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339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012-2725

(212) 477-0066

FAX: (212) 979-1013

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SLAUGHTER and SCHEMES

Sebokeng - Thokoza - Vosloorus - Katlehong - Tembisa - the slaughter in the townships around Johannesburg over the past six weeks has amassed over 750 dead. To be added to the thousands murdered in three years in the African communities in Natal - Vulindlela - Edendale - Imbali - Mpumalanga. Late in July, under the guise of the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Inkatha organization of Kwa Zulu tribal Chief Gatsha Buthelezi invaded the Transvaal in a power struggle aimed to secure the chief prominence, even dominance, in the fast-moving events in South Africa. The cry of 'tribal warfare' was officially encouraged and was picked up by lazy- or ingrained-thinking newsmen. This soon was replaced by the notion of a 'Zulu' (Inkatha adherents) - 'Xhosa' (the African National Congress) war. All in all it was 'black-on-black' violence. These falsifications award Inkatha with the fealty of all South Africans of Zulu origin and consign the ANC to being a tribal entity rather than the national movement true to its proclaimed objective of a unitary, non-racial, democratic South Africa. The slanders serve apartheid perfectly.

The unbridled killing reached even into the streets of downtown Johannesburg, with at random shootings from passing cars and African commuter trains pulling into stations flowing with blood, crammed with the corpses of the freshly-slain and mutilated. The South African Police were said to be unable to stem the violence, but the SAPs were diligent in guarding roaming Inkatha squads and in detaining and shooting those opposed to Inkatha. There were more frequent sightings of white men, faces blackened or hooded, taking part with Inkatha in the murderous rampages. At a 'peace rally' in Soweto on 16 September, where the Zulu king and the paramount chief of the Xhosas appeared together, up to 50,000 Inkatha members turned out armed with axes, pangas (machetes) and sharpened iron poles to cheer the Zulu king. The South African Police could not explain why the heavily armed men were allowed at the 'peace rally'. A SAP colonel said: 'It is ridiculous to disarm 30,000 to 50,000 people.'

(continued over)

Pretoria can prevent violence when it wants to. On 18 August, at the end of the first week of the still growing war in and about Johannesburg, 5,000 black residents of the Thabong and Bronville townships marched seven kilometres into the center of white Welkom, a gold mining town in the Orange Free State. They presented a petition at the police station, demanding an end to rent evictions, cheaper charges for services and one non-racial authority for the entire community, black and white. For weeks officers of the Conservative Party had threatened war if a single white was harmed and members of the Nazi-like Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging turned out in uniform along the route. Police contingents were strengthened and African National Congress marshals flanked the marchers. There was shouting and strongly-worded posters, but the petition was delivered and the marchers returned to their homes. Police ordered the AWB to disperse and they did.

That same day in the equally conservative white Transvaal city of Vereeniging (Sharpeville of the 1960 massacre is nearby), the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the United Democratic Front and the African National Congress organized a parade by 20,000 Africans, accompanied by 3,000 marshals, to the central post office to protest the late July vigilante-police violence in Sebokeng, and the Transvaal Provincial Administration's threats to cut their essential services, and in support of a united municipality of blacks and whites with a single tax base. The South African Police erected razor wire along the route, led the marchers with police and army vehicles, stationed policemen armed with shotguns at every intersection and were supported by South African Defence Force units mounted on horseback. Unlike the raging wars inside the African townships, the above two events involved white communities and the press and t.v. were present and attentive.

Pretoria has mounted a concerted campaign to force ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela to meet with Inkatha's Gatsha Buthelezi to achieve peace. Buthelezi cries out for such a meeting with increasing desperation. The South African press editorializes and op-eds for this assumed panacea. Overseas press and media have picked up the cry. The South African foreign minister wrote the UN secretary-general urging the international community to apply pressure on the ANC. Pretoria's aim is three-fold: to shore up Buthelezi's badly sagging influence inside South Africa and among his foreign friends; hopefully to split the ANC; and, to demean Mandela himself. Now, with its decision to indict Ms Winnie Mandela, the apartheid regime has upped its efforts to stay in control. As for stopping the violence, President De Klerk can call in Chief Buthelezi and tell him to lay off.

Pretoria is pursuing another scheme aimed at controlling the future. The National Party says it will admit blacks to its ranks, a move dismissed by critics because membership is by geographic limits of constituencies; it is difficult to imagine a Nat Party in black neighborhoods. More seriously, the Nats are angling for an alliance of like-minded political parties by which they hope to construct a body consisting probably of Coloured and Indian elements, the Pan Africanist Congress, Inkatha, any opposed to the ANC. A similar exercise worked in Namibia where an anti-SWAPO political alliance was built up. Such a device can serve well to provide a strong minority in round table talks and in whatever future parliament that evolves.

There has been talk of a 'third force' supporting, counseling, directing the war in the townships and in the rural areas and that this is composed of elements of the police and of others determined to derail the talks going on between Pretoria and the ANC. Despite some opinions that the government is sincere in wanting a negotiated settlement and that the Afrikaner has no history of sustained schemes, emerging events argue otherwise. The South African Police and Defence Force make no concerted effort to quell violence in the African areas. The killing goes on apace. Both security chiefs are among Pretoria's top negotiating team. A newly-designed 'iron fist' policy is directed mainly at ANC-UDF-COSATU members. And there is Pretoria's unbroken record for decades of the use of destabilization activities, military assaults and assassination units in neighboring African states and elsewhere. A regime so long accustomed to rule will not relinquish that power and will make every effort, at all levels, to retain it in turbulent South Africa.

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SOUTH AFRICAN MADE WEAPONS AIMED AT AMERICANS IN THE GULF

South African made artillery is arrayed against U.S. troops stationed in the deserts of Saudi Arabia. Iraq, during its eight-year war against Iran, purchased at least 100 G5 cannon, probably more, from Armscor, the South African state arms manufacturer. These deadly weapons are now most certainly concentrated in Kuwait, zeroing in on American soldiers.

The G5, reputedly the most efficient and far reaching artillery piece in the world (it can throw a 155mm shell 42 kilometres) was part of an oil for weapons swop whereby parched South Africa received \$1 billion worth of the sticky precious fluid. Johannesburg's WEEKLY MAIL says military experts claim Pretoria was doing such a brisk business in the cannon that it drained its own stock, at a time it was sorely needed for the decisive battle of the war in Angola in 1987 - at Cuito Cuanavale.

