the *Secret Service Accounts* - was to be accounted for both the *Secret Service Accounts*, the *Secret Service Accounts* and the *Secret Service Accounts* and the *Secret Service Accounts*. The Special Forces Special Account was to be retained for the operations of the *Secret Service Accounts*. The Special Forces Special Account would continue to be maintained but limited to the specific requirements of the military expenditure and equipment.  


49 It was reported that in the case of the *Israel* 1989 recognition it was the Palestinian Authority on police, politics and armed conflict and a few places. In the case of the *Israel* 1989 recognition it was the Palestinian Authority on police, politics and armed conflict and a few places. In the case of the *Israel* 1989 recognition it was the Palestinian Authority on police, politics and armed conflict and a few places.  


51 General Maurice "Mike" Sisaketo was transferred from the NIS to the Political Development directorate in mid-1993.  

52 According to Mr. Van Houtz, "De Klerk needs to carry out the agenda (NSP) ... as a super intervention strategy. The ANC carries out an agenda that is not so well defined ..."  


54 First elected to parliament in 1984 by-election, Kriel's only previous involvement with the area of internal security appears to have been as a member of the NF NP study group for Law and Order.
With the ANC's "suspension" of its armed struggle in August 1992, the major potential for black left-wing sabotage disappeared. This was the term used by government security forces spokesman when discussing indiscriminate killings of unarmed blacks by unknown perpetrators. See author's Clashing Aids Struggles, 1993.


93 Besides the government forces and the anti-apartheid forces, Nelson Mandela appears to have found coined the term "Third Force" to refer to the unidentified gunmen in the 1995 State of the Cabinet Speech, London, 8 August 1993.


95 E.g., in Justice in General Amnesty, New HOI, weekly, Johannesburg, 21-27 August 1995, p. 13-15, was being "steered" through by Justice Minister Kobie Kekana, only "passed" into the hands by having it referred to the ANC and that it had no option but to "have the law nullified retrospectively at the earliest possible opportunity". SADF press release, 5 November 1990.

96 South African Press Service, 16 and 26 October 1992. Subsequently, De Klerk stated that, while the cut-off date for political crimes was 5 October 1990, "I made it clear that I am against shifting it to any date beyond October 1992 (emphasis added)." SADF press release, 29 April 1993.


98 In response to Auditor-General's reports of corruption and mismanagement of state funds, De Klerk established the Office for Serious Economic Offences under the Justice Minister in 1992. With a mischievous investigation of major crime and financial irregularities, this unit was axed by the ANC in 1993.

99 In the case of the Committee of Public Accounts, the audit of the commission was limited to summary receipts, work or not made public, and the outcome was that the information was "always given to the man, and that's President de Klerk..." according to Transnet's president, the then UN Assembly, New HOI, 5 March 1993.

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SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW INTELLIGENCE ENVIRONMENT

Kevin A O'Brien

INTRODUCTION

In the post-Soviet restructuring of the international system, one area that has gone largely unremarked is that of intelligence and security. One of the principal mechanisms for governments to implement both foreign and national security policies, intelligence, has been affected perhaps even more than other forms of security such as armed forces, by the massive international changes in governance, in policy-making, and in the transition from a bipolar to a multipolar world. Due to this final influence, regional leaders are emerging in the field of intelligence and security as the Great Powers, especially the United States and the Russian Republic, begin an introspective examination of their new roles both internationally and domestically.

South Africa is one of these new regional powers, in all senses, both within the context of Africa and the Southern World. It is clear that South Africa has undergone a revolution. One of the areas where this is most evident is that of national security, as has been indicated by the continued evolution of the security and intelligence services of the RSA. This change was first acknowledged on 21 October 1994, when Minister of Justice Dullah Omar first announced publicly the intended new structure of South Africa's secret services. This was followed by the release of a Government White Paper on Intelligence in October 1994, outlining future policy considerations, and, in December 1994, by three new bills of legislation restructuring the intelligence and security services, as well as the mechanisms for control, co-ordination, oversight and accountability.

These changes were crucial to the furthering of a peaceful settlement between the former government and the former liberation groups. The national intelligence structures that are established now will go a long way to ensuring continuity and peace in all of the RSA's security structures, especially after 1999; indeed, the importance of these new national intelligence structures will continue to increase, due both to their key role in providing national intelligence estimates to the government of the day, and to the redefinition of the briefs of the individual agencies. The new South African intelligence dispensation appears to have tried to develop solutions for many of the problems in other intelligence and security services. Indeed, the links emerging between the services of South Africa and those of Canada, Australia, Great Britain and the United States, as well as in the legislative comparisons drawn between these states, all point to a growing alliance in this area. This is particularly the case between Canada, South Africa and Australia. What is still lacking, however, is the new national security dispensation is a clear definition of South Africa's national security itself. Until this is clarified, the mission of all participants in South Africa's security will remain incomplete in its definition. This paper will examine not only the structure and focus of the new intelligence community in South Africa, but also and most importantly the environment within which it is expected to operate.

There are a number of external security issues that impact most on the RSA, as is indicated in the White Paper on Intelligence:

"New global political, social and economic problems are filtering South Africa's borders. International extremists have forged links with their South African counterparts, whilst international drug cartels use our country both as a transit route for their trade and as a market, thus corrupting our social system."

But these are not the only pressing external concerns:

"there has been a dramatic increase in foreign intelligence activities in South Africa. Apart from the classic political and military espionage, other activities of foreign/ hostile intelligence services and industrial espionage agents have increased markedly in the economic, technological and scientific fields." ¹

All of this brings us to the future role of the intelligence and security services in the new South Africa. With the massive upheavals that South Africa's national security structures have faced over the past five-to-six years, it is only now that a new focus and direction is being mandated for the secret services of the RSA.² This paper will examine these new structures and policies within five key areas: legislation, national security management structures, focus and organisation of the new services, the policies to surround these services and their area of operations, and their context in comparison to other Commonwealth models.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY ASPECTS

OUTLINE

Most of these new policies and principles emerged out of informal discussions held between the National Intelligence Service (NIS) and ANC Intelligence in July 1993, which built on earlier meetings between the two in March of that year; the areas of discussion and conclusions reached were eventually incorporated more officially in the discussions and negotiations of the Sub-Council on Intelligence of the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) formed in November of 1993 to oversee the period up to the elections and the transfer of power, as well as negotiations on the Interim Constitution.

The principal pieces of legislation that concern the new structures are the National Strategic Intelligence Act, the Intelligence Service Act, the Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspector-General of Intelligence Act, and the 1994 White Paper on Intelligence. In addition, aspects of the Police and the Defence Acts are relevant to any examination of the new national security structures. We will look at the national security policies of South Africa and at the White Paper on Intelligence as the principal influencers of the new intelligence environment; the other places of legislation will be discussed as relevant to the new intelligence structure.
NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY OF SOUTH AFRICA

In order to carry out the functions and mandates given it, the Intelligence community must operate within the national security policy of the state. National security as it has been narrowly defined in the past is now considered to encompass a great many more issues and concerns than previously. Within the South African context, these include the growing importance of non-military security, threats to stability and development, and the reality of international interdependence. This last point is the most important for the purposes of this discussion: as the White Paper on Intelligence indicates:

“The intermingling and transnational character of modern-day security issues furthermore indicates that solutions to the problems of insecurity are beyond the direct control of any single country and cannot be rectified by purely military means. The international security agenda is shifting to the full range of political, economic, military, social, religious, technological, ethnic and ethical factors that shape security issues around the world. The main threat to the well-being of individuals and the interests of nations across the world do not primarily come from a neighbouring army, but from other internal and external challenges such as economic collapse, overpopulation, mass-migration, ethnic rivalry, political oppression, terrorism, crime and disease, to mention but a few.”

Therefore, South Africa’s new national security policy will encompass as its objectives not only the ‘absence of war’ but also the pursuit of democracy, of sustainable economic development, and social justice. Regionally, it will advance the principles of collective security, non-aggression, and peaceful settlement of disputes. National security is increasingly being defined as threats to the people rather than threats to the state. Joe Nhlanhla, formerly head of the MK Department of Intelligence and Security (MK-DIS) and now the Deputy Minister for Intelligence, stated in 1992 that

“The redefinition of South Africa’s security needs is the inter-relationship between the security of the state and that of the people must be seen in arriving at a new definition of national security. The security of the state depends on its ability to maintain its political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity... The security of the people depends on the satisfaction of their political, economic, cultural and social needs... The security of the state depends on the security of the people, and the security of the people depends on the security of the state.”

The White Paper on Intelligence expanded on this theme by stating that

“National security should be understood in comprehensive terms to include the military, political, economic, social, technological and environmental dimensions. National security should therefore besides its traditional concern with defence, violence and subversion, encompass the basic principles and core values associated with and essential to the quality of life, freedom, justice, prosperity and development.”

This reconceptualisation of security is an essential element in understanding the context within which the security services will operate.

“The principles which will therefore guide the defence and security community centre on the understanding that South Africa shall be committed to resolve internal and external conflict primarily through non-violent means; that national, social and individual security shall be sought primarily through efforts to meet the social, political, economic, and cultural needs of the citizenry; and that South Africa shall pursue peaceful and co-operative relations with neighbouring states in order to promote regional security, stability and development.”

This approach to security will hold up the Reconstruction and Development Programme as integral to the country’s emerging national security doctrine. It is because the RDP is aimed at rebuilding the country in order to meet the basic needs of the people, to develop and build the economy, and to democratise South Africa, that it will be one of the determinants of lasting peace and security in South Africa. The RDP currently oversees programmes comprising a considerable proportion of the government’s budget: it is therefore an extremely important programme within South Africa and a focus for most international assistance programmes.

Through the development of this new national security policy, it is thought that the replacement for the former National Co-ordinating Mechanism, instituted by then State President F W de Klerk in 1991, will evolve once the new structures and mandates are fully in place. It is plain from the transition of power that the so-called ‘sacrosanct’ who exerted such a heavy influence on the government through the State Security Council (SSC) and its associated Stratom Intelligence arm under former State President PW Botha, and later the Cabinet Committee for Security Affairs (CCSA) under De Klerk, during the apartheid years are no more; now, new individuals have been appointed at all managerial and ministerial levels by the Government of National Unity (GNU). There has been a degree of tension within the GNU over such appointments; all ministerial positions relating to security (Defence, Safety and Security, Intelligence, Justice, and Foreign Affairs) have gone to ANC personnel, which has raised tensions over equality within the government, especially between the ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

The intelligence services of South Africa have long been at the forefront of both politics and change in the country. Military and police intelligence were very influential on government policy, and in their implementation in the worst days of the apartheid regime, while the civilian NIS was used in the late 1980s as the instrument for the first...
Neither military nor police intelligence, with their alleged ties to covert death squads and the continuation of violence into 1994, would have been capable, nor probably willing, to undertake this role. The SADF Directorate of Military Intelligence (SADF-DMI) was heavily involved in the 'total strategy' policy of response to the guerrilla war carried on by the ANC and other liberation groups - it had vehemently opposed any contact with the enemy. The NIS had been marginalised under State President Botha during the 1970s and '80s while military intelligence was raised to the level of policymaker, it rose to prominence under De Klerk, who realised in both military intelligence and the police security branch, allowing the NIS to carry out its mandate to be the sole provider of national intelligence estimates to the government. This was especially true after the unbanning of the ANC and MK, as well as the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA) in 1990.

The reason behind the changes in the intelligence and security structures was partly a result of the general government restructuring following independence, but also to allow for the integration of the MK-DIS, along with all other intelligence services in the country, into the new national intelligence structure. As Joe Nhlanhla indicated in 1992:

"The current situation presents all intelligence actors with an opportunity unique in our history - to redefine the political principles, organisational culture and morality in terms of which intelligence in future shall be practised. In discussing the future of intelligence in our country, we cannot negate the fact that we, as intelligence actors, constitute a tragic legacy: a legacy of opposition to one another - some of us struggling against apartheid, others defending it - actions that were dictated by the very nature of our highly politicised roles respectively. Today, a new mission must be determined for the South African intelligence community - a mission which is in line with the desired goal of a non-racial democratic order."

1994 WHITE PAPER ON INTELLIGENCE

The White Paper on Intelligence, released in October of 1994, laid out the first expression of what the new structures, operational mandates, and policies of South Africa's intelligence community will be in the coming years. By examining the points raised in the White Paper, a solid understanding of what direction the government will take in reforming and restructuring an institution that has been tied, in particular

the former Directorate of Military Intelligence and its associated Special Operations Forces, as well as the old Security Branch of the SAP, so often in the past to the crimes of the apartheid regime.

To begin with, one of the most interesting aspects of the White Paper is its examination of what is called the 'philosophy of intelligence'. This is considered because

"Reshaping and transforming intelligence in South Africa is not only a matter of organisational restructuring. It should start with clarifying the philosophy and redefining the mission, focus and priorities of intelligence in order to establish a new culture of intelligence. Prior to the election of a democratic government, security policy was formulated by a minority government. Its ability to deal with what was in the national interest, was therefore flawed. Moreover, since the minority government was faced with a struggle for liberation, this issue dominated the question of security and, consequently, the activities of the statutory instruments that served it. A further consequence was that the role of the state's security apparatus was over-accentuated with virtually no institutional checks and balances."

In order to assist in the policy formulation process, intelligence must be accurate, relevant, timely, and have an element of warning and assessment. The reciprocal nature of this tie must ensure that intelligence is developed by the policy-makers through the commitment of sufficient resources, including financial, infrastructural and personnel. The White Paper indicates that intelligence will serve the following purposes in South Africa: to provide policy-makers with critical and off-again unique information to warn them of potential risks and dangers; to identify opportunities in the international environment, through assessing real or potential competitors' intentions and capabilities; and to assist in good governance, through providing honest, critical intelligence that highlights the weaknesses and errors of government.

From these principles, the newly formulated mission of the South African intelligence community has emerged. This will be

- the safeguarding of the Constitution,
- the upholding of individual rights enunciated as Fundamental Rights in the Constitution,
- the promotion of the interrelated elements of security, stability, co-operation and development, both within South Africa and in the region of Southern Africa,
- the achievement of national prosperity whilst making an active contribution to global peace and other globally defined priorities for the well-being of humankind, and
- the promotion of South Africa's ability to face foreign threats and to enhance its competitiveness in a dynamic world.

THE SUB-COUNCIL ON INTELLIGENCE OF THE TRANSITIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

As part of the negotiations over the transition of power, a Sub-Council on Intelligence was established within the TEC, one of only four such councils, indicating its importance
control through this body over the day-to-day functions of the intelligence community; the NIS opposed this. The compromise, written into the mandate of the 
Transitional Executive Council Act, states that the TEC would oversee the operations while control would be left to the individual department heads, much as with the 
army and the police. 

In addition, a Joint Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee (JCIC) was established 
within the TEC. It eventually gave way to the National Intelligence Co-ordinating 
Committee (NICOC) and the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence (CCSI) 
which replaced the National Intelligence Committee and the Cabinet Committee on 
Security Affairs respectively. The JCIC was authorised to oversee the co-ordination of 
the intelligence services, to investigate the activities of any service which appeared to 
contravene its mandate, and to provide intelligence information to the TEC and its 
other sub-committees. Finally and most importantly, the sub-committee became the forum 
through which discussions on the future structure of the intelligence community 
were carried out within the GNU. This was especially important because the future 
scope and focus of South Africa’s intelligence community was not covered in the 
Interim Constitution, unlike the military and police which were. 

Through all of these negotiations, it was hoped that eventually, as Mike Louw was to 
state, South Africa could have “an intelligence service at peace with itself”. In order 
to accomplish this, Louw went on to say “the watchwords must be control, account-
bility and supervision. Too many people equate us with other secret organisations. 
We need to establish our own identity.”

The TEC Sub-Council on Intelligence agreed that as part of the continued approach to 
the philosophy of intelligence, the following principles and practical requirements 
were to be included in the mandates of the services for purposes of control and 
accountability: allegiance to the Constitution, subordination to the rule of law, a 
clearly-defined legal mandate, budgetary control and external auditing, an integrated 
national intelligence capability, political neutrality and the separation of intelligence 
from policy making, a balance between secrecy and transparency and the absence of 
law-enforcement powers. These are in addition to the four principle mechanisms for 
oversight and control of the intelligence services, built into the new structures: the 
appointment by the President of Inspectors-General to oversee the services, the 
establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence, the implementation of a 
code of conduct for the intelligence services, and a strict limit in definition of the 
briefs of each service. 

In order to ensure that those agencies tasked with carrying-out the intelligence and 
security work of South Africa would be able to execute their tasks with minimal 
inference and question, three final guidelines were established within the 
government. First, the services must accept as primary the authority of the 
government and other democratic institutions of society, as well as those bodies 
constitutionally-mandated to participate in and monitor the determination of 
intelligence priorities. Second, the services must be assured that no changes to their 
operational doctrines, structures and procedures would occur unless approved by the 
government and the people. Finally, the services would bind themselves to the new 
agreements through a mutually-agreed set of norms and a code of conduct.

NEW STRUCTURE OF THE RSA INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DEFINITIONS

In order to fulfill the missions laid out for the new South African intelligence 
community, a finite definition of national intelligence was first devised in order to 
provide parameters for both the restructuring of the community and the new (or 
continued) operational mandates of these agencies. The concept of ‘national 
intelligence’ was laid out as being gathered, collated, disseminated and evaluated 
information pertaining to the security of the state. To fulfill this requirement, “the 
intelligence services are required to set in the interests of the country as a whole. In this 
respect, intelligence should enhance national security, and protect and promote the 
interests of the state and the well-being of its citizens.” Further, developing on this 
principle, the concept of national strategic intelligence was defined as “comprehensive, 
integrated and estimative intelligence on all the current and long-term aspects of national 
security which are of special concern to strategic decision-making and the 
formulation and implementation of policy and strategy at the national level”.

National intelligence functions will therefore include counter-intelligence, foreign 
intelligence, and domestic intelligence. In addition, the President is further authorised to 
approve ‘special activities’ by the South African Intelligence community. Specific 
services will be responsible for each of these functions within their own area of 
operations. In order to avoid the problems under the apartheid regime where briefs for 
the individual agencies were either ill-defined or overlapped with those of other 
agencies, the National Strategic Intelligence Act has clearly defined these new briefs and 
what they mean for each agency.

These definitions and the briefs outlined for each agency raise a number of questions. 
First, does defining the different strains of intelligence so clearly really eliminate overlap 
in briefs or will conflict over resources and areas of operation in this regard continue? 
Second, the wording of such briefs as ‘domestic military intelligence’ and ‘domestic 
intelligence’ leaves many questions open as to the application of these tenets: one of 
the greatest problems is that there is no clear definition as to what constitutes a threat 
to the Republic. Unlike the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act which clearly lays 
out what constitutes a threat to Canada’s national security, the legislation on South 
Africa’s national security has not yet defined threats, foreign or domestic, to this level. 
Third, by defining national security so broadly, the intelligence briefs may, in fact, have 
created both new overlaps and too broad a mandate for the agencies to fulfill. There are 
fears that due to the incredibly broad nature of the definition of national security as it is 
voiced in the White Paper and other documents, the scope of intelligence activity could 
become too broad. Mark Shaw has indicated that “a broader conception of security 
would allow any issue perceived to be threatening to the state to fall into the ambit of 
intelligence agencies… no attempt appears to have been made to delineate more tightly 
which areas should be of concern for the intelligence agencies.” This concern will only 
be answered once South Africa’s national security policy is clearly defined.
THE CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

We will now turn to the national intelligence structures themselves. Several options for restructuring were examined during the two previous years. These included 'absorption', entailing members of the non-NIS services to be absorbed on an individual basis into the existing structures; 'amalgamation', which would take complete intelligence services (such as MK-DIS) and amalgamate them into the existing structures; 'marginalisation', in which a limited number of senior officials from other intelligence services would be accepted into the existing structures, while forcing members of the statutory and non-statutory forces to apply through normal recruitment channels; and finally 'integration', which implied a complete disbanding of the existing structures and the creation of totally new structures based on equal opportunity, in line with professional standards, for all members of all services. In the end, the option chosen was the fourth, being seen as the most viable and equitable.

The National Intelligence Service was disbanded on 1 January 1995; in its place was established, under section 3.1 of the Intelligence Services Act, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). It comprises those former members of the NIS, MK-DIS, the Transkei Intelligence Service, the Bophuthatswana Internal Intelligence Service, the Venda National Intelligence Service, and any other members of any intelligence service either attached to a political organisation or operating in the independent homelands or self-governing territories; the KwaZulu-Natal homeland police and the intelligence arms of the IFP are being integrated into the new National Investigation Service of the police, not into the new intelligence services. Although the new agency will include members from all of these services, a percentage of these former members will instead become members of the new South African Police Service and not intelligence. Subsequently, the foreign intelligence-gathering department of the NIA was separated and constituted under section 3.4a as the South African Secret Service (SASS). By dividing the operational mandates of the old National Intelligence Service between its foreign and domestic roles, it is hoped that this will "promote greater focusing, effectiveness, professionalism, and expertise in the specialised fields of domestic and foreign intelligence".

The new head of the NIA is the former deputy head of the MK-DIS, Sizakele Sigxase, while the head of SASS, as mentioned earlier, is the former Director-General of the NIS, MMJ (Mike) Louw. While many would have thought that the NIS should have been disbanded due to its links with the old order, many in the ANC argued for its retention due to a number of factors, the most important being the NIS' contribution to the compromises which led to the settlement between the government and the ANC. Also, the NIS possessed assets and capabilities that the ANC would not want to lose, including sources, information on both the white right wing and extremists in black parties such as Inkatha, technological capabilities, and greater professional training than in the ANC. Finally, while it was not stated openly, the NIS also possessed information of great interest to the ANC: information on the ANC itself, its leaders and cadres. By revealing this information, the NIS could have inflicted considerable damage on the GNU. Generally, the structure of the NIA was similar to the NIS, with the exception of the separation of the foreign intelligence department; most department heads have retained their positions in the interim while a full vetting is carried out, similar to that being undertaken in the new South African National Defence Forces (SANDEF). The structure was left intact through a mutual agreement reached between the NIS and ANC prior to the elections that the "constant flow of intelligence should not be disrupted." It is estimated that the total personnel complement in the civilian services is around 4,000; its 1995 budget is reported as R283 million (approximately US$70 million). Further changes to the structure and directorships of the new agencies are to be determined by the President.

The mission of the NIA as the domestic intelligence service was defined in the White Paper. The NIA will "conduct security intelligence within the borders of the Republic of South Africa in order to protect the Constitution." Its overall focus will be "to ensure the security and stability of the State and the safety and well-being of its citizens." This means that the NIA will carry out counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism operations domestically, acting alongside the SAPS to detect, deter and prevent terrorism, counter-innsurgency, foreign espionage, and other activities which could undermine the state. A further explanation of this mission was laid out in the National Strategic Intelligence Act in which the NIA was mandated to "gather, correlate, evaluate and analyse domestic intelligence... to fulfil the national counter-intelligence responsibilities... and to gather departmental intelligence at the request of any department of State." The foreign intelligence service, SASS, will have a complementary role to the NIA: it will "conduct intelligence in relation to external threats, opportunities, and other issues that may affect the Republic of South Africa, with the aim of promoting the national security and the interests of the country and its citizens." It is thought that SASS will continue to conduct traditional intelligence-gathering roles regionally and internationally, at the same time becoming one of the principle conduits for co-operation with the intelligence services of allied nations. This role was further explained in the National Strategic Intelligence Act: SASS will "gather, correlate, evaluate and analyse foreign intelligence, excluding foreign military intelligence... to institute counter-intelligence measures within the Service... and to gather departmental intelligence at the request of any interested department of State." SASS will be the ultimate mechanism for collecting and disseminating strategic intelligence, in co-operation with elements of the other agencies, for the National Intelligence Co-ordinator.

