Counterinsurgency's Impact on Transitions from Authoritarianism: the
Case of South Africa

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August 2011

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the

requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

ABSTRACT

Counterinsurgency's impact on transitions from authoritarianism remains poorly understood and undertheorized by the insurgency, civil war, and democratic transitions literatures. Using archival sources and interviews with ex-rebels, this paper examines the apartheid counterinsurgency program's hidden history. A program of clandestine violence and intelligence operations orchestrated at the regime's highest military and political echelons, it intensified during the 1990-94 transitional period. This paper analyzes its impacts on the state and its security sector during and after the negotiated transition. By marginalizing former rebels with high popular legitimacy, counterinsurgency disables security sector reform, while preserving entrenched criminal networks and racist tendencies within the police and army. This perpetuates institutional illegitimacy and corruption, and weakens security sector responses to post-transition violence, thereby distorting democratic outcomes. It also leaves lasting impacts at the social capital and participatory levels.

RÉSUMÉ

Ni la littérature sur les guerres civiles et ni celle sur les transitions démocratiques ne considère l'importance des opérations militaires clandestines menées par l'État afin d'affaiblir les forces politiques et militaires rebelles. À la lumière du cas de l'Afrique du Sud, basée sur des entretiens avec des ex-rebelles et des archives, cette thèse vise à combler cette lacune en expliquant comment les enjeux politiques et militaires des transitions démocratiques sont déterminés par ces opérations clandestines. Au moment même de la transition démocratique en 1990-94, l'État autoritaire chercha à affaiblir les forces politiques et militaires rebelles. Les opérations militaires clandestines de l'ancien régime visa alors les institutions étatiques de sécurité, dont l'armée, la police, et les services d'espionnage, afin d'y sauvegarder des éléments autoritaires et ainsi renforcer la résistance aux changements démocratiques. Notre hypothèse est que, malgré la transition démocratique, c'est le succès de ces opérations destinées à conserver le personnel et les pratiques autoritaires et racistes de l'ancien régime qui contribua vers le niveau d'implication des institutions de sécurité dans la corruption et le crime, l'importance du taux de violence urbaine ainsi que le niveau de confiance de la population envers ces institutions.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

forever be a testament to the power of the human spirit to transcend all barriers. Phumla and Elridge, your friendship is the most magnificent blessing. Endless thanks to Mama Koko for her hospitality, to my brother Feza (Banquo- "the Lord is with us, nothing can be against us"), the Molope family, Mxwedisa, the late Baba Luvo, Makana, Lihle, Mangete, Junior, MaBoyz, Qoqo, the late Hani, Tzagane, and others too numerous to mention. Many thanks to uGan for his friendship and for sharing his love of Peter Tosh (Not gonna give it up/ till Africa and Africans are free). Much love to King Buyelekhaya and his family. Thanks to Lufuno for his crucial logistical support.

I cannot name here many of my interviewees for this project, but I must emphasize how humbled I am by their hospitality and trust. Many of them went through great lengths, geographically and emotionally, to make themselves available. I will never forget my surprise when one gentleman who lived in a distant rural area, and whom I had given up all hope of reaching before my departure, actually came to meet me as I waited for my plane in the airport lounge, where we conducted a captivating interview.

There are many colleagues at McGill whom I wish to thank for their friendship and support. Special mention goes to Aisha Ahmad, Virginia DiGaetano, Theodore McLauchlin, Allen Stack, and Ora Szekely for their many helpful comments and crucial insights on various aspects of this project, and to Aviad Rubin for his insights and great hospitality. Thanks to Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brulé, who helped me so much along the way. Special thanks to my two extremely helpful undergraduate volunteer research assistants, Sarah Pollack and Nigel Gillis. I hope they learned as much helping me with this project as I learned from them. Many thanks also to Omar Ashour, Ece Atikcan, James Devine, Isabel

List of Abbreviations

ANC: African National Congress
APLA: Azanian People's Liberation Army (armed wing of the PAC)
AZANLA: Azanian National Liberation Army (armed wing of the Black Consciousness Movement)
BCM: Black Consciousness Movement
BMATT: British Military Advisory and Training Team
BOSS: Bureau of State Security (predecessor to the NIS)
FRELIMO: Mozambique Liberation Front (Mozambican government since 1975)
IFP: Inkatha Freedom Party (Zulu nationalist movement)
LLA: Lesotho Liberation Army (an apartheid proxy militia to destabilize Lesotho)
MK: Umkhonto we Sizwe (armed wing of the ANC)
MKVA: Umkhonto we Sizwe Veterans' Association (founded in 2001)
MPLA: Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Angolan government since 1975)
NIA: National Intelligence Agency (the post-apartheid successor to the NIS)
NIS: National Intelligence Service (the apartheid civilian spy agency)
NP: National Party (the party that governed South Africa, 1948-94)
PAC: Pan-Africanist Congress
PIDE: Portuguese overseas secret police, active in Portugal's African colonies
RENAMO: National Resistance of Mozambique
SACP: South African Communist Party
SADF: South African Defense Forces (the apartheid military)
SADF MI: South African Defense Forces Military Intelligence (also known as the Military Intelligence Directorate, or MID)
SANDF: South African National Defense Forces (South Africa's post-transition military)
SAP: South African Police (the apartheid-era police force)
SAPS: South African Police Service (South Africa's post-transition police force)
SDUs: Self-Defense Units (ANC militias during the 1990-94 political violence)
SPUs: Self-Protection Units (IFP militias, counterparts to the SDUs)
TDF: Transkei Defense Forces (the military of the Bantustan of Transkei)
UDF: United Democratic Front
UNITA: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
ZANLA: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANU-PF armed wing)
ZANU-PF: Zimbabwe African National Union- People's Front (Zimbabwe's main pro-independence faction and post-independence ruling party)
ZAPU: Zimbabwe African People's Union (breakaway faction of ZANU)

ZIPRA: Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (armed wing of ZAPU)

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background to the Problem

Why do many democratic transitions remain mired in a "gray zone"
(Carothers 1997, 2002) short of full consolidation? Specifically, why do
transitions from authoritarianism to democracy often fail to completely transform
state institutions and state-society relations? Recent literature on democratic
transitions has pointed to security sector reform (SSR) as a determining factor in
the success or failure of democratization struggles (Levitsky and Way 2010, 57).
South Africa's democratic transition astounded the world for the relatively
bloodless manner in which the country adopted universal suffrage, multiparty
democracy, and a comprehensive, progressive constitution. The 1994
"breakthrough" election "definitively ended an authoritarian regime by bringing a
group of political reformers to power" (Barkan 2002, 72). Since then, "[n]either
the ANC government nor any faction within it has tried to resort to
extraconstitutional means to sustain its power, nor have they been accused of
doing so by the opposition… To date, there has been no return, or threat of return,
to the violent confrontations of the apartheid era" (Harbeson in Joseph, ed., 1999,
46). Bratton (2004) also lauds the South African judiciary for "[leading] the way"
on the continent by "establishing a constitutional court that undertakes rigorous
judicial review of test cases based on an expansive bill of rights" (5).

Yet despite these gains, the socio-economic dimensions of the transition, the
lack of transformation of the state security sector, and the prevalence of urban
violence, have substantially compromised the quality of South Africa's

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democracy. Meanwhile, whereas Bratton contends that "legitimacy is a product of democratization," South African state institutions have had persistently low legitimacy since the transition (2004, 2).

Using South Africa as a case study, my work addresses this gap in the literature by examining the role of counterinsurgency in the context of evolving state-society relations in two interrelated ways. First, I analyze counterinsurgency's impacts on the state by exploring its effects on the security sector during and after transitions from authoritarianism to democracy. Second, I examine patterns of state response to insurgency by analyzing the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency program of clandestine violence. This comprised a wide range of and intelligence operations orchestrated at South Africa's highest military and political echelons, a program that intensified during the 1990-94 transitional period.

My dissertation examines counterinsurgency as a crucial variable that explains the persistence of violence, insecurity, and unreformed security forces in post-authoritarian contexts. It points to two key reasons why counterinsurgency legacies affect democratic transitions and consolidation. First, it leads to the systematic exclusion of ex-guerrillas from the "new" security forces, often because old security elites are unwilling to cede equal power in the institutions they control. I posit that these ex-rebels' integration into the post-transition police and military largely determines these forces' ability to enforce the law, secure the peace, and overcome their reputations for violence and brutality with newfound popular legitimacy. Second, by marginalizing these ex-guerrillas from state institutions in a context of chronic poverty, it pushes them to use their combat skills for criminal ends, contributing to post-transition violence.

My analysis of insurgency and counterinsurgency combine to create a unique picture of the security-related aspects of South Africa's transition. There is already a substantial literature on the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency campaigns, but none has examined the interaction effects between these campaigns and the ANC insurgency's attempts to transform South Africa's security institutions along with its broader political culture and configuration. The democratic transition literature has largely marginalized insurgent agency in political processes, while the literature on insurgency has underestimated the impacts of prior institutional legacies in the state, and especially state counterinsurgency programs, in affecting and shaping civil war resolution and democratic transitions. This study is therefore a unique contribution to the bodies of literature on insurgency; civil war resolution and security sector reform; and democratic transitions. It has implicit comparative value to a wide range of other cases.

Democracy and development in post-conflict settings depends critically upon a secure society free of violence. Without this, gains such as political rights and democratic institutions mean little, and are easily reversed. Yet neither the civil war resolution literature nor the democratic transition literature has systematically examined counterinsurgency as a variable explaining the emergence of a path dependent process inhibiting democratic consolidation. Developing this variable promises to generate theoretical insights that are critical for explaining "gray zone" outcomes in democratic transitions. Counterinsurgency legacies strongly distort and subvert democratic change and, I argue, block the path towards democratic consolidation. Specifically, these legacies obstruct democratic consolidation in the form of establishing legitimate forms of law and order

because the corrosive effect of violence on social trust and collective action networks often persists even after the democratic transition. Ultimately, post-transition counterinsurgency legacies restrict the spectrum of possible change, undermining public confidence and lowering popular expectations of state performance, thus perpetuating a disconnect between state and civil society.

Defining Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

"Insurgency" refers to a popular struggle aiming to topple and replace the incumbent government. Insurgencies typically encompass armed and unarmed actors, whose activities may vary in terms of how closely or loosely their activities and operations are centralized and coordinated. Kilcullen defines "counterinsurgency" as "an umbrella term that describes the full range of measures that governments take to defeat insurgencies," including "political, administrative, military, economic, psychological, or informational, and these are almost always used in combination" (2010, 154-5). Previous literature has distinguished between "hard," or armed (also known as "kinetic") counterinsurgency strategies, and "soft" strategies "designed to win the hearts and minds (and sometimes debts) of local populations" through a blend of propaganda and patronage; historically, most campaigns have deployed both strategies simultaneously (Price 2010, 247). For the purposes of analyzing counterinsurgency's impact on democratic transitions, however, I find it more useful to distinguish between its "blunt" and "sharp" ends, which are complementary, rather than mutually exclusive: at the "blunt" end, the state deploys conventional army and police forces to achieve overt (that is, not secret) objectives through such strategies as "clear-and-hold" military campaigns and mass arrests of suspected insurgents. As compared to the

conventional military and police operations unfolding alongside it, counterinsurgency's "sharp" end features a clandestine nexus of military, police, and intelligence services, which afford the state "plausible deniability" for its actions. The units tasked with such operations are typically covert, and nebulous chains of command are calculated to ensure that their activities, if uncovered, cannot be conclusively traced to the top. They include death squads, and often finance themselves through illicit channels that cannot be traced to state spending; Mason and Krane (1989) have noted that states will often initiate violence in a struggle with civil society by targeting defiant elements with death squads. In a civil war context, the state will seek to "turn" captured guerrillas or entice their leaders into collaborating with the state through bribery, blackmail, and torture, creating fear and suspicion of "sellouts" within the rebel group and the larger population.

Counterinsurgency programs have been an integral aspect of authoritarian regimes' attempts to violently thwart opposition movements, yet their impact on transitions from authoritarianism remains poorly understood and undertheorized. In the ambiguous period after the formal cessation of hostilities, the government has strong incentives to maintain counterinsurgency until the last possible moment and even after the transition. Even when negotiators have addressed security sector reform, this process can remain incomplete as the security forces seek to shape the political transition. In particular, government elites' control of the security institutions whose reform is being negotiated, and into which guerrillas will be integrated, gives them leverage over rebel groups. State elites will attempt to use this leverage to preserve key aspects of their power, especially their grip on the post-transition military and police, even as political office changes hands

(McSherry 1997). The two main counterinsurgency strategies at this stage are to co-opt select rebel leaders through intelligence recruitment, and to marginalize or kill guerrillas who cannot be co-opted during the negotiations and security sector reform process.

State Formation, Civil-Military Relations, and Path Dependency

If South Africa's transition to democracy demonstrated the country's relative institutional strength and high level of state consolidation, the high levels of violence that prevailed before, during, and since have also exposed the tension between these state strengths on the one hand, and its predatory history, on the other. South Africa is especially typical of the ongoing tension between what Musah (2003) characterizes as the "Tillian" and "Weberian" paths to state formation, with the former defined as state consolidation through protection racket mechanisms, and the latter defined as state consolidation through bureaucratic expansion. For Musah, Africa's conflict-torn weak states demonstrate "Tillian" or "extreme Tillian" tendencies, whereby "processes of state reconfiguration… are characterized by security rackets, predation, and mercenary activity in an unending cycle of violence… in which the reassertion of statehood is in permanent competition with state collapse" (165). Yet the case of South Africa, which after a brutal civil war remains plagued by chronic insecurity and weak capacity towards many of its citizens, indicates that beneath the veneer of Weberian state legitimacy and control can lie a Tillian state.

A growing body of literature on the security-development nexus (Buur, Jensen and Stepputat 2007) explains how violent histories continue to shape social and economic development. SSR is therefore central to providing a context

of security in which democracy and development can flourish. Whereas there exists a broad spectrum of literature on state bureaucracies and interest groups and their roles in interacting and shaping various outcomes, the body of literature focusing on the impacts of security forces on democratic transition outcomes is relatively slim. The literature on civil military relations (Finer 1962; Diamond and Plattner 1996) has emphasized the security forces' "potential threat to the effective exercise or even the survival of civilian rule" (Diamond and Plattner 1996, ix), but focuses on issues of military "professionalism" and influence or interference in policymaking. This ignores the clandestine ways in which elements within security forces can undermine democratic forces, and fails to recognize that "professional"- i.e., well-organized and -trained forces- can, paradoxically, be better equipped to subvert democratic consolidation. Migdal emphasizes that "struggles for domination" within and between the state and society "have involved alliances, coalitions, and conflicts in multiple arenas, including various components of the state and other social forces" (1994, 17). In many cases, the state security forces have played prominent roles in such struggles.

Previous literature has used an organizational culture argument to explain why state security forces have exercised restraint, refraining from military intervention in uncertain times because of "[a] norm of civilian supremacy" (Taylor 2003, 2). However, the organizational culture argument has not been used systematically to explain security forces' propensity for clandestine violence, particularly as it has been calculated to shape political outcomes during and after democratic transitions. Taylor focuses on military involvement in "sovereign power issues" but doesn't consider a variety of subtler ways in which security forces can shape

politics; he emphasizes that widespread corruption in the military makes it "potentially unreliable as a defender of the state" (2003, 335), but omits the far more immediate threat it can pose to the local citizenry. Taylor's (2011) authoritative study of corruption, ineffectiveness, and low legitimacy in post-Soviet Russia's police and intelligence services captures how post-authoritarian policing typically involves repression and predation more than protection (178-9), but this framework has rarely been applied to post-civil war contexts in a way that emphasizes continuity with counterinsurgency operations.

Pereira and Ungar make the key point that in most authoritarian regimes, the police and military have been fused in such a way so as to "not allow a neat analytical separation between the two," a problem that often persists post-transition (2004, 264). In their discussion of security force violence in post-authoritarian Latin America, they emphasize that it is the "degree to which state violence is subject to the rule of law", not the "deployment of violence itself, that distinguishes an authoritarian regime from a democratic regime," finding that "public support for and mobilization around police reform are crucial to its enactment and success" (2004, 264-66). However, the legal restrictions that the state has imposed on police power in such instances are rarely sufficient to restrain the forces' violent legacies.

Path Dependency and State Violence

Kohli (2004) portrays institutions as social patterns that gel only over time, and argues that states with colonial histories are particularly vulnerable to path-dependent trajectories. As Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth point out, "institutions themselves become the object of contention", and elites may craft

"deliberate political strategies to transform structural parameters in order to win long-term political advantage" (1992, 21). These dynamics take on particular importance in the context of security institutions in transitions from authoritarianism, which can lead "to unanticipated patterns of domination and transformation" (Migdal, Kohli and Shue 1994, 8).

Here it is important to consider state power as arising not only from its capacity to enforce power, but from its legitimacy within civil society and the citizenry's attendant consent to submit to the state, especially in terms of its Weberian monopoly on the use of force. This takes on particular importance in the study of transitions from authoritarian rule, where elite-level transformation may leave certain institutions or levels largely unchanged, limiting the significance of the overall transformation for large sectors of society in a variety of important ways. The compromises that characterize such transitions mean that while some state institutions might transform completely, others will change only partially or not at all.

Democratic Transitions

In describing the "economic bases of democratization," Bates explains that authoritarian "tyrants" keep "hostages" when negotiating with insurgents, and that between the two kinds of hostages- military and economic- "only the latter is truly credible" (1999, 84). While there can be no doubt that the basis of South Africa's negotiated transition was indeed primarily economic, Bates underestimates the security forces' impact as a highly influential factor in the transition. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) were among the first to point out the role that military elites can retain during transitions, recognizing that the state

security apparatus acts as the gatekeeper for all other dimensions of reform. However, they regard the role of state security forces as being essentially binary, whereby the military either interdicts change or remains in its barracks. O'Donnell and Schmitter acknowledge that clandestine elements often enjoy considerable autonomy to pursue their own violent agendas even- or especially- as political developments transform old foes into partners at the negotiation table (1986). Yet the democratic transition literature hasn't considered the impact of clandestine state violence on elite pacting and SSR in pivotal moments that generate path-dependent outcomes. Even when authoritarian regimes include a well-articulated civilian leadership infrastructure, security force chiefs have been able to circumvent conventional channels and to exert their influence directly on heads of state and other key political decision makers (McSherry 2005). Furthermore, when security force elites have attempted to sabotage change, they have often secretly colluded with political elites. For example, Knight (2003) describes how the KGB launched its failed 1991 coup attempt to reverse Gorbachev's reforms at the behest of old-guard politicians within the Soviet government; after the transition, the KGB still maintained important political influence and corruption networks (Knight 2000).

A body of literature (e.g., Higley and Barton 1992; Best and Higley 2010) has examined elites' impacts on democratic consolidation, but without focusing on security elites' crucial role. Counterinsurgency programs' post-transition legacies include the stunting of state security sector reform (SSR) by preserving authoritarian tendencies and channels of corruption within these forces, thereby eroding their effectiveness and legitimacy. These compromised security institutions in turn contribute to high post-transition levels of urban violence, both

through an inability to police effectively and by actively participating in certain types of crime and political control. This strongly distorts and subverts democratic change. If, as Mac Ginty claims, "the key to understanding crime in a post-peace accord context lies in the 'persistence factors' through which the elements and dynamics of wartime persist into the post-peace accord period" (2006, 126), the key to understanding these 'persistence factors' lies in analyzing counterinsurgency, which in turn largely explains chronic post-authoritarian violence and insecurity.

Several authors have argued that transitions from authoritarianism are inherently path dependent because personnel, attitudes, and practices in state institutions tend to endure for years after a democratic government has been elected (e.g., O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Hagopian and Mainwaring 2005). The new state therefore retains many imprints of the old, including authoritarian legacies in civil-military relations (McSherry 1997). Counterinsurgency shifts the political spectrum to the right by restricting democratic participation even as the state transitions away from authoritarianism. Levitsky and Way measure competitive authoritarian regimes' coercive capacity according to two indicators: "scope," defined by the security apparatus's "effective reach"; and "cohesion," referring "to the level of compliance within the state apparatus." They also note that these regimes often exercise repression through covert "low intensity coercion" (2010, 58-9). Yet their focus on post-Cold War hybrid regimes does not consider prior institutional history, nor does it trace the continuity within these institutions across the democratic transition process. Most importantly, they examine the impact of security forces' coercion when it is wielded on behalf of the state, but not when it is wielded by security force elites to undermine the state.

Counterinsurgency's post-authoritarian legacies of disorder should be considered within the broader context of post-Cold War neo-liberal hegemony, and the phenomenon characteristic of many Third Wave democracies that Gills and Rocamora (1992), punning on the US counterinsurgency doctrine of 'low-intensity warfare,' have termed "low intensity democracy," in which "'elite democracies' in effect coexist with tacit military dictatorships. Social reform agendas that could have established the basis for broader popular participation and greater social justice have been abandoned" (Gills and Rocamora 1992, 501). This corresponds closely to what Oxhorn calls "neopluralism," "a market-centered pattern of political incorporation" in which "unprecedented" political rights are accompanied by narrowed "social rights of citizenship" (2007, 124-127). Mbembe has insisted on characterizing the African political transitions of democracy's 'third wave' as "recompositions" featuring "the co-existence, within the same dynamic, of elements belonging to warfare as to the conduct of civil politics" (Mbembe 1990, cited in Joseph 1999, 60). Counterinsurgency programs have been integral to securing what McSherry (2005) calls "the class orientation of the state." Even as power has shifted from authoritarian elites to democratic ones, the state has continued to "represent the interests of three very specific groups: the military hierarchy, the national economic elite, and the transnational corporations" (Donghi 1993, cited in McSherry 2005, 26).

Insurgency, Ideology, and Legitimacy

This study also makes an important contribution to the literature on insurgency, underscoring the crucial and oft-neglected role that the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), played during the anti-apartheid struggle.

The case of Umkhonto we Sizwe departs from recent findings (e.g., Weinstein 2007; Metelits 2010) that privilege structural explanations which explain the degree of success of insurgent movements through the nature and level of the economic and social endowments they possess. They argue that these factors in turn determine insurgent movements' use of violence against local populations. In this formulation the level of the insurgent group's popular legitimacy and their success in recruitment of cadres is based exclusively on their bargaining position vis-à-vis the local population, which is seen to be more effectively accomplished with lower levels of economic endowments necessitating lower levels of violence. Instead, this case suggests that political ideology, and not just structural conditions, can be the single most important factor in determining how a guerrilla movement interacts with a local population.

I define political ideology as a set of ideas that constitute a set of practices and actions in the political realm. The "greed vs. grievance" literature (e.g., Collier 2000; Keen 1998) has characterized political ideology in the narrow terms of "grievance," which fails to capture the nuances of ideology. Whereas "grievance" is a cruder conception of struggle motivation standing in opposition to instrumental motivations for rebellion, ideology represents a system of knowledge characterized by an interactive dynamic. This encapsulates both a top-down articulation of reasons for struggle from elites to masses, as well as bottom-up dissemination of grievances from masses to elites, which are interpreted according to a broader rubric. Revolutionaries across a broad geographical spectrum, such as Mao Zedong (1961), Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1961), and Frantz Fanon (1961), have all emphasized the importance of ideology in triggering and sustaining rebellion, and although their explanations for rebellion are undoubtedly

self-serving, we should not discard the role of ideology in overcoming the collective action problems posed by rebellion.

The "Old vs. New Civil Wars" debate also refutes the importance of ideology as a motivation for rebellion. Pointing to the variety of instrumental motives that have driven rebels and their supporters, Kalyvas (2001) cautions: "it is a grave mistake to infer the motivation of rank-and-file members from their leadership's articulation of its ideological messages" (107). Yet my research indicates that MK's rank-and-file were generally well-versed in the ideology of their struggle, and that their primary motivations for joining the struggle derived from the ANC's ideology of combating apartheid's class and racial inequalities. This ideology was widely disseminated by both the ANC leadership based in exile, and by grassroots organizations nominally aligned with the ANC. Anti-colonial struggle in southern Africa, and South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle in particular, were unique in that the racist ideology of apartheid and its institutions set the stage for a struggle in which ideological motivations proved far more important than the economic and military capabilities that are often privileged as the primary independent variables to explain the levels of success and failure of insurgent groups worldwide (Davidson 1981).

In her comparison of insurgencies in El Salvador and South Africa, Wood (2000) focuses heavily on the contribution of trade unions and other civic organizations to resisting apartheid, but underestimates MK's role in instilling a spirit of militancy within ANC ranks; in striking at the regime and its collaborators militarily; and in uniting and inspiring strikes, protests, and other forms of non-violent insurgency. Furthermore, in her discussion of "resolving civil wars with democratizing pacts" (2000, 204-8), Wood discusses the 'side

payments' made to various potential spoilers to keep negotiations on track, but ignores counterinsurgency's pernicious impacts both during and after the transition. Wood (2004) emphasizes the "pleasure in agency" derived from a variety of actors who aligned themselves with the FMLN rebels fighting El Salvador's government, but she does not theorize the role of political ideology outright.

Weinstein privileges structure over agency in his explanation of why some insurgent groups "commit high levels of abuse," arguing that "decisions about recruitment, organization, and violence cease to be driven by the actions of individuals and become, instead choices made under binding constraints imposed by the resources a group has at its disposal and the membership it has attracted to participate" (2007, 20-1). Although MK's insurgency against apartheid was undoubtedly "shaped by conditions that affect the viability of challenging the state" (Weinstein 2007, 21), my study finds that MK's political trajectory, and particularly its low levels of abuse towards civilians, was shaped primarily by its ideology, and as such was firmly agency-based. MK was driven by the ANC's ideology, which sought to overturn apartheid's racialized system with a stridently non-racial agenda, and to minimize civilian casualties while doing so. The case of MK contradicts Weinstein's contention that armed groups choose to use violence "as a natural outcome of a path of organizational evolution rather than a strategic choice made in response to changing conditions on the ground"; indeed, the ANC's decision to found its armed wing arose directly in response to the 1960 Sharpeville massacre of unarmed protesters and the accompanying realization that non-violent resistance had not caused the regime to flinch.

By insisting on ideology as endogenous to group formation, Weinstein

underestimates ideology's role in creating a robust movement that can withstand the severe challenges of confronting a ruthless and formidably armed regime. In the South African case, MK also prevailed in attracting more recruits and in building a stronger apparatus than its anti-apartheid competitor, APLA (the Azanian People's Liberation Organization, armed wing of the Pan-Africanist Congress), which emerged under the exact same conditions as the ANC and yet restricted its own pool of recruits on ideological grounds by refusing non-Africans into its ranks. Exogenous factors do not explain why the ANC and MK gained greater power and legitimacy than the PAC and APLA; ideology does.

Contrary to much of the literature on insurgent recruitment and competition between movements (e.g., Bloom 2005; Metelits 2010), in the South African case, rival guerrillas forces MK and APLA refrained from targeting each other or seeking through violence to 'outbid' each other to boost their popularity. Metelits argues: "Insurgents shape their strategies toward local communities according to whether they face competition" from rival groups that seek recruitment "from the same pool"; if rival groups are in competition for recruits, insurgents are more likely to "protect their perceived interests through means that can harm locals" (2010, 11). My research on the South African insurgency directly contradicts these findings, as MK succeeded in capturing the lion's share of liberation movement popularity vis-à-vis its rivals through its careful cultivation of a pan-ethnic image and its insistence on a high standard of political consciousness among its cadres. Harming locals would have been the most direct way for the ANC to undermine precisely the credibility and legitimacy that, even despite its relative shortage of material resources, made it such a formidable challenger to the apartheid regime.

My study also makes an important contribution to the literature on insurgency and civil war by highlighting the role of counterinsurgency both in recruiting informers within insurgent movements and in establishing, funding, and arming ostensibly independent or private actors, such as gangs, vigilante groups, and death squads, in order to establish plausible deniability for state violence. My dissertation demonstrates that clandestine state counterinsurgency strategies are often causally prior to individual motivations for engaging in civil war violence. The role of clandestine state recruitment has been critical in generating civil war violence that previous literature (Mueller 2000; Kalyvas 2006) has attributed to private, instrumental, and spontaneous motives. Meanwhile, Kalyvas (2006) examines motives for collaboration during civil war, but does not discuss its post-war implications for the state and civil society.

Counterinsurgency's Impact on Civil War Resolution and Security Sector Reform

This dissertation fills an important gap in the literatures on democratic transitions, civil war resolution, and security sector reform, which have ignored the causal link between counterinsurgency legacies and post-conflict violence. Civil war settlement often results in a nebulous outcome between war and peace (Mac Ginty 2006; Darby 2006; Hartzell and Hoddie 2007). Recent literature on civil war resolution has focused on "credible security guarantees" as a prerequisite for peace agreement implementation (Walter 1997; Glassmyer and Sambanis 2008). Spear notes the "tactical advantages" that 'cheating' affords to parties who seek to gain "an advantage over their rivals" while allowing the peace process to go forward (2002, 156).

In seeking to explain why post-transition outcomes often remain highly problematic, Mac Ginty emphasizes that during and after a peace process, many actors use a "finely calibrated" strategy that balances negotiations with "the capacity to engage in violence" (Mac Ginty 2006, 114), while Hoglund and Zartman posit that states pursue violent strategies during negotiations only "in unusual situations" (2006, 14). However, these formulations ignore the crucial advantages in power and resources a strong state enjoys over rebels, advantages that become magnified as both sides forswear violence, making it likely that the government will use clandestine means to tilt the playing field in its favor. Thus the state can renege on its commitments even as it ostensibly fulfills them, thereby tainting the outcome of reform.

Glassmyer and Sambanis expect stronger states to be "better able to control actors," making their "promises to implement" military integration "more credible" (2008, 367). Yet they also expect stronger states to be better at counterinsurgency, which is paradoxical given the government's temptation to pursue counterinsurgency strategies even as it offers rebels security guarantees. Stronger states especially can wield violence in ways that transcend the category of 'spoilers,' aiming not so much to derail negotiations as to leave an authoritarian imprint on their final outcome. Neither Stedman's (1997) original typology of spoilers, nor Mac Ginty's (2006) supplemental category of "accidental" spoilers, account for government violence calculated by incumbent decision makers to shape critical aspects of post-transition outcomes in lasting ways.

The literature on security sector reform focuses on peace settlement negotiation and implementation as the critical point where warring sides relinquish their ability to defend themselves and commit to establishing new security

institutions. According to Hartzell and Hoddie: "In most cases, implementing a military power-sharing or power-dividing arrangement requires collectivities to forego the capacity to protect their own interests and instead entrust their security to the newly established institutions of the postwar state" (2007, 98). Spear acknowledges that "during demobilization there is the potential for a security dilemma to operate" between the state and rebels, and emphasizes the importance of positioning "assembly points for demobilization" in such a way as to "reduce the fears of betrayal by an opponent" (2002, 146).

Yet this formulation assumes equilibrium between state and rebel forces, and ignores the inherent power imbalance that leaves rebels mostly powerless in the wake of a negotiated settlement. Because post-civil war security dilemmas tend to be particularly acute for rebels, it is critical to establish secure cantonment points where guerrillas will not fear betrayal (Spear 2002). But security guarantees for rebels mean little because governments will try to use counterinsurgency for clandestine 'cheating,' aiming especially to infiltrate rebel movements, recruit key decision makers, and to marginalize or kill those who refuse co-optation. These operations contribute to a civil war outcome favorable to the incumbent regime- especially incumbent members of state security forces- leaving mistrust between former enemies firmly in place.

Counterinsurgency's Post-Conflict Impact on the Security Sector

Sustaining counterinsurgency operations during negotiations increases the importance of secrecy and plausible deniability, both to avert a showdown with the state's political leadership and to avoid international condemnation that could weaken the state's bargaining position. Security force elites are typically more

radical than the moderate state leaders who negotiate with rebels. These elites

may be concerned with both the country's political future and their own personal

fates after reform, perpetuating authoritarian tendencies in post-conflict security

institutions and compromising their ability to provide effective internal security,

without which "formal democratic rules and equality before the law can mean

little in practice" (Call and Stanley 2001, 152). This prevents the "new" security

institutions from overcoming their reputations for violence and brutality, from

developing popular legitimacy.

As Toft points out, in most cases of negotiated settlements to end civil

wars, "[d]ue to the absence of a reformed set of security institutions, the state…

fails to integrate former rebels into the state military or police system in order to

make them part of the security solution" (2010, 37). Yet despite her focus on

security sector reform as a way to prevent the resumption of civil war, she does

not consider ex-combatants' roles in transforming post-transition security sector

performance and legitimacy. This represents an important lacuna in our

understanding of SSR's contribution to democratic transitions, particularly in

contexts where high levels of urban violence persist despite a successful transition

from authoritarianism. As the Iraqi case since the US invasion has demonstrated,

widespread exclusion of local ex-combatants from the post-war security forces can

deprive these forces of much needed expertise[1], while simultaneously creating an

entire disaffected class that is likely to engage in violence driven by grievance,

greed, or both (see, for example, Diamond 2005).

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[1] The comparison only goes so far, because the popular legitimacy of Saddam Hussein's
security forces in post-invasion Iraq was certainly far less widespread than that of
guerrilla armies in post-civil war contexts such as El Salvador, Guatemala, or South
Africa.

Rocky Williams, himself an MK veteran, emphasizes "the importance of ensuring that high levels of legitimacy ("buy-in") accrue" during security sector reform, and further stresses the importance of transforming "the culture of the institution," including its "leadership, management, and administrative ethos" (2006, 48). Williams stresses the importance of "build[ing] and maintain[ing] high levels of dialogue and partnership… within the hierarchy of authority and oversight" (56), yet this formulation assumes that authoritarian networks and tendencies within the armed forces have been dismantled, and does not account for their pernicious influence on civil-military relations. Williams also warns that unless security sector "transformation" "initiatives are thoroughly indigenized and imbued with practical, local content, then African civil-military relations will be no more than a reflection of "imported" non-African systems" (2006, 46). In the event, this is precisely what occurred in South Africa, where apartheid remained encoded in the post-transition security institutions.

Hanggi (2009) finds that legitimacy is closely tied to "local ownership" of SSR, whereby the communities being policed feel represented and protected by the forces policing them. Indeed, my study finds that whether they join new security institutions or not, former rebels are likely to feel marginalized by such settlements and to regard the new institutions with suspicion. The rebels' constituent populations are likely to regard rebels themselves as legitimate defenders, and to feel ownership of new institutions to the extent that they incorporate the rebel forces. Thus counterinsurgency destroys the sense of popular ownership of these institutions, damaging a critically important aspect of the democratic transition. State security forces are also especially likely to engage in corruption in counterinsurgency contexts; for example, "Russian units in

Chechnya have been plagued by rampant corruption and have been linked with narcotics trafficking, prostitution rings, illegal arms-dealing, and kidnappings for ransom," albeit in the context of an ongoing political and military struggle (Kramer 2004, 18). These criminal networks and practices are likely to endure in the post-conflict era. Tanner's observation that police forces are typically "very weak, even dangerously inept, at crime prevention and standard detective work during the reform and postauthoritarian period" should be considered through this lens (2000, 121).

A negotiated agreement may also ensure that civil servants, including security force members, keep their jobs in the post-transition state through a "sunset clause" intended as a "side payment" to ensure that they do not defect or rebel against the settlement (Wood 2000). In such cases, it becomes all the more difficult for the insurgent movement to monitor or enforce reform in the new security forces, especially former rebels' adequate integration. Meanwhile, marginalizing ex-guerrillas in a context of chronic poverty pushes them to use their combat skills for criminal ends, contributing to post-transition violence.

During and after a negotiated transition, suspicions about "sellouts" and spies often endure among the guerrillas' constituent masses even long after political violence has subsided. The advancement of certain former rebels within the reformed state institutions, along with others' marginalization, raises questions about the existence of intelligence operations to promote ex-guerrillas amenable to preserving the status quo within the security forces. Meanwhile, security forces' mutually profitable links with criminal networks often endure into the new era as a form of clandestine "side payment."

Transitional Justice

By focusing on counterinsurgency legacies, this dissertation also highlights the shortcomings of post-conflict truth and reconciliation commissions. For all the fanfare that has surrounded some of these processes- and South Africa's in particular- they have often favored symbolic reconciliation over concrete transformation, distracting domestic and international audiences from the marginalization of insurgents and the persistence of authoritarian tendencies in post-transition state institutions. This challenges assertions in the "transitional justice" literature (e.g., Kritz 1995; Elster 2004; Stan 2009) that such processes can, "if properly pursued," allow "for rebuilding a democratic community established on trust, individual rights, rule of law, and respect for truth" (Tismaneanu 2009, xi). Writing about South Africa's TRC and its aftermath, Gibson (2004) notes truth commissions' ability to build legitimacy in post-transition government institutions, yet in his analysis of South Africa's exemplary judiciary he neglects to examine the chronically mistrusted police forces.

That literature's emphasis on the redemptive qualities of social participation in truth-telling occludes the need for thoroughgoing institutional transformation to erase destructive authoritarian legacies. As Elster points out, "parties may… be constrained by the continued presence of an old regime that retains control over the military and security forces" (2004, 246), yet the constraints themselves need to be specified. Marais emphasizes that the TRC "function[ed] in a broader socio-economic- and ideological- context that demonstrably reinforces existing equalities, cleavages, and antagonisms, but its remit prevented it from piercing the indifference of the privileged" (2001, 302). Furthermore, even though truth commissions such as South Africa's have brought to light an important volume of

information about the regime's crimes, mainly from low- and mid-level security personnel, the full scope of regime stratagems and complicities have remained largely hidden. In particular, since the transition South Africa's most burning unresolved question has been that of which ANC officials were apartheid spies (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003).[2]

South Africa's Post-Conflict Urban Violence

South Africa has maintained soaring violent crime rates since its transition to democracy in 1994. In per capita and real terms, it has one of the highest rates of murder and rape in the world (South African Police Service 2008). Urban violence has remained the biggest challenge to the state since its transition from apartheid (Shaw 2002), preoccupying and constraining state policy. Kynoch (2007) has emphasized the uniquely high levels of South African urban violence when compared to other contexts of urban post-conflict poverty in Africa and elsewhere, specifying *relative* poverty's propensity to cause urban violence. Indeed, South Africa has recently surpassed Brazil for the widest gap between rich and poor in the world. The transition from apartheid to democracy and universal political rights was not, for vast segments of the South African population, accompanied by significant improvements in living standards, or indeed, in a significantly improved relationship with the state. Yet despite the

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[2] Although the 1996-98 TRC uncovered the truth about many apartheid killings, it stopped short of revealing certain crucial details; in particular, a list of ANC collaborators mysteriously disappeared from the TRC files before it was to be made public (author's confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009). Bell and Ntsebeza write: "The TRC chairman, Alex Boraine, claimed that there was neither 'the time nor the resources to sniff out informers.' The truth is there was not the political will to do so, or to probe too deeply into the system itself, let alone how the transition came about" (2003, 345).

characteristic "widespread routinization of violence in the everyday practices of the counterinsurgency forces" (Warren 2000, 237), most of the literature on urban violence in South Africa does not address counterinsurgency legacies as a key source of ongoing violence and instability.

A broad spectrum of literature about the violence during and after South Africa's transition (Mamdani 1996; Chipkin 2004; Steinberg 2008; Kynoch 2005, 2008) adopt culturalist or instrumentalist explanations, underestimating or ignoring the role of the state's counterinsurgency program in triggering and sustaining this violence. Typical of this trend, sociologist Bozzoli claims that "post-apartheid townships became intractable and violence-ridden places in which ordinary people made their lives, but in which powerful forces continued to create ungovernability where the political call for ungovernability no longer existed" (2004, 284). She goes on to pin blame for South Africa's current "social decay" on "the lethal cultural cocktail of youth militancy, a culture of boycotting, high levels of tolerance of violent behaviour, endemic crime and easily available hard and soft drugs [that] have threatened to shape the new order in destructive ways."

Kurtenbach critiques the "social decay" explanation for urban violence, insisting: "causes of youth violence in post-war societies are closely related to the experiences of war and widespread violence at different levels" (2008, 8). Yet it is critical to reach beyond war's impacts and point to the specific mechanisms of counterinsurgency and their legacies in sustaining "ungovernability." In the same way that corruption is the hallmark of the neo-patrimonial state's location *within* society (Bayart, Ellis, Hibou 1999), so has decentralized violence originating in the State become embedded in post-authoritarian South Africa. Authors writing

about other violent states have emphasized state counterinsurgency's role in creating and sustaining criminal gangs and vigilante outfits (Campbell 2000, 9).

Roger Southall writes with foresight about the "perpetual debate about the quality of [South Africa's] democracy, notably with regard to three issues: the tension between democracy and South Africa's status as a 'dominant party state'; an incipient clash between democracy and constitutional liberalism; and whether the state has the capacity to realize the ambitious aims outlined in its constitution given the weight of apartheid social deficits" (2000, 148). To these we could add the challenge of reforming the state security institutions in order to make a clean break with apartheid's violent past. While there is much literature on the South African security forces' transition from authoritarianism to democracy (e.g.: Howe 1994; Kynoch 1996; Cawthra and Moller, eds. 1997), and a proliferation of literature post-apartheid security institutions, very little of this literature addresses either counterinsurgency and its legacies or the integration of former guerrillas into the security forces. Furthermore, these former guerrillas' voices, perspectives, and experiences are virtually absent within this literature. My dissertation address an undertheorized root causes of urban violence in South Africa, and also sheds light on the role that weak security sector institutions play in the country's continuing urban violence crisis.

Hypothesis

My primary hypothesis is that far from playing a minor role in state-society relations and the transition to democracy in South Africa, counterinsurgency and its legacies crucially shaped state-society relations before and after the post-apartheid transition. My study's greatest contribution is to

emphasize the importance of the security sector's impact on state-level outcomes during democratic consolidation, an impact which most of the literature on transitions has thus far underestimated. One of my most important findings is that by marginalizing former rebels with high popular legitimacy, counterinsurgency disables democratic reform of the police and military (the security sector), while preserving entrenched criminal networks and racist tendencies within them. This, in turn, affects political outcomes in two crucial ways. First, it perpetuates institutional illegitimacy and corruption, and weakens security sector responses to waves of post-transition violence, thereby distorting democratic outcomes. And, second, it leaves lasting impacts at the social capital and participatory levels.

Chapter Description

The chapters that follow examine the legacy of counterinsurgency in influencing the nature of democratic transitions and state-society relations in more specific empirical terms. Utilizing South Africa as my case study, I explore the ways in which counterinsurgency legacies determine the trajectory of the "negotiated" transition to democratic regimes, and play a key role in determining whether this transition is consolidated over time. In doing so, this dissertation helps to explain why some countries like South Africa witness a lower level of social capital associated with urban violence while other countries with similar institutional trajectories but different levels of state capacity and higher levels of social capital enjoy greater levels of social peace and are more effective at democratic consolidation.

This dissertation not only breaks from conventional explanations of urban violence based purely on sociological and cultural analysis, but contributes to the

academic literature in important ways. Specifically, this research addresses the gap in the literature on counterinsurgency by taking into account state-level outcomes that go beyond examining the onset, prolongation and end to civil wars. It also complements the literature on democratic consolidation by addressing the question of why high levels of urban violence persistent following democratic transitions. And, finally, this work contributes to the scholarship on social capital in democratization, which rarely addresses the prior question having to do with the institutional and political origins of the so-called "dark side" of social capital.

This research also offers an analytical model that takes account of the mix of strategies and motives underpinning the response of the state to urban violence in less-developed countries, and it holds lessons for policymakers as well as students of politics. It suggests the persistence of urban violence in the African context is determined not only by the actors in civil society but also by the political competition of state elites seeking to garner legitimacy for political objectives.

The dissertation begins with an analysis of South African insurgents during apartheid. Chapter Two of my study explores the history of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (commonly referred to as MK), underscoring the movement's broad legitimacy among South Africa's black masses during the apartheid era. The chapter depicts MK as the closest thing South Africa ever had to an armed force that represented and defended a majority of the population's interests. MK achieved this not only because it stood against the racist apartheid regime, but especially because it embodied the ANC's non-racial ideology and, even in the midst of civil war, hewed to a doctrine of using violence selectively and, wherever possible, avoiding civilian casualties. Indeed, MK's staunch non-

racialism was the key to attracting not only blacks, but also recruits from South Africa's Indian, Colored, and even white communities.

MK expressed its strategy as being "80% political, 20% military," meaning that its primary goals were to raise support for and awareness of the ANC within South Africa, while placing a strong emphasis on politicizing its forces to ensure that they would select legitimate state targets before attacking them. In stark contrast to the apartheid regime, the ANC's armed wing sought to avoid harming civilians, and regarded violence as only one among many strategies in the liberation struggle. The chapter includes a case study of MK's little-known involvement in the Angolan civil war from 1975-1989 to emphasize the movement's effectiveness and cohesion as a fighting force, and its non-predatory relationships with the local communities surrounding MK bases in northeastern Angola. Based on extensive interviews with former MK guerrillas, this chapter suggests that Umkhonto we Sizwe's personnel were qualified and prepared for the challenge of creating new security forces in a democratic South Africa, a task from which they were systematically marginalized.

Chapter Three examines the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency program in historical detail. It situates this program within the broader context of the apartheid regime's alliance with the West during the Cold War, and its status as the most elaborate and longest standing of the interlinked regional white minority counterinsurgency programs in Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique. This chapter uses my categories of "blunt" (i.e., overt) and "sharp" (i.e., covert) counterinsurgency techniques to highlight the full spectrum of police, military, and intelligence tactics. The chapter traces the origins and evolution of apartheid counterinsurgency, as the regime honed its strategies of

using clandestine units and proxy forces, along with front companies and psychological operations (PSYOPS, in military parlance), to wage an increasingly elaborate war against the national liberation movements and their supporters in neighboring African countries. This counterinsurgency war gradually overshadowed the regime's use of conventional military and police forces, especially as the onset of negotiations in 1990 made the plausible deniability of these operations increasingly important.

Using this background, the chapter places particular emphasis on the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency program's operations during the 1990-94 transitional period. Using archival sources and interviews with ex-combatants, this chapter tells the hidden history of South African counterinsurgency during the transition, revealing a variety of interlocking strategies apparently conceived at the highest echelons of the apartheid security forces to undermine the ANC and to shape the country's transition from apartheid to democracy, strategies still in effect during *the month that elections were being held*. In particular, the chapter examines evidence of South African Military Intelligence operations to recruit or blackmail high-ranking ANC officials during the negotiations; evidence of a larger conspiracy to assassinate MK commander and South African Communist Party chief Chris Hani, killed in Johannesburg in April 1993; and evidence of a concerted plan to persecute and marginalize MK veterans seeking to join South Africa's post-transition security forces, while staffing those same forces with ANC and PAC members who had been recruited beforehand by South African Military Intelligence. This chapter emphasizes the possibility of an agenda held by personnel within the security forces that was distinct from the agenda that the South African state was pursuing in its negotiations with the ANC.

Chapter Four examines the Bantustan of Transkei as a case study in order to illustrate the history of confrontation between MK insurgents and the apartheid regime's ubiquitous counterinsurgency forces. This came to a head during the transitional period after the dismantling of apartheid laws in 1990, but before the ANC's 1994 rise to power. As a case study, the Bantustan of Transkei during this period further illustrates MK's role as legitimate defenders of the local population. The apartheid regime created the Bantustan system of ostensibly independent black "homelands" as a way of outsourcing the enforcement of racist governance to supposedly sovereign black leaders, who had in reality been handpicked by apartheid politicians and who enjoyed their military backing.

As opposed to the ANC's illegal status in the other Bantustans, Transkei was unique in that its leader from 1987-1994, Bantu Holomisa, developed overt ANC sympathies soon after seizing power in a coup. Holomisa unbanned the ANC and PAC in Transkei a full year before the apartheid regime followed suit; he also allowed MK forces and networks to flourish on Transkeian soil. This inevitably led the South African military to attempt to overthrow Holomisa in November 1990, but the MK forces in Transkei thwarted this coup attempt and helped to maintain Holomisa in power until the free and fair elections of 1994, when the Bantustans were dissolved. This case study reinforces the historical portrait of MK as a cohesive and effective fighting force with high popular legitimacy that resisted the apartheid regime's predatory strategies in any way it could. It also serves to illustrate the apartheid regime's intensified counterinsurgency program in the transitional period following Mandela's 2 February 1990 release from prison and the onset of negotiations with the ruling National Party.

Chapter Five explores the marginalization of MK veterans in South Africa's SSR process, and sheds important new light on the persecution of MK cadres assembled at the Wallmansthal military base for integration into the new security forces. It analyzes a wealth of interviews and ANC and MK policy documents from the transition years 1990-94 that describe MK's vision for transforming the security forces, juxtaposing this against the continuity of apartheid attitudes and personnel within these institutions. It points to the ongoing lack of integration of MK veterans into the post-transition security forces, and to those forces' enduring racist attitudes and involvement in crime.

Chapter Six departs from some of the empirical narrative, using critical theory in order to analyze the hegemony that counterinsurgency and its discourses continue to exercise in a variety of ways within the South African state, civil society, and in their mutual relations. I argue here that these types of discourses routinely obfuscate the history of MK's anti-apartheid struggle as well as some of the essential challenges for democratic consolidation, while misinterpreting the "epidemic" of urban violence in the country. This contributes to the critical studies literature, fusing a critical framework, including narrative accounts, with an analysis of political and institutional transition from authoritarianism.

In line with this analytical objective, I use a Gramscian framework to analyze the ways that counterinsurgency has exercised hegemony by shaping the very terms on which scholars and participants alike have discussed the transformation of the state and its security forces. It underscores counterinsurgency's influence in beholding the new government to the military-industrial complex, and in prompting the post-apartheid state to replicate aspects of its predecessor in dealing with urban violence and other problems facing civil

society since 1994. It analyzes divisions between elites and masses within the ANC that contributed to MK's marginalization. This chapter then points to low levels of public trust in the security forces as a counterinsurgency legacy, and a consequence of the slow pace reform in these institutions. It theorizes South Africa's growing gap between rich and poor- the highest in the world- and the growing disconnect between the state and society as further legacies of a counterinsurgency program which, at its root, was conceived to protect and entrench racial and class privilege in a country founded on sharp socio-economic inequalities.

Methodology

I consider South Africa to be a paradigmatic case "exemplifying extreme value for within-case analysis" (George and Bennett 2005) for analyzing counterinsurgency's impact on transitions from authoritarianism, for several key reasons: South Africa represents a case of successful civil war settlement, and its transition to democracy has, by most metrics, been very successful. Post-transition elections have been regular, free, fair, and peaceful; it has the most vibrant economy on the continent; a robust independent judiciary protects strong political and press freedoms; and the 1996-98 Truth and Reconciliation Commission, however imperfect, held the previous regime more accountable than similar processes elsewhere. Given the conditions and outcome, the effect of counterinsurgency on the transition should have been weak, yet my findings show that it nevertheless played a critical role. We can deduce that in other cases of transitions from authoritarianism whose outcomes remain even less conclusive, counterinsurgency is likely to have had at least as strong an impact.

In particular, the South African security forces' lack of reform (Mashike 2008) and low popular legitimacy (Chikwanha 2005; Steinberg 2008), along with the persistence of widespread urban violence, stand in contradistinction to the relative success of other post-authoritarian reforms, and points to these institutions' susceptibility to strategies of clandestine violence by previous security elites. This study focuses on the history of guerrillas struggling to seize the South African state, and on the evolution of the state's counterinsurgency program. To this end, I employ a combination of ethnographic, process-tracing, and historical institutional methodologies.

Using a single case study for in-depth analysis is an ideal method for evaluating institutional historical processes over time (Collier 1993). I have used the process tracing method to engage "in a close processual analysis of the unfolding of events over time within the case," to explore in rich detail the history of insurgency and counterinsurgency in South Africa, and the aftermath of this conflict post-transition (Collier 1993, 115). For my analysis, I have used archival research and semi-structured interviews with local officials, police, and residents in my research site. Rathbun has emphasized the value of the "semi-structured" interview as a "directed research strategy in which researchers seek to uncover some degree of objective truth" (2008, 687). Migdal affirms the importance of "'closely viewed crucial instances' – case studies reflecting the rootedness of the scholar in society- in order to make persuasive comparative generalizations" (1994, 9).

Historical Institutionalism and Process Tracing

The historical institutionalist framework is a particularly useful tool to trace the continuities and cleavages in South Africa's security institutions before, during, and after the transition from authoritarianism (Katznelson 1997, 85). Focusing on institutions in this context affords the purchase required to explain how authoritarian vestiges can remain embedded in state institutions during and after "extraordinary moments of regime transformation" (Katznelson 1997, 85). My study highlights how, following "critical junctures" like democratic transitions, "institutions continue to evolve in response to changing environmental conditions and ongoing political maneuvering but in ways that are constrained by past trajectories" (Thelen 1999, 387). My study uses within-case comparison to highlight "variables… that explain important differences in regime and institutional outcomes across a range of cases" (Thelen 1999, 390). Historical institutionalism is a particularly useful framework to study institutional evolution in a post-civil war context, as it illuminates "the players, their interests and strategies, and the distribution of power among them" by "drawing attention to the way political situations are structured" (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992, 12-13).

In this study, I employ the process-tracing method that George and Bennett refer to as "analytic explanation," whereby a study "converts a historical narrative into an analytical causal explanation" (2005, 211). This use of "highly specific" narrative is especially important when dealing with hidden histories that do not form part of the mainstream historical narrative- in this case, the narrative of clandestine violence and its impacts during and after South Africa's transition from authoritarianism. In the context of ongoing conflict during that time, the

specificity of historical detail helps greatly to contextualize it within the broader narrative, and often- though not always- contains within it an implicit explanation about why such important histories have remained hidden. Thus in seeking to explain the lack of genuine transformation in South Africa since the transition from authoritarianism, this study seeks to "identify… different paths to an outcome" and to "point out variables that [have otherwise been] left out in the [other] comparison[s] of cases" (George and Bennett 2005, 215). Process tracing permits "causal inference on the basis of a few cases" (George and Bennett 2005, 215), and the histories gathered here from interview and archival data reveal a "hidden history" of South Africa's transition and its aftermath. The narrative that this study establishes permits us to make important inferences about the direction of South Africa's transition, and to construct a vision of how that transition might have proceeded differently.

I use process tracing to highlight the emergence of the ANC's armed wing, MK, and its development as a force that in general adhered to stringent ideological standards that stressed the restrained use of violence and the transformation of apartheid's economic and racial injustices. I emphasize MK's popular legitimacy among South Africa's African majority during the struggle years and trace MK's evolution during the struggle years. I also trace the MK's role during the bloody transitional years 1990-94, and the marginalization of its cadres both within the ANC and within the South Africa's 'new' security forces, both during and after the transition. I also emphasize the extensiveness of the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency program, and its intensification during apartheid's final decade and following the onset of negotiations. I argue that the apartheid regime's clandestine violent strategies contributed greatly to sustaining

high levels of violence after South Africa's transition to democracy, and in persistently low security force legitimacy and effectiveness.

Whereas the literature on criminal violence in South Africa has shown other contributing factors to sustaining this violence, one of my dissertation's contributions is to outline counterinsurgency's impact on this outcome. To achieve this, I trace the exclusion of former insurgents from the post-transition security forces and argue that their marginalization weakened these institutions by depriving them of popular legitimacy. I also trace security force involvement in criminal activity during and after South Africa's democratic transition to emphasize this causal link. I use interviews with ex-combatants, civil servants, and academics, as well as archival documents and statistical data to measure and demonstrate these outcomes.

Guerrilla Ethnography

"[T]he study of the margins is important not only for communicating and interpreting the voices of less powerful people, but also because the knowledge produced in the margins may sometimes be, in the world of truth claims, more accurate than that generated in the center. People in the margins may have more than "another perspective" to contribute; as actors close to local processes of political change, they sometimes have more detailed information about certain types of phenomena than do political and social elites… ethnography offers an opportunity not only for enriching our understanding of perspectives on politics, but also for identifying otherwise elusive causal mechanisms, for more firmly establishing what happened and why" (Allina-Pisano 2009, 56)

A counterinsurgency program's full extent and duration often remains unclear long after the conflict's end, just as its planners intended. The two best sources for researching counterinsurgency history are therefore declassified archival documents and personal interviews. Although the topic of apartheid counterinsurgency is well-ploughed terrain, hardly any existing literature has focused on interviews with ex-guerrillas, who were the regime's intended targets, and who remain mostly confined to South Africa's margins even today. Using extensive interview-based field research, I have drawn on insights from ethnographic methodology in my study of these ex-guerrillas' 'hidden histories' as a case where "informal practices drive formal politics, …where political actors hide their activity," and "where the politics of less powerful people are the object of study" (Pisano 2009, 54).

The purpose of counterinsurgency is to shape historical outcomes without leaving a trace. Decades after a conflict's end, the counterinsurgency program's historical trajectory and impact can be still very difficult to identify and easy for its architects, agents, and apologists to obscure and deny. Even when its existence is undisputed, the full reach and duration of a counterinsurgency program's operations often remain shrouded in mystery, just as its planners intended. The two most common sources that enable the researcher to develop a portrait of a counterinsurgency program are therefore declassified archival documents and personal interviews, especially with those who were the program's intended targets.

I have relied on 375 pages of primary-source documents from the South African History Archives containing much information on apartheid clandestine operations during the transition that surfaced only partially or not at all at the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. At its core, my study is based on material collected in interviews with 13 former members of the African National Congress (ANC)'s armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (or MK, isiXhosa for 'Spear of the Nation'). Over the course of two months, I interviewed these men in and around the city of Mthatha, in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, and in Johannesburg. Three of these ex-guerrillas had been regional commanders, two others high-ranking officers, One had belonged to an elite unit within the guerrilla force, and most were well-placed to offer important insights. These interviews shed new light on the apartheid counterinsurgency program during South Africa's 1990-94 democratic transition, one of the bloodiest and most disputed periods in the country's history. Interviewing ex-guerrillas who fought apartheid and constructing a narrative of their struggle can be an imposing challenge:

> Returned exiles, especially those belonging to Umkhonto we Sizwe, are reluctant to expose themselves emotionally and seek to preserve a façade of invulnerability. Problems of trust are evident in this trend…. Life in the [MK training] camps [in African host countries] eroded trust especially of those who had not had similar experiences. A strong theme that emerges in interviews and questionnaires is *the respondents' need to contain within themselves information that might damage them in some way if it were leaked*. Those who went through similar experiences might be the only ones trusted with such information. (Skinner 1998, cited in Gear 2002, 35; emphasis added)

The ex-guerrillas' reluctance to speak openly about their experiences has largely been due to fear of the uncertain circumstances that are a legacy of the apartheid counterinsurgency program, a fear borne out by the nature of the

transition itself, as we shall see. For many ex-combatants, the fear of leaking damaging information is not merely a vestige of a career led in absolute secrecy. Many remain mistrustful of the South African state and its security forces to this day, precisely because of the incomplete nature of the transition within these institutions. One former cadre emphasized that the most important task of a guerrilla during the struggle was "not to distort information."[3]

These interviews are supplemented by interviews with local policemen, private security officers, municipal employees, ANC party members, and academics. The relatively small sample of ex-guerrillas I interviewed is offset by the long duration of many of the interviews, and the details provided therein. When notified of my plan to interview former guerrillas, several South African researchers and academics warned me that locating ex-guerrillas would be a great challenge, that getting them to talk was likely to be very difficult, and that getting them to tell me anything of substance, even more so. The two ex-guerrillas who were most circumspect about their experiences both worked in various branches of the South African security forces, and were understandably unwilling to disclose anything that might compromise their careers. Some ex-guerrillas were more guarded in what they chose to reveal, but most were quite candid and some appeared relieved to be unburdening themselves of harrowing details they had rarely shared.

