



# EPISCOPAL CHURCHPEOPLE for a FREE SOUTHERN AFRICA

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15 September 1992

## CISKEI MASSACRE

The hideous and putrid bantustan system of Pretoria's apartheid was emblazoned for all the world to see and hear at the Ciskei massacre on 7 September. The event was a staple of life - death - in South Africa. The shootings at the hick town 'capital' of Bisho looked almost identical to the mass killings at Sharpeville 32 years ago - doubtless to instances over the past three hundred years. Wonder is that Ciskei did not set the entire country off into chaos. Next time? The first of 50 United Nations observers have arrived in South Africa and others from the Organization of African Unity and from the European Community will follow. How much effect will these tiny groups of outsiders have on the fierce and flaming course of history in South Africa?

The Human Rights Commission of Johannesburg writes of Pretoria's secret program to increase the size of its 'homelands' by 1.2 million hectares of land (a hectare is 2,471 acres) (see over). Faced with the final days of apartheid and the overwhelming currents of change, Pretoria insists on propping up its zombi creations.

## SA officers 'set up massacre'

From Chris McGreal  
in Johannesburg

A CABAL of South African army officers working with the Ciskei military, and either answerable to Pretoria or having close ties with it, ran the operation in which soldiers killed 28 unarmed demonstrators and injured about 200 as they marched on the black homeland a week ago. Among them is the officer who gave the order to open fire, Colonel Horst Schubesberger, the Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) operations chief of staff, according to sources in Bisho and witnesses.

There is mounting evidence that the massacre, far from being a tragedy born in the heat of the moment, was a trap laid by the Ciskei military to lure the protesters to their deaths. President F W de Klerk ordered the Goldstone Commission into violence to investigate and report on the attack.

As accusations about the incident continued, chief negotiators for the South African government and the African National Congress agreed in a television debate yesterday to meet today to set the stage for a summit between Nelson Mandela and Mr de Klerk.

Pretoria has denied responsibility for the massacre on the grounds that it occurred on "foreign" soil. An 18-strong group of United Nations observers arrived yesterday. Suspicions that the protesters fell victim to an ambush centre on one question. The ANC's plan to break out of the stadium in which it had permis-

sion to rally was known to both the Ciskei and South African security forces. So why was a gap left in the stadium fence, and soldiers hidden in the long grass beyond it, when other routes were closed by razor wire and troops posted visibly to deter demonstrators from crossing?

Ciskei says the protesters broke through the fence, but witnesses say it was already down. Had the military wished to keep the ANC inside the stadium it could have sealed it with razor wire as it had done the road. Instead, the positioning of the wire appeared designed to funnel protesters into the line of fire of the soldiers hiding in the grass. As the demonstrators charged from the stadium, the only troops they could see were lined up some distance away. Suddenly the soldiers in the grass rose up and started firing. A preplanned attack would explain why South African police pulled away beforehand when they might have been expected to remain on an "international" frontier where trouble was imminent.

Throughout the shooting, Colonel Schubesberger was in overall command, and in radio contact with Ciskei's military ruler, Oupa Gqozo, and with white South African officers who hold senior positions in the Ciskei forces.

THE INDEPENDENT Monday 14 September 1992

### SOUTH AFRICA

Homelands and tribal areas

#### POPULATION ESTIMATES

AFRICAN	
Zulu	8.5m
Xhosa	7.0m
N. Sotho	3.4m
S. Sotho	2.6m
Tswana	3.6m
Venda	0.7m
Others	3.3m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29.1m</b>

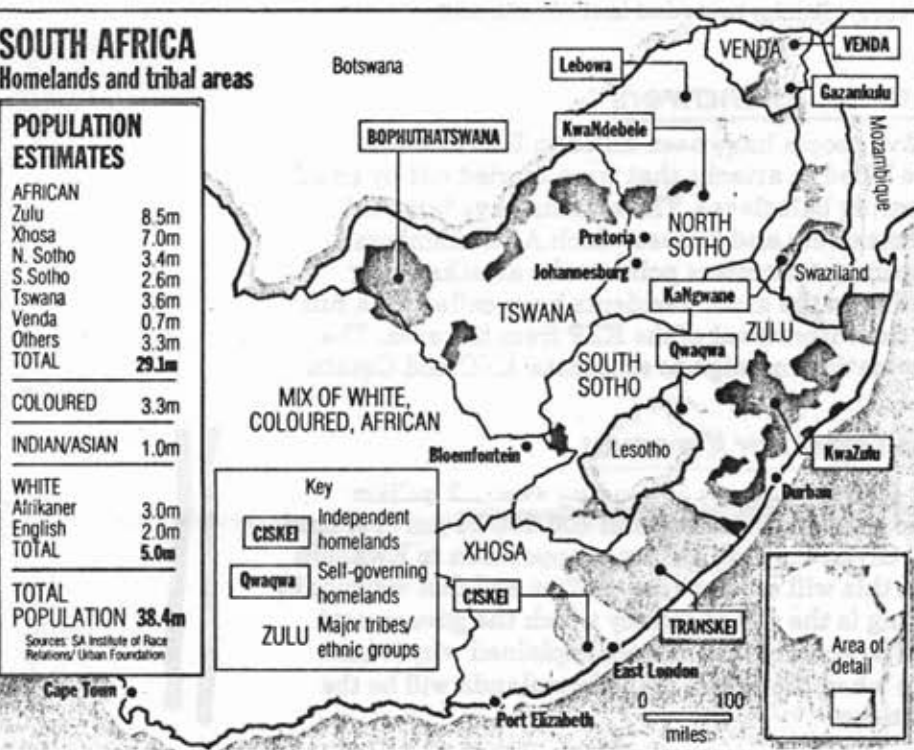
COLOURED 3.3m

INDIAN/ASIAN 1.0m

WHITE	
Afrikaner	3.0m
English	2.0m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.0m</b>

**TOTAL POPULATION 38.4m**

Sources: SA Institute of Race Relations/Urban Foundation



THE SUNDAY TIMES • 13 SEPTEMBER 1992

## DEATHS IN NATAL - AUGUST 1992

Durban Region	45	North Coast	55	Midlands	27
Ntuzuma	1	Nongoma	2	Imbali	2
Umzinyathi	13	Tongaat	2	Wembazi	4
Glebe	2	Mandini	1	Richmond	9
Ntshongweni	4	Empangeni	5	Loskop	2
Pinetown	1	KwaSokhulu	6	Bruntville	1
Ndwedwe	2	Esikhoweni	35	Table Mountain	3
Inanda	4	KwaMbanambi	3	Pietermaritzburg	6
Malukazi	5	Eshowe	1	South Coast	68
Umcazi	8			Murchison	41
KwaMashu	2			Umgababa	2
Durban	3			Adam's Mission	5
				Gamalakhe	3
				Folweni	9
				Umbumbulu	6
				Umkomaas	2

TOTAL : 195

NOTE: The figures included in this report are the confirmed deaths that have been brought to the attention of the HRC. These figures do not purport to be the exact number of deaths, which in all likelihood is higher.