THE WEEKLY MAIL reports a correspondent for the authoritative British journal, JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, says the Armscor-Iraqi contract includes a 'training package. This means that either the Iraqis came here (South Africa) or the South Africans went there.' He also believes 'that even if the Iraqis are no longer buying G5s, Armscor must still be involved in maintenance, spare parts and ammunition.' The expert adds that Iraq also used South African anti-tank mines and radio equipment. 'There are strong rumours that Iraq has also bought a consignment of Kukri air-to-air missiles from Armscor.' Further, the Jane's man says Iraq is developing its own 155mm and 210mm self-propelled guns - 'the basic vehicle for these is similar to the G6 (the motorized version of the G5) which means that Armscor must be involved in an exchange of plans.' THE WEEKLY MAIL adds that 'other sources claim that South Africa has also made its sophisticated MRLS (Multiple Rocket Launch System) available to Iraq.'

So much for the total embargo against Iraq. (A story in the South African press says that Pretoria may be invited to send an air squadron to the Gulf to support the USA).

Yet another gruesome irony of the South African deal is that the G5 was conceived and built at a plant straddling the Quebec-Vermont border by scientist Gerald Bull, who was mysteriously and professionally assassinated outside Brussels in March this year. In 1976, the South Africans, desperately mired in an earlier part of the Angolan war, came to the USA, bought what was known as the GC45 cannon, its blueprints, hired technicians and purchased shells from a US army arms plant with no problem at all.

Americans who could soon be in a bloody war in the Gulf - Vietnam in the sand - will be on the receiving end of weaponry made at home.

Death and revenge. And an unwilling police force

THE appalling fact about the violence torturing Natal — apart from the horror and dislocation — is the conflict is growing.

While the State of Emergency between June 1986 and the middle of this year was accompanied by a sharp drop in fatalities elsewhere in the country, in Natal the Emergency regulations have been singularly ineffective in halting deaths from political violence.

Take the figures for the Natal Midlands region. The year preceding the national State of Emergency — 1985 — saw a mere 12 deaths. A similar figure of 13 was recorded the next year, when the Emergency was introduced.

It was after Emergency rule became a constant condition of life that the death toll began to rise around Pietermaritzburg: 1987 saw 413 deaths; 1988 — 691; 1989 — 696; and the first seven months of 1990, a chilling 620 killings.

This brings the total in the Midlands region to 2 445 over five years. In the Durban region it is estimated that at least 1 411 people have been killed from 1987 to mid-1990.

Why should the Emergency be an effective weapon against political fatalities in all parts of the country except Natal?

The only convincing explanation is the security forces do not have the will and the motivation (and to some extent the manpower) to end the violence in Natal.

Commentators have examined the history of the conflict between the Inkatha

The cycle of attack and counter-attack goes on despite promises of peace by the state, the ANC and Inkatha. One of the problems is the apparent reluctance of the security forces to legally end the violence
By **JOHN AITCHISON** of the Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal

movement of Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the United Democratic Front/Congress of South African Trade Unions. Until recently, it could be supposed that the state condoned and encouraged this conflict, which is essentially political contestation for the support of the people of Natal.

The state saw the UDF/Cosatu/ANC group as "the enemy" and allowing another black political movement to wage war on it was very much in the state's interests. It was cheap — in terms of military spending, drawing little negative publicity and being dismissed as "black on black violence" or "faction fighting".

The civil war also encouraged reactionary elements within white South Africa to resist more firmly any attempt to democratise the country.

And it made Inkatha and Buthelezi, who had been the most resistant and independent of black leaders working



Police action needs to be planned to contain the violence on both sides

within the 'homelands' structures, more pliable and dependent on state support.

It is incontestable that the state's police forces aided Inkatha, largely through taking action in terms of the Emergency against only the UDF side and through allowing violent acts to be perpetrated without taking police or legal action. Occasionally the security forces have acted in direct support of Inkatha.

The most devastating form of state inaction was the failure to prosecute murderers. According to a recent statement from the Department of Law and Order, since 1987 only 120 prosecutions for politically-linked murders have taken place in the Durban area and 36 have been initiated in the Pietermaritzburg area.

The fact that there is still a State of Emergency in Natal does not necessarily mean it now serves any particular point.

In the past the Emergency was used for three main purposes in the region:

- Detaining UDF/Cosatu/ANC supporters, but not Inkatha supporters.
- Prohibiting UDF or Cosatu meetings but permitting Inkatha gatherings.
- Inhibiting media reporting.

None of these measures is particularly applied at the moment except for tight restrictions on non-Inkatha meetings and rallies. The argument for continuing the Emergency in Natal, therefore, is weak — unless the intention is to use the restrictions against Inkatha.

What is really needed is determination on the part of the police and army to smother violence through professional policing and due legal process. This should be followed by finance for reconstruction and emergency aid.

The events of late March and April showed the reformist attitude of Presi-

dent FW de Klerk had not adequately percolated down to the security forces.

After years of apartheid propaganda, transforming the police forces will be difficult. But it was outrageous that at the end of March thousands were allowed to mobilise in the Natal Midlands, to travel considerable distances and kill nearly 100 people relatively unhindered by the police — who were present.

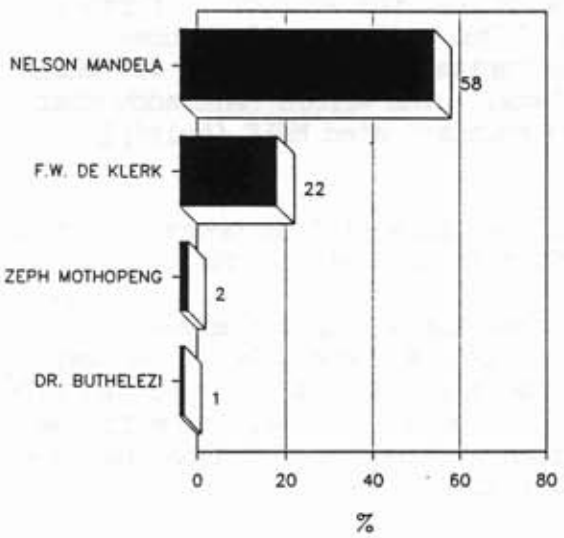
Further, it is clear that in areas like Vullindlela and Table Mountain the army and police are failing to ensure that refugees can go back in safety to their homes.

This sorry picture, inflamed undoubtedly by raised expectations in the wake of the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations and the release of Nelson Mandela, is becoming a conflagration engulfing most of Natal. The Empangeni and Port Shepstone areas have become new focal points of conflict.