This is an inductive study in which the topic of counterinsurgency itself and the conclusions I draw about it derive from the research subjects I met and the stories they told me, as well as from archival sources. My archival research extensively corroborates my interviews. I conducted the field research for this

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[3] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

study during two months spent in South Africa, most of it in Mthatha (whose official spelling prior to 1994 was 'Umtata'), formerly the capital of the Bantustan of Transkei and today one of the largest cities in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, with an estimated population of between 600,000 and 800,000. Through a set of fortuitous circumstances, I came to befriend a group of former Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrillas who ran a private security company together. Within several hours of being introduced, these men invited me to move as a guest into their house for the duration of my stay. In addition to affording me the closest possible exposure to their lives and stories, living under their roof also protected me from the constant menace of South Africa's urban environment. These former guerrillas were widely known and well respected in the community; nobody wanted to tangle with them.

As their guest, I was also able to maximize the "snowball" technique of gathering interviews. The snowball method was integral not only in locating ex-guerrillas, but in gaining their trust so they could talk to me freely about their experiences. My hosts introduced me to other former guerrillas and vouched for my trustworthiness, opening doors that would have otherwise remained firmly shut even had I managed to find them. Thus I became as much a participant observer in my research as I was an interpreter of interviews, archival records, and other sources of data; I was "neck deep" in my research context, which Edward Schatz maintains is necessary "to generate knowledge based on that context" (2009, 5). The distance that often separates the researcher from the researched, especially in a country so dramatically polarized along race and class lines, was closed considerably, though it would have been impossible to close it altogether. Because I had not expected to be able to interview ex-guerrillas in

depth, my back-up field research plan consisted of archival research and interviews with such academics and civil servants as would be willing to be interviewed. I was fortunate that interviews with ex-guerrillas indeed became the main thrust of my research, while I deployed my backup plan to gather secondary research.

Living under the same roof as ex-guerrillas blurred the usual boundaries between researcher and subject, boundaries that tend to be all the more defined between a foreign white researcher and local African informants in a country awash with apartheid legacies. This may seem problematic from the perspective of maintaining "objectivity" in my research, since I became empathetic towards my interviewees and predisposed to absorbing their interpretations of the history they had lived through. Yet, with Dvora Yanow (2009), I insist that a search for "objectivity" under these circumstances is in any case fruitless and counterproductive, for several reasons: First, as Yanow insists, this "is the heart of a hermeneutic phenomenology that presupposes that the meanings of social realities are intersubjectively constructed and that understandings of them derive from prior knowledge" (2009, 290).

Less abstractly, it is clear that otherwise, my access to this data would have been severely restricted, if it were granted at all. Furthermore, the very data I sought on the histories and legacies of persecution and exclusion by and within South African security institutions are located in the margins of the state, among those who were persecuted and excluded. "Objectivity," in this context, is precisely the scientific voice of what Lalu (2009), following Guha (1994), calls "the colonial archive," whose hegemonic narrative- even during South Africa's democratic era- continues to marginalize critical perspectives on apartheid

history. I have also observed Schatz's admonition to "be skeptical about aspects of individual testimony," (2009, 7) and wherever possible I have used archival materials to corroborate the knowledge derived from interviews (Gerring 2007, 104). In virtually all cases, the interviews and archival sources have complemented each other, dovetailing to provide a seamless narrative and fresh perspective on South African political processes.

Schatz further points to a "second and less common understanding of ethnography" as a "*sensibility* that goes beyond face-to-face contact. It is an approach that cares- with the possible emotional engagement that implies- to glean the meanings that the people under study attribute to their social and political reality" (2009, 5; emphasis in original). We can elaborate that the more a researcher is immersed in a community that has historically been persecuted and marginalized, the more such a sensibility is critical to establishing reciprocal bonds of trust, and to crystallizing the researcher's understandings of subaltern survival and resistance strategies.

Schatz's observation that "people are 'insiders' or 'outsiders' by degree in any named group or community" (2009, 6) is underscored by an experience I had while living in Mthatha. During my stay, an important local ethno-political figure was charged with serious crimes; among the media assembled to cover the trial was a photojournalist from Johannesburg. On the lookout for a scoop, the photojournalist soon took a keen interest in the ex-guerrillas present at the trial, and, noticing my interactions with them, asked me whether these men in fact possessed the experience and credentials that they were reputed to have. I demurred and dodged the question. When I mentioned this later to my hosts, they expressed satisfaction that I had revealed nothing, since they believed this

photojournalist was likely to "distort information and cause confusion." Although he was a black South African fluent in Xhosa, whereas I was a white foreigner who spoke only English, the photojournalist failed to gain the ex-guerrillas' trust, and they remained suspicious of his motives. I had found myself in the unexpected role of gatekeeper to a realm of historical knowledge that remains sensitive to this day.

Several interview subjects for this study had been captured and tortured by the apartheid security forces, and not all had recovered equally well. One man, who bore horrific scars on his torso from having been first brutalized with a power drill by his torturers, then left for dead in a trash dumpster, experienced severe flashbacks while talking to me. As he started to relate his story he suddenly began spiraling into the hell of his trauma, sobbing uncontrollably; it shocked me to realize that looking into my Caucasian face while I asked questions about the past had likely reminded him of his torturers, triggering the flashback. "I saw faces," he explained, after walking off into the yard for a while to regain his composure. His determination to overcome the horror of memory and tell me his story seemed as intense as had been his resolve to survive the torture. I later learned that this particular man was saved by street children who, while foraging for food, found him in the dumpster and brought him to hospital. The homeless children would periodically visit to check on his progress over the course of his hospital stay. However, he fled the hospital before his wounds had fully healed out of fear that the security forces would come there to find him. Indeed, I had heard about several instances of the apartheid forces coming to hospitals to find resistance fighters wounded in shootouts, and murdering them in their beds. My hosts told me that since then, despite being unemployable and destitute, this man

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has always given money to street children. Since the transition, he survives thanks to support from former comrades. Like many other MK veterans, he has received no compensation from the government to this day.

Another ex-guerrilla who had been captured along with two comrades in the mid-1980s spoke of having been denied food in captivity for several weeks; his captors then inserted an electrical wire into his anus and switched on the current. "Then, they would feed us," he said, explaining that the pain of defecating after this torture was just as bad as the torture itself. In another interview during one of Mthatha's cold, drizzly afternoons, the same ex-guerrilla, dissatisfied with the kerosene heater going at full blast right next to us, turned to give an employee some cash with instructions that he go out and buy a brand-new electric heater. "They used to keep us naked for months in prison," he explained. "The floor was always wet with dirty water. Now, I don't like to be cold."

Most of the ex-guerrillas told me I was the first researcher of any kind to ask them about their experiences in the struggle. I encountered barely any suspicion, but during one interview with an ex-guerrilla on a balmy evening in his Johannesburg backyard, I heard a nearby commotion going on in isiXhosa between his wife, her friend, and one of my friends. Amidst the discussion, I heard my friend hotly invoke the late Joe Slovo, the most senior white ANC member and a longtime Umkhonto we Sizwe commander; this caught my attention. She later told me that the veteran's wife and her friend were incredulous that he, of all people, was "selling out" by discussing MK history with a white man. In response, my friend had upbraided them, insisting "that's Joe Slovo's son!" to bolster my credibility, and to remind them of the non-racial ethos of the ANC's struggle. Subsequently, a barbecue and reggae dance party dispelled any

lingering tensions, establishing my credentials as a white man capable not only of asking questions about struggle history, but of holding my own in late-night dancing, imbibing, and singing.

Another former MK commander explained his motives for disclosing to me: "Listen, we MK veterans now have nothing. That's why I helped to form the [MK] Veterans' Association, because most of us are living in poverty. So I figure, now we have that freedom we fought so hard for, what is there for me to hide?"[4]

These episodes indicate that even after the advent of democracy in South Africa and the establishment of universal rights, the historical record of the anti-apartheid struggle remains largely safeguarded within the communities that waged it. Despite the public revelation of this previously secret history through such mechanisms as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and its entry, albeit partial, into the mainstream historical record, many people oppressed during apartheid have remained reluctant to openly reveal or share their experiences. Nor did these people necessarily assume, even 15 years after South Africa's democratic transition, that a white interviewer's motives were benign.

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[4] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Methodology and Representativeness: Deriving Theory From a Small Sample

My sample of ex-guerrillas represents a 'convenient sample,' bounded by logistical and political obstacles and challenges, including my own security and preserving the confidentiality of my informants. All my informants granted me interviews on the condition that I maintain their confidentiality. Due to these limitations, it is not possible to identify these informants at length. The relatively small size of my sample must be considered in light of the difficulty of locating ex-guerrillas, gaining their trust, and securing their willingness to conduct and record interviews about the struggle years. To ensure confidentiality, I avoid attributing the quotes in this dissertation to specific informants. However, I strive to develop a comprehensive portrait of my sample's representativeness in this section by depicting the 13 informants in terms of social difference, thereby outlining the broad spectrum encompassed by their respective experiences, backgrounds, and present circumstances.

It is important to demonstrate that my sample of interviewees is representative in a number of analytically crucial ways. In terms of social profile, these ex-guerrillas represent both lower-level as well as higher-level cadres from Umkhonto we Sizwe, and constitute a good representative sample of both high-ranking officers and rank-and-file recruits. Some had achieved a degree of economic success since independence, either through private ventures or, in two cases, by working in the new security services. Others, unemployed, were barely getting by. Though there was a degree of correlation between the ex-combatants' rank in MK and their post-struggle level of income, some who had been high-

ranking officers were now poor, while others who had not attained a very high rank now lived comfortably.

Some had reached a greater level of formal education than others; most had joined the armed struggle around age 15 or 16, before finishing high school, and had not subsequently had the opportunity to complete their studies. One informant had gotten a university degree while in exile in Zambia, then enrolled afterward for guerrilla training. All spoke Xhosa as a first language; and, like most South Africans, all spoke English. Most gave detailed and vivid descriptions of their histories in MK, whose main language of instruction and communication was, in any case, English. During the interviews, some of the informants were willing to divulge virtually their entire personal histories as combatants in the ANC's armed struggle. Others were more circumspect, particularly those currently working in the security service; one ex-combatant working for the new security services opened our interview by declaring: "I won't give you any state secrets!"

There is an important range of variation among former MK combatants: they can be divided according to those who went "into exile" from South Africa for more extensive training at MK's bases abroad- including guerrillas who received even more specialized training in the USSR and other Warsaw Pact countries- and those who received military training in crash courses in Lesotho and within South Africa proper. Gear (2002b) notes that many combatants who considered themselves liberation fighters and who were involved in extensive urban combat, especially during the pitched fighting of 1990-94, actually had only minimal contact with the ANC and MK. Meanwhile, within the population of guerrillas who went into exile, there is also variation between those who spent

significant periods in exile, dating as far back as the 1970s and early 1980s, and those who spent only a year or two in exile; furthermore, after MK was forced to close its Angolan bases in 1989, it was forced to house and train its cadres at bases in Zambia, Tanzania, and Uganda, where the training was not as intensive. In terms of my sample's representativeness, then, it is important to note that the informants in this study cover this spectrum of rank, combat experience, and training within MK.

It also important to note that a number of different sources have corroborated the narrative of marginalization of ex-guerrillas developed here through my interviews with MK ex-combatants, including both those who were integrated into the new security forces and those excluded from them. Some of my informants were bitter at the ANC because of their perceived marginalization during and after the transition, while others expressed pride in the ANC's accomplishments during and since the negotiated transition. One in particular emphasized that the ANC accommodated its cadres to the greatest extent possible during and after the transition; he remains a proud member of the ANC to this day. Thus my sample, while small, reflects the political and social divisions, such as they are, within the ANC and MK.

Informant #1 had been a senior officer at an MK base. Belonging to an older generation of combatants than the rest of the informants, this man was among the first MK fighters to be deployed in Angola. He received overseas training, and also saw extensive combat during the 1970s and 1980s. Like many ex-guerrillas, he has not been able to secure steady employment since South Africa's independence.

Informant #2 was a high-ranking officer during the early- to mid-1980s at an MK base, and so was informant #3. Informant #4 was a high-ranking officer at a different base, and all three saw extensive combat during that era. All three received advanced military training overseas. After independence in 1994, two of the men became self-employed, while one joined the post-transition security forces.

Informant #5 saw extensive training in MK camps before being sent overseas for further specialized training. During one incursion into South Africa, he was captured and severely tortured before managing to escape through a window while in state custody, whereupon he fled and regrouped with MK formations. He found only sporadic employment after the transition.

Informant #6 was a youth activist with the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), and went on to join MK in Angola. After the transition he pursued a career in the post-transition security forces, and today remains active in the ANC.

Informant #7 was recruited into MK as a youth, undergoing a crash course and then serving as a liaison for guerrillas infiltrating from outside. He then went into exile under the ANC's auspices. Shortly before the transition began in 1990, he decided to join MK and received military training. After the transition he became a civil servant.

Informant #8 joined MK as a youth in the late 1970s, receiving training in a crash-course. He served as a driver and courier for MK units throughout the 1980s, smuggling weaponry and messages, and arranging logistics for MK strike teams. After the transition, he found work with a private security company.

Informant #9 was heavily persecuted by the Bantustan regime in Transkei. In the mid-1980s he went into exile, receiving training first at an MK base. Upon his return to South Africa after the transition, he worked in a traditional leadership role.

Informants #10, 11, 12, and 13 belonged to a younger generation of combatants compared to the other informants, joining MK as youths from 1989 onward. All four received crash-course training and were involved in missions inside South Africa. None of these men joined the post-transition security forces, and today all are semi-employed.

CHAPTER TWO

<u>Umkhonto we Sizwe's Armed Legitimacy</u>

"Hamba Kahle Umkhonto/ Umkhonto we Sizwe….."

("Go well defender/ defender of the nation…..")

-African National Congress protest song[5]

This popular refrain from the anti-apartheid struggle era was ubiquitous in South Africa during mass actions, strikes, and funerals from the 1960s onward, and remained popular even after independence in 1994. Like many struggle-era songs, most black South Africans know the words and tune by heart to this day. The song illustrates the degree to which Umkhonto we Sizwe penetrated black South African consciousness as the legitimate "defender of the nation." The lyrics also reveal how, in isiXhosa, the word "spear" (which is how "Umkhonto" is usually translated in the context of the guerrilla movement's name) is interchangeable with "defender," further underscoring MK's status as an armed group that broadly represented South Africa's oppressed during apartheid. In spite of the movement's weaknesses and shortcomings, MK guerillas were the closest thing that African communities had in terms of a security force tasked with defending the community, and the only personnel who enjoyed anything close to popular legitimacy among African communities, where they were for the most

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[5] The present author learned this song from ex-combatants and their families in South Africa. It was used to serenade struggle heroes, especially at funerals (Slovo 1995); Berkeley describes ANC cadres chanting it at a funeral for an ANC member killed in post-independence political violence in KwaZulu-Natal province (2001, 151), underscoring its ubiquity as a quintessential struggle tune.

part lionized.

This chapter is intended to illustrate MK's high level of popular legitimacy among black South African masses, and its expectation that it would play a key role in the post-transition security forces. My research demonstrates that unlike their apartheid foes, MK generally avoided targeting civilians and used violence in carefully calibrated ways, not indiscriminately, like the regime. Yet apartheid security elites remained largely in control of the post-transition security forces. Therefore, one of the biggest reasons that post-transition security forces have lacked effectiveness and legitimacy in civil society is that MK guerrillas, who had the training, discipline, and legitimacy to do the job well, were instead excluded during the security sector reform process. This chapter on MK's history and ideology up until the transition lays the foundation for this argument.

Throughout the apartheid era, MK guerillas were more of a shadowy presence in South Africa than a visible cadre, the object of secrets and rumours rather than a standing force situated within the community. Unlike other southern African liberation movements such as Zimbabwe's ZANU and ZAPU, Mozambique's FRELIMO, or Angola's MPLA, MK was, with few exceptions, unable to secure "liberated zones" in which it could maintain a sustained, visible presence. Yet while MK lacked strong military capabilities and extensive battlefield achievement, it was able to wage a relatively successful strategy that inspired and politicized South Africa's population fighting against apartheid. Indeed, it managed to force the apartheid regime to devote ever-greater resources to security.

History: The ANC Develops an Armed Wing

Founded in 1912, the ANC only began its resort to violence after the apartheid state responded to five decades of political struggle with progressively more punitive and violent policies. The ANC leadership founded MK in response to the killing by South African Police of 69 unarmed PAC protesters and the wounding of 186 more at Sharpeville, near Johannesburg, on 21 March 1960. This massacre convinced the African National Congress that negotiating with the apartheid regime was futile. In response to Sharpeville, the smaller, racially constituted Pan-African Congress (PAC) also founded its own armed wing, Poqo ("the Steadfast", later renamed the Azanian People's Liberation Army, APLA). As popular frustrations began to boil over violently in the wake of apartheid repression, "it became vital to demonstrate an organized alternative to unplanned and suicidal outbursts which were beginning to take place. It was also necessary to make an open break with the politics of non-violent protest which had dominated the ideology of pacifism among many leaders of the liberation movement."[6]

MK was integrated into the ANC as a military wing subordinate to the overall leadership, with Nelson Mandela serving formally as its commander. Its manifesto stated: "Umkhonto we Sizwe will carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation organizations… Umkhonto we Sizwe will be at the front line of the people's defense."[7] Beginning on 16 December 1961, the first

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[6] South African Communist Party (SACP) publication "Path to Power" (49), cited in "MK and the Future," an MK document dated November 1990, from the South African History Archives
[7] Quoted in "MK and the Future"

MK attacks were ineffectual sabotage bombings of government buildings and infrastructure that caused no casualties and revealed "a large degree of amateurism" (Meredith 2005, 124). In 1963, MK suffered a blow when many of its founding operatives, including Mandela, were captured in a police raid on their base, a farmhouse in the Johannesburg suburb of Rivonia, and sentenced to life imprisonment.[8]

The ANC had dabbled in armed revolution against the formidable apartheid security forces. It would respond to its initial setbacks by establishing guerrilla training camps in Zambia, alongside its political structures in exile. From Zambia, MK sent one group for training in China and thereafter received most of its training and assistance from the Soviet Union.[9] 1967 saw the highly publicized Wankie operation, in which future ANC hero Chris Hani commanded MK fighters from Zambia into Rhodesia alongside a team from Zipra (the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army), with the joint objective of establishing forward operating bases that would place South African territory within MK's reach. Once it reached the vast Wankie (Hwange) game reserve, the guerrilla force was tracked by Rhodesian military units reinforced by South African soldiers and police, clashing with them in several skirmishes during which the MK-Zipra team inflicted heavy casualties on the colonial forces.[10]

The Rhodesian officer commanding the encirclement of the insurgents confirmed that in initial skirmishes with the MK forces, his troops were routed (Smith and Tromp 2009). Yet the guerrillas had no rear base and faced relentless

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[8] In this operation, the American CIA played a key role in assisting the South African security forces to find the ANC leadership.

[9] "*Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe, 25th Anniversary Souvenir Issue,*" 1986, p.12

[10] "The Wankie Campaign," by Chris Hani in "Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe," pp.34-37

attacks by the colonial forces; with dwindling water, food, and ammunition, the survivors were forced to seek asylum in Botswana, where the authorities, unwilling to incur the apartheid regime's wrath, imprisoned them. As one former MK commander explained: "We wanted that the Boers [Afrikaners] should feel that we are around. Because they said MK is dead. After the prison trial, they said we have killed the backbone of ANC. So we wanted to prove to them that we are still alive. So we used to hit them where they didn't expect us."[11]

MK leadership was under no illusions of being able to defeat the apartheid regime's powerful war machine on the battlefield. Nor did the ANC wish to escalate armed conflict with Pretoria in a way that would trigger a bloodbath. MK's emphasis on a preponderance of political activity was also a pragmatic admission of its weakness relative to the South African military; according to a Soviet officer who trained Angolan and MK forces in the 1980s, "the ANC faced a huge, well-adjusted war machine, able through its strategy, tactics, and technical capacities to counter practically the whole African continent" (Shubin 2008, 249). Yet MK sought time and again to expose the weaknesses in apartheid's armor, and thereby to generate political leverage and popular support for the ANC. MK was instrumental in transmitting the ANC's leadership to communities within South Africa that otherwise could not be accessed directly; the armed struggle also strengthened ANC credibility both within South Africa and on the world stage, where the ANC's profile grew tremendously during apartheid's final decade (Lodge and Nasson 1991).

MK's Popular Legitimacy

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[11] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Cock writes: "MK was often depicted by the apartheid state as a 'phantom army'; but what it lacked in resources and personnel, was offset by its powerful ideological presence. During the 33 years of its existence, MK soldiers were heroized and its episodic military actions were eulogized." (1997, 120) McKinley similarly points to MK's "almost unquestioned moral authority and symbolic power," which "revealed itself in the content and character of internal resistance: the youth mimicked armed MK combatants in their one-sided battles with the SADF, 'armed' in most cases with stones, Molotov cocktails, and wooden AK-47 replicas" (1997, 77-8). As one ex-guerrilla said, "we were regarded in fact as super-heroes, because everybody was willing to assist even though everybody knew the price. If you are caught harboring an MK cadre then it was a serious offence, very serious, you will be charged under the Terrorism Act, for harboring. Even when [guerrillas] came in numbers, everybody welcomed us. We were highly welcomed by the ordinary people."[12]

Asked how MK cadres were regarded within the community, another ex-guerrilla replied: "Oooh, with respect. Loved and respected, yeah, loved and respected." Emphasizing MK's reliance on mass support, he described how the regime fundamentally misunderstood their strategy: "They thought that we guerrillas operate only from the bushes. You know what they did, right around the [Venda-Zimbabwe] border they chopped all those trees because they expected us to come through the forest, so they didn't know, because our strategy was to mobilize the masses inside and they were our forest because they are the ones who were hiding us, not the trees down there."[13]

The guerrillas' enormous popularity resonated even through prison walls;

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[12] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[13] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

another ex-guerrilla who had been captured while trying to infiltrate South Africa from Botswana said that during his six years of solitary confinement in the mid-1980s,

> …We used to call each other in the evening when it was closed, guards were off duty, and there were many comrades who were arrested during the state of emergency. So we used to teach them politics although we did not see them, our cells were closed, we did not see anybody but we used to talk to them. We would tell them about the struggle. They would ask political questions [about] our own analysis of the situation, and they used to contribute. It was nice discussions that we had. It whiled away time, but [later] you would feel that they were released because you wouldn't hear them for a long time, and you would find that now there are no more comrades, only criminals.[14]

Tracing Internal Rifts: Dissent within MK and the ANC's Tenuous Unity

       Significant divisions within the ANC and MK had existed as far back as the 1960s, and persisted into the era of negotiations with the National Party and the ANC's transition to power. These divisions stemmed fundamentally from the divide between rank-and-file cadres who had enlisted in MK with the fervent aim of waging all-out guerrilla war to overthrow the apartheid regime, and the ANC leadership, which never committed wholeheartedly to this strategy, largely due to the apartheid regime's military strength and the leaders' own reluctance to risk losing Western sympathy. Although the ANC's armed struggle component was carefully calibrated to complement its larger political program, its detractors, both from within the movement and in activist circles outside the ANC's ambit, argued

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[14] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

that the ANC never achieved the "the one element central to a successful seizure of power – an armed, mass-based internal cadre"; McKinley cites South African arch-scholar Ben Turok: "the armed struggle, in whatever form, was always seen by the [ANC] leadership as a 'half-hearted thing'" (McKinley 1997, 68). Though many guerrillas were enthusiastic ANC members, others tended to view the ANC political elites residing in Zambia, Tanzania, and Europe as being soft and complacent; MK guerrillas' adulation of leaders such as O. R. Tambo and Chris Hani stemmed from these leaders' willingness to endure the rigors of camp life alongside the cadres at MK bases (Smith and Tromp 2009). Nevertheless, aside from several mutinies on MK bases, the ANC, despite its limited resources and the tremendous pressures of fighting the apartheid Goliath, experienced hardly any violent or enduring fragmentation, unlike so many other insurgent movements; indeed, the ANC was the only southern African liberation movement never to split during its 30 years in exile (Sparks 2003).

After the individual heroics of MK's Soviet-trained guerrillas in the ill-fated 1967-68 Wankie campaign, the ANC's armed struggle stalled, lowering the morale of MK recruits in their training camps. This precipitated the 1969 ANC conference at Morogoro in Tanzania, in which MK cadres demanded a stronger ANC commitment to waging guerrilla war (McKinley 1997). Although the ANC redoubled its resolve at Morogoro and created a new body, the Revolutionary Council, to oversee the fused political and military aspects of armed struggle, it nonetheless failed to escalate its military campaign throughout the 1970s. A 1971 seaborne mission to infiltrate guerrillas into South Africa failed when the engines of the Somali transport ship hired for the purpose died off the coast of Kenya; subsequent attempts to infiltrate the MK team overland resulted in the capture of

several guerrillas by South African police.[15]

MK got its first 'big break' when the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique gained their independence simultaneously in 1975 following the collapse of Lisbon's Caetano regime. The Portuguese had collaborated closely with the Rhodesians and South Africans to thwart southern Africa's national liberation movements, and as African revolutionary movements uprooted the colonizers, the ANC established bases closer to South Africa. This enabled MK to step up its attacks, but even then, the guerrilla war never achieved the intensity that many of its cadres had envisioned. Disenchantment continued to lurk within MK ranks on its bases in exile, contributing to mutinies at several Angolan MK bases in the early 1980s. The discord and distrust within MK ranks was exploited and exacerbated by apartheid intelligence recruitment. As the ANC uncovered evidence of this enemy penetration, it established prisons for mutineers and suspected spies with the help of host governments in Angola and Tanzania, where abuse of prisoners became widespread, becoming a focal point of apartheid propaganda to discredit the ANC (see, for example, Sanders 2005).

Other scholars also point to the lack of a mass internal armed uprising of the sort that overthrew other white-minority regimes in the region as a fundamental failure of the ANC's armed struggle strategy (McKinley 1997). Legassick (2002) describes the handful of SACP members within the ANC to which he belonged that broke off to form the 'Marxist Workers' Tendency' faction, for which they were expelled at the ANC's 1985 Kabwe conference. This faction's main disagreement with the ANC was its insistence that MK's armed struggle only served to make the apartheid regime more brutal, and that the ANC

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[15] "*Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe, 25th Anniversary Souvenir Issue*," 1986, p.12

should therefore refrain from pursuing armed struggle until guerrilla warfare could arise, in the classic Marxist-Leninist fashion, as an organic component of internal protest instead of an exile-based complement to domestic struggle. Legassick (2002) attributes the incomplete nature of South Africa's transition-especially its economic aspects- to the ANC's strategy.[16]

Armed Struggle's Turning Point: the 1976 Soweto Uprising and its Aftermath

The 1976 Soweto uprising was a key turning point for the anti-apartheid struggle in general, and for MK in particular. As the world looked on, the apartheid regime mowed down unarmed student protesters, killing hundreds. This politicized a generation of South African youth and served to convince them that the freedom struggle was paramount, taking precedence even over education. MK then received a massive influx of South African youth who fled into an uncertain exile in hopes of joining the guerrillas. According to an interview with MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani and Chief Political Commissar Steve Tshwete, "before 1976 there were only 1000 ANC members in exile. After 1976 this rocketed to 9000 and a further 4000-5000 left between 1984 and 1986."[17] The exact number of guerrillas in MK ranks by the end of the 1980s is unclear; during the struggle, MK avoided divulging its full strength, and different sources provide varying

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[16] However valid their doctrinaire critique of the ANC's strategy, it is worth noting that the Marxist Workers' Tendency members were all white, a factor which may have facilitated their ideological opposition to the timing and nature of the ANC's armed struggle, whereas black ANC members feeling the full weight of apartheid oppression may have been more inclined to take up arms in whichever manner possible, however imperfect.

[17] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.

estimates of this strength. One former guerrilla commander in charge of training recruits at an MK base in Angola estimated that he trained well over 1000 guerrillas a year at his base alone since the early 1980s. Meanwhile, as discussed in the Methodology section, MK encompassed personnel with a wide range of training and experience, from the thousand or so guerrillas trained in the USSR, to hundreds of others trained in other Warsaw Pact countries, Egypt, Cuba, Zambia, and elsewhere, to those trained in MK's own Angolan bases, to crash-course trainees who never left South Africa and had varying degrees of contact with MK leadership.

The most common route for those seeking to join MK after the Soweto uprising was to cross the border into neighbouring Lesotho or Swaziland, where they could link up with MK operatives and begin their crash-course training. Thereafter, they would be flown or cross overland to Mozambique, from which they were then sent to training camps in Zambia, Angola, or Tanzania to be trained as guerrillas.[18] Meanwhile, MK operatives would infiltrate South Africa overland from several routes, including via Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Lesotho.[19]

The years following this influx of recruits were some of the most successful in terms of spectacular MK attacks on South African targets. Until then, MK had focused on sabotage operations calculated to demonstrate restraint, as with a 1976 railway bombing in which the MK operative "intended to cause damage insufficient to derail a train," because he had been ordered "only to show 'the police and army how far we could penetrate if we were forced to do so and what our capabilities were'" (Davis 1987, 123). Such nuances were lost on the

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[18] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[19] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

apartheid regime, which used violence indiscriminately and perceived its enemies' hesitation to do the same not as an aversion to harming innocents, but as a sign of weakness. In any case, "the only message [South African] whites received was that of black incompetence and brutality," since "Pretoria could clearly intercept and distort the ANC's propagandist objectives even if it failed to prevent Umkhonto from successfully attacking targets affecting white areas" (Davis 1987, 123).

From the period 1976-1981, MK had begun "armed attacks on the property of black 'collaborators' such as councilors and policemen. For the first time there [were] armed attacks on police patrols and police stations, security force vehicles and property."[20] The period from 1981-83 brought a "dramatic increase in the incidence of attacks on government targets, military and economic installations and infrastructure."[21] These attacks were too spectacular for the regime to conceal from the press: the 1981 81mm rocket attack on Voortrekkerhoogte military headquarters in Pretoria; the 1982 bombing of the SASOL oil-from-coal plant in the Transvaal, which burned for days; a sabotage attack in the same year on the not-yet-operational nuclear power plant at Koeberg near Cape Town; and the 1983 bombing of South African Air Force headquarters in downtown Pretoria, killing 19 and wounding 217, most of them military personnel. Each operation required extensive intelligence gathering beforehand, using well-placed agents in highly guarded areas to prepare the attacks.

MK suffered an important setback when the Pretoria regime used destabilization tactics and economic sanctions to force Mozambican president

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[20] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.
[21] ibid.

Samora Machel into signing the 1984 Nkomati accord. The accord forced Mozambique to close the ANC bases on its territory; in return, South Africa would cease its support for the RENAMO rebels sowing terror in Mozambique's hinterland. Nkomati represented a diplomatic victory for South Africa that some observers saw as the onset of a 'Pax Pretoriana' (Minter 1994, 108); the accord left the ANC 'shocked and stunned' according to President Oliver Tambo'" (Davis 1987, 129). And although Mozambique upheld its end of the bargain, forcing ANC and MK personnel to scatter to more remote locations, South Africa nonetheless covertly maintained its support for RENAMO until at least 1991, perpetuating Mozambique's devastating civil war (Minter 1994).

Meanwhile, MK continued to receive and train recruits at its camps in northern Angola, where its ranks swelled to around 8000 (Davis 1987, 118). MK thus became directly involved in this regional Cold War "hot spot," joining the Angolan government and its Cuban allies in their war against the SADF and Angola's UNITA rebels, who enjoyed South African and US support. MK distinguished itself in combat with UNITA far more than has previously been acknowledged, as discussed below. Yet reluctance on the part of the independent "Frontline" states bordering South Africa, combined with the SADF's oft-demonstrated ability to strike ANC targets in these states, prevented MK from establishing bases near, or inside, South African territory. Instead, MK's Angolan bases were located over 1000 miles away, while an estimated 350 to 2000 guerrillas operated inside South Africa at any given time (Davis 1987, 118).

Mounting frustration among guerrillas at their inability to strike at the enemy contributed to unrest within MK bases, and ultimately, to several instances of mutiny that MK crushed with Angolan assistance. Meanwhile, MK continued

to challenge the apartheid regime through cross-border raids, increasingly using Bantustans such as Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Transkei that shared borders with Frontline states as points of entry into South Africa.[22] The ANC launched a mine-laying campaign along South Africa's borders, using limpet mines to target the apartheid security forces and white farmers living in these border areas, who were integrated into the border patrol apparatus and thus considered legitimate targets.

"The Apartheid Regime Did All Our Recruiting for Us": Ideology and Recruitment

"We never had to do any recruiting", recalled one former MK commander; "the apartheid regime did all our recruiting for us."[23] Indeed, from 1976 onward, the influx of youth hoping to join the armed struggle was more than the ANC was equipped to absorb. Ex-guerrillas described joining the armed struggle as a natural step in their progression towards becoming more politically aware and active: "as we grow, we are aware of the situation because you can see the police brutality, you witness it on a daily basis. Most of us were from families who were affected by the system. So we got introduced to the political situation at an early age."[24] Another ex-guerrilla recalled how he resolved to take up arms against apartheid when one of his teenage schoolmates was pursued and killed by police after a student rally. One morning shortly thereafter, an MK cadre approached him and two of his friends as they practiced karate drills on a hillside; all three eventually joined.[25]

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[22] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[23] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[24] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[25] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Even those who didn't belong to any particular political formation were motivated by ANC propaganda to join the struggle, as one described: "I used to listen to propaganda programs, when there was still [the ANC's] Radio Freedom they used to broadcast from Angola, Madagascar and also Tanzania."[26] Even for black youth who had no contact whatsoever with whites beyond apartheid police violence, the ANC's non-racial message resonated, as several ex-guerrillas explained:

My brother was in the PAC underground, so he also influenced me politically. But as I grew up, I developed and joined the ANC, which was preaching non-racialism. The first step of your politicization is your conscientization, so that you feel that it's good to be an African. Then, the next step is to develop to understand broader politics- that it's not about black and white. You can have a fellow black man who can be your enemy, much as we have white people who have died in our struggle. I mean, it is just logical that non-racialism is the best, you know.[27]

Many South Africans who wanted to resist apartheid also joined the PAC and its armed wing. Others joined the array of student unions and trade unions that spearheaded the struggle, beginning with the 1973 miners' strike; by 1983, this grassroots insurgency blossomed into the United Democratic Front (UDF), which united a spectrum of students and workers throughout South Africa and rocked the regime with strikes and protests. The Black Consciousness movement, launched by human rights activist Steve Biko before his 1977 death in police custody, also drew many adherents, many of whom then joined the PAC or the

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[26] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[27] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

ANC. Yet MK remained the quintessential emblem of the struggle, and by the mid-1980s, it began coordinating its armed actions ever more closely in support of strikes and protests. Shubin mentions that most of MK's recruits in the 1960s were drawn from the ranks of South African trade unions, constituting "the best out of the working class," in the words of one guerrilla from Natal (2008, 19). MK also drew many of its cadres from the ANC's alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP), which was banned by the regime at the same time as the ANC, and which contributed to MK's pan-racial ideology. As one former MK commander explained: "Even within the regime there were sympathizers and ANC people inside. Even in the South African government itself, police there, up! The Communist Party was there to recruit whites and did its job, too much [i.e., very much]."[28] Several ex-guerrillas described white volunteers as being among the most ideologically committed and motivated MK fighters; indeed, a number of MK's founding members were white, including commander Joe Slovo, military intelligence chief Ronnie Kasrils, and explosives expert Jack Hodgson.[29]

White MK guerrillas played integral roles in gathering intelligence and infiltrating apartheid forces, laying the groundwork for such spectacular MK operations as the 1982 SASOL oil refinery bombing and the 1983 Church Street bombing of South African Air Force headquarters in Pretoria.[30] One ex-MK commander described the doctrine of non-racialism among MK forces: "we were not fighting a racist war in the first place, not fighting whites. We had whites within MK and daring ones who fought tirelessly, animals, coming inside [infiltrating], making havoc. Hitting targets. Rondepoort police station, South

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[28] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[29] Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe
[30] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

African Air Force base, SAAF bus, many. And no one ever sold out from those guys. Not even one. They were very dedicated."[31] These white recruits also fought against UNITA in Angola, where MK even absorbed several defectors from the SADF special forces, "commandos, even from the [elite] South African reconnaissance unit… We trained several. Mostly blacks, but also some whites. Also some whites."[32] In a 1988 interview, MK Commander Chris Hani affirmed: "more whites are joining the ANC," which envisioned "not just a supportive role for whites but also a plan for physical participation."[33]

African Ethnicity and Recruitment

The ANC's detractors often pointed to its top leadership- heavy with Xhosas- to suggest that an ethnic element lurked behind the Congress's non-racialist rhetoric (indeed, the nickname "Xhosa Nostra" implied an ethnic mafia-(Russell 2009). In particular, apartheid psychological warfare propagated this narrative to foment Xhosa-Zulu conflict in classic colonial divide-and-rule fashion. An ex-guerrilla commander unmasked this falsehood, insisting that the recruits flooding MK's ranks "were coming from everywhere. I wouldn't lie, my brother. Hey! Rural, townships, everywhere!"[34] He described an MK unit comprised of ethnic Indians from Durban who launched several successful missions before being cornered and killed by police in a ferocious shootout, insisting that virtually every community across South Africa had at some point contributed to the guerrillas' ranks.

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[31] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[32] Ibid.
[33] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.
[34] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Regardless of the composition of the movement's top leadership, the ANC maintained legitimacy across virtually every potential line of cleavage among South Africa's oppressed communities. Interviewed in 1988 when he was serving as MK Chief of Staff, Chris Hani emphasized that MK would increasingly be deploying teams of mixed ethnicity on missions to various parts of South Africa as part of a deliberate strategy to establish contacts with local populations and to reinforce the ANC's pan-ethnic "national consciousness," declaring: "No other force in the country has shown such a close attachment to the aspirations of the people through action as MK."[35]

"Armed Propaganda" as Liberation Strategy

The white man there has always been regarded as a colossus but now the blacks are saying, who are these people who are beginning to attack the [SADF] bases. Who is this boy [on trial after his capture] who says, my only regret is that I have not completed my task. He towers above the judge because he shows no hatred for whites as human beings but he articulates hatred for the system. It is going to be talked about for a very long time in northern Transvaal [province]. Who are these nine boys in [the Bantustan of] Venda who fought the SADF, fighting helicopters and others for more than 12 hours in April [1988], who inflicted casualties and were able to break out of encirclement. I am sure the South African media did not report the battle….["36]

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[35] "MK and the Future,"
[36] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.

In this interview, MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani emphasized the transformative "demonstration effect" on colonized peoples of MK's revolutionary violence. Hani closely echoes Fanon's insistence on violence as an integral aspect of decolonization: "Thus the native discovers that his life, his breath, his beating heart are the same as those of the settler… and it must be said that this discovery shakes the world in a very necessary manner. All the new, revolutionary assurance of the native stems from it" (1961, 45). Note also Hani's mention of apartheid media censorship to prevent news of MK battlefield achievements from spreading.

A variety of literature downplays MK's ability to dent apartheid military might: Murray reports that the apartheid security forces derided MK guerrillas as "commuter bombers" who would plant explosives and flee, unable to challenge the regime's forces head-on (1994, 259); Sanders writes that MK cadres' lives were typically "nasty, brutish, and short," and insists that MK's claims to have dented the apartheid security forces in their attacks were vastly overstated for propaganda purposes (2006, 223). Yet throughout the mid-to-late 1980s, there were an ever-increasing number of shootouts between guerrillas and apartheid forces that never made the headlines, in which the regime undoubtedly downplayed its casualties. One seasoned former guerrilla explained: "As you know, always when there is contact with the enemy propaganda prevails saying that no one was hurt, all that, as if we were just aiming on the air."[37] An MK document similarly reported:

> In a lengthy analysis marked "secret" and dated April 1982, the CIA says
> that although the racist minority South African government has taken steps

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[37] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

to reduce publicity and play down its impact, guerrilla warfare is a growing reality in the land of apartheid. It notes that raids and acts of sabotage carried out by the ANC are growing in number, efficiency, and coordination. Even the CIA, the murderers of Lumumba [and] Allende agree that their ally, the South African racists, are "deliberately suppressing reliable reports of successful guerrilla attacks to protect white morale."[38]

Another former guerrilla explained that despite news media blackouts concerning most MK operations, the regime could not entirely conceal these strikes because local communities would hear exchanges of gunfire and, afterward, ambulance sirens as the security forces scrambled to evacuate their dead and wounded. News of these operations would then spread throughout black communities like wildfire.[39] In a 1990 interview one month before the transition's onset, Chris Hani emphasized: "If armed struggle was ineffective South Africa would not have militarized itself in the way it has done. They have to build bases along the borders, they have had to patrol, they have had to pay, suspend substantial amounts- billions, in fact- for defense. Defending against what if armed struggle has been ineffective?"[40]

Even more importantly, the downplaying of MK's military prowess reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the ANC's strategy of combining

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[38] "MK Comes of Age," SAHA Archives, MK

[39] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009; in a similar vein, an article in the 1986 commemorative issue of the MK journal 'Dawn' described the final mission of MK 'Special Ops' veteran Barney Molokoane, who died while attacking the Secunda power station near Cape Town in 1985. According to the article (corroborated by my interviews with MK guerrillas who knew him), Molokoane and his comrades were killed only after running out of ammunition in a pitched gun-battle with security forces, following which local communities heard police and ambulance sirens wailing for hours into the night, indicating that the MK force had inflicted heavy casualties before succumbing (SAHA).

[40] Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21/1/90- Road Ahead Perspective (SAHA)

armed incursions with building mass organizational structures. Along with the MK guerrillas who "were sent inside" by the ANC's Lusaka headquarters to train and arm people's units, "there were also people responsible for only political work, also people responsible for only trade unionism, to conscientize the masses."[41] From the unified political and military leadership in the Zambian capital, the ANC commanded an elaborate network of regional commands: "machinery responsible for Eastern Cape, machinery responsible for Transkei, machinery responsible for Natal, machinery responsible for Transvaal. Structures that took orders up and issued them down for implementation."[42] By developing these connections, the ANC Underground would gather intelligence and organize weapons distribution to cadres via secret drop-off points known as 'dead-letter boxes,' or 'DLBs.' This enabled MK to take the initiative, monitoring the apartheid security forces and challenging them through "well-calculated moves."[43]

Guerrillas moved among South Africa's black communities like Mao's proverbial fish among water, often relying on them for shelter, food, transportation, and other forms of support. Guerrillas sheltered in homes, workplaces, and university dormitories as they sought to move seamlessly among the populace to avoid detection.[44] A former guerrilla was candid about the impossibility of defeating the apartheid war machine on the battlefield, while explaining how the movement's political platform galvanized popular resistance: "The ANC never undermined the strength of the Army. Even in the [ANC leaders'] speeches, they recognized that South Africa has a big army, with all the

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[41] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[42] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[43] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[44] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

money and all the stuff. But our struggle and our war was based not on the military approach, because we used guerrilla tactics whereby you don't need to be many, and you have the support of the communities, so all that you are doing is not yours, it is for the communities. So in that manner you have more."[45]

In a June 1988 interview, Hani described how even in the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana, under a climate of severe political repression, "the local population was sympathetic to the courageous cadres of the ANC. They were cooking food for them. The priests were holding services for them. And there was a clear politicization of the black population in an area where the ANC was never really known."[46] This demonstrates how MK deliberately sought to expand its influence and legitimacy in communities where political and ethno-regional constraints had thus far limited its influence. Through MK, the ANC's political and military platforms reinforced each other and continually broadened the movement's influence.

Instead of challenging the apartheid regime's armed might head-on, MK's strategy was based on infiltrating and striking, while inflicting minimal death and destruction. One ex-guerrilla based in the Transkeian capital described:

The operations that we carried out here in Mthatha were very successful in terms of lobbying support, or demonstrating the way the enemy was incapable of protecting its own institutions. Among the places that were attacked was the fuel depot, the main power station just this way, and at the dam a dummy was put there just to show that we could have damaged this thing but we know that

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[45] Confidential with ex-combatant, November 2009
[46] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia. From the South African History Archives, Section H5.17 (Umkhonto we Sizwe)

the whole community could be affected. So nobody was killed in those operations, but they just demonstrated that the enemy is asleep.[47]

In an interview, Chris Hani emphasized the propaganda power of these symbolic attacks. MK's bombs were usually calculated to cause damage to property without killing regime personnel, aiming to "encourage an embattled people who are not allowed to organize freely in their trade unions and in their mass democratic movements. Thousands of their followers and activists are in prison… Bombs are also an active weapon in mobilizing our people, in reviving their hopes, in destroying despondency." As the bombings increased the armed struggle's visibility among the masses, workers and students "will walk tall and those who are despondent will say, what am I doing for the struggle. He will think about his street committee. He will think about his activity in SAYCO [South African Youth Congress, an anti-apartheid organization] and the trade unions. He will think about, what am I doing for the ANC cadre who comes in to place that bomb."[48] Another ex-guerrilla described how MK's strategy of "People's War," with its emphasis on embedding guerrillas into local communities, brought dividends in terms of legitimacy by training them to resist the state:

> The units that went into the communities taught them how to deal with the army. For instance, a very common tactic: when the police see fire, they will quickly rush there, so South Africans would just put a burning tire and dig a big trench on the way going there and then camouflage the trench. The police will come with their armored vehicles into that ditch, they are trapped there, they will be assaulted, burned to death there. I mean, it was a

[47] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[48] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar,", 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.

big army but people came to adopt tactics and the credit goes to those tactics for the liberation. We used simple weapons, the AK. So their numbers were not a problem. And that is why we overcame them, because of the mass support."[49]

An MK publication from the 1990-94 period emphasized this mass strength and resilience as one of MK's primary assets: "We have the numbers, we have a highly politicized community with a lot of creativity and initiative."[50] Another ex-guerrilla explained: "You see, the ANC had its roots among the masses. The most battles were here, inside. So each and every family knew that there was ANC fighting for this, they knew the history of the ANC from its formation, its culture, though it was banned, but people on the ground were interacting like hell, spreading the gospel everywhere."[51]

Responding to the ANC's call for mass mobilization and the urgency of their condition under apartheid, "people everywhere" organized themselves into cells, maintaining secrecy by "avoiding that horizontal communication" with other members in the community that would enable the security forces to unravel entire networks with the capture of one cadre. Instead, people sought contact with MK infiltrators to establish a system of "vertical communication," in other words, a clandestine chain of command to receive training and instruction.[52] One key source of mass political indoctrination was ex-prisoners "coming from Robben Island, sentenced during 1960s for MK activities," who returned from being "banished, then they mingled with the masses, started spreading the gospel, so it

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[49] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[50] "MK and the Future," p.4 (SAHA)
[51] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[52] ibid.

was MK within the masses all the time."[53]

The 'Four Pillars of Revolution' and Cadre Policy: Instilling Discipline

The ANC's four "pillars of revolution" guided its struggle and embodied the combination of political and military elements it deployed. One former MK commander enumerated them: "First was armed struggle. Second: international solidarity. That means winning of international community, to understand our struggle. So that if we ask for sanctions they help us, they cut all contact with South Africa as a government because of the apartheid. Armed struggle, international solidarity, underground, and mass mobilization. We achieved a lot from these four."[54] All four "pillars" were interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and together they enabled the ANC in exile to establish links with, and a degree of authority over, anti-apartheid activism in South Africa. The "Underground," as MK's clandestine "inside" structures among South Africa's population were known, provided a network of contacts and potential recruits with MK infiltrators from abroad (Suttner 2008). This underground network was especially critical since, in the words of one ex-guerrilla, MK survived the apartheid onslaught by adopting a policy of "intelligence first and combat last"; in other words, guerrillas were trained to strike only after ensuring that their cover was secure and conditions were optimal.[55] Chris Hani further elaborated on the importance of a solid underground network "built by those people inside the country, who know the conditions, who are aware of the activities of the enemy, including the

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[53] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[54] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[55] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

security organs of the system, who can monitor even the individuals who are involved in that underground, because the underground is always a target of infiltration and surveillance by the enemy."[56]

Initially, the ANC's Revolutionary Council charted the course of the armed struggle, guided strictly by strategic considerations with no "interference by commissars. It was only military men, no interacting."[57] Then "At the Kabwe conference in 1985, it was suggested that the RC [Revolutionary Council] be changed to the PMC [Politico-Military Council] whose structure and tasks were to… facilitate proper coordination between the different organs of our movement."[58] The PMC would also oversee target selection, as another ex-guerrilla explained: "sometimes as a military you would want to attack something, but politicians would see that there is a danger, you see? So that's when the PMC emerged, to direct and control the revolution inside."[59]

Furthermore, in line with the broader ANC policy, MK operated strictly according to the meritocratic cadre policy, whereby members were vetted and their service records carefully weighed before promotion. Cadre policy emphasized discipline as the primary revolutionary virtue, hence the MK slogan "discipline is the mother of victory." These principles were derived from the movement's socialist manifesto of political change, the 1954 Freedom Charter, which expressed a vision of racial equality and wealth redistribution in terms sufficiently vague as to have the broadest possible appeal.

Although the ANC itself was a "broad church" whose members included doctrinaire Marxists alongside African nationalists and religious Christians, MK's

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[56] Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective (SAHA)
[57] ibid.
[58] "MK and the Future," SAHA, p.5
[59] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

ideological curriculum most strongly reflected its links to the SACP and its Warsaw Pact funding and training. MK also reflected the influence of its Warsaw Pact advisors in its deployment of political commissars among troops at their bases and in the field. The ANC's Marxist-Leninist class-based analysis of the struggle dovetailed with the non-racial approach, as one ex-guerrilla described learning "non-racialism, class struggle, don't judge anyone by his skin color, but his political beliefs." The movement's fight against the apartheid security forces was framed in class terms, with MK cast as a "revolutionary army" fighting on the people's behalf against South Africa's "bourgeois army," whose purpose was to protect the country's capitalist systems of exploitation, along with enforcing white supremacist rule.[60]

At the ANC's watershed 1985 conference in Kabwe, Zambia, Chairman O.R. Tambo emphasized that as MK's ranks swelled with new recruits, it needed to assure the quality of the "new army of our revolution", requiring "the kind of cadre that the new situation and the tasks we face demand. The issue of a proper cadre policy that takes into account our human resources and our perspectives is of fundamental importance to our further advance."[61] Even as the ANC developed its 'Underground' to resist apartheid hegemony within the minds and communities of South Africa's oppressed, the Underground also evolved into a body that was intended to instill discipline within the movement's ranks and to enforce 'cadre policy's' austere meritocracy. Corruption for personal gain closely overlapped with "selling out," or working as an informant for the apartheid security police; both weakened the resistance movement, and the Underground

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[60] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[61] Transcript of address, SAHA

served as its eyes and ears, enforcing accountability.[62] One high-ranking ex-guerrilla pointed to the lack of accountability and rise in corruption that has increasingly pervaded the ANC since 1994, emphasizing that discarding cadre policy led personal wealth and ambition to replace merit as the criterion for power within the Congress.[63]

"80% Political, 20% Military": The Political Objectives of MK's Selective Violence

> Despite the difficulties and hazards involved, units of Umkhonto we Sizwe, are spreading their armed presence in the country, and the enemy provokes them at its peril, as recent experience has demonstrated; for, to the armed attacks and brutal force the enemy uses against the people, the people have now to respond with armed force. What is more, the experience of our lifetime, including the experience of June 16, 1976, and after, teaches us that the issue of power and peace in our country, as elsewhere, will be resolved in our favour only by an effective combination of political and armed activity - however, targeted not on persons, but on the racist system except when persons go out of their way to defend the system.[64]
>
> <div align="right">-ANC Chairman O.R. Tambo, 1979</div>

As popular uprising surged throughout the townships in the mid-1980s, ANC Chairman O. R. Tambo emphasized that the "ANC's main objective was not 'a military victory but to force Pretoria to the negotiating table'" (*Financial Mail*, 17 January 1986, cited in McKinley 1997, 78). Thus for both pragmatic and

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[62] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[63] Ibid.
[64] http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or79-1.html accessed 8/2/2010

ideological reasons, the ANC set an agenda for MK that was 80% political and 20% military.[65] This reflected both the ANC's commitment to political struggle as the primary means of achieving national liberation, and the focus within MK on non-military operations to further the goals of revolution. In particular, MK's role was to politicize and conscientize the masses. MK placed the utmost emphasis on politicizing its cadres before arming or deploying them. As one former MK commander bluntly explained, "If you aren't politicized, you're a thug."[66] Another former MK commander elaborated: "With us, you couldn't give somebody a gun without politicizing him, you must first politicize him that he or she should know who the enemy is. Because giving somebody a gun who is not politicized is like giving a lunatic a gun."[67]

This emphasis on politicization and discipline within the ranks corresponded closely to MK's emphasis on violence primarily as a symbolic act of resistance, subordinate to the ANC's platform of sustained and variegated political action. MK spread the ANC's non-racial ideology of national liberation, and devoted an important chunk of its meager resources to politically educating its cadres at their bases.

This emphasis on maintaining strict discipline within the ranks through political education embodies Will Reno's assertion that "commissars interpret the interests of fighters to themselves." Reno reinforces the importance of politicization as the line that separates those guerrillas who defend their communities from those who victimize them: "young men who protect their communities have commissars, people who can interpret their grievances and

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[65] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[66] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[67] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

channel them, as opposed to those young men who instead prey upon their communities."[68] Reflecting the influence of the SACP and MK's Soviet trainers, MK deployed political commissars among its trainees and politicized them about the justness of their struggle based on an understanding of the apartheid military as a 'bourgeois army' in contrast with MK, which was a 'revolutionary army.' Several MK cadres recalled this class-based indoctrination in their Angolan camps; one said "they taught us mostly Marxism, sometimes Leninism."[69] Class-based doctrine also proved useful in interpreting the motivations of blacks who collaborated with the apartheid regime, and were labeled 'lumpens' in MK parlance.[70]

The ANC sought by every means possible to distinguish itself in the eyes of the world from the brutality of its apartheid foe. Thus in a press conference in London on 28 November 1980, ANC Chairman O.R. Tambo announced that Umkhonto we Sizwe would thereafter adhere to the Geneva Convention "in the conduct of the [armed] struggle against apartheid and racism and for self-determination in South Africa," for the sake of "protecting the dignity of human beings… and for humanitarian reasons… Wherever practically possible, the African National Congress of South Africa will endeavour to respect the rules of the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the victims of armed conflicts and the 1977 additional Protocol 1 relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts."[71] MK thus became the first non-state actor ever to declare its adherence to the Geneva Convention (Davis 1987). This adherence was

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[68] Will Reno, seminar at McGill University, Montreal, Canada (13/04/2008)
[69] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[70] Confidential interviews with ex-combatants, November-December 2009
[71] Downloaded at http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or80-11.html, accessed 8/2/2010

more than a symbolic gesture to increase the ANC's international legitimacy, for not only did MK avoid targeting civilians, it also sought to uphold Convention standards on the battlefield in Angola, where MK troops took UNITA guerrillas prisoner on numerous occasions. The ANC was also "remarkably willing to crack down on its own members for human rights violations, through two internal commissions in 1992 and 1993" (Elster 2004, 197). The apartheid regime, of course, observed no such rules and was notorious for torturing and executing prisoners.

Much of the literature on the transformation of the South African security forces falsely equates the liberation movements' practices with those of the apartheid state by underlining, for example, that "none of them was designed to serve a democracy and none of them had an impressive record of respect for human rights and international law" (Nathan 1996, 88). Yet despite the wartime constraints imposed by a brutal, omnipresent enemy, MK distinguished itself from its authoritarian foe by exercising restraint that must be considered remarkable under the circumstances. MK's declared intention was always to replace the apartheid police and military in a seizure of power, and thereby to constitute a democratic security force that would represent the oppressed majority. MK's emphasis on minimizing civilian casualties and inculcating its cadres against the indiscriminate use of violence underscores the contribution its cadres would have made, had they been properly integrated into the post-transition security forces, to securing South Africa's future.

Although MK's human rights violations- which were gravest towards cadres suspected of being spies- cannot be glossed over, it is equally inaccurate to lump MK in the same category as the apartheid regime when the ANC was, in

fact, committed to a vision of replacing apartheid with a non-racial democracy; took extraordinary measures to avoid inflicting civilian casualties; and voluntarily adhered to international standards such as the Geneva convention while the apartheid regime flaunted them. One ex-guerrilla emphasized the strict directives guiding the use of force: "There was a standing order that said soft targets must be avoided at all costs."[72] Another described an attack on a police station in Kokstad, near the Transkei border, in the late 1980s. Whereas MK cadres usually did their own surveillance and intelligence gathering in preparation for a raid, on this occasion the guerrillas were relying on intelligence gathered by youth activists who did not employ the same professional standard, and did not maintain their surveillance of the target until one hour before the attack was planned ("zero hour," in military parlance). As a result, the guerrillas were unaware when they opened fire that the policemen within were in the midst of receiving a visit from their families. "When we opened fire on them and threw our grenades, we heard women and children screaming. We called off the attack immediately and withdrew with harassing fire. Our mission wasn't to hurt small kids. Those cadres [who failed in their surveillance task] were punished."[73]

As the ANC stepped up its efforts to recruit and train cadres inside the country, it inevitably risked diluting the level of training and political 'conscientization' that MK's best-trained soldiers received in their Angolan camps. The Congress also could not hope to maintain the same level of oversight and centralized command-and-control over MK operations. Yet even among the local structures and "Self-Defense Units" (SDUs) trained by more seasoned guerrillas, the movement continued to place a strong emphasis on political

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[72] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[73] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

indoctrination. A former guerrilla commander described the three-week "crash course" that MK set up in neighboring Lesotho as consisting of "minor tactics, firearms, but the most part is the disciplinary part of it, you see, so that when [a new recruit] handles any lethal weapon he must know the enemy. He must not shoot at innocent civilians. And they must not select targets without telling [regional MK leadership], so that we give a go-ahead, to avoid anarchy." He recalled an incident in which some new recruits "wanted to attack a white crèche [nursery school]; we said no, those are angels, future leaders of this country. They won't follow in their fathers' steps. Ours is to teach and change the system. Because we knew we were building a South Africa which had white, colored, we are not for blacks. That's the Freedom Charter. As early as '54."[74]

In its efforts to avoid harming non-combatants and to uphold a strict code of military conduct, the ANC aimed to appeal simultaneously to three distinct audiences: first, South Africa's racially and economically oppressed population. Second, South African whites, to whom the ANC sought to "convey a delicately balanced message: that their security and lifestyle are at risk, despite all the government's power, for as long as minority rule exists; however, the same ANC responsible for armed resistance is a reasonable, moderate, and nonracial alternative" (Davis 1987, 121). Third, the ANC was highly conscious of its international image and reputation. It took extraordinary lengths to avoid supplying ammunition to its detractors in the West, and to bridge the Cold War divide by rallying anti-apartheid initiatives in Western Europe and North America, while also receiving political and military support from Warsaw Pact and African countries.

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[74] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

A former MK regional commander emphasized the strict code of military conduct that distinguished MK from other armed insurgent movements, noting: "we didn't use terrorist ideas." Almost without exception, the ANC refrained from operations it could have easily mounted to "cause fear, panic amongst the white population. They were vulnerable, but we were no terrorists."[75] The ANC's decision not to kill civilians "limited their scope" because they refrained from taking an "indiscriminate approach," whereas in other revolutions "when you have to bomb a bridge you bomb a bridge. When you have to kill you kill. Then it sends those shockwaves."[76]

Instead, the ANC was committed to holding the moral high ground, and needed to consider how inflicting casualties might impact the broader struggle. MK was especially reluctant to undermine its "recruitment drive within white communities" and "within SADF itself," in which the ANC sought to recruit white members and promote a campaign against the regime's mandatory conscription of white males to the SADF.[77] In his 1993 memoir *Armed and Dangerous*, MK Military Intelligence chief Ronnie Kasrils describes the valuable intelligence that MK was able to glean through its spy networks within the SADF forces, which it then passed on to Cuban and Angolan forces fighting the apartheid regime in Angola, contributing to the regime's 1988 defeat at Cuito Cuanavale.