Comments on Statistics

There has been an alarming increase in unrest related deaths in the Natal Region with one hundred and ninety-five deaths recorded. This is the highest death toll in Natal since early 1990. The Port Shepstone area remains the worst effected area with forty-four deaths being recorded this month and forty last month. The most dramatic increase in deaths occurred in the North Coast with twelve deaths recorded last month and fifty-five this month. The Durban Functional Region also recorded a serious increase in deaths with twenty-one last month and forty-five this month. The only area to witness a decrease in deaths was the Midlands with forty deaths recorded last month and twenty-seven this month.

Focus on Esikhoweni

Since the first of August thirty-five people have been killed in Esikhoweni. Twenty-five of these people were killed in attacks that were carried out by small groups of heavily armed men wearing balaclavas. The attacks have targeted people at specific homes of ANC members and venues which ANC members frequent. Investigations by independent monitors point to the attacks being carried out by a hit squad operating in the area. Residents have called for a full inquiry into the killings and for the withdrawal of the KZP from the area. The attacks seem to be part of a systematic campaign to eliminate ANC and Cosatu leadership in Northern Natal.

More Land For Kwazulu

The South African Government is in the process of handing over 1.2 million hectares of land to the homeland governments. In Natal 600 000 hectares of land will be transferred to KwaZulu. Given the long history of opposition to KwaZulu and incorporation into KwaZulu this will escalate the conflict and fuel violence in the region. What is also disturbing is the veil of secrecy which the government has maintained over the issue. The government has not explained why it has taken such a decision, at a stage when the future of the homelands will be the subject of constitutional negotiations.

Security Force Uniforms

There have been an increasing number of allegations made by the SAP and IFP that ANC members have attacked homes of IFP supporters wearing Security Force Uniforms. The SAP also claim that they have arrested ANC members and found uniforms in their possession. The most recent allegations were made after the brutal killing of an IFP leader and his family in Mpusheni earlier this month. The ANC has denied these allegations stating that their members have not embarked on such a campaign. In Port Shepstone a youth alleged that he was arrested by police and while in police custody he was forced to dress up in a Security Force uniform and photographs were then taken.

## "OUR PEOPLE ARE FACING DEATH"

An interview with Rev Bongani Blessing Finca by Josephine Carlsson

(The Rev Bongani Blessing Finca is chairperson of the Border Council of Churches, the branch of the South African Council of Churches in the region which includes the Ciskei "homeland". Rev Finca is also a moderator in the Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Africa. The Border Council of Churches has a long history of protesting human rights violations in the Ciskei.)

On September 7, Ciskei police and military opened fire at a crowd of 68 888 unarmed African National Congress demonstrators. Thirty-three persons were killed and many more injured.)

**Q.** Rev Finca, you were one of the church leaders that took part in the march when Ciskei's security forces shot and killed 33 people? Could you tell us about your own experience on that day?

**REV FINCA:** We came into a situation which was electric with anger. It was almost like the Ciskei forces were preparing for war, they got live ammunition before the march.

But what was most frustrating was that nobody was expecting the shooting at the time when it happened. We were just waiting while the people on the front line, members from the National Peace Accord Committee, were going to negotiate with the Ciskei government's forces. There was no warning or chance for us to negotiate. And it appeared to happen without any provocation.

It was the most frightening experience that I have had in my total life. We have been involved in protest marches in this region from the very difficult times during the time of State of Emergency in the eighties but nothing can be compared with the experience of this Monday.

**Q.** Had the churches tried to intervene before the march?

**REV FINCA:** On Sunday morning, the day before the march, we said "let us as churches try a democratic method" to solve the dilemma. However, the ANC was prepared to negotiate but Brigadier Gqozo, the Ciskei leader, refused completely. We proposed that a referendum for all the people in Ciskei should be held within 21 days to determine if the people support Brigadier Gqozo or not. We asked him to announce the referendum and to honour the result of it and we asked the African National Congress to call off the march if there was an agreement about a referendum.

**Q.** Some commentators have said that the ANC must accept part of the blame for the killings, since the march was organised by them despite the fact that they knew that the Ciskei security forces might resort to violence. What is your reaction, as a local church person, to this viewpoint?

**REV FINCA:** There are things which are so fundamental to the rights of human beings that it is worth risking your life for them. This march was a major statement by people who are living under extremely repressive conditions. The choice here in Ciskei is a choice between submission to an authoritarian, repressive rule which relies on the barrel of the gun or to stand up and say "in spite of all the military might that you have got are we going to make a statement to the whole world that we demand the relief of the situation." We are living under complete siege in this area and we either subject ourselves to that siege, keep quiet and say "these people are too powerful, they will kill us if we do anything, so it is best to keep quiet and be completely overwhelmed by their military might". Or we say "there is still room for non-violent protest to articulate our demand for liberation and for democracy in this region." It is not as if there was any other choice. People at a distance from this situation in which we are living can theorise about all sorts of things...we live here with the people.

**Q.** Yesterday church leaders, both national and from the region met with Brigadier Gqozo. What did you say to him?

**REV FINCA:** We pursued the proposal about a referendum for the people of Ciskei. And we said that the shooting of the people at Bisho does not present a solution to the problem of Ciskei. Instead, violence will escalate, because the people are going to resort to such measures. We are saying to Brigadier Gqozo, that there is no other way this can be stopped except through a commitment from him to a referendum. He was not willing to discuss with us, it was clear to us that this meeting was forced on him after contacts with the South African government.

TO: EDITORS AND SOUTH AFRICA DESKS  
FROM: SOUTHERN AFRICA CHURCH NEWS  
Alice, South Africa: September 18, 1992  
Southern Africa Church News is an ecumenical news agency working with the churches and human rights organisations in southern Africa. This interview may be edited and used without fee, but credit must be given to Ms Carlsson and SACH.

THE WEEKLY MAIL

August 28 to September 3 1992

## SA security firm trains ADM men

Weekly Mail Reporter:  
East London

A PRIVATE Johannesburg-based security company, operating from a military base in Ciskei and linked to violence in the region, is recruiting and training African Democratic Movement (ADM) members as armed guards.



Q. How would you describe the present situation in your region?

REV FINCA: I can definitely say as chairperson of the Border Council of Churches that for the people of this region, the situation has gone back to what it was before the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, if not worse. There is blatant disregard for human rights, for democracy and a great reliance on the weapons of terror to suppress and deny fundamental human rights and democracy to the people of this region.