It is unclear at this time what role the Foreign Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Foreign Affairs will play in the new dispensation; there is speculation that it will interact with both agencies (NIA and SASS) for sourcing and co-ordination of foreign intelligence.

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION AND SPECIAL FORCES

Within the SANDF, the Intelligence Division (SANDEF-ID) will be greatly downsized and brought under civilian oversight, while remaining under the purview of the Defence Secretary. SANDF-ID will include members of the SANDF-DNI, MK-DIS, APLA intelligence personnel, and the Defence Forces of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei. Its operational mandate will be to "gather, correlate, evaluate, and use foreign military
intelligence, and supply foreign military intelligence relating to national strategic intelligence to NICOC...gather, correlate, evaluate and use domestic military intelligence excluding covert collection except when employed for service referred to in section 227(1)(e) of the Constitution...and institute counter-intelligence measures within the National Defence Forces." 44  Military intelligence is specifically forbidden from collecting covert non-military foreign intelligence under section 2.4.4 of the National Strategic Intelligence Act. Questions still exist, however, regarding the Director of Covert Collection, the existence of which was uncovered in November 1982 during an investigation by the Goldstone Commission. Many of its personnel included former civilian Co-operation Bureau personnel, a misnomer if there ever was one due to its suspected assassination role, which was reportedly disbanded permanently in April 1990.45

In June of 1993, Joe Nhlanhla stated that the primary role of military intelligence will remain a tactical nature and that this tactical intelligence function will reflect the traditional brief of the armed forces - the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Republic. Furthermore, the armed forces must not engage in an internal policing or police-support role, unless mandated by the government under the terms of the Constitution. While the armed forces do need a defined strategic intelligence function, this should be limited to the acquisition of information on long-term military intentions of the adversaries - strategic intelligence should remain the prerogative of the civilian intelligence agencies who will remain responsible for the co-ordination of the strategic intelligence brief. Finally, he concluded that as much transparency and oversight should be afforded into the activities of military intelligence as is possible.46

The aim and goal of the SANDF-ID will be "to enhance political and military decision-making with regard to National Security and military related developments which may have an impact on the area of strategic interest in general, and on the RSA in particular. To accomplish this mission, it is to be understood that defence intelligence fulfils a staff function, only providing the required intelligence/advice to the commander; the decision to use or ignore this intelligence/advice rests with the commander. Defence intelligence is furthermore not an operational institution, save in the collection mission. Officials with the SANDF-ID have stated that the "command of intelligence in itself must therefore be regarded as a system. This implies that Defence Intelligence can only perform optimally when all of its elements are fully operational." With the reduction of threat perceptions and continued pressures to further reduce defence spending, the SANDF has adopted a force structure "based on early warning of a potential threat. Maintenance of relevant capabilities to ensure the early detection of changes in the strategic environment is thus of utmost importance. To this end, arrangements for sharing intelligence with allies and the broadening of the exchange of military attaches are being pursued."47

There are those who feel that military intelligence will continue to require an internal role due to the external problems within their purview which become internal problems. Former Deputy-Chief of DMI Major-General Chris Theron stated in 1993 that

"In classic military terms the probability of a conventional threat has diminished drastically while the RSA has experienced a sharp increase in armed violence, both criminally and politically motivated. There has also been a dramatic shift in the geographical pattern of the armed conflict it is no longer projected from outside the country as a matter of co-ordinated strategy. The streets and some rural areas are increasingly becoming the proverbial battlefield. The inability of our neighbouring states to stop illegal cross-border arms trafficking is going to influence South Africa's internal security for years to come."48

Special Forces, long the 'eyes and ears of military intelligence', were in the past required to undertake long-range reconnaissance operations to obtain strategic intelligence. It has been noted that in the future, they will be required to know in advance about strategic intelligence within immediate and far flung enemy areas in order to prepare the SANDF; that their role be the disruption of the enemy's logistical, communications and administrative infrastructure; that they be subject to both Cabinet and Ministerial oversight and approval; that all personnel be bound by a Code of Conduct; and that no member of the special forces be used in an internal urban counter-insurgency role.49

There remains a concern that comprehensively restructuring SANDF intelligence could lead to mass resignations by current practitioners, which is relevant to the South African community at large. This raises some concern because

"Intelligence personnel possess skills generally not shared by ordinary soldiers, sailors and airmen. They are accustomed to operating in a covert and clandestine manner, they manage or have access to reasonably well-organised networks of operatives, and they are often more than not have access to military hardware and material. Recent events have illustrated the danger of displacing these members from within the armed forces onto the extra-parliamentary terrain where they can utilise (as they are already doing) their considerable skills in the pursuit of specific party-political goals."50

This final point will be discussed towards the end of this paper.

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE NATIONAL INVESTIGATION SERVICE

The former Crime Combating and Investigation Division of the South African Police, established in April 1991 with the merger of the SAP Security Branch and the Crime Investigation Division, was disbanded in July 1994. In its stead the South African Police Service will have a new National Investigation Service (SAPS-NIS) concerned solely with crime intelligence and no longer with issues of national security. The mandate of this service is to "gather, correlate, evaluate and use crime intelligence in support of the functions of the South African Police Service...and to institute counter-intelligence measures within the South African Police Service".51 Its mandate was further laid out in section 16 of the Police Act of July 1994 detailing operational responsibility for crime intelligence.52

CO-ORDINATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT

THE ROLE OF NICOC

Coordination of intelligence activities will be overseen by the newly-created National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee (NICOC), replacing the Joint Co-ordinating 181
SIDF-ID and SAPS-NIS, responsibility flows, respectively, through Defence Secretary Pierre Steyn in consultation with Minister of Defence Joe Modise, and National Commissioner George Fivaz in consultation with Minister of Safety and Security Sidney Mufamadi, to the OPR.

At the same time, the Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspectors-General of Intelligence Act created the positions of Inspectors-General for each service (NIA, SASS, SIDF-ID, SAPS-NIS), to whom the Director-General of each service is accountable. The functions of the Inspectors-General are to review the activities of the intelligence services and to monitor their compliance with policy guidelines and other established mandates and principles. They will be allowed full access to documents, budgets, reports, and all other classified information; each Director-General is mandated to ensure that all matters of interest and concern having to do with the services is brought to the immediate attention of the Inspectors-General. This is why the Inspectors-General are so important, especially given the role and authority of the Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence (see below).

THE PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Further, a parliamentary oversight committee has been formed. This will be named the ‘Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence’, and will be similar to the ‘Canadian Security Intelligence Review Committee’ (SIRC) and the ‘Permanent Joint Board on the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation’ (PJBSAO) in its functions. The Committee is composed of seven members appointed by the President, proportionally representative to the seating of the various parties in parliament. The role of the Committee is to receive reports from both the auditors and other evaluators of the services, make recommendations both on legislation related to the services and the activities of the services themselves, order investigations and hold hearings on matters relating to intelligence and national security. It will also monitor the activities of the services in the light of human rights and other rights entrenched in the Constitution. Its jurisdiction will cover both the NIA and SASS as well as SANDF-ID and SAPS-NIS, and it will report directly to the President, and through him to Parliament.

Although section 4 of the Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspectors-General of Intelligence Act authorises the Committee access to any and all information that may require in its investigations and duties, the same section also authorises the services to withhold from the Committee information on any person or body engaged in intelligence or counter-intelligence activities, information which could reveal the identity of a source, or any knowledge of intelligence or counter-intelligence methods carried out by any service if that information could also reveal a source. This absolute protection of sources is one of the key political compromises that led to this point: as both sides prior to the 1994 elections engaged in espionage activities against the other, it is assumed that each side had (and may continue to maintain) sources in the other camp. Thus, any revelations regarding the nature of sources at this point could greatly damage the balance achieved in the GNU. Indeed, there is evidence that many of the NIS files detailing informers in the ANC were destroyed prior to integration, in order to avoid a ‘witch hunt’.
THE CODE OF CONDUCT

In addition, a Code of Conduct has been written into the Intelligence Services Act as an additional mechanism of oversight and accountability. This code stemmed from discussions between the ANC and NIS, during which the ANC wanted detailed guidelines with real regulatory powers, spelling out the rights of operatives, how to handle sources, etc. The NIS argued that this would make intelligence work extremely difficult, possibly even endangering agents and compromising operations; it wanted a code which would bind agents as little as possible. The compromise, written into the purview of the authority responsible for the intelligence brief, became the Code of Conduct. It states that members of the secret services:

1. Shall openly declare their loyalty to the Republic of South Africa, the Constitution, and the laws of the country,
2. Will be loyal to their organisation and assiduously guard and protect the integrity of their profession, its methods and sources,
3. Shall adhere to the basic principles of their profession, as well as the policies, regulations and directives of their respective services,
4. Shall respect the norms, values, and principles of a democratic society including the basic human rights of individuals,
5. Shall strive, in the execution of their duties, to attain the highest degree of objectivity, integrity and professionalism,
6. Shall strive to be responsible in the handling of information and intelligence, and shall at all costs prevent the wrongful disclosure of national security interests,
7. Shall commit themselves to the promotion of mutual trust between policy-makers and professional intelligence workers, as well as co-operation with all the members of the intelligence community,
8. Shall commit themselves to carry out their duties without seeking personal gain or advantage by reason of the duties, facilities, funds and knowledge entrusted to them,
9. Will conduct themselves in their personal life in a manner which will not prejudice their organisation, their profession and fellow craftsmen, or the facilities entrusted to them, and
10. Shall commit themselves to report any violations of this code through command channels to the relevant authorities. 

Breaches of the Code and other guidelines were laid out very specifically in the Intelligence Services Act; should violations or misconduct occur, the Director-General of each service is mandated with presidential authority to “charge any member with misconduct”, to establish a board of inquiry following an unsatisfactory explanation from the individual in question, and to sentence that individual should they be found guilty; these powers could be used extra-territorially should the offence occur outside of South Africa’s borders but still fall under the purview of the Intelligence Services Act. Finally, the Code had the function of authorising intelligence officers to disobey any orders which contravened either the Code or other statutes on operational capabilities.

OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO THE NEW SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE ENVIRONMENT

THE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

There is a perceived role for the intelligence services in relation to the RDP. It has been suggested that the NIA would be used to monitor corruption, mismanagement and misuse of funds from within the Programme, as well as to be a quiet overseer of its implementation and success. The 1994 White Paper on Intelligence appears to confer this mandate onto the NIA: since the factors raised in the RDP as central to the country’s emerging security doctrine are deemed to be essential for peace and national security, the role of the intelligence community will be to secure the programmes of the RDP through an integrated understanding of the broad concept of security. There may be several problems with this. First, the RDP itself encompasses almost every aspect of society - could the intelligence service actually watch and scrutinise all aspects of the RDP? Should they be allowed to? Second, as Mark Shaw has pointed out, no clear distinction appears to have been made between the government’s policy and the security of the state, two very different things. An intelligence community should be responsible for maintaining the state and not the policies of the individual party. Since the RDP is a policy, should it therefore be outside the interests of the intelligence community? Finally, since the RDP will also show the weaknesses in society by its intrusion into areas of debate and inequality, due to scarcity of resources, should such problems not be allowed to come to the attention of the government through normal processes, rather than being taken under investigation by the intelligence agencies?

TRAINING

With regards to training issues, the White Paper states that training is to be regarded as the most important tool in developing professionalism amongst the practitioners of intelligence in order to establish fully this new dispensation. To meet these requirements, the syllabus and content of teaching at the National Intelligence Training Academy in Pretoria is being revised to reflect those new structures and policies. There have been some members of the South African academic community who have been involved in teaching at the Academy, but by and large this has been on an ad hoc basis and never formalised.

COVERT ACTION

One of the most interesting points raised in discussion of the future focus and mandates of the secret services is that of covert action. Throughout much of the history of intelligence in South Africa, covert action carried out sometimes by the civilian agencies but mostly by the SADF-DMI and its attached Special Operations Force was a staple of intelligence policy and operations. Now, such actions are specifically and severely curtailed: as is stated in the White Paper on Intelligence, “measures designed to deliberately interfere with the normal political processes in other countries and with the
internal workings of parties and organisations engaged in lawful activity within South Africa, must be expressly forbidden.  

In addition to these constraints, the Basic Principles and Guidelines of National Intelligence states that

"no intelligence or security service/organisation shall be allowed to carry out any operations or activities that are intended to undermine, promote or influence any South African political party or organisation at the expense of another by means of any acts (e.g. ‘active measures’ or ‘covert action’) or by means of disinformation."

This point is interesting not only due to its absolute reversal from previous policies, but also due to the fact that covert action, whether political, paramilitary, economic, psychological or otherwise, is a mainstay of almost every Intelligence organisation internationally, the only question that arises regarding this stipulation is in section 31(1)(d) of the National Strategic Intelligence Act in which military and crime intelligence are authorised to carry out the covert collection of intelligence domestically only under section 227(1)(a/b/c/e)(SANDF) or under section 215(b/c/d)(SAPS) of the Interim Constitution. Whether or not this construes ‘covert action’ within the parameters of the White Paper on Intelligence remains to be seen.

INTEGRATION

Generally, with regard to the civilian services, it can be stated that integration of these former enemies is going ahead smoothly with few or no problems internally. This is partly due to the fact that included in the Intelligence Services Act was an invitation to all those who formerly worked for the above organisations to voluntarily ‘not join’ the new agency; many took this option, either resigning or being asked to leave. However, this has raised the very pressing concern, echoed in both the police and national defence forces, of so-called ‘third force’ activities. The Goldstone Commission of 1991-1994 found a great deal of evidence to indicate that former members of the police and the defence force were now engaged in covert paramilitary activities aimed at destabilising the settlement process, as well as in attempts to seek revenge against former colleagues.

There were no solid indications of involvement in these activities by the NIS. Although there were no open indications as to whether these actions continue today, there have been a number of events that suggested that such actions are continuing. For example, even in 1995 there was a series of assassinations of local police officials in which third-force activities were cited as the cause. There are indications that this will continue to be a pressing problem for the new intelligence community.

There are indications too, that as with many other departments in the South African Government, an increasing number of former officers and public servants have stated that they are leaving the intelligence agencies due to well-founded concerns that there is little future for them in the public sector with the increasing dominance, especially after 1998, of the ANC in government. The ANC leadership within the GNU must be careful to avoid instilling a siege-mentality within these sectors of the public service; the potential dangers presented by many of these officers seeking out similar employment in the private sector are clear. For this reason, Deputy Minister Nhlanhla has emphasised the necessity to retrain and redeploy former and serving officers, balancing rationalisation with employment:

"The wholesale demobilisation of trained personnel from the security services, including those from the intelligence services, in an environment of heightened instability can lead to the proliferation of private armies and security agencies. The intelligence agencies, mindful of the wastage that results from pay-out packages, favours the route of retraining and redeployment as a means of rationalisation."

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the new intelligence structures in South Africa are the product of great negotiation and discussion; it is hoped that the success achieved here will be reflected in the integration processes currently underway in SANDF and SAPS. There are many pressing problems that must be addressed, however, the greatest of which is finding an alternative solution for professional officers from the intelligence agencies seeking employment in the private sector; this problem will only compound other problems and lead to greater instability, if not attended to.

Further, with the end of the GNU’s mandate in 1999 and the increasing domination of the public sector by the ANC, it is likely that problems will arise within the security branches of the government over job satisfaction, promotion, employment practices, visions of the future, and other points of contention. This could in turn lead to a mass resignation/withdrawal of support from the public sector after 1999 and an increase in private security forces, particularly within the IIP and NP.

That is not to say that the future is that bleak. If a balance can be found between the increasing ANC domination of the government and public service, and the concerns of the professionals who have served in these agencies, a peaceful and stable environment will be developed for an equitable future in the country. Many South Africans themselves have expressed, in both official fora and privately, optimism regarding the future of intelligence and security in South Africa. The past is behind us, it is felt, and the future is open:

“Our country is poised on the brink of tremendous opportunity, in which the human potential of our people can be harnessed to make South Africa a beacon of hope and success for the world.

Intelligence has a critical role to play in identifying threats, potential threats as well as opportunities for the democratic dispensation in South Africa. The transformation of the intelligence community is a process already underway, and must be encouraged so as to allow the intelligence community to play its rightful role in meeting our national goals, particularly those set out in the RDP.

Ultimately, it is through the approach to security outlined in the RDP - the meeting of the basic needs of the people through development, sustained economic growth and mass participation in the building of a new South Africa - that the cherished goals of peace and stability will be reached.”
This paper results in part from interviews conducted with official and private sources in South Africa, Canada and the United States during 1994-1995. As most of these interviews were confidential in nature, I have tried to indicate, by brackets, the information for which I cannot give full attribution in this paper. Where this has not been possible, no reference will be cited.


2 The relative significance of the intelligence structures and the legislation governing such structures in the British parliamentary model of government, such as Britain, Canada, and Australia. At the same time, however, given South Africa's republican nature which grew out of a British parliamentary system, there are certain aspects of legislation that reflect a peculiarly South African requirement, given its political history and considerations for the future.


5 Ibid, 7.


8 There was much controversy surrounding the NCN which then-President de Klerk instituted in 1991 to reinforce the NSMS, many critics pointed out that it was simply the NSMS under a different name, gave its structures and control. De Klerk retained in the State Security Council (SSC) and the 'bureaucracies' that had controlled it since President-de Klerk's cabinet, replacing its authority with a new National Security Committee (NSC) functioning under the Cabinet Committee on Security Affairs (CCSA). The NSC was soon renamed the Cooperation on Security Intelligence Committee. Nevertheless, the South African Intelligence Service under Dlchop, op. cit. 65. The national security regime which is now in place under the new dispensation, is the only one that will be determined with the consultation of a national security policy, as yet still in discussion.

9 The 1991 memorandum of the SSC and CCSA included the release of the following documents: Sekatana, 1987; and Constitutional Affairs, now underway. As part of the national and local regulations, were undertaken to prepare evidence for the purpose of law enforcement and the prosecution of offenders. 1986.

10 In the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act, section 2(1), which contains the definition of "intelligence about any threat or potential threat to the national security and stability of the Republic which falls within the functions of a department of state, and includes intelligence needed by such department in order to neutralize such a threat" (s.14); and "crime Intelligence" is defined as "measures and activities conducted, instigated or taken to prevent or neutralize the effectiveness of organised crime or hostage international intelligence, to prevent violations of the law or the threat to the national security and stability of the Republic which falls within the functions of a department of state, and includes intelligence needed by such department in order to neutralize such a threat" (s.14); and "crime Intelligence" is defined as "measures and activities conducted, instigated or taken to prevent or neutralize the effectiveness of organised crime or hostage international intelligence, to prevent violations of the law or the threat to the national security and stability of the Republic which falls within the functions of a department of state, and includes intelligence needed by such department in order to neutralize such a threat" (s.14).
49 Tsvangirai, The Transformation of Military Intelligence and Special Forces, op cit, p. 39.
50 Nhlangula, ibid, p. 42.
51 ISA Act, s.25(6).
52 The National Commissioner is responsible for the investigation and prevention of organized crime, crime which requires national investigation and prevention, or crime which requires specialised skills in the investigation or prevention thereof.” ISA Act (s.15(1D)) “Organised Crime.”
54 Originally, it was thought that NICOIC would come under the purview of Executive Deputy Prime Minister to whom a National Intelligence Co-ordinator would report: once this was decided against, former senior MKP decided to include creating NICOIC in the purview of the Deputy Minister for Intelligence.
55 ISA Act, s.15(1).
56 ISA, s.71.
58 Compared to the Canadian and British models, South Africa has retained a list of each in its inspectors-general's list and has not yet adopted the concept of a Cabinet secretariat: the Inspector-General are subject to the same rules as those of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner for each service, which is established and operates in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4)).
59 The Inspector-General is established and operates in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4)), and in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4))(2) the Inspector-General is subject to the same rules as those of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner for each service, which is established and operates in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4)).
60 The Inspector-General is established and operates in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4)), and in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4))(2) the Inspector-General is subject to the same rules as those of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner for each service, which is established and operates in accordance with the ISA Act (s.74(4)).
SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE OAU AND SADC

Jakkie Cilliers

BACKGROUND

The liberation of South Africa has had an electric effect on Southern Africa. Following the elections of April 1994, the debate regarding regional security co-operation in Southern Africa has indeed been dynamic. A number of concurrent and overlapping initiatives are in evidence, most of which appear to have been systematised under the broad umbrella of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This article will speculate and comment on some recent developments in this regard, within the wider framework of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations (UN). The greater part of the article will focus on the proposed establishment of a follow-up organisation to the Front-Line States (FLS) and the development of the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC).

To say that the world has moved away from the old bipolar, East/West, capitalist/socialist binary oppositions towards a multipolar and multifaceted world is by now a somewhat outworn observation. The transformation is clearly incomplete. Increased violence and criminality are characteristic of structural transformation and have become worldwide phenomena. The rules of the old order have lost their legitimacy, but the new order is not yet fully in place and transformation trends to be naturally unstable. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, “We have entered a time of global transition marked by uniquely contradictory trends. Regional and continental associations of States are evolving ways to deepen co-operation and ease some of the contentious characteristics of sovereignty and nationalism. National boundaries are blurred by advanced communications and global commerce, and by the decisions of States to yield some sovereign prerogatives to larger common political associations. At the same time, however, fierce new assertions of nationalism and sovereignty spring up, and the cohesion of States is threatened by brutal ethnic, religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife. Social peace is challenged on the one hand by new assertions of discrimination and exclusion and, on the other, by acts of terrorism seeking to undermine evolution and change through democratic means.”

Africa does not have a basic political division, for instance running through the middle of the continent, as was the case in Europe until recently. There are no highly militarised alliances, systems or blocs that divide Africa. There is no neat disparity between independent countries and those not yet liberated, or between market and centrally planned economies. There is rather a multitude of ethnic and religious divisions and a massive disparity between a very small, very rich elite and the poverty-stricken masses, many of whom owe little allegiance to the state within which they live.

It is crucial for a region such as Southern Africa to be aware that though global transition implies a reduced threat of conventional and, temporarily, of nuclear war, it does not seem to imply a decreased risk of regional instability, as is evident in the recent wars waged between Iraq and Kuwait: Internal conflicts in Rwanda, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia; the effective dissolution of Zaire, and more recently in the Russian Republic of Chechnya. Tensions of wars and instability proliferate in Southern Africa with Angola still seething, Lesotho seemingly unable to find peace and the threat of a further intensification of the low level civil war in KwaZulu-Natal continually hanging over South Africa like a dark cloud.