Because of this delicate situation, in which MK sought through persuasion and infiltration as much as by violence to erode apartheid power, "we didn't just do as we like. We had to check first the political situation. Is it going to gain us

[75] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[76] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, 20/12/2009
[77] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

for the revolution if we hit them? Or are we going to multiply hatred within them against the revolution? We knew that no man, we are going to win the war, let's not destroy the country."[78] The former MK commander emphasized that the ANC's struggle was distinct from "the struggle of another country, whereby guerrillas used to attack, even burn mealie [corn] fields." Emphasizing the ANC's rigorous politicization of its cadres, as compared to more indiscriminate armed movements in other countries, he continued: "We are no peasants, blowing bridges so that everyone suffers. Destroying hospitals, clinics. Poisoning dams. You see? No. That's why I said, since we didn't use terrorist tactics, they thought we are not good enough [i.e., not on par with the apartheid forces], but we won the struggle, at the end of the day."[79]

Another ex-guerrilla said that MK's aversion to causing casualties, especially civilian ones, "was demonstrated in many situations," recalling in particular a shootout between guerrillas and police that ensued after "our cadres" had held up a South African bank: "They fought to the last man, they never shot the people there and it was whites only inside that bank, but those guys were fighting the police. If it was a criminal thing, you know they could have decided to die with these people. But in the beginning, MK decided that it is politics that guides the barrel of the gun. They don't give you a gun if you don't know your enemy."[80]

"Armed Propaganda," "People's War," and the Intensification of Armed Struggle

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[78] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[79] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[80] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

The 1980s saw the intensification of armed struggle in two phases, "armed propaganda" and "people's war." These phases were a response to mounting apartheid repression, and to the 1984 eruption of rebellions throughout South Africa's townships, spearheaded by the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF was formed in August 1983 as a loosely-knit association of anti-apartheid activists from across South Africa, mainly student movements, youth movements, and labour associations, that sought to coordinate their struggle with the ANC, and effectively became the "ANC internal." As waves of protest swept black townships in the 1980s, starting with those in the Vaal Triangle near Johannesburg in 1984, the ANC assigned MK a specific role within this broader insurrectionary phase. During this period of escalation, the ANC increasingly compromised, yet did not abandon, its ethos of avoiding civilian casualties, as the armed struggle became increasingly decentralized and widespread.

The ANC sought to harness this uprising by infiltrating MK cadres tasked with spreading the armed struggle within South Africa by training UDF members as militants. Within South Africa, "although the UDF was the legal organizational structure to which the majority of the internal masses were attached, they looked to the ANC and its armed wing MK to provide them with the means to realize the vision of genuine people's power" (McKinley 1997, 76). The period 1983-85 represented MK's "transformation from a guerrilla war conducted by insurgents to a so-called 'people's war'" featuring "armed propaganda" attacks against "commercial and economic targets" targeted by popular strikes and boycotts.[81] The ANC's 1985 Kabwe conference affirmed this strategy, whereby the

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[81] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.

movement would infiltrate guerrillas entrusted to uphold its principles even during the lengthy periods when they would inevitably have no contact with headquarters in Lusaka. This created "the risk that not all of the principles it taught to govern guerrilla warfare would be adopted by domestic enlistees" (Davis 1987, 119).

The strict ethos of discipline that was inculcated in MK's most highly trained personnel was inevitably diluted as the movement sought to expand its ranks and structures within the South African masses. MK was tasked with training Self-Defense Units (SDUs): "As the violence took its toll in the reef, our deputy president was reported… as having said that MK cadres will lead in the formation of self defense units."[82] One ex-guerrilla explained that in MK, "there was a culture of discipline, regarding observing standing rules. Regarding punctuality. Orders were obeyed. But then, when somebody disciplined has to work with raw untrained people, anything could happen."[83] Gear emphasizes this difference between the professionalism of SDU cadres, who received training within South Africa on an ad hoc basis, and the "thorough political education provided to" MK guerrillas at their bases "in exile" (2002, 84). Crash-course trainees in particular were prone to using indiscriminate violence: "Some people got excited by being involved and do all sorts of things in the name of the movement, some of which was uncalled for, even though this person believes he is doing something in the name of liberation, but some people died who were never supposed to have died."[84]

Indeed, during the mid-1980s a spate of unauthorized bombings by raw

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[82] "MK and the Future," p.1 (SAHA)
[83] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[84] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

recruits at shopping malls, beaches, and restaurants killed and wounded a number of white civilians, and the ANC was forced to awkwardly distance itself from these actions (Davis 1987, 120). During this period, ANC members in South Africa's black townships also began spontaneously manifesting their anger against suspected regime collaborators by killing them with tires placed around their necks, doused with gasoline, and set aflame- the notorious "necklacing." Again, the ANC disavowed such tactics that "deviated from Congress policy" while acknowledging the extreme conditions that had pushed untrained activists to adopt them.[85]

One ex-guerrilla recalled that necklacing "became popular, and the ANC realized later that this is dangerous, it must be stopped, that's when it intervened. Because a lot of people died, even some innocent ones." He contended that apartheid agents were the first to introduce necklacing as a tactic to spread fear and confusion within the UDF, and recounted how misinformation spread by the regime's agents occasionally caused SDU militants and MK fighters to mistakenly suspect or even kill their own comrades, whom they would later learn were innocent: "the Boers [Afrikaners] knew, if they tell those that that one is working for them, it will suit them, so people died. I remember one unit from MK shot another comrade in Durban and they were hanged. But it was later realized that no, man, that was an enemy agent who sent that information."[86]

Another ex-guerrilla recalled how "some people manipulated the process for their own gains," abusing the struggle for revenge or profit: "one can never

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[85] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia
[86] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

say discipline was there fully and observed, no."[87] In the increasingly lawless atmosphere that pervaded many black townships during the 1980s, gangsters sought to capitalize on ANC/UDF legitimacy by posing as political activists while profiting from criminal activities, so much so that a term was coined to describe them: *comtsotsis*, signifying gangsters ("tsotsis" in township slang) who posed as comrades (Suttner 2004). Putting the question of discipline in MK into a broader historical context, a former MK commander argued that it ultimately "was successful, because at least we didn't have anarchists who just went to attack whites on racial lines."[88] Although there were isolated incidents of such indiscriminate violence by MK fighters, the overall level of discipline was remarkable considering the intense grievances that fueled MK recruitment. This period saw a twelve-fold increase "in the killing of black collaborators such as black councilors, suspected informers, and policemen," along with a three-fold "increase in the number of shootouts between ANC guerrillas and police."[89]

During the period 1987-88, the ANC intensified its "armed propaganda" campaign of hitting "linkage targets" that connected it to the people's struggle: "corporations involved in bitter disputes with black unions, or rent collection offices trying to break community boycotts, or township constabularies hated by blacks for employing brutal policemen" (Davis 1987, 121). MK attacked railway lines to bolster UDF calls for work stayaways, and attacked the police stations at Orlando and Soekmekaar, which were involved, respectively, in evictions of black residents, and in indiscriminate violence against black communities (Suttner

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[87] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[88] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[89] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia

2004, 699). One ex-guerrilla described bombing a municipal building in support of a workers' strike in Kokstad; his unit hit the building in the middle of the night while it was empty, avoiding casualties but boosting the strikers' morale in an environment of harsh state repression.[90] During this period, the ANC also intensified its challenge to the regime's ruthlessly efficient Joint Management System, which blurred the distinction between civilian and military structures by integrating them into a counterinsurgency network embedded throughout the country. MK leadership justified "armed attacks in city centers, on civilian buildings containing SADF recruiting offices, police interrogation centers, and agents of the security management system."[91]

The advantage of waging "People's War" was that the ANC could exert more direct influence on the course of mass struggle within South Africa, transforming the ANC from a largely symbolic movement in exile to one with widespread mass representation and legitimacy. By the mid-1980s, MK had stopped targeting heavily guarded, high-profile state targets of the sort that it had focused on at the beginning of the decade. This was partly because MK networks and infiltration routes from Mozambique had been compromised by the Nkomati accord, but it also reflected a political decision to enhance the ANC's mass popularity by giving voice to popular grievances through attacks on regime targets located in or near black communities, especially police stations (Davis 1987).

In the process, MK transformed into an organization with a nucleus of several thousand highly trained guerrillas with diverse combat experience,

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[90] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

[91] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia

ranging from the Angolan battlefields to skirmishes with apartheid security forces and operations inside South Africa. By training local militants, these radiated outward into tens of thousands of crash-course trainees who in turn spread ANC ideology to the masses and organized rudimentary units to defend black townships against the regime's proxy militants. In a 1988 interview, MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani "conceded that the training of cadres inside the country [as opposed to MK bases exile] had created certain communication problems and had affected the skill of operatives."[92] Yet it was these mass-based uprisings- guided by the ANC's 1984 call to "make the townships ungovernable" and backed by MK's sharply increasing attacks- that ultimately played the greatest role in bringing the apartheid regime to the negotiating table.

"Winning Hearts and Minds" and Unraveling Apartheid's Political Gains

MK was the ANC's indispensable tool to compete with the apartheid regime for South African "hearts and minds," particularly in the black townships. In an environment where the state relentlessly crushed anti-apartheid activism, the armed struggle was the sharpest manifestation of covert resistance. As the apartheid counterinsurgency campaign intensified, "winning hearts and minds" became a zero-sum struggle between the ANC and the regime, which had its own strategies to wrest African loyalties away from the ANC, and thus to neutralize the progressive forces. The township uprisings of the mid-1980s that loosened the apartheid state's grip on black communities were locally generated and organized, with minimal input or direction from the ANC in exile. The ANC's emphasis on developing underground structures enabled it to connect with the student

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[92] Hani interview, Lusaka, 1988

organizations and trade unions that were at the cutting edge of local activism, and to help coordinate their activities at a national level. By infiltrating South Africa, connecting with local structures, and setting up cells, MK invigorated these networks and provided an armed dimension to their resistance against the state. MK attacks on regime targets further encouraged grassroots resistance throughout South Africa.

Operating under the UDF umbrella in many black townships, "despite their initial weaknesses, people were experimenting with democratic institutions. Street committees, people's organs of power, people's courts."[93] It was in this context that MK had come closest to establishing liberated zones on South African territory, however tenuous, "in certain areas in the townships where police had difficulty penetrating because [MK cadres] with combat experience were coordinating the street committees and so forth."[94]

To roll back the UDF's political gains, the regime deployed an elaborate crackdown involving tens of thousands of SADF troops in the townships to crush these alternative governance structures. This counterinsurgency initiative was aimed at seizing the political terrain from the UDF-ANC alliance, rolling back the gains they had made in their campaign to make the townships "ungovernable," and reestablishing state control over hotbeds of black activism. To this end, the regime banned 18 political organizations, while attempting to portray its new initiative as democratic. According to Hani, "the regime is now feeling confident that it can bring back the traitors and install them and strengthen the position of the regime in the townships. The ANC is clearly saying: no, never will we allow

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[93] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia (SAHA)
[94] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, 20/12/2009

you to set up puppet administrations again in the old way." Deploying "both political and military methods," the ANC mobilized the masses against the elections using "revolutionary violence or forceful persuasion" to deter "blacks from collaborating."[95]

PW Botha's 1988 "Crossing the Rubicon" speech was intended to signal to the world that the apartheid regime was prepared to relinquish racist governance. In reality, Botha was a hardliner unwilling to transform South African politics and instead planned to implement further cosmetic changes along the lines of his 1982 "Tricameral Parliament," in which Indians and Coloreds- but not blacks- gained symbolic representation via delegations of apartheid stooges lacking any real political power. The ANC viewed the NP's 1988 initiative to hold elections in black communities throughout the country to establish "municipal councils" as "one gigantic step by the regime to restore what our people destroyed"[96] in the surge of protests throughout 1984-86.

According to Hani's analysis, the regime's "clampdown is intended to create space for these people who are betraying our cause to install themselves as an organization of credibility." Despite the obvious lack of black popular support for such political structures, Hani insisted that the ANC would not be "satisfied even with a 6% poll. We don't want them even to get 10% or 8%. We want a collapse of the municipal elections, because they should be the farce, which they are, in the eyes of our people and also in the eyes of the world."[97] Hani expressed

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[95] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia. (SAHA)
[96] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia.
[97] Ibid.

a keen awareness of the global backdrop against which the struggle was unfolding, emphasizing Botha's attempts to portray his initiative as "restoring democracy to the blacks" to "his own gallery" of international supporters- "Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, [Helmut] Kohl, and others."[98]

MK's Legitimacy in Comparison With Other South African Armed Groups

The struggle against apartheid saw the rise of several armed resistance groups in South Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, all of which were dissolved in the transition to democracy in 1994. MK was undoubtedly the largest and best known, followed by the Pan-African Congress (PAC) armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), and the historically marginal Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA). MK was the largest, best-organized, and most disciplined of the forces, and also belonged to the movement responsible for negotiating the transition from apartheid to democracy, and so its members were best positioned to be directly involved in the negotiations, and to benefit from whatever provisions the negotiators would make for former combatants. The PAC, by contrast, played a very marginal role in political negotiations, joining only a year before the 1994 elections, and only after extensive internal "wrangling" (Gear 2002, 29).

As opposed to MK's non-racial ideology, the PAC and APLA subscribed to an African nationalist ideology that did not recruit or accept other races. APLA was famous for its slogan of "One Settler, One Bullet", with its thinly disguised racial connotation (Sparks 1994). Whereas MK operatives generally adhered to a high standard that included sparing civilian targets and refraining from looting

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[98] Ibid.

behavior, APLA did not discriminate between state targets and white civilian targets. APLA cadres were responsible for the notorious 1993 Heidelberg Tavern and St. James' Church massacres, in which groups of white civilians were murdered.[99] MK, by contrast, was known to call off attacks on military targets at the last minute if civilians were present, to express regret for civilian loss of life when it occurred as a result of its operations, and has no comparable stain on its record in terms of systematically targeting and killing non-combatants on a racial basis.

APLA also funded its armed operations through a "robbery unit" (referred to during TRC hearings as a "repossession unit"), which systematically secured money and provisions through armed robberies of banks, grocery stores, and other targets (Gear 2002, 28); indeed, during the period 1990-94, by the admission of Letlapa Mphahlele, APLA's own Director of Operations, the PAC lost more cadres trying to finance themselves through robberies than in actual combat operations (Foster et. al. 2005). MK, by contrast, largely refrained from such predation, both because its ideology prohibited it, and, significantly, because it had better-developed sources of funding than APLA did- especially MK's Soviet sponsors (Shubin 2008). The ANC has also enjoyed stronger and more widespread support than the PAC among virtually all sectors of the South African

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[99] Jeffery (2009) alleges that the ANC was involved in planning these attacks on civilian targets, and that MK cadres participated in their execution. However, this is highly unlikely, considering that the mainstream South African media sources she cites were almost certainly fed this disinformation by the apartheid regime, whose counterinsurgency mechanisms specialized in spreading disinformation to discredit the ANC, and in blaming MK for the regime's own violence (see Chapter 3). Indeed, Sparks (1994) points to evidence that the regime's own *agents provocateurs* had orchestrated these attacks on white civilian targets to polarize the country, while according to Bell and Ntsebeza (2003), APLA in particular was heavily infiltrated by SADF Military intelligence. Finally, after the transition, former APLA Head of Operations Letlapa Mphahlele claimed sole responsibility as the mastermind of the Heidelberg Tavern and St. James Church attacks, which he ordered (Foster et. al. 2005).

population, both in regionally specific and national terms, reinforcing the ANC's and MK's broad-based legitimacy vis-à-vis the PAC and APLA. After 1994, the PAC faded into insignificance.

It is important to note, however, that unlike other anti-colonial guerrilla groups such as ZANLA and ZIPRA in Zimbabwe or MPLA, UNITA, and FNLA in Angola, MK and APLA cadres developed no overt rivalry, generally refrained from targeting each other both during and after the struggle[100], and displayed pan-African solidarity. One former MK guerrilla who had spent six years in prison along with several members of his unit related how their apartheid captors placed MK and APLA cadres in separate cells to foment rivalry between them. One day in the prison yard, he approached the APLA men and "broke the ice" by appealing to their shared African identity and common struggle goals. This served to establish camaraderie between the MK and APLA prisoners and blunted their captors' attempts to manipulate and divide them.[101]

MK Operations, Training, and Tactics

An overview of MK cadres' training underscores their capacity to sustain armed struggle even after losing the superpower sponsor with the Soviet Union's collapse. It also underscores MK's readiness to assume a variety of roles in the security forces during and after the transition, and highlights MK's own highly evolved machinery for training its cadres, both in its camps in exile and in Lesotho, under the noses of the apartheid forces.

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[100] One important exception was the killing of 4 APLA cadres in a shootout with MK forces at a voter education station in Port St. Johns one month before the 1994 elections (see Chapter 4); these APLA cadres were a renegade faction, however, since by this time the PAC leadership had rescinded its rejectionist stance towards the negotiations.
[101] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

The youth rebellions against apartheid that erupted throughout much of South Africa from the Soweto uprising onwards ensured that "many [MK] cadres get the battle experience even before they are formally trained outside the country. It's an army made of soldiers who's [sic] initiation into the war begins at a tender age, due to the brutalities of apartheid."[102] From this foundation, MK guerrillas learned and integrated into their training a broad array of tactics, reflected the diversity of training they received from several different countries, particularly the USSR, Cuba, East Germany, and the elite "Red Beret" Angolan commando unit, as well as Yugoslavia, Egypt, and India. According to one ex-guerrilla, by observing and infiltrating SADF, MK became familiar with both NATO and Warsaw Pact tactics. "SADF underestimated us, assumed that the crash-course trainees they captured from Lesotho were fully trained 'terrorists,'" he said, savouring the irony of the apartheid regime's term for guerrillas. "They didn't know. Why? Because we *deceived* them. They found out later, when we starting outmaneuvering them, defeating them in skirmishes. Hitting them. When the white communities started to see coffins, they realized. We were very well-trained, very *versatile*."[103]

Usually moving under the cover of darkness, the guerrillas were prepared for combat in which they were outnumbered by their pursuers: "we were trained to fight a section of them when we were two."[104] One former MK commander explained the difference between guerrilla training and the SADF's conventional military training: "There you are trained specifically as a rifleman. Then you go up ranks, and maybe you join that artillery unit, or you are an infantryman, or you

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[102] "MK and the Future," p.3
[103] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[104] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

belong to engineering regiment. But as a guerrilla you are versatile, you train in all those fields. So that was our advantage."[105] It must be emphasized, however, that many if not most MK guerrillas did not receive such comprehensive training. MK also developed a Special Operations, or 'Special Ops" unit that performed "sustained operations of a higher quality that [had] a strong political content."[106] This elite unit launched operations in both Angola, where it fought UNITA, and in South Africa. Two of MK's most talented commanders- Barney Molokoane, whom one ex-guerrilla described as a "very gifted special operations commander, a military genius"- and Timothy Makoena, tasked and led the Special Ops unit.

The ANC continually reevaluated the role of armed struggle in the movement, and at the watershed 1985 Kabwe conference, it decided: "all Congress members were expected to undergo a 3-month crash course in the camps."[107] The ANC decided further on a standard for MK guerrillas, who underwent "basic training for… 6 months during which [guerrillas are] taught small arms use, conventional drill, topography, armed combat, communications, compass and map-reading, etc. After 6 months the soldier can go for specialist training to East Germany (armaments engineering) or the Soviet Union (military academy).[108] A former MK commander described being sent to Moscow for a twelve-month commander's course: "When we went back to Angola to the camps we taught the others, we were instructors."[109]

The ANC's Angolan camps trained thousands of guerrillas, as one former

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[105] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[106] "MK and the Future," p.5
[107] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia (SAHA)
[108] Ibid.
[109] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

base commander recalled training over 1000 recruits per year at his camp alone in 8-month courses: "I'm talking about those who went for general course. There were many, always. Hundreds. Sure, man. Different platoons, companies. In my base I used to have about one thousand-something students."[110] By the late 1980s, MK operations were branching out and employing increasingly sophisticated weaponry inside South Africa. An MK team captured at Broederstroom, near Pretoria, was armed with Soviet-built SAM-7 portable anti-aircraft missiles, and while MK commander Chris Hani expressed regret that they were captured, he emphasized that other similarly armed MK units had eluded capture, and warned that such armaments would be used in the future to shoot down South African military aircraft.[111]

Despite the Soviet Union's collapse and the disintegration of MK's main source of military support, the movement remained confident in its ability to continue harassing the apartheid security forces and keep them on the defensive. Davis (1987) notes that although MK trained its cadres to use a wide variety of weaponry, including large-calibre machine guns, mortars, anti-aircraft artillery, armored vehicles, and heavy artillery, in the late 1980s MK continued to request and receive shipments mainly of the light weapons best suited for urban guerrilla warfare: AK-47s, pistols, grenades, and limpet mines. One ex-guerrilla explained the strategic logic behind this emphasis on light weaponry: "if you had an AK, you were like a God. All you needed was an AK and some grenades- with that you could cause havoc. It was just a question of knowing tactics, how to use them

[110] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[111] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia; Hani emphasized that the missiles would not be used to target civilian aircraft (in 1979, ZIPRA had used the SA-7 to down a Rhodesian civilian airliner).

effectively."[112] This is significant because it suggests that MK's operational capacity was well insulated from the loss of its superpower patron, with most of its arsenals and structures left intact even after the Soviet Union collapsed. It also raises the possibility that, contrary to some scholars' assertions that the Cold War's end eroded the ANC's strategic position vis-à-vis the apartheid regime (e.g., Taylor 2001), MK's military resources and morale remained largely undiminished.

The guerrillas' training also included survival tactics behind enemy lines, and what the ANC termed "Military Combat Work," (MCW), a "course which is specifically for underground workers- urban guerrilla training."[113] One ex-guerrilla explained that in the urban settings where many operations took place, guerrillas usually traveled "without a weapon, because you cannot go through a checkpoint with an AK in your luggage." A separate unit would be responsible for transporting weapons: "If you are going to attack somebody in this house, they will tell you pick [up] a weapon at 3 o'clock in that dustbin.[114]

MK also trained a large number of its fighters in rudimentary crash courses that lasted several weeks, mainly at ANC bases in Lesotho. The main advantage of such crash courses, in addition to forming a large number of people in a short period of time, was that recruits could cross into Lesotho, usually on the pretext of working there, without arousing the apartheid authorities' suspicion or losing their legal status within South Africa. By comparison, the lengthy absences of recruits who had left the country for training at MK bases in Angola were much more difficult to explain or conceal, and required forged documents. Cadres

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[112] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[113] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[114] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

at these crash courses learned such skills as "sabotage, how to use limpet mines," and were in turn sent back to "recruit more, train others, make cells. So we taught them just a little bit of engineering, mobilizing people, ambushes and raids." These recruits learned to attack the regime's forces within their own communities, such as "how to raid a police station, so that when they go for a mission they must know that there must be assault units, there must be covering units, there must be capturing groups."[115] Most importantly, they were trained to follow more senior guerrillas' directives to ensure discipline within the movement.

Case Study: Umkhonto we Sizwe in Malangue Province, Angola, 1975-89

An analysis of MK's presence in Angola in the midst of that country's civil war provides a case study that sheds important historical light on its competence as a fighting force and its relations with the local communities surrounding its bases. MK's "exile" years based in remote northern Angola represented one of the only occasions in its history that the ANC's armed wing enjoyed the support of a rear base and a friendly host government. Therefore, an analysis of the dynamics of MK's presence there gives an indication of how it could have performed as a security force in a free South Africa. Following Angolan independence from Portuguese colonial rule in 1975, the triumphant MPLA, under the leadership of Eduardo Dos Santos, invited MK to open bases on Angolan territory from which to operate and train guerrillas.[116] The MPLA had been vying with two other rebel groups for political power in post-colonial Angola: FNLA, under the command of Holden Roberto, who initially enjoyed CIA support and was based out of Mobutu's Zaire; and UNITA, under the

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[115] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[116] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

command of the charismatic Jonas Savimbi, who became the apartheid regime's key regional ally after its 1975 military invasion failed to install a friendly government in Luanda. This incursion had been thwarted largely by Cuban military intervention, which repulsed the South African expedition, and thereafter maintained a military presence until 1989.

Although the MPLA-Cuban alliance had defeated this initial South African foray, they would remain bogged down in a brutal civil war that lasted until the twilight of apartheid. In this war, South Africa deployed its UNITA ally to destabilize Angola, while Savimbi enjoyed direct US assistance and several visits to the Reagan White House (Minter 1994). By the late 1980s, the Cold War superpowers had invested tremendous resources in backing their respective southern African proxies.

"Winning Hearts and Minds"

As one grizzled former MK commander recalled: "when Angola had its independence we were already there, but we had no MK camp. We were staying in one of [MPLA's] camps. And then we got our first camp, it was in Benguela, along the coast."[117] "Comrade Ivan," a Soviet military officer who trained Angolan and MK forces during his years based in Southern Africa, related: "the attitude of the Angolan government and people to the South African patriots was more than friendly. Under the state of civil war and practically full economic dislocation, Angola was nevertheless looking for opportunities to do what it could to help the ANC. The goodwill of the Angolans extended to the Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC" (Shubin 2008, 251). MK had five bases in

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[117] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

northern Angola. The relationship of mutual goodwill and support between the Angolan state and MK guerrillas, as well as the fighters of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization)'s military wing, PLAN (People's Liberation Army of Namibia), was much in evidence both at the strategic and communal levels.

At the local level, according to a number of ex-guerrillas, MK enjoyed respect and popularity among the rural communities surrounding their bases in Malangue province. As part of their doctrine of "winning hearts and minds," MK forces provided medical care to Angolan villagers living near their bases, a rarity in the country's war-torn rural areas. The MK cadres were highly disciplined, and as one ex-guerrilla mentioned, against the backdrop of Angola's violent chaos, "the locals were surprised we didn't loot."[118] Two ex-guerrillas emphasized that in addition to the strategic and ideological emphasis on "winning hearts and minds," MK policy provided a strong deterrent to guerrillas abusing their power over locals by mandating the death penalty for cadres convicted of rape.[119] This demonstrates that in a case where MK was able to operate openly, with the support of the local government, it cultivated good relations with local communities and enjoyed a high degree of trust and legitimacy. Asked about these relationships, one former MK commander responded: "Oh! You know, our relationship was very good because in some ways we used to help them. Because our camps were situated where there were peasants. Sometimes we used to go, take old clothes, give it to them, we had a very good relationship." And the penalties in MK for rape "were very, very harsh, so nobody would think of doing

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[118] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[119] Gear further emphasizes that MK cadres found guilty of raping Angolan women were beaten and sentenced to death (2002, 83)

that thing. Because they know if you raped, you disgrace our name, you get a firing squad."[120]

Another MK commander with long experience in Angola recalled: "We used to treat them, give them food, wash kids if there are sores, give them injections. We used to go out just to check the peasants, if they are safe. We went with medical boxes, you know, or we would tell them, in that village, we will come next week, they've got four patients, so we organize some medicine for those there. Every time."[121] Because of MK's emphasis on discipline and its harsh penalties for rape, local populations "were surprised man, what kind of people are these? Because before [in the same region of Angola] there were ZIPRAs and ZANLAs [guerrillas] from Zimbabwe, there was no hundred percent discipline in those areas, unlike MK."[122] This former commander also said that sympathetic locals would help MK troops track down and corner UNITA forces.

A Profile of MK in Battle in Angola

During the course of the civil war, in which swathes of territory exchanged hands numerous times, Angola's MPLA government had delegated to MK the role of defending the highly strategic Malangue province against South African-backed UNITA rebels on the Eastern front, near the Zairian border. MK occasionally launched joint operations with the Angolan army, "but in most cases we were fighting alone." A high-ranking officer at one of MK's bases in Malangue emphasized that during the early 1980s, UNITA commander Jonas Savimbi coveted the fertile, resource-rich province and sought repeatedly to

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[120] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[121] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[122] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

conquer it. Under MK's guard, Malangue never fell: "They didn't take that province. All those years. All those years! Sometimes they attacked Dondo, or Ndalatande, or Masvingo, those small towns, we used to counterattack them again, flush them out."[123]

As MK became enmeshed in the strategic dynamics of Angola's civil war UNITA, the apartheid proxy, targeted the liberation movement: "They used to occupy bridges, closing the road from east to south. And we had our logistics, our trucks with food [bringing supplies to MK bases], and trainees coming up. So we had to defend the whole road."[124] UNITA would frequently lay ambushes for MK patrols and convoys, claiming many MK casualties, but the ANC's armed wing hit back ferociously; as one former commander recalled: "UNITA were fighters also, but they didn't match us." The ANC guerrillas gave no quarter during years of fierce fighting, to the point where, according to one MK commander, "UNITA respected us. There was an order from Jamba [UNITA's main headquarters, located in southern Angola] that they must not attack us because if they attack us, hey! We give them hell! Yeah, we stop everything and concentrate on them, straight!"[125]

'Special Ops'

In a raid during some of the heaviest fighting in 1983-4, MK forces, including the elite 'Special Ops' unit, overran UNITA's Kuanza Sul camp, which was second in size and importance only to the rebels' general headquarters at Jamba. The raid was in response to a UNITA ambush in which an MK fighter was

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[123] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[124] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[125] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

killed and several were wounded. Although the camp was protected by the massive Kuanza River, MK units under Chris Hani's command penetrated the camp's defenses, overran Kuanza Sul, and sent UNITA troops fleeing. A former guerrilla who took part in the mission recalled being impressed by the camp, "a big one nicely built with wood, very clean, classroom, toilets, bungalows." Yet in comparison, MK's camps were even "more organized. Ah, too much, we were a government, really. We had everything. It's just food that was not so good."[126] In addition to its superior training, MK's main battlefield advantage over UNITA was the discipline instilled in its ranks through its thoroughgoing program of politicization, which stood in contrast to UNITA's ethno-nationalist and profit-driven motives.[127]

In addition to the vast material and logistical support that South Africa provided UNITA, the apartheid regime also deployed mercenaries and commandos into the rebel group's ranks to coordinate and persecute the Angolan war, such that UNITA was "fighting side by side with the Boers [Afrikaners]."[128] Although MK fighters, unlike their SWAPO counterparts, were not deployed directly on cross-border raids from Angola into South African-controlled Namibia, they saw frequent combat against the South African soldiers embedded within UNITA forces, particularly over the course of running battles with UNITA in 1983-4.[129] The fighting featured back-and-forth ambushes and raids between the two guerrilla groups, as they sought the upper hand during months of pitched combat in the Angolan woodlands and savannahs.

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[126] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[127] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; Minter (1994) documents how UNITA relied mainly on coercion to recruit and retain its members, although some of its recruits were apparently driven by ideology and grievance.
[128] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[129] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

UNITA was especially important to the South African war effort in Angola "because SADF didn't know the way in Angola. And UNITA were Angolans, so they showed them all the terrain."[130] Another former MK commander recalled encountering battlefield situations that proved the high degree of assistance that the apartheid regime was providing UNITA, including skirmishes with white soldiers embedded in UNITA's ranks, and elaborate booby traps that UNITA would have lacked the engineering expertise to assemble: "They used to plant sophisticated bombs. So if you try to defuse it, underneath it's booby-trapped."[131]

Although fighting UNITA meant that MK soldiers in Angola were fighting the apartheid regime only indirectly, the ANC was well aware of the South African soldiers deployed alongside their proxies, and even captured several. According to one former MK commander, a number of SADF soldiers that MK captured in combat "joined us. We gave them politics, so that they should know who the enemy is. We were not a government, so we didn't have places where we can take the prisoners of war to." These defectors were mostly black South African soldiers, but "there were also some whites. So we politicized them."[132]

MK's Soviet-trained Special Operations ("Special Ops") unit particularly distinguished itself in these battles against UNITA. According to a former Special Ops guerrilla, the commanding officer of Special Ops in Angola was Timothy Makoena, who was "second in charge after the overall commander," an Angolan brigadier. "We were recruited into that unit, and after training, preparing, we

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[130] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[131] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[132] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

know [UNITA's and SADF's] tactics." The chain of command for this elite unit featured three of MK's most important leaders: "Chris [Hani] would come and brief us about the situation inside [South Africa], [and] we were working closely with Ronnie Kasrils. Joe Slovo was commanding the special ops unit, he was based in Mozambique, so when [the Special Ops unit] would go to be infiltrated they would pass through Mozambique, and then be infiltrated through Swaziland. Joe Slovo would be directing cadres into the country."[133] This was done mainly through MK's Fazenda camp. Designated as a way-station for guerrillas undergoing final preparation for infiltration into South Africa, Fazenda camp was dubbed "Survival" by the MK fighters because of its extremely Spartan conditions.

Chris Hani's Military Role in Angola

Interview with ex-combatants shed important new light on MK commander Chris Hani's role in the movement's combat operations. Smith and Tromp's 2009 biography of Hani depicts his role as commander of MK's abortive Wankie mission (see pp.55-56) as his sole combat operation, for which he was immortalized as an ANC military hero, and from which he derived endless legitimacy as a guerrilla commander until his death in 1993. Although this literature mentions Hani's visits throughout the 1980s to Angolan training camps to boost MK troops' morale, it omits his ongoing combat role as one of MK's foremost field commanders during that period. In fact, during several visits to MK camps in Angola, Hani- who was based mainly in ANC offices in Zambia and

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[133] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Lesotho- donned combat fatigues and, rifle in hand, led MK raids into UNITA camps, including the successful raid on Kuanza Sul camp.

Far from being a symbolic presence, then, Hani commanded strikes against MK's proximate enemy in Angola, in a heretofore-unwritten chapter of the ANC's military history that greatly bolsters MK's credibility and reputation as a fighting force. One ex-guerrilla explained the gulf between Hani and the rest of the ANC in terms of his military leadership and legitimacy, emphasizing that Hani "went to support us, to boost our morale, because other leadership were not to be seen. They were very flamboyant, very busy. Doing nothing. They were cowards." Hani, by comparison, "was a fighter. He was amongst the soldiers. He would visit the front, sleep outside with the soldiers on terrain, went for marches, lead the soldiers to battle."[134] This quote also highlights the tension between MK guerrillas' commitment to armed struggle against apartheid, and the ambivalence of much of the ANC leadership towards these guerrillas and their mission.

Hani also infiltrated South Africa several times, and when MK adopted the tactic of targeting the apartheid border patrol with mines, Hani led "the first unit planting limpet mines on the Eastern Transvaal, he planted his own [mine], himself, and went back again [into Zambia]." Hani would also cross South African territory overland "to Lesotho to meet leadership of the commanders, to issue some orders," and set an example for physical fitness: "We used to run to run with him. Fit! Fit! Very disciplined. Hey! Too much. Yeah, he was a true soldier. He cared for everyone."[135]

A former guerrilla in MK's 'Special Ops' unit recalled meeting Hani for the first time "in Lesotho, he used to like me just after chatting for some few

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[134] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[135] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

minutes, he tells me he knows my family, and told me I'd be leaving for Angola very soon. Then he was made the army Chief of Staff, so when we were in Russia he came there to tell us we are supposed to leave very soon because there is fighting going on in Angola. We met him in Angola again when he was commanding us in the Eastern front. When we were starting to operate against UNITA in the early stages, he was there."[136]

The chapter of MK's history in Angola has never been properly documented, yet it provides crucial insights into the operations of a force whose battlefield experience and prowess has remained largely downplayed and obscured. Because of apartheid South Africa's regional hegemony, the long reach of its military, and the iron will of its political leadership to strike at ANC targets, real or suspected, in neighboring countries, MK was generally unable to secure forward operating bases closer to South African territory, and was forced for most of its history to station and train its best-trained fighters thousands of miles from the South African border. The ANC still managed to infiltrate many of these fighters into South Africa on a variety of combat and intelligence missions. Some of these succeeded brilliantly, while many others were thwarted, leading to MK cadres' capture, and often to their deaths.

Meanwhile, the apartheid regime's predilection for outsourcing violence against both its foreign and domestic foes meant that MK rarely had direct confrontations with apartheid forces in Angola. Instead, via its local proxy UNITA, the apartheid regime sought to put MK on the defensive in terrain far removed from the land MK forces sought to liberate. This followed the pattern of outsourcing combat roles to African proxies that was the trademark of apartheid

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[136] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

counterinsurgency, which will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. Yet in spite of these odds, and in contrast to mainstream historical narratives seeking to portray it as a marginal or insignificant force, MK distinguished itself in combat against UNITA and its apartheid allies in northeastern Angola. MK also demonstrated its high level of discipline and implemented its political ideology by cultivating positive, non-exploitative relationships with local communities in the region where it was based. Despite its geographical and strategic disadvantage in this highly militarized region, in Angola's Malangue province MK demonstrated important political and military competence and cohesion. This provides an important case study of MK's abilities in a historical and regional context in which it constituted the closest thing to a local security force.

The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale and MK's Withdrawal from Angola

After sustaining unprecedented casualties in a 1988 battle near the south-western Angolan town of Cuito Cuanavale, the apartheid regime abandoned its foreign military adventurism. MK played a key role in this showdown alongside the much larger Angolan and Cuban conventional armies and the Namibian liberation movement, SWAPO. In his memoirs, former MK Chief of Intelligence Ronnie Kasrils describes how MK soldiers attached to the Cuban and Angolan forces monitored and translated SADF communications to provide crucial intelligence on South African positions and strategies (Kasrils 1993). A former MK guerrilla stationed with the Cubans related how the Afrikaans-language SADF radio intercepts he monitored during the battle reflected the devastating impact of the continuous bombardment by Cuban 122mm mobile rocket artillery-the notorious "Stalin's Organs"- on SADF troops pinned down near the strategic

town.[137] Thereafter, South Africa became more committed to political

negotiations and embarked on a path that led irrevocably to the first free and fair

elections in 1994. Mandela himself was quoted as saying that the battle of Cuito

Cuanavale was the turning point "in the liberation of my people" (Kasrils 2008).

A political solution to the international flashpoint emerged soon afterward. Under

glasnost, southern Africa was no longer a Soviet priority and Gorbachev pressed

for negotiations, as did the US, which hosted the proceedings in New York. In

exchange for South Africa's withdrawal from Angola and Namibia, which gained

its independence in 1989, Cuba withdrew its troops from African soil and Angola

closed all MK bases on its territory.

The ANC anticipated losing its Angolan bases and its official line was that

it was "prepared to make any sacrifices required of it" as part of a settlement to

end South Africa's devastating war on the Angolan front.[138] Angola had in any

case offered no direct infiltration routes into South Africa, and since "MK was

fast becoming a people's army trained by MK officers," Chris Hani claimed it

was "no longer dependent on an African base. We could just as well run the

operation from [East Germany] or Cuba."[139] Although this partly reflected

acceptance of a fait accompli, it also indicated that the ANC welcomed the end of

South Africa's extremely bloody foreign campaigns in Angola, Namibia, and

Mozambique, which foreshadowed the end of apartheid itself.

MK's broader perspective on the shifting regional strategic balance

befitted its emphasis on fomenting political change over violence whenever

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[137] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[138] "Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia (SAHA)
[139] Ibid.

possible to achieve its ultimate goal of national liberation. Even after the Angolan

bases were shut down and the guerrillas relocated to Uganda, MK continued to

receive a high volume of trainees, and its leadership under Chris Hani continued

its efforts to maintain a high standard among recruits. One ex-guerrilla explained

that when he joined the ANC in 1989, he had no intention of undertaking military

training, "but [Transkei regional MK command] and Chris Hani said no man, just

go to receive training, so they drove me down to Durban, from Durban I flew to

Johannesburg, from Johannesburg I flew to Zambia, and from Zambia I flew to

Uganda."[140]

The ANC's Notorious Prison Camps in Historical Perspective

In response to mutinies at some of its Angolan bases, the ANC established

prison camps on Angolan and Tanzanian soil for the "re-education and

rehabilitation" of its rebellious cadres. Conditions at some of the camps were very

harsh, and some mutineers were killed or perished under hard prison conditions,

leading various authors (e.g., Trewhela 2009; Jeffery 2009; McCarthy 1996) to

equate the ANC's worst abuses with the apartheid regime's brutality. The reasons

for unrest within the camps were twofold: first, some guerrillas became restless,

as they resented fighting against UNITA and grew impatient to fight the apartheid

regime directly. McKinley criticizes the ANC for "externalizing" its

organizational centre, including its military structure, whereby "thousands of the

best activists sat in far-flung military camps waiting to launch (or so they were

told) an armed seizure of power" (1997, 65).

Self-criticism from within MK echoed this analysis; one guerrilla wrote:

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[140] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

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"It is known that a soldier in any army should be constantly engaged" either in further training, "productive or administrative work" within the army, or "combat activities in the case of an army at war. One of the principles of armies is that a soldier is never kept idle. Why does it seem as if this principle is violated in our army?"[141] A former MK commander elaborated: "a soldier in the camp must always be kept busy. If not, he will think shit." In order to keep MK soldiers engaged at their Angolan bases during lulls in the fighting with UNITA, this commander would regularly lead teams of thirty guerrillas on reconnaissance patrols, checking for ambushes or traps and visiting surrounding villages.[142]

This relative lack of direct military action against South Africa eventually became a subject of tensions and grievances within the movement, triggering several mutinies on MK's Angolan bases. MK put these mutinies down with the help of the Angolan military in a campaign known by its Portuguese name, *Luta Contrabandito* ("struggle against bandits"). One ex-guerrilla expressed incredulity at some soldiers' refusal to fight apartheid's proxy: "[UNITA] would shoot us when they saw us, so why not fight them, to pave the way, to clear? Those mutineers, one of their demands was to stop fighting in Angola. I don't know who was going to fight for us because we were given a place to train, there was war in Angola, who was going to defend that place?"[143]

The apartheid regime exploited these tensions by recruiting MK cadres as spies, exacerbating divisions and mutinies within the movement (see Chapter 3). Beyond the damage and casualties that apartheid agents managed to inflict, their purpose was to sow doubt and mistrust within the movement's ranks. This

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[141] "MK and the Future," p.6, from the South African History Archives, Section H5.17 (Umkhonto we Sizwe)
[142] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[143] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

contributed to a climate in which the leadership of the ANC's Soviet-trained counterintelligence apparatus, Mbokodo ("the rock that crushes"), gained influence and was prone to abusing its power. In response to persistent complaints about this chapter of its history, the ANC launched several inquests into human rights abuses at its prison camps, in 1992 and 1993 (Elster 2004).

Conclusion

Although it was never able to achieve supremacy on the battlefield and never enjoyed the benefit of a rear base so crucial to successful guerrilla warfare, MK nevertheless managed to play an important role in motivating popular resistance to apartheid and in sapping the regime's strength. What it lacked in military might, the ANC's armed wing compensated for in a sophisticated and nuanced political program which saw it capture the popular imagination of South Africa's oppressed communities, helping to pave the way for the popular uprisings of the 1980s, apartheid's final decade. Because of the discipline that was such an integral component of MK training, the movement largely managed to adhere to its doctrine of avoiding civilian targets, despite the apartheid regime's indiscriminate violence. As a movement, MK's defining trait and greatest asset was its popular legitimacy, which it cultivated assiduously by recruiting from all sectors of South African society, and which was a critical component of the ANC's popularity throughout South Africa. This was further bolstered by MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani's immense popularity, not only among South African masses but especially within the ranks of the armed wing itself.

The section on MK history in Angola highlights a central point, which will be reinforced in Chapter 4, on the MK presence in Transkei: that wherever the

ANC's armed wing could rely on a friendly government to provide a rearguard, it managed to hold its own in combat, while simultaneously cultivating strong positive relations with the local population. The harsh, isolated conditions in MK's Angolan camps triggered several mutinies in the early 1980s- fueled by apartheid counterinsurgency efforts- but did not succeed in disrupting the course of the struggle, which intensified up until the onset of negotiations between the regime and the ANC in February 1990. Therefore, MK's popular legitimacy, combined with its emphasis on the selective use of violence and the high level of training and competence displayed by many of its cadres, made it a force that was well-prepared to take an active role in South Africa's post-authoritarian security forces, a role from which it was marginalized by apartheid counterinsurgency and the abandonment of the ANC rank-and-file by its elites.

CHAPTER THREE

COLONIALISM'S CUTTING EDGE: APARTHEID

COUNTERINSURGENCY

This chapter examines counterinsurgency as the apartheid regime's main strategy for dealing with popular resistance. It details the apartheid state's increasing militarization throughout the 1980s, and the intensification of clandestine strategies of outsourcing violence before and during the negotiations between the regime and the ANC, from 1990-94. These clandestine strategies focused on intelligence operations to infiltrate rebel ranks, and violence by special units and proxy forces affording the regime 'plausible deniability.' Apartheid counterinsurgency forces sought to covertly shape political outcomes throughout southern Africa (Minter 1994; Ellis 1998), honing their expertise during decades of clandestine warfare on the subcontinent. SADF Military Intelligence in particular mastered the use of proxy warfare and special forces to destabilize or topple hostile regimes throughout the 1980s, before intensifying the use of these strategies domestically. In terms of my classification of "blunt" (overt) and "sharp" (covert) categories of counterinsurgency operations, apartheid counterinsurgency forces were specialists at "sharp" operations, benefiting from South Africa's industrial strength and Cold War alliances for training, funding, and technology. Their covert methods have made post-transition counterinsurgency legacies difficult to trace, yet it would be hard to overestimate counterinsurgency's importance as a variable shaping domestic and regional political processes.

The chapter examines evidence from archival research and interviews with ex-guerrillas indicating that the regime continued to deploy counterinsurgency tactics even after President de Klerk, responding to ANC pressure and following an internal inquiry culminating in the Steyn Report, purged his security forces of 23 high-ranking officers in mid-1992, the point at which earlier literature considers apartheid counterinsurgency to have effectively ceased. Instead, this chapter presents compelling evidence that apartheid counterinsurgency continued at least until the month of Mandela's election to power in April 1994.

This chapter demonstrates that during the transition, the apartheid security force elites focused on two distinct counterinsurgency strategies: first, the deployment of proxy units to terrorize and destabilize ANC strongholds in particular, and African communities more generally, as has been discussed extensively in previous literature on South Africa's transition; and second, recruiting spies within the ANC's top leadership, and assassinating the incorruptible Chris Hani, who would not be bribed or blackmailed. This latter dimension has not been directly or comprehensively explored in any previous literature. A third strategy, on which I will also elaborate in the next chapter, was to control the security sector reform process by retaining top military and police positions, by staffing the 'new' police and military with askaris, and by marginalizing MK fighters during the integration process. The apartheid regime's strategies of outsourcing violence by creating death squads and proxy forces, and by recruiting guerrillas from the liberation movements, have impeded the extent and scope of change particularly in the state security institutions. They have also contributed directly to urban violence and to the erosion of social capital in the post-transition era.

The Colonial Origins of Counterinsurgency

If colonial governments in Africa often sought to minimize expenditures by operating "on a shoestring," as Sara Berry contends, it is equally true that colonialism depended on the ability to rapidly deploy overwhelming violence to crush African resistance. This aspect of colonial rule was achieved through the recruitment or conscription of black soldiers who could be paid a fraction of what white soldiers would require, and whose deaths came at no cost to the colonial power, as compared to the public outcry that resulted from white combat deaths. In many cases, recruitment among certain ethnic groups within the colony led to the formation of virtual warrior castes, fomenting enmity among various ethnicities and facilitating the colonial imperative of divide-and-conquer. Hence the British raised armies in East Africa by drafting Africans from northern Ugandan ethnic groups such as the Acholi, while Portugal was able to sustain its African wars for over a decade by relying heavily on African conscripts, who did most of the fighting, and the dying, on behalf of their colonial masters (Davidson 1981).

If, as Mamdani (1996) contends, apartheid South Africa must be regarded as the blueprint, not the outlier, for colonialism in Africa, we must consider the ways in which its exceptionally strong institutional heritage of state consolidation and efficiency bolstered its ability to assert control by deploying violence. Anti-colonial struggles smoldered across the continent; the colonial state consolidated as much as it needed to in order to crush uprisings. But violence in the colonies could be costly to deploy, hence its outsourcing wherever possible to proxy

forces. To the greatest degree possible, colonizers would outsource and decentralize violence while maintaining monopoly on the use of force.

South Africa's emergence as an industrial power is tightly intertwined with its history of state violence, and gave rise early to counterinsurgency strategies that it would later perfect: A number of studies (Shaw 2002; Kynoch 2005, 2007) have analyzed the specific combination of urbanization and racist rule that gave rise to patterns of high crime, and specifically gang violence, among black communities as far back as the founding of the city of Johannesburg during the gold rush of the late 19th century. There is much evidence that the colonial, and later, apartheid state actively abetted black criminal gangs as a method of undermining socio-economic capital within black communities in the context of intense racial segregation (Kynoch 2005). In the final decades of apartheid, death squads emanated from the bowels of the country's burgeoning military-industrial complex.

Outsourcing Murder: Askaris and Mercenaries

Counterinsurgency operations have historically relied on an alliance between state special forces and intelligence units, and "sellouts" recruited from among the insurgents. However much counterinsurgency operations have relied on deploying "soft" strategies to "win hearts and minds," they also rely on murder and repression in order to eliminate more intractable opponents of the regime, and to make less militant insurgents more amenable to cooptation or compromise. State military and intelligence formations subject would-be sellouts to a combination of persuasion and coercion to make them switch allegiances. One

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former guerrilla described the apartheid regime's methods of recruitment and its impacts on MK:

"Everybody who gets arrested, chances are that they are recruited. They use all types of tactics, depending on what they think will work on you. They wouldn't force you into it, but they will talk you into it. They can approach it politically, convince you that it's not possible that your side can win, so why don't you join the bigger side? So interrogation was organized, it was systematic. They had experts. So they recruited one way or the other. Then they will maybe force you to shoot one of your comrades and once you do that, you can't go back to your comrades, you are part of them. So they had a small army from our people. These are people who were trained by our army, so it's a blow to have somebody you have trained crossing over."[144]

During the British counterinsurgency campaign against Kenya's Mau Mau uprising in the 1950s, 'askari,' the Swahili and Arabic word for 'soldier,' came to denote a captured guerrilla 'turned' into a collaborator. 'Turning' insurgents "became a systematic feature of the southern African wars," according to Minter, who recounts British intelligence officer Frank Kitson's mix of threats and incentives for 'turning' Kenyan guerrillas: "the combination of carrots (employment, loot), sticks (execution) and a plausible rationale (cooperating with a powerful government is wiser than terrorism)" (1994, 124). Kitson's methods, and his ability to succeed in most cases "within a few hours," were strikingly similar to SADF Major General Jac Buchner's success rates at 'turning' MK guerrillas into askaris throughout the 1980s (Berkeley 2001, 177). Another former MK guerrilla, who was himself captured and tortured by the apartheid regime's

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[144] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

forces, related their methods for "turning" guerrillas: "When you are taken in, all sorts of things are used to frighten you. They break your heart, your morale. They make you feel useless, [wearing] not even your underwear, and you are always blindfolded. You are tortured, burned, cigarette butts, all sorts of things. So if you are not strong enough…" According to him, newer guerrilla recruits who had not received a full course of training were most vulnerable, but even "some who were well-trained, politically mature- they would sell."[145]

The Rhodesian military adopted this tactic from the British, raising elite units such as the notorious, 1800-strong Selous Scouts with 50% black conscripts or higher, many of whom were captured from the military wings of ZANU and ZAPU. They taught these tactics in turn to the South Africans, who used askaris extensively against MK and APLA. By 1990, Colonel Eugene De Kock, commander of the C-1 police death squad known as "Vlakplaas,' had over 300 askaris under the command of a white officer corps (Ellis 1998, 268). In an interview with journalist Bill Berkeley, Dirk Coetzee, another Vlakplaas commander, "explained the Vlakplaas mentality this way: 'Let the blacks kill themselves, the bastards. Let them kill one another. Divide and rule, destabilize, discredit the ANC. Make sure there is no peace between the ANC and Inkatha.' Coetzee described Inkatha's leaders as 'power-hungry bastards, complete opportunists'" (Berkeley 2001, 173-4).

South Africa relied extensively on askaris in both the foreign wars it waged to destabilize its neighbours, and especially in its domestic counterinsurgency operations. Askaris were integral to counterinsurgency warfare because they could infiltrate African communities, unions, and guerrilla

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[145] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

movements in ways that white operatives never could. A former MK guerrilla explained why askaris were "very, very dangerous," a bigger threat to MK fighters than white soldiers and policemen: "If you are crossing the border from Lesotho on some trucks with two hundred laborers, who is going to identify you? The white policeman doesn't speak African languages, he thinks all blacks look the same. He won't recognize the signs. It's blacks who will identify you, then they will sell you out."[146] Those bastards were everywhere. And they wanted to impress [their white commanders], so they were very arrogant. Very destructive."[147]

MK's response to the askaris further underscores the threat they posed: by the late 1980s, MK commander Chris Hani identified the elimination of spies within the movement as MK's top operational priority, taking precedence over offensive operations against the apartheid forces themselves.[148] According to an archival document from 1988, MK commanders Chris Hani and Steve Tshwete "made it clear that the 'elimination' of black collaborators was a top priority for MK." The ANC also targeted the alternative governance structures the apartheid regime tried to create to 'win' black 'hearts and minds,' and MK's initiative "included the selective elimination of black candidates in the October [local council] elections [in the South African townships] if political methods failed to persuade them not to stand."[149] To achieve this, Hani created the elite "Icing Unit," whose sole task was to

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[146] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[147] ibid.
[148] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[149] Notes of a meeting with Chris Hani, Chief-of-Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar, from June 3rd 1988 in Lusaka, Zambia

identify and eliminate spies, and named the unit after Zola Dubeni, a legendary MK officer who had died in a shootout with apartheid forces during a mission in Cape Town in the mid-1980s.[150]

Colonial counterinsurgency forces supplemented askaris with mercenaries who further afforded the state plausible deniability and also assured it a pool of personnel ready and willing to undertake its dirty work. Hence the CIA and Belgian intelligence services relied on a rogue's gallery of white soldiers of fortune with blacks under their command to undermine Patrice Lumumba's fledgling regime in the Congo, and ultimately, to kill him. Portuguese counterinsurgency operations in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau included white mercenaries who, when Portugal withdrew from its colonies, continued their careers fighting black liberation movements first in Rhodesia, and then when the Salisbury regime fell, in apartheid South Africa. Thus it was that the South African counterinsurgency forces comprised ex-Portuguese *flechas* and Rhodesian Selous Scouts in their ranks (Ellis 1997, 266), as well as Angolan and Mozambican mercenaries.

The Evolution of Counterinsurgency

Techniques of violent colonial subjugation merged with Allied clandestine warfare methods from the Second World War to produce modern counterinsurgency strategies. Counterinsurgency's "first wave" in the 1950s encompassed British attempts to crush insurrection in Kenya and Malaya, and French campaigns in Algeria and Indochina, the latter morphing into a US operation as French involvement there drew to a close. These experiences among

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[150] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

NATO powers led them to cross-pollinate counterinsurgency strategies by training their special units together and exchanging expertise. The "second wave" of counterinsurgency began with US intensification of the Vietnam War in the 1960s; Portuguese wars against liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau; Rhodesian "bush wars" against Zimbabwean armed movements; Israel's response to Palestinian insurgency after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war; and the increasing coordination and sophistication of authoritarian Latin American regimes' strategies to crush domestic resistance (McSherry 2005).

Counterinsurgency specialists wrote manuals based on their combat experiences, such as David Galula's 1957 *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* and Roger Trinquier's 1961 *Modern Warfare*, both based on the French war in Algeria, and J.J. McCuen's 1962 *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, all of which eventually became popular reading within SADF ranks (Ellis 1998). The apartheid state borrowed counterinsurgency doctrines "directly from the British experiences in Malaya and Northern Ireland, the French in Algeria, and the US in Vietnam and El Salvador" (Murray 1994, 232), as well as from the Israelis, Portuguese, and Rhodesians. Although the US did not overtly arm the apartheid regime, American clients such as Israel and Taiwan did, as did NATO member countries such as Italy, West Germany, France, and the UK. Meanwhile, SADF officers including the hard-line General Magnus Malan received training at the US Army War College. The South African military's closest alliances, however, were with their fellow colonial regimes in Southern Africa: the Portuguese counterinsurgency police, known by its acronym PIDE (Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado) and the Rhodesian intelligence and special forces units. As the Portuguese colonies gained independence and Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, their

colonial counterinsurgency veterans found new work with South African counterinsurgency units (Berkeley 2001).[151]

During apartheid, South Africa transitioned from colonial pacification strategies to modern counterinsurgency (Gottschalk 2000). Its implacable stance towards civic protest triggered the rise of African armed struggle, raising the stakes of political change ever higher. The March 21, 1960 police massacre of 69 unarmed protesters at Sharpeville led the ANC to found its armed wing, MK, while the smaller Pan-African Congress (PAC) launched its own armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Movement, (APLA). After the June 16, 1976 police massacre of hundreds of Soweto schoolchildren, over 6000 African youth fled into exile to join the liberation movements (Murray 1994, 119). Like other authoritarian regimes, it did not discriminate between non-violent resistance and guerrillas, targeting them all with a range of violent tactics. The South African Police (SAP) fused with various military and intelligence branches and played a key role in both domestic and foreign counterinsurgency operations, especially in occupied Namibia (Gear 2002, 10).

In 1975, South Africa sought to install a puppet regime in Luanda through military intervention immediately after Angola's 1975 independence from Portugal. This ill-considered move triggered Cuban military intervention. The combined Cuban and Angolan forces held the South Africans at bay, enabling the socialist MPLA (Movimiento Popular para la Libertaçao de Angola) to maintain power. Subsequently, the apartheid regime settled into a counterinsurgency strategy that consisted of fuelling the Angolan civil war by offering joint support with the CIA for UNITA rebels, coupled with SADF intervention from bases in

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[151] Sanders (2006) reported that all the Rhodesian intelligence files were transferred from Salisbury to Pretoria on the very day of Zimbabwean independence.

Namibia. South Africa supplemented its conventional military incursions with special forces teams and mercenaries deployed to assist UNITA. One of the most vicious SADF units in this theatre, the 32nd "Buffalo" Battalion, was composed entirely of black Angolan and Namibian mercenaries commanded by white officers.

One key aspect of South African counterinsurgency strategy was the use of proxy warfare to destabilize countries giving shelter to anti-apartheid guerrillas. South African military intelligence took over the coordination of RENAMO, a guerrilla outfit originally created by the Rhodesian intelligence services to destabilize neighboring Mozambique, whose territory had served as a rearguard for ZANU guerrillas, and later, for the ANC. SADF special forces (in particular the "Five Recce" reconnaissance commando unit) participated in RENAMO massacres of civilians calculated to destabilize Mozambique's socialist, pro-ANC government. In addition to extensive South African support for RENAMO and UNITA, without which the Mozambican and Angolan governments would have undoubtedly defeated both movements, the SADF also created and supported other surrogate groups to destabilize governments sympathetic to the ANC. These included the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA), which fought against Leabua Jonathan's government, and "Super-ZAPU," supposedly a breakaway faction of the Zimbabwe African People's Union but in reality a creature of apartheid, which sought to destabilize Robert Mugabe. Throughout the 1980s, SADF also staged commando raids on suspected ANC targets in Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, striking MK on several occasions but mostly killing civilians (Fauvet and Mosse 2003).