The cycle of violence tends to follow a general sequence in area after area. Trade unions will generally become active or radical youth groups begin to mobilise people. In certain cases, youth mobilisation may include violence.

Inkatha, whether out of an inability to tolerate an alternative power base or through a fear that this will lead to attacks on them, has tended to rely on coercion and violence to suppress the threat. This may take the form of forced recruitment into Inkatha. Eventually a cycle of attack and counter-attack, violence and revenge is spinning out of control.

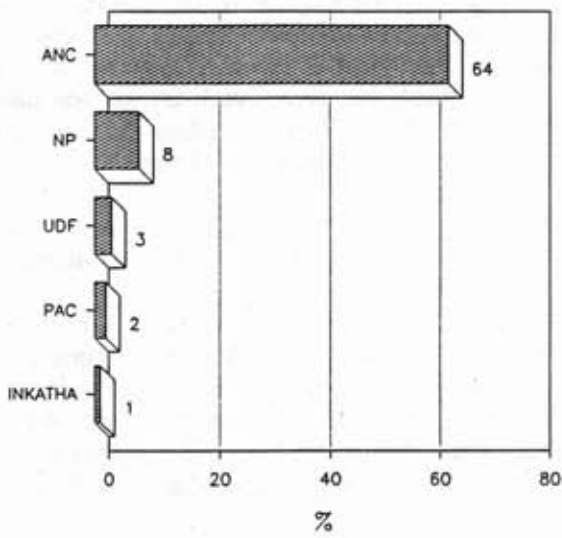
THE MARKINOR SURVEY ASKED METROPOLITAN BLACKS, "Which ONE person should lead South Africa?"



BASE: 1500 METROPOLITAN BLACK ADULTS

CONDUCTED: MARKINOR
APRIL 1990

"Which ONE party's, group's or organisation's policy comes closest to the way you personally feel?"



BASE: 1500 METROPOLITAN BLACK ADULTS

CONDUCTED: MARKINOR
APRIL 1990

A study conducted among Black South Africans in metropolitan areas by Markinor, a private organization in Rosebank, Johannesburg.

THE DAILY MAIL August 14 1990



INFORMATION

Notes & Briefings

Black-on-black violence?

The label most often used to describe the Natal violence is that of 'black-on-black' violence. This label, promoted by the police 'unrest' reports, implies certain assumptions about the causes of the violence. It suggests, feeding white fears of majority rule, that the foundation of the bloodshed is an atavistic internecine tribalism. The label serves to disconnect the conflict from apartheid structures and indeed goes further, in purporting to justify continuation of the State of Emergency, including the presence of South African Defence Force (SADF) troops in the townships. Yet this term has as much heuristic value as describing World War II as 'white-on-white' violence. The label serves rather to prevent an understanding of the nature of the conflict. In the first place the conflict is not tribal, it is profoundly political. The conflict is not between tribes but is a conflict, in a region most of whose residents are Zulu-speaking, between a group associated with the apartheid structure and those opposed to its role within the structure.

The role of the police

Competition between politically opposed groups does not of itself lead to violence. To understand the scale and intensity of the violence which erupted in Pietermaritzburg and spread to other parts of Natal it is necessary to examine the role of the police.

Ineffective and partial policing of the official law enforcement agencies has been a condition for the violence reaching its current proportions. To generate community or vigilante violence it is not necessary for the police to actively participate in or instigate the violence: all that is required is that they refrain from intervening. Where one side is armed, such a failure to intervene grants the aggressors immunity from the consequences of their violent conduct, and ensures that the community attacked must rely on its own capacity to defend itself or embark on retaliatory or pre-emptive attacks. Once the cycle of violence is initiated, the absence of police intervention allows the conflict to become self-generating. COSATU has alleged that the vigorous prosecution of four or five of the known warlords in late 1987 would have deterred their supporters and members from embarking on wanton and apparently public violence.

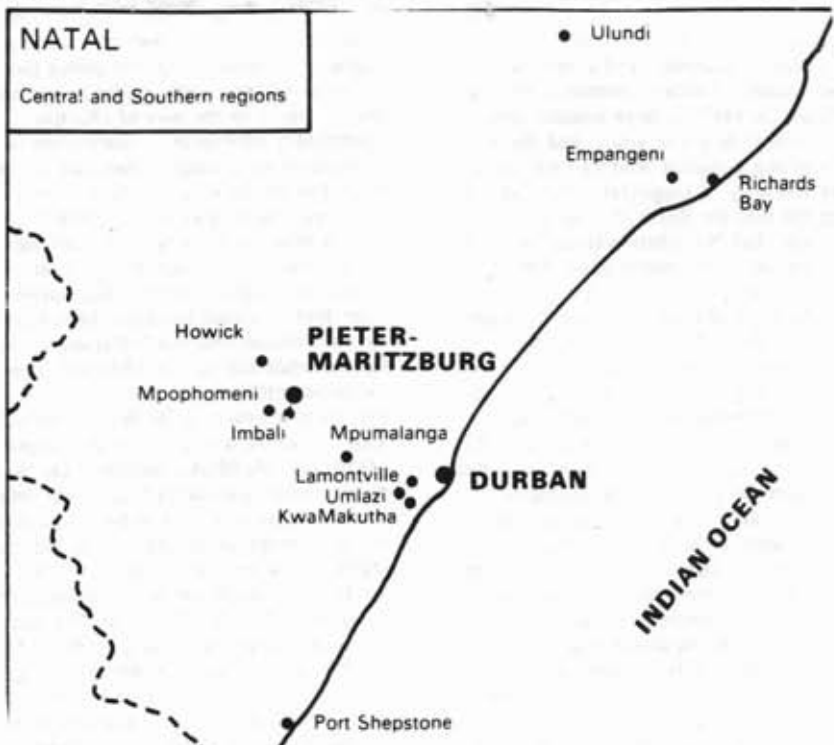
It is alleged however that the police went further than mere omission and assisted Inkatha directly in the conflict. Residents of various townships around Pietermaritzburg allege that the police

Secondly the label has obscured the way in which the conflict has served apartheid. In brief the conflict has served to justify emergency rule over the residents of black townships. It has seen the elimination of large numbers of activists and members of anti-apartheid organisations. It has disorganised and disrupted anti-apartheid organisations and held the communities in which they are based captives of the turmoil. All this has been accomplished without the material cost

which would have been involved in a pacification programme in which the armed forces acted as the principal agents, and without the public and international censure that would have followed intervention and repression by security forces. It is for this reason that the Natal conflict has been cited as an example of the 'privatisation of repression' or a process of 'sub-contracting the dirty work'.

