



# FACT SHEET

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## PRETORIA'S SECRET WAR AGAINST THE ANC

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In the past month, new evidence has verified the ANC's long-standing charge that the South African government is playing a central role in instigating and orchestrating political conflict. Through the perpetuation of this conflict, the government hopes to weaken the ANC, to promote rival black organizations more likely to enter into an electoral alliance with the National Party, and, ultimately, to extend white political control beyond the abolition of apartheid laws.

### Covert political contributions

Nine days after Bush lifted sanctions, Johannesburg's *Weekly Mail* published details of secret South African government payments to Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party. Through the security police, Pretoria gave nearly \$100,000 to Inkatha to finance two rallies in late 1989 and early 1990. The money was intended to increase the visibility of Inkatha's anti-sanctions stance and to enhance its ability to compete with the ANC. More recently, Martin Dolincheck, a former South African intelligence officer, revealed that the defunct Bureau of State Security played an integral role in promoting Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi from the party's inception in the mid-1970s.

The government also donated \$525,000 over five years to build up the Inkatha-aligned United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA) as a rival to the more popular Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). UWUSA's formation was accompanied by a series of attacks on COSATU members. According to press reports, some of the government money was used to hire vigilantes to intimidate other union activists.

The grants to Inkatha and UWUSA came out of a special "Secret Services Account", set up in 1978 to finance political "dirty tricks." Over the past five years, the government has channeled more than \$500 million through the slush fund to a variety of sympathetic groups. The recipients of most of this money remain unidentified.

Although President de Klerk tried to distance himself from the scandal, he is clearly implicated. He was among the top government officials who signed documents authorizing the payments. Moreover, government expenditures on secret projects increased significantly under his administration as Pretoria pursued a duplicitous policy of negotiating publicly with the ANC while waging a clandestine war against it.

### Beyond propaganda: The security forces intensify the violence

The South African security forces are integral to this secret war. Even before President Bush announced the premature termination of most sanctions, township residents and independent monitoring groups had repeatedly accused the military and police of routinely siding with vigilantes or Inkatha members in attacks on political opponents. Major Nico Basson and other defectors from the South African intelligence services have stated that the South African government has provided arms and training to Inkatha in an effort to intensify the violence. Pretoria has consistently denied these reports, insisting that it has only trained Inkatha members to act as bodyguards for party officials. In early August, however, former Inkatha members told the *Weekly Mail* that they were trained by the SADF in urban and guerrilla warfare. They were later directed to assassinate anti-apartheid activists.

Military personnel also appear to have been directly involved in instigating attacks, often in the guise of Inkatha supporters. A former SADF sergeant recently revealed that members of the notorious Five Reconnaissance Regiment (5 Recce) had executed several indiscriminate attacks on township residents, including last September's assault on a Soweto commuter train which left 26 dead and 137 wounded. Five Recce carried out a number of cross-border raids against exiled ANC activists in the 1980s. It is one of a number of brutal and semi-clandestine units formerly deployed in South Africa's war of destabilization against the Front Line States. According to

Captain Dirk Coetzee, the former security branch officer who blew the whistle on government-sponsored death squads two years ago, these returning troops, in a loose affiliation with the "dirty tricks" departments of the SADF and police, make up the core of a "third force" working to demoralize its opponents and to obstruct negotiations.

#### De Klerk's "total strategy"

Some observers--including President Bush--insist that President de Klerk is committed to genuine reform and democracy. They argue that he is trying to stop the violence so that it will not scuttle negotiations. Others, like former insiders Nico Basson and Dirk Coetzee, claim that the violence and the government's attempts to promote "moderate" black leaders are essential components of a sophisticated "total strategy," designed to protect the long-term interests of South Africa's white minority.

De Klerk's earlier (and now virtually forgotten) position in the conservative wing of the National Party, and his decision to retain all of the major cabinet ministers from the Botha administration, support the view that he has undergone a change of style, rather than a change of heart. He remains dedicated to defending white privilege, but he is shrewd enough to realize that, to do so, he must accommodate some black demands. By making concessions on a range of political issues, he hopes to defuse or to suppress economic demands which more directly threaten white interests.

According to Basson, the de Klerk government and the military formulated their strategy for a "new" South Africa in late 1989, shortly after de Klerk came to power and before he announced the first wave of reforms. This planning was based on an assessment of "Operation Agree," South Africa's \$35 million covert initiative to promote the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) over the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia's 1989 independence elections. The resulting strategy envisions the creation of an electoral alliance--including Inkatha and an array of smaller black, "coloured," and Indian political parties--in which the National Party would be the most influential (but probably least visible) member. However, in order for such a coalition to win a non-racial general election, the government must weaken its leading opponent, the ANC. The continuing violence furthers this objective by intimidating political activists, encouraging ethnic divisions, and discrediting black leadership.

These revelations contradict de Klerk's professions of good faith and demonstrate that his government cannot be trusted to play a neutral role in the process of reform. If de Klerk is genuinely committed to democratization, he must negotiate with the ANC and other popular organizations to form an interim government capable of overseeing the drafting and implementation of a new constitution.

#### Present U.S. policy

In his eagerness to reward de Klerk, President Bush prematurely lifted the sanctions imposed by Congress under the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 (CAAA) on July 10. These included the ban on new U.S. loans to and investment in South Africa, trade restrictions, and the withdrawal of landing rights for South African air lines. However, several key sanctions, independent of the CAAA, remain in effect:

- \* A ban on U.S. support for the extension of **International Monetary Fund credit facilities** to "any country engaging in apartheid," except in certain limited circumstances.
- \* A ban on **Export-Import Bank financing** for: a) any export which contributes to the maintenance of apartheid, b) any export to the South African government until the President certifies that significant progress has been made toward the elimination of apartheid, and c) any export to other South African purchasers which have not implemented specified fair employment practices. (An exemption, contained in the CAAA, is still in effect for black-owned South African businesses.)
- \* A ban on all **exports to the South African police and military**. (The Export Administration Act, to which this measure was attached, expired at the end of 1990. It has been extended by Executive Order, pending Congressional action on a new law. The South African-related provisions of the act needed to be extended by the President each year.)
- \* A ban on **arms trade** with South Africa.
- \* A ban on **cooperation or intelligence-sharing** between U.S. and South African intelligence agencies.

In addition, many state, county, and municipal governments have imposed their own restrictions on transactions with companies doing business in South Africa. These were not directly affected by the President's move, although the administration hinted that it may initiate legal action to nullify local sanctions.

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