I am shocked at the profile of the people who really are in charge of the Ciskei. Major General J J Viktor, the person who is the head of the police is a South African security policeman with a history of repression when he was regional commander in Northern Transvaal already in the late seventies. The head of the Ciskei Defence Force, Brigadier Oelschig is seconded from the South African Defence Force and has been working for Army Intelligence. The head of Ciskei's Military Intelligence, a Colonel Ockert Swanepoel, has a history of being part of the Special Forces which was operative in killing many of our people in eastern Cape. This kind of people are the people who are in charge of the day to day running of the Ciskei.

I think it is not by accident or by coincidence they happen to be here at this time. It is part of the whole plan of the South African government to destabilise the Eastern Cape region which is known throughout our history as being a stronghold of the ANC.

Q. What do you think the churches should do in this crisis situation?

REV FINCA: The meeting we had with Brigadier Gqozo yesterday told me that he is not prepared to listen to any person who proposes the way of democracy to him. We are to propose that the same delegation which went to see Gqozo now should go to President F W de Klerk to present this same proposal.

Unfortunately, I don't see any other way except joining the organisations which call for non-violent mass action in South Africa at a national level. That seems to be the only viable alternative to a violent confrontation in this region - unless some miracle happens at our meeting with de Klerk. It looks as though we have to embark on measures such as a national stay-away to cripple the economy, we have to embark on consumer boycotts to pressurise those with the economic power to negotiate. We have to resort to those desperate, non-violent measures.

Q. As a church leader in this region, what do you preach right now?

REV FINCA: The message that the church stands with the people in their suffering and is prepared to suffer with them. That is the way in which the church becomes a sacrament of hope to the hopeless.

We do not see our role at this time as we saw it a year or so ago where we tried to play a middle-man role, where we tried to please both sides so to say, be acceptable to both sides in the negotiations. I think the church now has to locate itself fully and wholly with the victims of this world. We are back to a situation of crisis, a Kairos situation where we must take sides.

Our people need our ministry if they are going to survive and if they are not going to listen to the voices which are saying that "military training" is the solution for to overthrow the government. There are already voices saying that and after this violence from the Ciskei side more people might listen to them.

Q. What do you expect from your church partners abroad?

REV FINCA: The church should gear itself to analysing the South African situation honestly and without being harassed by the pain of telling the truth. That analysis then needs to be sent on to the people who have got the power. Apart from that, churches again need to campaign for using the isolation of South Africa as a weapon in this struggle. And thirdly it is a need for constant protests from our partners to the people who matter and the people who matter in this case is the F W de Klerk's of this world, who need to take effective action to have this matter addressed.

Q. When I listen to you I get the feeling that you see the situation as extremely serious - is that correct?

REV FINCA: When I got out from the church leaders meeting with Brigadier Gqozo yesterday that position was strongly fortified in me. I think a number of our people are facing death in this situation. There is no remorse from the Ciskei Government's side, none altogether. There seems to be a resolve on that side to keep power no matter how many people die in the cause of that. To me it seems as serious as that. (SACN)

THE WEEKLY MAIL

August 28 to September 3

ADM secretary general Basie Oost-huyzen and Ciskei Defence Minister Colonel SS Pita both denied any links with the company. Pita said the company was simply using the Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) base at Wesley. However, it seems clear that there are links with the Ciskei government.

The regional manager for Peace Force, Trevor Thomas Taylor, gave his address to a local company as "c/o Military Base, Bisho" which is the main Ciskei military base. And this week two recruits who fled the base said they had initially been recruited in the grounds of the parliament complex in Bisho, and were told that they were being hired for government jobs. Earlier this week uniformed Peace Force members shot at pupils at a school in the Ciskei village of Phakamisa, injuring seven.

At the Wesley base recruits said they were told by Peace Force Security personnel that African National Congress members were not welcome and that only those belonging to the government-sponsored ADM should stay.

"Immediately we were going to get out of the bus, Mr Brown (one of the Peace Force Security trainers) came and stood by the door and said 'I don't want ANC here, ANC must fuck off'," said Kululekile Mkanyile, who was recruited from Phakamisa village.

"Mr Brown said he doesn't want members of the ANC there because the ANC is setting houses alight and it is the ANC that we are fighting."

Another recruit, from Dimbaza, who did not want his name used as he was threatened after he fled the base, confirmed this. "These white guys told them they didn't want ANC there, they wanted only ADM. Also Pan Africanist Congress members left. Only ADM members stayed."

ANC sources confirmed that others had been recruited from Keiskammahoek, Zwelitsha and even Grahamstown and Komga across the South African border.

The courses apparently last three weeks and the trainees are then given pistols. They are paid R800 a month.

It's not clear just what the training is for but the trainees said they believed it was to support the ADM and the unpopular headman system which the organisation is based on.

One man was recruited by Ciskei leader Brigadier Oupa Gqozo's body-guard. "When I left I met the body-guard and he wanted to shoot me. He said I am bringing the information to the location."

"I think this is to kill people and it is associated with Inkatha."

A few months ago unemployed people in rural areas in northern Ciskei were recruited in groups and taken to Ciskei government offices. They were told they were to work for Department of Manpower as security guards. Again, several recruits fled after finding that the units were to support the ADM against the ANC.

# How SADF props up Gqozo

*South Africa's Military Intelligence is aiding Ciskei's Brigadier Oupa Gqozo by creating an Inkatha-type organisation as a bulwark against the African National Congress. By EDDIE KOCH*

**C**ISKEI strongman Brigadier Oupa Gqozo is building an Inkatha-type movement with the backing of South African Military Intelligence operatives to counter the African National Congress.

Colonel Gert Hugo, former chief of intelligence in the Ciskei Defence Force, says Gqozo's regime was deliberately bolstered by Military Intelligence (MI) — and then dressed up in civilian clothes — to create a political bulwark against the ANC.

And there are now fears that the African Democratic Movement (ADM), a conservative organisation that operates like Inkatha through tribal structures in the Ciskei, is training and arming a private army to bolster Gqozo's rule over the Ciskei. (see separate story).

Considerable evidence has emerged to indicate that Gqozo's homeland government and the ADM — now key members of the National Party's conservative alliance against the ANC — are MI creations:

- Hugo this week told *The Weekly Mail* that SADF intelligence officers, working for Gqozo under the cover of a front company called International Researchers (IR), masterminded the creation of the ADM in early 1991 as part of a plan to create a pro-Pretoria force in the eastern Cape.

- ADM acting general secretary Basic Oosthuizen is on the payroll of the SADF. This is according to Ben Conradie, a former army undercover agent who ran various front companies for MI in the eastern Cape.

- Oosthuizen now describes himself as "a political adviser" to the Ciskei government. He is a former employee of an MI front company called Dynamic Teaching whose main task was to run anti-communist education programmes on behalf of the SADF in black townships of the eastern Cape.