The last four decades have seen 35 major conflicts and almost ten million deaths in sub-Saharan Africa. In Rwanda alone, the intensity and speed of the genocide and subsequent epidemics claimed nearly a million lives. Africa’s millions of refugees flee war, drought and disease, absorbing nearly half of the world’s allotted emergency food aid. More accustomed to civil wars than border conflicts and inter-state conflict, Africa is experiencing a new wave of violence at a time when the continent and its woes have been marginalised in a post-Cold War world and at a time when Africa is arguably more vulnerable than ever before.

The instability is further increased by readily available cheap weapons and the lack of control over the proliferation of small arms - a much greater threat to the Southern African region than the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical or biological, or their delivery systems. The reality facing South and Southern Africa is that the structural and predacising factors for violence and instability will endure for a long time. As a result, South Africa, with its limited resources, will have to invest heavily in conflict prevention mechanisms as a realistic and practical approach to its role in the African region. Given the ‘peacekeeping fatigue’ of the larger Western countries, there is little evidence of any remaining political will amongst developed countries to step in to provide stability when the fragile control of government collapses, as has so often happened in the region. In five years, the UN peacekeeping budget has increased by 1 565 per cent to US $3 600 million for 1995. Continued increases of this nature are clearly untenable, making a reversal in the level of involvement more likely.

It is clear that the industrialised countries, led by the UN Security Council ‘Big Five’, want Africans to accept increased responsibility for co-operation, preventive diplomacy and peace support operations in their region. But can Africa really look after itself? Do the structures of governments and the social fabric of the region allow for such self-reliance?

Indeed, what are the prospects for increased regional security co-operation under the auspices of either the OAU or SADC, given the development levels in the constituent states? And at the root of all of these questions; which regional political and security arrangements are appropriate in Southern Africa and what should South Africa’s role be within such structures?

SOUTH AFRICA IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

South African engagement in Africa is not only premised upon a sense of obligation arising from the support that many neighbouring countries rendered in the
Increasingly it would appear as if the Government of National Unity (GNU) accepts that South Africa has to assume the responsibilities commensurate with its relative economic power, despite different opinions among political parties in the Government on the extent to which South Africa should become engaged in the region. There are, however, enough indications that the ANC, and therefore the Government as a whole will pursue a fairly assertive regional policy.

Progress towards a democratic value system shared amongst the various states in the region, and sustainable and rapid economic growth are clearly the building blocks for greater regional, national and individual security in Southern Africa. However, the prospects for a greater degree of regional economic integration are not favourable. This is principally due to the fact that most African economies are similarly structured, in that they produce, consume, export and import essentially similar products. Instead of complementing each other, African countries are competing, especially with regard to the export of mainly primary commodities that are sent to similar markets, generally in Western Europe. They also compete in importing the same products from the same sources - again mostly Western Europe. In a comprehensive historical study released during April 1995, of attempts at regional integration irrespective of their success or failure and involving all five continents, the World Bank found that the twenty countries in sub-Saharan Africa had the lowest level of complementarity of all those studied. The bank concluded that "little strongly suggests that the structure of African countries' exports and imports differs so widely that regional trade integration efforts hold little promise for accelerating industrialization and growth." In fact, only 2.7 per cent of the region's total trade is amongst members.

Although regional economic integration and multilateral co-operation may be a slow process, bilateral security arrangements between South Africa and its neighbours on a variety of issues of mutual interest are flourishing. Examples include measures to counter weapon and drug smuggling, cattle rustling and vehicle theft, disaster relief, security training and assistance and policing of maritime exclusion zones. While the commitment to SADC and the OAU dominates at a rhetorical level, it is often these arrangements that rapidly produce tangible results - an impression that is confirmed in private discussions with officials from the South African Department of Foreign Affairs. Deputy Defence Minister Ronnie Kasrils has already proposed that the South African Navy could become the 'leading edge' of the SANDF in promoting peace, stability and economic development in the littoral states of Southern Africa and that it could assist in the development of neighbouring navies and foreign ports, as far afield as Luanda, Mombasa and Dar Es Salaam.

The recent agreement between South Africa and Mozambique to counter the trade in small arms has led to a joint operation in Mozambique between the South African

Police Service and the Mozambican authorities, during which more than a thousand weapons have been destroyed in a matter of months. On 12 June 1995, South Africa and Namibia signed a comprehensive agreement on cross-border policing aimed at combating drug and arms smuggling, and vehicle theft. The agreement also included provisions for joint border patrols and sharing specialised training and technology.

Bilateral agreements have also been signed at provincial level. During June 1995, for example, Mpumalanga Premier Mathews Phosa signed an agreement with the neighbouring Mozambican provinces of Maputo and Gaza. It includes increased security measures against highway bandits, and for wildlife protection, organised tourism, promotion, agriculture, use of common water resources and training of administrative, cultural and sports staff. Individual provinces are becoming involved in the execution of South Africa's interests in the region, to the extent that the Department of Foreign Affairs is establishing a provincial liaison directorate to act between the provincial administrations and the various branches of the Department and to co-ordinate activities of mutual concern outside the borders of the country.

In contrast, academic discussions have concentrated on encompassing terms for collective regional security, in which multilateral arrangements would include non-military concerns. The debate has been influenced by the model of the former Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (now the OSCE). The OSCE's major strength lies in its being a process in which participating states co-operate to find solutions for shared problems, in contrast with the adoption of prescriptions drawn up by a qualified majority. The sharing of common values, parity in levels of development and similarity of geo-political constellations are some of the factors that ease communications and foster good relations among participating states. It is thus possible for amicable solutions and maximum agreement to prevail.

While co-operation is easily achievable amongst partners sharing a common value system and similar levels of development, it is more difficult to attain when significant disparities exist among participating countries.

Whatever its desires or practices regarding foreign policy, South Africa's dominance in Southern Africa will be difficult to avoid. In 1992, South Africa exported some R17,35 billion (US $4,32bn) worth of goods to its neighbours, but imported only R4,12 billion (US $1,14bn) from them; it has 23,000 of Southern Africa's 42,000 kilometres of railway lines; 58,000 of 87,000 kilometres of paved roads, and over 5,1 million of the region's six million motor vehicles. South Africa handled nearly sixteen times more tonnage of goods through its harbours compared to the rest of the region, and it creates 75% of sub-Equatorial Africa's total installed electricity capacity.

Parity in levels of development clearly does not exist to any real degree in Southern Africa. This could lead to the establishment of hierarchical domination among co-operating partners. Economic leverage tends to determine decision making and the ability to execute mandates. In the long term, this could undermine effective regional co-operative structures.

In exploring these issues, the debate on collective and co-operative security has covered a wide range of policy issues. These include so-called 'new-thinking on security', the
nature of the threats facing Africa, conflict mediation and arbitration, confidence building measures, disarmament, food and health security, etc. A second major consideration for debate has been the level at which linkage should occur, i.e. at the level of the OAU (Africa), SADC (sub-regional) or bilaterally, or possibly the requirement for entirely new bodies and structures. Other issues were those regarding the establishment of regional or sub-regional peacekeeping forces and even defence and non-aggression pacts. At every stage the danger of political agreements being undermined by the limited administrative, technical and military ability of African states to convert idealistic goals into content, has tended to inhibit real progress. At an Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) seminar in September 1995, the Department of Foreign Affairs emphasised that "...[t]hat favours a cautious and step-by-step approach towards regional development, taking into account the availability of resources and of manpower, coupled with the general capacity of the region to accommodate initiatives and to effectively act thereupon."

Yet recently, the successful examples of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking in restoring democracy to Lesotho and the break of the Impasse stalling the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement in Angola have enthused believers and sceptics alike.

SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY

In a statement to the Portfolio Committee of Parliament on Foreign Affairs on 14 March 1995, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs outlined South Africa’s foreign policy objectives and priorities as follows: “The promotion of the economic development of the Southern African region is of paramount importance... South Africa to believe that it could enter into a prosperous future in isolation without taking neighbouring countries with her would be unrealistic and hazardous. South Africa will, therefore, strive to achieve such development by fine-tuning the instrument that is ready to hand in the form of the SADC... By means of joint working committees, bilateral and/or multilateral agreements with our partners in Southern Africa, South Africa intends to establish consensus on ways in which to deal with issues such as drug smuggling, extradition, enhanced trade with the region, transport matters, the control of stock theft, the protection of endangered species, cross border trade in stolen goods, and the problem of illegal migration of persons to South Africa... Our aim is to create a new form of economic integration in Southern Africa based on principles of mutual benefit and interdependence.** Clearly, Southern Africa and SADC is the first priority of South African foreign relations.” And the commitment to assist is evident from the remarks by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, speaking at the annual meeting of all of South Africa’s heads of mission abroad since September 1995: “...despite our own limitations and problems, it is our objective to make a significant contribution in ensuring peace, democracy, respect for human rights and sustainable development in Africa.***

Apart from the obvious fact that South Africa cannot be an island of stability and prosperity within a sea of turbulence and poverty, South African considerations are also driven by longer term economic interests. Although the European Community remains South Africa’s largest trading partner, South Africa’s trade with the rest of Africa leapt by almost two thirds between 1993 and 1994 with most of the increase coming from trade with countries in Southern Africa and in East Africa. The total value of trade between South Africa and the rest of Africa was valued at R10.9 billion (US $3.9 billion) in 1994, compared to R6.9 billion (US $1.9 billion) the previous year. The balance of payments of trade with Africa is also heavily in South Africa’s favour (R8.6 billion, exports vs. R2.4 billion of imports).**

Given South Africa’s stated commitment to assist in the region, the following sections will examine the OAU, SADC and other structures which could play a role in this regard.

**THE ORGANISATION FOR AFRICAN UNITY**

The **UN Charter** anticipated the involvement of “regional arangements or agencies” in maintaining international peace and security along with the UN. Article 53 of the UN Charter refers to enforcement action by regional bodies, but requires that “…no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangement or by regional agencies without the authorisation of the Security Council.” The involvement of regional organisations, however, was severely constrained by the political realities of the Cold War. This may be changing, as the United Nations is not only overburdened with demands to maintain peace and security in the world, but public opinion in the larger developed countries also appears increasingly reluctant to support intervention in conflicts in the developing world. The richer countries are questioning the balance between their financial obligations and the tangible benefits they receive from the UN. This has given rise to attempts to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of regional and sub-regional organisations.

Since the establishment of the OAU 32 years ago, a system of ad hoc arrangements has been used to deal with inter-state conflict, while intra-state conflict has mainly been left to each member state to handle in an appropriate manner. Only in the 1990s has the OAU has moved towards a permanent structure that will enable it to formalise and intensify its ability to assist in building peace in Africa. The end of the Cold War and the liberation of South Africa have served to galvanise its efforts in this regard.

The **OAU Charter** of 1964 provided for a Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration to encourage members to settle their disputes peacefully. The Commission remained unused as the OAU, involved in decolonisation efforts and torn between the East-West conflict, sought to maintain at all costs the inviolability of its inter-state boundaries and ignored internal conflict-generating factors that characterised the internal situation in many countries. At various times proposals were made for an African Security Council and for Africa to follow the model of the former CSCE through the establishment of a Conference on Peace, Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa, initiatives that remained unrealised.

In 1990, OAU leaders officially pledged their commitment towards the peaceful and speedy resolution of conflicts. The 1991 OAU Summit of African Heads of State and Government acknowledged in its final Communiqué for the first time that “...there is a link between security, stability, development and co-operation in Africa” and that the...
problems of security and stability in many African countries had impaired the capacity of the OAU to achieve co-operation."

A Division of Conflict Management was subsequently established in March 1992, with a small budget. In July 1992 in Dakar, the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government agreed "in principle" to establish a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, with the Mechanism formally adopted in a Declaration by the Heads of State and Government in June 1993, during the OAU Summit in Cairo.

South Africa subsequently became a member of the Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution established by the OAU on 30 June 1983, for one year. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the OAU later stated that "[the establishment of the Mechanism was an act of historical significance and self-empowerment. What Africa said to the world is that yes, we may continue to need outside help in dealing with our problems, but we will be centrally involved and provide leadership in any efforts at conflict resolution... we can no longer fold our hands and wait for the foreigners to come and resolve our problems."

The Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the establishment of the Mechanism has committed the OAU to close co-operation with the UN in respect of peacemaking and peacekeeping. Moreover, the Mechanism is also committed to co-operation with regional organisations such as SADC. Presenting South Africa's foreign policy priorities to the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs in Parliament during March 1995, Foreign Minister Noz Toz stated that "...any South African involvement in the prevention or solving of conflict situations elsewhere in Africa, should take place within the framework of the OAU's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Only if the OAU is seen to be accepting responsibility for, and dealing effectively with its own problems, will the Organisation and our Continent earn the respect of outsiders..."

Thus far the Mechanism has not been a spectacular success. Observing elections has been the most active area, a practice that has become particularly prevalent since 1990. By mid-1995 the OAU had observed 39 elections or referenda in 25 member countries. According to Nbara, "Conflict resolution has also been handled effectively by the OAU through the exercise of preventive diplomacy in many forms, including the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General, Eminent Persons, Special Envoys and Representatives of the Secretary-General. In addition, there has been direct contact between the OAU and governments of countries concerned, as well as missions from the General Secretariat to countries in question. Field trips recently undertaken to the Congo, Gabon, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Nigeria, Cameroon and Lesotho have aimed at facilitating the process of mediation between the conflicting parties, or assessing the conflict situation on the ground, with a view to reporting to the Secretary-General and/or the Central Organ for further action. Within the area of conflict resolution, the OAU has been at the centre stage in the use of mediation as a tool for resolving actual conflicts in countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, the Congo, Liberia, Burundi and Rwanda." While these claims flatter the importance of the role played by the OAU, they do indicate an increased activity and role for the Organisation that eclipses its previously almost dormant existence.

Preventive diplomacy falls directly within the jurisdiction of the Secretary-General of the OAU and the Central Organ. In this regard the OAU has an ambitious programme in mind and it intends to:

- establish an Early Warning Network to "... cover the entire continent";
- establish and enhance the capacity of the OAU Conflict Management Centre through seconding staff from member countries;
- establish a data-base covering all member states, detailing each country's general profile, its conflict profile, as well as profiles of individuals who can be engaged as Special Envoys or Special Representatives for conflict prevention duties;
- have "... Member States earmark forces in their respective armies and security structures for possible utilisation in peace observation and peacemaking operations first and foremost by the United Nations and in exceptional situations by the OAU";
- "... establish a proper machinery and unit to manage peacekeeping operations"; and
- "... examine possibilities of establishing a proper military Co-ordinating Unit at the [OAU] Secretariat and Funding."

Although the OAU has decided that peacekeeping should not constitute a primary activity of the organisation and that conflict prevention and peacemaking are the most important and cost effective areas, pressure from both member countries and, perhaps more important, from donors, is building up for the OAU to extend its activities in these areas. By September 1995, the Assistant Secretary-General of the OAU stated: "Our experience of the last year and a half with the [Central] Mechanism clearly reveals two shortcomings: The first shortcoming is our inadequacy to fully operationalize the Mechanism in the area of preventing incipient conflicts from erupting into full-blown conflicts mainly due to the lack of speedy exchange of information of conflict situations within Member States. The second problem that the General Secretariat has faced in operationalising the Mechanism, lies in the area of peacekeeping... our experience demonstrates the increasing reluctance on the side of the United Nations, especially the major powers, to get more involved in peacekeeping operations directly. The General Secretariat continues to believe that time has come for Africa to be prepared to take some degree of responsibility for peace-keeping."

As a result of various discussions, the OAU Summit of June 1995 endorsed the establishment in Addis Ababa of an Early Warning Network. It will be based in a co-ordinating facility located in the Conflict Management Centre being constructed with the assistance of the US Government at OAU headquarters. The Summit agreed to hold a seminar on early warning systems in Africa during November 1995 in Addis Ababa, although it eventually took place during January 1998. The seminar was attended by
member states, NGOs, academic and research institutions and the media.

Speaking at an international conference on peacekeeping in Africa during July 1995, South African Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad encouraged the proposed OAU Early Warning Seminar, stating that it should primarily:

- “take stock of Africa’s present early warning and communications capacity;”
- define the anticipated capacity and need for future early warning and communications abilities;
- determine the implications for national sovereignty and non-interference in affairs of other states; and
- investigate the relationship between an OAU early warning capacity and those of the sub-regions on the one hand and between the OAU and the UN on the other.”

If an early warning of a potential crisis is given, and the will to act is present, a wide variety of tools exists in theory for such action, whether it is undertaken by the UN, the OAU, SADC or by one or more countries acting in collusion. Tools include fact-finding missions, small preventive or observer missions (such as those of the UN and OAU in Rwanda), and the use of a special envoy or an eminent person. With regard to the latter, the OAU has recently requested member states to identify eminent persons who could be considered as special envoys or representatives. Preventive military deployment is also an option, although it is beyond the reach of the OAU, and possibly also of SADC, in the immediate future. The OAU has also decided to establish a stand-by capacity for a 100-person preventive observer mission. The material for the mission is expected to be assembled by January 1996. OAU member states would then be approached to identify available personnel to participate on a stand-by basis.

A Crisis Management Room where a core of civilian and military officers will monitor crisis situations in Africa on a 24-hour basis, will be established, and in this regard, the OAU has appealed to member states to provide personnel for the operations centre.

Two years after the adoption of the Mechanism, Nkama identifies serious shortcomings in the OAU’s ability “… to fully operationalise the Mechanism in the area of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, because of delays in the exchange of information on conflict trends and a shortage of resources. Information on new developments relating to conflict situations within member states has been sought, often to discover that it is not possible to obtain the knowledge that would enable the OAU to take the necessary political action. Additionally, serious difficulties and constraints in managing OAU missions in the field and in consulting with African leaders in the various national capitals about conflict situations … have been experienced. This is mainly due to communication problems impeding the decision-making process.” In fact, the Commander of the Tanzania People’s Defence Force, General Mbowo, stated during July 1995 that “if the OAU’s programme on conflict resolution appears to be faced with some crucial problems, including the lack of the necessary financial resources, as well as the absence of an Africa Rapid Reaction Force. Consequently the OAU appears to be playing only a peripheral role, while the UN and sub-regional organisations are taking the lead in the quest for peace in troubled African states such as Sudan, Senegal, Liberia, Rwanda and Burundi.”

Even these comments are cautious when measured against regular newspaper reports with headlines such as ‘Broke, helpless OAU meets amid woes’. The Citizen, for example, reported on 26 June 1995 that “If one year after the genocide in Rwanda, Africa’s leaders gather today for the latest summit of the Organisation of African Unity at a time when the body’s impotence to tackle the continent’s woes has seldom been so pronounced ... Now the Pan-African body is practically broke and appears helpless in the face of wars, famine and the ravages of AIDS.”

But the UN’s programme of capacity building at the OAU has only started recently. Although South African foreign policy will probably focus on the sub-region, there are positive signs that the OAU may at last be stirring from its Cold War hibernation to play an increased positive role on the continent.

PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

At present, substantial additional negotiations and preparations will be required to establish either an African or Southern African peacekeeping or rapid reaction force. The practical, logistic and financial implications of such initiatives would tax the resources of participating countries. A variety of unresolved issues, such as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states of the OAU and SADC, further complicate matters. Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad recently commented that “...serious questions need to be asked about the effectiveness of outside military intervention to prevent or stop internal conflict ... The most important contribution that South Africa can make in preventive diplomacy at present is the moral authority it has derived from its own process of national reconciliation and democratisation.”

Several countries in Africa are already offering peacekeeping training at staff colleges, namely Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) recently listed the following tasks that the South African Department of Defence could undertake in peace support operations in the region:

- electoral support such as the provision of air transport (the SANDF were involved in similar operations in Angola in 1992 and in Mozambique in 1994);
- humanitarian assistance (the SANDF provided humanitarian assistance in Rwanda in 1994);
- engineering operations, especially mine-clearing (the SANDF and South African companies are involved in Mozambique and Angola);
- observation and verification of agreements such as cease-fire or troop withdrawal;
- preventive deployment;
medical assistance;
- demobilisation and arms control;
- securing the delivery of humanitarian aid; and
- disarmament of paramilitary and irregular forces.

In the interim, member countries, the OAU and sub-regional organisations can improve their preparedness for eventual participation in peace support operations in Africa in a number of ways. These include the following:

- improving the level of preparedness of troops, i.e. better trained, equipped and battle ready troops to enable participation;
- encouraging the standardisation of equipment, doctrine and standing operating procedures among African countries, which would greatly enhance interoperability and co-operation;
- encouraging countries to participate in UN stand-by arrangements, with governments indicating in principle to the UN which personnel and equipment they will be willing to make available for UN peacekeeping operations (by July 1995 only 5 out of the 41 countries participating in UN stand-by arrangements were from Africa);
- partnership arrangements between African and donor countries whereby the former provide troops and the latter assist in the provision of heavy equipment for peacekeeping;
- pre-positioning of non-lethal equipment, such as tents and communications equipment, at advance logistic centres in select locations throughout the continent; and
- dedicated peacekeeping training assistance by and to African countries, as well as conferences and seminars on the subject.

A reason for the increased enthusiasm of the OAU to involve itself in peacekeeping activities, is the pressure from foreign donor governments on African countries to accept a greater degree of responsibility for peacekeeping in Africa. The British Government, for example, has convened seminars in Camberley, Accra (October 1994) and Cairo (January 1995), the United Kingdom/Zimbabwe Workshop on African Peacekeeping in Harare (January 1995) and the United Kingdom/Ethiopian Workshop in Gaborone (7-8 August 1995) to investigate doctrine, training, logistics, an early warning system, preventive diplomacy, etc. The French have proposed an African Intervention Force during the Birratz Summit of 1994. Finally, the US Government has funded the Peace Management Division project of the OAU to the tune of several million dollars, while a number of countries have also contributed to the OAU Peace Fund. Both the British and French initiatives borrow from the original proposals made by the OAU Secretary-General in Dakar in 1992 and Tunis in 1994.

The British proposal would require the establishment of logistics bases, skills centres and involve military training assistance. It consists of a range of services, including:

- improving communications between the OAU and the UN;
- strengthening the capacity of the Mechanism to analyze information and assessments that would be provided by African Governments and other sources;
- strengthening co-operation between the OAU and sub-regional organisations to harmonise initiatives and conflict management approaches;
- clarifying the role of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in conflict prevention and management;
- recognition of the role of the OAU, especially in early warning and preventive diplomacy, and the primacy of the UN with regard to peacekeeping; and
- building an OAU stand-by capacity to rapidly launch small scale Military Observer Missions.

The French Government has also been active in this area. Their proposal centres around the setting up of an African Rapid Intervention Force at sub-regional level, under the political direction of the OAU. Essentially, the French Government has proposed the creation of a modest permanent force, with possible contributions from African countries during times of crisis. As proposed, the OAU would have to make an agreement with the European Union (EU) to provide peacekeeping items at short notice once a decision is taken to deploy an OAU force under a UN mandate. African countries would be required to put aside equipment for logistics bases, with the EU supplementing air transport, air support, intelligence information and technical advice on request.

