

INTERNATIONAL

Blacks at War

As vigilantes attack radicals, South Africa's unrest takes a bloody new turn  
they are called "the fathers" but  
there is nothing paternal about  
their wrath. In the South African !

squatters' shantytown of Cross-  
roads last week, scores of blacks  
armed with clubs, spears, iron bars and

stones went on a rampage against radicals. |

Wearing white headbands, the vigilantes  
thrashed the "comrades," burned down  
their shacks and destroyed the homes of  
their kinsmen. In at least one incident,  
they dispensed street justice with a gory  
punishment the radicals themselves have  
made infamous: they hung a "necklace," or  
an automobile tire soaked with gasoline,  
around the neck of a victim and set it on  
fire, engulfing the man in a blazing ring of  
death (page 34). "We are giving them a

taste of their own medicine!" shouted one |  
vigilante leader as he and 70 followers ma- |

rauded through the streets.  
The fires smoldered for four days, send-  
ing a mushroom cloud of smoke over the

sprawling shantytown near Cape Town. |  
When it was over, more than 3,000 of the |

tiny houses in Crossroads had burned to the  
ground and over a quarter of its population

of 200,000 was left homeless. Thousands of |  
displaced blacks sat on the roadsides, shiv- |

ering in the winter cold, surrounded by  
salvaged scraps of bedding, clothing and  
kitchen utensils. There was no clue to  
where they would go only that they could  
soon get caught again in the cross fire be-  
tween the fathers and the comrades.

The war for South Africa's townships has i

taken a bloody new turn. The young radi-  
cals who have gained increasing control  
over the segregated areas are no longer  
fighting just the white police. Now they are

. bodies in the streets and the front yards. " |

waging violent battles with other blacks. |  
Some of the vigilantes are moderates who |

oppose the radicals's strategy of armed struggle. Others are street gangs who fear the loss of their petty-crime rackets. Still others are older blacks who have become fed up with intimidation of blacks who refuse to join in antiwhite boycotts and protests. Whatever their motives, thousands have started to fight back, convulsing townships from Guguletu near Cape Town to Soweto outside Johannesburg in violence that has left more than 100 dead in the past month. 'Soweto is in a state of civil war,' says one resident. 'It's no longer

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| an increasingly tough war on the radical  
| African National Congress (ANC)'s strategy he underlined last week by ordering air  
' and ground strikes on ANC bases in Zim-

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| Fighting fire with fire: Black vigilantes after attacking comrades in Cape Town  
e A  
~ ARGUS

news to wake up in the morning and see

For the moment, South African President P. W. Botha seems content to let the black goats eat each other. He has been waging |

! babwe, Zambia and Botswana (box). At  
- than police in punishing ANC-inspired  
home, the vigilantes may have more luck

| radicals. The battles in the townships also i  
| support Botha's bid to convince the world |

' that much of South Africa's unrest is  
' 'black on black.' Some blacks charge that !

government forces are helping the vigilan-

tes, turning a blind eye to their violence.  
supplying them with arms and in some  
cases even joining in their rampages. Pre-

| toria has denied the charges.

The government could quickly come to

| regret the violence. A new round of unrest

may erupt in three weeks, when blacks  
celebrate the 10th anniversary of the 1976

i Soweto riots. Last week ANC leader Oliver

Tambo called on his followers to stage a

{ nationwide strike and â\200\234spread total disobe-  
' dienceâ\200\235 on June 16. Even more worrisome

for Pretoria, the warfare has begun to seep  
beyond the townships, which house only 25

. percent of South Africaâ\200\231s 22 million blacks

but lie close to major cities and are seed-  
beds of radicalism. It has now spread to

rural black homelands like | |  
KwaNdebele. If the bloodshed |  
keeps mounting, Botha may de-  
cide to scotch his policy of limit-  
ed reform and crack down  
harder than ever. Soon the  
Afrikaner will say, "What is the  
point of going on like this when  
you get no credit for anything  
you do?" â\200\231 â\200\235 warns one senior gov-  
ernment official.