From this perspective the Natal violence is one example of the widespread emergence of vigilantes throughout

South Africa in the 1980s, as part of a broader strategy of counter-insurgency warfare, known elsewhere as 'low intensity conflict'. The promotion of the label 'black-on-black' violence is an *object* of this strategy, serving *inter alia* to sever the connection between the central government and the violence. As with the destabilisation strategy directed against the states of Southern Africa, there are short-term advantages for Pretoria in such intense conflict, but the long-term consequences could be the creation of permanent conflict and destruction, a culture of violence in which killing is the norm and in which force becomes an acceptable solution to every problem.



have failed to intervene when their communities are attacked by Inkatha, or when the police do intervene it is not to disperse Inkatha mobs but to disperse the residents congregating to defend their neighbourhood, thereby opening the way for Inkatha attacks. An interdict was successfully granted in favour of the residents of the Mpophomeni community,

ordering the police to protect them, to disperse Inkatha mobs when the community is attacked and to cease the campaign of unlawful assaults on members of the community. In Mpumalanga interdicts have been granted against the South African Police who were alleged

to have not only failed to protect community residents from attacks by armed Inkatha groups but to have stood by while their houses were being looted. Police similarly failed to intervene when such groups were looting the houses in Vulindlela in March 1990. In Trust Feeds during 1989 it was police themselves, according to an inquest magistrate, who attacked and killed women and youths inside a homestead. There has been no prosecution of any of these policemen.

Attorneys acting at the instance of COSATU conducted research into police responses to incidents of violence in Imbali township, and on the basis of the affidavits provided to them, and correspondence with the South African Police, alleged a pattern of police collaboration with Inkatha in that:

- The police had a differential approach to the bearing of arms by Inkatha as opposed to non-Inkatha residents. The police were alleged in some instances to have armed or failed to disarm Inkatha mobs while pursuing a vigorous policy of searching for arms in UDF areas including allegedly torturing suspects. Inkatha 'peace' rallies are attended by warriors heavily armed with spears, knives, fighting sticks, homemade guns and the like. Police have claimed that these are merely 'cultural weapons'.

- The police have failed to prosecute

Inkatha members particularly the most notorious warlords, even though eyewitness evidence has been adduced of their participation in murders.

One example is that of David Ntombela who is a member of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and a member of the Inkatha Central Committee. He was alleged, in 1987, to have gunned down the mother of a UDF youth and thereafter her young daughter who had witnessed the shooting. A magistrate found at the inquest into the death of Angelica Mkhize that Ntombela was unlawfully responsible. Ntombela has not even been charged or prosecuted.

The identified Inkatha leaders responsible for the killing of COSATU shop-stewards in Mpophomeni in 1986, notwithstanding an inquest finding that they were responsible for the murder, have been neither charged nor prosecuted. Indeed there have been less than a handful of successful prosecutions arising out of the three and a half thousand killings perpetrated in the last three years.

Attorneys' attempts to expedite prosecutions have been frustrated by investigations and prosecutions which lack vigour. It is inconceivable that such a record would have been tolerated by the authorities if the victims had been government sympathisers or whites.

- The police have failed to protect witnesses, complainants or court applicants in interdict proceedings as well as communities under attack. The result has been a crisis of confidence in the law enforcement agencies, the courts, and alternative forms of conflict resolution.

A case in point is that of Johannes Mthembu. He and his four sons lived in Imbali near Pietermaritzburg. After

clashing with local Inkatha personalities in late 1987 during which his son, Elphas, was shot, he brought interdict proceedings in January 1988. After service of the court papers one of the Inkatha leaders cited in the interdict arrived at Mthembu's house. After an altercation two other sons, Smallridge and Simon, were shot, one of whom died. In July 1988, after the interim interdict had been granted against three warlords restraining them from attacking the Mthembus, and shortly before the case was due to reopen, Mthembu's fourth son, Ernest, was shot dead by an unknown assassin when he opened the front door of his house one night. The surviving members of the family have had to flee the area. It is certainly possible that the legal proceedings initiated by Mthembu aggravated his position and exposed him to greater danger than he would have faced had he fled the area initially.

In another incident Jabu Ndlovu, a COSATU shop-steward who had spoken out against police collusion with Inkatha warlords, had her house petrol-bombed shortly afterwards. Her daughter and husband died in the blaze. She died some days later from burns. Her son was murdered a year later.

- Even where warlords have been taken into custody they have been released on bail shortly afterwards. Such release on free or limited bail has disheartened communities who see little advantage in proceeding with prosecutions or complaints in the absence of any apparent results, and at substantial risk to themselves.

- The police have failed to effectively discipline themselves. Notwithstanding repeated complaints against police partiality or blatant illegality the police have little to show in the way of effective disciplinary proceedings, suspension of miscreants, or change in patterns of conduct. For example, an interim interdict has been obtained against Willem De Wet, a policeman, alleged to have used torture on a UDF youth, Bonginkozi Zondi, in order to extract information from him. (Zondi has since been killed by unidentified assassins.) Subsequently a further undertaking was obtained from the police attorneys in response to allegations of torture by De Wet or his colleagues against a young woman, Lydia Mazibuko. Mazibuko identified De Wet in an identity parade in December 1989. Lawyers have now had to launch further interdict proceedings against De Wet in regard to the torture of the chairman of the Imbali Ratepayers Association, Larry Silwane, in March 1990. De Wet had not been charged as of July 1990.

- Police use Inkatha members alongside their own forces to identify 'comrades', or have handed 'comrades' over to Inkatha warlords to be disciplined, and have allowed Inkatha members to assist in effecting the arrest of non-Inkatha members. It is significant that the police have routinely sought to identify whether a suspect at the scene of violence is a member of Inkatha or not. Indeed some community residents falsely claim to be Inkatha members when apprehended in the knowledge that they will receive more lenient treatment.

- Inkatha members who have participated in or been at the scene of violence are seldom if ever detained under the emergency regulations whereas over a thousand UDF members have been detained supposedly on the grounds that they are a contributing factor to the violence. Research undertaken by COSATU also revealed that of 22 incidents of violence surveyed, despite the fact that 16 of the incidents were initiated by Inkatha members and only three by opponents of Inkatha, 26 of the 28 arrests arising out of these incidents were opponents of Inkatha. Only two were from Inkatha.