However, the capacity of the OAU to undertake these duties effectively is questioned by donor countries to the extent that the OAU has stated that "... at the initial stages, both the British and French initiatives were not strictly speaking OAU centred and the involvement of the Organisation only came after the insistence of African leaders and Member States on the centrality of the Conflict Mechanism to African peacekeeping efforts." Yet the OAU believes that it "... must provide the necessary leadership ... to coordinate the various initiatives from Africa's external partners. It must also prepare itself to undertake peacekeeping responsibilities." In order to address these deficiencies, the OAU intends to establish a conflict management observer mission at the UN in New York and is considering an enhanced UN liaison office in Addis Ababa, staff exchanges and the electronic exchange of information. However, early implementation of some of these ideas is constrained by the current shortage of personnel and inadequate capacity within the OAU Secretariat.

In the light of the perilous state of the OAU's finances, the funding of such ventures is a key consideration. A special fund, the OAU Peace Fund, was created in the wake of the adoption of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution with the purpose of providing exclusive support to OAU conflict management activities. Thus far contributors to the Peace Fund appear to be few and far between.
While South Africa's participation in peace support operations is ultimately a political decision, the departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs have argued that two factors mitigate against South African involvement in the near future, namely that the new SANDF is still being created through integration and transformation and that units sent on peacekeeping operations at this stage would still reflect the old order. Secondly, the deployment of troops outside the borders would have to be justified against domestic security, socio-economic, financial and development priorities.

THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

There are five main sub-regions in Africa, each hosting a sub-regional organisation: the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGAD) in the east, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Maghreb Union (UMA) in the north, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). While the main focus of sub-regional groupings is economic development, intra-regional rivalry and squabbles between member states have impeded integration and development. In addition, increased domestic tension and conflict have a negative impact on economic performance. Intra-state conflicts have affected even those neighbouring states that were once stable. Njara recently stated that "there is ... a pressing need to restructure and strengthen these sub-regional organisations so that they can become an integral part of the partnership, with the UN as a world body and the OAU as a regional organisation, to foster peace and security on the African continent." Of these organisations, much of Africa is looking to the SADC to provide an example worth following.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was established in 1992 as the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). For the first twelve years SADCC operated without a legal framework, treaty or protocol. Consicious of the poor record of regional economic integration schemes in Africa and other developing countries, the founders opted for a loose organisation promoting co-operation and co-ordination rather than formal integration. With members' economies being mainly, but not exclusively, dependent on apartheid South Africa, they aimed at reducing this while promoting development. SADCC's original strategy was to concentrate on promoting co-operation in the area of infrastructure. In practice, its primary activities were the co-ordination of members' development initiatives and assistance in raising funds for these projects. The focus of the organisation, therefore, has been on issues of economic co-operation and development.

In this endeavour SADC had only limited success. Trade with South Africa increased, even during the time when the organisation actively sought to limit this growing dependency, and so has dependence on donors. According to the Africa Institute, projects depend on donor finance for 90% of total costs. Donors are openly critical of members' failure to mobilise their own resources and to maintain completed projects. Despite criticism, one important contribution to regional development "...has been the forging of a regional identity and a sense of common destiny among the countries and peoples of Southern Africa." In 1988, at the SADCC Heads of State meeting in Harare, it was decided to formalise the organisation by giving it legal status that would replace the existing Memorandum of Agreement. Four years of consultation followed. The Declaration and Treaty of the SADC was eventually signed by Heads of State and Government in Windhoek in 1992 and expressed confidence that developments, such as the independence of Namibia and the transition in South Africa, "...will take the region out of an era of conflict and confrontation, to one of co-operation; in a climate of peace, security and stability. These are prerequisites for development ..." With the change of name the emphasis changed from 'development co-ordination' to 'development integration'. The true vision of SADC is in essence full economic integration of the Southern Africa region, and trade liberalisation. However, Oduke has stated that "While the SADC always portrayed itself as an economic body, the organisation had more political and ideological inclinations than economic concerns. Its policies always portrayed political beliefs, particularly of the founding father. Still, like other international bodies such as the Organisation of African Unity, SADC failed in many instances to condemn its own members." Although SADC defines itself as a development agreement, it sees itself at the same time as a sub-regional political organisation under the OAU, essentially a political organisation. This has resulted in considerable ambiguity and confusion on the real nature of SADC, with the organisation often involved in areas far removed from those of development co-ordination and facilitation.

One possible explanation for this is the weakness of the SADC Treaty on the central focus of the organisation. In Article 4, member states adopted the following principles without any discussion or elucidation of the implications of each principle:

1. "sovereign equality of all Member States;"
2. "solidarity, peace and security;"
3. "human rights, democracy, and the rule of law;"
4. "equity, balance and mutual benefit; and"
5. "peaceful settlement of disputes." Article 5 of the Treaty lists eight further objectives, including the promotion and defence of peace and security. In order to achieve these objectives, the Treaty lists ten activities, without referring to defence or security co-operation. The closest is a commitment to "promote the co-ordination and harmonisation of the international relations of Member States" and to "develop such other activities as Member States may decide in furtherance of the objectives of this Treaty."

The Windhoek Declaration of 1992 that established SADC, called for, among others, "...a framework of co-operation which provides for ... strengthening regional solidarity, peace and security, in order for the people of the region to live and work together in peace and harmony ... The region needs, therefore, to establish a framework and mechanisms to strengthen regional solidarity, and provide for mutual peace and security." Unlike an organisation such as the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), SADC has a formalised structure. This includes the Summit of Heads of State; the Council of Ministers; the Standing Committee of Officials; Sector Committees of Ministers; Sector
A number of Commissions and Sector Co-ordinating Units has been established by SADC to guide and coordinate regional policies and programmes in specific areas. SADC activities and administrative functions are the responsibility of the SADC Secretariat, which also gives support to the Summit, Council and Standing Committees. The Secretariat is located in Gaborone, Botswana, headed by an Executive Secretary, and financed by subscriptions from member countries. Over the years SADC has established various institutions through which it conducts its business. The annual Summit is made up of Heads of State or Government, and is the ultimate policy-making institution of SADC. It is responsible for the overall policy direction and control of functions of the Community. Each member State has identified a National Contact Point which is located in the Ministry responsible for SADC matters and acts as a link between other agencies of government and SADC organs. In South Africa, the Department of Foreign Affairs fulfills this function.  

SADC presently has twelve members: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, with South Africa joining in 1994 and Mauritius in 1995. Among these members are some of the poorest nations in the world. The total combined GNP of the first mentioned ten members of SADC in 1992 was US $28 billion, and that of South Africa was US $106 billion. More countries want to join SADC, among them Madagascar and Zaire, with the latter having applied three times for membership. SADC has recently decided on a list of criteria for membership in an attempt to limit further expansion.

Despite questions on its past achievements, SADC is poised to enter a new era. Article 22(1) of the SADC Treaty provides for member states to conclude a series of protocols to "spell out the objectives and scope of, and institutional mechanisms for co-operation and integration." These protocols will be negotiated by member states and, after approval by the Summit (i.e. the Heads of State), become an integral part of the Treaty. During its August 1995 meeting, SADC signed a binding agreement for the first time to share the scarce water resources available in the region. This Protocol on "Shared Water Course Systems" is, therefore, a test case for SADC and will be pivotal to the success of subsequent endeavours, such as the establishment of a sector on security.

SADC has an ambitious agenda, if the plans of its Executive Secretary, Kaire Mbuendo, are a yardstick. The organisation is, for example, drafting a treaty that would eliminate internal trade barriers and export subsidies in the region by the year 2000. A further treaty on the free movement of people is planned. Both agreements would present South Africa and some other member countries with a major dilemma. South Africa's economy is nearly four times larger than the combined economies of the other eleven members. South Africans are 35 times richer than Mozambicans, the poorest SADC country. However, development indicators show that black South Africans are often not much better off than many of their neighbours. Intra-regional trade is growing; South Africa's exports to the continent, 70% of which goes to the SADC region, increased by more than 25% from 1993 to 1994, although its imports from the region remain at a low level. Sharing a single currency will be difficult without significantly increased intra-regional trade, despite the fact that the currencies of Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho are all pegged, at par, to the South African Rand. No wonder that South Africa, in charge of SADC's finance sector, has not even begun to look at the matter of extending this monetary area further. With an estimated five million illegal immigrants already in the country, the South African Government also fears that the complete
freedom of movement pursued by SADC would mean that millions of people will move south, legally and illegally.30 However, none of these concerns question the logic of regional integration and co-operation, but suggest that, in certain respects, South Africa would rather err on the side of caution in pursuing regional integration and would prefer an open-ended and phased process without a pre-determined timetable.31

Following the resolutions and recommendations of the SADC Workshop on
Democracy, Peace and Security, held in Windhoek in July 1994, SADC appeared set
to enter the areas of security co-ordination, conflict mediation and even military
cooperation on a grand scale. This was further strengthened by the decision of the
FCS on 30 July 1994, to dissolve and “become the political and security wing of
SADC”.

One of the Windhoek working groups on Conflict Resolution recommended that
“...Conflict Resolution and Political Co-operation become a ‘Sector’, the
responsibility for which would be allocated to a SADC member state” and that a
Protocol on Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution was to be formulated. This
recommendation was eventually confirmed at the Heads of State meeting in South
Africa during August 1995, but only after many of the other recommendations of the
Windhoek conference had either been toned down or abandoned.

Among the multitude of recommendations, the Windhoek Working Group on
Disarmament and Demilitarisation called for the “development of regional
mechanisms for peacekeeping and peace enforcement activities” and “equipping
and training of national forces for peace keeping roles”.

These proposals were subsequently referred to the next meeting of the Council
of Ministers in Botswana where many of the intrusive and potentially prescriptive
recommendations that could infringe upon the sovereignty of member countries,
were abandoned. It was decided at the meeting rather to establish a wing for conflict
mediation and prevention, as opposed to a sector. This was followed by further
discussion and discussion in Lilongwe, Malawi, in February 1995. Here the SADC
Secretariat tabled a Non-Paper that proposed the creation of a regional peacekeeping
capacity within the national armies of the region, but received a cold response from
South Africa. The proposal was apparently not resuscitated at the Heads of State
meeting in August 1995.

THE PROPOSED ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN STATES

Pursuing the decision to establish a wing for conflict mediation and prevention, a
meeting of SADC Foreign Ministers in Harare on 3 March 1995, recommended the
establishment of an Association of Southern African States (ASAS) as the political
arm of SADC under Chapter 7, Article 21(3)(g) of the SADC Treaty. According to these
recommendations, ASAS would replace the now defunct FLS co-operative framework
and would become the primary mechanism to deal with conflict prevention,
management and resolution in Southern Africa.32 The meeting proposed the
organisation of two specialised sectors within ASAS, namely a political and a military
security sector. ASAS would be guided by the principles of the July 1994 Windhoek
document, that included the following:

- the sovereign equality of all member states;
- respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable
  right to independence;
- peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation, mediation or arbitration; and
- decisions on military intervention of whatever nature only to be taken after all
  possible remedies have been exhausted, in accordance with the Charters of the OAU
  and the UN.

The Ministers further proposed that the following objectives would apply to ASAS:

- protection of the people of the region against instability arising from the internal
  breakdown of law and order, inter-state conflict and external aggression;
- full co-operation in regional security and defence, through conflict prevention,
  management and resolution;
- maximum support to the organs and institutions of SADC;
- mediation in inter-state and intra-state disputes and conflicts;
- co-ordination and harmonising, as far as possible, of policy on international issues;
- promotion and enhancing of the development of democratic institutions and
  practices within each member state, and encouraging member states to observe
  universal human rights as provided for in the Charters and Conventions of the OAU
  and the UN;
- promotion of peace and stability; and
- promotion of peacemaking and peacekeeping in order to achieve sustainable peace
  and security.

ASAS would be independent from the SADC Secretariat, and would report directly
to SADC Heads of State. The ASAS proposal, therefore, was a deliberate attempt to
preserve the key features of the FLS arrangement, namely an informal and flexible
modus operandi with direct access to SADC Heads of State, and minimal bureaucracy.
Speaking in Parliament on the Foreign Affairs budget vote in May 1996, South African
Minister of Foreign Affairs Alfred Nzo commented that “… the Foreign Ministers of SADC
have proposed that the former Front-Line States be turned into a new political and
security arm of the SADC.”33

This, however, was not to be. The first problem to surface was the fact that the various
Ministers of Defence and Police and the intelligence communities were not consulted
in the formulation of these recommendations, nor, for that matter, some of the
Ministers responsible for SADC liaison within member countries. As a result, a final
decision on the structure that had already become known as ASAS, was delayed for an
additional twelve months at the August 1995 Summit Meeting in Johannesburg, until
1996.
The first sign that the ASAS proposal was going to run into trouble at the Summit appeared when Nzo told a press briefing that the Foreign Ministers of SADC would have to reconsider the name ASAS, as well as whether it would be an association or a sector. Many commentators saw in the decision to delay the creation of ASAS the hand of disgruntled Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, who felt that Zimbabwe had a right to a commanding position in any new grouping, similar to the role it played in the FLS, and was plighted at the increased dominance of South Africa. Zimbabwe had apparently insisted, amongst other things, that the permanent chairmanship of ASAS be given to the longest-serving SADC Head of State (Mugabe), but Namibia's proposal that a two-yearly revolving chairmanship would be more appropriate won the day. However, such a chairmanship appears to err on the side of excessive caution, as the implication is that a member country would only chair the sector once every quarter of a century. The final communiqué issued in Johannesburg therefore deliberately omitted the name ASAS, and simply stated that "the Summit reviewed its decision of Gaborone in August 1994, to establish the sector on Political Co-operation, Democracy, Peace and Security. The Summit considered and granted the request of the Foreign Ministers of SADC, that the allocation of the sector to any Member State be deferred and that they be given more time for consultations among themselves and with Ministers responsible for Defence and Security and SADC Matters, on the structures, terms of reference, and operational procedures, for the sector."" 

Despite these delays, many of the concepts of the ASAS proposal, such as informality, flexibility and confidentiality, were accepted as cornerstones for the envisaged SADC sector. With the political framework established, a considerable amount of work remains to be done with regard to organisation, structures, specific terms of reference and, most importantly, the decision to allocate the sector to a specific country, or to allow it to rotate still has to be taken. Given the sensitivity of the sector, allocating it on a permanent basis to a single country will probably be difficult and it could be expected that the final agreement will provide for either a rotating system between countries, rotating chairpersons from different countries or strict criteria for a multinational staff. In preparation for the next Heads of State meeting in 1996, the various ministers concerned would therefore be expected to produce specific proposals in this regard.

THE INTER-STATE DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

The Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) is a forum where ministers of Southern African states, responsible for Defence, Home Affairs, Public Security and State Security, discuss a wide range of issues relating to individual and collective defence and security. At present, it seems as if ISDSC will become part of the SADC sector on security. Established in 1988 under the aegis of the FLS, ISDSC initially included seven member states, with South Africa, Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland joining it in November 1994.

ISDSC is an informal structure operating according to practices agreed upon by member states and developed over time. It has neither an Executive Secretary nor a permanent secretariat. The Chief of the Zambia Air Force listed the objectives of
ISDSC as follows.

- Prevention of aggression from within the region and from outside the region.
- Prevention of coups d'état.
- Management and resolution of conflicts.
- The promotion of regional stability.
- The promotion of regional peace.
- Promotion and enhancement of regional development."

Based on its agenda, the primary functions of the three ISDSC sub-committees may be summarised as follows:

**Defence:**
- to review and share experiences on the prevailing military security situation in respective member states;
- to explore areas of further military co-operation and practical means to realise this objective; and
- to exchange views and propose mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in the Southern African sub-region in particular, and Africa in general.

**Public Security:**
- to co-ordinate public security activities in the sub-region;
- to exchange information and experience on public security matters, such as motor vehicle theft, drug trafficking, counterfeit currency, illegal immigrants, forged travel documents and fire arm smuggling; and
- to explore areas and means of enhancing co-operation among police agencies in the sub-region.

**State Security:**
- to review the security situation in the sub-region and to analyse issues affecting the sub-region, including political instability, armed conflict, influx of refugees, religious extremism and organised crime;
- to recommend appropriate measures to deal with potential threats to the stability of the sub-region; and
- to consider ways of consolidating and expanding co-operation between member states on matters relating to state security.

In the past, ISDSC played a key role in conjunction with the liberation movements, in co-ordinating strategy and activities against colonialism and apartheid in Southern Africa. Its mandate, however, has always been and appears to remain confined to making recommendations for the consideration of the Heads of State and Government of member states.

During its meeting in Arusha in November 1994, it was decided that the organisation and structure of ISDSC would remain unchanged for the time being, pending further discussions, and that it would not immediately become part of SADC or constitute the proposed Sector for Defence and Security of the SADC structure envisaged by the Windhoek conference of July 1994. The meeting recognised that it had to redefine its role and establish a new basis for common security and multilateral co-operation. The Defence Sub-Committee consequently held seminars in Gaborone (16-17 March 1995) and Cape Town to discuss the possible expansion of its structure.

The sub-structure of the Military Sub-Committee of ISDSC, however, would only be finalised after discussions in Cape Town during September 1995. Here ISDSC decided on a streamlined organisation, consisting of a functional sub-sub-committee (including operations, intelligence, personnel development and logistics), a professional sub-sub-committee (including the chaplains, lawyers and medical associations), a sports committee and the standing maritime and aviation sub-committees. The Defence Sub-Committee also decided to support the East and Southern African Liaison Offices of the International Military Sports Council (Comité International du Sport Militaire - CISM) in their efforts to build confidence and friendship through sport. In practice, each member country would nominate one or two persons to participate in each of the committee's activities.

The proposed functions of the Military Operations and Intelligence components are:

- To promote a common understanding amongst the member states of each of the state's operating and planning procedures.
- Determine to what extent command and staff procedures, tactics and equipment are compatible and in what fields standardisation should be sought.
- Do contingency planning for the establishment of an operational centre in the case of disaster relief operations being launched.
- To co-ordinate the conduct of intelligence and counter-intelligence on military and military related activities from outside the region which may threaten the sovereignty and stability of one or more of the states in the region.
- To co-ordinate the conduct and integration of intelligence and counter-intelligence on military related factors and developments influencing the security stability within the region.
- To support strategic planning within the region.
- To facilitate and support combined operations.
- To co-ordinate military intelligence and counter-intelligence in the functional fields to be identified.
The extent of potential co-operation on maritime affairs was significantly increased when Mauritius, the only island member of SADC, joined ISDSC in 1995. However, the Arusha meeting already recommended that, although they were not SADC members, Madagascar, Kenya, Zambia, Congo and Gabon were invited to join the Standing Committee on Maritime Co-operation that held its inaugural meeting at the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe on 15 June 1995. It is unclear what the implications of this membership would be once the formal linkage between the ISDSC and SADC is finalised.

Attendance at maritime and aviation meetings will occur at the level of naval and air force chiefs. The proposed purpose of the Maritime Committee is to promote co-operation in developing professional capabilities and a common doctrine and standing operating procedures to achieve interoperability. This can be achieved through, amongst other means: common training, combined exercises and operations and student exchanges. An obvious priority would be to establish an effective command, control, communications and intelligence infrastructure for maritime co-ordination. The agenda of the Standing Committee could also include assistance with the protection of marine resources (notably fishing) and the marine environment, ecological pollution control (including oil spills, transportation of hazardous cargo), disaster relief, combating piracy, drug and arms trafficking and illegal immigration, safety of life at sea (through search and rescue operations and monitoring sub-standard vessels), hydrography and navigation aids and the support of scientific research. It implies that civilian components, such as departments of Transport, Environment, Safety and Security would have to be involved.

The decision to opt for a single professional sub-committee replaced the earlier idea of establishing a separate Military Medical Doctors Association, a Military Lawyers Association and a Military Chaplains forum to discuss training, development and management of the respective areas within the armed forces.

The principle of unrestricted bilateral defence co-operation between member states, as well as between member states outside the region, was adopted by the ISDSC. It will promote multilateral co-operation and provide intelligence support for preventive diplomacy initiatives in cases of pending or actual hostilities. It must also be able to plan combined operations. It appears increasingly that ISDSC will become the formal mechanism for multinational military, police and intelligence co-ordination.

It is expected that discussions on the establishment of a regional non-aggression pact will proceed soon, but that any movement on a mutual defence pact or treaty organisation, as proposed at the Windhoek conference in July 1994, is not an immediate prospect. While a non-aggression pact is a virtual requirement for the ensuring of the regional stability and building of confidence among SADC member states, the implications of a defence pact are far-reaching and complex and probably unnecessary.

Shortly after the SADC Heads of State Conference in Johannesburg, the seventeenth conference of ISDSC, the first to be held in South Africa, began on 4 September 1995, in Cape Town. Preliminary meetings of top officials were held prior to the arrival of Defence, Home Affairs and Police Ministers on 7 September. The agenda included subjects such as the smuggling of illegal weapons and drugs, illegal immigrants, forged travel documents, counterfeit money, protected animal products and the extradition of fugitives. During the meeting, South African Defence Minister Modise took over as chairman of ISDSC from the Tanzanian Minister of State, Defence and National Service, AO Kinané. Chairmanship of the newly established Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation was accepted by South African Police Service Commissioner George Fizev.

During September 1995 the SANDF issued the following programme of action, based on Modise's closing statement at the conference:

"In the light of the report from the sub-committee, the following is the outline of a programme for co-operation over the next twelve months:

- Apply resources to stem cross-border crime.
- Stop the illegal flow of arms between Southern African countries and into our region from elsewhere.
- Undertake joint intelligence exercises and develop a regional threat analysis that can usefully serve as an early warning system.
- Undertake the necessary training, logistical and operational preparation for peace operations, on land, air and at sea.
- Invite member states to participate in training exercises and attend educational and training courses.
- Continue to engage in confidence and security building measures. An example of this is the SANDF's invitation to other Southern African Development Community (SADC) states to observe Operation Southern Cross at South Africa's Army Battle School.
- Help emerging democracies in building civil-military relations consistent with democracy, through regional workshops, educational programmes and practical support.
- Promote naval co-operation and protection of the region's marine resources.
- Be ready to meet requests for assistance from the Government of Angola."

The statement listed the following 'Organisational issues' that required attention during the next twelve months:

- "Resolve the debate around the future of the Association of Southern African States (ASAS) and its relationship to SADC.
- Determine the structures appropriate to each of the defence, police and intelligence sub-committees and ensure effective co-ordination amongst them."

214

215
CONCLUSION

The post-Cold War era has brought with it the collapse of most of the political space that the Third World occupied during the East/West struggle. For the most part, the former Third World is no longer of significant strategic interest to developed countries, neither as a location for military bases nor as the source of prizes in the ideological competition. The demise of the Socialist World has not resulted in promoting developing countries, but rather in their demotion to peripheral status. Cutting evidence of African marginalisation is found in the US Institute for National Strategic Studies' Strategic Assessment 1995: "The US has essentially no serious military/geopolitical interests in Africa anymore, other than the inescapable fact that its vastness poses an obstacle to deployment to the Middle East and South Asia, whether by sea or air." 10

Virtually all recent wars in Africa were fought over independence and decolonisation. They have been fought within states, as opposed to between countries. Even after independence, this deadly legacy persists. In 1990, thirteen open conflicts were recorded, including major civil wars in Ethiopia, Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia and Chad. Armed struggles by minorities occurred in Uganda, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, the Western Sahara, Sudan and Rwanda. Droughts and famine have transformed many conflicts into major disasters. The problems caused by concentrations of refugees and successive strata of exiles sow the seeds for the next crisis, as witnessed in the constant see-sawing in Rwanda and Burundi.