- The head of IR, Anton Nieuwoudt, played a prominent role in an MI project to train an elite unit of Inkatha paramilitary fighters at a base in the Caprivi Strip. Members of this Inkatha unit have been involved in a series of covert operations against ANC activists.

- Another senior Ciskei army officer, Brigadier Andrew Jamangile, last week told an inquest court that Gqozo collaborated closely with SADF intelligence officers to undermine "progressive organisations" in the eastern Cape soon after he came to power.

Hugo told *The Weekly Mail* he was present at Gqozo's farm, called Blacklands, near King William's Town, during an informal Ciskei Security Council meeting in December 1990 called to discuss the formation of the ADM.

"At this meeting Anton Nieuwoudt and Clive Brink — both agents for MI who ran IR — were present even though they were not supposed to sit on the Security Council. It was clear that they had caucused the idea of setting up a political movement like Inkatha and were using the meeting to set this in motion."

Ciskei's former intelligence chief says the SADF men were obsessed with the idea of using the Ciskei as a bulwark against the ANC for the following reasons:

- The eastern Cape was seen by the army at the time as a hotbed for the ANC and its ally, the South African Communist Party.

- They were deeply concerned about Transkei leader General Bantu Holomisa's support for the ANC and the SACP and indications that his homeland was being used as a power base for the "revolutionary alliance".

- MI believes that the ANC's strength relies on an appeal to Xhosa ethnicity and for this reason it is important to maintain and foment divisions between the two Xhosa homelands.

"The ADM was created to give Gqozo's anti-ANC regime more credibility by building a civilian movement of support for him and decontaminating the military image that had built up around him," says Hugo.

"Gqozo also stated at the Blacklands meeting that he would use the ADM to enter into a political alliance with the National Party and other organisations opposed to the ANC."

Hugo, who worked for Gqozo as Chief of Staff Intelligence for more than a year, says the Ciskei strongman was first put in power by a military coup in March 1990 led by officers

genuinely opposed to the corrupt rule of Pretoria's old surrogate ruler in the Ciskei, Lennox Sebe.

The coup, which came just weeks after Nelson Mandela's release from prison, was staged by a young corps of Ciskei army officers led by Brigadier Andrew Jamangile and Colonel Colonel Zanusmi Zantsi.

"He was the most articulate of the officers so they decided to elect him as the head of the military council. I was present at a meeting at the King William's Town home of Chris van Aardt, South Africa's ambassador to the Ciskei, when Jamangile and Zantsi arrived with Gqozo to discuss the coup," says Hugo.

Officers from the security police, army intelligence and the National Intelligence Service had gathered in the ambassador's home to assess the post-coup situation in the Ciskei and to decide whether the SADF should intervene to reinstate Sebe.

"I remember that Gqozo was still dressed in his pyjamas when they arrived that morning. (Foreign Minister) Pik Botha had been calling all morning to find out if the coup leaders were against the RSA. The meeting persuaded Botha that Gqozo was our man and could be relied on to protect our interests."

For a few months Gqozo appeared on public platforms with ANC and SACP leaders in an apparent effort to bolster his credibility.

But within five months, IR was set up and operated out of offices on Gqozo's farm and later from the ministerial offices in the capital of Bisho.

Hugo says IR, later renamed Ciskei Intelligence Services (CIS), set about imposing complete control over the policy of the Ciskei government.

This is confirmed by Jamangile, former head of the Ciskei Defence Force. Last week he stated in sworn evidence before court, that Gqozo broke all promises to work with "progressive organisations" after the MI operatives in International Researchers had established their control in Bisho.

Gqozo's failure to co-operate with the Ciskei army officers who put him in power after the coup prompted them to write a letter in February 1991 demanding his resignation. "We clearly stated in the letter that he was alienating himself from progressive organisations," said Jamangile.

The officers, disgruntled at being controlled by South African military agents, wanted to replace Gqozo with the Ciskei's former minister of post and telecommunications.

Jamangile was giving evidence in an inquest into the deaths of Charles Sebe and Colonel Onward Guzana. The brigadier claims that both men were lured to their deaths in January last year by Pretoria's agents in Bisho.

Jamangile and Hugo say IR had encouraged Sebe and Guzana to stage a false counter-coup at the time and then crushed it in order to convince Gqozo that he needed the support of MI to stay in power.

IR has also been implicated in the planning and logistical support for an attempted coup against Holomisa's pro-ANC government that took place in the Transkei in November 1990.





# ANC accuses 'De Klerk lapdog'

THE CLUE to the state-sanctioned murder on Ciskei's artificial border yesterday was there for all of us to see. Of course none of us realised it until afterwards, but as the throng of singing, chanting African National Congress (ANC) supporters approached the razor-wire that sealed entry to Ciskei's capital, Bisho, the South African Police (SAP) had left.

The police were there not long before and they would reappear in large numbers as soon as the barrage of gunfire against the unarmed demonstrators died down and the weeping started.

But for those few minutes when lives were in the balance, the SAP disappeared.

Later a Colonel Louw said it was because they had to guard white-owned property on the route of the march. But it seemed strange that the police should disappear after following the demonstrators from the beginning. Some of those who survived have little

## Chris McGreal, an eyewitness in Bisho yesterday, describes the shooting as cold-blooded murder

doubt that the SAP was forewarned. The police withdrew for the massacre.

It was cold-blooded murder. The marchers did indeed defy the Ciskei government's warning not to go beyond the stadium next to the roadblock and into Bisho. The ANC had said it had no intention of abiding by rules imposed by the hated "homeland" dictatorship. But no more than a few had spilt from the stadium when the barrage started. There were a few seconds of automatic fire and then the fusillade came.

Between the road and the stadium is a large patch of open ground. People started falling. Some were obviously shot, others

dropped in terror. Initially they lay flat on their faces but as machine-guns opened up from at least two directions, the demonstrators crouched low and ran. Still the bullets continued to fell them.

When the fusillade died down, the Ciskei troops finally fired their tear-gas. They had chosen to wait until afterwards, although tear-gas is obviously preferential to live ammunition if the intention is to prevent bloodshed. The marchers, some bloodied, most covered in dirt, started fires in the bush. The smoke helped dissipate the effect of tear-gas, they said.

Afterwards the area of open bush between the road and the stadium was littered with shoes,



lost or thrown off in panic. Blouses hung from thorn trees, ripped from women whose lives were too threatened to worry about their dignity.

The secretary-general of the ANC, Cyril Ramaphosa, was still next to the razor-wire, lying face-down in the road. Mr Ramaphosa

is rarely found angry. On this occasion he was distressed. More than once he said it was all so unbelievable.

Next to him, the ANC's head of political education, Raymond Suttner, was venting the anger. "De Klerk unleashed his lapdog today. It's De Klerk we'll bring to account," he said.