South African destabilization operations and economic sanctions eventually

brought Mozambique to its knees, whereupon the Botha regime was able in 1984

to dictate to Mozambique the terms of the Nkomati accord, which stipulated that

South Africa would cease its support for RENAMO in exchange for Mozambique

denying the ANC shelter. Mozambique was thus forced to stop providing the

ANC with a critical common border from which to launch attacks into South

Africa; meanwhile, the apartheid regime never interrupted its support for

RENAMO, and the Mozambican civil war raged on. After a second meeting at

Nkomati in 1986, the apartheid regime apparently killed Mozambican president

Samora Machel by planting a decoy a beacon that emitted false signals, causing

Machel's Soviet-piloted aircraft to crash into the mountains near the

Mozambique-South Africa border.[152]

Apartheid's Military-Industrial Complex, Corruption, and Counterinsurgency

As South Africa's securitization and industrialization intensified, a political

scandal emerged that exposed both the apartheid regime's pervasive high-level

corruption and the centrality of clandestine intelligence operations to its very

function. This is significant because it highlights patterns that would become

ingrained in the state, persisting not only throughout the intensification of internal

conflict in the 1980s, but during and even after the transition to democracy.

The "Infoscandal" of 1979 (also referred to by the South African media as

'Muldergate') disgraced President B. J. Vorster's protégé and likely successor

Connie Mulder, who was forced to resign from politics. Mulder was involved in

bribing domestic and foreign journalists and purchasing newspapers through front

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[152] http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/media/pr/1998/p980518b.htm

companies to control and distort information about the increasingly predatory apartheid regime. This was a key aspect of 'Total Strategy's' PSY-OPS operations to improve apartheid's foreign and domestic image, and embodied apartheid's "securocracy," whereby the highest political echelons increasingly managed interlocking gears of South Africa's war machine. South Africa's civilian intelligence agency, the Bureau for Strategic Services (BOSS), had been closely connected to the operation. Shrouded in secrecy, the project's funds were embezzled by a range of well-connected government and private figures (Hyslop 2005, 782).

Vorster's health was failing, and in the wake of "Infoscandal" Defense Minister PW Botha seized the political initiative, stepping in first as South Africa's prime minister, and then, in 1980, as president. Botha enjoyed strong support from hard-line SADF generals, and aimed to accelerate the fusion of the military and political spheres. He immediately set to restructuring the intelligence service, demoting Vorster's right-hand man, BOSS's Henrik van den Bergh, and retooling the security establishment to secretly and brutally escalate the war on South Africa's liberation movements.

It was a sort of "golden age" for apartheid counterinsurgency, as Botha concentrated more power than ever into SADF Military Intelligence and downgraded its civilian rival, BOSS (which he renamed the National Intelligence Service, or NIS), to a secondary status. The significance of the move lay in the fact that SADF MI, as a branch of the military, was connected to a wide variety of clandestine commando units and death squads operating both internally and externally. Backed by Botha's brazen policymaking, these units were given free reign to infiltrate, destabilize, and hunt down any individual, movement, or

government, in South Africa or elsewhere, that resisted apartheid. More than ever before, the government would now assign the military, with its full range of resources, to internal surveillance and repression.

Upton Sinclair's definition of fascism as "capitalism plus murder" is certainly borne out by the securocrats' readiness to devour their own: even before Connie Mulder became trapped in the National Party's hall of mirrors, the corruption that flourished amidst apartheid's securitization had already claimed a victim from South Africa's Afrikaner elite. In 1977, an apartheid death squad murdered NP parliamentary candidate Robert Smit and his wife, apparently because Smit was about to blow the whistle on corruption within the NP (Gottschalk 2000). Even for high-ranking politicians, the military was apparently the ultimate arbiter of praetorian purity: in the early 1980s, when Zimbabwean forces allied to the Mozambican government overran a base of SADF-sponsored RENAMO rebels, they captured documents belonging to a SADF MI liaison officer, Colonel van Niekerk. Among the papers was "an MI political assessment of every member of the contemporary South African cabinet," including an assessment "that in any future major crisis" South African foreign minister Roelof 'Pik' Botha "was the cabinet minister most likely to betray the Afrikaner volk- and in such circumstances should be eliminated." When a Mozambican government minister showed Botha the document during his next visit to Mozambique, he "turned white as a sheet," having no doubts about the document's authenticity (Gottschalk 2000, 247-8).

During the 1980s, even as South Africa moved towards what Hyslop (2005), after Chabal and Daloz, calls a "high corruption/ low growth" phase, the military-industrial complex thrived, becoming one of the country's main engines

for economic growth and employment. The indigenous arms industry, aided by the NATO countries, Israel, and Taiwan, worked overtime to defeat the global arms embargo on South Africa, churning out a spectacular arsenal for the regime's external and domestic wars.[153] Private security companies mushroomed, staffed by former soldiers and policemen who maintained close links with the security forces (Cawthra 1986). South Africa's counterinsurgency efforts became enmeshed in its broader military-industrial complex, which was the nexus between the public and private realms in South Africa's securitized, corporatist political economy.

As the private sector offered a layer of insulation from the state, SADF MI began setting up an array of front companies to facilitate its clandestine operations, ranging from surveillance and psychological warfare to murder.[154] Their "privatization" afforded the state a layer of plausible deniability as its agents acted in a supposedly non-state capacity. In an Orwellian euphemism, SADF MI gave death squads innocuous names such as the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB); internal communications referred to it as "the corporation," with its commander as the "chairman" (Ellis 1998). CCB in particular was envisioned as a network of skilled soldiers who would develop elaborate civilian business credentials as a cover to gather intelligence and orchestrate assassinations, dissolving the boundaries between government and private forces (Sanders 2006). Key death squad commanders such as Vlakplaas's Eugene de Kock developed contacts with representatives from national armaments development company

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[153] This included everything from rifles and mortars to tanks, heavy artillery, jet fighters, and missiles; many of these models were indistinguishable from the Israeli designs they copied. Israel also helped South Africa to develop nuclear warheads, one of which was apparently tested in the Indian Ocean in 1979.
[154] SAHA Archives

Armscor that facilitated clandestine operations (Ellis 1998, 289). This spectrum of clandestine violent actors interwoven with profitable interests would remain largely entrenched in the post-apartheid security forces.

'Securocrats' and the 'Total Strategy'

After the Soweto uprising, South Africa's internal security was further militarized under then-defense minister PW Botha's "Total Strategy." Botha and South African Defense Forces (SADF) chief Gen. Magnus Malan "popularized the propaganda doctrine of a Soviet-led international 'total onslaught" to legitimate the SADF's 'Total Strategy,' propagated in the 1977 Defense White Paper" (Gottschalk 2000, 34). 'Total Strategy' played on Afrikaner class and racial fears of the "*rooigevaar*" ('red peril') and "*swartgevaar*" ('black peril'). As Botha ascended to the presidency in 1979, the apartheid security forces became increasingly ruthless and systematic, hunting down ANC activists throughout Africa and Europe while fomenting civil war to destabilize neighboring countries that supported South African liberation movements.

'Total Strategy' entailed a reconfiguration of the intelligence services and "most government departments under the security umbrella of the National Security Management System (NSMS)" (McCarthy 1996, 71). Under Botha's security cabinet, heavily urbanized South Africa became a panopticon in which state surveillance lurked around every corner, waiting to deal violently with insurgents and activists alike. The term "securocrats" emerged to describe the military's growing decision-making powers as counterinsurgency became increasingly alloyed to state bureaucracy. The NSMS "had the power to intervene at every level of South Africa's civil administration. It was also the brain centre of

a security network whose nerve ends reached into some five hundred regional, district, and local Joint Management Centers" (Sparks 1994, 158). The State Security Council directed the NSMS, with Botha himself as chairman. Under this system, the entire Republic of South Africa was divided into security jurisdictions to facilitate rapid responses to anti-apartheid activism wherever it arose. Through the Joint Management Centers, the apartheid state "aimed at radically reshaping the moral, cultural, religious, political and material underpinnings of civil society in the black townships" (Phillips 1998, 213).

A Joint Management Centre might, for example, respond to a wave of protests through an integrated carrot-and-stick response that involved arresting or killing key activists while simultaneously improving public works and housing to dampen local grievances and, in classic counterinsurgency parlance, "win hearts and minds" (Ellis 1998). One former combatant emphasized that as a guerrilla in an urban area, blending in convincingly with the local population was a matter of life and death because the state was omnipresent, watching:

> "The Boers had the State Security Council with many wings up to the killing squads, whereby intelligence was gathered from street to street, there were street committees, police members from the community, so that each and every house is known: who stays there, who goes there. If something's wrong, they put that certain house under surveillance. They are very patient, check who's coming out. So they connect everything that's urban. That's when death squads started."[155]

According to this ex-guerrilla, this strategy of systematic surveillance

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[155] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

linked to death squads was the implementation of counterinsurgency methods that "first appeared in Latin America."[156]

SADF Military Intelligence's Influence in the Bantustans

As destabilizing the ANC via proxy warfare became the cornerstone of South Africa's counterinsurgency strategy in the 1980s, the Bantustans took on increasing strategic importance and became key sites of contestation. The SADF "exploited" the Bantustans' "'independence,' sending or withholding assistance, creating false conflicts, and setting up extra armed forces from which it could conveniently dissociate itself" (Flanagan 1998, 193). Proxy forces such as Ama-Afrika engaged in bloody battles with the UDF in Eastern Cape Province, which became a trial run for the regime's subsequent training and deployment of the IFP against the ANC in Natal province (Flanagan 1998, 196). SADF MI set up front companies to conceal state involvement in a wide variety of secret operations, including murder and sabotage as well as "consulting" services for security forces controlled by Bantustan dictators loyal to the apartheid regime. Hence, in addition to the IR-CIS company "advising" Ciskei strongman Oupa Gqozo, SADF MI also created Ciskei Aircraft Industries and similar arms companies to afford itself clandestine leverage in ostensibly foreign territory.[157]

The list of "retired" military personnel assigned to "advisory" roles in the Bantustan security forces reads like a who's-who of white African counterinsurgency specialists: Maj. Gen. Ron Reid-Daly, formerly of the notorious Rhodesian Selous Scouts, became a military advisor in Transkei along with other Rhodesians formerly under his command who even continued to

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[156] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[157] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC Gunrunning 1974-97)

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operate under the name Selous Scouts. From 1983 onwards, Reid-Daly worked in close coordination with SADF's Eastern Province Command under Brig Joffel van Westerhuizen to undermine ANC activity in the region (Flanagan 1998, 194). After Holomisa took over in Transkei, SADF Col. Jan Breytenbach, paratroop commander in the May 1978 Cassinga massacre of hundreds of Namibian refugees in southern Angola (Heywood 1996), began training a paratroop battalion in Ciskei whose only conceivable military purpose was an attack on neighboring Transkei. Post-1994, journalistic investigations revealed former counterinsurgency personnel's extensive involvement in gunrunning throughout the Eastern Province and Ciskei (later to be incorporated along with Transkei into the Eastern Cape province- see Chapter 4).[158]

Proxy Forces: Outsourcing Violence

The apartheid regime deployed a blend of counterinsurgency and conventional military operations both domestically and abroad, intensifying the use of proxy forces to ensure South Africa plausible deniability and minimal white combat casualties. Especially in the final decade of apartheid, state security forces created, armed, and trained a variety of black militias and "youth wings" that battled anti-apartheid activists, including the *Witdoeks* in the Western Cape, the Eagles Youth Clubs in the Orange Free State, and the Ama-Afrika movement in the Eastern Cape (Schutte, Liebenberg, and Minaar 1998). The regime also recruited Zulu nationalist leader and former ANC member Mangosuthu Buthelezi in secret meetings with high-ranking police and military intelligence officers, feeding Buthelezi false intelligence about ANC plots to kill him and then arming

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[158] SAHA Archives.

and training Zulu militias from his Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) for "self-defense" (Berkeley 2001). This set the stage for over a decade of relentless strife between ANC and IFP activists in Natal province and throughout the townships near Johannesburg and Pretoria, killing tens of thousands.

Such strategies afforded the state "plausible deniability" in the killing of activists, and fomented a wave of "black on black" violence that obscured the apartheid regime's culpability and reinforced the stereotypes of black activists as uneducated, unruly youth who were as likely to devour their own communities as to battle apartheid. As Gear maintains, "[t]he use of surrogate forces reflected a tangible shift from a primary dependency on the SADF and SAP to suppress internal black resistance, to a policy of divide and rule…. The use of surrogate forces fostered perceptions of "Black-on-black" violence, and maintained a distance between those who were physically involved in the fighting and those who ultimately benefited." (2002, 15)

In an interview, MK commander Chris Hani illuminated the connection between the apartheid regime's failed efforts to thwart black protest by 'winning hearts and minds' during the State of Emergency it maintained from 1986-90, and the emergence of death squads: "the space the regime created for itself by banning or restricting other organizations has not led to the emergence of pro-regime organizations, except bandit organizations like the askaris and a few vigilante groups. But these are mercenaries, people who do not enjoy any organized structured support by the masses."[159] In other words, when the regime failed to sustain black pro-apartheid governance structures in the black communities, it resorted instead to escalating clandestine violence.

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[159] Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective (SAHA)

Counterinsurgency and Infiltration of MK's Angolan Bases

One former MK commander recalled that the apartheid regime "had also their informers who infiltrated us, that happened in 1976 in the Soweto uprising, they had already trained their men, and after June 16 when students went out [into exile to join the guerrillas] they released their guys to go and join MK."[160] The apartheid informers were instrumental in fomenting dissent and strife within MK ranks, contributing to bloody mutinies in several camps in the early 1980s that had to be put down with Angolan military assistance.[161] These *agents provocateurs* capitalized on genuine discontent within MK ranks that had arisen about fighting UNITA, poor living conditions in the camps, and impatience to fight the apartheid regime directly. In addition to inspiring mutiny, the apartheid agents undermined the ANC in more direct ways, including the poisoning of 500 guerrillas in 1978 at the MK base in Nova Catengue, described here by an MK commander:

> That's where we were poisoned. But fortunately we were with Cubans who had sophisticated doctors, they had medicine... The whole camp was poisoned and one of them whom they sent, his group was cooking in the kitchen that day, I think it's when he got the chance to put that poison. And I remember that day we had fish for supper. And I think it was for about two years we didn't eat fish. When it came everybody was excited that oh, fish, fish, fish! And it was poisoned. There were others went for some more. So that means it's double. So we were all sick, we vomited, with diarrhea, you know, we were powerless. So we had to sleep under the trees [with the IV drips] hanging there. It was in October, that's why we called it a Black

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[160] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[161] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

October.[162]

The Cuban doctors' swift action averted any deaths (Sanders 2006), but it was a great shock to the ANC. This episode demonstrates how apartheid agents were able to wreak havoc on an MK base, and the unusual menu switch suggests that these agents had managed to penetrate its logistics. Apartheid agents succeeded in sowing doubt and mistrust within MK ranks, contributing to a climate in which the ANC's East German- and Soviet-trained counterintelligence apparatus, Mbokodo ("the rock that crushes"), gained influence and was prone to abusing its power. In response to the mutinies on its Angolan bases, the ANC established prison camps on Angolan and Tanzanian soil for the "re-education and rehabilitation" of its rebellious cadres, including the infamous "Quatro" camp. Conditions at these prisons were harsh and some mutineers perished, leading various authors (e.g., Trewhela 2009; Stott 2004; McCarthy 1996) to equate the ANC's worst abuses with the apartheid regime's brutality.

In addition to causing divisions within the ANC, these incidents provided the apartheid regime with a major propaganda coup, enabling it to play up alleged massive ANC human rights abuses in "the gulags of Southern Africa." SADF MI used a similar strategy against SWAPO, which also maintained prisons for dissenters in southern Angola. The history of these prisons is documented in Paul Trewhela's book *Inside Quatro* (2009), which documents ANC abuses against mutineers at its camps. Although Trewhela asserts that the mutineers were punished by the ANC for calling for greater openness in the movement, one former MK guerrilla insisted that in the early 1980s, both the apartheid regime

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[162] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; Sanders (2006) reports the incident as having occurred in September, not October.

and a US intelligence agency had recruited within ANC ranks.[163] Indeed, an internal ANC investigation uncovered "a major apartheid spy-ring" in 1981 including "an extensive network of infiltrators… some of whom were linked not only to Pretoria, but also to the intelligence services of some Western powers" (Sanders 2006, 287).

This provides an important perspective from which to consider several other works detailing ANC abuses against the mutineers, notably Mwezi Twala's *Mbokodo: Inside MK-Mwezi Twala: A Soldier's Story*. According to a former MK commander, during the "Luta Contrabandito," also known by its Angolan name, "Mcatashinga," Chris Hani had directly intervened in MK's Angolan camps to spare mutineers' lives from the firing squad, despite the fact that executing mutineers during wartime is standard military practice: "You conduct a mutiny in an army, you disobey orders in the face of the enemy, you cause confusion, you lower the morale of the cadres by disseminating propaganda, a military tribunal is set up and you are forgiven- it was Chris Hani who saved these guys… there were a lot of them- they were saved from the firing squad by Chris Hani himself." [164]

Meanwhile, Bopela and Luthuli's book *Umkhonto we Siswe: Fighting for a Divided Nation* (2005; their misspelling of the movement's name in the title is telling) suggests that the ANC was not a broadly representative movement, implying that siding against it was an equally popular and legitimate political choice. Trewhela also wrote an article titled "A Death in South Africa: the Assassination of Sipho Phungulwa" in the journal *Searchlight: South Africa*, which he reprised in his book on Quatro. After serving time in the Angolan prison camps, Sipho Phungulwa called for greater participatory democracy in the ANC

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[163] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[164] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

at its 1989 Regional Political Committee meeting in Tanzania. According to Trewhela, MK "assassins" killed Phungulwa in June 1991 to silence his call for greater participatory democracy within the ANC. In fact, in a 1998 application for amnesty to the TRC, the MK men who shot Phungulwa testified that they targeted him because he had been recruited and deployed by the apartheid regime as an askari, a claim which was accepted by the TRC.[165] According to Smith and Tromp, in April 1991 Phungulwa and a group of other MK dissidents fled ANC bases in Tanzania and crossed overland to South Africa, where they were held and "processed" by the authorities. They were then released in Johannesburg where they "staged an impromptu press conference at which they expressed their fears of [ANC] retribution," following which they approached ANC and SACP offices "to expose the hardships they endured in Angola" (2009, 200), even garnering the support of the famed Archbishop Desmond Tutu.[166]

Within three weeks, a team of MK "assassins" had killed Phungulwa and wounded his associate, Luthando Dyasophu in Mthatha; the regime and other critics of the ANC portrayed this as an attempt by ANC hard-line elements to silence calls for democracy within the movement. Yet it is curious that Phungulwa and the other dissidents were swiftly released from South African custody after being "processed," since MK guerrillas falling into state custody were usually imprisoned for years.[167] The dissidents' unfettered access to the media and their ability to hold an "impromptu" televised press conference in Johannesburg also raises questions, since MK guerrillas on their own could not

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[165] The record of the TRC proceeding can be found at:
http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1998/98814_0x6839810595.htm
[166] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[167] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

simply secure television airtime.[168] The ANC's detractors also capitalized on

Phungulwa's death to draw an equivalency between MK operations and the

regime's death squads. Apartheid operations to infiltrate MK ranks were not only

intended to gain intelligence on the ANC, but to shape its very evolution as a

movement, a strategy that would reach its height during the transition period, and

have lasting impacts afterwards.

Counterinsurgency and Urban Violence

In apartheid's final decade, the SADF played an increasingly prominent

domestic role as black protest mounted throughout South Africa. In 1985 SADF

were deployed to assist the police in suppressing mounting opposition. From this

point on, the SADF were more and more deployed for internal security, police and

military "fused together in a pattern of indiscriminate violence" (quoted in Cock

1989). The 1985 call by the ANC and UDF (United Democratic Front) to "make

the townships ungovernable" produced a groundswell of urban violence that

proved extremely unwieldy in the hands of its organizers, entrenching a political

culture of civil disobedience and deliberate political and economic chaos. This

strategy's original aim, as conceived by anti-apartheid activists, was to bring

down the apartheid state by thwarting its authority to render it meaningless in

both the physical terrain and the civic culture inhabited by black communities.

Counterinsurgency forces exploited this unrest by sowing suspicion and

divisions among the activists. After MK began to distribute hand grenades for

activists to attack the apartheid military in the townships, the SADF countered by

sending black agents to distribute booby-trapped grenades with no time-delay fuse

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[168] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

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that would explode in activists' hands. This resulted in deaths and caused angry mobs to lynch several genuine MK guerrillas on suspicion of collaboration with the government.[169] One former guerrilla also claimed that the notorious "necklacing" technique of killing suspected collaborators by dousing a tire with gasoline, setting it aflame, and putting it around the suspect's neck- a widespread method which became the symbol of "black-on-black" violence throughout the protest years of the 1980s- was originally introduced by these same apartheid agents.[170]

By 1985, 35,000 soldiers were deployed in townships across the country as part of the state's strategy to suppress internal resistance, drastically increasing arrests and detentions; this would swell to over 40,000 by 1987 (McKinley 1997). On 12 June 1986, President Botha and his 'securocrats' re-imposed a state of emergency in response to mounting protests in cities and townships throughout the country. "The securocrats, concentrated in the professional ranks of the SADF, and generally seeing the police force as ill-educated and crude operators, believed that their more sophisticated counter-revolutionary tactics (centered on waging low-intensity warfare) would be better able to maintain law and order while defusing the uprising" (McKinley 1997, 72).

During this period, the NSMS oversaw the creation of a vast network of clandestine units tasked with intelligence gathering and assassinations, following a "low-intensity conflict" doctrine of denying insurgents a base in their own communities by terrorizing the populations they relied upon for support (Ellis 1998). In addition to targeting guerrillas, these units kidnapped, tortured, and

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[169] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; Legassick (2002) also mentions this.
[170] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

killed thousands of unarmed civic activists, including community organizers, trade unionists, lawyers, university professors, and anyone else who challenged apartheid rule. These units reported to their superiors on a need-to-know basis, often bypassing conventional chains of command entirely. This ensured plausible deniability, while also eliminating accountability. When F.W. De Klerk replaced P.W. Botha as state president in 1989, he disbanded the NSMS (Mkhondo 1993). Yet the elaborate counterinsurgency architecture was already in firmly in place, complete with various channels for illicit self-financing; as one ex-guerrilla explained:

> Those thugs were involved in car racketeering, ivory rackets, drug trafficking, even human trafficking, they would allow even Chinese coming in with people for prostitution, their intelligence was for them to enrich themselves. Then they used to destroy, even kill informers whom they think were going to be problematic for them in the future… They knew what was going to happen tomorrow. They knew that the politicians were thinking of negotiations with the ANC and PAC, so they wanted to get rich fast before anything could happen. So they were busy, trying to stop the fires of liberation.[171]

These economic motivations fused with the imperative to weaken the ANC, and in the absence of any explicit orders to stop killing, the apartheid counterinsurgency forces accelerated the pace of violence.

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[171] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

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Foreshadowing 'Third Force': Counterinsurgency and the 1989 Namibian Election

In 1988 allied Cuban-Angolan forces gained the upper hand over the apartheid military in a showdown on the plains of southwest Angola, culminating in the decisive battle of Cuito Cuanavale. Faced with mounting white casualties, economic problems, and emboldened adversaries, the National Party agreed to superpower-brokered negotiations in New York, accepting United Nations Security Council Resolution 435, which called for Namibian independence. The agreement's terms were that in exchange for SADF's withdrawal from Angolan and Namibian territory, Cuba would withdraw its forces from African soil and Namibia would gain independence, culminating in elections scheduled for 1989 that SWAPO, which enjoyed overwhelming popular legitimacy, was sure to win.

Accustomed to using clandestine violence to shape political outcomes, the apartheid regime launched a last-ditch counterinsurgency operation to prevent SWAPO from winning Namibia's first-ever free election. The South African objective in its former colony was strikingly similar to the strategy the NP would soon adopt in its negotiations with the ANC in South Africa proper: "on the one hand, to try to gain as much international credit as possible for allowing the process to take place smoothly, and on the other to try to manage the transition as far as was possible in South African interests," which meant eroding popular support for SWAPO to ensure it did not win a two-thirds majority (Saunders 1992, 220). Indeed, Sanders (2006) mentions that SADF MI regarded this as a 'dress rehearsal' for the democratic process that would soon sweep South Africa.

Following a familiar pattern, in 1989 the CCB killed white lawyer and SWAPO activist Anton Lubowski in Windhoek on the eve of elections. In

violation of agreements, the regime continued to deploy the vicious Koevoet ('crowbar') police counterinsurgency unit in northern Namibia to intimidate voters until only weeks before the election, which SWAPO nonetheless won handily. Afterward, many Koevoet members, including the infamous Colonel Eugene de Kock, returned to South Africa and brought their techniques home. Elements within the military and the NP expressed confidence that South Africa's upcoming elections could be similarly "managed" in order to thwart the ANC at the ballot box (Mkhondo 1993, 60). SADF's clandestine plan to derail elections in Namibia also foreshadowed Third Force violence and disinformation in South Africa; Saunders writes: "That the Department of Foreign Affairs and Military Intelligence were working to different agendas was seen most clearly on the eve of the election, when Foreign Minister Botha was fed bogus radio messages purporting to come from UNTAG and to concern a buildup of SWAPO fighters on Namibia's northern border" (1992, 228).

Meanwhile, even after the Namibian independence and the end of South African involvement in the Angolan war, SADF MI maintained support for its external proxy forces- UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique. After the onset of the regime's negotiations with the ANC, the clandestine apartheid military structures continued to supply and to arm their surrogate foreign forces for several years. This secret alliance persisted in Mozambique until 1991, when RENAMO finally concluded a peace agreement with the government, and continued in Angola until at least 1992. The strategy seemed calculated to afford South Africa the means to instantly resume violence against neighboring states friendly to the ANC in the event that negotiations should fail (Minter 1994).

Counterinsurgency During Negotiations, 1990-94

As South Africa became increasingly bogged down in its Angolan war, the National Party ousted PW Botha from the party's leadership. Botha ceded his position to FW de Klerk, who had a reputation as a modernizer. Meanwhile, the South African leadership had been engaging in negotiations with the ANC, and on 2 February 1990 de Klerk shocked the nation and the world by unbanning the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP), and releasing Mandela and a host of other political prisoners. Yet even as the political negotiations took shape, their onset ushered in an era of unprecedented violence in South Africa that would ultimately claim an estimated 16 000 lives, more than the total number of people killed during the entire restive decade preceding the negotiations (Klopp and Zuern 2007).

In the Groote Schuur Minute of May 1990, the National Party announced "the release of political prisoners, the return of exiles, and the amendment of security legislation" (Sparks 1994, 124). The return of exiles included thousands of MK fighters who were repatriated from their camps in various parts of Africa. Yet even as the MK cadres' return to South Africa, SADF counterinsurgency units that had been deployed in neighboring conflicts returned from their missions abroad, to be tasked with intensifying violence at home. On 7 August 1990, the NP and ANC "met again in Pretoria, and after a day-long session Mandela announced the unilateral suspension of the ANC's armed struggle. It was a major concession for which he got little in return." (Sparks 1994, 124) Although MK guerrillas were ostensibly granted indemnity from prosecution for "renouncing violence" (Murray 1994, 121), the apartheid security forces faced no comparable restrictions. Armed might was the regime's main field of leverage as the unions and

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political organizations, now unbanned, launched strikes and mass actions that paralyzed South Africa's economy and gave the ANC the upper hand in negotiations. Despite the ongoing negotiations, "to all intents and purposes South Africa remained in a state of civil war" (Gear 2002, 32). According to one ex-guerrilla, until 1994 it was still "open season" for the regime to target guerrillas and apartheid death squads roamed the land.[172]

The 'Third Force'

Hoping to weaken the ANC's power base through terror, the apartheid regime armed and trained Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) militants, deploying them against ANC strongholds with the aim of creating an ethnic rift between the Xhosa-dominated but staunchly non-sectarian ANC and the Zulu-nationalist IFP (Gottschalk 2000, 244). This further afforded the apartheid regime the propaganda benefit of labeling the ensuing violence as "black-on-black," casting cynical doubt on the viability of African self-rule. SADF reconnaissance commando units ("Recces") trained and deployed these proxy forces; in September 1990, they began joint operations in which they massacred 572 black passengers on commuter trains in the Johannesburg area (Gottschalk 2000, 238). "Then there were attacks on minivan taxis used by blacks, drive-by shootings in township streets, random bombings and machine gun attacks on bars, night clubs, and private homes. No arrests followed these terrible outbursts" (Sparks 1994, 138). The term "Third Force" arose to describe these attacks' untraceable origin.

In an address to the ANC's Organizing Committee National Workshop titled "Strategic Priorities for Building the ANC," Comrade Popo Molefe noted

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[172] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

that the upsurge of state-sponsored violence "directed primarily at black communities" was aimed at "redefining the political terrain… It is linked to the longstanding strategy of apartheid to use terror to destroy democratic opposition." Molefe emphasized that state president de Klerk had clearly "not distanced himself from this strategy," pointing to the enduring roles of longtime apartheid strategists Minister of Police Adriaan Vlok and Defense Minister Malan, and the recent promotion of former SADF MI chief Kat Liebenberg to head of the SADF. According to Molefe, the escalation of violence "shows that the shadowy CCB type machineries continue to operate, despite the alleged dismantling of the CCB. Under a different guise the mini JMCs continue to plot the elimination of our activists in the townships."[173]

An MK document released three months after the onset of NP-ANC negotiations framed the full range of SADF proxy warfare and destabilization operations as known to MK at the time: "Almost all the death squad and bandit activities have been linked to" the SADF. "Apart from revelations" about training Inkatha in the Caprivi Strip and the evidence seized in "the Gorongosa Capture" at RENAMO headquarters in Mozambique,[174] "it is known that even the so-called 'independent' groupings have their membership mostly from the SADF. Not only has this army taken over the black schools, but it has also annexed white schools through the cadet system, the 'veld' camps, etc." The racist indoctrination that was central to these paramilitary youth programs "help[ed] to shape an army that

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[173] "African National Congress Organizing Committee National Workshop, 6-9 November 1990: Strategic Priorities for Building the ANC- Address by Comrade Popo Molefe," SAHA Archives

[174] This refers to the above-mentioned capture by the Zimbabwean army of a trove of SADF MI documents at RENAMO headquarters in Mozambique, situated in Gorongosa national park, which contained comprehensive evidence of elaborate apartheid programs to create, arm, and equip domestic and external surrogate forces, as well as other clandestine projects.

has not only killed and raped the young and old alike, but has also developed a system of automatic self-reproduction into many other extreme right-wing organs."[175]

The Third Force aimed to erode ANC power and to de-legitimize the ANC by exposing its inability to protect its constituency from Third Force violence, especially in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. Massacres erupted in Tokoza, Tembisa, Katlehong, Sebokeng, and Soweto, and survivors described white and black plainclothes assailants randomly killing civilians, often from a white minibus (Mkhondo 1993, 56). Apartheid ally Mangosuthu Buthelezi was a lynchpin for outsourcing violence, and his quasi-autonomous Kwa-Zulu homeland's "police force" was commanded and staffed by a succession of white counterinsurgency veterans who coordinated raids on ANC strongholds and other nefarious activities (Berkeley 2001). Buthelezi's second-in-command, the notorious apartheid informer Themba Khoza, had the distinction of being on the NIS and SADF MI payrolls simultaneously (Sanders 2006).[176] In 1991-92, Third Force violence reached its crescendo in the black townships of the 'Reef' area ringing Johannesburg and the PWV (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging) region. There, hostilities erupted between ethnic Zulus loyal to the IFP, and other ethnic groups, particularly Xhosas, loyal to the ANC. While they worked in mines and other industries, the two groups lived according to apartheid's grand design, in ethnically segregated, men's-only hostels (Mamdani 1996). Armed with traditional Zulu spears and clubs and with modern weaponry supplied by the regime, IFP loyalists in the hostels raided neighboring communities, and were

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[175] "MK and the Future," p.5 (SAHA Archives)
[176] In a December 2009 interview, one former MK guerrilla stressed that if Buthelezi were ever brought to trial for war crimes, his list of offences would be virtually endless.

attacked in turn.

The apartheid security forces organized raids by IFP militants against ANC strongholds, setting in motion waves of retaliatory and pre-emptive attacks from both sides. The security forces also brought busloads of IFP *impis* ("traditional" Zulu warriors) from the rural heartland of Natal to Johannesburg to take part in attacks on communities loyal to the ANC, and to attack ANC rallies and demonstrations (Lesch 2006). As one former MK guerrilla recalled, the political climate was already so charged during this period that the Third Force only needed to set a few sparks in order to set South Africa's black communities aflame, which they did very deliberately.[177] To ensure plausible deniability, many of the arms SADF MI supplied to the IFP were taken from a US shipment of "fifteen to sixteen containers full of modern weapons" destined for UNITA, seized by Military Intelligence after resolution 435 was passed and redirected to Durban for distribution to the regime's proxies (Lesch 2006, 174). Berkeley (2001) similarly describes counterinsurgency operative Jac Buchner organizing a convoy of fifteen tractor-trailers at the height of the violence loaded with weapons for Inkatha. With top-level authorization, SADF MI distributed "those weapons to A.W.B. and Inkatha members and a lot to underground agents who were fighting the ANC" (Lesch 2006, 175).

In response to this violence, the ANC began organizing Self-Defense Units (SDUs) throughout the country to defend communities against Third Force violence. MK fighters were often at the forefront of setting up the SDUs, whose level of training, due to the urgency of the crisis, rarely exceeded a crash course of several weeks.[178] It became impossible to enforce strict discipline within SDU

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[177] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[178] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

ranks under these circumstances, and violence being perpetrated in the ANC's name became more indiscriminate than ever before, even as the ANC leadership laid the blame for the chaos engulfing South Africa firmly at the National Party's doorstep (Mkhondo 1993). Meanwhile, the IFP, claiming to be the victim of ANC violence, set up its own "Self-Protection Units" (SPUs), which, along with the ANC's SDUs, became involved in vigilantism and a variety of instrumentally motivated criminal enterprises (Kynoch 2005). During this time, Third Force elements perpetrated massacres on ANC strongholds such as the one in June 1992 at Boipatong where IFP activists from the nearby KwaMadala hostel killed 45 civilians, threatening to derail negotiations and sending the country to the brink of the abyss (Murray 1994, 182).

Much of the literature on the violence during this period has underestimated the importance of counterinsurgency strategies in triggering and sustaining Third Force violence. Mamdani (1996) interprets the Zulu-Xhosa ethnic dimensions of the violence through the lens of "the rural in the urban"- in other words, as ethnic nationalisms from the rural black homelands clashing against each other in South Africa's diverse industrial heartland. Yet this ethnicity-based approach to explaining the violence ignores the apartheid regime's embrace of the IFP as the perfect black foil to the ANC's power; its extensive penetration of Inkatha political structures; and its thorough manipulation of virtually the entire IFP leadership as a tool to undermine the liberation forces. So whereas ethnic animosity might have helped to sustain the fires of conflict, the apartheid counterinsurgency program had already doused the entire scene with fuel, and then lit the fuse.

Echoing earlier literature on greed-driven motivations in civil war (Collier 1998; Mueller 2000; Kynoch 2005) points to the instrumental motivations that drove much of the violence in South Africa during the transition period, arguing that within the black population, many combatants from both sides took advantage of factors such as lawlessness and abundant weaponry to engage in profitable crimes disguised as politically motivated violence, setting in motion patterns of crime that persist in South Africa until today. Yet this formulation ignores the regime's deliberate political calculations behind unleashing Third Force violence, and underestimates the vast resources- in terms of organized structures, personnel, money, and weapons- at the security forces' disposal during this period. Even though some of the individual perpetrators may have been seeking profit, the larger point is that the security forces actively abetted criminal gangs and also masqueraded as ordinary gangsters to weaken and destabilize black communities. As one ex-guerrilla explained:

> If there is peace in an area, they will make sure that they divide the people according to their political affiliations, or according to their own tribalistic ways. Dividing Xhosas and Zulus. So there was always element of Third Force, you know, it was not gangsterism. A gangster cannot just kill people for nothing. He kills to rob. So why should you see someone spraying people with AK [assault rifle] whom you don't even know firsthand. So sure, sure, sure, it's Third Force.[179]

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[179] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Counterinsurgency must therefore be considered as causally prior to other factors during this era, while contributing motivations such as profit-seeking must be regarded as secondary explanations for the raging political violence.

Other authors have pointed to the transition as a period when both the regime and the ANC began to spin out of control. Gear emphasizes: "During this period especially, notions of an all-powerful and coordinated state and a homogenous and disciplined liberation movement were, more than ever before, thrown into question. Paradoxically, this was largely a result of the 'totalness' of the strategies both had employed (the state in its implementation of counter-insurgency 'total-strategy', and the ANC/UDF in its broad-based mobilization for 'People's War') (2002, 6). Yet to apportion equal blame to the regime and the ANC for this violence is to ignore the state's role as primary instigator of violence and the ANC's imperative to defend its constituent communities as best it could against the regime's 'Third Force' depredations. Other scholars go much further; in a book she claims sheds "new light on the struggle for South Africa," Jeffery (2009) outright blames the ANC's strategy of 'People's War' for instigating the killing of thousands in the transition years, thereby whitewashing the regime's crimes.

Counterinsurgency and the Limits of Plausible Deniability

Sparks (1994) suggests that De Klerk was forced to tolerate destabilizing 'Third Force' activities by elements within his security forces precisely because De Klerk, "never sure of his control over Botha's old securocrat establishment, never wanted to put it to the test." Sparks quotes Frederik van Zyl Slabbert's analysis of De Klerk's tenuous hold over the state's security institutions: "'what

do you do if you confront your top generals and say, 'you're fired,' and they reply, 'no we're not'?'" (1994, 157). Assuming that De Klerk genuinely wanted to stop to the murderous Third Force activities, it seems likely that he could not. In an interview with Alistair Sparks at the onset of the transition, Mandela himself gave his negotiating partner the benefit of the doubt while painting a portrait of Third Force activities that historical hindsight would seem to vindicate:

> I still regard De Klerk as a man of integrity, and I think he feels the same about me. We have developed an enormous respect for each other. I can call him at any time, I can get him out of bed or out of cabinet meetings. I believe he, and perhaps the majority of his cabinet, are still as committed to the peace process as we are. But he has a problem with elements of his government- especially his security establishment, which is riddled with right-wingers who are not with him at all- and he is not being frank with me about that" (Sparks 1994, 156).

Pointing to pervasive racist attitudes in the security forces, Mkhondo surmised: "De Klerk seemed to lack the executive and operational muscle to contain police excesses and the security forces escaped effective control… [he] faced a huge dilemma: he would have liked to establish political control over the security forces but, on the other hand, he needed them as an insurance policy in case negotiations failed" (1993, 79). Meanwhile, testimony at the TRC from a variety of apartheid soldiers and policemen indicates that planning and authorization for Third Force activities originated in the highest echelons of the old defense establishment (Ellis 1998).

This punctures the image, carefully cultivated by SADF generals, of a "heavy-handed" but ultimately democratic security establishment, firmly

subservient to civilian authority, willing to change with the times, and posing no challenge to De Klerk's conciliatory initiatives. Although the apartheid security establishment never overtly threatened De Klerk's initiatives with a coup d'etat, as some feared it might, it had other, clandestine options that enabled it to undermine the negotiations while maintaining "plausible deniability." Others, such as Bell and Ntsebeza, condemn De Klerk along with the security elites for authorizing Third Force violence and brutal military operations such as the October 1993 SADF raid on Mthatha that killed five teen-aged civilians (2003, 206). Mechanisms designed to ensure plausible deniability for the violence seem to have worked exactly as intended, permanently obscuring the levels of command at which decision makers were aware of the violence, even as the regime's complicity is no longer in doubt.

Counterinsurgency and Spies within ANC Leadership

In his "Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force," Ellis raises "the important question of ascertaining the extent to which the agenda and pace of negotiations, and thus the shape of the eventual political and constitutional outcome, were actually driven by proponents of violence who were able to make their influence felt from outside the conference chamber" (Ellis 1998, 263). The contours and political impact of South Africa's counterinsurgency program are still emerging. According to archival documents, the April 1994 court case for SADF Cmdt. Nieuwoudt was held in camera "as Nieuwoudt's job had included the recruitment of sources, the interrogation of as many as 2000 guerrillas, and the identification of targets for overt and covert operations. The lawyers involved stated that the matter needed to be in camera to prevent exposure of current covert

military operations, *meaning clandestine operations underway the month the elections were being held* (emphasis added)."[180]

The documents shed light on the extent to which SADF MI likely infiltrated the ANC, with a section about "the Joe Modise Connection," referring to MK chief Joe Modise. They also refer to secret documents that mention "a very senior person" which the Directorate for Covert Collections (DCC) under the command of SADF MI Brigadier "Tolletjie" Botha "was in the process of recruiting 'just before the state president closed us down'."[181] President De Klerk had ordered the DCC shut down in November 1992 after investigators from the Goldstone Commission, launched in 1991, inadvertently stumbled upon its headquarters, uncovering a trove of information about MI counterinsurgency programs still very much underway (Mkhondo 1993, 86). According to the documents, "this unnamed person was allegedly open to being blackmailed into being recruited as he was involved in illegal activities. 'He is a very senior member of the intelligence service of the ANC.'"[182] The documents describe a memo, dated September 1992, which refers to "a secret meeting between Modise [MK commander], Moloi, (head of MK Ops, now senior man in SANDF)[183], three named others and MI.[184] MI clearly viewed this meeting as one with already recruited sources or with possible sources. This meeting was organized by a paid

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[180] SAHA Archives
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] This refers to Lehlonhlono Moloi, who, according to an ex-guerrilla, had been recruited by the apartheid regime (author's confidential interview, December 2009); note also the document's mention of Moloi's high-ranking position in the post-transition military.
[184] Based on his own research, James Sanders, who gives the document a more cursory analysis, identifies the three others as: "M.K. Zakes (regional commander PWV), M.K. Maincheck (Commander of MK outside South Africa) and J. Mnisi (commander Pretoria)" (2006, 339).

MI source (one of the five ANC members could be the source)."[185] James Sanders notes Modise's heated denial, after the documents' contents surfaced in the press in 1996, of participation in any such meeting (2006, 339).

In note form, the archival document continues: "Memo notes how much support Modise has within MK; says the meeting could be the first step towards 'neutralizing the SACP/Hani/Kasrils faction'[186] and winning votes in a later election; says the MK five involved in the secret meeting do not want to fight with the old SADF unlike Hani." The document goes on to cite a passage in Afrikaans which it translates thus: "'This discussion is also with people who want to promote their own agenda (assuring own positions), but who are also prepared to break the back of the ANC/SACP backbone.'"[187] Finally, the document frames this disclosure within a larger political context: "This reference to Modise et al should be seen in context of the rest of the memo: the memo discusses how SADF can keep upper hand with election looming; refers to three options open to SADF of (1) discrediting the militants within SACP and ANC, (2) "recruiting agents of influence", and (3) "exploiting the rift within MK" (encouraging the recruitment of ANC sources)."[188]

These documents paint an astonishing portrait of a counterinsurgency program led by top-ranking SADF officers seeking to shape the transition's outcome by advancing a secret military agenda distinct from the ongoing political negotiations. This agenda- to marginalize the ANC's left-wing faction, and to ensure that the post-transition military remained in control of the *ancien regime*-seems, in fact, to have largely materialized. After the 1994 elections, Joe Modise

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[185] SAHA Archives
[186] This refers to Ronnie Kasrils, chief of MK Military Intelligence
[187] SAHA Archives
[188] Ibid.

was named Mandela's Defense Minister, while in the "new" military, General Georg Meiring, one of the architects of 'Project Echoes,' a secret operation to discredit The ANC by falsely linking MK to the Irish Republican Army and the Palestine Liberation Organization (Mkhondo 1993, 86), became Chief of Staff. Former MK commander Siphiwe Nyanda replaced Meiring in 1996. Modise was a key player in the "Arms Deal" scandal that still roils South African political waters; he and Nyanda featured prominently in "the odd new [post-transition] militarist alliance of white officers from the apartheid army and black guerrillas from the anti-apartheid struggle" (Kynoch 1996, 446). Meanwhile, according to one ex-MK source, an MK commander who used to betray guerrillas to SADF MI rose to prominence in the post-transition military.[189]

In 1996, Kynoch observed: "although former guerrillas must be evaluated and trained before being placed on active duty, SADF members undergo no such process. Despite the appointment of ex-MK commanders to the posts of Minister and Deputy Minister of Defense, and the new army's recruitment of ex-MK officers, the SANDF remains a formal, conventional military dominated by an experienced corps of Afrikaners" (Kynoch 1996, 443). Documents mention Cmdt. Nieuwoudt "talking before the elections about his agents among the MK members who would be part of the SANDF: 'They are already identified, we already know what ranks they will be appointed to, which of them will be generals, which of them are going to be brigadiers, and a great many of them are going to be lieutenant-colonels.'"[190] The document also mentions "[r]eferences to plenty of others recruited as moles from MK who are now in the security

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[189] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[190] SAHA Archives

forces."[191] Ferdi Barnard, a CCB and DCC veteran, had "boasted to journalists about the effectiveness of his plan [to subvert MK]:

The ANC is deeply infiltrated by the security forces. From my experience I would say that the ANC has been infiltrated very much, all departments, including the intelligence department and at the very high level. I recruited certain MK commanders as informants of mine. I started strengthening links again with Mandrax smuggling networks operating between here, Zambia, and Maputo, which had very good contacts with certain MK commanders (Mkhondo 1993, 86).

Barnard's mention of using drug smuggling networks to compromise MK commanders is all the more interesting in light of the "very senior person" in the ANC cited above, likely Modise, who was "open to being blackmailed into being recruited as he was involved in illegal activities."

Earlier literature has mentioned "that after mid-1992 senior SADF commanders, including the Chief of Staff (Intelligence), had a series of discreet bilateral meetings with leaders of the ANC and its armed wing" (Ellis 1998, 292). Yet these contacts appear to have been more sinister than a mere parley between counterparts from opposing sides, especially against the backdrop of counterinsurgency operations ongoing at that time, and considering that the documents cited above suggest a deliberate strategy to marginalize Hani. The documents speculate that the substance of these high-level meetings, as well as details of other counterinsurgency operations, may have been at the heart of the mysterious 1992 Steyn Report. De Klerk had commissioned SADF Gen. Pierre

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[191] SAHA Archives

Steyn to investigate ongoing clandestine operations after the previous investigation, the Goldstone Commission discovered the DCC.

The Steyn Report's contents remain unknown, as Steyn, who began to receive threats, "is said to have briefed the State President on the basis of a series of written reports rather than to have handed over a finished document" (Ellis 1998, 290). The SADF attempted to conceal Nieuwoudt's activities from this investigation, and paid him off to ensure his silence.[192] Select portions of the report emerged in 1996, but only those parts affirming that there was no SADF plot to attempt a coup d'état on De Klerk's government (Potgieter 2006, 299). This hardly explains De Klerk's firing of 23 officers, including two generals, after receiving the report, or, for that matter, the post-transition refusal of the Mandela government and all subsequent ANC administrations to reveal its contents.

De Klerk's purge reinforces the thesis of a counterinsurgency agenda distinct from the National Party's political agenda, while raising the possibility that the negotiations' outcome reflected not only a state compromise with the ANC to its left, but also with the security forces to its right. Indeed, in 1992, SADF intelligence Colonel Gert Hugo revealed in an interview that the SADF had "contingency plans for a military takeover if the government appeared to be losing its grip on the ANC and its communist allies," explaining that the military elite had "so much dirt" on De Klerk's cabinet "that they had become virtually untouchable" (Mkhondo 1993, 80). Even De Klerk's limited purge had strained government relations with the SADF almost to the breaking point.

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[192] SAHA Archives

The Assassination of Chris Hani

By recruiting rebel leaders, counterinsurgency programs have aimed to shape the very terrain upon which a negotiated transition unfolds. During a negotiated transition, this restricts the spectrum of political participation to a range beyond which militancy can cost a leader his life. The closer that revolutionary black leaders have come to approaching the levers of state power, the more important it has been for colonial intelligence operations to kill them in secret. In the history of African anti-colonial struggle, colonial intelligence services have directly or indirectly engineered the assassination of such key leaders as the Congo's Patrice Lumumba (1960), Mozambique's Eduardo Mondlane (1969), Guinea-Bissau's Amilcar Cabral (1973), Burkina Faso's Thomas Sankara (1986), and very possibly South Africa's Chris Hani (1993), to name only a few. These leaders have had in common the propagation of an anti-colonial ideology notable not only for a platform of black emancipation from white racist rule, but perhaps more importantly, a range of socialist or communist ideologies aiming at economic empowerment of the masses through wealth a redistribution.

Chris Hani was shot and killed in his driveway in the Boksburg suburb of Johannesburg on April 10, 1993 by Janusz Walus, a radical white racist whom police apprehended minutes later. On the strength of his credentials as MK commander and SACP chief, Hani had been second only to Mandela in popularity among South Africa's masses; his death triggered massive protests and riots that threatened to derail peace negotiations and plunge the country into a violent abyss. Only Mandela's urgent televised address, in which he pleaded with black South Africans to consider their shared destiny with whites, averted total chaos

(Mkhondo 1993, 165). After an investigation and trial, only Walus and far-right politician Clive Derby-Lewis were convicted for Hani's killing, which was found not to have been the product of a larger conspiracy (Smith and Tromp 2009). Yet several attempts had already been made on Hani's life (Brand 1998; Shubin 2008), and an incident months before his murder related by an ex-MK guerrilla suggests that shadowy elements had already marked Hani for assassination. According to this ex-guerrilla, who had regularly bodyguarded Hani after his return to South Africa from exile, "Chris used to be surveiled. When we were still together we used to tell him hey, let's counter-surveillance, we are being followed."[193] Even after the ANC dismissed this ex-guerrilla from Hani's retinue, Hani would still occasionally call on him for additional security. On this particular occasion, in January 1993,

> The mission was to go and wait for Chris. He boarded a plane in Johannesburg, which was going to land at seven o'clock in East London. But firstly I discovered that there were askaris inside the airport, almost a platoon. I recognized three askaris. One I knew because of his involvement in killing MK comrades in roadblocks and raids. I went back inside the airport, but armed now, with two F-1 grenades and a Makarov [pistol]. There was no one to stop me at the door, no longer policemen there. [The askaris] were manning everything. I took cover next to a pillar then I instructed [an accomplice to go apprise Hani of the situation]. I went upstairs, because I could see that the command post was there, so if I took them by surprise, disarmed them, then Chris comes to where I am, their mission will be over. I confronted them carrying a grenade and a pistol, so there was no other option for them because I was going to shoot them. Right

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[193] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

straight in the airport! Then fight my way out with two grenades. And I knew there were many whites there inside, and I knew that this [operation] was not sanctioned by the De Klerk government, this was dirty work of the CCB.[194]

After escorting Hani out of the airport and away from the apparent trap, the ex-guerrilla discovered that Hani had been sent without any bodyguards accompanying him on the flight, contrary to MK security procedures, supposedly due to a "mistake" at the ANC offices in Johannesburg.[195] This left several glaring questions about the askari platoon's mission at the airport, and the planning that left Hani unguarded, "because there are no coincidences like that, you know? And I'm trained in intelligence, I've been a security man for a long time."[196] This unresolved incident has convinced the ex-guerrilla that Hani's assassin "was not a lone ranger." The speed and precision of the assassination suggested an elaborate surveillance operation of the sort that the ex-guerrilla himself had previously detected while bodyguarding Hani. He suspects that Hani's assassins were deployed as an intelligence cell to conceal a broader network. Furthermore, during the ensuing investigation into Hani's death, "no one ever came to us as Chris Hani's ex-guards when they were investigating, maybe to ask what we know or what we saw. I mean when someone is killed suspiciously, you go even to a servant, even to a garden boy, and get facts and follow leads. So it didn't happen to us, as you are the first one asking me."[197]

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[194] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[195] This mirrored the circumstances of Hani's murder; a 1998 ANC internal report found that "he had spent the night before the murder with a woman at a Johannesburg airport hotel, which explained why his bodyguards had not been present when Walus [shot Hani]" (Brand 1998, p.332).
[196] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[197] Ibid.

According to journalists' investigations at the time, Eugene Riley, a CCB agent, allegedly warned the National Intelligence Service about the impending assassination after hearing from Mohammed Amin Laher, "an ANC intelligence officer," that "the plot was a joint project by 'both sides of the spectrum'- the ANC and the government security apparatus. Riley died in 1994" (Brand 1998, 238). These findings corroborate documents cited above indicating collusion between the highest echelons of ANC and apartheid security establishments in an attempt to marginalize Hani. Hani had been a prime target of the CCB from his 1990 arrival in Transkei onward.

During the transitional years when Hani lived in Transkei under strongman Bantu Holomisa's protection, SADF Military Intelligence had drafted plans for Hani and Holomisa's assassination via IR-CIS and other covert units, to be followed by a SADF intervention to destroy MK elements under the pretext of restoring order in Transkei.[198] These schemes culminated in the failed coup attempt on Holomisa. Note also the MK source's mention above that he had previously detected surveillance of Hani while bodyguarding him, and the apparent coordination between elements within the ANC's Johannesburg office who booked Hani's flight, and the askaris waiting at the airport in East London on that January evening.

An ANC press statement dated on the day of Hani's killing pointed to lingering questions about the incident's circumstances, and to the regime's lack of professionalism and urgency in handling the case. It complained: "the waters around the assassination of Chris Hani are being muddied," noting that "before an investigation had commenced, Deputy [Police] Minister Myburg had already

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[198] SAHA Archives

pronounced on the case, claiming it to be the work of a lone gunman without political motive." South African Police spokesman Captain Kotze had "again demonstrated his gross insensitivity and partisanship by arrogantly calling the ANC leadership 'irresponsible'." The ANC statement emphasizes key unsolved aspects, including "the investigation of a second car reported to have been at the scene of the crime."[199]

A statement released by MK the following day mourned a leader who "was the embodiment of the noblest ideals of democracy and liberation." It called Walus's membership in the extreme-right AWB "hardly surprising," adding: "However, what is cause for great concern is that it is a part of a greater conspiracy to destroy the forces of democracy in order to perpetuate and further entrench minority white domination." The document blames "the South African Regime" for the murder "in the final analysis," and connects the regime's security priorities during the transition with the looming challenge of security sector reform:

> The South African Police have concentrated their attention on MK whilst allowing the Rightwing to continue unhindered in its preparations to undermine peace in this country. It is precisely because of such conduct that MK maintains that the present security forces are illegitimate and will continue to be so until a democracy is established and a new police and defense force representative of the new South Africa is created."[200]

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[199] "ANC Press Statement on Police Pronouncements," 13 April 1993, Johannesburg (SAHA Archives); later police attempts to identify or explain the "second car" proved inconclusive (Smith and Tromp 2009).
[200] ANC Department of Information and Publicity: MK Statement on the Assassination of Chris Hani," 14 April 1993, Johannesburg (SAHA Archives)

The day after Hani's murder, former SACP chairman and future ANC Housing Minister Joe Slovo blamed the South African Police for enabling the killing, noting that since the regime had given Hani indemnity to return to South Africa, the South African Police had systematically refused all requests to give Hani any special protection, or to issue licenses for firearms to his bodyguards.[201] Although the magnitude of the conspiracy to kill Chris Hani may never be fully revealed, it is clear that apartheid forces had kept Hani in their sights for years, such that his return to South Africa after the ANC's unbanning served merely to bring him into closer range.

The apartheid regime also sought to discredit Hani and the ANC through psychological warfare operations, such as the widely publicized confession extracted from alleged bank robber Solomon Mqanqeni – apparently under duress- that Hani and MK cadre Tokyo Sexwale had masterminded and profited from a series of bank robberies in 1991, following which Minister of Law and Order Hernus Kriel "launched his attack on MK, accusing it of being involved in crime."[202] In a statement following this incident- which came only two weeks before Hani's murder- the SACP declared: "As we move into an election campaign we can expect dirty tricks operations, directed against leading ANC-alliance figures, to move into top gear."[203] In a piece published the day after Hani's death,

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[201] Bereng Mtimkulu, "Joe Slovo Slams Cops," *City Press*, Johannesburg, 14 April 1993
[202] "The Mqanqeni Affair: South African Communist Party Central Committee Statement" (31 March 1993), (SAHA MK); the statement goes on to note: "On the very evening of the statement being presented to court, Mqanqeni and his alleged accomplices mysteriously escaped from prison. Although we have no knowledge of the individual… we fear for his safety. Having usefully served a purpose, he may now well be an embarrassment to those who have used him." Indeed, the regime's counterinsurgency forces were notorious for "disappearing" collaborators whom they feared might expose them.
[203] Ibid.

South African journalist Sekola Sello related: "two weeks ago, Chris Hani told me that the recent spate of black-on-white killings [by APLA in the Eastern Cape] was part of a smokescreen to create the right climate for leading anti-apartheid activists to be killed."[204]

The impact of Hani's death on South African politics cannot be overstated. Not only did it leave a gaping void in the MK and SACP leaderships; it silenced the voice that South Africa's impoverished black masses most trusted and relied on to speak on their behalf, and extinguished the brightest star among the generation of black leaders succeeding Mandela. Murray contends that Hani's "links with scores of militant populists outside the ANC mainstream… could have been transformed into a powerful militant nexus to the left of the ANC, catapulting the [SACP] into a critical role as a key political power broker with which the first post-apartheid government would have been forced to make deals" (Murray 1994, 128). Although it is debatable whether Hani would have mounted such a challenge towards the ANC's mainstream, it is certain that no South African leader since has approached Hani's popular legitimacy and reputation for incorruptibility.[205] Hani became a symbol of the transformation that never was.

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[204] Sekola Sello, "Honesty Might Have Cost Chris His Life," *City Press,* Johannesburg, 14 April 1993

[205] An anonymous reviewer for a journal article-length version of this chapter (under review at the time of writing for *Comparative Politics*) offered these insights regarding Hani's impact on South Africa's future: While the circumstantial evidence presented here, and elsewhere, suggests that those found guilty for Hani's assassination most likely did not work alone, I am not sure that events would have been so different as is suggested here. Based on my own recollections of time in South Africa immediately prior to this event, Hani seemed to have taken a lead in the ANC leadership's concerted strategy of lowering, rather than raising, popular expectations, on the eve of elections. He certainly would have made a more dynamic and charismatic successor to Mandela than Mbeki. Shubin (2008) and others also point to his greater insistence on the transparency of decision-making within the ANC (although this would have improved with anyone compared to Mbeki). But although a populist, Hani's ideology and program were not that different from Mandela's, and his base was not organized enough to permit a

One ex-guerrilla insisted that with Hani to voersee the process, far more MK cadres would have been integrated into the new South African security forces: "if Chris were still alive today, things would be very different."[206]

Conclusion

The apartheid regime's counterinsurgency campaign was notable not only for its extreme violence, but for the ways in which it fused political and security decision-making institutions while permeating both the state and civil society. The South African military and police systematically targeted armed and nonviolent militants alike, recruiting them as informers or killing them. This extremely wide-ranging program of clandestine violence shaped the most critical aspects of South Africa's negotiated transition, including elite pacting, security sector reform, and state-society relations. This has left lasting post-transition impacts.