The vast majority of conflicts in Southern Africa, therefore, have been largely intra-state. Complex as they are, they are further aggravated by distrust, religious fanaticism and ethnicism. Old animosities are kept alive and a culture of tolerance remains elusive. In Southern Africa in particular, the legacy of apartheid, colonial exploitation and policies of the ruling elite have contributed to refugee problems, economic migration, smuggling, drug-trafficking, poaching and piracy. Ethnic divisions have forced countries into downward spirals of civil wars, lawlessness, anarchy and misery. The extent of the decline brought about by the struggle for independence, the resistance to such struggles, and by corrupt and inept despotism, can hardly be overestimated. The collapse of state institutions and the disruption of government functions severely complicate attempts to intervene and assist these countries, either by the more affluent, developed countries, or by Africans themselves.

In this context, any military attempts to ensure a settlement, intervene in a dispute, or deploy armed forces for humanitarian assistance, are bound to be either limited or would require substantial resources. As such, peacekeeping and peacekeeping involve constant danger and are more complex and expensive than the classic monitoring of cease-fires, the control of buffer zones or even preventive deployment. It implies that outside intervention, as has been the case in Somalia and Rwanda, must extend beyond military and humanitarian tasks and might include the re-establishment of effective government and the promotion of national reconciliation. Should the 'intervening powers' come from the region, the potential difference between the needs of the population who require assistance and the national interest of intervening countries will inevitably complicate the situation further. More importantly though, there must be serious doubts about the persistence and ability of either Africa or the international community to effect such measures.
Endnotes


3 Anfin, SA-Nambia deal to fight border crime. The Citizen, 13 June 1996.
4 Anfin, Photo signs security posts in Mozambique. The Citizen, 13 June 1996.
5 Stated by South African Department of Foreign Affairs Hereafter given as DFA, The Southern African Development Community.
6 DFA, op. cit., p. 12.
8 This was stated in an interview with the Director General of the Department, Mr. M. Evans, see Statement by Mr. Evans at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Cape Town, 3 May 1995, p. 2.
9 G. Lautenbach, it's a foreign affair as colleagues and comrades discover common ground. The Sunday. Independent, 17 September 1995.
11 A. Haggag, OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, paper presented at the ISDSC meeting In Cape Town, 7 September 1995, pp. 4-5.
13 J. Noko, op. cit., p. 11.
15 Ibid., op. cit., p. 5-6.
16 OAU, OAU's Position towards the various initiatives on Con-Res Management: Enhancing OAU's Capacity in Preventive Diplomacy, Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping. 2nd African Union Meeting. Addis Ababa, 4, 10.
17 Ibid., p. 10.
18 Ibid., p. 21.
19 Ibid., p. 22.
21 Haggag, op. cit., p. 8.
26 Pahdo, op. cit., p. 5.
29 The Chief of the SA Air Force recently made a number of specific proposals in this regard for the standardisation on the Ribon PC-7 trainer aircraft.
30 Haggag, op. cit., p. 12.
31 Ibid., p. 13.
32 Ibid., p. 15.
33 Ibid., p. 20.
34 See, for example, the remarks by Khris, op. cit., p. 3.
35 Through the Reconciliation. Southern Africa Towards Economic Liberalisation. adopted in Lusaka, Zambia, on 1st April 2000. The concept of a regional economic co-operation was first discussed at a meeting of the FLS Foreign Ministers in May 1979 in Gaborone. The meeting led to an international conference in Arusha, Tanzania two months later that brought together all independent countries, with the exception of the then Rhodesia, South West Africa and South Africa — and international donor agencies. The Arusha conference in turn led to the Lusaka Summit held in the Zambian capital in April 1980. After accepting the Declaration, which was to become known as 'Southern Africa: Towards Economic Liberalisation', Dr Hakainde Hichilema was elected as the first chairman of the SADC.
36 Dube, op. cit., p. 3.
38 Dube, op. cit., p. 4.
40 Ibid., p. 7-8.
41 Ibid., pp. 5 and 10.
42 DFA, op. cit., p. 8.
43 From discussions at the ICP roundtable discussion, The SADC and ISDSC, Southern African Perspectives, Pretoria, 26 September 1995.
44 The South African decision to join SADC was taken at a cabinet meeting on 3 August 1994. The accession was approved by the Senate and National Assembly on 13 and 14 September 1994, respectively, DFA, op. cit., p. 3.
46 Aristotle and Zedekiah (a SADC member) wanted to consult further.
48 As a first step, SADC would embark on an impact study in 1998 to assess the effect of dropping tariffs. This study would also form the basis for a mechanism to be used to compensate countries that could be harmed from the loss of import tariff revenue. The trade and industry sector was also involved in removing non-tariff barriers to trade through the harmonisation of standards in the region. A key part of this process was the establishment of national standards authorities. Only five SADC countries have these institutions. J. Plummer. SADC plans free trade area. Business Day. 24 August 1995.
49 Asipu, Clutching the golden goose may be easier said than done. The Times. 5 September 1995.
50 DFA, op. cit., p. 1.
51 The FLS organisation was set up in 1970 by the already independent Southern African States, notably Zambia and Tanzania, to lobby for the liberation of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.
52 Nhlobo. op. cit., p. 4.
53 Ibid., pp. 4-6.
55 S. Emmuane, Uguteke is a substrate in the words. Media Mail & Guardian. 25-31 August 1993.
PUBLIC OPINION ON DEFENCE AND SECURITY ISSUES

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article presents the results of an opinion survey conducted by MarkDate of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) between 27 May and 9 June 1995. The quarterly Omnibus Survey is done from door-to-door and its purpose is to provide clients with an opportunity to participate in a national survey at minimal cost. The questions relating to security issues in South Africa, included in the survey, are the result of a series of workshops between the Institute for Defence Policy (IDP) and the HSRC. IDP and the HSRC also co-operated in the interpretation of the results.

This questionnaire is normally administered to a probability sample of 2 200 respondents in South Africa, the June 1995 realised sample being 2 229. The universe of the sample is all South African residents of eighteen years and older and the sample is stratified according to the nine provinces and socio-economic classifications.

The sample allocation is approximately proportional to the adjusted 1991 population census figures, with a few exceptions. Multistage cluster (probability) sampling is used to draw respondents, with the adjusted 1991 population census figures as measure of size. Census enumerator areas and similar areas are used as the cluster in the penultimate sampling stage, from which an equal number - one or two by four - of households are drawn. All clusters are drawn from the final clusters with equal probability (systematically). Respondents are drawn at random from qualifying household members. In addition, the population of live-in domestic workers is sampled in accordance with its incidence in already drawn households.

The realised sample is weighted according to the 1991 biographic features of the South African population, eighteen years and older, and is thus considered to represent a broad spectrum of perceptions held by the adult population of South Africa.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY

In answer to the question how South Africa should obtain weapons and military equipment for its security forces, respondents were strongly inclined to opt for self-reliance in the provision of weapons. The largest single proportion (45%) indicated that South Africa should make enough weapons for its own use. An additional 25% indicated that South Africa should produce enough weapons for its own use and should also compete for weapon sales overseas. Only 7% of respondents said South Africa should buy all weapons overseas and 4% expressed the view that South Africa should ask for aid, including weapons, from overseas.
Chi-squared analyses of the data relating to this question indicated that African, coloured and Asian respondents, although strongly inclined to say that South Africa should make enough weapons for its own use, are not as likely to adhere to this view as white respondents, of whom 53% have indicated that the country should make enough weapons for its own use and should compete with overseas countries for the sale of weapons (see Figure 1).

Further analysis indicates that the proportion of respondents contending that South Africa should make enough weapons for its own use and to compete with other countries for weapons sales, tends to increase in direct relation to the educational levels of respondents. Only 14% of persons with little or no formal education are of the opinion that South Africa should make enough weapons for its own use and also sell armaments, while 21% of persons with a formal education of less than Standard 9 are of a similar opinion. Of persons with a Standard 10 qualification and higher, 40% are in favour of the production and export of arms. The proportions of persons who believe that South Africa should make only enough weapons for its own use remain roughly constant at 41% for persons with little or no formal education, 45% for persons with a formal education level of less than Standard 9, and 43% for persons with a formal education level of Standard 10 and higher. One possible reason for this trend is that people with higher educational levels may see the arms industry as a source of employment and revenue to a greater extent than people with less education.

Supporters of all political parties included in the analysis, with the exception of those supporting right-wing parties, were inclined to respond that South Africa should make enough weapons for its own use. The majority of supporters of the right-wing parties (60%) tended to respond that South Africa should not only make enough weapons for its own use, but should also compete overseas for weapon sales.

The largest single proportion of respondents also indicated that South Africa should increase its own weapon manufacturing capacity. The question asked was: "Should South Africa maintain, reduce or increase its own weapon manufacturing capacity in the present circumstances?" A total of 43% of respondents were in favour of South Africa increasing its weapon manufacturing capacity significantly, or just increasing it. Only 18% felt that South Africa should reduce its weapon manufacturing capacity or reduce it significantly.

Those respondents who felt that South Africa should increase its weapon manufacturing capacity, were then asked what their single most important reason was for thinking that it should increase. The largest single proportion of respondents (45%) indicated that a country should be defended by its own weapons, while the next largest proportion (32%) said that an increase in weapon manufacturing capacity would increase job opportunities.

Further analysis of the responses indicating that South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity should decrease, was also conducted. Altogether 57% of respondents who originally stated that the country should decrease its capacity indicated the fact that
weapons provoke violence as their main reason, while 16% felt that an increased crime rate would result and 13% said that South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity should decrease because the country is not at present under threat.

The data relating to the possible increase, decrease or maintenance of South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity, were analysed by means of Chi-squared analyses according to population group (see Figure 2). The largest single proportion of three of the four population groups - Africans (42%), coloured people (29%) and white people (50%) - stated that South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity should increase. Only the Asian population group was more inclined to say that this capacity should decrease, with 36% in favour of a decrease, and 29% in favour of an increase. The reasons for the disparity between the responses of the Asian and the other population groups are probably partially to be found in cultural determinants. Large proportions of respondents, especially amongst coloured people, expressed uncertainty in response to the question.

Chi-squared analyses of the data on South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity were done according to support for political party. the results show that supporters of the main political parties are in favour of an increase in South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity. This is especially true for supporters of the right-wing, 55% of whom indicate that South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity should increase. However, many respondents amongst all support categories have been inclined to an 'uncertain' response, as can be expected in answering a question that requires some knowledge of the arms industry. Of supporters of the ANC, the majority party in South Africa, 43% are in favour of an increase in arms manufacturing, 20% support a decrease in arms manufacturing and 36% are undecided.

An interesting result is that those persons who feel that their standards of living will rise under the Government of National Unity (GNU), are most likely to want an increase in South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity (50%), with a slight decline in the case of those seeing their living standards falling under the GNU (44%) and those feeling that they will remain unchanged (35%). The high figure in the case of those who think that standards of living will deteriorate, can possibly be partially attributed to feelings of being threatened or unsafe.

A number of other questions on the weapon industry were also included in the survey. One was: "Assuming South Africa does maintain its weapon-building capacity, to whom should the country sell arms?" The following represent the most common responses: any country (15%) and non-African countries (13%). Another question was: "Who loses the most if South Africa no longer produces and sells weapons?" The largest single proportion of respondents (30%) thought that arms manufacturers would lose the most in this case, followed by the GNU (19%), the South African public (15%) and the country's work force (13%).

A further question was: "Who should give final approval of arms exports by South African arms manufacturers?" The response was the President (27%), Parliament (27%) the Ministry of Defence (22%) and ARMSCOR or the weapon industry (11%). In answer to the following: "Any decision about the future of the South African arms manufacturing capacity should be taken by?", responses were only Parliament (26%), the workers and management or owners (19%), only the workers (11%), and the public (11%).

In summary, support for the arms industry is especially evident among white respondents, while it is also significantly supported by African, coloured and Asian respondents. Increased support is also found among those with higher education levels and those who foresee a rise in their standards of living under the GNU.

It is further significant that respondents of three population groups, namely African, white and coloured people, were in favour of increasing South Africa's weapon manufacturing capacity. Support has therefore clearly been shown for the maintenance and even strengthening of the arms industry in South Africa, with only the Asian group dissenting.

SOUTH AFRICA AND PEACEKEEPING

Almost two-thirds of the respondents involved in the Omnibus Survey indicated that they want the country to have a peacekeeping force that can be utilised externally to help other countries maintain peace. However, not many respondents appear to be willing to volunteer for service in such a force. Rather than serving as a basis for policy formulation, these results are seen to reflect ignorance about the subject and about the debate on the issue thus far in the country.

The idea of a peacekeeping force to help maintain peace internationally is especially popular among supporters of the traditionally black parties, namely the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Thus 71% of supporters of the ANC, 71% of PAC supporters and 69% of IFP supporters approved the creation of a peacekeeping force by the South African Government to help maintain peace internationally. The idea of a peacekeeping force is much less popular among supporters of the traditionally white parties - 44% of the National Party (NP), 41% of the Democratic Party (DP), and only 19% supporters of right-wing parties support the idea of such a force.

Analysing the data according to the different race groups in South Africa, it is noticeable that the idea of a peacekeeping force is most popular among Asians, of whom 72% expressed support for such a force, followed by Africans (67%) and coloured people (59%). Only 31% of white people support the creation of a peacekeeping force. This may be due to their greater awareness of hardships especially endured by white soldiers and their dependants in the seventies during operations in Angola.

The data showed conclusively that the creation of a peacekeeping force was supported to a far greater extent among English speaking persons: 64% were in favour of such a force, while the corresponding proportion among those speaking Afrikaans was only 35%.
As might be expected, people who were unemployed and looking for work, were most inclined (69%) to support the idea of the force. The second largest group were students, of whom 57% supported the creation of the force. A smaller percentage, namely 56%, of those in full-time employment supported its creation.

Younger respondents were especially supportive of the idea that South Africa should have a peacekeeping force. A total of 53% of respondents between 18 - 24 years of age, 65% between 25 - 34 years, and 80% of those between 35 - 44 years gave their support to the idea. In all other (older) age groups, the level of support varied between 47 and 56%.

Analysis of the data also showed that the largest single group of respondents, although not the majority (27%), felt that the South African Government should pay most of the costs of deploying a peacekeeping force beyond the borders of the country. In this respect, 15% of respondents said that the country to which a peacekeeping force is deployed, must bear the brunt of the costs, while 13% thought the United Nations should foot the bill. Presumably, the level of knowledge of the massive costs of such operations must be low amongst the vast majority of participants.

Analysed by political parties, the highest levels of support for the idea that the government should pay the greater part of the costs for such a force was found among the ANC (46%), PAC (32%) and IFP (38%). Supporters of the NP expressed greater reluctance for the Government to spend money on the force with only 14% supporting it, while only 5% of right-wing supporters were in favour of the Government financing the force.

A large proportion of those questioned (46%) was satisfied that such a peacekeeping force should serve worldwide where it is needed. A total of 21% felt that such a force, should it be established by South Africa, should be deployed only in other African countries.

The largest single proportion of respondents (43%) were in favour of the peacekeeping force serving solely under the command of the South African Government, rather than under the command of another country. In this regard though, a slightly smaller proportion (37%) felt that a South African peacekeeping force should also be prepared to serve under the command of another country.

The ideals represented above, however, did not reflect a personal willingness or commitment to put it into practice. While South Africans are keen to have a peacekeeping force, not many are prepared to volunteer for the job. More than half of the respondents (54%) say they would not be prepared to volunteer for the force, although 39% would indeed be prepared to do so. A considerable percentage of African people (44%) was prepared to volunteer for duty in a peacekeeping force outside South Africa. Only 29% of coloureds, 27% of Asian and 14% of white respondents indicated their willingness to volunteer in this respect.

Analysed by political parties, the supporters of the ANC and the PAC (both 46%) and the IFP (43%) were most inclined to volunteer for duty in such a force. Only 21% of NP supporters and 8% of right-wing supporters would be willing to do the same.

This lukewarm response to volunteering for peacekeeping duties outside South Africa appears to be confirmed by the response to another question that enquired about the willingness of respondents to do part-time military service in an international peacekeeping force. In this regard, 42% of respondents were either willing or very willing, while 43% were unwilling or very unwilling.

As might be expected, it is especially male respondents and younger respondents who are more prepared to serve in a peacekeeping force, should it be created by South Africa. Thus 39% of male respondents and more than half of those between the ages of 18 and 24 personally would be prepared to volunteer for service in such a force.

Whereas in countries such as the United States, Britain and the Netherlands, participation in peacekeeping operations has been the subject of an informed and ongoing public debate, this is not the case in South Africa. In fact, ignorance about the implications of South African participation in peacekeeping operations, including the possible cost in terms of human life, foreign policy implications and the financial burden of operations are impediments to sound policy decisions. This has underlined the importance for South Africans to discuss and debate participation, especially in view of unrealistic and very high expectations from Africa and the international peacekeeping community, worn out by the burden of Africa's troubles, that South Africa could make a significant contribution in this regard.

WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

Strong opposition to equal participation of women in the armed services was expressed by respondents in the survey. They overwhelmingly rejected the idea of women taking part in police patrols in dangerous areas and of women doing combat duty in the front lines. This response is representative of all population groups. Despite these objections, respondents were positive about more women being recruited into the armed forces.

The findings on the whole suggest that South African respondents do not wish to relegate women to positions of inferiority within the security services or to reject the idea of women providing a service to the country within these structures. However, it is clear that there are deeply entrenched cultural factors within South Africa predisposing people to reserve positions for women which cannot be reconciled with the performance of such duties as fighting in wars or patrolling dangerous areas.

In response to the question: "Should women be allowed to do combat duty in the front line or not?", the majority of respondents (59%) felt that women should not do combat duty (see Figure 3). Similarly, respondents felt that women should not be allowed to do police patrols in dangerous areas (70%). The question, "Should women on police patrol always be accompanied by a male?" yielded a positive response of 83% of all respondents. A large percentage (77%) also felt that women in the SANDF should carry weapons (probably for self-defence), and that women who are taken prisoners of war while on combat duty, should be treated differently from their male counterparts (50%).
However, 55% felt that special efforts should be made to recruit more women into the defence force.

Four of these questions were indexed to form an indicator of attitudes to women in the military. These were the questions asking whether women should be allowed to do combat duty on the front lines, whether a special attempt should be made to recruit women into the defence force, whether women in the SANDF should be allowed to carry weapons or not and whether women should be allowed to do police patrols in dangerous areas or not. The first attitude categorised was ‘positive’ (that is, inclined to be in favour of equal participation in the military by women), the second was ‘neutral’ and the third was ‘negative’ (in other words, inclined to be against equal participation of women in the armed services). Almost equal proportions of responses fell into the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ categories (37% ‘positive’, 38% ‘negative’), with the ‘neutral’ response being 25%.

Chi-squared analyses of the indexed values according to population group indicated that African and especially white respondents (42%) have a negative rather than a positive view of equal participation of women in all aspects of the armed services. Coloured and Asian respondents have a more positive view on such participation.

Chi-squared analyses of the results showed clearly that, in accordance with world-wide trends, younger people, and Asian and coloured respondents have a more positive attitude to women fully participating in the armed services of the country, than older people, African and white respondents (see Figure 4). Analysed according to affiliations to political parties, the results showed that respondents supporting right-wing parties are most likely to be against the full participation of women in all aspects of the security services (54%). However, supporters of the Democratic Party (47%), the Inkatha Freedom Party (46%) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (43%) expressed a similar view. Supporters of the African National Congress were more in favour of participation (39%), while supporters of the National Party were equally divided between being in favour and being against full participation (both 30%).

Analyses of the results according to gender only indicated negligible differences.

Although the results of this survey alone cannot be regarded as a direction for policymaking, many factors make it important for feminist groups and the government to heed the findings of the survey. These factors are, amongst others, general feminist trends and women’s emancipation that are characteristic of the late twentieth century as expressed in a variety of changes occurring in South Africa at present.

South Africa has a long history of women participating in various roles in the security services, stretching back to the previous century. As a result of deep-seated cultural attitudes and job reservation, women have been seen fulfilling supportive roles for many decades. It is only recently that, for instance, the South African Police Service has started a conscious recruitment drive to provide a service that is more representative in terms of gender. Defence policy has also been changed to remove gender
discrimination. On a practical level, however, it will take far longer to remove the remaining obstacles that still exclude women from certain positions. These obstacles include, amongst others, appropriate facilities, physical standards, etc. With a Defence Review and rationalisation of the number of people to be retained in the Defence Force already announced, as well as the pressure to reduce defence spending, it is at this practical level that the implementation of the Government's decision of no discrimination may take a longer period to materialise.

On a cultural level, there are no doubt still deeply entrenched stereotypes that prevail in South African society as a whole. The drive towards women's emancipation is far from being complete. With patriarchal attitudes abounding amongst all population groups in the country, and in the context of an historically male-dominated terrain such as the security forces, women are sometimes still seen as being unsuitable to take up positions of their own choice, particularly where these involve risk or danger. Often also, women are revered to the extent that their role in society is seen as irreconcilable with that of a soldier or policeman constantly exposed to

**DEMOBILISATION**

The Minister of Defence, the President and various other leaders in the country have stated that demobilisation and the rationalisation of the SANDF to reduce its numbers, will be necessary and will commence shortly. Demobilisation of members of the non-statutory forces, has already started and particularly affects two major groups. The first comprises former members of the liberation armies who cannot be accepted into the new full-time force, as a result of ill health, physical disability, age or lack of appropriate educational qualifications. The second group includes those who do not wish to follow a career in the SANDF. Both groups represent voluntary separations from the defence force.

Rationalisation in the form of formal retrenchment or non-voluntary separation of members from the SANDF, will affect members of both statutory and non-statutory forces and is due to start in the next financial year. This will be affected by decisions on the new size and shape of the defence force that are being reviewed at present, and by the next defence budget. The SANDF is expected to downsize its forces levels by up to 30 000 full-time staff members. South Africa is already experiencing problems with large scale unemployment, compounded by drought and trends in industrial development. The end of the year will add further numbers of scholars and students who have completed their studies to the job-seekers. However, former soldiers constitute an exceptional group in the light of their service record, previous training and their ability to create or manipulate violence. Furthermore, the negotiations leading to South Africa's democratisation promised them career security. The public still appears to be sympathetic to this group. Respondents clearly expressed themselves in favour of help for former soldiers, irrespective of whether they fought for or against apartheid. To the question: "Should all former soldiers (APLA, MK and SANDF) who fought for or against apartheid and for whom there are no more jobs in the SANDF be given special help now in finding jobs and being reintegrated into society?", more than half of the respondents (53%) answered "yes, everyone", followed by "no, only those who fought against apartheid" (11%), while only 8% were in favour of helping only those who fought for apartheid.