On the other side of the wire had cowered members of the National Peace Secretariat, mainly elderly, well-meaning white men who are supposed to prevent this kind of thing happening. The chairman, John Hall, who had just lain through some of the most terrifying moments of his life, said he would have to get the facts before he could comment.

The Rev Bob Clarke was not so cautious. "I could feel the shots coming over the top of us. I cannot see the justification. The crowd was peaceable. It doesn't make sense," he said.

Mr Ramaphosa went to look at

the bodies being gathered in the road. He stopped by three men shrouded in blankets.

A dozen or so people knelt on the road, led by a priest in a shrill song of mourning.

The crowd drifted down the road, a few hundred yards from the border, then settled on the grass bank or just stood staring back to the top of the hill. A man in a T-shirt commemorating the Boipatong massacre in June was brushing off the dirt. Underneath the mud was recorded Nelson Mandela's words at the funerals of those victims: "De Klerk is conducting war against the people."

Hardly anyone noticed the black Range Rover that rolled up four hours after the killings. Behind the tinted windows could just be made out the tiny dictator, in an oversized hat, who was the trigger-man this day. Brigadier Oupa Gqozo was squeezed between two security men. He sat looking at the scene for a few minutes and left.

Tuesday 8 September 1992



THE INDEPENDENT

THE TIMES TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8 1992

## Reporters caught in the hail of fire

FROM CLYDE RUSSELL

IN BISHO

THE world's press was caught up in the killings in Ciskei yesterday, being forced to dive for cover as rifle grenades exploded near them and bullets whistled past. The Agence France-Presse correspondent in the region describes the carnage.

"Lying face down in the dust where South Africa meets the Ciskei black homeland was bad enough, but the continuous automatic rifle fire, which lasted for at least five minutes, was terrifying. There was no warning that the African National Congress march on Bisho, the Ciskei capital, was about to turn into a bloodbath. But soldiers of Brigadier Joshua "Oupa" Gqozo, Ciskei's military ruler, fired thousands of rounds and several rifle grenades at the ANC protesters, killing 28.

"Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC's secretary-general, along with other ANC leaders, was forced to hit the dirt as the shooting spread. In acts of selfless bravery, Mr Ramaphosa was shielded from flying bullets by ordinary ANC men and women.

"This correspondent was not so lucky, being hit by either shotgun fire or shrapnel in the left shoulder. I've been hit, I called to colleagues as the blood soaked my shirt. While the shooting was continuing, Michael Hamlyn, the Times correspondent, dressed my wound, but others were less lucky. A man standing near me was killed instantly on being shot in the head.

"During a brief lull in the firing, wounded people could be heard calling for help, but as soon as anybody moved the shooting resumed. After what seemed like a lifetime, the Ciskei soldiers withdrew.

"The Ciskei authorities claimed that they were shut at first by ANC supporters, but all the journalists and the ANC discount this." (AFP)



## Amnesty deal may leave in place covert security networks

JOHANNESBURG/Mounting international and domestic pressure appears to have clinched a general amnesty for President FW de Klerk's security forces in the near future.

But the move could backfire badly - leaving covert anti-ANC networks already in place invulnerable to the full-scale investigations the amnesty's major advocates, UN peace envoy Cyrus Vance, assistant US secretary of state Herman Cohen, and, most recently South African peace commission head Judge Richard Goldstone, say should follow it.

Responding to Friday's UN proposals for South Africa, Goldstone argued that his commission would never do more than "scratch the surface" unless it undertook comprehensive investigations into all military and paramilitary forces in South Africa.

A general amnesty, he argued would remove the various forces' vested interest in secrecy and free witnesses previously inhibited by fear of prosecution to come forward.

De Klerk's negotiators, meanwhile, have for the past fortnight been working to head off the main challenge to an amnesty from the ANC.

Pushed by Vance into talks with the

ANC on the release of the country's 400-plus remaining political prisoners as a precondition for progress towards a settlement, government officials have now succeeded in demanding a linkage between the prisoners' releases and a general amnesty.

This will mark the third concession they have extracted for the release of the same group of prisoners - in 1990 prisoner releases as part of a general amnesty for the anti-apartheid community formed a cornerstone of the Pretoria Minute agreement under which the ANC suspended its guerrilla war (*SouthScan* v6/9 p89).

Last year further prisoner releases, and assistant ANC secretary general Jacob Zuma's written acceptance that all political prisoners had been released, despite its immediate repudiation by deputy-president Walter Sisulu, played a major role in the erosion of sanctions.

By denying the remaining prisoners 'political' status, Pretoria managed to hold onto them as an additional bargaining chip.

Formally, however, ANC negotiators are refusing to accept public trade-off. They argued that technically De Klerk has the legal and administrative instruments he needs to grant indemnities

in the form of the indemnity committees he created in 1990 to indemnify the several thousand ANC and allies exiles and underground operatives.

Several covert operatives, among them former CCB covert network head Joe Verster, have already applied for indemnity.

ANC negotiator Matthew Phosa said ahead of Goldstone's call that the ANC was proposing that De Klerk use the same committees to indemnify, on a case by case basis, his security force personnel. "We...expect that what was good for us will be good for them," Phosa said. This would enable the ANC to deny responsibility for the amnesty, or any linkage with the prisoner releases.

Use of the Indemnity Act mechanisms would, the ANC believes, also achieve the ANC's public demand on amnesty - that of full disclosure.

But although the law demands full disclosure from each applicant, De Klerk included in regulations governing the indemnity committees stringent secrecy clauses and harsh penalties for breaching them. Reports of the committees go only to De Klerk himself.

If the Indemnity Act mechanisms fail to provide the ANC with the full disclosure they seek - and believe is essential to enable them to track those responsible for the current violence and thus, if they continue to operate or are reactivated in future, to act against them - the amnesty itself may not provide the flood of willing witnesses Goldstone is clearly expecting.

The major driving force behind most of the recent revelations of state involvement in violence has been self-preservation by the sources.

Former police hit squad head Dirk Coetzee - he crossed to the ANC after being abandoned to a possible murder charge by his superiors - is the most graphic example of this.

With a general amnesty, this motive will disappear, and new information would dry up. The tracks leading to existing covert networks - and, upward, along the chains of command, into De Klerk's Cabinet - would cease to flow.

In these circumstances Goldstone's comprehensive investigation into the security forces could achieve less than his current "scratching the surface".

This is clearly what De Klerk would like to see. Vance, too, argued for "a clean break with the past to enable a gear-change to future-directed dialogue". (*Own correspondent*)

## ANC critical of police 'facelift'

By Christopher Munnion in Johannesburg

THE African National Congress yesterday dismissed the South African government's sweeping restructuring of the police force as "a mere facelift".

Senior ANC officials had initially welcomed the changes announced by Mr Hernus Kriel, Minister of Law and Order, but after studying the proposals, it issued a statement saying it took "strong exception" to the government's "unilateral action in restructuring society".