This chapter has also used data gathered from interviews and archival sources to challenge the accuracy and credibility of recent literature seeking to draw an equivalency between the ANC's excesses during the struggle years and the apartheid regime's crimes. Because these counterinsurgency operations have remained shrouded in secrecy, unanswered questions cutting to the heart of South Africa's transition still persist. How far up the chain of command were the orders for Third Force violence given, and who knew about them beforehand? Which

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substantially different position. It is therefore equally plausible to conclude that Hani would have succeeded in implementing GEAR [South Africa's privatization-driven economic policy adopted in 1996] with less opposition than Mbeki actually faced. On other issues, however, such as AIDS policy, it is quite possible that Hani would have adopted a more proactive and sensible policy. (Received 6 December 2010)

[206] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; Suttner (2008) also describes Hani's unique popularity and legitimacy within the ANC's rank-and-file.

ANC and MK members were recruited by apartheid intelligence agencies, and how did they collaborate? By providing partial answers to these questions, this chapter has paved the way for a theoretical analysis of counterinsurgency's post-transition legacies.

CHAPTER FOUR

Case Study: Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, and their Legacies in the Bantustan of Transkei

The Transkei, show-place of the Bantustan scheme, could well be the first battlefield on which apartheid will be defeated.

- Govan Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, 1973, p.148[207]

With this prophetic observation, ANC leader Govan Mbeki concluded his 1973 book on Transkei's mass resistance to apartheid rule and the imposition of the Bantustan system. As the first Bantustan to gain its independence, Transkei was indeed the "show-place" of the National Party stratagem for outsourcing the administration of South Africa's black majority to dictators loyal to the apartheid regime. As the Bantustan regimes of Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana, and Venda hardened into self-governing territorial units in the early 1980s, they developed elaborate "defense" forces to repress domestic unrest, in the image of the South African Defense Forces and the South African Police. These last played important advisory roles in the Bantustan forces, which were trained and often commanded by white officers seconded from South African Military Intelligence (Sparks 1994).

The apartheid securocrats sought as much as possible to preserve the illusion of Bantustan sovereignty. Meanwhile, as Transkei became a hotbed of

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[207] Govan Mbeki was a prominent ANC leader from Transkei and a contemporary of Mandela, Tambo, Sisulu, and that generation of ANC leadership, as well as the father of South Africa's second democratically-elected president, Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki elder wrote important portions of his landmark book while in apartheid prisons, where he composed entire chapters on stolen toilet paper.

ANC and MK activism, it increasingly became a focus for SADF Military Intelligence counterinsurgency operations. The apartheid strategy of outsourcing the dirty work of governing restive black populations to surrogate black authorities must itself be understood through the prism of counterinsurgency. First because, as we have seen, outsourcing coercion afforded the regime the double benefit of dividing black communities against themselves to more easily rule them, while also minimizing white combat casualties; and second, because setting up Bantustans as "independent" entities gave the apartheid regime a further layer of cover under which to clandestinely deploy its full range of police, military, and intelligence forces against insurgents.

An examination of documents at the South African History Archives sheds light on clandestine Third Force operations by the apartheid security forces to destabilize the Bantustans of Transkei and Ciskei. These operations included recruitment of askaris and mercenaries for various coup attempts against leaders in both homelands. It also provides a window onto the recruitment of informers within the ANC and MK- including at the highest levels of leadership- and their projected role within the post-transition security forces. The archival sources paint a portrait of a defense establishment steeped in counterinsurgency practices, keenly aware of the imminent transition and its import, and seeking to undermine the ANC and PAC and their respective armed wings as much as possible in order to ensure the apartheid defense establishment's enduring influence after the transition.

These operations intensified especially after Transkei strongman General Bantu Holomisa displayed increasingly overt affinity with the ANC from 1988 onward, whereupon Transkei became a safe haven for MK guerrillas. These

guerrillas were instrumental in thwarting a SADF MI-engineered coup attempt to remove Holomisa and to install in his stead a dictator favorable to the National Party. This represents a rare failure in the apartheid regime's history of counterinsurgency operations, which I argue was brought about by MK's ability to operate freely on Transkeian territory with the local government's support- a luxury it enjoyed on only one other occasion, in northern Angola's Malangue povince, where the ANC's armed wing was also successful in repulsing hostile forces.

The tremendous groundswell of popular support for the ANC and MK was by no means unique to Transkei; indeed, as we have seen in Chapter 2, MK enjoyed great legitimacy in virtually every corner of South Africa. What is unique about the Transkei case is the freedom MK enjoyed because the local government supported it from 1989 onward. Whereas in the rest of South Africa, MK largely played a supporting role to the UDF's trade unions and student movements in directly confronting apartheid hegemony, in Transkei the UDF was virtually absent and popular resistance to apartheid manifested itself chiefly through MK, which by the time of the transition had the freedom to organize and train openly. This provides us with a case study of MK as legitimate defenders of the masses against the apartheid regime, and suggests that had MK guerrillas been properly incorporated into South Africa's new security forces, they could have made a powerful contribution towards ensuring a more secure post-transition outcome.

The thoroughgoing integration of MK guerrillas into the 'new' security forces would have benefited the post-transition forces and the communities they were meant to serve in at least three key ways: 1) adding greater legitimacy to the armed forces 2) utilizing the guerrillas' extensive experience throughout the

country and 3) establishing a force that was more aware and responsive to the community's needs, engendering more trust from them.

This chapter proceeds in four parts. I first outline the history of Transkei focusing specifically on the apartheid's state's broader counterinsurgency campaign that included attempts at suppressing political dissent through the utilization of clientelist linkages with local leaders. The second part details the factors associated with the legitimacy of the MK and the ANC in this period, which made the Transkei a hotbed of guerrilla activity and a persistent thorn in the regime's side. This led to Transkei strongman Bantu Holomisa's increasing alignment with the ANC, which ultimately caused SADF MI to engineer a coup attempt on Holomisa after the onset of negotiations between the regime and the ANC. The counterinsurgency forces that sought to topple Holomisa aimed to pave the way for the apartheid military to hunt down MK elements in Transkei. However, MK guerrillas based there were instrumental in thwarting this coup attempt, underscoring their capabilities as a combat force with high popular legitimacy that defended the local community at a crucial moment during the transition.

The chapter concludes with an analysis of urban violence. I argue that some of the roots of the current urban violence, and state responses to it, can be located in counterinsurgency legacies. In this regard, the legacy of counterinsurgency in Mthatha, formerly the Transkei capital, offers an important lens through which to analyze this crucial legacy for contemporary South Africa. As in much of South Africa, urban violence proliferates in Mthatha and its environs, while the woefully under-manned and under-trained police forces are unable to mount a serious response. They leave a vacuum that has been largely

filled by private security companies (PSCs) founded and staffed by former MK guerrillas, who fulfill in a private capacity the policing role they were excluded from performing through the state security forces. These PSCs benefit from public credibility and trust largely by virtue of their personnel who had previously taken up arms against apartheid.

History of the Transkei Bantustan

South Africa began its Bantustan project in the early 1960s as a way of outsourcing the governance and repression of South African blacks in such a way as to put black faces on their continued economic and political oppression and exploitation.[208] The Bantustans were "tribal homelands" assigned to South African blacks on the basis of ethnicity, on the pretext that this would provide them with a form of self-governance. In reality, this was an attempt "to weaken [African] nationalism through division, by turning the tumult of African struggle against white rule into the safe manageable sluices of tribal contest and conflict" (Mbeki 1964, 7).

Formed on less than 12% of South Africa's total land mass, the Bantustans were very small in comparison with the size of the population forced to live on them- 5 million blacks, or almost half of South Africa's black population of 11 million, out of a total population of 15 million (Mbeki 1964, 15). By 1992, Transkei's population was of 3.5 million (Peires 1992, 367). The Bantustans were also very small in comparison with the historical range of the peoples now forced

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[208] The etymology of "Bantustan" is characteristic of the apartheid regime's total racialization of politics: "Bantu" refers to the ethno-linguistic grouping that encompasses most sub-Saharan African peoples; during apartheid, whites often referred to Africans collectively as "the Bantu", as in, "such activists are likely to stir up the Bantu"; the suffix "-stan" implies "territory".

to live in them; meanwhile, the apartheid regime drew up the borders in such a way as to keep for itself the lion's share of natural resources and prime agricultural land. The apartheid regime's Bantustan strategy was the culmination of a plan to concretize "racial domination and segregation (already well established in South Africa) in terms of *national* difference" so as to depoliticize African rural poverty by absolving whites of direct responsibility for it (Ferguson 2006, 57). Southall similarly interpreted the notion of Bantustan independence as "an attempt by the South African government to mystify the particular relation that obtains between capital and labor under apartheid by elevating an essentially class relationship (exploitation) to an apparently international transaction between discrete (white and black) nationalities" (1982, 4). In other words, the policy was to divide and rule and suppress political dissent, as well as meet economic interests on the part of the apartheid state.

Writing at the peak of Transkei's political and economic self-determination, Southall noted: "[d]espite government assertions to the contrary, it is clear also that the broad mass of blacks strongly rejected the decision of Kaiser Matanzima (the Transkeian Chief Minister) to opt for a separate political future, as was indicated *inter alia* not only by opposition internal to the Transkei, but by the forthright repudiation of homeland independence by such important bodies as the South African Students' Organization and the Black Peoples' Convention" (1982, 3). The founder of the Black Consciousness movement and Transkeian native son Steve Biko called Bantustans "the greatest single fraud invented by white politicians," which "was seen by blacks naturally as a big fraud calculated to dampen the enthusiasm with which they picked the cudgels in the broader political fight for their rights in the country of their birth" (Biko 1978, 81-83). In

Biko's view, blacks who bought into the Bantustans' ersatz sovereignty and political freedoms and used "Bantustan platforms to attack" apartheid were merely "exonerat[ing] the country from the blame that it is a police state" (1978, 86).

South Africa created the Bantustan "homelands"- self-governing polities landlocked within South African territory- essentially to outsource apartheid, depoliticizing black poverty by absolving whites of direct responsibility for it. Insulated from international condemnation of the white regime by their ostensible sovereignty, the Bantustan dictators paradoxically had more leeway to repress their African populations than did the apartheid regime itself. Officers trained by or seconded from SADF Military Intelligence (MI) commanded the Bantustan "defense forces," which were notorious for their harsh repression.

The apartheid regime respected Bantustan sovereignty to the extent that this suited its domestic and foreign policy objectives; however, the tentacles of the South African military and police counterinsurgency apparatus were entrenched in every aspect of Bantustan politics, and the apartheid Security Branch secret police regularly seized suspected activists from and enjoyed unfettered access to Bantustan territory.[209] A former MK fighter recalled that remaining undercover as a guerrilla and integrating into society was even more difficult because village headmen and regional chiefs were incorporated into the apartheid counterinsurgency system: "It's worse with rural, the masses, peasants. They are very conservative. And those days even the headmen were taught to check anyone who visits, anyone must be reported to the king or chief of the village. All those structures were under the State Security Council under those

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[209] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

Joint Management Centers."[210]

But in order to achieve both its objectives of suppressing political dissent and organizing labor and capital for development, the State needed to utilize its clientelistic linkages with local elites. In this case, Kaiser Matanzima played an important role. Transkei received 'self-government' in 1963, becoming the first black homeland to do so. The apartheid regime "promoted" Transkei's tinpot dictator Kaiser Matanzima "against tribal custom from a minor chieftaincy to the head of the Emigrant Tembus… in a blatant divide and rule policy" (Mbeki 1964, 146). In 1976, Transkei became the first Bantustan to gain its independence under Matanzima, described by one observer as "[South African president and Bantustan architect] Dr. Verwoerd's most sincere black disciple" (Peires 1992, 366). Writing several years before Transkei gained its official "independence," Mbeki described Matanzima as an "arrogant and ambitious" leader who used the pretext of black independence in the Bantustans to play "the role of the classic collaborator... the strong man groomed by the white government to keep down the peasantry, to destroy the political fighters of the Transkei who, outlawed and persecuted in the Matanzima kingdom, are becoming throughout the country an inspiration to resistance" (1973, 146). Matanzima also championed apartheid out of an apparently genuine conviction in the virtues of 'separate development' along ethnic lines, giving rise to his "resolute and highly authoritarian opposition to the pan-South African nationalisms of the ANC and PAC" (Southall 1992, 3). Mbeki noted: "Matanzima, arrogant and ambitious, explains his acceptance of the Bantustan programme on the grounds that the Transkei could in this way become South Africa's first independent Black state" (Mbeki 1973, 146).

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[210] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

South Africa took pains to dress up their new clients with all the accoutrements of real independent states, although the Bantustans' independence was recognized only by South Africa's fellow pariah states in the international community such as Israel and Taiwan. Most important among these trappings of statehood were well-equipped armies, named "defense forces" after South Africa's own military. The "homeland services were merely extensions" of the apartheid regime, "with their personnel originating predominantly amongst the lower ranks of the [Security Branch] and BOSS" (McCarthy 1996, 72). More importantly, the top-ranking decisionmakers in the Transkei state and security structures were drawn directly from SADF MI, and, as the Bantustans increasingly became the focus of South Africa's military and political strategy, this leadership answered to the top echelons of the apartheid security forces.

Removed from the international community's scrutiny by this territorial sleight of hand, the dictators South Africa appointed to power in the Bantustans actually had more leeway to repress their African populations than did the apartheid regime within South Africa proper. The Bantustans faced no external threats, and if the divisions between the apartheid police and military were blurred, in the Bantustans they were nonexistent. The Bantustans' juridical autonomy then, served to concentrate the forces of repression purely at the domestic level. Whereas the rank and file of the various Bantustan defense forces were almost entirely African, their commanding officers were often white South African Military Intelligence operatives. Furthermore, these regimes would often retain the services of "consultants" working for South African intelligence services who could shape policy decisions to Pretoria's liking.

The ANC and MK's Popular Legitimacy in Transkei

Although it is little more than a political backwater in South Africa today, Transkei is one of the most important historical sites of resistance to apartheid, and is the birthplace of virtually the entire pantheon of ANC leaders, including Nelson and Winnie Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Govan and Thabo Mbeki, and Chris Hani, as well as PAC founder Robert Sobukwe and Black Consciousness proponent Steve Biko. The region has a long history of resistance to colonial rule, which intensified in the 1800s as the British colonizers swept eastward from their foothold in the Cape of Good Hope, seizing African lands and killing the Xhosa paramount chief Hintsa in 1835 (Lalu 2009).

Indeed, it is by understanding the role of ANC and MK leaders in the Transkei that we can better appreciate the political legitimacy of both organizations in detail. That is, while most analysts have often emphasized the black-white divide and the racist ideology of Apartheid to understand the legitimacy of the ANC and MK, the real roots of the legitimacy of these counterinsurgency organizations must be located historically and within the context of Bantustan politics. As I argue below, MK's increasing legitimacy in society was in direct proportion to the increasing illegitimacy of the "native authorities" and chiefs that the Apartheid state sought to use in its policies of divide and rule. It was not only state violence, but the failure of what Mamdani (1996) calls 'despotic native authorities' that helped to increase MK legitimacy in civil society. Moreover, this demonstrates that civil society came to increasingly side with the liberation movements as legitimate authorities over the regime's appointed representatives.

While the apartheid regime made international headlines with its 1960

massacre of peaceful protesters at Sharpeville, in a far less publicized campaign it simultaneously moved to crush the Pondoland Revolt, a series of rural rebellions against the regime's consolidation of power through the cooptation of traditional chieftainships (Mbeki 1964). From then onward, the mostly rural Transkei region provided a steady flood of recruits to the ANC and PAC. In 1979, ANC leader in exile Oliver Tambo called for resistance by the people of Transkei against the Matanzima regime, swelling the cohort of youth fleeing into voluntary exile to join MK's ranks.[211] Yet even as the Bantustan governments' juridical autonomy gave it freer reign to suppress black revolt, it could also cut the other way: in June 1981, the Matanzima government imposed "(yet another) State of Emergency... which was justified by George Matanzima by reference to a resuscitation of activity by the exiled Congress Movements, and followed the detention the previous month of Brigadier Keswa, Commissioner of the Defence Force, and two other high ranking officers, for alleged contacts with the ANC" (Southall 1983, 310). Southall wrote the postscript of his landmark 1982 study on the Transkei in time to observe MK's increased military activity there:

> Finally, it is perhaps a pointer of things to come that in August 1981, five guerrillas who had successfully planted bombs in East London and Port Elizabeth [in South Africa proper] should withdraw to the Transkei where they killed two local policemen before two of them were later shot dead and three captured by a combined South African, Transkeian, and Bophuthatswana security force. If, as is supposed, the insurgents were attempting to make their way to Lesotho, it raises the possibility that they chose their route through Transkei in expectation of receiving succour and support from the local population (Southall 1982, 310).

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[211] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

Indeed, MK had elaborate support networks through Transkei and while it enjoyed widespread support in many parts of South Africa, in Transkei MK guerrillas could truly move amongst the population as fish among water, to use Mao's dictum for guerrilla warfare. Even during the time of the Matanzima regime, MK had already identified the possibility of using Transkei as a haven and operating base for its guerrillas. In this they were greatly assisted by King Sabata Dalindyebo, the abaThembu monarch who hailed from the Madiba clan, the same royal lineage as Nelson Mandela. King Sabata would use his palace, known as the "Great Place", situated some 40 kilometres from Mthatha, to shelter guerrillas and hide weapons caches. Matanzima eventually sent him into exile, and King Sabata joined the ANC in Zambia, where he gave a rousing address at the organization's landmark 1985 Kabwe conference. While in exile, King Sabata's son and heir to the throne, Buyelekhaya, joined MK in his turn.[212]

Identity, Terrain, and Transkei's Suitability for Armed Struggle

By appointing Matanzima, who shared Tembu Royal House lineage and a common grandfather with ANC leader Nelson Mandela, the National Party architects hoped to divert Mandela's and the ANC's popularity in the region towards an "independent" alternative under their control. In terms of the actual "tribal" legitimacy of their authority, Peires points out: "the chiefs who rose to prominence under the homeland were not the great hereditary aristocrats such as King Sabata Dalindyebo of the Thembu, but junior chiefs such as [Transkei's] Kaiser Matanzima, [Bophuthatswana's] Lucas Mangope, and [Kwa-Zulu's]

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[212] Author's interview with King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo, December 2009

Gatsha Buthelezi, who depended on the South African connection not only for money and power, but even for their very status as chiefs" (1992, 384). In contrast to Mandela, who had departed the region of his birth to participate in the ANC's broader national politics until his arrest and imprisonment, his nephew, King Sabata Dalindyebo, remained in Transkei, where he provided increasingly vocal opposition to his cousin Matanzima and the Bantustan scheme. Although the ANC was banned in Transkei, King Sabata aligned himself openly with it, founding the Democratic People's Party (DPP) in opposition to Matanzima, and repeatedly suffering arrest. King Sabata even sheltered MK guerrillas at his royal "Great Place."[213] In 1979, Matanzima deposed King Sabata from the Paramountcy of Thembuland; Sabata fled into exile in Zambia, where he died in 1986. His son and eventual successor, Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo, fled into exile to join his father, where he joined MK and received military training.[214]

From the perspective of the combatants themselves, Transkei was a natural site of MK activity partly because commander Chris Hani and a great many guerrilla field commanders hailed from there, including "daring ones" who led raids into South Africa and often perished, such as "Mbilo Maxhebeza, Zola Dubeni, a lot of them."[215] While apartheid's architects made it progressively harder for South African blacks to get more than a rudimentary education, a disproportionately large number of ANC and MK members from Transkei "were also educated, [they] went to universities [at] Fort Hare, Durban, Wentworth," making them ideal candidates for training as guerrilla commanders.[216] Despite

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[213] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009; during the Bantustan era, the capital's name was spelled "Umtata"; the ANC government introduced the current spelling in 1994 to signal a break with the past.
[214] Author's interview with King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo, December 2009
[215] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[216] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

these advantages, guerrillas seeking to infiltrate Transkei still ran the risk of betrayal from traditional authorities, who had been incorporated into the regime's omnipresent surveillance apparatus, as one ex-guerrilla explained:

> You want to reveal yourself [to the populace], but you've got to stick the rules of secrecy. It's worse with rural, the masses, peasants. They are very conservative. And those days even the headmen were taught to check anyone who visits, anyone must be reported to the king or chief of the village, who was incorporated into the apartheid system. All those structures were under the State Security Council under those Joint Management Centers up to the operational side of it. All over South Africa. It was even not known by the government.[217]

Transkei was particularly suitable as an MK operating base for a variety of geographical reasons. First, the lush, hilly terrain was ideal for concealment, enabling guerillas to train and store weaponry. The shared border with Lesotho, an independent state landlocked by South African territory, was also a crucial factor that allowed guerillas to penetrate into South Africa from ANC safe houses, and then flee back across the border. The Lesotho border was also a key crossing point for MK recruits going into exile for training, and served as a conduit for personnel and weapons that proved to be MK's most reliably secure infiltration route into the country.[218]. Because of the terrain and the constant flow of workers to and from South Africa, the Lesotho border was undoubtedly the easiest border for guerillas to cross to and from South Africa. Although the apartheid regime recruited many spies to combat MK in Lesotho and staged several commando

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[217] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[218] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

raids on ANC offices, "the Lesotho regime had no resources to counter us," and the ANC also had many sympathizers within the regime.

Transkei thus provided MK with a rear base for operatives throughout South Africa, as people from other regions "would run to Transkei and we would harbor them from police. The terrain is favorable, and there are many places to hide." Another advantage was that "roads were not as accessible. You could see a car coming from five kilometers and you know those are policemen," giving guerrillas plenty of time to flee. The Bantustan militaries were also not as well equipped as the SADF, and "they didn't have resources like helicopters for backup."[219]

As one former guerrilla recalls: "Chris [Hani] came to Lesotho [to organize guerrilla formations], because there were no activities in the Eastern Cape, even Western Cape, so Transkei had to service all these areas in terms of infiltration, in terms of arming, because most bases, arms caches we brought here from Lesotho."[220] Transkei became a hub for MK, and guerrillas "from Natal used to come here and stay here before being infiltrated out, maybe via even Swaziland, but arranged logistically."[221] Arms cached in Transkei were likewise smuggled out for operations throughout South Africa "in various ways: false bottom, trucks, buses, cars, suitcases, taking from the armories."[222]

Several former guerrillas described Matanzima's harshness as a strong factor in their decision to join MK; two described their fathers' repeated arrests for political activity, and one related how his father was banished to a remote rural area and forced to live in a roofless hut as punishment, shattering his

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[219] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[220] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[221] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[222] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

health.[223] Yet, brutal though the Matanzima regime was, the echelons of the TDF government and security forces were ripe with recruitment opportunities for the ANC. One former guerrilla described how many people in the Transkei security apparatus had been to school with ANC members "and they wanted to show us that they're not on the other side but they're just working to feed their families. So we had to conscientize them. Recruit more, especially those who are working on strategic points so that we know when there are going to be roadblocks, cordon-and-search operations."[224] Despite the Matanzima regime's brutality, the ANC underground thrived in Transkei, which soon became a key refuge and transit point for MK guerrillas. MK thoroughly infiltrated the Transkei Defense Forces (TDF) and would regularly steal weaponry from TDF armories, even using TDF bases to train its cadres.[225]

According to one former MK guerrilla who was active in Transkei, infiltrators from MK used to hide among students at the Fort Hare University residence and pretend they were students:

> At that time you never knew who was coming back from exile or who is inside. There used to be crash courses at Lesotho or Swaziland, so somebody could leave the country for 3 months without anyone noticing, somebody could think he's at school yet he's gone outside to undergo a crash course, and then come back to operate. So my ex-schoolmates from Fort Hare used to come around with messages from such people, this is what has to happen, so we used to do that underground work. So that's how I got connected with MK, working that way."[226]

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[223] Confidential interview with ex-combatants, November 2009
[224] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[225] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[226] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

These interviews attest to a broad range of recruitment processes. They highlight that while the regime's violent repression drove many Transkei youths to join the ANC's ranks, close social and communal networks made it far easier for MK to recruit in a clandestine fashion. That is, while much of South Africa was undergoing different levels of violence, in Transkei the history and close social networks of activists came to play a very important role in recruitment spearheaded by key leaders at the time. While more seasoned guerrillas embarked on more daring missions, crash-course trainees were tasked mainly with attacking the property of Matanzima's Transkei government, such as "burning of government installations, burning government cars, and anything that would sabotage the working of government" while avoiding inflicting casualties on lower-ranking Bantustan state personnel.[227]

Southall links the upsurge in popular resistance to the Bantustan authorities in the mid-1980s to "an upturn in guerrilla activity by the ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe" (1992, 19). The Matanzima regime's harsh clampdown on students following "the extensive unrest which gripped the homeland's schools and tertiary institutions" (Southall 1992, 19) earned it a reputation for brutality surpassing even that of the apartheid regime. Several ex-guerrillas attributed the late arrival to Transkei of popular movements such as the UDF not to the unfavorable conditions for political mobilization within the African population, but rather to the Matanzima regime's harshness, which did not allow for such movements to take root.[228] Southall notes that "the regime was considerably more concerned by the growth of underground activity ascribed to the ANC and/or MK," which included "the assassination of one minister in 1985, the attempted

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[227] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[228] Confidential interview with ex-combatants, November 2009

assassination of another, and the bombing of the Umtata offices of the Prime Minister and senior TDF personnel on the eve of the first funeral of Sabata Dalindyebo in April 1986" (1992, 19).

As in the rest of South Africa, MK activities in Transkei were closely coordinated to respond to the needs of the masses under occupation. One former guerrilla described an attack on the main police station in Transkei, near Mthatha, in response to the Matanzima regime's harsh repression: "People went out [of Transkei] and asked [MK commander] Chris [Hani] because there was suppression, martial law, curfew, roadblocks, so they said MK must do something. So comrades were ordered to attack the police station, straight." The station was operated by the ubiquitous South African Police, which "roved, mingled, it was everywhere." MK forces had intelligence from a guerrilla who "was playing for the police soccer club. He was staying with them in the police barracks." The guerrillas assaulted with rifles and grenades, inflicting heavy casualties, following which the South African police "started putting sandbags around police stations now, but we were going to overrun all police stations if we wanted to."[229]

Yet MK's role was hardly restricted to military action; rather, it integrated a broad, clandestine political mobilization strategy that incorporated student, union, and labor mobilization.[230] In discussing the role of union and labor strikes during the transition from apartheid, much of the existing literature on the Transkei (e.g., Southall 1992; Peires 1992) underestimates the level of

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[229] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; the three cadres who participated in this raid were all killed afterward- one in a skirmish with askaris in Mount Fletcher, another at a roadblock in East London, while the third fled, wounded, to Lesotho, where apartheid agents tracked him to his hospital bed- "he saw his killers," the former guerrilla related.
[230] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

coordination in the ANC's combined political-military strategy, and MK's role in bypassing and infiltrating the Matanzima regime. Just as in South Africa proper, MK applied its "20% military/ 80% political" formula to its activities in Transkei, spreading its ideology of resistance and recruiting operatives for a range of anti-government activities.[231] Despite the TDF's historical status as apartheid's proxy forces, MK rarely targeted Bantustan security personnel, and then only when specific officers were notoriously brutal; as one former guerrilla explained: "we never touched those Mickey Mouse soldiers- our fight was with the apartheid regime."[232]

The TDF was also far more useful to MK intact, since MK had thoroughly infiltrated it. One former guerrilla told of stealing plastic explosives manufactured by South Africa's Armscor from a TDF armory, then using them to blow up an empty municipal building in Kokstad, South Africa, in support of a workers' strike there.[233] This freedom for MK guerrillas to train and operate under the noses of the apartheid regime was unique and unprecedented in the history of the struggle; only the geographically and politically hospitable Transkei provided it.

The Militarization of Transkei and Changing Allegiances

If the apartheid regime's efforts to use native authorities to suppress dissent failed, so did its increasing efforts to use a military solution in Transkei and elsewhere. What is important to note here is that as the State began to formulate and employ its counterinsurgency campaign, the ANC and MK gained greater legitimacy within South African society. Equally important, this period set

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[231] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[232] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[233] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

the stage for a legacy of a security sector riddled with corruption and a legacy of violence rather than law and order. In 1986, SADF MI concocted a strategy in "response to the intense and seemingly unstoppable power of local UDF-ANC resistance in the Eastern Cape [province]" (Sanders 2006, 265). Dubbed "Operation Katzen," its objective was to unify Transkei and Ciskei into a single Xhosa ethnic homeland, under the Matanzimas' control, and reflected "the internalization of the destabilization policy" that the apartheid regime had "applied to the front-line states through support of UNITA, RENAMO, and the Lesotho Liberation Army" (Sanders 2006, 265). To this end, SADF MI created a Special Forces branch of the TDF under the control of General Ron Reid Daly and 26 other officers formerly of the Rhodesian Selous Scouts, "a ruthless counterinsurgency unit which had gained notoriety when combating Rhodesia's liberation movements" and which had now been repurposed to suit the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency exigencies (Southall 1992, 3). Led by the former Rhodesians, the TDF military adventure in January 1987 against Lennox Sebe's regime in neighboring Ciskei ultimately failed, and Operation Katzen was abandoned, but the precedent had been set and henceforth the apartheid regime's policies towards the Bantustans were increasingly shaped by counterinsurgency strategy.

Meanwhile, winds of change began blowing through Transkeian politics. The apartheid regime did not object when a TDF force rounded up and deported the former Rhodesian Special Forces.[234] Kaiser Matanzima's brother George, who

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[234] Southall reports that the Pretoria regime removed Reid's Selous Scouts because the regime had come to regard them "as a destabilizing element" in the region (1992, 4). However, this is doubtful, considering that the Rhodesians had in fact been acting under SADF orders precisely to destabilize Transkei and Ciskei (knowledge that was still secret at Southall's time of writing); it is more likely that the South Africans let the Selous Scouts leave because they already had other counterinsurgency plans for the region.

held Transkei's prime ministership while his brother held the presidency, meanwhile released TDF Brigadier Holomisa from state custody, where he had been held for his role in expressing TDF troops' resentment of the Selous Scouts (Southall 1992, 4). The Matanzima brothers feuded over political power, while corruption allegations and discontent within the military weakened both their positions, leading to the eventual appointment to power of Stella Sigcau to the premiership in September 1987 (Southall 1992, 4). With South African support, Matanzima, who had lost power following an inquiry into massive corruption by his administration, orchestrated Holomisa's overthrow of Stella Sigcau "after only 86 days in office on the pretext that she had accepted a R50,000 bribe from [Kaiser's brother and rival] George Matanzima" (Peires 1992, 370). In reality, the securocrats toppled Sigcau because she had sent a diplomatic delegation to meet with the ANC in Lusaka.[235] In the power vacuum that ensued prior to Holomisa's consolidation of power,

> The South African Security Police had a field day in Transkei, and intervened directly to clean up the [MK] cadres who had infiltrated Transkei. Three suspected MK were gunned down in Umtata in broad daylight, two more were killed in Mount Fletcher, and a sixth was detained and shot in Butterworth. Bantu Holomisa, the new military head of state, was widely regarded as nothing more than a catspaw of the Matanzimas" (Peires 1992, 370).

Holomisa initially rose to power with the apartheid regime's blessing and close support, and his initiatives to stop the massive corruption that had flourished under the Matanzimas were initially well-received by Pretoria. But the Brigadier

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[235] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

would soon make an about-face: by 1988 Holomisa began to develop strong affinities with the ANC and placed several MK soldiers in the TDF (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003, 200). A key turning point was in November 1989, when Holomisa granted permission for the reburial of King Sabata, whom KD Matanzima had sought to dishonor posthumously by having the King "ignominiously buried in a commoner's grave" (Southall 1992, 5).

Because of King Sabata's alignment with the ANC, his reburial, "attended by tens of thousands of people" (Peires 1992, 371), "became a major political rally, as thousands of people, including Winnie Mandela, gathered to pay respects displaying the black, green, and gold colors of the ANC" (Southall 1992, 6); "The ANC flag was openly displayed in Transkei for the first time in thirty years, together with the revolutionary songs and dances already familiar elsewhere in South Africa" (Peires 1992, 371). At the ceremony, several ANC delegates urged the assembled crowd to regard Holomisa's rule favorably (Peires 1992). Within a week of King Sabata's reburial, "the government released six MK cadres serving long prison sentences. Two more cadres facing execution were reprieved by a moratorium on capital punishment" (Peires 1992, 371). Several weeks after that- and three months before Pretoria's De Klerk regime- Holomisa unbanned the ANC and PAC "along with 13 other national and local opposition groups" (Southall 1992, 6). In an address to the Cape Town Press Club on 15 October 1990, Holomisa emphasized:

Between 1988 and December 1989 Transkei unbanned more than thirty organizations, many of which were still banned in South Africa. We were also the first ones to unconditionally release political prisoners. We have placed a moratorium on the death sentence and have amended security laws

with the result that they have lost much of their original draconian tinge. It is again Transkei that first mooted the holding of a referendum to test the views of her people regarding the future. It is again the same Military Government that has made it possible for rival political organizations to live side by side without their followers engaging in violent acts against one another."[236]

In his address to the MK conference in Venda on 9 August 1991, Holomisa insisted, "our resolute stand and our proclaimed intention to unban ANC and PAC caused the RSA [Republic of South Africa] President to fly down to Umtata on 11 January 1990 to express concern over the unilateral decisions we have taken."[237] In 1992, as new waves of violence engulfed South Africa, Holomisa released to the media what became known as the 'Holomisa Files,' a collection of documents and recordings proving the connivance of top ministers and generals in the apartheid regime in ordering the murders of dozens of activists, most famously the killing of Matthew Goniwe and three others in the Eastern Cape province, who became known as the 'Cradock Four' (Mkhondo 1993, 74).[238]

Holomisa was undoubtedly prescient in anticipating the reforms that

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[236] The South African History Archives (SAHA), William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97), from the AL2878 (The Freedom of Information Programme Collection), consulted in December 2009.

[237] "Office of the Military Council Transkei: Umkhonto We Sizwe Conference, 9 August 1991- Message from the Transkei Government by Major General H. B. Holomisa, Chairman of the Military Council, Republic of Transkei," SAHA Archives

[238] The names of the other activists murdered on the night of June 27, 1985 are Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkonto, and Sicelo Mhlawuli. Rich Mkhondo reports: "Goniwe's body had 27 stab and bullet wounds and his face was burned beyond recognition… Black communities were convinced Goniwe and his colleagues were killed because of their role in the formation of the street and area committees in defiance of apartheid structures in the Eastern Cape. The day of Goniwe's funeral was the day on which then President P. W. Botha declared the first State of Emergency" (Mkhondo 1993, 74).

would inevitably result from South Africa's overtures to Mandela and the ANC. But his own precocious overtures to the liberation movements seem motivated as much by ideology as by his ability to foresee the changing political winds; after all, by openly embracing the ANC, he was exposing himself to an inevitable backlash by the apartheid regime, which eventually came in the form of a coup attempt. By the time of Holomisa's *abertura* of the late 1980s, Transkei was already a hotbed of ANC and MK activity. MK's priority in Transkei by the late 1980s- as in the rest of South Africa during this period- was to "eliminate" informers within its ranks; the increasingly free hand granted to MK by Holomisa facilitated this task, and MK forces killed askaris and collaborators in Mthatha and the neighbouring township of Ngangelizwe.[239]

Holomisa became extremely popular among his constituency by rallying with the ANC (after independence he founded his own political party, UDM, and became one of the few non-ANC leaders to win a provincial election). He joined Mandela, Tambo, and Chris Hani in a victory parade in the provincial capital, Mthatha, immediately after Mandela's release from prison, and openly provided the MK with a platform in Transkei. Transkei's importance became magnified in the context of the ANC-NP negotiations, since "[o]ne of the ANC's main sources of grievance was that it was unable to hold meetings and organize branches in the self-governing homelands, where de Klerk was busily building his anti-ANC alliance." (Sparks 1994, 147)

The Transkei Defense Forces' legitimacy among the local population grew in proportion to the regime's political openness and its increasing alignment with the ANC and MK. In his statement to the MK conference in Venda on 9 August

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[239] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

1991, Holomisa emphasized:

> The Transkei government has long embarked on amending and repealing
> security legislation to bring it into tune with current developments. This has
> facilitated the role of the security forces for they are no longer required to
> concern themselves with political matters. It is evident to everybody that
> our security forces are a shield against the eruption of trouble in political
> rallies and meetings; they go out of their way to ensure the safety of leaders
> and individuals alike at rallies. They are there to promote individual rights
> and maintain general law and order which is confined to bringing criminals
> and offenders to book.[240]

Holomisa clearly intended to contrast the mandate of his security forces
with that of the apartheid regime- and particularly its clandestine elements- when
he insisted that "in the political scene [the TDF's] role is very circumscribed: they
have to guard against selfish reactionaries who want to destroy the present order.
We do not cherish the prospect of employing them in the destabilization and
weakening of political rivals. We also abhor their use in the orchestration and
fomenting of violence among competing political parties and organizations."[241]
By 1990, on Holomisa's order, MK fighters in Transkei were even able to walk
freely in uniform carrying their trademark Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles- they
were officially defenders of the Transkei population. One former guerrilla
recalled that Transkeian locals were jubilant at the sight of MK soldiers openly
brandishing their Soviet-made weaponry.[242]

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[240] "Office of the Military Council Transkei: Umkhonto We Sizwe Conference, 9 August
1991- Message from the Transkei Government by Major General H. B. Holomisa,
Chairman of the Military Council, Republic of Transkei," SAHA Archives
[241] Ibid.
[242] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Peires (1992), and especially Southall (1992) employ a rigid, class-based analysis to account for the surge of popular support in favor of Holomisa from the middle classes previously loyal to Matanzima, "notably enthusiastic middle-class support for Holomisa at the time of the [attempted] Duli coup" (Southall 1992, 9). They explain the shift in middle class support from Matanzima to Holomisa by highlighting the latter's willingness to safeguard the middle classes' "material advantages" (Southall 1992, 9). Yet an ideological explanation is much more compelling: virtually the entire top ANC leadership hailed from Transkei, and the Congress was tremendously popular throughout Transkei's urban and rural areas, drawing a flood of ANC and MK recruits from all realms of society.[243]

Meanwhile, King Sabata's open declaration of allegiance to and solidarity with the ANC- cemented by his 1980 appearance at a press conference alongside OR Tambo- increased support for the ANC along Xhosa ethno-political lines. This set a powerful precedent for top-ranking chiefs, who mainly belonged to the Bantustan's tribal state apparatus (Peires 1992), to align themselves instead with the ANC. Perhaps most important was the asylum Holomisa granted to MK chief and Transkei native son Chris Hani in July-August 1990, after the South African government withdrew Hani's indemnity from prosecution; Holomisa thus benefited from Hani's immense popularity. Therefore, an alternative explanation to the orthodox Marxist analysis of this shift in middle class support from Matanzima towards Holomisa, is that once Holomisa displayed pro-ANC leanings, Transkeian masses and middle classes alike rallied to his side.

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[243] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

Cold War's End and Transkei's Increasing Strategic Importance to MK

As Holomisa cemented his pro-ANC leanings and the State ramped up its counterinsurgency operations after the onset of negotiations, Transkei took on increasing importance as the main strategic base for MK operations, and as the key to MK's legitimacy and effectiveness. This bore important legacies for contemporary SA politics. General Holomisa's favorable disposition towards the ANC and its armed wing created a situation unique in South African history, in which MK fighters, rather than being forced to live and operate undercover, could instead openly operate as defenders of their community.

Although it is undoubtedly true that Umkhonto we Sizwe "never sustained" a "serious challenge to the armed forces of the apartheid state" overall (McKinley 1997, 77), its operations in Transkei persistently harassed the state and challenged its hegemony. Indeed, South Africa mounted elaborate commando strikes against ANC/MK headquarters in Lesotho on two occasions, in 1982 and 1985 to target the infrastructure that enabled the group to infiltrate its cadres into Transkei and South Africa proper. MK's leadership in Transkei was also more watertight than its counterparts in Swaziland: one ex-guerrilla emphasized that the main reason MK guerrillas operating from Transkei were more successful at evading capture than those in Swaziland was because SADF MI had infiltrated Swazi MK's top leadership, who would betray guerrillas as they embarked on their missions.[244]

Despite MK's dislocation and strategic impotence in the wake of its expulsion from Angola, operations to infiltrate South Africa continued. In this regard, MK operations in Swaziland, Lesotho, and Transkei took on increasing

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[244] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

importance. The Transkei operations were the closest thing MK had to an "internal" underground, in the sense that Transkei was situated in the heart of South African territory and enabled MK guerrillas to infiltrate far more easily than they could across South Africa's external borders. MK's foothold in Transkei represented one of the rare instances where the ANC's armed wing achieved its objective of "the setting up of autonomous administration in areas which are under our control or where the enemy, for one reason or another, has forfeited control. This is part of [MK's] training."[245] The Nieuwoudt documents showed that the SADF still regarded the ANC and PAC as a military enemy after 1990, revealing that by mid-1991 the SADF regarded their key threat as the militants in the ANC and PAC who were gathering under Hani and Holomisa in the Transkei. In 1990, Pretoria also dispatched a delegation to Mthatha to raise its concern over the safe harbor that ANC and MK enjoyed on Transkeian territory.

Counterinsurgency and Resistance in Transkei: The November 1990 Coup Attempt on Holomisa

The 1990 coup attempt on Holomisa's Transkei was an important turning point for the counterinsurgency campaign that followed. As the New York Times reported at the time:

> A band of white and black rebel army troops mounted a coup attempt today in Transkei, a black homeland, and 17 people were reported killed in the fighting with loyalist forces. The military ruler, Maj. Gen. Bantu Holomisa, said at a rally late today in Transkei's capital, Umtata, that the coup attempt had been put down, the independent South African Press Association

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[245] SAHA document, MK and the Future," p.3

reported. General Holomisa said the leader of the uprising, Craig Duli, a former Holomisa aide, was dead, the agency said.

-"Black Homeland Reports Uprising," *New York Times*, November 23, 1990

The apartheid regime grew increasingly infuriated with Holomisa's pro-ANC leanings, and in particular with his sheltering of MK commander and South African Communist Party (SACP) leader Chris Hani, who coordinated MK operations from Transkei. But despite its indignation, South Africa now became trapped by its own rhetoric about Bantustan independence; with the whole world watching after Mandela's release from prison, the apartheid government was forced to respect Transkei's sovereignty, and could not so easily impose the military solution it wanted. Meanwhile, the unbanning of the ANC and PAC and the lifting of the State of Emergency that had conferred sweeping powers of arrest and detention to the security forces, meant that the SADF's counterinsurgency forces now had to resort to clandestine operations to weaken and destabilize the liberation forces. The Bantustans became the lynchpin of this strategy.

Among the apartheid security forces' feverish activities during this period- activity copiously documented in testimonies by security forces personnel to the TRC- was a desperate attempt in November 1990 to overthrow Holomisa in a coup d'etat. The apartheid forces had already moved to install a regime sympathetic to its interests in neighboring Ciskei, the better to provide a platform for attacking Transkei; to this end, it toppled Ciskei President Lennox Sebe and installed in his stead Brigadier Oupa Gqozo on 4 March 1990.[246] The regime's primary aim in seeking to topple Holomisa was to uproot the MK formations that

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[246] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)

had established themselves in Transkei, underscoring the extent to which the SADF, backed by elements within the State's political echelons, had come to regard the ANC's guerrilla army as a threat. To maintain plausible deniability about its involvement, SADF deployed a force consisting of TDF collaborators along with mercenaries from the defunct Lesotho Liberation Army (itself created in the 1970s by the apartheid regime to destabilize Lesotho) under the command of Chief of TDF Military Intelligence Col. Craig Duli, a SADF MI agent.[247] The LLA had been commanded by a Lesotho national recruited by SADF MI, Mtsumogehle, who "used a base here supported by apartheid, a terrorist organization" to launch destabilizing attacks against the pro-ANC Lesotho government. "Others were ex-SADF," explained an MK veteran who participated in the fighting.

A favorite South African counterinsurgency strategy was the setting up of front "companies which appeared to have no connection to the South African government but which were in fact controlled by one or another covert unit" (Ellis 1998, 279). Just as South Africa had sought to outsource apartheid by creating the Bantustans, so did it outsource its dirty war to clandestine, ostensibly civilian units that afforded the state "plausible deniability." Of these, one of the most notorious was the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB), responsible for killing many anti-apartheid activists (Mkhondo 1993).

Within months of CCB's July 1990 disbanding after its activities were revealed by the state-appointed Harms Commission, SADF MI set up International Researchers-Ciskei intelligence Services (IR-CIS) as a "consulting" company in Ciskei, whose strategic importance to the SADF lay in its shared

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[247] Ibid.

border with Transkei. Although SADF MI controlled IR-CIS, funding for the front company, "from an unknowing Ciskei government- was completely separate from the SADF."[248] SADF MI promptly took over all security-related aspects of Ciskei's governance, installing Cmdt. Anton Nieuwoudt as a senior intelligence advisor to strongman Oupa Gqozo, himself allegedly on SADF MI's payroll.[249] The archival sources note the "immediate and perfect harmony between the Nieuwoudt's organization and the [South African] Security Police and other" death squad "elements," as well as his "uncanny ability to deploy SADF forces at very short notice without the request being formulated by the Chief of the [Ciskei Defence Force]."[250]

A report at the South African History Archives from a special session of the Truth and Reconciliation commission details the arrest on 9 April 1990 of 25 men in Queenstown, South Africa where they were planning a coup attempt in Transkei. They were convicted in a Port Elizabeth court and sentenced to six years in prison for illegal possession of a vast quantity of arms, yet, "in an extraordinary step, were released on bail pending the outcome of the appeal after the Queenstown security police assured the court they would watch over the accused."[251] While they were out on bail they amassed another arms cache and planned the coup attempt. Duli now approached Gqozo for support, while Nieuwoudt and notorious death squad leader Eugene De Kock- the two were "understood to have close links"- busied themselves preparing for the coup.[252] On November 22, 1990, the coup plotters attempted to seize Holomisa's offices in

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[248] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid.
[251] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[252] Ibid.

Mthatha's Botha Sicgau administrative complex, but were repulsed by combined MK and TDF forces. Craig Duli and his bodyguard Boetie Davis were killed, while the poorly-trained LLA forces, according to an MK soldier who took part in the fighting, were "butchered like hell."[253] The coup targeted Mthatha, the capital, aiming to seize radio and television stations and other key buildings in order to quickly unseat Holomisa. MK fighters, who were far better trained and more highly motivated than the TDF, were instrumental in repulsing the mercenaries.

One former MK guerrilla who helped to beat back the coup attempt recalled: "At the time I was training, jogging at the [Mthatha] stadium. So I saw soldiers running, then I became alarmed. I asked what is happening. They said, oh, they are shooting, it's a coup!" According to him, "there wasn't advance intelligence about it," because although the MK leadership "knew something was going to happen," the attempt came without any prior coordination from within the TDF, "so it was like an invasion, like a raid." Although certain elements within TDF initially rallied to the invaders' side, prompt action by the ANC guerrillas soon turned the tide: "they became afraid when they saw us MK with our [RPG-7] grenade launchers, [laughs], because they didn't have such arsenals in their base, so when we took from our [arms caches], some, it was their first time seeing AK-47, so they thought, Hey! [whistles] AK! It can kill us all! Then they just became disillusioned about joining those bastards."[254]

In the confusion and shooting, many of the poorly-trained TDF soldiers lost their nerve, only to be brought back onside by the disciplined MK fighters: "some were running, some were hiding, stripping their uniforms, but when they saw us, they came back." MK guerrillas on the scene also convinced their TDF

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[253] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[254] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

counterparts not to defect by explaining the political context of the violence, "boosting their morale against and explaining that the coup is not a progressive one, it's Boers, so they can't now join such a thing. That era had passed!" After the coup attempt was thwarted, MK fighters immediately launched "a cordon and search" operation aimed at "uprooting all bad elements within," only to find that all the attackers had already been captured or killed. To obscure the apartheid regime's hand, the attackers "used guns captured from ANC guerrillas, AK-47s-even the grenades were F-1s from Russia."[255]

According to this former guerrilla, it was imperative to quash the attempted coup before nightfall, since SADF forces were massed at entry points along the Transkei border waiting to invade under the pretext of restoring order.[256] The SADF had a call-up in nearby East London "planned some months earlier, for the four days starting on November 22," indicating that the coup attempt was planned well in advance and that the SADF had been "geared to intervene.'[44] Documentary evidence shows that SADF MI clandestine operatives based near Transkei were very upset when it became clear that South African forces were not going to intervene after all on behalf of the ill-fated coup plotters, further indicating that such an intervention had been agreed upon and planned beforehand.[257]

Assisted by the ANC, Holomisa's Transkei government organized a mass rally in Mthatha as a show of popular support for the Holomisa government and in protest of the attempted coup. As one ex-guerrilla explained, "the masses were told to come in numbers and demonstrate against the coup."[258] Tens of thousands

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[255] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[256] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[257] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[258] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

strong, this rally was intended to deter any SADF intervention in support of the coup plotters by demonstrating that any such move would be met with mass popular unrest, which would bring negative international publicity to the apartheid regime of a magnitude that it could not risk incurring.[259] This hastily organized rally following the defeat of the initial incursion was consistent with MK's emphasis on seeking political solutions to apartheid aggression wherever possible instead of military ones, and avoided a much bloodier scenario, as one former guerrilla explained: "it was going to be a long battle. Us digging in, attacking again as guerrillas. It was going to be a mess, so we had to stop it [i.e., the SADF intervention] before they came."[260]

MK chief Chris Hani had been in Johannesburg at the time of the coup, and the MK regional commander in Transkei called Hani to tell him to stay away from Transkei until the conflagration had died down.[261] The apartheid regime was thwarted, as MK fighters, familiar with the terrain and highly aware of the political stakes hanging in the balance, inflicted heavy losses on the mercenary force. This unique historical event gives us a window onto MK fighters' commitment and skill as defenders of African communities- in this case, the Transkei population- under circumstances in which they had the opportunity and institutional backing to openly defend those communities' security interests. Indeed, one former MK guerrilla insisted that the coup attempt was ultimately intended to target MK formations in the Transkei- "they wanted MK, at the end of the day"- and that toppling Holomisa was merely the opening move.[262] This is borne out by archival documents indicating that MK formations operating in

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[259] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[260] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[261] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[262] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Transkei became the South African defense establishment's chief priority from 1989 onward, as illustrated by this statement from around mid-1990 from SADF MI Commandant Anton Nieuwoudt:

> The main target, and it was very clear at this time, was the Transkei, you must understand that the ANC had begun to return from exile and many of the agents had come back to the [Republic of South Africa], and they had begun to group together with the PAC in the Transkei, and what concerned the intelligence community the most at that stage was the militants, a militant wing, come let's call it by its name, the militant ANC's and the militant PAC's which grouped together under Chris Hani together with Holomisa, and this matter was discussed at the highest level, it was a great worry, because they expected trouble from that grouping in the Transkei."[263]

Like other apartheid covert operators whose dirty deeds were eventually unmasked, Nieuwoudt here insists that the problem of MK forces gathering alongside PAC "militants" in the Transkei "was discussed at the highest level," suggesting that the de Klerk administration was aware of these operations.[264]

Aftermath of the Coup Attempt

In a television broadcast on the day of the apartheid regime's own version of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, 23 November 1990, South African Foreign Minister Roelof 'Pik' Botha described Holomisa as "the African National Congress's strongest supporter in the whole of Africa" (Peires 1992, 366). This televised

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[263] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[264] According to the SAHA archives, in April 1995, the South African Police finally admitted that the Duli coup plotters had used weapons supplied by the SADF. The SADF declined to say how the weapons got in the hands of the attackers.

statement was clearly coordinated with the coup attempt and seems intended as an explanation for why the South African government saw fit to endorse it. Without overtly claiming responsibility for the coup attempt, the apartheid regime thus acknowledged that it was prepared to reap the benefits of the attempted coup should it have succeeded, while preserving the ambiguity of plausible deniability.

According to archival documents, on 23 August 1991 the South African Police "admitted they knew of the planned military takeover of Transkei. This follows an admission by the Department of Foreign Affairs that they knew of the existence of the plans."[265] Holomisa emphasized that he had not been warned of the plans. The archival sources indicate: "When Hani's indemnity was temporarily withdrawn in 1991, he fled to Transkei and stayed there as Holomisa's guest. This intensified SADF fears that Transkei was being used as a haven for guerrilla activity, and made it even more crucial for the SADF to maintain control of Ciskei."[266]

Secret documents uncovered in February 1995 reveal that "by mid-1991 the SADF regarded their key threat as the militants in the ANC and PAC who were gathering under Hani and Holomisa in the Transkei," and had deployed an elaborate counterinsurgency program to subvert them.[267] Attacks on ANC targets in Ciskei, meanwhile prompted the South African Communist Party to claim: "there was a well coordinated plan to weaken the ANC in the region."[268] Thereafter, SADF MI maintained contingency plans to kill Holomisa and Hani in Transkei using surrogate forces. According to one plan for April 25, 1991, outlined in top secret documents uncovered by journalists on 9 August 1991,

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[265] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[266] Ibid.
[267] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[268] Ibid.

ongoing plots to overthrow Holomisa by South African Military Intelligence

"allegedly involved the assassination of Bantu Holomisa and MK's Chris Hani

and suggested the possibility of a coup using SADF. Some initial planning took

place in Gqozo's office."[269] The plan called for Holomisa and Hani to be

assassinated by the Transkei Group, consisting of Kaiser Matanzima and his

loyalists, who were under the protection and guidance of SADF MI.

Following the assassinations, the SADF would immediately be deployed

in Transkei. "This would take place under the pretext that they had been asked to

maintain law and order and search for MK bases. They would have further

justified their presence by spreading disinformation about planned attacks on

civilians by MK soldiers. They would also suggest that MK intended [on]

disrupting talks between the ANC and government by attacking civilians."[270] The

SADF would supervise the TDF while a take-over by the "Transkei Group"

surrogate forces was in progress, and the askari Vulindlela Mbotoli would

succeed Holomisa. In preparation for this, the askari Nkosekhaya Gobingca was

given the task of collecting intelligence, "and ordered to confirm the exact

location of MK bases in Transkei and the presence of any sophisticated weapons

that might have been brought in."[271] MK forces assisted by the TDF thwarted this

plot by kidnapping Mbotoli from South African territory and bringing him to

Transkei, where he was tried and imprisoned.[272] In 1993, 17 people were tried and

convicted in Transkei for their role in the attempted 1990 coup.[273]

If authorizing the reburial of King Sabata had improved Holomisa's image

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[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] South African History Archives, Section A2.4.1.7 (TRC gunrunning 1974-97)
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid.

in Transkei, the coup attempt greatly boosted his popularity, as "he was regarded as having stood up to the [South African] government, which was widely regarded in Transkei as having been behind the coup attempt.[274] In a move calculated to boost the image of the much-hated Brigadier Gqozo in Ciskei, IR-CIS apparently engineered a "coup attempt" on Gqozo and its "subsequent 'putting down'" in the hopes that this might boost Gqozo's image with the Ciskeian population- a ploy which "failed dismally."[275] Indeed, as alleged by the Chief of Ciskei Defense Forces (CDF) Military Intelligence Col. Gerrie Hugo after he "fled to Transkei and spoke out about IR-CIS" activities there, "Nieuwoudt had total control over Gqozo" and claimed that "as [IR-CIS]'s existence depended on the existence of threats against Gqozo, the unit actively fabricated evidence of threats" emanating from "both the ANC and from within Transkei."[276]

As SADF MI planned further strikes against Holomisa and drew up a hit list of ANC members in Ciskei, the CDF underwent a military buildup of unprecedented proportions, including the creation of a paratroop battalion commanded by SADF Special Forces veteran Jan Breytenbach, whose only possible purpose was to strike at Transkei.[277] SADF MI later funded a political party created by Gqozo, the "African Democratic Movement," whose members clashed frequently with the ANC in the run-up to the April 1994 elections. Gqozo eventually contested the elections via ADM, but did not gain a single seat.[278] Like many SADF MI operations during the period approaching the elections, this raises

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[274] Ibid.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Ibid.
[277] SAHA Transkei
[278] SAHA Transkei

the question of whether and to what extent these counterinsurgency initiatives may have continued into the new post-authoritarian dispensation.

The record of SADF MI counterinsurgency operations in Transei and Ciskei is crucially important in terms of laying the groundwork for the widespread popular distrust of the security apparatus. But less known is the durability of these policies with respect to the weakened and generally illegitimate nature of contemporary security forces. Indeed, SADF MI activities during this period reveal that even as top-level negotiations unfolded with the ANC, the apartheid security forces devoted great resources to strike covertly at the ANC's leadership and security capacities, using Bantustan "sovereignty" to add another layer of plausible deniability. In August 1991, South African Director-General of Foreign Affairs Neil van Heerden emphasized that there was no connection between the SADF and IR-CIS, saying that "chief of the SADF Kat Liebenberg would have told Brig. Gqozo to disband the unit as it was an embarrassment, 'because there are continued allegations that a connection exists and I can assure you no connection exists.'"[279]

Note that the SADF had planned to justify its hunt for MK forces in Transkei under the pretext that the Transkeian government had asked it to maintain law order; the fig-leaf of Bantustan sovereignty remained essential to the SADF's counterinsurgency strategy. It is also ironic that that the SADF had planned to spread disinformation claiming that MK had been planning to attack civilian targets, considering that MK eschewed non-military targets, whereas indiscriminate killing was the apartheid regime's hallmark. However, the greatest irony revealed in these archival documents is the SADF's claim, prepared in order

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[279] SAHA

to cover its planned coup, alleging that MK had intended to disrupt ANC-government negotiations. This reveals the regime's attempt to drive a wedge between MK and the ANC by portraying the guerrilla wing as extremists more radical than the political leadership, whereas in reality MK subordinated itself to the command of the ANC's political echelons, and took very few initiatives without their authorization.

Of course, SADF counterinsurgency's core aim was to weaken the ANC as much as possible, and its "Third Force" massacres would push the nation to the brink of the abyss more than once during the course of negotiations. Should the negotiations between the ANC and the National Party have ultimately failed, Transkei would undoubtedly become even more strategically important to both the ANC and the PAC, especially if open hostilities had resumed; the regime would have then redoubled its efforts to topple Holomisa and eradicate MK from its Transkei strongholds. Ntsebeza offers the following interpretation of the calculus behind South Africa's attempts at effecting regime change in Transkei:

> De Klerk and his ministers and generals knew that Transkei would be assured of a seat in any negotiations about the future dispensation for South Africa. As long as Holomisa represented the homeland, this vital element would be allied to the ANC. If the leadership of the Transkei changed, the ANC could hardly object to the presence of a Transkei delegation, even if the new leader decided not to support the liberation movement (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003, 200).

Ultimately, the homelands played only a marginal role in the transition, as the ANC was able to concentrate power at the negotiating table away from the

Bantustans. Transkei had become a thorn in the apartheid regime's side, assuring the ANC a safe base of operations and an electoral powerbase even as the National Party sought frantically to discredit the ANC among black voters, soon to be given the franchise for the first time. But it is interesting that, unlike many authors (e.g., Ellis 1998, Klopp and Zuern 2007), Ntsebeza does not buy de Klerk's plea of ignorance about the violent machinations of the counterinsurgency elements in his government and security forces during South Africa's transition. SADF MI Commandant Nieuwoudt's secret statement quoted above reinforces this thesis. Instead, Ntsebeza holds de Klerk accountable for much of the violence and assumes that the orders to unleash it continued to come from the very top, as they had throughout apartheid's history.