Statistical analyses indicate that population group has been a significant predictor of these responses. The African, coloured and Asian population groups were considerably more inclined than the white group to say that everyone should be given special help to find jobs and be reintegrated into society. Not surprisingly, the African group as the population group most affected by apartheid, was more likely to suggest this kind of help for those who struggled against apartheid than the coloured, Asian or white population groups. The white population group was the most inclined to say that nobody should be given special help.

When analysed by language, chi-squared analyses indicated that the Tswana group was most likely to indicate that everyone should receive special help to find jobs and be reintegrated into society. The Xhosa speaking group was most likely to say that those who fought against apartheid should receive this kind of help and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans were most likely to indicate that nobody should receive help.

Analyses indicated that socio-economic classification was another variable showing a significant relation to responses to the question of whether people for whom the SANDF can no longer cater, should receive help in finding jobs and in reintegrating into society. Squatters, respondents in rural areas and in the black townships were most likely to answer that everyone should receive help. Respondents in the former urban areas for white people were most likely to indicate that nobody should receive this kind of help, probably reflecting in part, a basic class difference in attitudes towards the issue.

ANC supporters are especially in favour of helping former soldiers to find jobs and with reintegrating into society. Those respondents who had a positive view of the legitimacy of the Government of National Unity (GNU) felt that everyone should receive help (see Figure 5).

In another question on rationalisation, respondents were asked about retrenchment: "When the armed forces retrench people, who should be the first to leave?" Although many respondents were unsure (28%), the largest single proportion who expressed a viewpoint, indicated that those who are the least well trained (13%) and those who joined last (12%) should be the first to leave. Another reason that featured significantly was that those who are the least capable according to the command structure, should be the first to leave (11%). This was followed by "white soldiers" (8%). The first three reasons - late joining, least trained and least effective - shows signs of having connotations with labour relations practices.

**UNIONISATION**

Since the mid-eighties, the state has faced increasing pressure to grant its employees the same fundamental rights as the rest of society. Despite restrictions placed on trade union activity and strike action and the creation of alternative channels to address both
collective and individual grievances, nearly all state departments have been affected by labour unrest, including the security forces.

Uniformed personnel of the military, police and correctional services have, until recently, been prohibited from belonging to trade unions. During 1993 the government acceded to the increased demand for public service unionisation by promulgating the Public Service Relations Act No. 102 of 1993. This legislation allowed public service employees to form trade unions, while restricting this right to civilian employees of the Security Departments.

In September 1993 the Department of Correctional Services announced that uniformed members would also be included under the Public Service Labour Relations Act, although they were still denied the right to strike. The Police submitted an amendment to the Police Act that empowered the Minister to promulgate regulations allowing trade union activity and subsequently engaged in active attempts to form an employee body to represent policemen and women. The SADF resisted unionisation, although it did amend the Defence Act in September 1993 to allow members to join "... any professional or vocational institute, society, association or like body approved by the Minister."

The Department of Defence not been subject to the same degree of labour unrest as the rest of the security forces. Since 1994 and particularly after the acceptance of the new Public Service Labour Relations Act (1993) that has granted SANDF civilian employees labour rights, incidences of labour dissatisfaction have increased among both civilian and uniformed personnel. The most significant was the protest by 32 soldiers of 21 Infantry Battalion stationed at Lenz in August 1994, who were later convicted of mutiny. Although protesters have had meetings with senior officers, the Minister of Defence and even with the President, there is marked disapproval of their actions. The South African National Defence Union (SANDU) has recently attempted to challenge the restrictions in the Defence Act, prohibiting uniformed members from joining a union or striking, as being unconstitutional.

With regard to the above, respondents to the survey were asked: "In view of the fact that they perform an essential service and some people think the service they render should be uninterrupted, should people in the SANDF be allowed to form trade unions?" The largest single proportion of respondents (45%) indicated that they should be allowed to form trade unions. A sizeable proportion (40%), however, felt they should not.

Chi-squared analyses of the response according to population group revealed that 52% of African respondents, 51% of Asian respondents and 38% of coloured respondents, representing the largest single proportion in each case, were in favour of allowing trade unions in the SANDF. Almost three-quarters of white respondents (73%) were not in favour of trade unions in the SANDF (see Figure 6). The proportion of respondents in favour of the SANDF allowing trade unions increased according to educational levels. Respondents with no or little education are the only group where the proportion of those in favour of the SANDF allowing trade unions is marginally smaller those against the SANDF allowing trade unions.
indicated that more than half of the respondents from each population group were opposed to SANDF members being allowed to strike. Analysed by support for political party, respondents supporting right-wing parties (95%), the DP (73%) and the NP (70%) are the most likely to feel that SANDF members should not be allowed to strike or demonstrate.

Respondents were asked: “Do you think that working conditions for the members of the police service have improved or deteriorated since trade unions have been allowed?” The response revealed that 39% of respondents indicated that conditions in the police service had improved or improved a lot since trade unions were allowed, while 24% stated that conditions had deteriorated or deteriorated a lot. Analysed according to population group, data indicated that the largest single proportion of African (48%), coloured (33%) and Asian (26%) respondents expressing a definite viewpoint, claimed that working conditions in the police improved since trade unions were allowed. In the case of white respondents, by far the largest single proportion (45%) said that working conditions had deteriorated in that time. A feature of this response was the large proportion of respondents who were uncertain.

Chi-squared analyses according to support for political parties indicated that supporters of the traditionally black political parties were most inclined to say that working conditions in the police service had improved since trade unions were allowed. Fifty percent of ANC supporters, 43% of PAC supporters and 52% of IFP supporters, in each case the largest single proportion expressing an opinion, indicated that working conditions in the police had improved since trade unions were allowed. On the other hand, the greatest single proportion of supporters of traditionally white parties indicated that working conditions had deteriorated in the police since the advent of trade unions. Especially the supporters of the right-wing parties (53%), but also of the NP (33%) and the DP (29%) were inclined towards this view. Many respondents, however, were uncertain in their responses to this question.

Respondents were also asked: “Do you think the effectiveness of the SAPS has improved or deteriorated since trade unions have been allowed?” The largest single proportion of respondents (35%) felt that effectiveness improved or improved a lot, while 25% thought it deteriorated or deteriorated a lot. Analyses indicated that African, coloured and Asian respondents were inclined to feel that the effectiveness of the police service had improved (respectively 43%, 30% and 38%). A mere 7% of white respondents thought that the effectiveness of the SAPS had improved while 51% felt it had deteriorated since trade unions were allowed. A feature of the data was the large proportion of respondents who were inclined towards a ‘uncertain’ response. Unfortunately other reasons for improvement or deterioration during the same period were not tested (see Figure 7).

Chi-squared analyses of the data by support for political party of responses to the question of the influence of trade unions on the effectiveness of the police service revealed a substantial difference between those supporting traditionally black and white parties. The largest single proportion of supporters of traditionally black parties expressing an opinion stated that the efficiency of the police had improved since the
PART-TIME MILITARY SERVICE

Following the recommendations of the Groenewoud Committee, a compulsory national service system for medically fit white males aged eighteen years of age was introduced in South Africa on 1 January 1968. Prior to this, South Africa had used a system of selected ballotees called up for service. Thereafter the first initial period of continuous National Service was subsequently increased to 24 months in January 1978. With effect from January 1983, the total service commitment period of part-time force personnel, subsequent to the completion of their initial training period, was extended to 720 days over a period of twelve years. In December 1985, the State

President announced that the initial period of training would be reduced from 24 to 12 months with effect from 1 January 1990.

In 1993 it was announced that from January 1994, a new volunteer military system (VMS) of one year initial training and eight camps of thirty days was being introduced. A maximum of approximately six thousand selected, matriculated, volunteers are being accepted for training at present, although possible ballotting remained a part of the Defence Act. In the draft White Paper on Defence, the Minister once more committed South Africa to using only volunteers for both its full-time and part-time forces.
In the questionnaire, respondents were asked the question: "Should military service be entirely voluntary or should all young men and women be forced to do it?" An overwhelming majority of 97% of respondents (the highest percentage recorded for any answer dealing with security matters), answered that it should be voluntary. This strong preference for voluntary rather than compulsory military service, is probably related to, among others, association of compulsory military service with the 'old' SADF. Afrikaners were the least likely to indicate that military service should be entirely voluntary, while English and African language speakers were more likely to say it should be voluntary (see Figure 8). Analysed according to population group, African and Asian respondents were more likely than white and coloured respondents (the two population groups who previously served on a legally enforced, part-time basis) to indicate that military service should be voluntary.

Respondents were also asked: "Should South Africa have a system of compulsory non-military national service?" They were divided in their views on this matter. Approximately the same proportions were in favour and against such a system (42% in favour, 41% against). The issue of non-military service clearly deserves more thorough research and political attention than has been the case thus far. In fact, given South Africa's unemployment levels that are approaching 45%, such a programme, essentially targeted at the 'lost generation', could play a crucial role in reconstruction and development. It may also greatly assist the implementation of the RDP and would certainly benefit the Department of Health, whose Minister has already suggested something similar for newly qualified doctors.

Respondents were asked to give their views on the type of military force that should defend South Africa. The question was: "Should South Africa in time of war be defended by a fully voluntary military force of professional soldiers, a part-time military force called up for compulsory military service, or a part-time military force volunteering to do military duty?" 60% of respondents wanted to see South Africa defended by full-time, professional volunteer soldiers. Only 13% wanted South Africa to be defended by part-time soldiers called up for military duty (as was the case in the recent past) and 12% wanted South Africa defended by part-time soldiers volunteering for military duty (the World War II system). This support for a (larger) regular army, particularly for peacetime tasks such as assisting the police or international peacekeeping, as opposed to a military essentially based on part-time forces, who then preferably only form the emergency or wartime forces, cuts across political divisions. Analysis by political party proved that supporters of all political parties supported this view (see Figure 9).

Another question enquired "If you were an employer, would you allow your employees to volunteer for part-time military service if it were for an uninterrupted three-month period?" More than half of the respondents (55%) answered in variations of the 'affirmative', indicating a positive attitude regarding the military. It should be noted, however, that the greatest single proportion of respondents (25%), did not think that their present employers would allow them to volunteer for uninterrupted military service of three months.
The respondents revealed a strong tendency towards being willing to protect South Africa for the sake of issues with a local impact, rather than for international reasons. This was notable in their response to the question: “How willing would you be to do part-time military service in the following circumstances?” Respondents were more inclined to be willing or very willing to do part-time military service only in their own areas, in times of internal national emergency, in support of the SAPS to maintain law and order, and in times of national disasters. In times of external threat (war), when volunteering for an international peacekeeping force or when asked if they are willing to volunteer for service “anywhere, anytime”, respondents were inclined to be very unwilling or unwilling. This may indicate a willingness to serve rather in the Rear Area Protection Units (previously Commandos) or as police reservists, in contrast to serving in the Citizen Force intended for conventional operations. The recent decision by the Parliamentary Caucus of the ANC to request the disbanding of the Commando Force, appears to clash directly with the findings of the survey in which 52% of ANC supporters expressed willingness to volunteer for part-time military service in defence of local issues, representing the essence of Commando service.

Analysis by population group indicated that white people (61%) were most willing to do military service in defence of issues of a local nature, followed by coloured (58%), black (50%) and Asian people (45%). Analysed by language group, Northern Sotho (65%) and Afrikaans speakers (64%) were most likely to be willing to serve South Africa in issues of a local nature. Those least likely to do so were English (47%), Tswana (48%) and Zulu (49%).

Further analyses of the willingness to do military service for the sake of local (South African) issues according to support for political party, showed that supporters of the right-wing (68%) and the NP (66%) were most likely to be willing to do military service in defence of local issues. Those least likely were supporters of the DP (47%), perhaps as a result of a more international outlook; and the IFP (48%), who might feel more threatened by forces within the country itself than the others. Among the respondents who classified themselves as supporters of the ANC, 52% were willing to volunteer for service, while only 34% claimed to be unwilling. The figures for the PAC were 90% ‘willing’ and 36% ‘unwilling’ (see Figure 11).

Regarding issues involving an international character/threat, the two items enquiring after respondents’ willingness to do part-time military service in times of external (international) threat/emergency and their willingness to serve in an international peacekeeping force, were combined. The combined response to this item was that 31% of respondents were willing or very willing to do part-time military service under these circumstances, while 42% were unwilling or very unwilling, and 26% uncertain. Respondents in former white urban areas were the most unwilling to do part-time military duty for international rather than purely South African interests/threats. Respectively 52 and 56% of respondents in the applicable categories expressed unwillingness to do part-time military service under such circumstances. Those most willing to do military service were respondents in the former self-governing states (42%), residents of hostels (37%), and squatters (30%). This response may be related to the depressed economic circumstances of these three categories of respondents, who may
see military service to a greater extent, under whatever circumstances, as an employment opportunity than other respondents.

Analyses of willingness to do part-time military service in defence of basically international issues/threats by population group indicated that white (51%) and Asian people (50%) were most inclined to be unwilling or very unwilling to do part-time military service for international purposes. These were followed by African (37%) and coloured people (30%). All four population groups were more inclined to be unwilling to do part-time military service for basically international issues/threats.

PERCEPTION OF THREAT

The tendency to be willing to protect South Africa appears to be confirmed by respondents' reaction to another question, "Compared to the past (especially before the election last year) and considering the degree to which the country is now threatened, to what extent does South Africa still need a strong defence force?" Altogether 55% of respondents felt that a strong defence force was still "much needed" or "needed", while only 20% felt it was now "unnecessary" or "very unnecessary". All population groups confirmed the need for a strong defence force.

As stated previously, all four population groups were more inclined to be unwilling to do part-time military service in respect of basically international issues/threats. If the intensity of international threat were to increase, people's perception of threat could change quickly and drastically. Chi-squared analyses were done of the data relating to willingness to serve in the case of international threats/issues, according to support for political party. The figures indicated, somewhat inexplicably, that supporters of the DP (59%), and more predictably, supporters of the right-wing parties (50%) were most likely to express unwillingness to serve because of international threats/issues. The greatest single proportion of NP supporters (55%) also expressed unwillingness to serve should the country be involved in international issues. Supporters of the PAC (50%) and the ANC (39%) were most likely to be willing to some degree to serve the country under these circumstances.

Reasons provided for the necessity to maintain a strong defence force, again referring mainly to local rather than international issues, were also probed in a question. These answers included the following, all referring to violence locally: "support the SAPS to end the violence" (39%) and "there are still problems with violence in South Africa" (23%). Reasons referring neither to local nor international issues were: "the country is threatened" (7%), "the country should be prepared" (7%), and "would provide the nation with more security" (25%). Only one reason referred to an external threat: "war against us" (18%). These trends may be partly explained by the perception that, relatively speaking, crime has become a greater threat to South Africa than any external action by a hostile country or group.

The Afrikaans and English language groups (again mainly the white population) were by far the most inclined to respond that South Africa still needs a strong defence force. This same trend is further confirmed by an analysis of the data on the question by population group. Asian and white, and to a lesser degree coloured respondents, were more
inclined than African respondents to state that South Africa should still have a strong defence force. This can probably be explained by the degree of empowerment being experienced by African people at present, making Africans less likely to feel threatened by present changes in South Africa than the other population groups (see Figure 12).

![Need for a Strong Defence Force (by population group)](image)

The data relating to South Africa's needs for a strong defence force was also analysed according to support for a political parties. The pattern of responses indicates that supporters of the right-wing and the NP are considerably more inclined to claim that South Africa still needs a strong defence force. Those least likely to support the idea of a strong South African defence force are the supporters of the IFP and the PAC.

All groups felt South Africa should be prepared to provide military help and assistance to neighbouring countries.

Respondents were specific in indicating the type of regional role South Africa could play in Southern Africa, as was evident in responses to the question: "What kind of help do you think the SANDF should provide to neighbouring African countries?"

A number of situations were provided. Approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated in reaction to each situation that they agreed that South Africa should provide help to neighbouring countries, thereby providing strong support for South Africa's involvement in the rest of Africa. The kinds of help respondents agreed to were:

- maintaining internal stability (72%);
- defending those countries' borders when these are threatened (66%);
- patrolling the borders between those countries and South Africa (76%);
- keeping a legitimate government in power (64%);
- assistance in training (73%); and
- the provision of equipment (67%).

These items were indexed for analysis according to population group. This indicated that Asian (80%) and black (78%) respondents were the most likely to feel that the SANDF should provide different kinds of assistance to neighbouring African countries. Coloured respondents (73%) were slightly less inclined to state that the SANDF should provide such assistance to neighbouring African countries. White respondents were less inclined to offer the help of the SANDF to neighbouring countries, with 48% prepared to offer help. This proportion is still the largest single one, indicating that more white people are willing to offer such help than those refusing it.

Analyses according to support for political parties confirms the general expectation that supporters of the PAC (86%), as might be expected of a party with a strong Pan-Africanist policy, are most likely to respond that the SANDF should help neighbouring African countries in the ways described above. They are followed by the ANC (78%) and the IFP (73%). Almost two-thirds (62%) of supporters responding the NP are also inclined to express support for the idea of SANDF assistance for neighbouring African countries. The only parties whose supporters are more inclined to respond that the SANDF should not provide help to neighbouring African countries are the right-wing parties. Altogether 39% of supporters of these parties were in favour of help, and 45% against (see Figure 13). Analyses according to the legitimacy of the Government revealed that those respondents with a positive view of the legitimacy of the Government are most inclined to state that the SANDF should provide help to neighbouring African countries.

**CONCLUSION**

Although questions included in the Omnibus Survey were not intended to be either exhaustive or definitive, the results pointed to important factors that should be considered further. Clearly the attitudes and opinions forthcoming from the survey results need to be born in mind in the formulation of future policy. The general public does not seem to be adequately informed about these issues and efforts should be made to involve South Africans in discussions and debates. This is probably the most important regarding South African participation in peacekeeping, the South African arms industry and the future of part-time military service. Participation on all levels of society in the decision making process is especially important.
Respondents expressed themselves unequivocally in favour of help for all soldiers that are being demobilised. A thoroughly planned programme of assistance and re-integration appears to be required. In view of the preference expressed by respondents that all soldiers should be helped, continued planning for such assistance or preferential treatment only for those soldiers who fought against apartheid, may be unwise.

Although the largest single group of respondents expressed the view that members of the SANDF should be allowed to form trade unions, a sizeable proportion were against this. With more than half of the respondents against allowing members of the SANDF to strike or demonstrate, another form of personnel association should probably be allowed in the SANDF and a formal mediation and arbitration system announced. Moreover, the security forces need clear policies in respect of unionisation and labour matters.

The survey has shown that future human resources policies of the security services in general, and the SANDF in particular, will require careful planning, adequate negotiation involving all groups and, above all else, the realisation that South Africans will continue to expect the government to have dependable, disciplined forces available, when they are required.

With respect to respondents’ willingness to do part-time military service, the results of this or similar surveys should be considered during the Defence Review that has already been announced by the Minister of Defence. Until now, well trained part-time forces that can react in large numbers at short notice, have almost been taken for granted in South Africa. In future, the provision of these forces will require careful planning and preparation. Given the results of the survey, and the Government’s policy of eradicating racism, affirmative action, and promoting gender equality, a major reorganisation of the part-time forces is on the cards.

The overwhelming preference for a voluntary rather than a compulsory military service should provide sufficient grounds for the authorities to plan for future military needs, particularly short term assistance to the police or for border security. This would not be applicable if the country is threatened by a major war, but would indicate that, for any lesser service, emergency or police assistance, the majority of respondents do not want to be involved. A war force should, according to public preference, be a full-time, professional force rather than a part-time force such as in the past. In view of the pending rationalisation of the SANDF, this needs to be considered.

Clearly, any appeals for voluntary part-time military service should be made on the grounds of local issues/threats rather than on international issues, as the South African public appears to be motivated by local issues/causes to a much larger extent than by international ones. However, these findings should be treated with caution, given the low external threat perception at present.

The fact that respondents are divided in their support for non-military national service indicates that the authorities may need to rethink any plans to institute non-military
national service, such as broadening the present Service Corps objectives to include the disadvantaged youth.

Contrary to views expressed by various pressure groups, the South African public supports the retention of a strong defence force. No attempt was made, though, to quantify the 'trade-off' between defence and other spending priorities. Support is thus admittedly at a general level.

ENDNOTES
1 The former TBVC states and self-governing areas were included in the proportional representation of the nine provinces.
2 Rural areas in former self-governing and TBVC states include: Squatters in former non-white urban areas (more and non-metro); Hostels; Former urban areas for Coloured people; Former urban areas for Asians; Former urban areas for Black people; Former urban areas (non-metro) for White people; Former urban areas (metro) for White people; Rural areas, excluding the self-governing and TBVC states.
3 Detailed tables containing these figures are available at the Centre for Social and Political Analysis of the HSRC.
4 Only statistical relations showing significance at the 1% level are included in relations considered by means of chi-squared analyses. Initially, dependent variables were analysed according to combinations of the following independent variables: gender, age, province, social-economic category, an index of various social and economic indicators, marital status, educational level, employment, satisfaction with political situation, satisfaction with economic situation, feeling of security, perceived risk or fall in standard of living, favourable to strikes on the police, favourable to protest action, an index of the perceived legitimacy of the government, the government's control over crime, improvement of one's personal life circumstances and the perceived manner in which the government has governed.
5 This variable was constructed out of the following sub-items: respondents' rating of the government regarding its fairness, effective use, transparency, strength, honourableness and credibility.
6 This variable was constructed out of the following sub-items: respondents' rating of the government regarding its fairness, effective use, transparency, strength, honourableness and credibility.

SWORDS AND BUSINESS: THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY
Markus Reichardt and Jaldice Cilliers

INTRODUCTION
South Africa is among approximately fifty industrialised countries with a domestic defence industry. In the past, the industry was characterised by cycles of crisis-driven developments in local manufacturing capacity that were dismantled when the immediate crisis had passed. However, the current cycle in which the Armaments Corporation of South Africa (Armcor) has grown into one of South Africa's major industrial undertakings, is different. It owes its existence mainly to the United Nations arms embargo which forced the South African Government to develop its own modern arms industry. It is also the first time that an extensive local arms manufacturing and design capability has been developed in response to a long term threat rather than an immediate crisis. As a result, South Africa has a defence establishment which is not only a major exporter of manufactured goods, but also (directly and indirectly) a major employer, with assets of approximately R4 billion (nearly US $1.1 billion). This national economic asset also has had a profound effect on the industrialisation of South Africa through the improvement of internal design capability for a wide range of manufactured goods. While production and exports of arms have never been politically popular, the dismantling of the South African defence industry, therefore, will entail equally unpopular political and economic consequences. South Africa, similar to other countries that experienced growth in their arms industries during the Cold War, is at present confronted by the challenge of 'right-sizing' its defence industry in such a way to enable it to make a continued positive contribution to the well-being of the country's economy and security.

THE ORIGINS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ARMS INDUSTRY
The origins of the South African arms industry date back to 1806 when Johan SF Botha, one of the first private armours in the Cape, imported gun parts from Britain and assembled the weapons. The local assembly of imported components or direct import of finished firearms became a pattern and persisted throughout the 19th century, despite sporadic attempts at import substitution. During the first Anglo-Boer War Martinus Ras, an Afrikaner blacksmith, manufactured two crude canons on his farm. They were the first artillery pieces designed and manufactured in South Africa, with one subsequently used against the British fort at Rustenburg.