- COSATU has argued that the police collaboration with Inkatha and/or policy of sympathetic treatment of Inkatha members should not be seen as the isolated actions of rogue policemen, but rather the application of a systematic policy of support for Inkatha. Thus for example, the Minister of Law and Order has unequivocally laid the blame at the door of the 'revolutionary agents of the ANC-South African Communist Party alliance', namely UDF and COSATU. On 24 April 1989 he announced the commencement of 'Operation Ironfist' which would put an end to the violence. He is reported as saying of the persons he blamed

for the violence: 'We will root them out. We know they will make a big noise but we are prepared for it. We will grab them with an iron fist.' In 1988 he had sought privately to discourage participation in the peace process at a crucial juncture.⁴⁸ At that stage he claimed that Inkatha was merely a cultural organisation, and blameless in the conflict. Such public pronouncements were so directly out of line with the acknowledged facts in the area that the inference is inescapable that the Ministry of Law and Order was itself directly involved in promoting Inkatha in the conflict. The consistent refusal by the government to accede to requests by a diverse range of organisations for a commission of inquiry into police conduct lends credence to COSATU's complaint.

The role of the police has been a crucial ingredient in manufacturing the violent instability which has ravaged Pietermaritzburg and Durban townships. Ineffective and partial policing has fuelled the violence while peace initiatives have been undermined by the lack of effective conflict-resolution machinery, such as the police and the courts, to sustain fragile peace accords.

Proof of the deteriorating confidence in the South African Police has been the insistent call since 1988 from several communities that the South African Police be replaced by the South African Army, even though the ANC has demanded the withdrawal of troops from the townships. Such calls are not statements of confidence in the army but an index of the low esteem in which the SAP is held.

SING ME A SONG, 'NKOSI SIKELELI AFRIKA', by Willie Sekete, an ANC Freedom Fighter released late in August 1990 after 11 years on Robben Island.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The Story of Cowley House

For a long time, relatives of political prisoners on Robben Island prison had nowhere to stay when they went to visit their loved ones. Then in 1978, the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) offered to put up the relatives in a big old house called Cowley House ...

NUMBER 126 Chapel Road in Woodstock, Cape Town, is the address of an old house called Cowley House. It is at this house that the families of political prisoners stay on their way to see their loved ones.

The house was built in 1898 as a home for some Anglican priests who had come out from Britain to serve the people. These priests were called the Fathers of the Order of St. John the Evangelist. But because they were living in Cowley House, they soon came to be known as the Cowley Fathers.

When the priests left South Africa in 1978, the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) took over the house. The WPCC opened the doors of Cowley House to the families of political prisoners.

LEARN AND TEACH

Mother
When the last hour
For the last battle strikes
Sing me a song
'Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika'

Mother
When your children
Servants from the quarters
Slaves from the sugar and
maize fields
Together in the final march
Sing me a song
'Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika'

Mother
When your sons and daughters
Hand in hand
Raised high the flag
Black, green and gold
Defiant to the dying day
United for the new day
In courage and strength
march
For the last battle
Sing me a song
'Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika'

Sing me a song
And call out to the world
'Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika'

NO PLACE TO SLEEP

David Viti, who used to work for the WPCC, tells the story of how Cowley House came to be. "From 1963, the government began sending thousands of political prisoners to Robben Island. The families of those in prison would come to Cape Town to visit their loved ones in jail. They came from all over the country. Some even came from as far away as Namibia," he says.

Often the visitors had no relatives in Cape Town and so they had no place to sleep. They also had very little money. They would get off the train at Cape Town station and sleep in the waiting-rooms at the station. The next day, they would walk five kilometres to the docks to catch the prisons boat to the Island.

If they arrived late and missed the

boat, then they missed the visiting time and the whole trip was a waste. This is because prison visits are only at a certain time, in the morning or in the afternoon.

When they came back from the Island, there was still the problem of a place to stay. Sometimes they would sleep in the waiting-rooms. It was very dangerous and anything could happen to these people — but this did not stop them from going to visit their fathers, sons and brothers.

This all changed in 1974, when David joined the WPCC.

OPEN HOUSE

One of the first things that David did was to offer his own home to relatives of prisoners on Robben Island. "Every weekend, about four or five people

came to sleep at my house," he says. "It is a small house, with one bedroom, a kitchen and a verandah which I turned into a diningroom.

"I had a car which I used for transporting them to and from the station and the docks. Sometimes I would take them to see the sea. By the way," David laughs, "you know people from Johannesburg like the sea because they don't have one in the Transvaal!"

As time went on, there were more and more visitors. David could not fit them all in his house. So he asked two friends, Mr. Stasi and Mr. Mshudulu, if they would help. "They agreed. But some people insisted on staying at my house because they were used to it. As a result, some had to sleep under the table because there was

no other space.

"In 1978 the late Mrs. Moira Henderson was the chairperson of the Dependant's Conference, an organisation that helps the families of political prisoners with subsistence grants. She asked the Anglican Church if they could let us use Cowley House. By this time, the Cowley Fathers had already returned to England. The church gave us the house that same year."

Even after they left South Africa, the Cowley Fathers continued to give support, and still do. The house is funded by donors and some foreign embassies. Relatives who can afford to give donations also contribute to the running of the house.

Since 1982 political prisoners have also been sent to Pollsmoor, Victor Verster or Helderstroom prison. Some of the relatives of these prisoners also pass through Cowley House.

HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Gladys Tengani is the house-keeper of Cowley House. Together with the staff of nine people, she looks after more than fifty people at a time.

Gladys welcomes all the visitors with a warm smile and makes sure that everybody gets a good meal, blankets and a peaceful night's sleep in one of the 12 rooms in the house. There are two big rooms where as many as ten people can sleep. Learn and Teach spoke to Gladys in the big kitchen at the house.

"The opening of Cowley House went a long way towards making visits to the prisons much easier," says Gladys. "For the first time, families of political prisoners could get together and talk about their struggles and problems."

"In this way they could encourage and support each other. Family members soon realise that they are not alone in their hours of darkness."

Gladys showed us around the rest of the house. In the evenings, guests gather in the sitting room to watch TV and chat and relax. On sunny days, they meet in the shade of the lovely courtyard. And for those guests who want to pray, there is a chapel next to the main house where religious services are held regularly.

Gladys works closely with the staff of the WPCC. The staff meet visitors at the railway station and the bus-terminus and take them to Cowley House. If visitors are going to Pollsmoor, they are taken to the bus stop and collected on their return. When it is time for the visitors to return home, they are given a lift to the station or the buses.