Rising expectations: Of the  
township warriors, the young  
radicals remain by far the  
strongest. Over the past 20  
months they have tangled re-  
peatedly with white police and  
alleged black collaboratorsâ\200\235  
in clashes that have left more  
than 1,500 people dead. Their  
grievances include substand-  
ard black education that has  
left many of them illiterate and unskilled,  
a white-dominated economy that keeps  
many young black job seekers unemployed  
and a political system that largely ex-  
cludes them. Meanwhile, Pretoriaâ\200\231s halt-  
ing moves toward reform have given them  
a sense of "rising expectationsâ\200\235â\200\224a feeling  
that white resolve is weakening and that  
they may win equality faster than their  
parents ever dreamed. Recently Botha

stepped up the reform process by proposing

to abolish the â\200\234pass lawsâ\200\235 that force blacks  
to carry identity cards to travel to white  
areas. He also proposed to allow blacks to

participate in provincial governments and  
give them property rights. But the radi-  
cals insist he hasnâ\200\231t gone far enough. They

want a one man, one vote system that  
'cals have begun to set up their own de facto  
. governments. In some areas they control,

- would almost certainly ensure a black
- takeover of power.

Eight months ago the militant rioting  
was largely sporadic (NEWSWEEK, Sept. 16,

ly organized. The radicals seem to be focus-  
ing on attacking black policemen and their  
familiesâ\200\224firebombing their houses, lean-  
ing on black shopkeepers not to serve them.  
While the comrades once fought mostly

MARK PETERS FOR

Strength in numbers: The radical armies are large and angry

with stones, they are now better armed. In major townships like Alexandra and Guguletu, police have come under sniper fire or grenade attack dozens of times in the past six weeks. In their hunt for suspected ANC terrorists government forces have uncovered arms caches that include Soviet-made limpet mines and AK-47 rifles. The radicals have also grown increasingly effective in carrying out the ANC's strategy of making the townships ungovernable. Many administrative boards and councils no longer meet for fear of being harassed. Some local government staffers are afraid to show up for work. The comrades have leaned on thousands of residents not to pay their rent a campaign that, according to one senior civil servant, has cost the townships more than \$65 million. As official authority has broken down, the radi-

NEWSWEEK

youths order residents to clean the streets.

In others, they try suspected collaborators (1985). Since then it has become increasing-

in people's courts and punish them with beatings and sometimes death. For many blacks the intimidation cam-

paign has had its intended effect. There

have been hundreds of resignations among South Africa's black policemen, who num-

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|

Pretoria's Surprise Show of Force

| Party rally in Pietersburg, in  
i the Transvaal. It was also  
. questionable how effective

The attacks began as the sun rose. Two South African fighter-bombers dived

ple of South Africa will have

| to pay the price of this,â\200\235 de-  
. clared official opposition lead- :  
i er Colin Eglin.

Economic threat: White House |

over the Zambian capital of  
Lusaka to strike a suspected  
encampment of the African  
National Congress. Rather

than destroying any terror- |

ists, their bombs killed two  
drinkers in an all-night bar.  
Helicopter-borne South Afri-  
can troops attacked a group of

houses outside the Botswana '

capital of Gaborone, killing a |

government employee. And  
in Harare, the capital of Zim-  
babwe, South Africansoldiers  
stormed the local downtown  
ANC office and a suburban  
safe house; a night watchman  
was wounded in the attack.  
All together last weekâ\200\231s ac-  
tions represented the most  
spectacular blow that Preto-

ria has launched against the  
outlawed ANCâ\200\224and possibly  
the most inept. â\200\234All the peo-

spokesman Larry Speakes ex-  
pressed the Reagan adminis-

coal, uranium and steel. If !  
' fronts. Far from damaging  
. the ANC'â\200\231s terrorist network,

South Africa has not made  
significant reforms within

i one year, the bill would ban

U.S. computer exports to  
South Africa. If Pretoria re-

| mains stubborn after two

years, the bill requires the  
president to consider order-

" ing U.S. firms to give up their

trationâ\200\231s â\200\234outrageâ\200\235 at the |  
raids; the administration also :  
! calculated to stave off the

expelled the senior South Af-  
rican defense attachÃ© from  
Washington and recalled the  
senior U.S. attachÃ© from Pre-  
toria. But presidential aides  
ruled out imposing additional  
sanctions. In Congress, how-

ever, a bipartisan coalition introduced legislation that would bar new U.S. investments or loans to South Africa and block imports of its

South African investments. At home, the raid seemed

growing right-wing political challenge to President P. W. Botha and to reassure agitated white voters that the government would not knuckle under to black extremists. But the hard-liners did not

| seem appeased: three days after the raid, 3,000 white

right-wing militants forcibly

the raids will prove on other

they may improve the organization's standing around the world. The threat of tougher

| sanctions can also only deep-

. en South Africa's economic

| depression. Still, Botha re-

mained unrepentant. Asserting that the ANC had been responsible for 193 serious acts of terrorism since April 1985, he vowed: "We will continue to strike against ANC base facilities in neighboring countries in accordance with our legal right." Given the consequences of last week's raids, it's unlikely the ANC was much impressed.