The archival documents mention that the "the SA security police were unhappy about the plans because of the timing of the coup and the effect it might have on president FW de Klerk in his dealings with the ANC"; combined with Mbotoli's abduction, this "ended the coup plans."[280] This is consistent with the literature on violence during negotiated transitions (Sparks 1994; Klopp and Zuern 2007), which holds that as the political terrain shifted towards compromise, the government sought to exert more direct control over its military and intelligence services, discouraging such adventurism. However, another equally compelling explanation is that the MK forces entrenched both alongside and within the TDF had already successfully repulsed one coup attempt, and, with their weaponry and training, were formidable enough to deter any others. As SADF intelligence officers themselves indicated, after the onset of negotiations in 1990 MK formations in Transkei became the SADF counterinsurgency program's top

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[280] SAHA Archives

priority. Although South Africa had originally created the Bantustans as a periphery to which the apartheid regime could displace its most pernicious racist effects, Transkei ultimately came to lie at the heart of the regime's counterinsurgency strategy, as MK used Transkei's favorable political climate to capitalize on its popular legitimacy and challenge apartheid hegemony.

Transkei as a Haven for MK During the Transition Years, 1990-94

Although the ANC's armed wing had scored a rare battlefield success in Transkei against the apartheid war machine, the top ANC leadership had virtually no reaction to the attempted coup. The Congress's top decision makers regarded the Bantustans as illegitimate creatures of apartheid and were ambivalent about the sincerity and value of Holomisa's pro-ANC overtures, even as he gave Chris Hani a safe haven after Hani's indemnity from prosecution had been withdrawn in South Africa. This can be attributed to two factors: first, that after having renounced armed struggle in August 1990, the ANC was reluctant to derive political capital from its military success, and would have been especially loath to jeopardize Western support in this regard. A second, far more controversial explanation, is that apartheid intelligence recruitment among senior ANC members might have contributed to marginalizing Hani, which is corroborated by the evidence (discussed in Chapter 3) that the regime had conspired with elements within the ANC to this end.[281]

After thwarting the coup attempt, MK continued to thrive in Transkei up until the eve of the transition to democracy and the dissolution of the Bantustans.

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[281] Trewhela (1991) alludes to this, alleging that during the transition MK was polarized into one faction in and around Johannesburg under Joe Modise's command and a second faction in Transkei led by Hani. This is especially interesting in light of the archival documents suggesting that Modise had been recruited by SADF MI.

For his part, Holomisa played an active role in envisioning MK's role during and after the transition, as evidenced by his address, titled "The Role of the Homelands and Their Armies in the Transitional Period and Future South Africa," delivered to the Umkhonto we Sizwe Conference on 9 August 1991 in Venda.[282] At the conference, Holomisa downplayed the very strong ties his regime had developed with MK, denying that Transkei was "integrating MK soldiers into the TDF," and insisting that the "co-operation" between MK and TDF "is confined to giving our permission to these cadres to protect their leaders when they visit Transkei."[283] Nonetheless, during this period MK forces became ever more closely alloyed to the TDF, to the point where the ANC's armed wing took command of the TDF Special Forces base at Port St. John's on the Indian Ocean coast, an hour's drive from Mthatha. A former MK guerrilla recounted that Chris Hani had given "the orders to go and join with the Transkeian Defense Force," and that the camp was renamed Chris Hani Camp in the former MK chief's honor after his 1993 assassination.[284]

MK had infiltrated the camp years before the onset of negotiations, and during that era "there were even some officers from TDF who [were sent abroad] for training under the wing of the ANC, MK. So there was that underground long before. But it was not known to the intelligence of South Africa."[285] Although it was the conventional army of an independent state, the TDF did not compare to MK's guerrilla formations in terms of training and professionalism. The TDF supplied MK with "another wing" of its camp "to open up to train locals, ANC

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[282] SAHA Archives MK
[283] Document titled "Umkhonto we Sizwe Conference, 9 August 1991," a series of speeches by Bantu Holomisa in the period before and during the conference. SAHA MK
[284] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[285] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

members." The curriculum included "instilling discipline, instilling perseverance, to have patriotism and love for the country, for the masses, for the elders, and to show them the military tactics. It was a crash course but we [also] did a commando's course."[286] The former MK guerrilla recalled Hani visiting the Port St. John's camp for an inspection: "Chris was saluting, some soldiers from our unit were marching there." Hani's killing came just before "he was going to visit the camp for a march-past parade," which was planned as an elaborate show of force for the ANC's armed wing.

The apartheid regime eventually "sent their people infiltrating" at the base, which MK discovered when "we were doing intelligence work within them, screening them. Because we had information that Boers wanted to attack there and they had people inside there."[287] We didn't trust first some from TDF, so we had to start cleaning within our formations. We uprooted about five of them, they confessed," but rather than take punitive measures against them, MK sought to rehabilitate these recruits who were young and "had no experience, so we had to mobilize them now for the good, to show them the right direction."[288]

Anticipating the imminent transition, MK sought to train as many guerrillas as possible at the base, eventually turning out several hundred trainees in "three of four groups," a handful of whom "went to integration, some were absorbed as captains" in the new armed forces. "So we were very proud because we produced very disciplined units from Port St. Johns." By this point, the SADF was watching the MK base intently and was fully aware of the activities there: "No, they knew. They knew. But we were armed to defend, so they didn't want

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[286] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[287] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[288] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

any problems, because [an attack] was not going to be sanctioned at the top [i.e., by the South African government]."[289] It is particularly noteworthy that MK continued to train and expand its forces even as the peace negotiations advanced; in the absence of any divergent political agenda between the ANC elites and MK the main purpose of this military activity was to prepare MK for integration into South Africa's post-transition security forces.

The foothold MK managed to secure in Holomisa's Transkei, to the point of developing a fully operational military base there, is the closest the ANC's armed wing ever came to liberating a portion of South African territory. The unprecedented freedom MK enjoyed under Holomisa to operate and parade openly under the nose of the SADF is a testament to the movement's ability and readiness to assume power in a free South Africa. Yet it was not to be; in contrast to the power that MK enjoyed during this period, the very liberation of South Africa for which they had sacrificed so much brought only marginalization and disarray to MK fighters.

As the apartheid regime dismantled the legal barriers to ANC mobilization in South Africa proper, the Bantustan puppet rulers- with the exception of Transkei's Holomisa- clung steadfastly to power, prohibiting mass organization. Bophuthatswana's Lucas Mangope proved particularly intractable in his rejection of national elections and the dissolution of the Bantustans (Sparks 1994). Thus when the ANC, under the leadership of former MK intelligence chief Ronnie Kasrils, staged a rally in the Ciskei capital of Bisho with the aim of marching on dictator Oupa Gqozo's presidential palace, they were met by withering fire from the Ciskei Defense Force- "with their white officers seconded from South

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[289] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Africa's Military Intelligence"- killing 28 marchers and wounding over 200 (Sparks 1994, 149). Holomisa had warned of precisely such an outcome in his address at the 25 January 1991 Conference on Constituent Assembly: "We have also to be wary of South African security personnel seconded to certain Homelands who might be inclined to encourage police behavior similar to the one that has led to the Sebokeng killings."[290]

The Bantustans that still remained opposed to the ANC's rise to power- which meant all the Bantustans except Transkei- soon became the lynchpin for extreme right-wing Afrikaners, including several within the South African military, under the leadership of retired SADF Gen. Constand Viljoen. These rejectionists sought to forge an alliance with the Bantustan leaders, chief among them Ciskei's Gqozo and Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana, to resist the transition by force, if necessary (Sparks 1994). The final attempt by a coalition of right-wing white extremists to thwart the transition from authoritarianism occurred at the 1994 'Battle of Bop' (Bophuthatswana), where the AWB (*Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweeging*- 'Afrikaner Resistance') and allied racist militias sought to form an alliance with strongman Lucas Mangope, who adamantly clung to power in the face of the negotiated transition (Sparks 1994). This odd alliance ultimately fell apart when the Bophuthatswana Defense Force mutinied against Mangope, but it further illustrates the strategic centrality of the seemingly peripheral Bantustans to the violent power struggles leading up to the transition. At the last minute the coalition collapsed and the right-wingers stood down, enabling the peaceful elections of April 1994, the ANC's rise to power, and the re-absorption of the Bantustans into South Africa.

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[290] Document titled "Umkhonto we Sizwe Conference, 9 August 1991," a series of speeches by Bantu Holomisa in the period before and during the conference. SAHA MK

MK as Defenders and the 'Killing of the APLA 4'

In April 1994, as South Africans gathered to vote in the country's first-ever free and fair elections, MK cadres became involved in a shootout with four guerrillas from APLA at a polling station near Port St. Johns. Although the PAC had finally withdrawn its opposition to negotiations a month before the election was scheduled to take place, some members of its armed wing remained bitterly opposed to the negotiated transition, and engaged in classic 'spoiler' behavior aimed at derailing the transition. In this case, the four APLA guerrillas were terrorizing voters in a last-ditch attempt to disrupt the elections, when the local ANC office put out an urgent call for MK to provide security. An MK team hurried to the scene and, bringing their superior training to bear, killed all 4 APLA extremists in a shootout.[291] This incident further underscores MK cadres' discipline in responding to guidance from the political leadership, and in providing security to South African citizens during the emergence of their fledgling democracy.

Urban Unrest and Youth Violence: Comparing Transkei and South Africa

One key distinction between the Transkei Bantustan and South Africa proper during the struggle years was the near-total absence of youth rioting in Transkei. In "mainland" South Africa, the 1976 Soweto uprisings and the government's brutal reaction to them triggered a wave of youth uprisings

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[291] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009; details of the shootout are also found in the newspaper coverage of the MK veterans' appeal to the TRC for amnesty for the shooting: "Killing of Apla 4 Recounted: Amnesty Sought for Shootout at Voter Training," *Daily Dispatch*, Thursday November 4, 1999, p.9

throughout the country, which were met by harsh police responses. Even as South Africa was aflame, the Bantustans remained generally quiet by comparison. Several interviewees explained that this was due to the airtight repression maintained by Matanzima's regime, deterring any youth demonstrations. Therefore, there was virtually no youth unrest in Transkei throughout the 1980s, unlike the strikes and protests that swept South Africa, and there were hardly any labor strikes- or labor unions- either. Matanzima was harsher and could afford to be more repressive against his own people than the white regime could because there was no international spotlight on him. His regime embodied the colonial outsourcing of repression and violence; indeed the Bantustans' very purpose was to outsource punitive policing against large segments of the African population.

The momentum generated by the Soweto uprising carried on into the 1980s, as youth increasingly prioritized political struggle, generating the slogan "liberation before education." This protest energy gave birth to the United Democratic Front (UDF), created in August 1983. The UDF was essentially the grassroots counterpart to the ANC; while the ANC coordinated the struggle from exile, the more decentralized UDF coordinated the day-to-day uprising inside South Africa while remaining closely aligned with the ANC. Out of the UDF arose militant elements that sought to identify and expose police informers within African communities, and to provide policing of a kind within these beleaguered and besieged communities in the midst of raging political violence. It was these militants that tarnished the image of the anti-apartheid struggle in the 1980s through their deployment of increasingly indiscriminate violence in the black townships, including the brutal 'necklacing' tactic used against suspected police informers (see Chapter 2).

As part of their mission in the 1980s to assist the struggle from the inside, MK trained UDF members in crash courses that included basic intelligence and weaponry tactics. This training was sufficient to prepare these ad hoc units for their limited role amidst the chaos of the struggle years; they were also trained to gather intelligence for MK guerillas to use in their operations, but unlike MK fighters, were not trained to undertake the guerilla operations. This point is important because it clearly distinguishes between the relatively unruly tendencies of some UDF militants, and the MK operations in South Africa during the struggle days. Some scholars (e.g., Bozzoli 2004; Jeffery 2009) have pointed to necklacing and other acts of "black on black' violence as proof that the anti-apartheid resistance was so chaotic and unwieldy as to share with the apartheid regime a large portion of the blame for the bloodshed of that era.

Not only must UDF violence be put in its proper context, but it is critical to draw a clear distinction between that violence, such as it was, and the actions of MK in South Africa during that period. The UDF was absent from Transkei, where there was hardly any youth militancy; nor, after 1990, did Self-Defense Units (SDU) arise in Transkei (archival sources also note that "the arming of SDUs... appears to have been quite limited in the Eastern Cape[292]"). This did not mean that Transkei youth were less involved in the anti-apartheid struggle than the youth in "mainland" South Africa. Indeed, though they seldom risked open protest under the Matanzima regime's iron fist, Transkei youth by the thousands fled to exile to join MK- the ultimate badge of commitment to political struggle. In the context of post-transition policing, this fact is particularly relevant because it underscores the relative lack of chaotic violence before the transition. Yet

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[292] SAHA Archives

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Mthatha and the former Transkei are today plagued by similar chronic insecurity as other parts of South Africa that were awash with political violence before and during the transition. This leads us away from the "culture of ungovernability" explanation for South Africa's chronic post-transition urban violence, and towards explanations based in the security sector.

The Transkei Region, Violence, and the Security Sector in the New South Africa

After the 1994 transition, in which Holomisa peacefully relinquished power, the new ANC government redrew the South African provincial boundaries to phase out the Bantustans, and Transkei and Ciskei were incorporated into the Eastern Cape Province. The ANC government completely dismantled the Bantustan administrative structures, and the provincial capital was moved from Mthatha, the region's largest city and once a bustling hub, to the former Ciskeian capital of Bisho. Mthatha has since slid into disrepair and remains mired in poverty and plagued by high levels of crime and urban violence. The police in the Eastern Cape province are known to be among the "most corrupt in South Africa."[293] Meanwhile, as in much of the rest of South Africa, the most reputable and reliable security forces are not the South African Police Service (SAPS, successor to the brutal SAP), but private security companies (PSCs). In Mthatha, the two largest and most successful PSCs are both managed and staffed by MK veterans. Their expertise derives largely from their training as guerrillas, and though MK had not originally trained its soldiers for policing tasks, it nonetheless far exceeds the level of training in the new SAPS.

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[293] Confidential interview with private security employee, Mthatha, November 2009

The dynamic between private and public security sector officers in Mthatha is a microcosm of the broader dynamic in South Africa, where private security personnel outnumber police by a ratio of 4 to 1 (Steinberg 2008). The commodification and privatization of security in South Africa, along with many other essential services, combined with the SAPS's lack of resources or professionalism, has meant that most South Africans have turned to private solutions for the chronic violence that pervades both urban and rural areas. Whereas many poorer communities in much of South Africa rely mainly on vigilantes for security (Buur 2004; Oomen 2004; Hansen 2006), in Mthatha the most trusted and professional security providers are PSCs run and staffed by former MK guerrillas. And whereas police and municipal Public Security Department officials alike treated former guerrillas and their private security companies with deference, the ex-guerrillas had little respect for their public sector counterparts, and seemed resigned to fill the near-vacuum in security left by the latter's ineffectiveness.

Formerly the capital of the Bantustan of Transkei, Mthatha is today the Eastern Cape's third-largest city after East London and Port Elizabeth, with 600,000-800,000 people. The city's general condition has experienced a decline commensurate with its loss of regional status. If Johannesburg, Pretoria, or Cape Town can be said to showcase South Africa's shocking disparity between rich and poor, more acute than in any other country on earth, Mthatha has little of the wealth found in South Africa's more cosmopolitan cities, and all of its poverty. In this sense, Mthatha is more reminiscent of other mid-sized cities in other sub-Saharan African countries, such as Chimoio in Mozambique or Arusha in Tanzania, than of bigger, wealthier South African urban centres. Urban decay is

widespread and instantly noticeable; main streets are fraught with potholes and cracks, while smaller streets are often clogged with litter and trickles of waste. Most street corners have traffic light, but few of them actually work, their bulbs often smashed in; this contributes to frequent traffic jams, accidents, and a general sense of chaos. Mthatha is emblematic of South Africa's urban-rural connection, surrounded as it is by communities whose livelihoods are drawn from a combination of local pastoralism and agriculture, cottage industries, and urban remittances.

Mthatha and its suburbs compose the Oliver Reginald Tambo municipality, which is in turn subsumed by the larger King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) Municipality, encompassing a constellation of rural areas in a radius around the city. Mthatha's population and economy are more representative of and integrated into its surrounding rural areas than Port Elizabeth or East London, and its population is more uniformly African. Only a handful of Indians, Coloreds, or whites reside there. Situated in the heart of historical Thembuland, Mthatha's African community is composed almost uniformly of people from the Xhosa ethno-linguistic group. Only 40 kilometres from the city centre lies the seat of the abaThembu kingdom, one of only a handful of kingdoms across South Africa to be formally recognized by the government as having historic legitimacy. The region's humble economic status belies its importance as one of the historical centres of gravity in South African politics: the KSD municipality and its environs have birthed many key national leaders.

Crime and Security in Mthatha

During my stay in Mthatha I was privileged to attend a City Hall meeting of the Committee on Public Safety, which gathered representatives from various community sectors together with members of the police and Department of Public Safety. As I waited for everyone to gather, I was struck by the condition of Mthatha's City Hall. The building appeared to be about a century old, featuring rich wood moldings and paneling of a bygone era. The front door had an elaborate stained-glass window with a coat of arms and an English inscription about the "District of Thembooland". But although the ceiling and walls maintained their lavish beauty, the floor was splintered and bleached by time, the last of its varnish long gone. I would be reminded of this contrast repeatedly as I saw the differences between the state, provincial, and municipal initiatives to curb crime, and the lack of real impact this made on Mthatha's streets.

One Public Security Department employee explained how criminals "take chances," trying to exploit urban mismanagement.[294] He outlined the interconnection between petty crime and organized crime, as informal traders on Mthatha's streets received no small business funding and therefore relied on cheaper stolen goods, supplied by criminal gangs. As in the rest of South Africa, crime in Mthatha includes numerous armed robberies of homes, businesses, and pedestrians., bank robberies, cash-in-transit heists, and carjackings, albeit with fewer murders than in urban metropolises such as Johannesburg or Durban. Targeted violence against both public and private security officers, commonplace in other parts of South Africa, is less intense in Mthatha, as one PSC officer said:

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[294] Author's interview with Mr. Fikile Hintsa, KSD Municipality Department of Public Security, December 2009

"You can drive around in uniform in Mthatha without a gun, In Jo'burg you would need a gun and a bullet-proof vest."[295]

Several municipal officials and ANC party members in Mthatha emphasized that locally and nationally, the high unemployment rate causes people to join crime syndicates to make a living, as poverty is rife throughout the Eastern Cape Province and much of the country, and remains the primary factor driving crime today.[296] According to one public security employee, the post-apartheid government system seeks to be "proactive" through launching "crime prevention instead of crime combating."[297] This has accompanied the shift in "policing style," which "has changed from autocratic and bureaucratic- now the police force works more with the community," such that "police-community relations have improved."[298]

Many of the weapons in the Eastern Cape province and throughout South Africa originate from the apartheid era, from MK's arms caches, TDF armories, and especially from the flood of guns the regime brought into African communities for counterinsurgency purposes. "In 1994 an official investigation found that only 3514 of 5634 firearms issued to police stations in the former homeland of Transkei could be accounted for. The missing 2120 firearms included R4 rifles and various handguns" (Cock 1997, 136). Archival documents reveal the continuity between weapons smuggled into the region by CCB, IR-CIS, and other counterinsurgency units during the years 1990-94 and ongoing arms smuggling operations in the region post-1994. The front companies set up by the

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[295] Confidential interview with PSC agent, December 2009
[296] Author's interview with Mr. Ngcukayitobi, African National Congress regional official, December 2009
[297] Ibid.
[298] Author's interview with Fikile Hintsa, KSD Municipality Public Security Department, Mthatha, December 2009

regime to facilitate covert infiltration and obscure its role in the violence made it that much more difficult to trace the flow of these weapons. Many of these arms were supplied to vigilantes such as the ADM activists in Ciskei who targeted the ANC, many of whom seamlessly turned to criminality post-transition.[299]

Meanwhile, several taxi and bus companies had employees "with known links to covert operations" who used their vehicles to smuggle weapons.[300] According to one former guerrilla, the taxi violence that swept much of South Africa during the late 1990s and early 2000s, in which rival taxi companies competing for routes attacked each other's staff and passengers, had its roots in Third Force violence, killing 20-30 people in Mthatha (and hundreds more elsewhere) at its height.[301] SADF MI had also set up several security companies that doubled as hit squads, trafficked in weapons, and had access to state armories, especially in Ciskei where they "protected" strongman Gqozo. An array of weaponry also went missing from various South African military armories before and after the April 1994 election, many of which were never found.[302]

The Private Security Sector Perspective on Mthatha's Security Crisis

In an audience with the chief of public safety for the KSD municipality, he told me, unprompted, that the municipality's top priority was to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras throughout the city. When I related this to a high-ranking employee of a local private security company and former MK guerrilla, he told me it was patently untrue. Pointing out the general decay of Mthatha's urban environment, he said that the city had no money for such hi-tech

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[299] SAHA Archives
[300] SAHA Archives
[301] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[302] SAHA Archives

endeavours (he claimed that the department of public security had only two pick-up trucks- "bakkies", in South African parlance- at its disposal, "I've seen them- one red and one white"), and that it made no sense to install CCTV when rudimentary repairs on sidewalks and traffic lights went unperformed.[303] He maintained that resources would be better-spent installing parking meters to collect the revenue that could fund such projects in the future. According to this security officer, the municipal security chief probably exaggerated to me during our interview because he imagined my true purpose was to assess Mthatha's security readiness in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Several private security officers emphasized that police statistics in South Africa are notorious for being unreliable, not only because of crimes that go unreported but also because of deliberate obfuscations by police, who may wish to give the impression of doing a good job by underreporting actual crime rates, or may alternatively attempt to draw more resources to their precinct by overreporting crime.[304] One academic at Mthatha's Walter Sisulu University emphasized the extremely low public regard for the police force in the Eastern Cape Province and Mthatha, where the police themselves are frequently involved in crime.[305] By contrast, both the populace and criminals themselves hold the PSC officers in high regard, as "criminals know we're former freedom fighters and we know how to shoot."[306] One PSC officer explained that police in the Eastern Cape are notoriously corrupt, and more so than in other provinces: "We bring in a thief, then we see him walking the streets a few days later- it's bribery."[307] According to

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[303] Confidential interview with private security company employee, December 2009
[304] Confidential interview with private security company employees, December 2009
[305] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko, Mthatha, 13 December 2009
[306] Confidential interview with private security company employee, December 2009
[307] Confidential interview with private security company employee, December 2009

this agent, the scale of police corruption ranges from petty bribery all the way up to much grander schemes. The same agent explained that police are often involved in arms trafficking: "they confiscate guns, then sell them."[308]

Another PSC agent and former guerrilla corroborated this after being approached during our interview by a plainclothes policeman who approached him in his office during our interview trying to sell confiscated marijuana to make a side profit. After the policeman left, the PSC agent explained the quandary between not wanting to foster such corruption among police, and also wanting to avoid alienating them. The PSC agent then related an experience he had some years earlier: "I remember, two years, three years ago [a police officer] who came with a rifle, selling it, you know? I refused, but after refusing I said, Aaagh, he's going to sell it to another one, and that one is going to kill somebody. I should have taken that gun and destroyed it." The agent went on to explain the broader infrastructural shortcomings that contributed to this problem, "because you don't have even places whereby you can report this and it can be treated with full respect and [confidentiality]. No, it will just go back to him, because [the police and criminals are] a syndicate."[309]

Other such anecdotes further punctured the thin veneer of professionalism that the SAP sought to maintain in Mthatha: One PSC agent described finding a police officer in his car drunk and bleeding in the middle of the night, having been beaten by 2 men he was trying to arrest, who stole his service revolver. Even though it was one of their own, the police took an hour to arrive on the scene. The PSC agent said this was typical of the police, who "are always late to a crime scene," and will occasionally call in a PSC for backup assistance.

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[308] Confidential interview with PSC agent, December 2009
[309] Confidential interview with PSC agent, December 2009

In one of the rare black South African perspectives on policing available in print, Mkhondo emphasized in 1993: "The police force that uncovered sophisticated political operations in the past, and acted with precision and speed when the victims were either white farmers or white policemen, could not display this level of efficiency when the victims were black" (Mkhondo 1993, 80). This dynamic persists even today- and even in contexts like Mthatha where the overwhelming majority of police officers are African. One private security officer related to me an incident in which, driving the Mthatha streets by night, he and his men noticed a robbery in progress and apprehended, cornered, and disarmed the five robbers. They promptly called the police to take charge of the situation. As they waited for the police to arrive, a crowd gathered and began to beat the criminals, upon which the PSC officer called the police and told them that a white person had been attacked. The police arrived on the scene with unusual speed and demanded to know where the white victim was, whereupon the security officer informed the police that he had told them the victim was white because "I just wanted to see them move quickly."[310]

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the history of the ANC's armed wing in the Bantustan of Transkei, focusing on its expansion and entrenchment during the Holomisa regime's tenure from 1988-94. It emphasizes the importance of this unique historical case in affording us an example of MK's ability to safeguard the local population in a time of political violence and uncertainty against the schemes and depredations of the apartheid regime. MK's role in repelling the

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[310] Confidential interview with PSC agent, December 2009

attempted coup on Holomisa, engineered and executed by apartheid counterinsurgency forces, is particularly important in this regard.

The chapter also analyzes the apartheid regime's growing focus on Transkei during this period as a target for intensified counterinsurgency operations. It then provides a case study of Mthatha, formerly the capital of Transkei, which is today plagued by violence and chronic insecurity, like much of the rest of South Africa. This chapter highlights the South African Police's incompetence and overall inability to meet this challenge, and contrasts it with the role of former MK guerrillas, shunted aside by the state at the time of South Africa's transition from apartheid and largely excluded from the new security forces. These former guerrillas today work in private security companies and are the most effective security providers in Mthatha. To this day, their legitimacy and effectiveness both derive largely from their status and experience as former MK guerrillas.

CHAPTER FIVE

<u>Counterinsurgency and the Marginalization of Umkhonto we Sizwe in South Africa's "New" Security Institutions</u>

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the legacies of the apartheid regime's counterinsurgency campaign to suppress the MK insurgency laid important legacies for contemporary South African politics. Among the most notable legacy was the durable impact that the conflict between state and society under Apartheid has had in terms of the evolution of security and law and order institutions which, taken together, are crucial components of state legitimacy and democratic consolidation over time. Consequently, building on the preceding chapters, this chapter sheds new light on South Africa's security sector reform process during its transition from authoritarianism to democracy.

I argue that far from being marginal, security sector institutions have played an important role in South African state-society relations both during and following the transition. In particular, I show that the legacy of apartheid counterinsurgency had three important outcomes that impacted state level politics: these include the marginalization of MK cadres during the transition negations; the increasingly tense relations between the ANC and the MK; and the increasing compromises that the ANC leadership ceded to the National Party with respect to the issue of law and order institutions. This ultimately created a security sector rife with corruption and distrusted by a large swath of South Africans in civil society.

Drawing extensively on interviews with former MK guerrillas and on statements and policy papers issued by the ANC and MK during the transition era,

this chapter demonstrates that MK had a clearly articulated vision of a security sector reform process that aimed to thoroughly transform South Africa's military, police, and intelligence services into democratic institutions that would serve the oppressed masses. The very detailed and politically sophisticated processes described in these ANC and MK documents, and also by individual MK cadres in both written articles and interviews, belie the image of MK perpetuated by the apartheid regime as an organization both radical and primitive, unequipped to take charge of state security institutions. Instead, my research portrays the ANC's armed wing as a tightly organized group whose "80% political, 20% military" doctrine primed it for the complex challenges of security sector reform.

Yet Umkhonto we Sizwe was ultimately marginalized during South Africa's SSR process- "out, last in everything," in the words of one former guerilla commander.[311] Two interrelated factors contributed to this marginalization: First, the apartheid security forces made it a top priority to preserve their authoritarian hegemony throughout the security sector reform process. They achieved this by recruiting ANC and MK leadership as collaborators, and by using their superior military resources to repress MK guerrillas who assembled in good faith at the SADF bases designated as assembly and cantonment points. Second, MK cadres were marginalized within the ANC itself by the Congress's own leadership, which, after relinquishing the armed struggle at an early stage in negotiations, largely abdicated command and control over its underground structures, despite the dangers this created of a backlash from disgruntled cadres.[312] This cut off tens of thousands of MK fighters from the pacting process in the midst of the 1990-94

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[311] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

[312] In confidential interviews, several ex-guerrillas described the ANC elites' relinquishing of command and control over MK.

escalation of political violence, during which apartheid counterinsurgency forces relentlessly attacked and infiltrated ANC constituencies throughout the country. This included the full range of combatants aligned with the ANC, from seasoned MK combatants to the increasingly numerous SDU members who were being trained and mobilized with minimal oversight from ANC leadership in order to protect besieged African communities from Third Force violence (Gear 2002b).

These politically and militarily radical elements were also those with whom the South African masses identified most closely, embodied by their lionization of MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani. The MK leadership expected the ANC to retain its armed wing as an insurance policy should the negotiations become derailed and the entire country slide back to violence; their astonishment upon learning that the ANC had renounced armed struggle in the opening round of negotiations is well-documented (e.g., Smith and Tromp 2009). Battle-ready and poised to safeguard the ANC's political gains, the MK cadres were instead largely sidelined and kept in the dark about the negotiations between the ANC's top leadership and the National Party.

The negotiations between the ANC and NP included a "sunset clause" that preserved important segments of the apartheid military and police as a form of 'side payment' to ensure institutional stability and to avert the possibility of a rebellion or coup attempt by these large, well-armed formations. However, as highlighted in the previous chapter, the elaborate and increasingly sinister factor of apartheid intelligence recruitment played a role in negotiations between ANC and NP elites that previous scholarship has not revealed or analyzed. During South Africa's security sector reform process, these counterinsurgency strategies created hidden dangers for MK cadres, and bore a more malignant impact on the

transition and its aftermath than did the sunset clause's provisions for institutional continuity.

Out of this grew a culture of arrogance on the part of white SADF personnel towards integrated cadres in SANDF in which former cadres "felt discriminated against" (Mashike 2008). Institutional racism has pervaded the military, triggering numerous complaints by black personnel and several violent incidents. As one South African academic explained: "in the army, resisting change was a way of resisting transformation," and the "exclusion of black people" was rampant "in all sectors" of the new state, "including the military." This has included widespread "persecution of black officers within the army."[313] One South African academic insisted "that we are still having problems of Third Force, there's a Third Force that is really emerging, and as a result, some MK veterans and members were excluded, and deliberately so. Because there are people who are really still against transformation."[314] Although the sunset clause most directly impacted the security forces during the first ten years of the transition, these were also the most critical years in terms of the potential to transform these forces. By the time the sunset clause expired a decade later, ex-guerrillas who would have considered a career in the security forces had already been forced to look elsewhere, and were that much less likely to change paths and join security institutions whose culture had, at a critical historical juncture, remained essentially unchanged.

Integration and Marginalization in the 'New' Security Forces

By ensuring continuity within the security forces into the democratic era, I

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[313] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko and Mr. Sonamzi, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, South Africa, 8 December 2009
[314] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko and Mr. Sonamzi, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, South Africa, 8 December 2009

argue that the apartheid security force elites left an authoritarian imprint on the new security institutions that contributed to chronic post-transition violence and insecurity. Moreover, this legacy has obstructed what most analysts would describe as an unconsolidated democratic transition in the country. Personnel within these security institutions have maintained channels of corruption and violent, racist attitudes into the new era.[315] Meanwhile, most MK veterans have faced exclusion from both the security forces they aimed to transform and from the ANC they had served in the democratic South Africa they fought to liberate.

The official numbers at integration into the new SANDF comprised 85,000 SADF troops, 17,000 MK and 6,000 APLA guerrillas, a handful of guerrillas from the tiny Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA, the armed wing of the Black Consciousness movement), plus 11,000 soldiers from the Bantustan armies (Gear 2002b). Gear defines demobilization in the South African context as "the specific process of discharging former MK and APLA cadres either because they did not meet the requirements for integration into the SANDF, or because they did not wish to follow a career" in the security forces (2002, 40b). Under the supervision of the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) assisting with the transition, the ex-guerrillas who wanted to join the new forces had to take a compulsory written exam, which many of them failed to pass; SADF soldiers, conversely, did not undergo any screening (Gear 2002a). One ex-guerrilla who was integrated into the post-transition security forces insisted that a lack of formal schooling disadvantaged many of the inductees from the liberation forces: "[comrades at integration] were de-ranked, given lower ranks, all those things. And you must understand something- these people left the

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[315] Confidential interviews with ex-combatants, November-December 2009; see also Mashike (2008).

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country not educated, not even having matric."[316] Yet a variety of respondents to an earlier study reported inconsistencies and lapses in the administration and processing of the exams, giving rise to their suspicions that the screening process was rigged by the old SADF (Gear 2002a, 23-4).

As mentioned above, the negotiations between the ANC and the apartheid regime saw the marginalization of certain factions within the ANC, and Umkhonto we Sizwe in particular. Many MK cadres received Mandela's renunciation of armed struggle as a *fait accompli* decision that surprised and disoriented its fighters. Ultimately, the SANDF that emerged from the transitional negotiations reflected the apartheid regime's position of relative power: MK and APLA cadres were merely integrated into the SADF's pre-existing structures, causing "considerable resentment among the non-statutory forces, as rank-and-file cadres were not party to the decisions and compromises made at the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) and by their military commanders in the bi-lateral negotiations between SADF and MK" (Gear 2002, 41).

MK's marginalization must also be considered in the broader context of neoliberalism's triumph over socialist redistributionist ideology during South Africa's transition, while MK was the repository and the guardian of the ANC's redistributionist ideology as embodied in the 1955 Freedom Charter. MK's exclusion from the transition process and the post-transition security forces is both a symptom of the path charted by ANC and NP elites in their negotiations, and a cause for the weak state security institutions, rampant urban violence, and chronic insecurity that followed the transition.

The ANC had nonetheless identified the security forces as key bastions of

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[316] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

apartheid institutional power that would require transformation in order to eradicate authoritarian tendencies. In its seminal 1992 "Ready to Govern" policy statement, the ANC emphasized: "The challenge is to address not only the security institutions and their composition, but also to go deeper and address the very nature of security policy itself. The basic principles underpinning such a policy should be based on and cover a realistic assessment of threats to: peace; territorial integrity; and personal security."[317]

Yet the apartheid regime succeeded in controlling the SSR process in ways that not only inhibited the transformation of the institutions themselves, but also persisted in defining how the new regime related to both domestic and external security, with extremely far-reaching impacts. This lack of transformation stands in stark contrast to a well-articulated vision, within both the ANC in general and MK in particular, of the post-transition security landscape.

Two ready counterarguments present themselves: first, that allowing the regime to control security sector reform was simply the "entrance fee" the ANC had to pay for a peaceful transition. The second counterargument is that the apartheid regime held the military upper hand, and could plunge the country into bloodshed at any time if its leadership was dissatisfied with the course of negotiations. National Party elites also worried at the time that the apartheid military- a powerful, highly organized force unto itself whose generals were habituated to wielding great influence in the corridors of national power- could perform a coup d'état if the generals felt that their own government was selling them out (Sparks 1994; Ellis 1998). Yet in paying this "entrance fee" to pass through the gateway of political power, the ANC relinquished not only the key

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[317] "Ready to Govern," SAHA Archives

aspects of its revolutionary political and economic platforms, but also its claim to representing important mass constituencies whose interests and voices it formerly represented.

Ultimately, the ANC's calculus in its compromise on security sector reform may have stemmed from its fear of the apartheid forces' propensity for violence, as reflected in an MK policy document during the transition: "we need to ask ourselves whether it would not create a greater danger for a future South Africa if we had a lot of unrehabilitated racist ex-servicemen roaming around idle and demoralized."[318] This raises the point that although Third Force violence ultimately undermined the National Party's bargaining stance vis-à-vis the ANC, it may have strengthened the security forces' position in the transition by giving it leverage. Hence the "need to understand that the question of the SADF is not being addressed in terms of the needs of a free and democratic South Africa," but rather affords "the enemy" an ability to "influence the rate at which the country is moving."[319]

The SADF, outmaneuvered politically but undefeated in battle, largely dictated the terms of security sector reform, limiting the number of cadres that could be integrated. Faced with this reality, the ANC seemingly preferred to marginalize the majority of its own combatants, rather than face the prospect of demobilizing and setting loose tens of thousands of unemployed disgruntled former apartheid soldiers. The testimony of one former MK veteran who joined the post-transition security forces is telling in this regard, suggesting that MK's high level of discipline was instrumental in preventing its members from splintering off into rejectionist factions during and after the transition: "That's

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[318] "MK and the Future," p.7, SAHA Archives
[319] "MK and the Future," p.7, SAHA Archives

why you don't have rebellion here, all those things. Because we understood what we are fighting for. And then the barrel of the gun [during the struggle was] led by the politics. You first understand what you are fighting for, we must liberate our country."[320]

The Evolution of the ANC's Elite/Mass Dynamics and MK's Marginalization

As far back as the ANC's 1969 Morogoro conference, the main line of cleavage between the ANC's elites and its rank-and-file, particularly the MK cadres, was discord over the movement's commitment to armed struggle (see Chapter 2). This remained the main cleavage line within the movement until its transition to power. After the transition disenchantment among cadres about the ANC's political trajectory turned to widespread bitterness about their socio-economic marginalization.

At the onset of transition, an MK document published several months after Mandela's release from prison emphasized that "objective conditions, though ruling out an immediate infliction of all-round defeat on the enemy, suggests the seizure of power and this brings MK to the centre."[321] Noting that MK's "problems are more administrative than operational," the document continued: "We have to boldly admit that had it not been for maladministration and improper coordination between our structures we would have been much further." This author noted the disconnect between MK's high levels of motivation and capabilities on the one hand, and the inconsistent and seemingly neglectful political leadership guiding its operations, on the other.[322] McKinley also notes

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[320] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[321] "MK and the Future," p.2
[322] "MK and the Future," p.6

that although MK made important gains in the late 1980s during Operation Vula, infiltrating the country "to rejuvenate organizational and military connections between MK and internal activists" it nevertheless remains "questionable what commitment the externalized ANC leadership had to utilize those gains" (1997, 82).

Although many cadres were caught off-guard by the onset of elite-level negotiations with the apartheid regime, MK cadres remained loyal to their political leadership virtually across the board. The ANC's remarkable political unity withstood the tremendous stresses of the negotiated transition, and the dramatic escalation in violence that accompanied it. As African communities throughout the country came under siege, instances of violent excesses by armed units loyal to the ANC, especially the less-disciplined SDUs, inevitably arose (Mkhondo 1993). Yet overall, MK discipline held fast, and despite any discord that existed between ANC elites and MK, no political or military factions splintered away.

There was nevertheless variation within MK in terms of cadres' attitudes towards compromise with the regime. In his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela recounts visiting 25 MK political prisoners during the negotiations to try to persuade them to accept the government's offer of amnesty and leave Robben Island. These guerrillas

…maintained that they would leave only after victory on the battlefield, not the negotiating table. They were fiercely opposed to this particular settlement, in which they had to enumerate their crimes before receiving indemnity. They accused the ANC of retreating from the Harare Declaration demand for an unconditional, blanket amnesty covering political prisoners and exiles…. I could sympathize with their arguments, but they were being

unrealistic. Every soldier would like to defeat his enemy on the field, but in this case, such a victory was out of reach. The struggle was now at the negotiating table. I argued that they were not advancing the cause by remaining in jail. They could be of greater service outside than inside. In the end, they agreed to accept the government's offer (1994, 506-7).

McKinley (1997) also records some MK cadres' surprise and outrage at the ANC's elites' decision to negotiate without consulting the rank-and-file. Conversely, the sense of marginalization and disillusionment with the ANC among the MK cadres I interviewed did not stem from any desire to maintain the armed struggle after negotiations began; Rather, it arose from the ANC's disbanding of MK, the lack of transformation in the security forces, and the socio-economic grievances among ex-guerrillas that the ANC has not adequately addressed. As one MK veteran recalled:

> just like all wars, it ended up at the table, that was normal, but the compromise is too much, you know? Because our people joined the army and they felt discriminated, so they opted out, so that's why I say the situation was not conducive. Even some of our leaders have told us that we are not up to [safeguarding the country], but our guys have been trained in big places, so what do you mean that we don't have soldiers good enough to take responsibility, so better the people from the previous regime, which we were fighting?[323]

As another ex-guerrilla described, even after the transition, MK veterans "got nothing to show that we are comrades. No recognition at all."[324] Several

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[323] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[324] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

other studies have noted widespread bitterness amongst former MK and APLA guerrillas rooted in their socio-economic marginalization, including many who resigned or were discharged from the new security forces because of pervasive racist attitudes (Gear 2002b; Mashike 2008).

MK's Armed Struggle and the Negotiated Transition's Class Dimensions

Scholar Somadoda Fikeni notes that "South Africa being a last comer," MK cadres "had seen the integration of forces in Zimbabwe, in Namibia, and so forth; then they realized that their conditions were worse off than those other forces. So to that extent they felt betrayed."[325] Indeed, an MK document from November 1990, contemplating MK's future role, notes: "we should have in mind the experiences of other countries which were faced with a similar situation, e.g. Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Nicaragua, Cuba, Vietnam"[326]; although there was variation in these countries' security sector reform processes, they all featured takeovers by socialist movements, an outcome that MK cadre had hoped to replicate in South Africa. By the late 1980s, as the ANC's top leadership negotiated the transition, the South African Communist Party (SACP) remained the ideological vanguard of the armed struggle. Thus in mid-1989, in its seventh congress, held in Havana, Cuba, the SACP reiterated its vision of "seizure of power": "Seizure of power will be a product of escalating and progressively merging mass political and military struggle with the likelihood of culminating in an insurrection" (cited in McKinley 1997, 98-9).

As one South African civil servant emphasized, the ANC was never a people's revolutionary party in the mode of communist African liberation

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[325] Author's personal interview, 20 December 2009
[326] "MK and the Future," p.1

movements such as Mozambique's FRELIMO or Angola's MPLA; instead, the ANC internalized class distinctions to a much greater degree, as did Kenya's KANU and Zimbabwe's ZANU. But if the ANC was a less staunchly revolutionary party, MK for its part was a revolutionary army. In terms of its demands for the total transformation of economic relations, MK was very closely allied to the SACP. Pointing to the ANC's embrace of the economic status quo as negotiations with the NP progressed, Taylor situates the ANC's "counterhegemonic" elements firmly within its socialist/communist camp, and notes: "that socialism was largely absent from the negotiations process and this disorientation suggests why counterhegemonic impulses were largely lacking from the ANC side in the transition process" (2001, 46).

These "counterhegemonic impulses" were precisely the socialist politics favored by the ANC's mass base and embodied by the MK's Marxist-Leninist liberation ideology, which justified the armed struggle on the basis of a revolutionary army fighting to defeat apartheid's bourgeois army. Thus can we understand the ANC's more radical elements as being simultaneously more socialist and more militant than the elites within the movement that negotiated the end of apartheid on the basis of shared economic priorities with South Africa's white elites.

The apartheid counterinsurgency program also sought to exploit the cleavages that arose within the ANC at the onset of negotiations. Here it is critical to recall that in the archival document in Chapter 3 that discusses SADF MI's prospective recruitment of Joe Modise and other high-ranking ANC military and intelligence officials. The document's author within SADF MI regarded his meeting with Modise and the others as a crucial step towards breaking the

backbone of what he refers to as the "SACP/Hani/Kasrils faction." This "faction," such as it was, was not opposed to the negotiations and did not seek to undermine them; rather, the SACP with Hani at the helm differed with the ANC negotiators especially on the issue of wealth redistribution, for which it was a staunch champion. This further underscores counterinsurgency's fundamental role as the safeguarding of corporate interests against popular resistance. As discussed in Chapter 3, SADF MI's apparently successful recruitment of ANC decisionmakers raises pointed questions about the extent of apartheid counterinsurgency's direct influence not only on the transition's outcome, but on the negotiations themselves.

Armed Struggle and Compromise: Guerrilla Visions of Security Sector Reform

> "On the question of integration, our army commander has stated that we are not proposing to join the SADF but there will be a need to create a brand new defense force. This seems like the most logical outcome of the current process of consultation with the enemy."[327]

At the onset of negotiations between the ANC and NP, a surge of anticipation rippled through MK about its role in safeguarding the ANC's gains, and in shaping South Africa's democratic security institutions. This is reflected in a variety of documents released from within MK ranks, including the proceedings of official MK conferences in 1991 and 1993, as well as in interviews with former MK cadres. Although some MK fighters were severely disillusioned by the onset

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[327] "MK and the Future," p.8

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of negotiations, which were the culmination of secret contacts between ANC and state elites that had been kept largely secret from the Congress's rank-and-file, most cadres had no illusions of being able to defeat the apartheid regime militarily. [328] Instead, they considered negotiations to be the logical culmination of the ANC's armed struggle, as opposed to an outright seizure of power.[329] MK commander Chris Hani himself was emphatic about the need to prepare the guerrillas to assume a central role in forging new state institutions: "we must tell our cadres that we must also improve their quality because as far as I'm concerned having fought for democracy they are going to be the core of a new South African army, a new South African security force, and they have got a duty to make our leaders negotiate… from a strong position."[330]

With its emphasis on keeping the country's infrastructure intact, and its reluctance to kill civilians, the ANC's strategy of armed struggle was calibrated to achieve a compromise with the regime[331] towards which MK "made a major contribution and sacrifice… by having steadfastly observed the ANC directive in terms of the agreements with the government to suspend armed operations."[332] Though it "was no easy decision," this restraint "was made possible due to the strong discipline of our cadres and their deep-seated commitment to peace, freedom, and the establishment of democracy in South Africa."[333] Yet despite

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[328] Many within the ANC- and especially MK cadres- were surprised to learn of the covert negotiations. McKinley writes that one MK cadre, "who felt that something was 'drastically wrong', described how the armed wing's leadership was 'summoned [by the political leadership]… and they told us there was no way the ANC would just go into talks. In 1988 the rumours surfaced again and we were again told that there would be no talks'" (*The Star*, 28 April 1991, cited in McKinley 1997, 87).
[329] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[330] "Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective" (SAHA)
[331] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, 20/12/2009
[332] "MK National Conference in Venda- Press Statement," 1991 (SAHA MK)
[333] ibid.

MK's disciplined restraint in the face of the Third Force's bloody, ongoing provocations, it remained marginalized during and after the negotiated transition, both by the regime and within the ANC itself.

MK's military code from its founding in 1960 stated: "When we have liberated our country, Umkhonto will constitute the basis of the defense forces of our country and the revolution."[334] Assessing the country's uncertain future and MK's role in it after the February 1990 Pretoria Minute, an MK document apparently written by a mid-level officer imagines "a successful insurrection… with lots of jubilation, a victorious parade of our combatants on APCs [armored personnel carriers] and Katyushas [mobile rocket launchers], ready to take up the position of a new defense force."[335] The MK officer himself then acknowledges that the start of negotiations had precluded this triumphant scenario, but he nonetheless emphasizes MK's readiness to assume control of a post-transition security force.

Another document from the transitional period, also written by an MK cadre, maintains: "MK sees itself as an important pillar in the struggle to set up in South Africa a non-racial democracy in a unitary state."[336] Once negotiations began, the armed wing's leadership wasted no time in planning for this: "Our army commander [Chris Hani] has recently emphasized the need to speedily build and convert MK into a regular army…. We have also seen comrades being sent for long term courses in the military academy."[337] MK also proved resilient in

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[334] The military code of Umkhonto we Sizwe, ANC document, cited in "MK and the Future" (SAHA MK)

[335] "MK and the Future," p.2

[336] "Military Forces During the Transition Period: Paper by Keith Mokoape," (SAHA)

[337] From a document of unknown authorship titled "MK and the Future," dated November 1990, p.1. The military academy in question was likely either in Zambia or at the MK base in Uganda, since by then MK's Angolan bases were closed and Gorbachev's USSR had ceased involvement in the region (Shubin 2008).

adjusting to the pressures of sudden political change, even as it dealt with the repatriation of its cadres from foreign bases in Angola, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia to South African soil, where virtually no infrastructure existed to receive them, and the regime continued to hunt them down. Documents from this period and interviews with former MK cadres highlight the dual imperatives of protecting African communities from Third Force violence, and preparing for impending security sector reform.

At the outset of negotiations, NP Defense Minister Magnus Malan repeatedly declared that guerrillas from the liberation movements did not qualify to join the South African security forces because of their technological inferiority and supposed lack of skill compared to the regime's forces.[338] Malan also "ruled out any possibility of an integration of SADF and MK," and "remarked dismissively in parliament: 'we are not on the road to using the army to keep employment off the streets.'"[339] In the later stages of the transition, apartheid security force elites justified guerrillas' exclusion from the new forces because of their ostensibly inadequate training and professionalism (Kynoch 1996). Yet even in the transition's early stages, MK elements had already noted that it was the SADF that lacked "proper political education in their training," insisting that the apartheid regime's brutal repression of the liberation movements disqualified them from participating in legitimate "post-liberation" security forces: "While the SADF may have the technology and the personnel, it has always been a tool for repression… All its personnel needs reeducation, others even rehabilitation before they can be considered as having a role to play in the defense of the future [South

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[338] "MK and the Future," p.8
[339] Laurie Nathan, "Article on the IDASA-ANC Conference on the "Future of Security and Defense in South Africa," May 23-27 1991, Lusaka (SAHA)

Africa]." One MK officer noted: "our training prepares us not only for the pre-liberation phase, but also the post phase."[340] Another insisted that according to statements and policy documents from the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM, which encompassed the UDF and various trade unions) during the transition phase, "MK has in fact been, and still is, the champion of a democratic order in South Africa."[341]

In keeping with MK's mass-based doctrine, a document contemplating MK's future emphasized that among all the factors requiring consideration during the security sector's transformation, "Above all, let us know what the prevailing mood is among our people on these issues. If we say that the masses are the key, then it is of great necessity that we move as one and any plans we make should be guided by the will of the people."[342] Yet under Mandela's guidance, the ANC's political leadership would soon discard this mass-based approach, and instead embrace a compromise with the apartheid regime that marginalized MK fighters and leadership. This gave free reign to the regime's still-intact security force elites to block reform in the military and police forces.

Elite-Mass Dynamics and MK's Marginalization within ANC

Though we have suspended armed activity; though our commitment to the search for peace is beyond question; it is precisely because of our keen awareness of the dangers inherent in the minority regime's determination to cling on to power that we dare not relax our vigilance and we dare not permit this MK to disintegrate or wither away. We are called upon, as the bulwark of the people's interests and their champion against oppression and

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[340] "MK and the Future," pp.2-7
[341] "Military Forces During the Transition Period: Paper by Keith Mokoape," (SAHA)
[342] "MK and the Future," p.9

repressive violence, to assist the masses in devising the appropriate
response to state-sponsored and vigilante violence.

- Nelson Mandela, addressing the MK conference in Venda, 9 August
1991[343]

The contrast could not be starker between the ANC's official statements
during the transition about MK's role in security sector reform and defending
black communities, on the one hand, and the actual steps the ANC took to
disempower MK, on the other. After the ANC unilaterally renounced armed
struggle on 6 August 1990, it maintained virtually no contact with and exercised
hardly any leadership over its armed wing. Although it was clear that the
apartheid counterinsurgency program remained intact and very much active
during the negotiations, the ANC's top decision makers had abdicated their
leadership over MK and remained divested from whatever successes MK fighters
were able to achieve. This pattern would repeat itself in mainland South Africa
when the ANC leadership refused to implement MK contingency plans to protect
ANC strongholds ringing Johannesburg and Pretoria that were beset by waves of
political violence: the MK fighters "had seen during negotiations the [Third
Force] killings in the township of Boipatong and they said, we could take up arms
and defend- they were stopped [by the ANC leadership]."[344]

The ANC's 1989 Harare Declaration had stipulated: "any suspension of the
armed struggle would have to come through a negotiated 'mutually binding cease-
fire'" (cited in McKinley 1997, 100). Yet in reality, as will be demonstrated
below, the ANC had unilaterally suspended armed struggle while the apartheid

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[343] "Address of Comrade President Nelson Mandela to the Conference of Umkhonto
weSizwe. Thohoyandou, Venda. 9th August 1991" (SAHA)
[344] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, December 2009

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regime's counterinsurgency forces and death squads continued to target MK cadres and ANC activists. Meanwhile, 'Third Force' violence was unleashed against ANC strongholds and black communities more generally. Suspending the armed struggle thus circumscribed MK's ability to defend black communities against this new wave of quasi-state violence. In much of the country, MK activity was limited mainly to training poorly armed, loosely organized Self-Defense Units instead of using their superior training and weaponry to defend black communities themselves. Chris Hani had anticipated ongoing regime violence when, on the eve of negotiations, he reiterated his vision of MK as a defender of the masses against regime depredations:

> The regime will have to give consideration to MK… MK is not there because the ANC is a banned organization. It is an answer to the violence of the regime. So I believe that the armed struggle will continue even if the ANC is unbanned. Because the regime will still use violence, the regime will still resort to its military and security forces… Do you think overnight now the regime will stop beating up the workers, shooting workers, dispersing demonstrations? Will it stop raiding homes? Will it stop using its security laws to ban and detain people?"[345]

In a pact signed in February 1991 at the D.F. Malan airport in Cape Town, known as the D. F. Malan Accord, the National Party and the ANC had agreed that Umkhonto we Sizwe need not be disbanded until South Africa's democratic transition was complete, and that in the interim, the NP would tolerate MK instead of regarding it as an illegal 'private army' (Sparks 1994, 131). In return,

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[345] "Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective" (SAHA)

MK would provide the government an inventory of the weaponry it possessed, which "would be placed under the joint control of a transitional authority once an interim government was formed" (Sparks 1994, 131). Yet despite agreements formalizing the National Party's recognition of MK, the regime continued to target ANC guerrillas until the very end of the transition.

As Third Force violence raged, an MK policy document noted the inevitability of apartheid attitudes enduring in the security forces; it emphasized that the ANC's and MK's inferior "bargaining power as influenced by our political and military strength, as well as other factors locally and internationally, tend to dictate" the terms of security sector reform.[346] Three months after Mandela's unilateral renunciation of armed struggle, the document noted the imbalance between the regime and the ANC on this front: "Our pronouncements on the future of the SADF have been more conciliatory than those of the enemy."[347] For his part, Chris Hani, who had relinquished the command of MK to replace the ailing Joe Slovo as head of the South African Communist Party, declared: "We must also teach cadres that there is a need to fight and talk, and if talks fail we must go back and fight. I think we must struggle very hard for our comrades not to feel that sitting down with the enemy is betrayal."[348]

In contrast to Northern Ireland and other cases of transition from armed opposition to unity between a rebel group and the state, the ANC relinquished armed struggle from the outset, instead of retaining it as leverage over the state, or as a strategy of last resort should negotiations go awry. In their negotiations with the National Party, ANC elites played the proverbial ace of armed struggle first,

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[346] "MK and the Future," p.4 (SAHA)
[347] Ibid.
[348] "Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective" (SAHA)

thereby weakening the ANC's ability to shape security institutions and other critical aspects of the transition.

The role that MK envisioned for itself in the transition was far more central and dynamic than the role the ANC ultimately gave it. MK members thus lost most of the contact and influence they had with the ANC leadership, while still being hunted actively by the apartheid police and military. MK cadres were involved in much of the fighting during the 1990-94 transition years, even as their operations were no longer sanctioned or coordinated from above. Gear writes: "while the ANC officially suspended its armed struggle, ANC-aligned Self-Defense Units (SDUs) and some MK members actively engaged the security forces and Inkatha supporters on the ground" (2002, 5). MK cadres also sought, "with varying degrees of success, to instill control and discipline among the [local] defense unit structures" (Gear 2002, 65).

The ANC did not have a firm plan from the outset for the deployment, demobilization, or integration of its armed cadres, and their fate was one over which Congress elites clearly ceded ground to the National Party. At its seminal July 1991 Durban conference, the ANC made four resolutions concerning MK: 1) it should remain combat ready; 2) "the ANC accepts full responsibility for cadres arrested and tried in the execution of their duties while defending the people"; 3) the ANC would establish and expand "MK structures at all levels including the opening of offices"; and 4) "The ANC would maintain and develop MK until a democratic constitution was adopted and a new defense force was created into which MK cadres would be integrated."[349] The Durban Resolution reflected the ANC's ambiguity over the future of MK, as the ANC affirmed that it had

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[349] "MK National Conference in Venda- Press Statement," 1991 (SAHA)

suspended armed activities, but had not renounced the armed struggle. Combat

readiness was still required, and no plan yet existed for security sector reform.

Even as the civil war intensified for another year after the conference, the ANC,

with Mandela at the helm, ultimately failed to follow through on all these

resolutions, and MK cadres were left to improvise their own responses to the

mounting violence and the challenge of security sector reform.

In "Ready to Govern," the comprehensive May 1992 document expressing

the ANC's vision for South Africa's democratic institutions, the Congress sought

to affirm MK's centrality. The section titled "Peace and Security" proclaimed:

"the South African security institutions themselves developed a racist, closed,

secretive, undemocratic structure lacking legitimacy in the eyes of the people. The

process of democratization underway in our country will not be complete without

addressing this problem." The ANC document then contrasted this with "[MK]-

the People's Army- [which] represented the cutting edge in the struggle for a non-

racial and democratic society. Viewed by the majority of South Africans as a

liberating force, its popular support was demonstrated at countless rallies,

marches, and demonstrations."[350]

At the 1993 MK conference in Kanyamazane, guerrillas decried "the

escalation of violence against our people and the fact that despite repeated

resolutions of various ANC and MK conferences, the crucial issue of self-defense

has generally been left to spontaneous, haphazard and uncoordinated initiatives of

our beleaguered communities."[351] This ongoing lack of armed protection for

African communities targeted by Third Force violence was primarily because the

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[350] "'Ready to Govern': ANC Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa, 28-31 May 1992" (SAHA)

[351] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane, From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA Archives).

ANC was unwilling to authorize MK to organize it. As late as 1993, then, MK was calling for "additional MK cadres" to "be employed on the full-time basis to work with SDUs in all major flashpoint areas," but the ANC provided no support for these endeavors. MK also resolved to remind the ANC "to accept full responsibility for cadres arrested and/or detained in the course of their activity in defense of the people."[352] This was plainly a call for the ANC to honor its commitments to MK made over two years earlier at the Durban Conference, underscoring the disconnect between the ANC's negotiators and MK, which was still struggling to protect African communities from state-sponsored violence.

Following its September 1993 national conference, MK released a press statement declaring: "we are confident MK will play a significant role in the process of leveling the political playing field. We are committed to the establishment of the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF)."[353] This demonstrated an acute awareness that the balance of military forces in South Africa both reflected and shaped the political 'playing field' on which the negotiations unfolded. An imbalance favoring the government security forces was the surest indication of the ANC's disadvantageous bargaining position, and ensured the marginalization of MK cadres and their agenda to transform the apartheid security forces. Emphasizing the state security forces' role in fomenting violence, MK called for the SADF to "be confined to barracks, while the SAP's task should be confined to fighting crime."[354]

At the 1993 conference, MK further called for the strengthening of its leadership through the creation of a military council, and called for more funds to

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[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Ibid.

"strengthen regional and zonal MK structures."[355] Thus despite the lack of

resources available to MK fighters returning from exile, and despite their

alienation from the ANC elite, MK strove tenaciously to remain organized and

responsive to South Africa's shifting political terrain. Its main goals were, in the

immediate term, to provide security for communities targeted by Third Force

violence, and in the longer term, to ensure the transformation of South Africa's

security institutions according to democratic ideals; in both these goals, it was to

prove extremely prescient in identifying key challenges to South Africa's

democratization.