A WEDDING TO REMEMBER

Gladys remembers all the people who have passed through Cowley House. But there is one event that will forever stay in her mind — the wedding of Irene and ANC leader Wilton Mkwayi in October 1987.

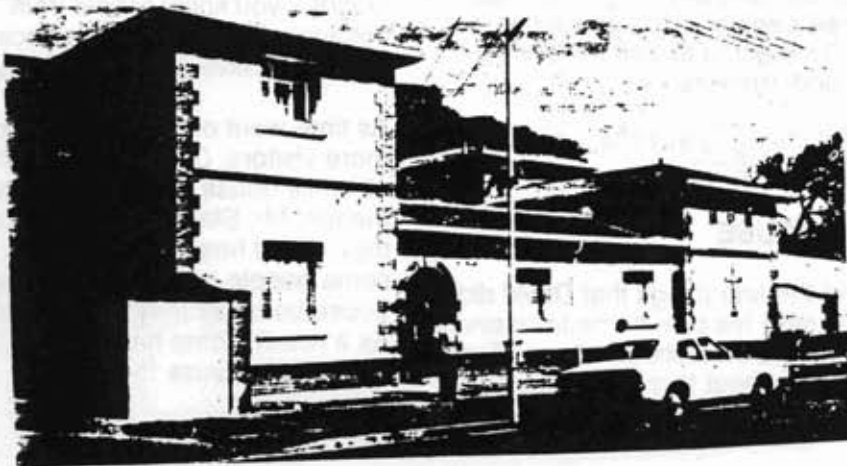
"The wedding ceremony was held at Pollsmoor Prison," says Gladys. "Afterwards, we held a big party here. Of course, Wilton could not be there — but it was a great party all the same." Wilton was released with six other ANC leaders in October 1989 after serving 26 years in prison.

Sadly, Irene did not live long enough to share the joys of married life — she passed away in December 1988.

This was not the only wedding to be celebrated at Cowley House. Adolphina Banda also held her wedding party at the house after she married Zebulon at Pollsmoor prison. Zebulon is on Robben Island where he is serving 12 years for ANC activities. And last year, another party was held to celebrate the marriage of John and Sylvia Thabo. John, who is on Robben Island, is serving a twenty year sentence for ANC activities.

Gladys has met the wives and children of many South African political prisoners. She has words of praise for the courage and dignity of these families. She has also met some of the released prisoners who have stayed at Cowley House on their way home. "Now I am looking forward to meeting all the others," she says. "And I want them to know that when they come out, there will always be a place for them here."

The opening of Cowley House did much to help the families of political prisoners. We are sure that it also gives those inside the prison cells much comfort to know that their loved ones are safe and well-cared for in the big, old house.



I. Specific Services Which the Western Cape Tries to Offer Newly-Released Political Prisoners

A. Transport from the Harbour to Cowley House

Collecting released prisoners from the harbour and transporting them back to Cowley House where they are offered free accommodation and free meals.

B. Telephoning Home

The first thing most political prisoners want to do upon release is to telephone someone - a spouse, a parent, a child, a sibling or even a friend. Contacting friends, relatives and loved ones is an important part of your release. Often it's the first uncensored communication you will have had in years. Cowley House will make its telephones available to you free of charge.

C. Initial Debriefing

After the initial excitement has simmered down a bit, we like to sit down with all newly-released comrades and discuss what needs to be accomplished before you leave Cape Town. This is where we start talking about the logistics of buying new clothes, consulting with your organisations, visiting your local attorneys, obtaining a free medical examination and arranging a group discussion with trained counsellors.

This is also a good time to deposit any large sums of cash you are carrying in a safe place; Cowley House has a locked safe, and will be glad to hold your money in safe-keeping until you are ready to leave.

D. Consulting with Your Organisation

It is essential that you establish contact with representatives of your various political organisations immediately upon your release so that you can learn the latest on happenings locally and nationally. Many times, representatives of organisations want to meet with released comrades before the comrades themselves confront the press.

E. Meeting the Press

Print journalists, photographers, and television camera crews converge upon Cowley House, and sometimes the harbour itself, when political prisoners are released. Our policy is that no one talks to the press, or gives an interview, until the release group has decided (a) whether it wants to consult with the organisation first; (b) whether it wants to issue a joint statement at a press conference; and (c) whether the group wants to appoint a spokesperson.

We suggest that no comrade give individual interviews without a designated representative of your organisation present, or failing that, without one of our staff members.

F. Thanksgiving Service and Celebration

For each group of releases, we sponsor a thanksgiving celebration and a small community-wide celebration at Cowley House. The purpose is to accord the same degree of welcome to all our comrades for their efforts in the struggle for liberation; it is also intended to lend comfort to the families of those remaining in prison.

G. Shopping for New Clothes

Tired of those drab prison uniforms? The Western Cape Relief Fund will provide each newly-released political prisoner R200 to purchase brand new street clothes. Although the grant is nominal, and only available to those released in Cape Town, the Relief Fund staff will steer you in the direction of progressive shop owners in Athlone who will give you special deals on your release attire.

H. Medical Examinations

Progressive physicians, acting through NAMDA and ESG, are offering routine medical examinations to all newly-released political prisoners. Here's your chance to get a free check-up, or clear up any medical questions you may have, before you return back home. Once again, it's absolutely free!

I. Legal Consultation

Most political prisoners have attorneys here in Cape Town, and there is often a need to tie up legal matters before departing from this region. It's best to visit your attorney while you are in Cape Town to ensure adequate follow through with your legal team at your final destination.

J. Informal Counselling Sessions

Some political prisoners have a great many anxieties - about jobs, education, family responsibilities and so on - immediately upon their release. This is your opportunity to sit down and share your thoughts with trained counsellors. It's purely an informational session, in which counsellors will let you know about opportunities for you and your family members to seek help, if you need it, from progressive counsellors all across South Africa.

A booklet on release and reintegration is currently being prepared by the Emergency Services Group (ESG) and the Black Sash. It offers useful information on the following: 1) the range of common difficulties which many political prisoners report having experienced after their release; 2) tips on how newly-released political prisoners can help themselves overcome their initial anxieties and apprehensions; 3) suggestions on how family members can alleviate tensions and stresses which may arise in the weeks and months after the release of a loved one; and (4) a few options on where ex-political prisoners can turn for further support.

K. Release Grant Applications

The International Defense and Aid Fund, headquartered in London since it was banned in 1963, offers released political prisoners 100 British pounds for every year of their most recent sentence.

Cowley House will supply you with the application form for these release grants, and will help you fill it in. Afterwards you have completed the application form, Cowley House will fax it to the London offices of IDAF. In the past, ex-political prisoners have started receiving their release grants in two to three weeks.