Mr Kriel announced on Thursday that 13 generals would be retired or asked to resign, some of them to be replaced by black generals as part of an attempt to end discrimination in the police force.

He said the moves were designed to "restore the credibility of the force".

The changes closely followed recommendations made by Dr Peter Waddington of Reading University, who was invited to South Africa last month to investigate the police response to the Boipatong massacre of 40 people in June.

Dr Waddington's report was scathing of the police's command and control structure and referred to incompetence in the handling of the township killings. "The top echelons of the SAP leave much to be desired," he said in his report.

The ANC, however, said the list of police generals due to be retired did not include "the names of any of those mentioned in the recent serious complaints against the security forces".

It accepted that it would be "churlish" to reject as insignificant all the announced changes, but said the restructuring would not affect the forces on the ground "where retraining within fully accountable procedures and structures is urgently required".

Two Right-wing groups, the Conservative Party and the Herstigte Nasionale Party (Reformed National Party) criticised the changes.

Mr Frank le Roux, the CP's Law and Order spokesman, said no country could afford to lose such a large leadership corps from its police force all at once.

"Years of experience and expertise are being given up," he said. "In these days of rampant crime it is a terrible waste of high level manpower."



# Pretoria purges top police ranks

David Beresford  
in Johannesburg

**T**HE South African government confirmed yesterday that it is dismissing 13 of its police generals, but it has failed to get rid of key officers with the most notorious reputations.

It now appears that the purge was a direct response by President F. W. de Klerk to a caustic, confidential report on the force drawn up for his government by a British academic, Dr Peter Waddington.

In the four-page document Dr Waddington recommended a phased purge of the more incompetent and controversial staff officers, suggesting they should be dumped as part of the negotiating process "like redundant ballistic missiles".

This may mean that yesterday's purge is just the first phase in President De Klerk's bid to reform the police. But the announcement disappointed those hoping for a clean-out of the force.

The minister of law and order, Hernus Kriel, announced that a total of 19 generals — out

of 55 — were leaving the force. Six of them have already reached normal retirement age.

Absent from the list was Major General Jac Buchner, currently commander of the KwaZulu police. A former Rhodesian soldier, Gen Buchner was a police "expert" on the ANC and the South African Communist Party during the years of the so-called "dirty" war and is believed to have played an important role in punitive raids on neighbouring states.

Also missing was Lieutenant-General Basie Smit, head of the security branch at the time of the Inkathanga scandal which involved covert police financing of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party.

The Commissioner of Police, General Johan van der Merwe, an officer with a long history of "anti-terrorist" activities, who is seen as passionately anti-ANC, is also to keep his job.

In addition to the purge of the generals, Mr Kriel announced the formation of a statutory board headed by a judge to investigate "serious" crimes by police.

He said there is also to be

greater devolution of command to the regions and a new community relations division, in an attempt to overcome the huge gulf between police and township residents.

The minister failed to announce the appointment of any black generals. He said no senior non-white officers were available at present, but indicated that they would be appointed later this year. "I am encouraging them. They must work hard and they must study," he said.

It now appears that Dr Waddington, director of criminal justice studies at the University of Reading, has had a phenomenal impact on policing in South Africa. He delivered a shock report on police investigations into the Boipatong massacre for the Goldstone Commission, which was published last month. But his confidential assessment of the entire force, a copy of which has been seen by the Guardian, was even more scathing.

It did, however, hold out some hope that reform was possible. "The top echelons of the SAP leave much to be desired," he said. "I have met

many much more impressive officers among their subordinates. Perhaps those in senior positions have spent too long under the previous regime to be able to adjust to the extent that is necessary."

The ANC reacted scornfully to yesterday's announcement, describing it as "a facelift, not a substantial change". The right-wing Conservative Party said it reflected the ruling National Party's "capitulation politics", adding of the axed generals: "We trust that these able officers will remain available to our country in the inevitably stormy times ahead."

Meanwhile controversy continued to mushroom yesterday over the other arm of the security forces, the South African Defence Force (SADF). The Johannesburg Star disclosed that the head of military intelligence had met the ANC secretly, and alleged that he confirmed the existence of a "third force" — a group suspected of responsibility for political violence — offering to team up with the liberation movement in hunting it down.

The SADF yesterday confirmed that their intelligence

chief, General Christoffel van der Westhuizen, had met ANC intelligence in the company of other government officials, but refused to say what was discussed. According to the Star, the meeting took place about three weeks ago.

Gen Van der Westhuizen is at the centre of a controversy over the murder in 1986 of four anti-apartheid activists.

The government's chief negotiator, Roelf Meyer, is expected to meet the ANC's secretary general, Cyril Ramaphosa, today for further talks aimed at luring the country's main black political grouping back into fullscale negotiations. The ANC suspended talks in the wake of the Boipatong massacre.

Seventeen people, including five commuters flung from moving trains, died in political violence in South Africa on Wednesday night and during yesterday, police said.

They said gunmen killed eight people during a rampage through Esikhawini township in Natal province, and also attempted to attack a local police station. Four people died in knife and gun attacks in townships around Johannesburg.

## Pretoria seeks to appoint black police generals

From Chris McGreal  
in Johannesburg

**T**HE South African government, admitting for the first time to the collapse of confidence in its blighted police force, yesterday purged senior officers who have failed to adapt to post-apartheid politics and established an independent unit to investigate policemen accused of serious crimes such as murder and obstructing justice. In a radical move, the Law and Order Minister, Hernus Kriel, also announced a "positive discrimination" policy rapidly to promote blacks previously banned from senior positions.

Thirteen of the 55 generals in the South African Police have been sacked as the government tries to rescue the credibility of a force whose standing is lower among blacks now than when the police was a vigorous enforcer of apartheid.

As the shake-up was announced, it was confirmed that a dozen people have died in attacks on commuter trains around Johannesburg this week amid accusations that the police failed to disarm the attackers.

Doubts are now so widespread that even the white community has started questioning police ac-

tions, particularly after a leading pathologist revealed a month ago the large numbers of prisoners killed in police custody. This week it was revealed that since the beginning of August at least 14 more people have died in police cells.

The Police Commissioner, Johan van der Merwe, said he backed change because he had read in the papers that his force has an image problem. Mr Kriel was more willing to acknowledge what he described as the need to bridge the gap between the police and "certain communities".

"It's not too late to restore confidence. It's a process of changing the hearts and minds of the police," he admitted.

Mr Kriel said the prohibition on non-whites in the general staff has been lifted and his force is looking for a new breed of general. He confessed that he would like to be able immediately to promote a black person to general, but that none were to hand. Non-whites will be sent on intensive training courses with the first black general

likely to be appointed before the end of October.