In its "general resolutions,' the MK conference membership, "noting i)

that there are forces intent on derailing and sabotaging the negotiation process,"

and "ii) the increase of war talk and violence," further resolved "to urge our

leadership and negotiators to ensure that the negotiation process is speeded up,"

even while remaining "vigilant and combat ready."[356] There was also a sense of

urgency that MK would soon be bypassed by political developments in South

Africa even as its key priorities remained unresolved: "This conference is of

particular importance in that this may possibly be the last opportunity MK will

have to discuss these issues at a national level."[357] Indeed, MK fighters would

hold no further conferences *qua* MK, nor would they have another opportunity to

assemble or to make further policy recommendations.

Here it is critical to note that even as MK sought to address the security

shortcomings in the elite pacting process, it remained steadfastly loyal to the ANC

leadership, "reiterat[ing] its unequivocal support for the democratization process

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[355] Ibid.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Ibid.

and the ANC's participation in the negotiation process."[358] There was no hint, then or before, of challenging the ANC leadership's exclusive status as legitimate representatives of the anti-apartheid movement; nor did any extremist or breakaway faction arise within MK that questioned the legitimacy or value of the negotiations themselves. Instead, MK's discipline held, and even if they were alarmed at how the negotiations unfolded, many cadres viewed the onset of negotiations as the culmination of the ANC's multi-faceted anti-apartheid strategy, which included armed struggle.[359] Yet the ANC's top leadership would implement none of the resolutions adopted at this conference, and disbanded MK before the end of 1993; meanwhile, the security forces would remain bastions of authoritarianism and white supremacy, and South African communities remained plagued by violence and instability.

As the SDUs were "the only line of people's defense" for most African communities during the transition, MK evidently took seriously its role in ensuring that the ad-hoc SDUs abided by the same strict disciplinary standard instilled in its own cadres, finding that "where [SDUs] have been used for criminal, factional, or covert state activities this has resulted from our own failure to perform the necessary role in their creation and supervision."[360] Although MK's resources were stretched extremely thin, and although the ANC's top leadership only reluctantly authorized its armed wing to organize self-defense for communities loyal to the ANC, the guerrillas nevertheless took extremely seriously their mission to safeguard these communities.

Because of their marginalization within the framework of the transitional

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[358] Ibid.

[359] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

[360] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane [Venda], From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA Archives).

negotiations, MK cadres went from earlier pronouncements envisioning a prominent, even transformative role within the democratic security forces, to worrying increasingly about their own welfare and survival, "recognizing the serious resettlement and integration problems faced by thousands of returning exiles and MK cadres in terms of both psychological stress and disability as well as unemployment, homelessness, and destitution."[361] This was the exact opposite of the vision MK commander Chris Hani had articulated on the eve of the transition, when he emphasized that the ANC leadership would send cadres back into South Africa from exile "in an organized manner, [such that] when those cadres go back, they are already deployed, they have got tasks of our movement. They are deployed. We are not going back as returning refugees."[362] In contrast, one former MK commander described the widespread lack of resources and disorganization facing guerrillas who returned to South Africa from their bases in exile:

> When we reached the country, everyone went home, so integrating again, coming together again was not an easy thing. Even to brief each other, because there is this MKVA [MK Veterans' Association] but it's just for certain individuals who are corrupt, it's not reaching the rank and file down there. It was not easy to organize and to have one voice calling to be integrated into police [and military]. No one cared for us. The problem was that you woke up at your house, you don't know what you're going to eat. So it changes now, it becomes a survival issue for you. Because you must eat, you must sleep, you must drink, and maybe some with wives and kids. So if you waste your time going to ANC offices, asking for help, you become a

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[361] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane [Venda], From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA Archives).
[362] "Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective" (SAHA)

nuisance. So most comrades became disillusioned, their morale became very low. Some died as paupers.[363]

The former MK commander went on to describe the suicide of an ex-guerrilla following a domestic dispute: "Because a child was crying, the other one washing clothes, so the mother of the child started shouting at this fellow: you are sitting here, what what, where is this ANC of yours? You went to exile, now you are here I'm feeding you… And the other one said, you want to know, I'll show you. Went inside and hanged himself."[364] The local MK comrades had to pool all their money to pay for a proper burial, as no money was forthcoming from ANC channels "to bury cadres, especially one who hanged himself…. we buried him in a community hole. We had no place to bury him. The landlord refused permission to bury him in his yard."[365] ANC elites, meanwhile, had sufficient funds to live in relative comfort after their return to South Africa from exile. This underscores not only the deepening split between ANC elites and masses during this phase, but in particular, the ANC's squandering and neglect of its vanguard: MK cadres.

However, according to another ex-guerrilla, the ANC did its best to support its cadres, and provided employment for some; meanwhile, with the return of guerrillas from exile under the conditions of transition, he describes a degree of marginalization- or at least social alienation- as inevitable:

When we came back, I was working for the ANC. The ANC took care of us. But you see, I think the problem that we had, when you have been in the battlefield, post-war, the cadres have left their home, their youth [has been spent abroad], they have got this gap- they don't know money, their friends

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[363] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[364] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[365] ibid.

who were left behind are married, they've got children. You don't have anything. You left your parents' house, your sisters have their own children. Now you're the uncle that must sleep somewhere, get women for the comfort, all those things.[366]

This ex-guerrilla contrasted the lack of counseling available[367] to returning cadres with the bonds forged through shared adversity that have led ex-guerrillas to offer each other staunch mutual support and assistance: "That counseling, that was overlooked, and I can tell you even now, we as comrades, we love each other. We bury each other. When we are together among other people, we talk our own language. Because we understand where we're coming from." He depicted his relationship with the ANC as positive and ongoing: "I'm still a member of the ANC, and I love ANC, I participate in branches, I go to meetings…"[368] He insisted that, at least in some cases, the ANC had offered support to former MK cadres, and contrasted their needs with the enormous task of post-transition nation building:

The ANC provided, the government provided houses for our people [MK veterans], it has policies in place, adult education, whatever. But it's not going to be an easy thing. You see, when you are fighting a liberation war, now you take over the country, you are faced with other difficulties. Another phase of the struggle, I would say, fighting for the economy, to build the country.[369]

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[366] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[367] In her 2002 study "Wishing Us Away," Gear found counseling to be "the key variable" in determining the degree of recovery from trauma and reintegration into society for former SDU members from the Thokoza township, which was the site of some of the fiercest fighting during the 1990-94 violence (p.32).
[368] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[369] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

The ANC had pledged 10 million Rand as handouts for demobilized MK veterans, but set up virtually no infrastructure to allocate it properly, underscoring ANC elites' lack of preparedness to address the challenges facing its combatants.[370] Many ex-combatants never received their payouts (Gear 2002a), and for those who did, the handouts themselves evaporated quickly in the context of chronic destitution that faced black communities throughout South Africa.[371] They also underscored MK cadres' marginalization, as the ANC's top leadership made a perfunctory gesture to alleviate the poverty facing its combatants instead of enlisting them to help transform state security institutions.

Whereas after the struggle, a number of MK veterans came to "occupy prominent positions in both government and the corporate world" and to "play visible and fundamental roles in society," most ex-combatants from the liberation movements were relegated to obscurity following the struggle (Gear 2002b, 8). A coterie of ANC members have benefited extensively from the ANC's post-transition Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) initiative, which has allocated shares in top companies to a select black elite, catapulting them into conspicuous wealth while most black South Africans continue to chase the elusive dream of economic advancement. As one informant emphasized, "Tokyo Sexwale is a billionaire while others are suffering," referring to one of the most high-profile

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[370] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane [Venda], From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA).

[371] A flyer titled "Call to Umkhonto we Sizwe" issued "by the Army Chief of Staff on behalf of the MHQ [Military Headquarters] of Umkhonto we Sizwe" and dated 14/09/1993 emphasized: "We also want to consolidate our list of those comrades who are destitute in order to begin distribution of the R10,000,000 raised by our President and Commander in Chief, comrade Nelson Mandela, in accordance with the resolution of our recent MK Conference in Nelspruit. Those comrades who are in need of relief must also report to the Regional Commands without delay" (SAHA).

ex-guerrillas since the transition, who has profited fabulously from BEE.[372]

Integration or Marginalization? Cantonment and Apartheid

Counterinsurgency at the SADF Wallmansthal Base

In addition to the MK's marginalization in the transition process, and the ANC ceding on a number of fronts to the National Party, the manner in which MK guerrillas were repatriated and integrated directly contradicted an MK policy paper from 1991 envisaging the terms of this process: "it shall remain an empty unbanning if legislation is not enacted to allow those MK forces that are outside to come into the country in an organized manner with their command structures, weaponry, and equipment intact." The document emphasizes that "the means by which units of MK return to bases inside South Africa is one of the central problems facing us in the transition period," and with astonishing foresight declares that assembly points for demobilizing guerrillas such as had been set up a decade earlier in newly-independent Zimbabwe were not acceptable, since such points "rely on the presence of an outside monitoring force, isolate the guerrillas from the transition process, and leave them extremely vulnerable to attacks or polarized confrontations that could hinder or totally disrupt the transition period."[373] Transkei strongman and MK ally Maj. Gen. Holomisa echoed this perspective in his address to the MK conference in Venda on 9 August 1991: "our search for an acceptable political settlement differs radicallay [*sic*] from what we have witnessed in Zimbabwe and Namibia in which the military wings of the liberation movements were confined to bases. This is not the case in South

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[372] Confidential interview with former ANC activist, December 2009

[373] "Military Forces During the Transition Period: Paper by Keith Mokoape," p.5, from SAHA Archives

Africa."[374]

In its resolution on integration into the new security forces at its September 1993 Kanyamazane conference, MK resolved: "ranking must take place as soon as possible, taking into consideration training, experience, and years of service." Predicting the dangerous conditions that awaited MK cadres at the assembly and cantonment points where they were to be demobilized, the resolution insisted: "ANC negotiators should ensure total security for MK members when they get to the assembly points and also ensure remuneration for the soldiers at assembly points."[375] Echoing earlier MK statements on the inadmissibility of clandestine units in the reformed security forces, it also demanded: "all those with CCB and other "dirty tricks" structures connections should not be allowed to sign up." Ultimately, however, none of these stipulations would be met; instead, MK cadres and structures found themselves powerless and excluded in the integration process, whereas askaris proliferated.

In parallel negotiations starting in 1993, the ANC and NP agreed to create the South African National Defense Force (SANDF), a new national military incorporating all former armies. The total number of liberation movement combatants was unknown, so MK and APLA had to compile Certified Personnel Registers (CPRs) in order for their guerrillas to be integrated (Gear 2002, 41); MK initially compiled a CPR with 83,000 names, which it pared down to 27,801 after the 1994 elections (Frankel 2000, 82). The number of cadres excluded from the CPRs is unknown (Mashike 2008). Compiling the CPRs required a level of transparency from the guerrilla movements that would have hitherto constituted a

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[374] SAHA Archives, Address by Major General Bantu Holomisa to the MK Conference in Venda, p.8
[375] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane, From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA).

fatal security breach: guerrillas had used *noms de guerre*, but pseudonyms would not be accepted for the purpose of integration (Mashike 2008, 10). Combatants were reluctant to submit their real names because the process began in 1992 in "a context of ongoing political violence during which some APLA and MK combatants feared for their lives" (Mashike 2008, 10).

In 1994, combatants from the various guerrilla organizations were instructed to gather at three military bases for demobilization or integration into the "new" security forces. MK cadres were sent to the Wallmansthal army base north of Pretoria, and APLA cadres to the De Brug army base. Whereas the negotiated consensus between the ANC and NP elites ostensibly represented the dawn of a democratic era, the process of integrating and demobilizing guerrillas underscored the inequalities that persisted in the crucial realms of defense and security, the very same realms that had been so central to enforcing and perpetuating apartheid. Several ex-guerrillas described a chilling situation awaiting them at the Wallmansthal assembly point. One ex-guerrilla explained that he and his comrades had gone to Wallmansthal intending to join the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF), which the ANC and NP had created jointly as a neutral force incorporating combatants from both sides, and which MK had endorsed at its 1993 Kanyamazane conference.[376]

Yet upon admission to the base they were immediately required to surrender their weapons, while being guarded by heavily-armed SADF soldiers: "we were fighting these people in the bush and we hit them hard. Now when we integrate, the camp where we went, they were still bullying. They disarmed us,

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[376] "Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane, From 3-4 September 1993" (SAHA).

but they had guns and they were still parading, guiding us."[377] SADF knew their

pseudonyms (or 'traveling names,' as they were known within MK), suggesting

that certain MK officers had collaborated with the regime without their

knowledge: "But when we went there they called us with our pseudonyms, the

names we were using outside. So we are amazed, where did they get those

names?"[378] The guerrillas took this as an ominous sign. Another ex-guerrilla

explained that among the newly decommissioned guerrillas swarmed many askaris

"all over. People who killed our comrades. It was not good [for us] to mingle with

the same enemy, on the same kraal [camp], especially askaris, who were at the

assembly points, and they had the advantage over us there- positions, monetary,

surveillance, logistically, so we were just out, last in everything."[379]

The procedure was for the guerrillas to be interviewed individually,

ostensibly to determine the rank that they would be offered in the integrated

security forces, but as another ex-guerrilla explained, [the askaris] "showed us that

no, here you have been followed, you have been investigated, and they wanted to

know who were the commanders."[380] Several ex-combatants I interviewed

mentioned that a number of MK guerrillas assembled at Wallmansthal, who had

long been targeted by the regime, disappeared during these intake interviews, never

to be heard from again: "there were enemy agents, a lot of them. They were still

active. They were screening, analyzing individuals, categorizing people. Some

people even vanished without a trace."[381] Another ex-guerrilla described how

askaris subjected the MK veterans assembled at Wallmansthal to questioning that

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[377] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[378] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[379] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[380] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[381] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

was clearly intended to identify the key fighters within their units: "They brought us in one by one, asked us who is in charge, which of us are the commanders, and so on. Some just disappeared, they were never heard from again. So we decided that no, here they will kill us one by one. We'd rather leave the army and demobilize. After that we just left the base. That was it."[382]

In 1994, "A majority of the approximately 6,800" ex-guerrillas at various assembly points also went AWOL (absent without official leave) to protest "grievances relating to living conditions, racism encountered in relations with white officers, non-payment of salaries, and delays in being processed" (Williams 1998 cited in Mashike 2008, 19). Mashike (2008) corroborates the accounts of several former guerrillas who recounted how, in a speech delivered to ex-guerrillas at Wallmanstahl, Nelson Mandela accused them of being not soldiers but murderers and rapists, and accused them of ill discipline. The ANC's top leadership, including Mandela and then-Defense Minister Joe Modise, denied MK veterans' allegations of racism in SANDF. MK soldiers at Wallmansthal suspected that Modise and [MK commander Siphiwe] Nyanda had "sold out" to the apartheid regime; when Modise showed up to calm the unrest that had erupted on the base, "[f]ew [MK soldiers] were especially impressed by the sudden and belated appearance of a chief who, in their opinion, had become all too cozy with former SADF generals. (Similar feelings were expressed at the time in regard to the new [Chief of Staff of MK], General Nyanda)" (Frankel 2000, 79).

One ex-guerrilla described how, suspecting his collaboration with the apartheid regime, outraged cadres burned Nyanda's car when he arrived at the base, and reacted to Mandela's ensuing speech with despair and fury:

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[382] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

The comrades were very angry. There was chaos. They burned the car, chased [Nyanda] away, they wanted Mandela, who came guarded by the Boers with rifles, dogs, all that, everyone was surrounded. There was a mix of [MK] officers and SDU members. He addressed them, you know, 'you are a bunch of robbers, criminals, rapists, you don't deserve to be in this army…' They responded with bad words to him, saying that no, you are not Mandela, Mandela died in prison, you are just a dummy of Mandela, how can you say this whereas you see that we are being swallowed here, there is no integration here, you see other comrades here are being taken at night, never seen again. [383]

Another former guerrilla pointed to both the isolation from the ANC leadership and the counterinsurgency forces facing MK fighters at the assembly points: "While being in Wallmansthal we never integrated into the army, there were problems in trying to link with other departments, having contacts. In terms of being kept up to date by the ANC, there was not that link. There are so many forces involved, powerful forces in the political setup, a very dangerous game. Third Force can crop up, fertile ground."[384]

One ex-guerrilla who had considered joining the post-transition military explained his decision to steer clear of the demobilization points: "Yeah, ooh, I never went there, sure, because I could hear the stories... Getting to understand that some of the top military brass were sellouts- it broke my morale, and that's when I said no, I am no more going to the army."[385]

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[383] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009; Kynoch (1996) and Mashike (2008) mention Mandela's speech at Wallmansthal and the hostile reception it received from MK cadres, although neither they nor any other literature mention the disappearance of cadres at the base. The incident does not appear in Mandela's 1994 autobiography.
[384] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[385] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

Meanwhile, several SADF officers who only months earlier had been running counterinsurgency operations in Ciskei were now overseeing the forces' transition.[386] One was SADF Brig Marius Oelschig, formerly head of the CDF, who became head of the military integration process (Kynoch 1996, 444); another military intelligence officer based in Ciskei, Chris Nel, joined Army Headquarters in Pretoria shortly after the election.[387] It is important to consider this history in the light of archival documents (discussed in Chapter 3) revealing that SADF MI operations were ongoing even during the month of Mandela's election to power; and testimony by a high-ranking SADF MI officer that the top ranks of the post-transition military would be staffed with MK and APLA personnel recruited beforehand by apartheid counterinsurgency forces.

The Aftermath of South Africa's SSR Process in the SANDF

A related problem with the integration of ex-guerrillas into the new security forces was the devaluing of their experience and training on the pretense that they had not received training in a conventional army:

There are few [MK veterans] who want to go to the army. Because that hatred is still there. Even now those guys who are with the army, they complain that hey! We are treated there second class. When it came to ranks they undermined our training. They said it's guerrilla warfare, and they did conventional, so their ranks should be higher than ours. And knowing that after eighteen years fighting for this country, there's a young boy there, he's got two years experience in the military, but he's going to be *my senior*- so we said no. We said if they want us to train conventional, we can do it but

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[386] SAHA Archives
[387] Ibid.

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with *our* ranks, which we deserve! And by then there was nobody to stand for us.[388]

This testimony illustrates the ANC leadership's abandonment of the fighters who had played such an integral role in the struggle, hence the lack of anyone to "stand for" the guerrillas and exercise democratic civilian control over the security institutions that were the site of such systematic discrimination. Meanwhile, askaris "were better treated than [MK veterans] because they got money when they resigned, given firearms, houses- a lot!"[389] An earlier study of the integration of ex-combatants into South Africa's new security forces also cites MK respondents vexed that sellouts received government jobs while guerrillas continued to languish in poverty: "We have worked hard for the ANC... But, now what is surprising is that the very ANC takes those *amalumpere*[390] [sell-outs, informers, askaris] who were killing people in the location, and gives them jobs" (Gear 2002a, 19). This demonstrates the extent to which the ANC, even after it ascended to power, allowed the control and management of the security institutions to remain in the hands of the old guard, leaving them to function largely as they had during apartheid.

Another episode from the transition period recounted by a former MK commander raises pointed questions about the ANC's commitment to integrating MK cadres into the new security forces: A month or so prior to the May 1994 elections, the ANC sent a battalion-sized MK force, about 800-strong, for military

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[388] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[389] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[390] This Xhosa struggle term originates from "lumpenproletariat," reflecting MK's Marxist-Leninist interpretation of Africans who collaborated with the apartheid regime.

training at a base in the Zambian copper belt near Kabwe.[391] The soldiers got to vote in the South African elections, but strangely, the Zambian military authorities had not been notified beforehand that MK forces were arriving for training:

> I don't know even now what was the mission behind that, because when we arrived in Zambia, the government didn't know about our presence, nor the minister of defense. Instead, South African radios and newspapers published about a unit outside that the ANC is refusing to comment about, [the ANC] said there are no units outside but there were units in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Angola, I don't know, maybe they were trying to sacrifice us. We voted in Zambia, but there was no logistical support for us there, it was trouble. We were just struggling, like as if we were in Angola [during] those [struggle] days.[392]

This stint was ostensibly to give MK soldiers training in conventional warfare in preparation for integration into the new security forces, but after completing their five-month training course, they were flown back to South Africa and the majority of cadres were not integrated. It is unclear whether this was mainly due to the ANC's disorganization, or whether the old guard in charge of the security forces blocked these MK forces' integration; a third possibility, suggested by the former MK commander himself, is that the ANC leadership wanted to disperse its own fighters lest they disrupt the transition process out of a sense of having been marginalized by it.

In the first decade of transition, the "sunset clause," a key aspect of the

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[391] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[392] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

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ANC/NP pact that left most state institutions intact, was partly responsible for the security sector's laborious transformation (Shaw 2002, 22-28). But this also played an important role in maintaining a level of urban violence that has continued to the present. Indeed, the ex-guerrillas were marginalized at a critical moment when systemic violence gripped South Africa, victimizing especially the poor. South Africa's black majority desperately needed legitimate security forces to protect it, and to reflect the democratization for which it had sacrificed so much, but security institutions largely remained part of the problem. In 1994, the SADF was still operating in Gauteng's Katorus township to counter the violence raging between ANC-aligned SDUs and SPUs (Self-Protection Units) aligned with the IFP (van Loggerenberg 1996, 54-55). Right up until it ceded power, the National Party regime continued deploying military units to police black townships, including the notorious 32nd "Buffalo" Battalion, comprised of Angolan and Namibian mercenaries (Murray 1994, 88). 32 Battalion was also deployed in Natal province, where it fueled the civil war that raged there throughout the transitional era.[393] In 1995, even after the ANC came to power, Mandela deployed 32 Battalion to confront Self-Defense Units that had refused to disarm (Reno 1997, 60). Even after the transition, then, ANC elites deployed some of its most vicious former enemies to neutralize armed formations formerly allied with it who were now threatening the state's monopoly on the use of force. Meanwhile, the need for a large, conventional standing army of the sort that the apartheid government had deployed against its neighbors had evaporated.

The new South African military excluded many ex-guerrillas on the pretense that they were uneducated, unmotivated, or infirm, perpetuating racist

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[393] Laurie Nathan, "Article on the IDASA-ANC Conference on the Future of Security and Defense in South Africa," May 23-27 1991, Lusaka (SAHA)

stereotypes that portrayed blacks as unfit for complex roles, while discrediting the training that thousands of MK fighters had gotten in its Angolan camps, in the Soviet Union, in other Warsaw Pact countries, and elsewhere (Kynoch 1996, 444). One former MK commander declared that part of the blame for MK's marginalization lay with the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) that supervised South Africa's security sector reform process as a supposedly impartial observer: "I blame them because they were the ones overseeing everything, smooth running of the whole thing. As you know, the British were part of the whole machinery." Frankel (2000) portrays the BMATT as an impartial advisory team that helped to ensure a smooth and balanced transition process, yet the British had previously trained apartheid military and intelligence units, and one former MK cadre insisted: "Once a colonizer, always a colonizer. They knew, they've invested here, so they had to compromise us for the sake of the minority."[394]

Since the transition, black soldiers in general and particularly former MK and APLA fighters in the SANDF have suffered systematic persecution and discrimination, as one South African academic explained: "those members are oppressed by the white minority who are working in the defense force, causing them to resign."[395] An earlier study on ex-combatants' integration into the new security forces also notes the "stigmatization and marginalization" of ex-guerrillas in the SANDF, some of whom mentioned persistent harassment, even beatings, causing them to resign or be dismissed; their complaints to the Defense Ministry were ignored (Gear 2002b, 26). Such persecution, in turn, has driven some black

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[394] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

[395] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko and Mr. Sonamzi, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, 8 December 2009

soldiers to resign from the military and instead to use their combat training for criminal purposes; alternately, it has driven black soldiers to shoot whites in the SANDF. In late 1999, Lieutenant Sibusiso Madubela, a former APLA cadre, shot and killed seven white officers and a white civilian at the Tempe military base in an incident that drew national attention (Mashike 2008). In 2006, another former liberation fighter "decided to kill white officers in the defense force and then kill himself."[396] Gear (2002b) describes a post-transition incident related by a former MK cadre who, along with other ex-guerrillas in the SANDF, were "lured to a *shebeen*" (a bar) outside their base in the Eastern Cape, then ambushed with grenades, apparently by black soldiers hired by white SADF officers (Gear 2002b, 27).

One former MK commander insisted: "even today, I'm telling you, there is still racism, both in the [police] and army. It's too much, it's rife. It's just exploding bit by bit. It will burn one day."[397] Commenting on the 1999 Tempe base killer, the former commander related that according to MK veterans serving in SANDF, Madubela had been severely mistreated, particularly by a white officer who "was a menace to black recruits and black non-commissioned officers, he would charge them, put their morale at the lowest level."[398] He mentioned that according to other black SANDF soldiers, racism remains systematic among white officers towards blacks in the army. "And black officers were not talking, they were not defending anything. Ah, no, they just get their salaries, move the other way, they are afraid to talk, no solidarity, never."

These conditions are ideal for the divide-and-rule approach towards blacks

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[396] Ibid.
[397] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[398] ibid.

that still persists along ethno-regional and political lines in the South African military: "And the Boers [Afrikaners], they know this. They try always to cause a wedge between Ciskei, Transkei, Venda, PAC, MK. That's how they manage them. They manipulate them by dividing them. Reminding them of who they are. And the stupid bastards now fall prey of that every time."[399] Gear (2002b) cites an ex-guerrilla in SANDF who claimed that his military base was divided into mutually hostile MK, APLA, and SADF camps. A black soldier from the Eastern Cape serving in the SANDF Special Forces corroborated this, describing the rampant tribalism in the new military. She said that there were strong animosities even between ethnic Xhosa soldiers from Johannesburg and its surrounding black townships, and ethnic Xhosas from the Eastern Cape.[400]

Meanwhile, the former MK commander emphasized that after the transition, incidents of whites abusing and even killing blacks in the reformed military were not uncommon, though they were seldom reported. He related how one of his friends in the new military was killed: "It started with these white soldiers being drunk, under the influence of cocaine sometimes, one drove an armored personnel carrier straight into some [black] soldiers who were just sitting there, killing one whom I know from Angola, and it just appeared and it just disappeared."[401] To this day, "there's been so many incidents that indicates that there's a serious problem of the exclusion of some of the progressive forces, of black people in particular, and also the persecution of some black officers in the army."[402]

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[399] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[400] Confidential interview with SANDF soldier, November 2009; in her mid-twenties, this soldier was too young to have fought during the struggle era.
[401] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[402] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko and Mr. Sonamzi, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, 8 December 2009

Lack of MK Integration into the Police

During apartheid, South Africa's military, police, and intelligence forces became inextricably interlinked, and cooperated closely in repressing the liberation movements. In its policy statements leading up to and following the transition, the ANC clearly stated its aim to transform the police forces along with the military, and many MK cadres planned to assist in creating a new, democratic police force. Yet the number of fighters from the liberation forces who were integrated into the police was negligible, and no known figures exist to track this aspect of the transition.[403]

Several ex-guerrillas described police training they had received, or were scheduled to receive, in preparation for this. One explained that many MK cadres "went even to police academies outside" of South Africa. "When we came, they told us we are going to be integrated into the police, with my other comrades. But it never happened. We even got documentation, but it never materialized."[404] Another former MK cadre explained: "those people who were sellouts, high position people, they did their best so that MK must be insignificant in both the army and the police force, the [integration] initiative must never materialize. And the police force continued to be the old police force, and they were the former SAP."[405]

In 1996, the new government launched an initiative to integrate SDU members from the Katorus area, near Johannesburg, into the police force. Although several SDU members did join, many of them remained involved in

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[403] Author's correspondence with Dr. Johan Burger, Senior Researcher, Crime, Justice and Politics Programme at the Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 9 December 2009
[404] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[405] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

gangsterism, in part as a result of apartheid agents provocateurs that had been sent to destabilize them. Ironically, however, the new government made no effort to integrate MK cadres into the police, even though they were far more trained and disciplined than the SDU cadres, and most had many more years' experience.[406] According to one former MK fighter, the number of MK cadres integrated into the police was extremely small: "I knew very few [cadres] who were given political appointments, but from rank and file, very, very few, if there are. No attempts were made to integrate them."[407] Another ex-guerrilla mentioned that during the transitional period, there were plans to send an MK contingent to be trained into a police force in India:

> But that never happened, and it was going to be a great move. Now, with the training that we have, with the fitness that we have, with the politically education that we had, we were going to make up a good police force for South Africa. Because the police force that was there was a corrupt police force, a brutal police force, which was unwelcome to the people. So it was going to be good if in the army there was a visible number of MK soldiers, and also in the police force, a visible number of ex-freedom fighters. But now, that never happened, and it is a well-known fact that some amongst us were sellouts, so double agents had their own effect [at the] top level.[408]

In the last few years, and particularly since the end of Thabo Mbeki's presidency in 2007, the state has finally begun to show interest in incorporating MK veterans into the police, but according to several well-placed sources, it has

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[406] Personal communication with Sasha Gear, researcher at the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (Johannesburg), 13/08/2010
[407] ibid.
[408] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

still not followed up on this initiative. One former ANC activist insisted on the correlation between the exclusion of former MK cadres and South Africa's current policing crisis. According to him, MK veterans stand to make a key contribution in intelligence gathering: "Police will tell you, 'our crime intelligence is not working'- there are very few MK veterans doing that job."[409]

A former MK commander explained that MK veterans, many of whom remain jobless and mired in poverty, enrolled as policemen because "we wanted some money to feed our families. We registered, we went for interviews, we went to the doctor, everything was perfect, we signed all those forms, we waited for them to call us for training. But nothing happened till today. That was 3 years back. There was never" an organized initiative to integrate MK cadres. The MK veteran added: "I think we can contribute a lot. Because our training is more advanced than what the police have. So through experience fighting, I think our guys can stand these criminals. So now, the training [the South African Police Service have] got, it's not enough, that's why there's still such crime."[410] Indeed, the MK veterans' struggle-era combat experience, their high legitimacy among South African masses even to this day, and their success in forming effective private security companies in the post-transition era (as discussed in Chapter 4) attest to the contributions they could make to the police.

MK and South Africa's post-Apartheid Institutions

Speaking at Pretoria's Freedom Park at the national "Day of Reconciliation" celebrations on 16 December 2009, President Jacob Zuma dedicated that year's Day of Reconciliation "to the forgotten heroes of the

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[409] Confidential interview with former political activist, December 2009
[410] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

country's liberation, the freedom fighters who left their homes and went into exile. 'When they left the comfort of their home and family, venturing into the unknown, the only comfort they sought was merely that they could contribute to the dawn of a new South Africa…. Soon, they became the forgotten heroes of the struggle. Many are known to live in abject poverty in a country they sacrificed so much for.'" Freedom Park chief executive Dr. Wally Serote called it "the first step of showing the necessary respect and recognition."[411] Yet thus far, the ANC leadership has never acknowledged its own role in this marginalization, nor has it sought to situate it against the broader context of chronic insecurity that has plagued South Africa since 1994. One South African academic explained: "once at home, having left the army, some having not gotten the recognition they wanted, some facing the humiliation of poverty, the sense of bitterness, the sense of betrayal became so high. So every compromise has demonstrated that in that sense blacks gave in more than they received."[412]

In 2008, South Africa's Ministry of Defense was renamed the Ministry of Defense and Veterans' Affairs, reflecting a recognition of the problems facing veterans of the armed struggle who were never properly integrated into state institutions, and who now pose a variety of problems for the state. The ministry's very title bespeaks the reality that in post-transition South Africa, national security requires the state to deal with apartheid's internal socio-political legacies at least as much as it requires facing any external threat. This in turn underscores the ANC's shortcomings in negotiating the apartheid transition. The failure of former combatants to reintegrate into society can be attributed to the fact that demobilization was implemented without proper planning (Mashike 2008). The

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[411] *The Star*, 17 December 2009, p.12
[412] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, 21/12/2009

state's awakening to the plight of former MK combatants reflects both the ANC's belated commitment to support and honour its combat veterans- especially under the presidency of Jacob Zuma, himself a former ANC intelligence chief- and, simultaneously, its fear that those veterans could threaten security by taking up arms for political or criminal causes.

In late 2009, Defense and Military Veterans Minister Thabang Makwetla warned that over 20,000 surviving veterans, mainly from MK, "need to be taken care of, not only because of the personal sacrifices they had made for the country, but because they could form a renegade force or use their professional skills in criminal activities."[413] The Minister noted: "Neglect may also bring about a situation where you have people resorting to the only skill they have in life, which is professional killing."

After 15 years of offering regular pensions, military hospital treatments, and benefits to apartheid security force personnel, then, the state was finally considering extending benefits to MK veterans. While apartheid military and police veterans' pensions and benefits continued uninterrupted during and after the transition, guerrilla veterans have received no pensions or benefits to speak of, save a few who qualified and received for the Special Pension Act (No. 69 of 1996) (Mashike 2008). On 10 February 2006, about 150 former combatants marched on the office of the Minister of Finance to demand the payment of pensions. This "protest action was not the first protest action since 1994, and two other demonstrations followed before the end of 2006" (Mashike 2008, 1). One MK veteran emphasized that despite his service to the nation he could not get free treatment at a hospital, whereas the apartheid policemen who had tortured him

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[413] "Deputy Minister Warns that Military Veterans May Revolt," *Pretoria News* (10 November 2009), p.2

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while he was in captivity today enjoy full veterans' benefits.[414] Because of poverty, lack of services, and dislocation from the ANC, many former cadres now suffer from PTSD and alcoholism.[415] Various ex-guerrillas have also emphasized that their marginalization from the ANC leadership remains ongoing.

Former guerrilla Shirley Gunn describes how since the transition, "[t]he people who did the work have never been honored… Yet, on the other hand, there is all sorts of handshaking, back-patting, ladder-climbing and moving above everyone else, creating this huge distance between [ANC and MK commanders who secured positions of power] and the foot soldiers on the ground" (Foster, Haupt, and De Beer 2005, 223). Another ex-guerrilla insisted that the ANC leadership "don't want us near their offices- never"[416] an experience corroborated by informants from Gear's (2002) study on South African ex-combatants.

In December 2001, the ANC founded the MK Veterans' Association (MKVA) to ensure ex-guerrillas' welfare.[417] A few months later, a former MK commander emphasized: "The ultimate goal [of MKVA] is to teach [veterans] skills and get them out of crime-related tendencies and highlight the role that they can play in fighting crime with the skills they acquired while they were still active MK members."[418] Indeed, the post-transition economic and political options facing former MK combatants are still shaped primarily by the brutal inequalities of apartheid economics.[419] As Mashike (2008) puts it, the ANC's reconciliation agenda shaped combatants' post-war experience.

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[414] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[415] ibid.
[416] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[417] "X-MK Members Visits [sic] King Sabatas Grave Side," *Indabazethu* (Eastern Cape), 27 February 2002, p.4
[418] Ibid.
[419] Author's interview with Martin Prew, South African civil servant, 13 November 2009

In his bid for election to the presidency in 2008, Jacob Zuma sought to galvanize MK veterans as a major power base, promising that veterans' benefits would finally be allocated. Similarly, Mandela, immediately after being elected to power in 1994, had used a special "Presidential fund" to pay lump sums to MK veterans, most of whom never received any further state support. In this way, the ANC has approached the issue of veterans' benefits as an opportunity for political patronage, rather than an obligation to former combatants duly attended to by the South African state. Former combatants who were at the heart of the struggle for their country's freedom have been reduced to begging favours from the state, while their badly-needed talents continue to be wasted. South Africa is slowly awakening to the challenges facing the veterans. In 2008, it passed the Special Pensions Amendment Bill, which President Zuma said he expected "would help resolve the financial problems of some of the veterans."[420]

Meanwhile, by the end of 2009 the government had started to consider services for veterans including "education and training opportunities, social services, health, and economic empowerment."[421] Several former combatants insisted that the MKVA did not adequately represent their interests, and served mainly as the tool of ANC politicians. One former ANC member declared that the "chairman of national MKVA only gains his salary, the money only goes to a select few." He mentioned the "rude attitude from bureaucrats" facing MK veterans seeking political support, and went on to emphasize that the best way to provide for these veterans would be to "put [them] to work. We've got those skills within our liberation forces, which are not recognized. These skills are in order *to*

[420] Barry Bateman, "Zuma Homage to the 'Forgotten Heroes,'" *The Star*, 17 December 2009, 12
[421] "Long Way To Go, Says Zuma," *Daily Dispatch* (Eastern Cape), 17 December 2009, p.3

secure. The state won't waste money if they spend it on veterans. These people are dedicated, they can stand up and build this nation. [South Africa is] going towards a banana republic. We need to call [MK veterans] according to their abilities."[422]

The ongoing exclusion of those veterans from the post-transition security forces has contributed to violence in South Africa through two interrelated mechanisms: it has weakened the security sector by depriving it of tens of thousands of skilled and experienced security personnel with high legitimacy among the country's African majority; and, by excluding them, it has encouraged these same veterans- trained in violence and facing few prospects for work or social reintegration- to seek their livelihood through crime (Mashike 2008).

This was corroborated in an interview with a South African academic who explained: "Hence now, when the MK cadres feel that they are being marginalized, they are deciding to involve themselves in these anti-social and criminal activities. And you can see that the robbery that is taking place is carefully planned, and you can see that it's perpetrated by people who really understand what they are doing, they are well-trained. So that's another critical aspect of the exclusion of the MK members."[423] Yet the extent to which MK veterans have been involved in post-transition crime remains unclear. Gear contends: "the extent to which ex-combatants are involved in, and responsible for [crime] is unclear and contested. While anecdotal evidence clearly suggests some level of involvement, no statistical data or detailed overview of the situation is available." (2002, 30) Echoing the ex-guerrilla cited above, who asserted that post-apartheid criminal

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[422] Confidential interview with former ANC activist, December 2009
[423] Author's interview with Mr. Somkoko and Mr. Sonamzi, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, December 2009

activities falsely attributed to former MK guerrillas, "such as highway heists where cars carrying cash were attacked, and [military-style] bomb attacks on ATM machines," were in fact the work of foreign ex-combatants, as scholar Somadoda Fikeni explains: "some people who were caught were Mozambicans who had come into the country having had [combat] training. In other words the whole [southern African] region where frustrations or poverty have been experienced, led to [crime]."[424]

Considering Alterative Paths to South Africa's Security Sector Reform

We must consider the manner in which the ANC proceeded in negotiations, emphasizing in particular its failure, after unilaterally renouncing the armed struggle, to rectify inequalities in the security forces by securing a future role for its own soldiers. Dr. Somadoda Fikeni maintains that a lack of agency on the part of the ANC was a major factor contributing to the institutional continuity within the security forces: "ANC could have used the political leverage it had, the mass action it had, the strike action it had, used the unions and so forth to further frustrate and bring the government down." He attributes the lack of reform in the security forces to three factors: "one, lack of political will. Two, overestimation of white power. Three, lack of imagination when you allow yourself to be absorbed into existing power structures with the hope that you will transform them once inside. And you can see what it is: they were never transformed. Virtually nothing."[425] On the other hand, as this chapter demonstrates, the apartheid security elites remained a formidable force to be reckoned with, and might have

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[424] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, Pretoria, 20/12/2009
[425] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, Tshwane (Pretoria), 20 December 2009

been far more difficult to dislodge. The leverage of mass struggle that the ANC is widely accused of having failed to use in order to force thoroughgoing transformation of the state (see for example, McKinley 1997), might not have been brought to bear so easily upon the security forces themselves.

It is also unclear to what extent former MK combatants could have prevented the post-transition criminal violence had they been properly integrated into the security forces. After all, the criminal violence was the result of a variety of systemic factors- within both state institutions and civil society- that could not be transformed or eradicated overnight. However, there can be no doubt that the lack of integration and resulting lack of legitimacy exacerbated this crime wave. Any counterfactual assessment of what the post-apartheid landscape might have looked like if MK fighters had been integrated en masse must take this into account. Furthermore, such total integration might have caused old-guard elements within the security forces to rebel against the negotiated settlement and spread violence, a reaction for which they were already well poised.

Considering the power of apartheid counterinsurgency within the security institutions, could MK cadres have brought significant change to the post-transition security forces had they been integrated properly and not been marginalized? In addressing this counterfactual, it is important to consider the extent to which apartheid security elites continued to exercise a grip on power within their institutions, and the possibility that they would have interfered violently with the transition process had the ANC insisted on having its armed wing take control of the police and military. Nor does it appear that the National Party political elites, had they wanted to do so, could have pushed the security forces into further compromise, considering how frayed civil-military relations

had become following De Klerk's 1992 purge of the security force ranks.

The seeds of South Africa's institutional continuity were therefore contained within its military stalemate and the resulting negotiated transition. Under these circumstances, and specifically in the absence of serious, outside, high-level efforts to reform existing practices, we might expect ex-guerrillas integrated into the security forces to bend to the institutional norms of corruption and involvement in crime instead of transforming these institutions. On the other hand, many of the guerrillas inclined to bend to these norms had already done so, having been recruited as askaris who profited by defending apartheid. We therefore cannot discount the potentially transformational contribution of those guerrillas who remained steadfast to MK's vision of national liberation throughout the struggle years and who aimed to imbue the new security forces with an unprecedented legitimacy. Several of the ex-guerrillas interviewed for this study have certainly articulated compelling visions of precisely such a transformation, along with a sense of bitterness over having been denied the opportunity to implement this transformation.

Finally, however, the exclusion and the systematic marginalization facing ex-guerrillas in these forces proved to be insurmountable obstacles, while the ANC, even were it to have had the will, simply lacked the leverage to reform these institutions through political pressure. This has resulted in the outcome illustrated by the case study in Chapter 4, whereby ex-guerrillas excluded from the 'new' security forces have contributed strongly to local security by applying their expertise through private security companies, establishing greater levels of trust and reputations for effectiveness than their state counterparts.

Finally, it is also important to distinguish between the factors constraining the ANC's ability to force thoroughgoing security sector transformation, and the marginalization of MK veterans within the ANC's own structures, which was far more avoidable. This latter outcome was the result of the elitism that pervaded the ANC as it came to embrace the economic status quo. In this sense, the cadres' broad political and socio-economic marginalization represents a missed opportunity of epic proportions to mobilize a population of politically trained activists on behalf of post-transition civic causes. In a similar vein, Suttner (2004) emphasizes that the elaborate UDF structures that mobilized activists across much of South Africa in support of the ANC were simply abandoned post-transition, squandering a grassroots network with enormous potential as a channel for social transformation.

Conclusion

The path charted during South Africa's SSR process has left a legacy of marginalization that persists to this day. This legacy has influenced the evolution and nature of the democratic transition in important ways. First, it has resulted in security institutions weak in legitimacy and effectiveness. Second, it has opened the door for other avenues of profiteering, including criminality. And third, it has compromised the relationship between law and order institutions, the State, and civil society, posing challenges to democratic consolidation. As one ex-guerrilla summarized the integration process: "So we compromised a lot during integration, it was hell. We were just swallowed. Look even now, I cannot be treated at military hospital. But I was a soldier, a fighter. What's that? That's why I say it was just a total anarchy. The whole process served individuals rather than

the whole MK fighters."[426] Guerrillas who chose integration into the new military or police experienced discrimination from their white counterparts and superiors, both at the institutional and individual levels. Their ranks were downgraded in almost all cases, which the SADF justified by claiming that the ranks earned in a guerrilla army were not equivalent to those in South Africa's conventional army. This approach ignored the world-class training that many guerrillas had received in Warsaw Pact countries, and in the Cuban, Angolan, Egyptian, Zambian, and Indian armies, not to mention MK's own rigorous guerrilla warfare training program developed at its bases in Angola.

Just as important, the downgrading of ranks illustrates the lack of emphasis on the security force as a potentially transformational arena that could reflect substantive changes in state institutions after apartheid. After all, once apartheid fell, the conflicts between South Africa and its neighbours evaporated overnight and the greatest security threat to South Africa became violence from within. This shift from the dynamics of anti-apartheid struggle to the monumental challenge of curbing urban and rural violence was anticipated and acknowledged in speeches by Mandela and a variety of other ANC leaders immediately after the transition. However, democratic South Africa was unable to shift its security priorities accordingly, and ex-guerrillas, by virtue of their training and their legitimacy within African communities, were excluded from the roles they were suited and prepared to fulfill. At the key moment of transition, the security forces literally remained bastions of apartheid's old guard, from which emanated criminal networks and systematic discrimination against the ANC's own liberation fighters.

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[426] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

CHAPTER SIX

<u>Counterinsurgency as Hegemony: South Africa's Incomplete Transition and the Post-Colonial Legacies of Clandestine State Violence</u>

There is now an increasingly wide consensus that South Africa has witnessed what may be termed an incomplete democratic transition. Citing the pervasive corruption and political centralization of the ANC, the weak state of law and order institutions, and the high levels of violence in civil society, scholars have argued persuasively that the elements of democratic consolidation are still lacking in contemporary South Africa (e.g., Darby 2006; Oomen 2004; Hansen 2006). As I have argued in previous chapters, this incomplete transition is closely linked to a number of interrelated legacies of the apartheid era itself, and more specifically, of apartheid counterinsurgency.

Among the legacies that have contributed to South Africa's incomplete transition and its sustained violence have been the culture of corruption within the ANC and its leaders; the instrumentalist profit-making link between criminal networks and the security sector; and the rampant privatization of security forces that has its origins in the apartheid era. However, rather than arguing that ANC leaders became personally disposed to a culture of corruption, I show that prior institutional legacies in the anti-apartheid structure helped to shape practices of corruption while setting the stage for a highly authoritarian structure that has been difficult to change following the transition to majority rule. Taken together, these legacies have stalled democratic consolidation by delegitimizing law and order institutions, undermining the advancement of social capital with civil society, and underpinning a pattern of violence that is among the highest in the world.

This chapter points to these diverse legacies of the history of counterinsurgency by examining three interlocking factors in post-apartheid South Africa in specific terms. First, it examines the lack of reform in the security institutions, including the persistence of South Africa's military-industrial complex. Second, it highlights pervasive mistrust at the level of both state institutions and state-society relations, reflecting counterinsurgency's persistence as the prism through which actors in both state and society perceive South African politics (Buur et. al. 2007); and finally, the chapter details the persistence of chronic urban violence and low levels of social capital. The chapter argues that low levels of public trust in the South African security forces is a legacy of the history counterinsurgency, and a consequence of the slow pace of reform in these institutions. I argue that South Africa's growing gap between rich and poor- the highest in the world- and the growing disconnect between the state and society, is also partly a legacy of a counterinsurgency program which, at its root, was conceived to protect and entrench racial and class privilege in a country founded on sharp socio-economic inequalities.

I argue that better MK integration could have ameliorated some of these inequalities by inculcating a higher level of professionalism and more legitimacy among the local populations within the post-transition security forces. This could have aided in better policing by strengthening law and order institutions, and undermined the continued racism that is prevalent in the security forces. MK integration could have also served as a counterweight to ANC elite dominations that led to corruption. This might not have single-handedly averted important levels of post-transition violence, but by strengthening law and order institutions it would have nevertheless contributed to a more complete democratic

consolidation.

A body of literature exists on how South Africa's transition has protected and maximized corporate interests and profits (e.g., Bond 2004; Turok 2008; Klein 2007). McKinley notes a "strategic convergence that occurred between the liberation movement and international capitalism" (1997, 83). But this literature has tended to regard the transition's economic and security sector outcomes as discrete, instead of exploring the crucial ways that these aspects continued to interrelate and influence each other after apartheid. This is surprising, considering the apartheid state's total securitization. The ANC's abandonment of its redistributionist platform has been of a piece with the disenfranchisement and marginalization of MK veterans. Apartheid continuities in the security forces are notable not only for what they preserve in terms of authoritarian continuity (see Chapter 5), but especially also for what they have kept out, which was MK's struggle to transform these institutions.

At a broader level of analysis, this chapter underscores the hegemony of the intertwined neoliberal (or neopluralist) economic and security paradigms in shaping South Africa's transition. This has created state security institutions that are both ineffective, because of their corruption and inability to prevent urban violence, and illegitimate, because of the lack of popular trust placed in them. Instead, the new South Africa has featured the triumph of the military-industrial complex, which was a key pillar of the apartheid regime. The notorious 1995 arms deal scandal, in which ANC elites received fabulous kickbacks from purchasing an array of exorbitant new weapons systems, epitomizes how, rather than steering South Africa towards socio-economic equality, post-transition elites instead have hitched their future to the military-industrial complex's payoffs,

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which have not trickled down to the poor. On the other end of the spectrum, most MK veterans- as well as the redistributionist ideology they espoused and fought for- today languish in obscurity and poverty, cut off from the security institutions they fought to reshape, and from the ANC whose vanguard they once formed. This corresponds to Gramscian understandings of hegemony, and to Fanon's warnings about the perils of elite consolidation following the overthrow of colonial regimes.

Counterinsurgency's hegemony in post-apartheid South Africa also manifests itself in the reproduction of a secretive and anti-democratic culture within South Africa's political institutions. This, I argue, is a legacy of the pervasive mistrust within the state and between the state and civil society that apartheid intelligence recruitment engendered within ANC ranks during the struggle era. Because counterinsurgency was for so long located at the heart of apartheid's formidable bureaucracy, and because the apartheid securocrats were able to shape key aspects of the democratic transition, their hegemonic imprint has endured both on state institutions and in civil society more broadly. Well after apartheid's official demise, the South African state has continually failed to establish a monopoly on the use of force, while violence has overwhelmed social capital to remain an extremely pronounced feature of civic life. In that sense, this chapter also builds on the links between apartheid covert operations and post-transition crime discussed in the case study of Transkei in Chapter 4.

These phenomena are not merely self-evident civil war legacies resulting from the presence of massive quantities of arms within society, or from having former combatants, whether motivated by ideology or profit, engaging in post-transition violence. Rather, they are a direct result of the apartheid regime's

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counterinsurgency initiative to dominate the arena of civil society by systematically replacing African communities' social capital with strife, or what became known to the world by the cynical term "black-on-black violence." The counterinsurgency strategy of destabilizing African communities by outsourcing political violence was calculated to ensure that violence would begin to reproduce itself within these communities independently of centralized command and control.

This chapter examines the surge in corruption within the ANC and the marginalization of MK veterans as causally co-dependent, before exploring the fused economic and security aspects of counterinsurgency's impacts across a broad spectrum of post-transition outcomes, including the military-industrial complex, policing, institutional capacity and legitimacy, and urban violence. Counterinsurgency's legacies in South Africa have expanded to shape the field of South African politics, including state institutions and state-civil society relations. Whether these legacies are the result of carefully calibrated counterinsurgency strategies at the moment of transition, or simply the continuation of established institutional processes and patterns of state-society relations- and my research indicates that they are both- they have imprinted themselves on South African politics in ways that continue to impede democratic consolidation.

Skeletons and Ghosts: Mapping 'Third Force' Legacies in the Post-Transition State

South Africa's counterinsurgency program and its political legacies endured even after elite pacting brought a sharp decline in political violence.

Contrary to previous claims that the "Third Force" had become increasingly decentralized and fragmented by 1993 (Ellis 1998, 292), my research here suggests an alternative explanation: that command and control of these operations did not become less centralized, only more hidden. Evidence of military intelligence operations continuing into April 1994, the month of Mandela's election to power, indicates the endurance of an elaborate counterinsurgency program which, far from being marginal to South Africa's transition, seems to have been calculated to shape its critical military and political aspects. The centrality of clandestine violence in shaping South Africa post-transition forces us to consider counterinsurgency's theoretical implications for democratic transitions, and especially its contribution to enduring authoritarian legacies, in a number of ways. This is especially important since law and order institutions are widely acknowledged to be a key component of democratic consolidation and social peace.

In the early years after South Africa's transition, literature on the emerging security sector mainly focused on the possibility that the new ANC government would use the formidable security forces it inherited for undemocratic ends. This had occurred in newly independent Zimbabwe, where Robert Mugabe had deployed Rhodesian counterinsurgency units-which had been his sworn enemies until only recently- to enforce a reign of terror in Ndebeleland in the early 1980s. Thus Kynoch (1996) underscores the SANDF's albeit limited role in the KwaZulu-Natal province's post-transition violence as evidence that the ANC might start deploying the new national military to overwhelm any ethno-regional challenges to its rule. Highlighting the continuity in the notorious Special Branch police unit after apartheid, McCarthy writes: "it is widely believed that the old SB

continued to perform its former function under the previous government" (1996, 69). Yet the greatest distinguishing feature of the security forces post-transition is not that the ANC, as the new ruling party, has used these forces to further consolidate its power; rather, the most striking feature of South Africa's new police and military has been that they mainly continued working for ends diametrically opposite to the ANC's post-apartheid reforms, both by marginalizing veterans of the liberation forces, and through involvement in crime.

Much of the crime that has characterized the post-Apartheid has had little to do with poverty or social inequality although these factors are clearly important. However, in political terms it is important to understand that criminality in post-Apartheid South Africa stems from the reality of how politics works and, in particular, how criminal networks and the security sector often comprise a symbiotic political and economic relationship. One ex-MK fighter described just how this nexus between crime and security operates:

> I stayed [in South Africa] from 1994 onward and then I was rearrested [in the late 1990s] for that very same offence which I was tried for [during apartheid]. When I was arrested I was prevented from going to the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission]. The police who arrested me were involved in criminal activities and I knew about them. So they were in fear that I might blow the whistle. In fact, the unit that arrested me was later dissolved because it was found to have been [involved in organized crime]"[427]

Elements within the post-apartheid police service attempted to discredit the TRC by coercing a witness into giving false testimony implicating a prominent

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[427] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009.

TRC lawyer in a 1993 APLA massacre of white civilians (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003, 341). In October 1995, former APLA commander Muziwendoda Mdluli was found dead in his car, giving rise to speculation that he was either on the verge of revealing details of Third Force activity, or that he committed suicide because he was himself about to be exposed as a collaborator with the regime; no one was charged with his death (Sanders 2006, 356). In 1997, police also arrested anti-apartheid activist Mzwakhe Mbuli, a year after his attempted murder; Mbuli was convicted despite strong indications that the police had fabricated the case (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003, 340). Gear cites a former SADF soldier's insistence that the suicide of a member of his unit in the late 1990s was stage-managed by elements from the old security forces who wanted to prevent him from testifying to the TRC about apartheid-era atrocities (2002b, 116).

Meanwhile, from 1994-1999, 115 state intelligence agents were implicated in crimes "'ranging from smuggling platinum and illegal dealing in gold to murder'" (Sanders 2006, 356). Far from being merely resistant to change, then, the post-apartheid security forces were implicated in collusion with organized crime, and more importantly, in subverting meaningful political change. One former guerrilla reacted strongly when asked about the effect that MK cadres would have had if they had been integrated into the police:

> (whistles) Hey! Look, the crime that is here now wouldn't have been there. I'm telling you, it was initiated by the police, it was done to undermine, to disorganize the country. Some left the police force to form private security companies, which were also involved in robberies, bank robberies, heists, it was intended to bankrupt the state. And some of those people who were sellouts amongst us maneuvered themselves into high positions. They were in fact promoted by the [old guard in the security forces], it's them who

determined who must be where. They took the people whom they knew, their operatives, put them in high positions so that they know they are doing what they like.[428]

According to this ex-guerrilla, apartheid security elites' influence over the security forces endured well after the transition, "up until the Mbeki era [which ended in 2007], it happened during the Mandela era, right into the Mbeki era, it is only now that it is being addressed."[429]

Although South African state institutions are tainted by corruption, they remain more robust and representative than their counterparts in many post-Soviet countries, and are in a class of their own compared to the rest of Africa. Nevertheless, suspicions persist in civil society that certain elements within the state continue to answer not to the elected government, but to shadowy 'Third Force' powers whose destabilization agenda remains ongoing (Buur 2007). A list of apartheid spies in the ANC disappeared during the TRC proceedings in 1997, shortly before it was to be made public.[430] In March 1997, President Mandela had the following reaction to allegations of apartheid spies in his government: "We want to know who [the spies] are, not necessarily because we want to take action against them but because, if they had been informing on behalf of the apartheid regime, there is the likelihood that they are doing that today" (Sanders 2006, 339).

At the very highest decision-making levels, then, the post-apartheid leadership was openly concerned about authoritarian intelligence recruitment's enduring impacts on the new democracy. Note Mandela's concern that informing "on behalf of the apartheid regime" may be ongoing, despite the fact that the

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[428] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[429] ibid.
[430] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

apartheid regime itself had already dissolved. This points to perceptions of a cabal comprising elements within the security forces, along with private and external actors, still working together- as they undoubtedly did during the apartheid era- to destabilize the ANC and profit from South Africa's natural wealth. In this sense, many South Africans understand the corruption reaching the highest levels of their government in terms that transcend mere greed. To this day, the question of which ANC members were apartheid spies remains highly volatile. The ex-askari Joe Mamasela, "confessed mass murderer and torturer," was still employed by the state in 2002; his enduring impunity may well be linked to his public announcement "that he knew, but would not name, five ministers in the first post-apartheid cabinet who were apartheid agents" (Bell and Ntsebeza 2003, 344). More than one ex-guerrilla expressed suspicion that 'Third Force' remnants still endure today: "The networks may not be operational, but they may be waiting to strike whenever the chance may be."[431]

In the first decade after the transition from apartheid, reports proliferated about secret networks of apartheid political, military, and intelligence personnel lurking in the shadows, waiting patiently for an opportunity to destabilize or overthrow the ANC government (Sanders 2006). In 1998, SANDF chief of staff Georg Meiring and several other holdovers from the apartheid regime serving in the new military and intelligence services were forced to resign after "exposing" an extensive plot to overthrow Mandela's government by several of the ANC's most prominent members, including Mandela's ex-wife, Winnie Mandela, and Bantu Holomisa, along with former MK members in the new military. These

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[431] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

improbable charges were soon revealed to be baseless, having been concocted to divide and destabilize the ANC (Sanders 2006, 350).

Since then, right wing political challenges to South African democracy have faded to the extremist margins, and have ceased to pose any major threat. A former MK commander gave an illuminating explanation for why the defunct political views of right-wing organizations such as the Boeremag militia, which launched a terror campaign in 2002 and had at one point plotted to overthrow the ANC government, were doomed from the start:

> "The right wingers only started fighting after '94, those *Boeremag* who are in jail. Something which had no base at all. They thought Afrikaners are all stupid, they are going to support them. But it was all madness, trying revolution in South Africa. This is not Nigeria, where coups are that easy. You cannot just go and say you are organizing a rebellion- against whom? Whose country? Whom are you going to attract? Whom are you going to mobilize? Coloreds, whites, blacks, Indians, against whom? It's a rainbow nation. You can't win." [432]

As one former MK cadre explained, the "right-wingers and people within intelligence circles of SADF were not doing one thing. They had different agendas. One seeking profit and others motivated by racist hatred."[433] Although overt racism began to recede in South African politics (although not within the security forces, as we have seen), illicit profit seeking has reached epic proportions, and MK veterans' suspicions about apartheid agents enduring in South Africa today focus on their links to apartheid-era organized crime networks.

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[432] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[433] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009

These networks have proven very resilient and many have continued to flourish, in one form or another, within the bazaar of governmental and private security agencies, themselves largely staffed by former security forces personnel (Ellis 1998, 1999; Sanders 2006).