L. Going Home

Cowley House and DC will help you make arrangements for travelling home. The SACC pays a second class train ticket for each newly-released political prisoner, but many comrades wish to upgrade their mode of transport by flying. The SACC only asks that you make up the difference between the cost of a second-class train ticket and the cost of a plane ticket home.

ALL-EMBRACING: As a church-based organisation, Cowley House strives to serve all political prisoners, regardless of their political affiliation. Photos by A. Laing



Cowley House offers free food and lodging on a temporary basis to South Africans travelling to Cape Town in order to make a prison visit. In the first five months of 1990, Cowley House provided food, shelter, transportation and support to 1,195 relatives of political prisoners. From January to June, those 1,195 individuals spent 4,788 nights under our roof.

A doctor's daily nightmare of the townships

"The woman, a fat woman, was holding a bread knife with which she had been stabbed. She had wounds in her abdomen — left lower quadrant and right upper quadrant — and chest. I wanted to explore her wounds, but there were no nurses to help and no instruments. I was tired and impatient. I took the knife and cut into the wounds, probing and poking. When a nurse appeared I felt ashamed. But the nurse also took the knife and, feeling nothing for the patient's agony, brutally opened up her chest wound..."

Reality in a Natal hospital is often as bad as the darkest dreams, writes Fred Kockott

At this point the phone rang, waking Sam Phillips, the British house officer, from her nightmare. She was on call at Edendale Hospital in Pietermaritzburg, Natal, which is at the heart of the township conflict between the Zulu Inkatha movement and the African National Congress. It was 4am on a Monday one month ago. The phone call summoned her to the casualty department. Dr Phillips was glad to be released from the dream, but waking was to give her no relief.

In casualty were a couple of car accident victims. Not too bad, Dr Phillips thought. Then a woman and baby arrived. The woman had stab wounds from her neck to her feet, all on the right side of her body. It was impossible to count the exact number of wounds. The baby was also wounded. Dr Phillips was told that the woman and child were sleeping when men claiming to be police came into their home and brutally stabbed them.

Still drowsy as she began to attend their wounds, Dr Phillips asked herself which was worse: the dream or the reality? Her dream was as plausible as the mother's misery.

Questions echoed in her mind: "How can people do this? How can I, day after day, see this without it changing me? Will I become hard? Will I go mad? Is there anything positive to learn from this experience?"

Her life was mending bodies, putting together the broken pieces. How much more satisfying it would be to prevent the breakage, she thought.

Dr Phillips, 25, had started work at eight o'clock the previous morning. It had been a typically bizarre day at the hospital. Two men, sitting on a bench in the corridor outside casualty, had stabbed each other during the night. Both had chest drains — plastic tubes inserted into the chest cavity to drain blood and air.

They were sworn enemies. In the afternoon, a dozen relatives of one of the men arrived. Several were drunk and aggressive. The other patient hid in an examining room. The sight of a patient gasping on the stairs, holding a bottle of blood linked to the chest, is not an uncommon sight at Edendale Hospital. Patients with chest wounds are told to walk up and down the seven flights of stairs to help their lungs expand.

Hospital security guards were

called to remove the rowdy visitors. Soon afterwards, a nurse was threatened by a man with a gun demanding Savlon and gauze. His requests were met.

Later, the victim of a bush knife attack was wheeled into casualty, accompanied by his girlfriend. The couple had been strolling in nearby streets when they were attacked. As Dr Phillips lifted the dressing to examine his wound, a nurse, hardened as she was, exclaimed: "Oh Jesus! Oh my God!" and recoiled.

A laceration extending from the bridge of his nose past the outer corner of his eye had split the upper region of the man's face. The bridge of his nose was broken. His upper eyelid hung over what remained of the lower lid. The orbit of his eye was exposed, as well as the muscles attached to it. It was the most hideous facial wound Dr Phillips had seen. A year before, newly qualified from University College Hospital, London, she would not have coped.

Dr Phillips still has difficulty accepting that such assaults are common on the streets outside. It worries her greatly that in the serenity of nearby white suburbs, most residents live oblivious to this daily trauma. In a letter to the local newspaper, she wrote that either she or they were living in a dream and that it was time one of them woke up.

Her night duties lasted two hours and by 6am she had finished attending to new patients. But she could not sleep and instead she wrote in her diary: "There is nothing I can do. That's to be left to others, to the people out there in communities, to the politicians, quasi-politicians, the organisations."

"These political organisations supposedly represent the interests of their people, but they seem intent on destroying these same already disadvantaged individuals. If I despair, then how must they feel, frustrated in their daily lives by the apartheid system, its unfairness and complexity? Nor are they even safe their own homes. Most probably they just want to be themselves and get on with what is left of their lives."

I found Dr Phillips asleep on the ground outside my doorstep on Monday afternoon. Her car had broken down on her way back home. We began to talk. She said: "If I lived here, I would want to do something more positive. Just putting people together so that the same can happen to them again is not enough."

Postscript: none of the cases seen by Dr Phillips was reported to the police. Neither was any of the incidents recorded by the Press.

Another episode in the Valley of Death: Three African men were walking up a road outside Pietermaritzburg in mid-August. An armored vehicle of the South African Defence Force came alongside and the young white soldiers, serving their yearly 30-day call-up, offered to give the men a lift. The three accepted. Once inside the troopies set to beating them, boots, gun butts, tools. One man, savagely beaten, was tossed out into the road and was found the next day in the adjacent ditch, dead. The other two men were eventually thrown out and were found the next day and taken to hospital with broken cheekbones, ribs, smashed heads. The State of Emergency still in effect in Natal Province prevents prosecution.

Prisoners walked to freedom

THE African National Congress says it feels a "deep-welling anger" at the way 11 political prisoners were released from Robben Island on Monday.

The prisoners walked to the seldom-used Esplanade railway station near Cape Town after Prison Service officials did not follow the usual procedure of releases.

While relatives and friends waited at Quay Five in the Cape Town harbour for the Island ferry to bring them there, the ferry was diverted to another point at the harbour.

According to a worker at Cowley House, which assists newly-released prisoners, they had asked to telephone to arrange to be collected but Prisons Service officials allegedly refused.

They then walked to Esplanade station where they telephoned Cowley House from a cafe nearby and asked to be collected.

A Cowley House spokesperson said it had become almost "normal procedure" to be informed of releases and send transport to Quay Five.