The government also plans a new unit to investigate police crimes. Mr Kriel said it would be independent, although its board will consist of three senior policemen, the Attorney General and a judge. Inspectors will be drawn from the police, intelligence service, lawyers and foreign experts but, officially at least, will only be answerable to the board.

The ANC described the reforms as no more than a facelift which do not come close to meeting demands for joint oversight of the security forces. But the government's admission that the police force is seriously flawed will ease some of the tensions delaying the resumption of negotiations.

But for those wanting to know if the nature of the beast has changed, it will not go unnoticed that among those officers named for promotion is General Koos Calitz, who last week was widely criticised for what amounted to anti-ANC political pronouncements during an investigation into the murder of a white farmer who had helped expose a police hit squad in the eastern Cape.



# Mike Lapsley



## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIEST WHO SURVIVED A LETTERBOMB

The new director of TEP (Theological Exchange Programme) has a background of powerful prophetic witness and commitment including a miraculous escape from almost certain death when a letterbomb exploded in his hands on April 28, 1990.

CHARLES MARTIN interviewed this extraordinary Anglican priest in his office in Athlone, Cape Town.

**Q.** We have heard about the letterbomb that was posted to you in Harare two years ago. Who sent it? Who was trying to kill you?

**A.** It was a highly sophisticated bomb that was small enough to fit between the pages of a magazine in an envelop and yet powerful enough to rip out the ceiling of my room, blow a hole in the floor and damage two other rooms. The postmark was from South Africa and the envelop was addressed to me at a private box number in Harare that could not have been discovered in any telephone

directory. One of the two magazines in the envelop was in Afrikaans and the technology was so advanced that the bomb did not explode in transit but only when I opened the envelop.

There is only one possible conclusion. It was sent by the South African security establishment, by a death squad like the notorious CCB (Civil Co-operation Bureau).

**Why would they want to kill you?**

I suppose it was because of my activities, writings and talks as a theologian and as a chaplain to the ANC in exile. I am a member of the ANC but I have never belonged to MK, so I could not have been regarded as a military target.

I had spoken about the evils of apartheid all over the world, and shortly before the bomb I had given talks in Canada about the two-track policy of the De Klerk government.

**What is the government's two-track policy?**

Since February 2, 1990 the government has been moving forward along two different tracks. The one is public and open. It is the track of unbannings and negotiations. The other is the track of destabilisation and violence. This is the covert or secretive track.

I told the Canadians, and others, that the South African government had not really changed. They have given up apartheid because it turned out to be a huge tactical blunder, but the National Party has never repented or even expressed regret or taken any moral responsibility for the crimes of apartheid with the immeasurable suffering and numberless deaths that it has caused throughout Southern Africa.

The same army and the same security establishment is still operating today. There is no evidence that the death squads have been disbanded. There is evidence of the government's secret funding and training of Inkatha members, and an abundance of evidence about police and army involvement in the violence.

**We were all shocked when we heard the news of this attempt to kill a priest, but what really surprised most of us was that it happened nearly 3 months after February 2, 1990. How do you account for that?**

It is only surprising if one believes that the killings of the past have ended. They now take a different form and the targets are different. The very fact that they tried to kill me after the famous turning point of February 2, 1990 confirms my two-track theory.

**What effect has this letterbomb experience had on your life? You lost both arms and one eye.**

My own story is but one example of the pain, the suffering and the injury inflicted upon millions of people throughout Southern Africa by the SADF, Renamo, and Unita. Angola has more amputees than any other country in the world.

As a priest without hands maybe I can be a sign of what apartheid has done, and is still doing, to millions of others.

**You often speak about the spiritual effect of your bombing experience, don't you?**

Yes, in the first place my physical survival was something of a miracle. The bomb was intended to kill. But more important still has been my mental and spiritual survival. For that I thank God who gave me the strength and encouragement I needed through the unbelievable support I received from so many people.

My family, friends, colleagues and the ANC were all very supportive. Messages came in from all round the world. I am a member of a religious order, the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM). My brothers in this community went to extraordinary lengths to help me. Most encouraging too was the letter of support I received from the seven primates or Archbishops of the Anglican church around the world, including Archbishop Tutu who has been particularly helpful to me here in Cape

Town.

I have gained much more than I have lost through this experience. My ministry has actually been enhanced rather than diminished.

**Mike, where do you come from and how did you arrive at the stance you now take?**

I was born in New Zealand and came over to South Africa in 1973 as a theological student. My religious community, the SSM, have been engaged in pastoral work in South Africa for more than a century.

I became a university chaplain in Durban. That was a powerfully formative experience in the 1970s. By September 1976, I had to flee, like so many others into exile.

After more than 6 years in exile in Lesotho and 8 years in Zimbabwe, I finally returned to South Africa at the beginning of this year. During all this time I worked for the liberation of my adopted country from the scourge of apartheid.

**Why? Why this strong attachment to South Africa?**

I have always been deeply committed to the victims of apartheid both inside and outside of South Africa. I have been powerfully moved by the suffering and the courage of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa. It has helped me to deepen my Christian faith and to develop my theology. It led me to join the ANC. And now I find that I myself have become a victim of apartheid.

**And your ministry in Cape Town now?**

On February 17 this year I became the director of TEP in Athlone, Cape Town. The Theological Exchange Programme is committed to theological dialogue between Christians of Third World Countries. We call it South-South dialogue.

I applied for this post because of my contacts with Christians in many Third World countries during my exile, because of my commitment to the poor and the oppressed and because of my abiding interest in theology. My work in TEP will be a continuation of the ministry I have been exercising for nearly 20 years. ●

*I have  
gained much  
more than I  
have lost.*

*I have  
always been  
deeply com-  
mitted to the  
victims of  
apartheid  
both inside  
and outside  
of South  
Africa.*



A 'NEW GENERATION' Afrikaner makes a stand against conscription

# Going against volk and vaderland

**A YOUNG AFRIKANER** is prepared to go to jail for three years rather than point a gun at a demonstration by black South Africans. He tells ALLISTER SPARKS why he must risk being called an ethnic traitor by family and friends.

**W**HEN Deon Maas got his call-up papers the other day it confronted him with the worst crisis of his life. Deon is a young Afrikaner who grew up in what he calls "a very homogeneous community" to whom military service is as fundamental a part of one's duty to volk and vaderland as belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church and voting for the National Party.

But Deon has decided he must defy the call-up and risk three years' imprisonment under SA's Defence Act, as well as being labelled an ethnic traitor by his family and friends.

"My parents don't begin to understand," he says. "I can't even discuss it with them. But it would be career suicide for me to do the call-up. I deal with black people in my work, and if I have to shoot at a black crowd in a township then hypothetically I may be shooting at someone I will have to do business with in two weeks' time."