One former MK commander explained his perception of enduring clandestine networks linked to apartheid counterinsurgency: "Even now, I would call those spies who were not exposed Third Force. Because surely they are not serving the government of the day. They are destabilizing, sabotaging every efforts that are being done, any progress. Once a spy, always a spy."[434] He related an incident in 1993 that highlights the overlap between counterinsurgency and organized crime immediately prior to the transition from apartheid: his MK unit noticed a robbery and smuggling network establishing itself in his region and "thought they were just amateurs, but when we tracked them, followed them, surveiled them, I saw three of them, I trained them in Angola and I knew they were askaris. They were sent here, but we disorganized them."[435]

The former commander maintained: "Even now former [MK] cadres are under surveillance, surely, surely, bugging of phones. I know. [They] check what you are doing now, why were you not in the integration, how are you surviving." He explained his conviction based on repeated post-apartheid attempts by ex-askaris to alternately blackmail or bribe former MK cadres: "First they wanted to blackmail us as if we were involved in these heists, these robberies. But it was exposed that [the actual criminals] were Zimbabweans, they had never been comrades. They were promoting crime themselves, the Third Force. They came to

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[434] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[435] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

me, tried to recruit me many times. Robberies, stealing cars, all such things. So some comrades were trapped [into cooperating with criminals].”[436]

Spy Intrigues and their Impacts on Post-Transition State Institutions

To this day, allegations of secret cliques nested within South African state institutions persist. Even as they undermine state-civil society relations, such allegations echo the transition-era intrigue surrounding apartheid intelligence recruitment within ANC ranks. Hence during the trial of former national police commander Jackie Selebi, former director of police intelligence Mulangi Mphego “dropped a bombshell… alleging that Selebi’s prosecutor is part of a ‘judicial mafia’ trying to subvert the state.” Mphego claimed that “intelligence revealed the involvement of no less than 45 people and seven private entities,” including the prosecutor and lead investigator in Selebi’s case.[437] Gumede (2009) notes the danger of “collapse of proper boundaries between party and State,” including the National Prosecuting Authority and “State intelligence agencies” (173).

Although State exploitation of security institutions for partisan purposes is one of the defining traits of “competitive authoritarianism” (Levitsky and Way 2010) and is hardly unique to South Africa, the specific manner in which the post-apartheid state has manipulated these institutions throughout its process of democratic consolidation demonstrates the persistence of counterinsurgency legacies. For example, Gumede reports that in response to the 2005 surge in popular protest, triggered by state indifference to the pressing needs of South Africa’s poor, “then intelligence minister [and former MK intelligence chief]

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[436] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[437] Adriaan Basson and Sam Sole, “Selebi Spy’s Paranoid World,” *Mail and Guardian* [South Africa Edition], December 4 to 10, 2009, p.6

Ronnie Kasrils ordered an investigation, blaming *agents provocateurs*, whom he sought to fish out" (2009, 174). As in the Arms Deal (see below), state elites deflected corruption charges with allegations that their accuser had been an apartheid spy.

Although blaming spies for triggering popular uprisings against the state or for leveling charges that threaten elite interests is a trusted tactic of authoritarian regimes- indeed, the apartheid regime itself routinely blamed black protest on communist or Soviet influence- it is far less common for semi-consolidated democracies such as South Africa to resort to this tactic. In this sense, Kasrils's casting of blame on saboteurs whom he vowed to root out must be understood as a direct legacy of Third Force destabilization, when anonymous agents executed the orders of hidden forces, domestic or external, located in the State, quasi-state, or private realms. It must be emphasized that whether ANC officials like Kasrils actually believe such sinister forces to still be at work, or whether they are cynically resurrecting struggle-era rhetoric to distract public attention from their own shortcomings, either way their use of counterinsurgency rhetoric reflects the enduring suspicion and uncertainty that is the Third Force's toxic legacy in State-civil society relations.

This same use of Third Force legacies as a prism through which to understand the fragmentation of post-apartheid state-civil society relations can also be found from below, as it were. Asked about widespread popular suspicions that ANC members who profited from the transition were 'sellouts,' prominent South African academic Somadoda Fikeni declared: "I would really doubt that particular thesis. It's very easy to see an informer in every other person."[438] Yet

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[438] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, Tshwane (Pretoria), 20 December 2009

such suspicions continue to inform popular perceptions and participation in South African politics. In his analysis of popular resistance to the ANC's privatization of service delivery, Buur notes "the circulation of past struggle narratives concerning evil forces and enemies of the ANC who 'turn,' 'buy,' and use' individuals and groups of people in struggles against the People's government." He emphasizes how the layering of past suspicions about the 'Third Force' over current inequalities "plays on popular perceptions and readily available images of inadequate socioeconomic transformation" in a context where "it is no longer possible to identify with the same certainty the evil or hidden forces" (2007, 119).

Yet by focusing on how people "recycle" categories from past conflict to discredit foes in present-day "developmental contestations," Buur overlooks how the persistent, unresolved questions about Third Force activity continue to inform popular dissatisfaction with the pace and scope of post-transition development. Therefore, although it may indeed not be possible to identify enemies "with the same certainty" as during the struggle era, it is crucial to understand that many South Africans genuinely believe Third Force destabilization to be ongoing, and are not merely resorting to old tropes to make sense of new problems. In this sense, popular perceptions of Third Force conspiracies to sabotage progress also serve to further alienate civil society from the State, thereby weakening South Africa's democratic consolidation. This demonstrates the entrenchment of counterinsurgency legacies within South African politics at the State and civil society levels, and the hegemony of counterinsurgency as prism through which actors at both levels interpret contemporary, post-transition politics. Unmoored and disembodied from its original historical context, then, counterinsurgency has remained the decentralized, self-replicating force that continues to undermine

South Africa's democratic consolidation.

Counterinsurgency, Knowledge, and Power: State Violence and Hidden Histories in South Africa's Security Sector

Counterinsurgency preserved white privilege in the security institutions and insulated them against significant changes. Using the interlinked discourses of 'professionalism' and 'democracy,' the security forces were key sites of contestation in which the apartheid regime sought, just as ANC stalwart Popo Molefe predicted at the transition's onset, to shift the "ideological terrain by depriving the national democratic struggle of its national liberation character."[439] The security forces' refusal to allow ex-guerrillas access to their ranks, ostensibly in order to maintain military and police "professionalism," actually compromised these institutions' ability to safeguard the population against rampant post-transition insecurity. As we have seen, by secretly recruiting top ANC officials, the apartheid counterinsurgency program played a crucial yet hidden role in South Africa's democratic transition, ensuring the old guard's enduring hegemony over state security institutions. Yet this incomplete transition largely failed to secure the consent of the governed, ensuring the security institutions' ongoing illegitimacy.

South African academic Philip Frankel's maintains that the ANC and MK succeeded in outflanking the apartheid-era security elites during the transition because

"…history, fueled by its own logic, was loaded to the advantage of MK. MK leadership, although technically uncompetitive from the obtuse

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[439] For Molefe's entire quote, see the Conclusion

technoperspective of the SADF, was also deeply schooled, through a mixture of choice and necessity, at the critical interface between military and political affairs in a fashion that was, with individual exceptions, way beyond the exact comprehension of their SADF opponents, locked as they were by years of total strategy within the strict boundaries of traditional military ideology… If the SADF insisted on the maintenance of standards, then let it be, so the ANC argued, since this would be swept aside by postdemocratic history" (2000, 41-42).

According to Frankel, by keeping their eyes on the ultimate prize- the political kingdom- MK and the ANC succeeded in transforming the very terrain on which the old security elites stood. Yet although the ANC eventually cemented its hold on political power, the unreformed security forces have remained an important source of instability for the new South Africa, and Frankel underestimates the degree to which authoritarian patterns have endured in the security institutions despite the tide of "postdemocratic history." In part, Frankel misses these authoritarian security force legacies because he finds evidence of transformation at the elite level- where, as we have seen, apartheid informers abounded- while ignoring the systematic marginalization of rank-and-file MK cadres.

Counterinsurgency's objective of violently shaping historical outcomes while maintaining secrecy and plausible deniability is calculated to assert hegemony not only by crushing those who resist the state, but also by determining as much as possible the contours of any transition to democracy. Thus even after the transition, the populations persecuted by the authoritarian regime retain their subaltern status, not just because they tend to remain relatively impoverished, but because their narrative of struggle remains confined to the margins of history;

Lalu therefore urges us "to envisage how disciplines, which strive to achieve a reality effect, end up producing a subaltern effect that reveals a fundamental continuity in the functions of history as a statist discourse" (2009, 11). The end of political oppression does not necessarily correspond to the de-marginalization of subaltern narrative, nor, in this case, to the emergence from historical obscurity of the violent details of the "dirty war" the state waged against them.

Meanwhile, the security force elites' claims that regime violence during apartheid was intended to safeguard South Africa against communism also enabled them to claim a "professionalism" that qualified them to maintain a hold on the country's security institutions once the ANC had relinquished its key demands for economic reform. Hence SADF Gen. Georg Meiring's assertion shortly before the 1994 elections that the SADF had always been a professional military force in the mold of Western democracies, which didn't interfere in politics and was devoted to serving "the government of the day," an assertion that Ellis calls "utterly fallacious but politically meaningful" (1998, 314). It was meaningful inasmuch as Meiring was signaling that the SADF would not launch a coup to prevent the transition. But by claiming that apartheid civil-military relations had always resembled those in Western democracies, Meiring was bypassing the forces' history of authoritarian brutality by cloaking it in the myth of the apartheid regime's orderly, Western-style government. As an entrance fee to join this government, the ANC sacrificed its redistributionist platform, and the cadres who sought to implement it.

Shortly after the 2 February 1990 Pretoria Minute, SADF Gen. Malan asserted that MK didn't "qualify to belong to any defense force in South Africa" because "SADF produces [military] technology while [MK] only uses that

technology."[440] Malan then proposed a combat skills contest between his men and the liberation forces to determine which were more qualified to serve. Although its role had been to enforce domestic and external repression, the SADF's armed might gave rise to a self-reproducing myth that equated military sophistication and organization with legitimacy. This claim to "realist" legitimacy derived from the security forces' projected image of modernity and orderliness and from the forces' own claim to "professionalism," rather than stemming from actual popular legitimacy. While Malan was ultimately dismissed in F.W. De Klerk's 1992 purge of hard-line military and police generals, the vision he articulated of SADF legitimacy deriving from technological and combat prowess was ultimately the main force shaping the post-transition security forces, completely overriding the ANC and MK visions outlined in the previous chapter of a security force that would truly represent and serve the people. 'Professionalism,' then, becomes a means of both concealing and excusing the security forces' authoritarian tendencies, in which the forces' skill and experience at deploying violence becomes, according to its own self-affirming discourse, an attribute rather than a liability.

These claims to professionalism, and their implication that the apartheid security institutions were ideally suited to safeguard 'democracy,' have in turn conspired to mask the security forces' clandestine violence during South Africa's security sector reform process. This has reinforced the hegemony of the colonial narrative about security sector reform in South Africa's transition, a narrative rendered all the more insidious because it persists in shaping our understanding of the transition from a colonialist point of view even as colonial rule itself finally

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[440] "MK and the Future," p.7 (SAHA)

gave way to non-racialism.

The hegemony of the colonial narrative is also evident in former guerrillas' testimonies about the insecurity and hidden violence awaiting them at the Wallmansthal base in 1993-94. Both these incidents and the distortions surrounding them serve to highlight the colonial violence that has heretofore remained hidden in historical accounts. Previous literature (e.g., Frankel 2000; Mashike 2008) has noted the chaos and sense of disillusionment that prevailed among MK cadres at Wallmansthal, but none mentions the presence of askaris at the base, nor the disappearance by night of MK fighters while under cantonment. These details gathered from ex-guerrillas completely transform our understanding of the security sector reform process, and of the transition itself. We learn about a clearly orchestrated program to identify and kill certain MK guerrillas at an assembly point disguised as a safe haven, and to marginalize and demoralize the rest. The guerrillas had assembled there in the belief that the war was over, trusting in the ANC leadership to have made arrangements for their security, and for their participation in the reformed security forces.

It is also critical to point out that whereas Frankel (2000), for example, mentions that MK cadres suspected Modise and Nyanda of "selling out" (see Chapter 5), he leaves the impression that the rank-and-file merely felt that their leaders had compromised too much in their negotiations, and fails to discuss evidence of actual recruitment operations by counterinsurgency forces. This narrative then implies- as we have seen from an excerpt of Mandela's own autobiography- that the necessary compromises made by elites in transitions to democracy are not always immediately understood or accepted by the foot soldiers, who may feel left behind, their struggle made obsolete by the pace of

"democratic history." By the same token, these guerrillas' experiences and convictions of having been "sold out" by their leaders become reduced to the level of rumor and conjecture excluded from the narrative of democratic history, conspiracy theories understood, in a strategic overturning, to be the *product*, rather than the source, of their disillusionment.

The existing narrative about this event portrays the grievances that caused the cadres to protest and go AWOL as being based on poor accommodations, lack of dignity, and a vague sense of mistrust that prevailed at Wallmansthal. The critical details of death and disappearance go missing from the record. In this telling of history, the cadres' mass disaffection and demobilization only serve as further evidence of their unprofessionalism and their dubious moral character, as Mandela himself underscored in his address to the cadres, in which he berated them and accused them of being criminals and rapists. The image of chaos conjured by thousands of ex-guerrillas expressing their disgruntlement seems only to underscore the comparative 'professionalism,' if heavy-handed, of the apartheid security forces, and their indispensability as the best force available for the job of securing the restive country in uncertain times. 'Professionalism' in this context becomes inextricably linked to truth, as the unreformed apartheid security forces retain a post-transition grip both on power within their institutions and knowledge about them.

Even as the mainstream narrative hides the regime's deadly treatment of select MK cadres at Wallmansthal, it also downgrades the cadres' suitability for participation in the new security forces, obscuring their agency as battle-hardened guerrillas who set out to contribute to the nation's future by joining its new security institutions. The overall effect is to undermine both MK's historical role

in the anti-apartheid struggle and especially MK's potential, yet unfulfilled role in securing South Africa's post-colonial future. Instead the guerrillas are firmly relegated to subalternity, reproducing their marginalization. As one ex-guerrilla related, Mandela's visit to Wallmansthal "didn't solve anything, things got worse. We were just swallowed. They used us, really."[441]

This counterinsurgency narrative, in which violence and power are hidden, thus reinforces the political outcome it served to shape, embodying what Guha calls "the prose of counterinsurgency": "the discourse of history, hardly distinguished from policy, ends up by absorbing the concerns and objectives of the latter. In this affinity with policy, historiography reveals its character as a form of *colonialist knowledge*" (1994, 355; emphasis in original). As Beverley (1999) points out, this knowledge, in turn, serves "to construct the bureaucratic and academic discourses … that purport to represent these… insurgencies and place them in a teleological narrative of state formation" (27), a narrative which corresponds in this case to that of South Africa's democratic transition. According to this narrative, MK's marginalization was a necessary sacrifice for the ANC to achieve its larger objective of ascending to power; yet this sacrifice has borne tremendous costs to the nation at several levels.

The Third Force's External Dimension

Another aspect of the continuity between Third Force operations and post-transition South Africa is the lingering suspicion that that many apartheid-era agents maintain Cold War-era connections with Western intelligence agencies.[442] The CIA and MI-6 are known to have recruited their own spies within both the

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[441] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[442] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

government and the ANC during the Cold War years, when their governments'
interests aligned closely with those of the apartheid regime (Sanders 2006).
Winter (1981) reports that the CIA had recruited IFP chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi
as far back as the 1970s. During the 1980s, Buthelezi became favored by the
Reagan and Thatcher administrations as a black figurehead who constituted an
alternative both to the National Party, which was becoming increasingly
unpopular globally, and to the revolutionary ANC. During the Cold War era,
prominent international crime bosses had business contacts with both South
African and Western intelligence agencies (Ellis 1996); it is believed that some of
these organized crime rings remain active in South Africa while also maintaining
their ties with Western intelligence (Ellis 1999).

After the transition's onset, the Unites States sought to further strengthen its
influence in the region by stepping up "its so-called development assistance to
South African blacks through a variety of funds "for 'strengthening democratic
institutions'" with known links to the CIA (McKinley 1997, 92). In 2001, the FBI
trained 2000 South African police and intelligence experts[443], leading to
suspicions that US intelligence agencies took this opportunity to recruit spies
from among their trainees.[444] Today, the apartheid regime's Western allies are
known to maintain an interest in South Africa largely because of its extensive
mineral wealth; Sanders writes that the Anglo American and De Beers mining
giants, two of the most powerful players in South African politics, today work "in
close conjunction with British intelligence" (2006, 366).

In a 1996 interview, retired former chief of SADF MI Major General
Tienie Groenewald mentioned MI6 and CIA involvement in Third Force

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[443] Jean Comaroff, McGill University, Montreal, 29 March 2010
[444] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

activities, announcing cryptically: "I know of CIA operations… supplies, financial involvement through a network of fronts" (Berkeley 2001, 172). Berkeley notes that this is "plausible but difficult to substantiate," making it all the more interesting that an ex-MK guerrilla's account of foreign intelligence involvement during the Third Force era would corroborate that of a SADF MI general. According to this ex-MK source, these agencies have maintained a strong influence in South Africa, insisting: "our country is not really governed by us. There is a lot of CIA activities around, foreign intelligence services, MI-6. Because our intelligence services are in tatters [since the transition] so [foreign intelligence services] get in those cracks and operate there."[445]

Despite the difficulties of confirming or infirming these allegations of Western intelligence involvement, they nevertheless add context to the widespread popular perception that a Third Force continues to actively shape national politics. It is well-known that as white supremacist rule retreated across southern Africa, counterinsurgency experts retreated first from the fallen Portuguese colonies to Rhodesia, and then from Rhodesia to South Africa, continuing all the while to fight against black independence struggles in the region (see Chapter 3); hence the persistent suspicions within some sectors of South Africa today that apartheid counterinsurgency personnel have similarly remained active post-transition in the service of hidden forces. These perceptions of the Third Force as originating abroad ("our country is not really governed by us") further reinforce the sense that South Africa's masses are ultimately incapable of determining the course of their own country's politics.

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[445] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

Corruption, Militarization, and Fragmentation in Post-Apartheid Policing

There is little doubt that current violence in post-apartheid South Africa is partly a result of counterinsurgency legacies. As I have detailed above, among the legacies that have contributed to continued and escalating violence in urban South Africa have been the authoritarianism and culture of corruption within the ANC and its leaders, the instrumentalist link between criminal networks and the security sector that has delegitimized law and order institutions, and the continued link between security personnel and cold war patrons in ways that have proved to have similar delegitimizing effects. However, another important legacy that is directly linked to urban violence in today's South Africa has to do with the unique ideology that underpinned apartheid rule itself. Specifically, the previous regime's corrupt and violent strategies- that quite often utilized racism as a key mechanism of policing- have continued to shape post-transition state institutions.

Urban violence in South Africa has remained at an intensely high level during and after the transition, a crisis that the weak and illegitimate police has been largely unable to handle, and has even exacerbated through its involvement in corruption. Since the transition from apartheid, security privatization has become increasingly outsourced and distanced from the state, imitating counterinsurgency's propensity for outsourcing. Reflecting its broader embrace of privatization, the South African government has embraced "a libertarian agenda promoting a shift from the public to the private, with the apparent loss of public accountability" (Baker 2002, 31). This combines with the state's lack of capacity and reach to create a kind of "perfect storm" in which the state is simultaneously incapable of and unwilling to project its power and offer its protection uniformly to all of its citizens. Counterinsurgency legacies have also manifested in the

increasingly militarized state responses to urban violence in South Africa, as the state once again deploys special units to target lawbreakers, while leaders encourage violent state responses to crime in increasingly strident pronouncements. The militarization of policing is itself a symptom of state weakness and institutional illegitimacy.

Police corruption and complicity in crime was staggeringly high at independence: in 1995-1996, 8,000 police in Gauteng alone were reported to have committed crimes of one kind or another (Brogden and Nijhar 1998, 93). In Johannesburg, according to the divisional police chief interviewed in 1996, four police a week were suspended for corruption and 1,076 policemen nationally were under investigation for corruption in 1996, an increase from 89 investigations in 1995, 56 in 1994 and 32 in 1993-94 (Lodge 1998, 22). Counterinsurgency practices entrenched within the police remained in evidence post-apartheid as racism persisted within police ranks and between white policemen and black civilians. Shaw mentions a white former apartheid policeman who applied for amnesty to the TRC for killing four ANC cadres, "remained on in the police and was [in 2001] alleged to be involved in a series of cases of police brutality where black people were the victims" (2002, 32).

The racist attitudes that formed apartheid's basis were naturally strongest within the organs of state coercion, and have remained chronic in those institutions well after apartheid's demise. In the decade following the transition, torture by police and deaths in police custody remained widespread in South Africa, while a government inquiry into police force racism initiated by former police minister Sidney Mufumadi was never released ((Shaw 2002). Despite its much greater relative levels of economic development and political freedom,

South Africa's police ranked 11th out of 12 African countries in a 2005 survey of trust in state institutions; at 35%, the police were also trusted least out of any institution in the country (Chikwanha 2006).

Perhaps more than any other single event, National Police commissioner and Interpol chief Jackie Selebi's 2010 conviction for links with organized crime, accepting bribes, and covering up murder, reveals pervasive corruption in the highest echelons of the post-apartheid police.[446] One former guerrilla pointed to Selebi's disgraceful example as an important cause of corruption in the SAPS today: "if even the commissioner is corrupt himself, what do you think [will happen] with the rank and file down there? They can see the head of Interpol was getting money from gangsters, so why him and not me?"[447] The corruption scandal that felled Selebi epitomizes the corruption that has penetrated all levels of the SAPS.

The ANC has repeatedly sought constructive solutions to South Africa's policing crisis, most recently at its December 2007 Polokwane conference, where it acknowledged the dimensions of the crisis and emphasized the need to develop a police force that responds to community needs.[448] An interview with a veteran South African civil servant shed light on a range of critical problems facing the police: The country has a very low clear-up, or case solving, rate, in large part because police corruption impedes clear-up, as the police operate with impunity.[449] There is also a great danger in testifying in court, as illustrated by a

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[446] "Judgment Day for Selebi," *Mail and Guardian (South African Edition)*, July 1, 2010
[447] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[448] http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2536#peace (accessed 18/07/2011)
[449] In late 2009, Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa's written replies to parliamentary questions about SAPS effectiveness revealed, "among other things, that there had been a 57 percent rise in lost and stolen police case dockets, and a 105 percent rise in sample backlogs at forensic science laboratories" said the opposition Democratic Alliance party's

case in the Western Cape province where a gang kingpin ordered from prison the killing of anyone who would testify against him. The SAPS also offers little protection for witnesses, and people often refuse the police witness protection program, fearing police corruption. Like several MK veterans, this civil servant emphasized that crime "is encouraged by officialdom," while in urban areas, "police become crime syndicates," citing a police commander in the Eastern Cape province who was caught "running gangs." Meanwhile, the SAPS's Vehicle Theft Unit had become the butt of widely told jokes because it "literally stole cars."[450]

Shaw (2002, 40) emphasizes that the state risks developing increasingly paramilitary responses to crime, endangering key tenets of democratic policing. One MK veteran who runs a private security company pointed out how the state tries to compensate for weak policing by deploying highly trained "tactical units," failing to address the fundamental problems of police inefficiency and corruption, and terrorizing the populace: "kicking down doors- criminals often masquerade as police so people are suspicious when police knock on their door- suddenly they barge in with torches and guns, traumatizing small kids, women."[451]

Following a November 2009 incident in the Mabopane township in which police shot and killed a toddler sitting in a car whom they mistook for a criminal, Police Commissioner Bheki Cele had to publicly urge police: "don't be trigger happy."[452] Shortly afterward, Cele commented on the viciousness of South African criminals: "these half-animals do not have a God."[453] On another

spokesperson Dianne Kohler-Barnard ("DA Slams Rise in Missing Police Case Dockets," *Daily Dispatch*, 18 November 2009, p.3)

[450] Confidential interview with South African civil servant, Tshwane, November 2009

[451] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

[452] "'We Must Avoid the Mabopane Incident,' Cele Tells Cops" *Pretoria News*, 7 November 2009, p.1

[453] Ibid.

occasion, during a November 2009 radio interview, Cele insisted: "criminals should be spoken to 'in a language they understand.'"[454] The police commissioner's words bespeak at once the nation's desperation to end violence, and a dehumanization of criminals that conveniently ignores the broader socio-economic roots of crime.

This dehumanization of lawbreakers is encoded through the police's increasing willingness to 'shoot to kill.' An interview with a police officer training in Krugersdorp highlighted parallels with apartheid-era policing: "[g]enerally, the police are trigger-happy… look at what happens when there are service delivery protests: the police shoot retreating protesters from the back."[455] The killing of citizens protesting inadequate delivery of basic services such as electricity and water, which is widely privatized, shows the South African state coming full circle, shooting the still overwhelmingly black poor who rise up because of socio-economic grievances. In recent years, even the military has clashed with the police as soldiers protest the very same poor conditions. Meanwhile, in November 2009, an inquiry into a massacre perpetrated by striking security guards on the rampage still had not come to finality.[456]

The militarization of South African policing in the post-apartheid era is itself a symptom of, and is also intended to compensate for, police weakness. The marketization of policing has also inexorably led to its militarization. In part, this can be explained by the "paper trail" of the ANC's progressively more neo-pluralist socio-economic policies and progressively harsher legislation from 1996

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[454] "Insecurity in the Forces," *Mail and Guardian- South African Edition*, 13-19 November 2009, p.8
[455] Ibid.
[456] Confidential interview with South African civil servant, Tshwane, November 2009

onward, characterized by business leaders calling for more severe legal sanctions against armed robbers.[457]

The founding in 2001 of the FBI-trained elite Scorpions crime fighting unit, which operated separately from the police and reported directly to the chief national prosecutor, highlights the ANC government's resolve to combat crime with the same fierceness- and similar tactics- as the apartheid regime had used to fight insurgents. Halting government activity as they deployed from helicopters to raid administrative buildings and seize files and hard drives for evidence of government corruption[458], the Scorpions at once reflected apartheid commando tactics and the Goldstone Commission's raids on Third Force intelligence units. South African elites have also harmed the state's crime fighting ability for political ends, as illustrated by the disbanding of the Scorpions, which, some claimed, had been altogether too effective at fighting crime and highlighted the shortcomings of ordinary police.[459] The unit had conducted several high-level investigations against ministers charged with corruption, including Zuma himself, who promptly disbanded the Scorpions shortly after Thabo Mbeki's sacking from the presidency, thereby weakening the state's ability to fight crime for the sake of partisan politics (Russell 2009).

Politicians have also sought to capitalize on the populism of appealing to anti-crime sentiments through widely publicized crackdowns and the increasingly militarized response to violence.[460] This militarized approach to policing is also

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[457] Interview with Cheryl Frank, senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, Tshwane (Pretoria), November 2009

[458] Jean Comaroff, lecture at McGill University, Montreal, 29 March 2010

[459] Ibid.

[460] Interview with Cheryl Frank, senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, Tshwane (Pretoria), November 2009

symptomatic of a fractious political arena in which politicians seek to build individual credibility by publicly taking an uncompromising approach to fighting crime. The ANC elite, including the state president Jacob Zuma, have also taken to anti-constitutional pronouncements encouraging violent extrajudicial responses against criminals by both the state police and by private citizens. Zuma also defended Deputy Justice Minister Susan Shabangu when she advocated deadly force as a first response to criminals (Burger 2008; Russell 2009).

When security forces suddenly switch their normative role from predators to peace officers, the very enterprise of law enforcement is precarious at best. In the words of one South African civil servant

No matter how many police you train, you've got to shift that culture of corruption. Institutions ultimately need to be robust enough to counteract the role of institutional agency in facilitating or committing crime. South Africa must reach a point where it's in an individual policeperson's interest to obey the law. If it's in their interest to engage in crime, the institutional channels for corruption will be there."[461]

In the context of rampant police corruption and incompetence, it is instructive to recall the testimonies of several former MK guerrillas presented here, describing the positive contribution that MK cadres were poised to make to national policing at the time of the transition. They had envisioned their contribution both in terms of using MK's organizational culture and its vast popular legitimacy to strengthen the post-apartheid state institutions, and in terms of existing plans- which were scrapped- to have contingents of MK forces trained

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[461] Confidential interview with South African civil servant, Tshwane (Pretoria), November 2009

abroad as policemen, specifically in order to safeguard the new democracy at the domestic level.

The Persistent Weakness of South Africa's Security Institutions

Since South Africa's democratic transition, its security institutions have remained plagued by important levels of corruption, violence, and racism (Lodge 1998; Brogden and Nijhar 1998; Hyslop 2006). Recruits' determination and motivation were key assets for MK, commodities that could not be bought then and cannot be bought today, even as the SAPS continues struggling mightily to establish a culture of selfless service within its ranks. Meanwhile, ex-guerrillas' legitimacy largely endures in many South African communities, which have "sometimes looked to former combatants to provide leadership in the fight against crime" (Gear 2002, 64). In December 2009, I had an astonishing glimpse of South Africa's post-apartheid police incompetence as former guerrillas showed me a video recording of their 2006 attempt to turn in struggle-era weaponry to the police before an amnesty deadline. In an attempt to reduce the volume of guns circulating in civil society, the police were offering amnesty to any who would hand their weapons in. This group of former guerrillas used this opportunity to surrender at the police station a massive quantity of weapons they had buried in 1989 in an arms cache (known as a "dead-letter box") in the Eastern Cape province. The cache included Semtex plastic explosives, hand grenades, fuses, limpet mines, and AK-47 magazines and rounds.

The ex-guerrillas filmed the lengthy process of digging up the arms cache and delivering it to the regional police station at the amnesty deadline, where one of the ex-guerrillas declared they were handing in the weapons for the sake of

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their children's futures. The police reaction was tragic-comic: as the MK veterans stood by for many hours waiting to hand in the weapons, police employees and passersby alike stood gawking in shock and amazement at the arsenal arrayed on the station floor. Despite the amnesty deadline for that day, the video documents an on-duty policeman (who, according to the ex-guerrillas, was a former askari) vainly attempting, in a series of phone conversations in both isiXhosa and English, to locate someone on the force sufficiently qualified and motivated to process the incoming munitions. Although they had entered the station in the early afternoon, the ex-guerrillas ultimately had to bring their weapons home with them late at night, returning only on the following day to finally hand them in successfully.

The Privatization of Law and Order and Urban Violence

If a legacy of corruption and violence used by police forces has continued to underpin violence in South Africa, this has been greatly aggravated by the privatization of security in ways that have weakened the efficacy and legitimacy of law and order institutions and de-linking the state from society. In particular, private security companies, whose numbers were already growing steadily during apartheid's final decade (Cawthra 1986), mushroomed after the transition, supplementing and compensating for the limitations of post-apartheid state police. Like every other sector of the post-apartheid economy, the privatization of security attracted foreign corporations, as global private security titans such as Chubb and Wackenhut have joined a burgeoning local private security market. This burgeoning private security sector is the embodiment of neo-pluralist notions of policing and social control (Bond 2004; Wacquant 2007). At the foreign policy

level, privatization since apartheid has given rise to the proliferation of mercenary outfits such as Sandline and Executive Outcomes. These companies' acceptance of payment from war-torn African governments in the form of national resource access represented a continuation with the apartheid era counterinsurgency's pillaging of natural resources to fund their proxy wars. None of the literature on security privatization in South Africa thus far has distinguished between former MK insurgents' firms and others.

The embrace of a defense policy geared towards the fulfilling the agenda of transnational capital and the military-industrial complex has a variety of interrelated impacts on the realm of policing. First, according to a guns-and-butter calculus, it has diminished the resources available to spend on policing even as an acute policing crisis has gripped a new South Africa free of external threats. Second, it has marketized policing to a large degree, vastly expanding the private policing sector even as the SAPS has suffered from a lack of resources. As noted above, security privatization in this context has meant that private policing- which South Africans of all colors and classes tend to trust far more than the SAPS- has become available to those who can afford it, while those who cannot often adopt a "community policing" approach that often strays into vigilantism (Hansen 2006; Oomen 2004). The lack of reliable state policing must therefore be understood within the larger context of South Africa's service delivery crisis, which has seen poorer South Africans suffer from a lack of housing, electricity, water, roads, education, and other basic services, including policing. The state is thus reduced to just one of several competing forces, alongside private companies and interests, competing for political influence and the ability to deploy force.

Urban Violence: Counterinsurgency Legacies in Civil Society

Caroline Moser (2004, 5) has provided a useful typology of urban violence (what she calls a "roadmap") that is partially applicable to the South African case. This typology ranges from political violence (characterized by guerrilla and paramilitary conflict, and assassinations); to institutional violence (extra-judicial killings and vigilante violence); economic violence (kidnapping, armed robbery, drug trafficking); economic social violence (petty theft, small gangs, turf wars); and social violence, (individual- and family-level violence, rape and sexual abuse). We can elaborate on Moser's model to emphasize the causal relations between different categories of violence, not only as they occur simultaneously, but also along a historical spectrum in which the first two categories- political and institutional violence- leave a legacy of violence that is decentralized and semi- or unsystematic, if no less deadly.

To be sure, not all cases of countries undergoing transitions will experience all of these kinds of violence simultaneously; but in cases where political and institutional violence were the order of the day for decades, we can expect overlapping categories of social violence to scar the new era. Indeed, whereas struggle-era political violence no longer plagues South Africa, institutional, economic, and social violence have proliferated and evolved, creating their own set of dynamics in turn. We can conceive of this as "violent entropy", whereby war legacies sow seeds of decay within the state and society, giving rise to new patterns of violence in post-transition societies. These socio-political impacts can neither be disaggregated from the past, nor from each other.

South Africa being the murder capital of the world over the last 15 years, there are multiple kinds of violence unfolding in different parts of the country; in

KwaZulu-Natal province, or example, much of the violence since 1994 has persisted along apartheid-era battle lines between factions and neighbourhoods loyal to the ANC and the IFP (Kramer 2007). To this day, much of the violence in KwaZulu-Natal remains "political", though the participants and grievances have shifted somewhat with time (Kramer 2007). Similarly, for the first five years after independence, much of the violence in Gauteng province, and particularly in the "Reef" area near Johannesburg, was inflected with the grievances- and inflicted with the weapons- that endured since the particularly bloody 1990-94 period (Gear 2002). In the Thokoza township, the site of some of the heaviest Third Force violence, "gunmen armed with AK47 assault rifles executed 12 residents" just three days after Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration, underscoring the continuity between apartheid and post-apartheid urban violence (Neocosmos 1998, 216). According to one estimate, by the end of 1997, there were 4 million illegal firearms in South Africa, a figure which would have only increased since then (du Toit 2001, 50). Although murder rates have remained high in Gauteng since then, the political nature of violence has receded, leaving in its wake the poverty and anomie that is apartheid's nationwide legacy.

In this regard it is important to highlight the link between the legacy of counterinsurgency during apartheid and the ongoing, widespread effects since the transition. Over the past fifteen years, South Africa has been wracked by crisis levels of murder and rape whose "distinctive feature… is not its volume but its violence" (Altbeker 2007, 48); it is also the country with the second-greatest gap in the world between rich and poor.[462] Counter-intuitively, these chaotic

[462] According to the CIA Factbook, South Africa has a Gini coefficient of 65 (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2172.html) (accessed 18/07/2011); interestingly, South Africa is second only to Namibia, which it ruled from 1915-89, and which has a Gini coefficient of 70; the UNDP's less complete index of Gini

democratic-era legacies appear diametrically opposite to the meticulously organized state violence that begot them.

As we have seen, askaris who persisted in the post-apartheid security forces were instrumental in maintaining criminal networks that boosted crime levels and nurtured urban violence. We must also consider how the apartheid regime's recruitment of askaris and informers decimated social capital networks in African communities and replaced them with anomie, bringing post-apartheid society to a place where, in the words of one researcher, "criminality has become the norm."[463] In this sense, it is important to look beyond the self-evident obstacles to peace arising from post-war legacies, and to consider the specific ways in which counterinsurgency campaigns seek to deprive insurgents of local communities' loyalties by using the communities themselves as battlegrounds. This atomizes societies and sows mistrust that reproduces itself in new contexts removed from the struggle-era battle lines. The "increased crime, corruption, and poverty that frequently follow democratic openings" (Carothers 1997, 91) can be explained in part through the *presence* of pernicious institutional legacies and patterns, rather than through the absence of post-transition institutional power and organization. The recent waves of violence in several South African cities targeting communities of immigrants and refugees from other parts of Africa can be understood through this lens.

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coefficients places South Africa in the top 4 countries globally for income inequality over the past 11 years (http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/67106.html) (accessed 02/08/2011) based South Africa's Gini coefficient of 57.8 from 2000; this discrepancy also underscores the ongoing rise in inequality since the transition.
[463] Author's interview with Cheryl Frank, Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies, Tshwane (Pretoria), November 2009

CONCLUSIONS

The role of apartheid counterinsurgency in South Africa's democratic transition has been much wider than previously understood, bearing striking implications for the literatures on democratic transitions, security sector reform, and civil war termination, and powerful policy implications. As previous literature has noted, democratic transitions that did not relapse into civil war have nevertheless tended towards a bloody aftermath. An analysis of counterinsurgency deepens our understanding of why this occurs. Counterinsurgency programs' alarming resilience during democratic transitions leaves distinct legacies in the institutional, social capital, and participatory realms that prevent democratic consolidation and shape "gray zone" outcomes. At the participatory level, a study of counterinsurgency illuminates the role that state intelligence services can play in shaping pacts between incumbents and rebel elites. Spy agencies' secret efforts to recruit or kill top-ranking rebel leaders shift the terms and political terrain of negotiations to the right, restricting true political change, perpetuating authoritarian power structures, and silencing progressive forces. This splits rebel movements between powerful elites and sidelined masses, disempowering broad, racially marginalized sectors of the population and worsening their impoverishment.

Counterinsurgency legacies also give rise to political uncertainty and instability both within state institutions and between the state and civil society. Fears of conspiracies and cabals, covert political agendas, and hidden loyalties represent a continuity with the authoritarian past that undermines trust, and with it, democratic consolidation.

Authoritarian, corrupt, and racist practices often endure in the security sector after democratization, undermining institutional legitimacy and sustaining criminal networks. Even as security institutions ostensibly pass under civilian control, counterinsurgency programs can remain at least partly intact, compromising security sector reform effectiveness and legitimacy, and contributing to an ongoing insecurity ecology. Counterinsurgency relies heavily on informer networks and on outsourcing violence to paramilitaries to ensure 'plausible deniability,' contributing to the destruction of social capital and the atomization of society. The distrust and violence that these strategies sow among occupied populations perpetuate themselves in the post-transition era, replacing social capital networks with privatized, securitized geographies. A history of state-sponsored political violence and copious small arms supply have left in their wake an epidemic of non-institutional violence, ranging from gang warfare, kidnapping, and organized crime, to individual-level violence.

The ANC's Post-Transition Renunciation of its Redistributionist Platform

The 1955 Freedom Charter had reflected the compromises within the ANC, embodying its embrace of African nationalists and doctrinaire Marxists alike, calling "for nationalization of the mines, but not for a more general challenge to basic property relations" (Marx 1998, 199). The ANC's 1989 Harare Declaration similarly described economic and land tenure reforms in only vague terms (Turok 2008, 31). After the transition, the ANC adopted a series of progressively more right-wing economic programs, abandoning the 1994 RDP's generous provisions for community development in favor of GEAR in 1996, which embraced private business on the premise that elite wealth would trickle down. Thus far, transfer of

wealth to blacks has occurred only at the elite level, through the very narrow

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) program, which has made

multimillionaires of a handful of well-connected black South Africans, leaving

tens of millions in crushing poverty, with inadequate housing or utilities (Turok

2008; Russell 2009).

The notion that blacks, having joined the economic elite, could somehow

transform it from within is debunked by the popular South African maxim, "the

boardroom table changes the black man, not the other way around." The drastic

"Chicago school" economic reforms, typical only a decade earlier of authoritarian

regimes such as Pinochet's Chile, were now the very reforms embraced by

democratizing South Africa, further entrenching the country's wide, highly

racialized gap between rich and poor (Klein 2007). By contrast, on the eve of the

transition's onset, Chris Hani had stressed the importance of "tak[ing] this

question of negotiation away from the clever initiatives and maneuvers of

individuals. We want to put it squarely in the hands of the people. The people

must know that negotiations is an arena of struggle."[464]

At the international level, the USSR had been the ANC's main patron, and

one of Mandela's primary tasks upon his release from prison was to reassure

those Western leaders who felt uneasy about the ANC's communist leanings and

to win their support (Shubin 2008). Meanwhile, the ANC's armed wing had been

trained, financed, and armed by the Eastern bloc, and had fought alongside Soviet

client Angola. Yet with the global decline of communist ideology came the

decline of the anti-colonial struggle's cutting edge in South Africa. One former

guerrilla recalled vividly the Communist contribution to the struggle and

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[464] Interview with Chris Hani, Lusaka, 21 January 1990- Road Ahead Perspective
(SAHA)

contrasted it with political avarice today:

"The [South African] Communist Party guided, it helped, those days. [SACP officials today] are corrupt communists, lumpens, thugs. They don't know anything about communism. Chris Hani, Moses Mabhida, Harry Gwala, Moses Kotane, Dathu Denqlume, Joe Slovo, Ruth First, Jack Solomons, Yusuf Dadoo, they were great men [and women], we used to respect them, you know, when you see them you see your *father*. Dignified comrades! [Now] you see a communist wearing a shoe costing twelve thousand [Rand] and a shirt costing four thousand, driving a car costing seven hundred and fifty thousand, then you call yourself a communist? How? You will turn fools, not us. We joined the ANC when we were still young, you see, we grew in the ANC culture and the Communist Party culture, you cannot come and tell us things have changed… Discipline is discipline."[465]

This ex-guerrilla blamed the rampant corruption and ideological inertia in the ANC today on its abandonment of the meritocratic cadre policy that gave the movement its discipline and power during the struggle years.[466] Cadre policy entailed the rigorous vetting of candidates for all leadership positions as a means of weeding out the unqualified, ideologically uncommitted, or worse, spies and traitors.[467] During the struggle years when the organization's survival was at stake, the ANC placed utmost importance on cadre policy. At the 1985 Kabwe conference, ANC chairman O.R. Tambo stated: "the question of the kind of cadre we are producing assumes greater importance with every passing day… these cadres will constitute and important component part of our internal structures and

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[465] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, December 2009
[466] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009
[467] Ibid.

therefore of the ANC as a whole. They must therefore be what the ANC wants them to be. This cannot be left to chance."[468] Although cadre policy may not be compatible with a commitment to political democracy and has been criticized within some Leftist circles for stifling dissent and debate, its dismantling in the South African case has coincided with the flourishing of corruption and nepotism within the ANC. This has accompanied the decline of MK veterans' membership within the party since the transition, as the ANC has increasingly alienated its former vanguard and has instead become a vehicle for elites to secure power and profits.

One South African scholar underscored South Africa's widening wealth disparities since the transition, the concentration of wealth into ANC elites' hands, and their corresponding inability to understand the poor and disempowered:

In 1991 when the ANC met in Durban for its conference, you would count the number of buses which were there. When again the ANC met in 1997, buses were half that population. When now they met in Polokwane [in December 2007], you would think it was a German car show. It tells you where the elite has gone. That's the most graphic depiction of that social distance."[469]

Since the transition, there has been a mounting tension between the ANC's championing of private wealth, and the fact that it "constantly draws on the rhetoric of the past struggle, insisting that the development of the new democracy

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[468] SAHA archives

[469] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, Tshwane (Pretoria), 20 December 2009

remains a direct continuation of that history" (Buur 2007, 111). Despite the ANC's use of struggle-era discourse as a means of shoring up its own legitimacy, it has done very little in terms of actually assisting the combat veterans who were at the forefront of the very struggle the party invokes today. On the other end of the spectrum, most MK veterans- as well as the redistributionist ideology they espoused and fought for- today languish in obscurity and poverty, cut off from the security institutions they fought to reshape, and from the ANC whose vanguard they once formed.

Class, Race, and Post-Colonial Continuities

Post-apartheid racism and its spatial and socio-cultural segregations persisted in South African society at large, and especially in the unreformed security institutions. Many former masterminds of apartheid counterinsurgency have since sought to deny that they and their murderous operations were defending a racist system, claiming dispassionately that the purpose of South African counterinsurgency was to protect free enterprise and Western values from communist socialism (Berkeley 2001).[470] This is instructive for what it teaches us about colonialism's versatility in shedding its racial discrimination aspect in order to adapt and survive post-apartheid. In this chapter, I argue that even as the era of apartheid clandestine violence gave way to non-racial democracy, the range of apartheid legacies that have endured in the new South Africa represent at least a partial triumph for counterinsurgency's hegemonic strategy. Moreover, chief among these legacies has been the clearly racist ideology that underpinned the

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[470] "I did not see it as upholding apartheid… In my whole working career, I spent more time with blacks than with whites," explained one-time SAP Special Branch chief, Maj. Gen. Jac Buchner, commissioner of the Kwa-Zulu Police from 1989 to 1992, in a March 1996 interview (Berkeley 2001, 180)

counterinsurgency campaigns during apartheid.

CLR James observed: "The race question is subsidiary to the class question and to think of imperialism in terms of race is disastrous. But to neglect the racial factor as merely incidental is an error only less grave than to make it fundamental" (1963, 29). European colonialism was first and foremost a capitalist project that instrumentalized race as a tool to maximize wealth exploitation; apartheid epitomized the violence of colonialism's legal, institutional, and socio-cultural racism, and the tremendous profits it brought to racial and economic elites. Corporate interests were instrumental in spearheading European colonial ventures, and privately-funded expeditionary forces colonized much of Africa and other continents (Rodney 1972). In some instances, those same corporate interests also spearheaded decolonization, recognizing that colonial modes of extraction had ceased to be profitable. Indeed, the very nature and implementation of key apartheid institutions such as the pass laws, and the establishment of the homelands system was in great part aimed at organizing both capital and labor towards South Africa's industrialization (Lodge 1986).

It was thus no coincidence that in 1986, on the eve of the transition from white minority rule, captains of private industry initiated dialogue with the ANC to explore how the inevitable political shift could be managed so as to preserve corporate wealth and political privilege as much as possible (Sparks 1994; Klein 2007). This dialogue seamlessly morphed into ANC negotiations with the National Party, and white elites eventually chose the pragmatism of abolishing state racism, and sharing power and revenues with their ANC counterparts, in exchange for the enshrinement of private profiteering.

Against the backdrop of ongoing counterinsurgency operations, two closely

interconnected factors contributed to South Africa's incomplete transition: First, the ANC elite's abandonment of masses -which was partly a result of apartheid intelligence recruitment operations, as we have seen- and second, the decline and fall of the ANC's revolutionary socialist redistribution platform, which overlaps with its elite/mass split. Situating the South African transition in the broader context of the neo-liberal "moment", Taylor points out that "the further involved in the negotiations the elites of the ANC became, the greater they began to identify with the hegemonic project that was being pushed by a multiplicity of actors" (2001, 38).

Upon his release from prison, Mandela himself identified the nationalization of industries as a top priority for the ANC, alarming the politicians and captains of industry who comprised South Africa's white elite (Taylor 2001). Yet Mandela's discourse would soon change, and the more socialist elements within the ANC sidelined, as the negotiated pact between elites took shape. The intelligence recruitment explanation set forth here is important to consider in contrast to Klein's (2007) portrayal of a disorganized and amateurish ANC negotiating team that withdrew its major demands for wealth redistribution after the NP easily outmaneuvered it in negotiations. Others have attributed the ANC's embrace of neo-liberal economics to the greed of individual ANC leaders, who quickly became accustomed to luxury.[471] Yet neither of these perspectives satisfactorily explains how the ANC came to repudiate its original negotiating positions so thoroughly. Here it is important to note that when South African masses accuse the ANC of 'selling out'- an accusation frequently heard when discussing politics with black South Africans- the implication of the term is not

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[471] Author's interview with Dr. Somadoda Fikeni, Tshwane (Pretoria), 20 December 2009

merely that ANC elites went too far in compromising with the other side, but rather implies that they were actually recruited by apartheid intelligence.

ANC policy statements and conference proceedings at the transition's onset demonstrated an extremely thorough and nuanced understanding of the National Party regime's hegemonic agenda. It also highlights the apartheid regime's increasing abandonment of race-based exclusionary politics- which had become increasingly unacceptable among its erstwhile international allies- in favor of exclusionary economic politics. Nine months after the February 1990 sea change in South African politics, the ANC held a conference at which Popo Molefe, a senior Congress leader, identified the National Party's key strategies to make South Africa's political terrain as inhospitable as possible to the liberation forces. Molefe said: "The regime is pursuing a political program with the following main objectives:

- to regain legitimacy in the eyes of the mass of the governed and the international community
- to present itself as a force indispensable to the process of the transition both as the manager of this process and the force best placed to secure it
- to shift the ideological terrain by depriving the national democratic struggle of its national liberation character and present[ing] it as a contest between "free enterprise" and "socialism"
- to pacify our people and engender the psychology among us of being passive spectators"[472]

The apartheid securocrats' counterinsurgency strategy already aimed to

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[472] "ANC Organizing Committee National Workshop 6-9 November 1990: Strategic Priorities for Building the ANC- Address by Comrade Popo Molefe," (SAHA); Molefe was a key ANC political organizer and strategist whom Mandela (1994) mentions in his autobiography.

weaken and discredit the ANC, both domestically and in the international arena, along the lines Molefe so accurately described. The National Party's war against the ANC existed along a continuum that encompassed the Third Force violence calibrated to sow chaos and fear in ANC strongholds throughout the country, as well as less overtly violent meta-strategies to ensure continuity in key areas of the state and civil society. Here I argue that in spite of the ANC's rise to power, apartheid counterinsurgency in fact largely achieved its objectives, as identified by Comrade Molefe in his address above. In particular, the role of the apartheid military and police structures in shaping the transition, and their enduring post-transition power, represent the manifestation of this hegemony, in which racial inequalities were abolished but class inequalities widened.

The Security-Corruption Nexus: Development and the Military-Industrial Complex

The twin imperatives of providing security and development in post-conflict settings have given rise to a burgeoning literature on the "security-development nexus" (e.g., Buur, Jensen, and Stepputat 2007). Yet in light of the massive corruption that endures in post-conflict settings- particularly within security force channels (Brogden and Nijhar 1998; Marks 1998; Hyslop 2005)- we must also consider the dimensions and impact of a "security-corruption nexus," whereby security institutions' proclivity for enabling corruption can overshadow post-conflict development initiatives. I argue that this is a legacy of counterinsurgency, located at the highest echelons of state decision-making. The new South Africa has featured the triumph of the military-industrial complex, which was a key pillar of the apartheid regime.

The notorious 1995 arms deal scandal, in which ANC elites received fabulous kickbacks from purchasing an array of exorbitant new weapons systems, epitomizes how, rather than steering South Africa towards socio-economic equality, post-transition elites instead have hitched their future to the military-industrial complex's payoffs, which have not trickled down to the poor. In this sense, the Arms Deal represented counterinsurgency's enduring legacies, as apartheid's militaristic and corrupt policies, embedded as they were within the state, replicated themselves within the ANC leadership. This militaristic aspect was now disembodied from the purpose of actual combat, which had been its main focus during apartheid; instead, ANC elites used these patterns embedded within the state to profit through the same channels that had become so well worn during apartheid. As the transition saw the ANC literally buy into notions of neoliberal democracy and capitalism as "normal" (Taylor 2001), so did this normative embrace entail also an embrace of the conventional military.

The Arms Deal scandal tainted a broad swath of post-transition politicians, while transforming the 'new' military into a vehicle for staggering personal profit as these newly-minted leaders reaped arms manufacturer kickbacks from the purchase of expensive state-of-the-art weapons systems. These included Swedish warplanes, British attack jets, helicopters, and naval frigates, corvettes, and submarines from a French-German-Italian consortium, bought despite the nonexistence of external military threats. Thus the South African navy and air force, which were far less corrupt than the clandestine security force branches and the police (Hyslop 2005), now acquired cutting-edge weaponry that had finally become available to South Africa with the lifting of anti-apartheid sanctions, a change from which the indigenous arms industry also profited tremendously

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(Kynoch 1996). Ironically, British Aerospace, manufacturer of the Hawk jet, paid huge kickbacks to Defense Minister Joe Modise in the form of a donation to a foundation ostensibly set up to benefit MK veterans (Holden 2008, 107).

We have previously seen how the apartheid elite was intertwined with South Africa's extensive military-industrial complex, giving rise to corruption scandals such as "Muldergate," with profound repercussions on the country's top leadership. It must be emphasized that the 1978 Muldergate scandal embodied the nexus of apartheid counterinsurgency and its military-industrial complex, as politicians and businessmen became embroiled in a scandal centering around clandestine operations to shape news coverage of South Africa by buying media outlets and paying off journalists (see Chapter 3). The increasing militarization of the apartheid bureaucracy in the 1970s and 1980s was accompanied by the militarization of South Africa's economy as it undertook to manufacture more of its weaponry indigenously and to become an arms exporter in its own right. This dovetailed with the security forces' political influence and the marketization of the South African economy to create an important post-transition legacy, in which top-level political corruption, and its links to the military-industrial complex, again resurfaced.

Shortly after the transition, Kynoch (1996) described worrying tendencies in the "new" South African defense establishment: "it adheres rigidly to political realism, supports the expansion of a massive defense industry and international arms trade, and manages to retain a budget grossly out of proportion with the legitimate security needs of the country" (1996, 442). In this context, "political realism" connotes a foreign policy still preoccupied by external security threats, which have been virtually nonexistent since the fall of apartheid. Yet the purchase

of these new weapons systems was not primarily based on foreign policy considerations, and as such did not reflect decision-makers' adherence to "realism" so much as their subservience to the military-industrial complex and its profits. This has represented an important continuity with the corporatism of the apartheid era. It was no coincidence that when post-apartheid politicians managed to embroil themselves in a world-class, multi-billion dollar scandal, it involved the weapons industry.

One South African civil servant emphasized that the "eroding state moral authority has real consequences on the state's ability to create safety."[473] A former MK guerrilla reinforced this, insisting that the arms deal's 'demonstration effect' led to the increase in urban violence and crime post-apartheid:

"When the arms deal came, people saw that hey man, these people who we believe are our leaders, they are corrupt, they are thieves themselves, they are dishonest, because our country is not in a war threat, so why buy arms with so much money, with so much billions when poverty is the main thing that needs to be addressed. And then the crime wave took over, and it became very much uncontrollable."[474]

Inevitably, from the intrigue surrounding Arms Deal surfaced the skeletons of apartheid counterinsurgency's most sensitive legacy: the question of which ANC members had spied for the regime. When faced in 2003 with accusations of corruption in the "Arms Deal" scandal, current South African president Jacob Zuma and his ally Schabir Shaik riposted by accusing chief national prosecutor Bulelani Ngcuka of being an apartheid spy codenamed 'agent RS452,' claiming

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[473] Confidential interview with South African civil servant, November 2009
[474] Confidential interview with ex-combatant, November 2009

that they possessed files to prove it- charges that later proved baseless (Holden 2008).

Counterinsurgency's Implications for Civil War Resolution

This dissertation opens the venue for a larger research agenda that will test these conclusions' generalizability across a range of cases; countries suitable for a comparative study of counterinsurgency that have undergone political violence before and during negotiated transitions include Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, East Timor, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, Namibia, Northern Ireland, Peru, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, among others. It also has important implications for understanding counterinsurgency's impact on negotiations that ultimately failed to resolve civil war, such as in Israel-Palestine.

The temptation to shape post-transition outcomes, combined with strong capacities for clandestine violence, makes counterinsurgency a compelling option for government decision-makers. Original research reveals new dimensions to apartheid counterinsurgency during South Africa's elite pacting process, and highlights why insurgents in conflicts elsewhere may remain distrustful of government security guarantees throughout negotiations to end conflict. This finding deals a blow to the recent wave of practitioner-oriented literature on counterinsurgency; for example, Kilcullen's recipe for counterinsurgency success calls for replacing centralized, "top-down" statebuilding agendas with "bottom-up, civil-society-based programs that focus on peace-building, reconciliation, and the connection of legitimate local nonstate governance structures to wider state institutions" (Kilcullen 2010, 115). Yet the evidence presented in this study indicates that governments will be tempted to "cheat" by deploying clandestine

violence even as they endeavor to gain local trust by giving insurgents and their constituent communities a semblance of ownership over post-civil war institutions and processes. Therefore, putting incumbent security forces in charge of these processes while assuming their trustworthiness and goodwill is akin to entrusting foxes with the safety of the proverbial chicken coop, and is likely to foster lasting distrust of the state among the rebels' rank-and-file even if rebel leaders have signed on to the pact. This leads to broader mistrust of post-transition institutions among former rebels and their constituent populations.

The state's capacity to sustain clandestine violence during negotiations creates a crucial imbalance between government and rebels, heightening rebels' fears of being marginalized or 'sold out' by their leadership during the elite pacting process. This sharpens findings from previous civil war literature that emphasizes the importance of "credible commitment" from both sides but assumes parity between state and rebels. Instead, the South African case indicates that counterinsurgency puts rebels at a distinct disadvantage during negotiations. Counterinsurgency also drives a wedge between rebel elites, whom the state will try to co-opt or recruit, and the rebels' rank-and-file, who are likely to become disgruntled with the elite pact and its provisions for security sector reform. Government counterinsurgency strategies to weaken rebels with clandestine violence have proven effective in warfare. Yet these strategies backfire when governments use them to gain leverage during democratic transitions, because they lead in the long term to weak, illegitimate, and corrupt security forces, and to chronic urban violence. Thus counterinsurgency may give governments the upper hand in war, but ultimately contributes to 'losing the peace.'

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The following sections of the South African History Archive (SAHA) at the William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, were consulted on 20 December 2009. Most have the author's name and date of release; some have neither.

H5.3.4 Kabwe Conference
-"Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the National Consultative Conference, June 1985- Presented by the President of the ANC" – address by O.R. Tambo

5.5.5 Negotiations Bulletin
-"'Ready to Govern': ANC Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa," 28-31 May 1992

5.16 Hani's Death:
The Mqanqeni Affair: South African Communist Party Central Committee Statement, 31 March 1993
ANC Press Statement on Police Pronouncements, 13 April 1993, Johannesburg
ANC Department of Information and Publicity: MK Statement on the Assassination of Chris Hani, 14 April 1993, Johannesburg

5.17 Umkhonto weSizwe:
-"MK Comes of Age"
-Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe, 25th Anniversary Souvenir Issue," 1986
-Notes of Meeting with Chris Hani, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and Steve Tshwete, Political Commissar," from an interview by John D. Battersby, 3 June 1988, Lusaka, Zambia
-Interview with Chris Hani, Deputy Commander Umkhonto we Sizwe, Lusaka 21 January 1990: Road Ahead Perspective (Interview follows extended NEC [National Executive Committee] meeting, 18-20 January 1990)
-Laurie Nathan, "Article on the IDASA-ANC Conference on the "Future of Security and Defense in South Africa," May 23-27 1990, Lusaka
-"MK and the Future," dated November 1990 (author unknown)
-"African National Congress Organizing Committee National Workshop, 6-9 November 1990: Strategic Priorities for Building the ANC- Address by Comrade Popo Molefe"
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-"Address of Comrade President Nelson Mandela to the Conference of Umkhonto weSizwe," Thohoyandou, Venda, 9th August 1991
-"Office of the Military Council of Transkei: Address by Major General Bantu Holomisa to the MK Conference in Venda, 1991"
-Special Conference of MK Held at Mgwenya College of Education in Kanyamazane, From 3-4 September 1993

-"Call to Umkhonto we Sizwe" issued "by the Army Chief of Staff on behalf of the MHQ [Military Headquarters] of Umkhonto we Sizwe" and dated 14/09/1993

A2.4.1.7 TRC Gunrunning 1974-97:
A collection of untitled documents from this section details in chronological order the SADF Military Intelligence preparations for the November 1990 coup attempt on Bantu Holomisa in Transkei; subsequent attempts to destabilize Transkei and Ciskei; and excerpts of SADF MI Col. Nieuwoudt's testimony at a special *in camera* session of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which includes his testimony on intelligence recruitment within ANC and MK ranks.

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