On Monday, however, they were not informed of the time the prisoners would be released.

ANC regional interim committee member Trevor Manuel greeted the men at a press conference shortly after their release.

"I feel a deep—welling anger at the way our people were released today," he said.

"There were heavily—armed policemen with dogs and barbed wire at the harbour where relatives gathered to meet their loved ones.

"We are asking that the releases follow a humane fashion, that the families and organisations are informed timeously to ensure the logistics are in place so they are welcomed with the dignity they deserve."

The only Western Cape person in the group of released prisoners, Jomo Matakata, said on behalf of the group that they were informed on Friday they would be released but were not told why.

"We are very angry about that."

The other Robben Island prisoners released on Monday were: Malusi Motimela, Moses Mokoe-na, Charles Gans, Sipho Nodlawu, Jeremiah Radebe, Kwanele Matiwane, David Maloma, Ntsikelelo Qaku, Patrick Mbelekeane and Lassy Chiwayo.

A Prisons Service spokesperson said at their arrival at the harbour, government transport was made available to transport the 11 to Cowley House as arranged.

"The released prisoners, however, refused to make use of the facility and preferred to walk to Cowley House while their luggage was transported by government transport," he said.

SOUTH AFRICA
September 6 to September 12 1990

Exodus of ex-SADF soldiers to Angola and talk of Unita border build-up

THE NAMIBIAN 29 August 1990

FORMER soldiers who served in the disbanded South African Defence Force units in Namibia are crossing into southern Angola from the Kavango region on an unprecedented scale.

Police sources at Rundu yesterday confirmed there was an increased movement of the ex-soldiers into Angola.

According to the sources, the former soldiers are leaving with their families and animals for Unita-controlled areas in the south of Angola.

As part of this move, on Monday this week, between six and nine men, including their families, drove a herd of goats across the border into that country, the sources said.

A police source at Rundu speculated that a recent rumour in that area that the ex-soldiers would be killed on August 26 could have given rise to the exodus of the former fighters.

Police face an uphill battle in containing the cross-border movement because the border population in both Namibia and Angola have become dependent on each other for trade. In addition, relatives and families live on each side of the border between the two countries.

Crossing has mainly been reported between the areas of Makusha and Mukwe, east of Rundu.

It was reported last week that seven ex-soldiers with at least 20 dependants crossed the border into Angola.

RAJAH MUNAMAVA

at Mukwe. No further details were available.

According to another report, about 10 ex-soldiers crossed over to Angola in the Mashare, Mupapama and Mabushe areas at the beginning of August. The Namibian is in possession of the names of the 10 soldiers.

A Rundu resident recently also wrote a letter to the Home Affairs Permanent Secretary in which he raised the question of the ex-fighters crossing into Angola.

In the letter, which has also come into the possession of this newspaper, the writer, Matheus Wakudumo, claims that up to 150 former soldiers walked over the border at Makena, near Linus Shashipapi Secondary School recently. Only last week (August 19), a man was allegedly badly assaulted by two ex-soldiers at Mashare, after claiming he had reported them to the police after they had been to Angola where they had attended a Unita meeting.

The two ex-soldiers had arrived at a meeting armed and in the company of Unita soldiers according to information received from civilians who attended the meeting.

According to the information, the soldiers wanted to know how to go about joining the rebel movement but were told to come back on an-

other date when the Unita commander for the region, Commandant Kandjimi, would be back.

The soldiers then apparently travelled back to Namibia where they were intercepted by the police who took them to Rundu for questioning.

The ex-soldiers have been named as Michael Muyota and Ben Mbambi.

After being released by the police that day, the men are said to have travelled back to Mashare where they hunted down and badly assaulted a civilian, Markus Nyumba, whom they accused of having reported them to the police. Mbambi allegedly kicked Nyumba and punched him. Consequently the man sustained a swollen jaw. The matter was reported to the police, who only warned the men about their actions.

The Namibian has now learned that the Rundu police are likely to ask the northern region police commander, Elias Hauliyondjaba, for more men and intensified patrols along the Kavango river.

On enquiry, Home Affairs Permanent Secretary Ndali Kamati said yesterday his office had received reports of the former soldiers moving into Angola only in the months of May and June.

All he could confirm at this stage was that there was a Unita military build-up on the border with the Kavango and eastern Ovambo regions, he said.

ANC warns SA over Walvis

THE African National Congress (ANC) has said that it is not in the interests of the South African people that Walvis Bay should remain a colony.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ANC's Namibia office said a future ANC Government was not interested in inheriting "territories that were illegally occupied by white hegemony".

The ANC further condemned "as an act of colonial expansion", the decision of South Africa to annex Walvis Bay, thereby undermining the territorial integrity of Namibia.

This annexation, the ANC continued, was in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly Resolution 1514(XV) and was illegal, null and void.

"We declare that Walvis Bay is an integral part of Namibia with which it is inextricably linked by geographical, historical, economic, cultural and ethnic bonds. We declare that the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its Territory".

The ANC said South Africa "must not use Walvis Bay in any manner prejudicial to the independence of

Namibia or the viability of its economy".

The ANC further condemned the decision by South Africa to claim sovereignty over the Penguin and other offshore islands, thereby undermining the unity and territorial integrity of Namibia.

"We affirm that the offshore islands of Namibia, including Penguin, Ichaboe, Hollandsbirds Mercury, Long, Seal, Halifax, Possession, Albatross Rock, Pomana, Plum Pudding and Sinclair are an integral part of Namibia," the statement added.

They endorsed Article 1 of the Constitution of Namibia which declared that "the national territory of Namibia" shall consist of the whole of the territory, including the enclave harbour and port of Walvis Bay, as well as the offshore islands of Namibia, and its southern boundary (which) shall extend to the middle of the Orange River."

Within the framework of the ANC's foreign policy, enshrined in the Freedom Charter, it was declared that South Africa would be a fully independent state, which respected the rights and sovereignty of all nations, and which would strive to maintain world peace and settlement of all disputes by negotiation and not war.

THE NAMIBIAN

Friday August 24 1990

US Peace Corps to help in Namibia

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Peace Corps yesterday signed an agreement in Gaborone under which USAID will provide \$30 000 (R76 800) in support of Peace Corps programmes in Namibia. The signing ceremony was attended by representatives of the Namibian Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sports and of the Botswana Ministry of Education. The Peace Corps programme in Namibia will begin with the arrival of the first 14 volunteers on September 9. They are currently undergoing training in Botswana and, following additional training in Namibia, will be assigned as teachers of English in Namibian secondary schools.