President Paul Kruger recognised the importance of modern weaponry for the defence of his young republic and devoted a substantial amount of his meagre public revenues to establish a state artillery by importing state-of-the-art equipment. Virtually the entire arsenal of the Boer republics at the outbreak of the second Anglo-Boer War was imported, from the ammunition for German-made carbines to the few French artillery pieces. However, in the throes of the war, South Africans once again proved capable of substituting at least some of the imports. Ammunition was manufactured locally and...
some crude artillery pieces - such as the 'Long Cecil' cannon produced at the De Bears workshops in Kimberley - were designed and built.

When the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, the country was given the status of dominion within the British Empire. The general assumption was that countries such as Great Britain and the United States would supply South Africa with armaments in war times. At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 South Africa found itself in a difficult position. Despite the prolonged Anglo-German arms race, the British defence industry was unable to satisfy Britain's war needs and it soon became clear that the dominions would have to manufacture armaments for themselves. This forced South Africa to establish a manufacturing capability to meet its own urgent requirements. Once again, it was mostly limited to the production of ammunition and the modification of existing heavy weaponry. After the war, in the belief that peace would last for at least a decade, it was decided to retain only the aircraft maintenance industry.

As a result of the war boom and the overall growth in the economy, South Africa developed a substantial industrial base in the following years. Although most of the developments were geared towards supplying the needs of the mining industry and the railroads, it increased the technological capabilities of South Africa in general, allowing the country to contribute to the Allied build-up in the years preceding the Second World War.

With the outbreak of the Second World War some of the industrial capacity in South Africa was converted to military production under the direction of an Advisory Committee on Defence Force Requirements. The Committee was established in 1940 to advise the Minister of Defence on all matters concerning the acquisition of armaments. Its recommendations led to the setting up of a number of armaments factories during the course of the war which, together with converted civilian concerns, manufactured a variety of armoured cars, trucks, artillery pieces, shells and bombs for the Allied war effort. The production of vehicles and explosives reflected the capabilities of the South African civilian industrial sector. For example, the production of more than 30,000 military vehicles were facilitated by the existing vehicle assembly industry in the country that developed during the inter-war years, while military explosives production was simply an extension of the civilian capacity that supplied explosives for the South African mining sector. In areas such as shipbuilding, with only a limited civilian capacity, South Africa's achievements were more modest.

At the end of the war most of the above production was discontinued, with two exceptions - the explosives production of African Explosives and Chemical Industries (AECI) and the ammunition plant of the SA Mint. All other industrial capacities reverted back to pre-war commercial business. South Africa's military force reverted to reliance on imports from Great Britain or the United States for its other defence requirements, normally the case in dominions of the British Empire.

The election victory of the National Party in 1948 set South Africa on a long-term course which would fundamentally alter this picture. Although relations between South Africa and Britain would not deteriorate substantially until the 1960s, the republican ambitions of National Party leaders and increasing world-wide condemnation of its apartheid policies, raised concern over the advisability of relying on external sources for most of the country's security needs. In 1946, the Minister of Defence, FC Erasmus, appointed an Advisory Provisioning Committee for Union Defence Force Requirements, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Defence Force Requirements, which argued for the establishment of a more permanent and institutionalised mechanism to direct national armaments policy. It later became the Board of Defence Resources. Initially, however, procurement remained the responsibility of the civilian Secretary of Defence.

The Board of Defence Resources was in turn superseded in 1961 by a Munitions Production Office (MPO, also known as the Defence Production Office), established as part of the Department of Defence. It was designed as the main link between the Department of Defence and industry, and as a nucleus from which a larger procurement organisation could be created when needed. Under the auspices of the MPO, South Africa's first rifle factory, the Defence Ordnance Workshop (later renamed Lyttleton Engineering Works), was set up during 1953. A secret Defence Special Account was established in 1952 to facilitate the purchase of arms on the world market.

Although a similar strategic motivation led to the establishment of SASOL, the Atomic Energy Commission and other parastatal organisations during this period, the National Party government did not proceed hastily to develop self-sufficiency in the area of weapons. A National Institute for Defence Research (NIDR) responsible for weapons research and development was formed in 1953 as part of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), but limited budgets severely restricted its work. The government's complacency was partially due to the Simonstown Agreement signed in 1955. Under the terms of this agreement, Britain undertook to supply South Africa with forces to defend Southern Africa against external aggression, in return for the use of the Simonstown base in times of war. For the South African government, the agreement raised hopes of a wider bilateral defence treaty with Britain and possibly within the alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). As a result, the government did little to expand the base of South Africa's arms industry during the 1950s. The only major equipment purchased during this decade were 200 Centurion battle tanks in 1952/53, of which half were sold to Switzerland in 1956. Increases in security expenditure were allocated to the police budget.

THE MOVE TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Two events dramatically altered the regime's threat perception. In the first place, there was a rise in domestic unrest which culminated in the Sharpeville shootings in 1960, and resulted in an international outcry. Secondly, the scale of foreign capital flight increased and investor confidence dropped, followed soon afterwards by an international call for an arms embargo against Pretoria. These developments eliminated importing as a long-term strategy for armaments procurement for the country. Traditional arms suppliers, such as Britain and the United States, came under fire from domestic pressure groups and Afro-Asian countries in international forums. By 1963, South Africa faced a crisis when its traditional principal sources of weaponry, Great Britain under its newly elected Labour government and the United States under the Kennedy administration,
announced their support for a boycott. In August 1983, the United Nations Security Council called on all member states to cease the sale and shipment of armaments to South Africa, and on 4 December 1983, it unanimously approved Security Council Resolution No 182, calling for a voluntary arms embargo against the Republic. A few months later a further resolution called in addition for the “sale and shipment of equipment and materials for the manufacture and maintenance of arms and ammunition in South Africa”.15

The South African response was swift. Aware of its technological weaknesses, the state openly countered foreign investment in its fledgling arms industry and shifted its policy to the acquisition of arms technology necessary to support local production. Even Prime Minister HF Verwoerd had to acknowledge that his government needed, “the assistance of industries in this country for the manufacture of armaments so that we shall not be solely dependent on countries abroad.”16 In 1961 along, 172 licenses for the local manufacture of military equipment were negotiated with a wide range of overseas sources. In October 1963, the CSIR announced the launch of a new National Institute for Rocket Research which took over from the NIDR and was tasked with developing a ground-to-air-missile in conjunction with local industry. The following year R33 million was ploughed into local armaments development, opposed to the R315 000 of four years earlier. For the first time, South Africa was establishing a long-term weapons manufacturing capability.17

THE RISE OF ARMSCOR

The government soon realised that the management of acquisition, especially negotiating license agreements with foreign suppliers, and the management of local production programmes required technical and business expertise not commonly found within the civil service. This was dealt with at length in the Steyn Commission report of December 1964.18 It resulted in the Armsmear Production Act (No 87 of 1964) that established the Armaments Production Board, to succeed the MPO. The Board’s task was to integrate state and private sector activities in the supply and procurement of armaments necessary for the immediate and long-term aims of the South African Defence Force (SADF).

In 1965, PW Botha took over as Minister of Defence and soon devoted much of his energy towards the development of the local arms industry and the streamlining of the weapons research and procurement process. In 1966 he established the Defence Council to “define research and development requirements, finance and control such projects, control stockpiling and consider the desirability of local manufacture on a case by case basis”. The Defence Council replaced the Defence Resources Board, the Defence Research Council and the Committee for Procurement of SADF Requirements, thus consolidating the procurement and research structures within the Department of Defence, The Minister of Defence chaired the Defence Council, with the Commandant-General of the SADF and the head of the Armaments Production Board serving on its board.19

In 1967 a special committee was appointed to investigate various armaments organisations abroad. It recommended the Délégation Ministérielle pour l’Armement, the French military-industrial system, as a model for the development of the South African arms industry. The French model called for the centralisation of the entire procurement and production process with strong public sector involvement at all levels. The following year, the powers of the Armaments Board (formerly the Armaments Production Board) were extended to oversee all phases of arms production and procurement. At the same time, the Armaments Development and Production Act (No 57 of 1968) was passed, which established the Armaments Development and Manufacturing Corporation (ADMC, the present-day Armscor) as a fully-fledged state enterprise to manufacture South Africa’s armaments.20

The basic role of Armscor, according to the Act is “… to meet as effectively and economically as possible, the armaments requirements of the Republic”. To this end the Act directs the Corporation inter alia to, “promote and co-ordinate the development, manufacture, standardisation, maintenance, acquisition or supply of armaments by collaboration with, or assisting or rendering services to, or utilizing the services of, any person, body or institution or any department of State” (Section 3).

Armscor is also empowered “… to develop, manufacture, service, repair and maintain, on its own account, or as the representative of any other person, to buy, sell, import or export through advertising or otherwise, to promote the sale of, armaments, including armaments required for export and firearms, ammunition and pyrotechnical products required for supply to members of the public” (Section 3).

Despite these wide-ranging powers, the ADMC departed from the French model and from the outset did not undertake the development or production of armaments in its own name. This was done either through subsidiary companies or through companies in which the corporation would “participate by way of shareholdings and/or financial assistance.”21

The basic procurement system at the time meant that the SADF, through the Defence Council, could establish a specific requirement, which would be passed to the Armaments Board. The Board would then seek to meet such a requirement from resources available in local industry. In cases where a project was too sensitive, of special strategic interest, or where it was too uneconomical to attract private sector investment, the Board would turn to the Corporation or to a foreign supplier.22

The Corporation’s first action was taking over and managing the two existing facilities of the Armaments Production Board: Lyttleton Engineering Works and the ammunition section of the SA Mint, (renamed Pretoria Metal Pressings).23 Having consolidated its base, the ADMC used the passage of the National Supplies Procurement Act (No 89 of 1970), which gave the Minister of Defence the power to order any individual or company “when necessary for the security of South Africa” to “manufacture, produce, process or treat and to supply or deliver or sell” any goods or services to the SADF, to begin an era of dramatic expansion.

With its initial share capital of R100 million, the Corporation started to establish or acquire companies, and distributed military contracts to the private sector. One of the first companies taken over was Atlas Aircraft Corporation, established in 1965 through
government's initiative. With French aid, the firm acquired licenses to produce Italian Aeromacchi jet trainers and light attack planes and later began the assembly of French Mirage jet fighters. In 1976, Kentron was formed to continue the development of missile technology, initiated by the National Institute for Rocket Research. In the same year, the Corporation also acquired the AECI plant in Somerset West to house Somchem, specialising in the manufacture of a variety of propellants and explosives. Another AECI facility at Lenz was re-organised as Naschem to produce bombs, mines and heavy calibre ammunition. The Corporation also acquired Rondens which it turned into Swanklip Products to manufacture a variety of specialised explosives and ammunitions. At the same time, Musgrave and Sons became a subsidiary charged with the production of rifles and high-precision arms components.28

As the instrument of the Armaments Board, the Corporation also took over the management of private sector contracting arrangements with the Altech and Grimaker Groups for the development of radar, radio and fire control systems; with Sandrock Austral, and the Dobyl and Reumtech groups for the production of armoured and mine-protected vehicles; as well as funding private sector research in a variety of other related fields.29

Its efforts soon bore fruit. By 1968 South Africa was capable of producing napalm bombs, anti-armour mines and night-sights. In the same year construction of the first locally produced naval vessel was approved and on 17 December 1968 the first successful rocket launch was accomplished at the missile base at St Lucia Bay. Two years later the SADF began deploying the Cactus, the first operational air defence missile system, that had been developed in co-operation with the French. Thus, by the early 1970s, the infrastructure was established, of what was to be, towards the late 1990s, the largest armaments industry in the southern hemisphere, and the world's tenth-largest arms export industry.30

Most of the expansion was facilitated by importing skills and technology on a substantial scale. Since adherence to the 1963 embargo was voluntary, its enforcement was only possible through moral pressure. It resulted in South Africa shifting the acquisition of defence equipment and technology away from countries whose governments were increasingly sensitive to international and domestic pressure. Britain had the most powerful domestic anti-apartheid lobby, making its position as principal source of South African weaponry unsustainable. Though British equipment continued to reach South Africa via other countries, it became limited to the supply of spare parts and equipment that has civilian as well as military applications (dual use equipment). The same applied to the United States.31

France filled the gaps left by the United States and Britain and by the mid-1970s accounted for more than fifty per cent of South Africa's weapons imports. French aircraft supplied or assembled in South Africa under licence included Mirage fighters, Alouette and Super Frelon helicopters and Transall transport aircraft. French companies also facilitated a substantial part of the transfer of technology required for the missile development programme that culminated in the Cactus system. French Panhard armoured cars, assembled by Sandrock Austral, formed the basis of South Africa's armoured car and mine-protected vehicle programme. France also sold three

Dophe class submarines to the country. But France was not alone: South Africa also began licensed local assembly of Italian aircraft and Belgian automatic weapons, while it continued to receive dual use equipment, such as trucks, radios, computers and transport planes, from Germany and other NATO countries.32

The decolonisation of Mozambique and Angola, as well as the increase in domestic unrest between 1974 and 1977, once again changed South Africa's threat perception and its defence requirements. The SADF's retreat in the face of superior Soviet weaponry in Angola demonstrated a weakness in conventional military hardware and a potential inability to meet what the government regarded as a potential real conventional threat: a Soviet-equipped opponent.33

As in the case of Sharpeville, the Soweto uprising attracted sufficient international attention to refuse the sanctions campaign against South Africa. Already in 1975, in a historical first, a compulsory arms embargo against South Africa were requested in terms of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. By late 1976 it was obvious that the imposition of a mandatory arms embargo was only a matter of time. An immediate result of the renewed sense of urgency was the merging of the Armaments Board and the AOW into one monolithic co-ordinating body, responsible for the entire process of weapons production: from research through development and manufacturing to servicing, parts repair and overhaul. The new body was called the Arms Corporation of South Africa Limited (Armcor). The urgency behind this move was underlined by the fact that the morger was effected in late 1976, while the enabling legislation was not passed until April 1977. Seven months later, in November 1977, the United Nations, citing South Africa's apartheid laws, its continued occupation of Namibia and its incursion into Angola, passed Resolution 418 which imposed a mandatory arms embargo against the Republic.35

The mandatory embargo was a blow to South Africa as it rendered continued reliance on licensing agreements legally impossible and reliance on imported technology increasingly difficult and expensive. However, after nearly fifteen years since the imposition of the 'voluntary embargo' it could no longer cripple South Africa's defence establishment. During this period, South Africa was able to import and industrialise almost all of the technology required for a design and production capacity to fulfil all its needs, except for the most sophisticated weaponry. Internally, the most important adjustment made by the Defence Force was the increase of compulsory national service to 24 months to satisfy its manpower requirements.

In fact, the five years that followed the imposition of the embargo, saw the introduction of numerous locally modified, designed and manufactured weapons systems, many of which were the direct result of developments during the 1980s and experiences of the SADF in Angola. In 1977, the Ratel, the first infantry combat Vehicle designed in South Africa, came into use. In Durban in the same year, Sandrock Austral shipbuilders began the construction under licence of the first of seven Minitrue class strike craft for the South African Navy. Two years later the first frequency-hopping radio entered SADF service.36 The G-6 155mm gun, from which the famous self-propelled G-6 was later developed, was unveiled in 1979. The system represented an immediate and successful response to the Defence Force's requirement for an artillery piece with a larger range than Soviet artillery, which had proved to be devastating in Angola.37
Another system developed as a result of the Angola experience, and introduced in 1980, was the Valkiri, a 127mm multiple rocket launcher system, modeled on the Soviet 122mm BM-21 multiple rocket launcher. Despite South Africa's sustained interest in rocketry and the comparatively simple design of the system, the introduction of the Valkiri nevertheless demonstrated the Corporation's abilities to develop weapons speedily. In 1981, the Otifant, a locally upgraded Centurion battle tank, the Ratel-60 and Ratel-80, and the SAMIL military truck range were all introduced into service in the SADF.28

The development of all these systems were publicised in an effort to demonstrate Armscor's successful countering of the arms embargo. The only exception was the Corporation's most powerful weapon, nuclear warheads. However, the development of these nuclear warheads, more than the famous G-4, demonstrated Armscor's ability to utilise existing capabilities to attain a strategic objective. The government decided in 1974 to develop and construct nuclear fission devices in order to acquire a nuclear deterrent capability. Armscor's task was not as daunting as it may have seemed. South Africa was one of the world's leading uranium producers, possessed a nuclear research capability since the 1950s, and operated a nuclear reactor since 1965. Using its position as a key supplier, South Africa was able to acquire uranium enrichment technology at comparatively low cost. In the light of the sophisticated skills base of its uranium industry, the internalisation of enrichment technology posed no great difficulty. By 1978 a uranium enrichment plant capable of supplying in South Africa's civilian and military requirements, was operational. By 1980, the first of six nuclear warheads had been assembled.29

The deployment of these systems meant that Armscor had succeeded in blunting the strategic threat posed by the arms embargo. Infantry and artillery weapons, light aircraft, mine-protected vehicles, ammunition and explosives were required to meet the threat as perceived by the South African government at the time. The nuclear capability provided a last-ditch strategic deterrent to guard against unforeseen disaster at a strategic level. No purpose would have been served by the attempt to develop nuclear submarines, inter-continental ballistic missiles, or similar costly and time-consuming weapons systems. By concentrating its efforts on attainable priorities, Armscor had accomplished most of what it set out to do.30

In the process, Armscor became one of the largest industrial groups in South Africa. With annual expenditure on arms manufacture and acquisition rising from R315,000 in 1960/61, R140 million in 1972, to R1,54 billion in 1981, the Corporation had grown to almost five times its size at inception. In complying with the Armsaments Act's provisions that "it meet as effectively and economically as may be feasible the armsaments requirements of the republic", it also succeeded in increasing its assets from approximately R200 million to more than R1,2 billion by 1981. With an annual turnover of more than R1,5 billion, the Corporation contracted more than 500 companies in the private sector which employed about 150,000 people. Along the way, the Corporation itself became a major employer. From about 5,000 employees in the early 1970s, Armscor had grown to the point where its subsidiaries employed over 25,000 people in 1981. By comparison only about 12,000 people had been employed in armaments production at the height of the South African effort during the Second World War.31

Of Armscor's sizable work force nearly forty per cent were 'non-whites' and most of these were 'coloured women'. Though most of Armscor's 'non-white' employees remained confined to lower grade administration and production jobs during the 1970s, they benefited from the Corporation's sensitivity to internal shortages of skilled labour. In 1977, for example, Armscor extended its generous housing subsidy scheme to its black employees and extended equal medical coverage and pension facilities to all employees. Although Armscor refused to recognise trade unions until after the Witsman reforms, some subsidiaries such as Naschem, officially opposed the principle of job reservation during the 1970s.32

Armscor came to comprise eleven operating subsidiaries. These 'magic eleven' as they were often referred to are shown below and were responsible as indicated:33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlas Aircraft Corporation Telcent</td>
<td>Kempton Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft manufacture, maintenance and service High technology with special alloys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFOPLAN</td>
<td>Pretoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEURION</td>
<td>Pretoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and manufacture of guided-weapon systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELOPTRO</td>
<td>Kempton Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture of optical, electro-optical equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LYTTLETON ENGINEERING WORKS (LEV)</td>
<td>Vereeniging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture of small arms, mortars and cannons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSGRAVE MANUFACTURERS &amp; DISTRIBUTORS</td>
<td>Benoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture and marketing of commercial rifles, shotguns and handguns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASCHEM</td>
<td>Pretoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filling of mortar and aircraft bombs, heavy calibre ammunition and mines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRETORIA METAL PRESSINGS (PMP)</td>
<td>Pretoria West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture of small-calibre and quick-fire ammunition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMCHEM</td>
<td>Escomer West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture of propellants, explosives, rocket-propulsion systems and rockets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWARTKLIP PRODUCTS</td>
<td>Benoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture of pyrotechnical products, hand-grenades and commercial ammunition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUWTEG (PTY) LTD</td>
<td>Hatfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-tanks, linked to missile-testing range at De Hoop on the Bredasdorp coast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARMSCOR ENTERS THE INTERNATIONAL ARMS MARKET

In 1980/81, the cessation of the Rhodesian bush war, the (temporary) downscaling of SADF operations in Angola and an (also temporary) decrease in SWAPO activity in Namibia gave Armscor its first taste of the difficulties traditionally encountered by arms manufacturers in peace-time. Between 1981 and 1984, manpower requirements were reduced by a third and over 600 contractors faced reductions in or cancellations of arms contracts. To maintain its production lines and the expertise that had been built up over the years effectively, its production levels had to exceed the SADF's peace-time requirements. As a result, in 1980/81, the Corporation made a strategic decision to move its scope and capacity beyond South Africa's armaments needs and to expand into the international arms market.

Armscor had first sold defence equipment to a non-SADF customer in the 1970s when it sold R18 million worth to the Rhodesian forces between 1972 and 1976. In 1979 it made its first sale outside Southern Africa when it sold a consignment of Eland armoured cars and Ratel infantry combat vehicles to Morocco. Its first public appearance outside Southern Africa at the Athens Defendery Weapons Exhibition in 1982 provoked an outcry from the international anti-apartheid movement, and the Corporation was forced to withdraw its exhibit. Nevertheless, the venture was successful as it attracted substantial publicity for the newly-unveiled G-5. Two years later, Armscor was back, exhibiting military electronics, ordnance and missiles at the FIDA '84 armaments show in Santiago, Chile. Once again, opposition by anti-apartheid groups accorded the Corporation greater publicity than it could otherwise have hoped for and the following year saw a fourfold increase in defence industry exports.

At the 1986 FIDA armaments show in Santiago, Fred Bell, executive manager of Armscor unveiled the XH1 helicopter which was hailed as a major breakthrough in South African aviation technology. Armscor executives boasted that they were exporting to over a dozen countries. At the 1988 show, Armscor once again caused a stir by presenting its own 'Sidewinder' air-to-air missile - the V3C- and a remote controlled reconnaissance aircraft.

The growth of South Africa's arms exports at a time when the country was subject to a mandatory arms embargo must rank as a substantial marketing achievement. It was brought about by the fact that South African systems were tested under combat conditions, were specifically designed for small and unconventional warfare, and sold at a discount. There can be no doubt that initial sales were not meant to be profitable, but once the value of the Rand dropped against the US dollar (1986), there was no longer any need for deliberate price reductions and Armscor's equipment, even with profitable mark-ups, was still very affordable.

The table shows very clearly that Armscor exports remained modest until 1985. This may have been partially due to the fact that Armscor production was still focused on re-equipping the SADF. By 1988, however, the Corporation had grown into the tenth-largest arms exporter in the world. Export earnings grew to the point where the defence industry became one of South Africa's key exporters of manufactured goods.

The claim made by Armscor, and often repeated as conventional wisdom, that it was at one time the largest exporter in this area, must be treated with a degree of circumspection. Armscor's achievement lies less in the scale of its marketing success, than in the fact that it was the first to export locally designed manufactured goods on a substantial scale and on a regular basis under seriously adverse conditions.