At 30, Deon Maas is one of a new generation of Afrikaners who are coming to terms with the fact that South Africa is in a state of transition and that they are going to be living most of their lives in a country run by blacks. It is forcing them to reassess many fundamental things which their parents' generation took for granted, from military service to their relationships with the church and the party.

*"I have a strong sense of a future in a country which will be predominantly black and which will be led by blacks. I intend to stay here and I want my two children to stay here too."*

Some are reacting in a spirit of resistance, joining the Neo-Nazi Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging and other far-rightist groups. Others are moving to the left, often outflanking the English-speaking liberals, many of whom are becoming nervous and thinking of emigrating now that black rule looks like becoming a reality.

It is the old Afrikaner survival imperative at work again, the fact that the Afrikaners have no other home as the English-speakers do and must live or die as a cultural entity upon the soil of Africa. That is what drove them to apartheid in the first place, and now that apartheid has collapsed it is forcing them to face its alternative.

"I have a strong sense of a future in a country which will be predominantly black and which will be led by blacks," says Deon. "I have no other place in the world. I intend to stay here and I want my two children to stay here too."

His friend Ben, who does not want his surname revealed, feels the same. He, too, intends defying his call-up, which is to be on stand-by during a campaign of mass demonstrations planned by the ANC and its allied organisations starting on August 3.

They say they know a number of young Afrikaners who feel as they do and will refuse to serve in what is still a system of whites-only conscription despite President FW de Klerk's declaration that apartheid is dead.

Both Deon and Ben did their two years of national service when they left high school aged 18. They were proud to serve then, regarding it as an honour to defend the fatherland against the "communist threat". But they are older and wiser now. The communist threat is no more, and they suspect it was probably a fabrication even then to justify armed repression of the black population.

**B**EN, who served as a platoon commander in a "homeland" says he is not against military service as such and would be ready to serve again if it was genuinely to defend South Africa. But he will not do township duty. "That is not defence," he says emphatically. "I don't want to shoot fellow South Africans. If there is a problem of criminal activity, then that is a police matter."

Deon feels even more strongly. He served as a photographer in a "civic action" unit in Namibia and Angola, where he says he witnessed

atrocities by the South African forces and was so repelled by them that he can never put on a uniform again. "My commanding officer wore a thing around his neck, a kind of lucky charm, made from a human scrotum," he recalled. "Then there was this oldish guy, about the age of my grandfather, who they felt had some information about Swapo movements. They hung him upside down from a tree and wound up the rope, then lit a fire underneath so that as he unwound he came down closer to the fire and roasted in it. When I objected I was threatened and called a kaffirboetie."

Today, says Deon, he neither owns a gun nor wishes to touch one. "There are enough people in this world who like that sort of thing. They can use them, but not me."

There is no bravado in either of these young men. They do not see themselves as heroes, nor do they relish the role they have cast for themselves. "I am scared," says Deon. "They can put me in jail and I am very worried about it." He worries too about his relations with his parents, whom he says he still loves despite their political differences. Then a wan smile flitted across his face. "I will phone my Dad and he will probably dip into his pension fund to help me pay for a lawyer. He is that kind of man when it comes to his children."

□ — The Observer.



**CALL OF 'DUTY'**... the SADF plays a controversial role in South Africa.

# BRINGING THE ABORTION DEBATE INTO THE OPEN...

**A**t the ANC National Policy Conference, the delegates recognised that more discussion and debate was needed before the ANC could adopt a policy on abortion. The ANC Women's League proposed a conference resolution to commit the ANC to placing this issue firmly on the agenda for discussion at branch level.

The conference did, however, look at women's rights, and within that the right of women to have control over their bodies. This would include the right to contraception and to contraception of your choice and the right to protect yourself from AIDS. Further, the right to choose whether you want sex or not, including protection from marital rape, would also be encapsulated in this constitutional clause.

Much concern was expressed at this conference and at many other conferences and workshops of the ANC and the ANC Women's League, over the number of women who die from illegal backstreet abortions. Further anxiety was voiced on the number of unwanted children who are abandoned and the number of children who are malnourished or not properly cared for, as a result of the economic and financial circumstances of the mother. Also noted was the large number of teenage pregnancies which occur and the need for further consideration on the plight of these teenagers.

For the record, there are approximately 300 000 women who resort to illegal abortions each year. These women are largely black and working class. More than 15 000 admissions each year to Baragwanath Hospital gynaecological wards are thought to be the direct result of illegal abortions.

This indicates the vast numbers of illegal abortions which must be occurring in South Africa and the vast numbers of women whose health is being endangered by these backstreet abortions.

Barbara Klugman of the Women's Health Project at Wits Medical School says in a paper on abortion the statistics available on the number of abortions annually are "just the tip of the iceberg since the illegal nature of abortion means many women are too frightened to come to hospital and many are too far away from medical services."

The criminalisation of abortion, by both legislation and sectors of our society who hold moral objections to abortion, results in women's risking death or serious damage to their health and fertility as well as experiencing the psychological trauma which accompanies the abortion experience. This criminalisation denies women the access to appropriate medical services and counselling.

Legal abortions in hygienic conditions would dramatically reduce the high maternal death rate in South Africa from abortion complications. Says the United Nations Human Development Report for 1991: "the maternal mortality rate accounts for half a million deaths each year" Figures reflect the severe neglect and low status of women in some parts of the world where "the lack of access to safe methods of family planning makes (illegal/backstreet) abortion one of the leading causes of maternal mortality. Women are often denied the right to decide whether or when to have children."

It is interesting to note that in England when abortion was legalised in 1967, there was only an initial rise in

abortion which then levelled out to equal the number of estimated illegal abortions which had been occurring prior to the 1967 legalisation. This suggests the legalisation of abortion therefore cannot be considered to increase the number of abortions already being carried out.

In South Africa, abortions are a reality in our society even though they are illegal. Women will continue to visit backstreet abortionists despite the criminalisation of abortion. Women should therefore have the access and the right to a safe abortion. Further rights should include the access to adequate and comprehensive health services that provide a range of medical, counselling and support services for all pregnant women whether they are carrying the pregnancy to term or obtaining an abortion.

Albie Sachs in his book "Protecting Human Rights in a New South Africa" argues that the key question is each individual women's right of choice on issues relating to health and control of fertility. He says: "The question of abortion could be dealt with on the basis of acknowledging the constitutional right of anti-abortion groups or individuals to campaign for women not to resort to pregnancy terminations, while at the same time recognising that in the last resort it is the pregnant woman herself who has the constitutional right to make the final decision." This suggests that part of a women's right to control her own fertility includes the choice of having an abortion or not having an abortion as well as the choice of contracepting or not contracepting. This would be an individual choice according to that individual's beliefs, not according to an imposed system of belief by a particular societal grouping. ■

★ WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR READERS' VIEWS ON THE ISSUE OF ABORTION ★