ARMSCOR AT ITS PEAK: 1986 - 1989

Although the years between 1981 and 1984 were difficult for the Corporation, its growth rate resumed with the escalation of the SADF's involvement in the Angolan conflict. By 1988, Armscor's assets exceeded R1.7 billion and its turnover peaked at R6 billion (US $1.4 billion). It had also become a leaner, more efficient operation, with a total work force of less than 23,000. In keeping with its reliance on the private sector, however, the number of its regular sub-contractors had risen to 1,100, providing more than 160,000 employment opportunities. Another 1,200 firms regularly supplied items from their normal production to Armscor.

The second half of the 1980s were years of expansion, as Armscor aimed to meet the SADF's increasingly sophisticated requirements. The Corporation set up operational research and systems engineering facilities such as Milistan, Gennam and Armatron and introduced the concept of system suppliers among its contractors. Howetiq, an Armscor subsidiary, began the development of satellite technology, while Somcimec expanded its booster rocket research. A space launch facility was established at the De Hoop test...
range. Other systems development included new air defence systems, a replacement for the Olifant tank, the ZT3 anti-tank missile, mobile radar stations and the Rooikat armoured car. The first large naval vessel built in South Africa, the 12 500 ton replenishment ship SAS Drakensberg, was handed over to the Navy in 1987.29

During this time France remained the principal supplier of systems. Earlier in the decade, its role declined somewhat as co-operation between South Africa and other pariah states such as Taiwan, Chile, and especially Israel, strengthened defence research. The co-operation with Israel was perhaps the most beneficial for Armscor, with Jerusalem almost certainly providing technology to South Africa that allowed Armscor subsidiaries to take on projects such as the development of the satellite, modifications to the Cheetah and the assembly of new navy strike craft, that would otherwise have been beyond its reach.31

Much has been written about the performance of SADF equipment, such as the G-5 and G-6's artillery range and the tank-killing capabilities of the Eland and Ratel-90. SADF equipment undoubtedly passed the test of combat and in some cases provided South African forces with a decisive edge. Virtually every land-based weapons system in service in the SADF, saw action in Angola during the 1980s, some, such as the G6, even as prototypes. It was only in respect of air power that South Africa found itself at a disadvantage, as Armscor's Atlas subsidiary, despite considerable effort, had not been able to internalise a design and manufacturing capability for supersonic jet aircraft. Atlas had built trainers and light spotter aircraft from imported designs during the 1960s and, more importantly, begun local assembly of supersonic jet planes - the French Mirage III and later the more advanced F1. In 1986, it unveiled the Cheetah, an upgraded Mirage III which incorporated a substantial number of modifications and improvements. The Cheetah was heralded as a major step towards the attainment of a local design and manufacturing capability for supersonic fighter aircraft and later Cheetah versions increased the number of modifications. However, despite Armscor's pronouncements to the contrary, this aircraft remained essentially a modification of an imported aircraft. And in the skies over southern Angola the import dependency made itself felt: after encountering the modern MIG fighters supplied to Angola, South Africa chose not to risk its few precious planes. It could not replace them through local manufacture and importing had been made virtually impossible by the embargo.40

COPING WITHOUT A THREAT: 1989 - PRESENT

The Cuban withdrawal from Angola and independence in Namibia removed the only force in the region capable of posing a credible conventional threat to South Africa. The government immediately took advantage of this situation to slash its defence spending from R12 856 million in 1989/90 to R9 187 million in 1991/92. These cuts were expected, as the end of the conflict reduced SADF running costs and allowed it to decrease procurement of consumables and capital projects. Budget cuts continued and by 1994 it reached a level that jeopardised the satisfaction of equipment needs in the Defence Force. Only 28 per cent of the 1994/95 budget was set aside for capital expenditure items as opposed to 44 per cent in 1989.

The reduction in expenditure also left the Defence Force in a difficult position. The army was not completely re-equipped, a process begun in the mid-1970s in response to the Cuban deployment in Angola. The air force faced block obsolescence of fighters and transports and lacked maritime patrol aircraft and the navy had lost its anti-submarine capability and had been reduced to a coastal force whose vessels would have to be retired within a decade.41

The impact on Armscor was immediate and substantial. In 1991 SADF orders dropped by more than forty per cent forcing it to retrench more than ten per cent of its work force.42

The Corporation responded in three ways:

- It began downsizing its operations to be compatible with demands for cost efficiency;
- It renewed its efforts to increase exports in order to increase its income and foreign exchange earnings; and
- It sought to commercialise its product ranges to enable it to gain a share of the civilian market.43

However, Armscor operated under the Armsments Act that specifically prohibited it from competing in the civilian market, whether by import replacement or not. The solution was to split the Corporation into two organisations that could perform its two primary functions, namely acquisitions and manufacture, separately. Subsequently, Armscor's manufacturing subsidiaries were re-organised into one economically independent industrial group of companies that would report under the Minister of Public Enterprises and would operate under the Companies Act. In this way, Denel, the new group that came into being on 1 April 1992, would be able to manufacture military as well as civilian products.44

Armscor, on the other hand, retained its acquisitions function in terms of the Armsments Act, reporting to the Minister of Defence. It also acquired a secondary function, that of ensuring that the requisite technology and infrastructure for the local manufacture and maintenance of weapons and equipment, were maintained. It furthermore retained control of the import and export of armaments, which included assisting the industry in its international marketing efforts and remained the sole agent for surplus SADF equipment.45 This was changed in June 1995 when the Minister of Defence announced that Armscor would no longer be in control of defence exports, but that this function would be moved to a cabinet committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Kader Asmal.

Denel, despite some rumblings about the initial evaluation of some of its assets, got off to a good start. In the publication of its first annual results in March 1993, the company posted a taxed profit of more than R234 million on a turnover of R2.9 billion. From the taxed profit Denel paid a further R60 million dividend to its hundred per cent owner, the Department of Public Enterprises, totalling its contribution to the state's coffers in excess of R120 million.46 The following year, despite what Denel Chairman Johan Maree called...
“unfavourable economic conditions” and the formal persistence of the arms embargo impeding its marketing activities, the picture was similar in nominal terms: on a R2,8 billion turnover, the Corporation posted a taxed income of R235 million and maintained its R80 million dividend. At this time its fixed and long-term assets amounted to more than R2,0 billion.4

The arms embargo was formally lifted in May 1994 and both Denel and Armscor took advantage of this by expanding their international marketing efforts. The chairman of Denel identified foreign sales as the principal activity to compensate for the downturn in domestic military demand. By the end of the 1994 financial year, Denel was represented in over 37 overseas markets. On 7 July 1994, the managing director of Denel, Johan Alberts, announced its major open sale of military equipment to another country - 60 self-propelled guns with ammunition and logistical backup valued at R120 million sold to Oman.4

With the publication of Denel’s third annual report in June 1995, Alberts’ vision of the group as “… diversified … with security-related products as part of its portfolio” seemed to be taking shape. Although armaments remained its core activity, accounting for approximately seventy per cent of its turnover, sales to the SANDF had declined from 65 per cent the previous year to less than fifty per cent of its total income. This also did not conceal the fact that Denel’s total income had declined in real terms, with the situation expected to continue into the near future, as a result of stiff competition in the international arms market. This was despite considerable productivity increases which had cut the group’s work force from 28 000 to less than 13 000 in three years. Nonetheless, Denel could congratulate itself on progress in the two areas targeted to sustain the decreasing local demand. Both exports and local commercial sales had risen for the third successive year, accounting for more than forty per cent of its turnover in 1995.4

THE FUTURE

Despite this promising start, the long-term outlook for Denel and the South African defence industry is not very positive. First and foremost, the absence of a credible conventional threat to South Africa’s territorial integrity and the overall positive relations between the Government of National Unity (GOU) and its neighbours will depress domestic demand for military hardware for the foreseeable future. The best that the industry can hope for is to maintain defence expenditure at current levels in real terms. The industry will have to adjust to this fundamental reality.

The accomplishment of this adjustment is of substantial importance to the economy, as the technological skills, sophisticated design and manufacturing capabilities, more than 20 000 employees, as well as the facilities in general, represent a considerable economic asset. A complete shut-down, while possibly desirable in an idealistic political sense, will not only involve substantial political costs, but will also be to the detriment of the economy, especially in respect of the manufacturing sector.

There are also some short-term threats that the South African industry must overcome in order to accomplish this adjustment. The most immediate and, in a sense the most dangerous, is the spiralling cost of the integration process. It has already become painfully obvious that predictions underestimated the difficulties involved in integrating the statutory and non-statutory forces into the new SANDF and it seems certain that personnel expenditure will continue to take a disproportionate share of the defence vote. Since the integration process will not contribute materially to either the quality or quantity of SANDF weapons systems, its costs must not be to the medium-term detriment of capital expenditure in the defence budget. This presents a difficult choice to politicians between paying more soldiers (who are also voters) more money, or buying the weaponry that will enable them to be effective soldiers.

As the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) gets under way in the next few years, there is the further threat to the defence budget of diverting even more resources away from defence to more politically correct areas. Already the ‘corvettes versus houses’ debate4 indicates the populist level on which the struggle for public resources will be carried out. South Africa needs ocean-going vessels capable of protecting its marine resources against foreign poaching and fulfilling its obligations in terms of international maritime treaties (such as search and rescue). Despite this, the purchase of such vessels is portrayed as a choice between social upliftment via the RDP or expensive toys. Irrespective of the fact that the Corvettes, for example under the Spanish tender, were to be imported as platforms whose modifications would have yielded substantial benefits for the local industry, public perception focused on a simplistic ‘guns and butter’ choice. The cabinet’s confused handling of the issue during the first half of 1995 reflects this sentiment.

Some clear, and preferably publicly debated choices need to be made and the defence industry and the military should be responsible for informing this debate. Framing the choices concerning the acquisition of major weapons systems in populist terms will, in the end, lead to a situation where there will be no need for the continued existence of the Arms of Service, as there will be no systems, even of a rudimentary nature, for them to use. If the South African Navy and Air Force are to survive as more than employment agencies, multi-billion rand acquisitions will have to be made from time to time, and will have to be supported by politicians. A strategic problem in this regard is that some of the more complex systems required by the SANDF to make a contribution to the RDP - such as transport aircraft and corvettes for fisheries control and drug interceptions - will always remain expensive imported items, as the absence of a credible threat provides no incentive for local research and development initiatives.

Furthermore, the moralising tone of this debate must not be allowed to spill over permanently into the national policy on arms exports. Despite the unquestionably dubious practices through which Armscor often sold its products in the past, South Africa cannot adopt an idealist position on arms exports. In a competitive business such as the international arms trade, morally-motivated special interest groups cannot be allowed to castigate their own arms exporters’ customers, if those exports and the jobs that depend on them are to be sustained.

The discovery in September 1994 that a consignment of weapons, supposedly destined for Lebanon, had apparently been sold to Yemen, led to the appointment of a commission of inquiry on 14 October 1994 by President Mandela (Government Notice 263
R1801). Its task was to "... comment - in the context of South Africa's national and international obligations and responsibilities - on the appropriateness of:
a) South Africa's current trade policy with regard to weapons and components with reference to weapons and related materials; and
b) decision-making processes with regard to such trade."

The Commission of inquiry into Alleged Arms Transactions between Armscor and one Eli Wazan and Other Related Matters (the Cameron Commission) recently published its first report dated 15 June 1995, in the Yemen transaction. A second report on other 'similar' transactions is expected shortly, as well as a report on South Africa's arms trade policy.

At the heart of the arms export control system under the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC) and the Cameron Commission (CAMEC), was the classification of countries into three groups (no restrictions, limited exports allowed, and no exports) and categories of armaments. These classifications and categories have been widely quoted in the press. One of the important reforms implemented by Armscor was the transfer of responsibility for the classification of a country from Military Intelligence to the Department of Foreign Affairs, which based its decisions on the following criteria:

1. the country’s human rights record;
2. the likelihood that a country may use products to suppress its own population;
3. the impact that weapons sales to one or more countries in a region could have on South Africa's bilateral or other relationships, or its image in the region;
4. the impact that weapons sales to a country could have on South Africa's bilateral relations with other countries or on its image in such countries;
5. the possibility that arms sales to a country or countries in a region could be detrimental to the balance of power in that region;
6. UN sanctions/embargoes under Chapter VII of the UN Charter; and
7. the defined categories of armaments.

During July 1995 the Weekly Mail & Guardian published the country categories, commenting that "...Armscor ... has come a long way in a year of gruelling public exposure by the Cameron Commission, and some soul-searching of its own."

In accordance with this system, the Department of Foreign Affairs approved the fixing of a marketing permit which was valid for two years. This approval, however, did not automatically allow the export of equipment as evidence from Denel's claims that it was refused some R40 million worth of potential contracts because it could not obtain export permits. A valid marketing permit normally implied that Armscor would issue an export permit upon application within the two year period. Even if significant changes occur in two years, the marketing of defence equipment is a notoriously lengthy process and requires some leeway in this regard. However, changes to a country's classification mean that marketing permits are withdrawn immediately, as was recently the case with Turkey. The legality of terminating contracts that have already been signed and for which export permits have been issued, is unclear. Under this system, marketing and export permits are therefore dealt with on the same procedural basis.

It has become standard practice to insist on end user certificates to substantiate the identity of the export item and the end user. Following the Wazan affair, Armscor now attempts to obtain independent verification of the validity of transactions and the authenticity of end user certificates, notorious for being falsified. Diplomatic channels are used for this purpose and arms are sold to a government only.

Product classification is done by teams of technical and military experts from Armscor and the Chief of Staff, Logistics, of the SANDF.

Considering the system described above, Armscor's introduction of a number of significant measures to tighten control of the export, import and transfer of armaments should be credited to the Cameron Commission. In fact, there appears to be no major structural flaw in the formal arms control regime developed by Armscor recently.

However, given the lack of confidence in policy on conventional arms transfers among certain sectors within South African society, and the real concerns raised by the Cameron Commission's investigation, Cabinet recently decided to implement a case-by-case examination of decision-making on conventional arms transfers, instead of the country classification system, and to remove the final control of arms sales from Armscor and the Ministry of Defence.

In what must be a unique appointment, even in South Africa, Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal was appointed chairman of the NCACC with effect from 30 August 1995, replacing Deputy Minister of Defence Ronnie Kasrils. According to newspaper reports, the committee had been functioning informally since August 1994 and had turned down deals with two countries, of which Turkey was probably one. Apart from Asmal, the NCACC comprises the Ministers of Defence, Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, Safety and Security, General Services, and Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, as well as the Deputy Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Intelligence Services and Safety and Security. Each weapon sale is subject to an export permit which is first scrutinised by a Vetting Committee, consisting of the Secretary of Defence and the Directors-General of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Industry, and if approved, recommended to the NCACC. Cabinet also decided to establish an independent inspectorate, to ensure that the guidelines and decisions emanating from the NCACC were adhered to. The inspectorate will periodically report to the NCACC and Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Defence. In the announcement, Cabinet was at pains to point out that the NCACC itself would also report to Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Defence and the UN Register on Conventional Arms - a salutary move. Finally, it would appear, arms transactions would also no longer be confidential, except if the national interest will be at stake, and through bilateral agreements.
In order for South Africa to capitalise upon these export opportunities, arms trade practices will have to undergo dramatic changes. In the past, Armscor could count on national security considerations to protect it from public scrutiny and prosecution in the case of transgressions. This situation has left the industry with a poor reputation and a tradition of questionable practices. For political, as well as purely economic reasons, this situation cannot be allowed to continue. South African policy makers will need to institute effective control and oversight mechanisms by addressing multilateral security concerns, which will allow the industry to attain domestic and international legitimacy and respectability. The 1993 lifting of restrictions on information on weapons sales and the country's signature of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as its stated intention to become a signatory to the Missile Technology Control Regime, are first steps in this direction.

Even if the South African defence industry can overcome these short-term challenges, it seems unlikely that it can retain its current size. This is mainly due to enormous overheads required to sustain research and development developed during the previous three decades to make the country largely self-sufficient in the provision of armaments. Even under the most 'favourable' conditions, it cannot be commercially sustained, as the following will seek to illustrate.

At its peak during the larger part of the 1980s, Armscor supplied most of the SADF's armaments on the back of a turnover which exceeded R2.5 billion and peaked at nearly R5 billion. Taking the very optimistic view that a downsized SANDF will be able to account for more than R1.5 billion of turnover in future, the defence industry would have to account for at least another R1 billion per annum on a regular basis in order to generate the returns which financed the development of systems such as the G-6, the Rooikat and the upgrading capabilities for the Olifant and the Mirage. This figure is twice the amount of even the most optimistic Denel export projections. Furthermore, despite the defence industry's pronouncements to the contrary, the scope for a substantial turnover from sales to the civilian sector without significant further capital expenditure, remains severely constrained, if experiences of the superpowers are anything to go by. For example, the US defence industry reveals that a key constraint on effective conversion to civilian production is lack of technical expertise available to the community and labour initiators of conversion efforts, while even managers are often at a loss about designing and marketing entirely new products. As a result, no single major US arms manufacturer has established itself successfully in a range of finished civilian products. The conversion efforts of Denel companies themselves have certainly had an impact on the number of retrenchments. In part it is a cultural problem, for arms manufacturers world-wide believe that it serves their interests better to sit out the times of low military spending rather than risk the dangers inherent in the conversion option. Change is difficult to accommodate, even if, as Denel executives profess, they are ready for it. Initial statistics on the sale and export of civilian products by Denel companies - approximately R1 billion - may be impressive, but the question remains how much of this represents genuine new business. It will be up to Denel managers to prove that sales of civilian products can compensate for the decline in military demand. If they succeed, it would substantially change the face of South Africa's defence industry.

As a tool of foreign policy, judicious arms sales can provide South Africa with additional political and economic leverage. This applies especially in the case of Africa where South African arms sales can help African states to reduce their dependence on non-African sources of supply. South Africa would also be better placed to arrange mutually advantageous barter or counter-trade arrangements with such countries. These arguments aside, there are few weapons systems more compatible with African conditions than South African armaments.
The question politicians need to answer, is "just how much South Africa (is) prepared to pay for strategic independence in weapons procurement." For South Africa to follow an independent foreign policy, it needs, among other capabilities, a defence industry capable of satisfying most of the medium-term requirements of its defence establishment. Thus the question can obviously not be answered in principle, but must rather be addressed on a case-by-case or system-by-system basis. South Africa's manufacturing sector possesses various strengths and weaknesses and it is upon some of the strengths that Armscor built its development. Just as the country excelled in the production of military vehicles during the Second World War, through its existing capabilities in the civilian motor vehicle sector, the future defence industry must seek to build upon the strengths of the present civilian economy and those which it has developed itself. For example, the continued existence of a diversified local automobile manufacturing sector, coupled with the fact that South Africa's armoured personnel carriers and infantry combat vehicles are clearly leaders in their field, puts a strong case forward for the continued support of this particular industry even in leaner times. The same applies to the mobile artillery system G-6, which is clearly capable of commercial viability due to its enormous export potential. In contrast, South Africa's aircraft design and manufacturing capabilities are certain to remain limited for the foreseeable future. Since the country can never hope to aspire to a leadership position in the production of modern supersonic jet fighters, the R & D effort and financial support systems should be redirected to those weapons that are leaders in their field.

In 1991, the government, concerned about maintaining core armaments production facilities, assigned R220 million to Armscor for the management of a special Industry and Technology Development Programme (ITSP) whose purpose is to make these critical choices. So far there is little indication how these resources have been used. Some of the funding has never been allocated to Armscor's own technology demonstrator programmes or its Technology Development Programme, both aimed at retaining the capacity for developing state-of-the-art equipment. In this sense, Denel confronts a challenge identical to that faced by any other major diversified manufacturer in an economic downsizing. There are parts of the operation which are profitable and need to be protected. Some of these profits should be devoted towards carrying those parts for which the management has high expectations. Others are marginal or simply not viable under the circumstances. These must be eliminated or scaled down in a way that minimises financial and socio-economic disruption to the undertaking and, if possible, society as a whole. By creating Denel, Armscor accepted this challenge for the South African defence industry.

The issue may seem less clear with respect to the support of strategic R & D in the military field. However, this is not the case. The skills currently employed in the military R & D effort, should be focused on those systems that have enabled South Africa to produce leading products, in order to maintain this leading position through ongoing development. Alternatively, the government or defence establishment must identify those areas regarded as of long-term strategic importance and must muster the political support to finance assistance to them. Given the skills shortage in this country, serious consideration should be given to the redirecting of efforts to existing civilian R & D efforts, of those not involved in the ongoing development of commercially viable systems. If a case needs to be made for public support for the conversion process in the defence industry, it should focus on facilitating the conversion of high level skills rather than specific production processes.

The rise of Armscor and the creation of Denel mark the end of the previous boom-and-bust cycles that characterised the South African arms manufacturing industry. The skills and design and manufacturing capabilities represented in the defence industry represent an asset which is one of the few positive legacies that the 'apartheid' era has bestowed upon the 'new South Africa'. The choices which will ultimately determine the shape and the size of this industrial asset will be:

- the degree to which Denel and its contractors can make the hard choices to keep its core businesses - those producing competitive, state-of-the-art weaponry, such as the G-6 and the Ratel - operating profitably through aggressive exporting and continued innovation; and
- the kind of choices made by government in respect of support for commercially non-viable domestic research, design and manufacturing capability of some of the more sophisticated systems, in order to preserve jobs and save foreign exchanges.

There can be no question that the defence industry in its present form represents an asset to the South African economy. What is at issue is how the development of this asset will be managed in the future.

Amongst the more interesting developments will be:

- international joint ventures with other developing countries, such as Malaysia;
- extending the Armscor acquisition capability to the rest of the Southern African region through the Association of Southern African States (ASASI); and
- defence co-operation and extending capabilities for defence in the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) talks.

Endnotes

3. Ibid.
5. DIWG, op. cit., p. 55.
6. Ibid., and Frankel, op. cit., p. 81.
9 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 37.
11 Ibid.
12 Frankel, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
13 DWG, op. cit., p. 65.
14 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 122.
16 Howard F. Piesemer, 1988, ed. 409.
17 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 122.
18 McWilliams, op. cit., p. 5.
19 Cawtheta, op. cit., p. 99-100.
21 Frankel, op. cit., p. 81 and McWilliams, op. cit., p. 12.
22 Cawtheta, op. cit., pp. 95-97.
24 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 122.
25 McWilliams, op. cit., p. 23 and DWG, op. cit., p. 66.
26 DWG, ibid., pp. 16-18.
27 McWilliams, op. cit., p. 72.
30 McWilliams, op. cit., p. 27.
31 DWG, op. cit., p. 59 and Frankel, op. cit., p. 81.
32 Frankel, ibid., pp. 84-85.
33 McWilliams, op. cit., p. 60.
35 McWilliams, op. cit., pp. 27, 45, 104-5 and Cawtheta, op. cit., p. 104.
36 DWG, op. cit., p. 65.
37 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 122.
42 Ibid.
44 Ibid., op. cit., p. 7.
51 *The Star*, 31 August 1995.
52 *South African Defence Review*, No. 13, November 1993, p. 44.
57 Heitmam, op. cit., p. 16.
60 Anne Katsianou and Joel Vedres, *Dismantling the Cold War Economy*, Basic Books, no place, 1992, pp. 211-216.
61 Ibid., pp. 238-239.