HARRY ANDERSON with PETER

: . i YouNGcHUSBANDinCape Townand  
broke up a ruling National !

Ray WiLKINSON in Harare

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ber about 18,000 out of a total force of 45,000. Police recruitment has slowed dramatically in the most turbulent areas. Recently two policemen resigned in the townships of Atteridgeville and Mamelodi. Constable Thomas Makhubela, 24, burned his uniform and emotionally recounted his change of heart. After seeing a police bullet kill a three-year-old child, he said, "I really could not take it any longer." Constable Actor Motadi, meanwhile, admitted that he had resigned "against his will" because he feared for his life in his off-duty hours.

But increasingly, other blacks have de-

cided to fight back against the radicals. Perhaps the largest group including most of the fathers of Crossroads are older blacks who have grown tired of being attacked as Uncle Toms. Enforcing their boycotts, radicals have attacked older blacks who shop at white stores; they have forced some offenders to drink cooking oil, detergent and bleach. A Soweto resident told of students who picked fights with him and other older blacks in a township she- been (speak-easy). Eventually two older blacks went to the home of one student and beat him badly. "Now what is happening,"

TEED

the Soweto man said, "i- that the e:ders are getting back at the students. For some of the vigilantes the motive for retaliating is ideological. Some moderate blacks town councilors. liquor-store owners lead fairly comfortable middle-class lives. They may want to see the system change, but only gradually. in a way that will preserve their advantages. At the other end of the spectrum. loyalists of the militant United Democratic Front (UDF) in Soweto have come under attack from members of the far-left Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), a "black conscious-

The Comrades' Decree: Death by Necklace

People's Court is in session !  
in South Africa. The court-  
room may be a Soweto shanty,  
with tires hanging ominously !

on the walls. Or it may be just

a vacant lot in another of the  
roiling black townships. The !  
judges are the "comrades,"

the radical young blacks who

increasingly run the town- :  
ships. A suspect is hauled in. |  
The trial is short, the guilty |  
verdict foreordained. The sen- |  
tence:. death by â\200\234necklace.â\200\235 !  
The victimâ\200\231s hands are tied, :

sometimes with barbed wire.  
One rubber tire is put around

his neck and another around  
hislegs. They are soaked with  
gasoline and set ablaze. â\200\234Yes, '

it surely is a horrible way to  
die,â\200\235 says "Killer,â\200\235 a 16-year-

old comrade from Diepkloof,a '  
section of Soweto. â\200\234But the

people we necklace have com-  
mitted horrible crimes and  
deserve to die horribly.â\200\235  
Many radical young blacks  
agree, justifying the necklace  
because it frightens less com-  
mitted blacks out of cooper-  
ating with South Africaâ\200\231s  
apartheid system. By some  
estimates, necklacings have  
increased to the rate of one a  
day over the past year. South  
African police say they have  
145 cases of necklacing on  
record. Occasionally even  
progovernment black gangs  
have done it. Sources in  
the eastern Cape Province,  
where this brutal form of ex-

ecution has been most often '

used, say that at least 207  
people have been killed by  
necklacing. A grim joke is

DAVID â\202¬. TURNLEYâ\200\224DETROIT FREE PRESS-BLACK STAR

â\200\230You're going to think twiceâ\200\231: Mob law in Duncan Village

making the rounds there at  
the expense of South Africaâ\200\231s  
United Democratic Front  
' (UDF), an umbrella organiza-  
tion of antiapartheid groups.  
Question: what does UDF  
stand for? Answer: Uniroyal,  
Dunlop and Firestone.  
The purpose of the necklace  
" isnot just to kill but to terror-  
ize. Bongani, a 21-year-old  
comrade, admitted necklac-

ing a 20-year-old found at a rally with a hidden tape recorder. He was screaming for mercy and crying that he would never do it again and . that he didn't know what he was doing and that he was sorry. We set him on fire, Bongani said. "If other would-be informers see today what could happen to them tomorrow, then they won't take the

" job. In weeding out opponents to man was necklaced for

nents the necklace also helps the comrades strengthen their hold on the townships. Victims are necklaced for a range of comrade-perceived sins. Township officials and black policemen have been executed but so have migrant miners, since mines are pillars of the system, and liquor-store owners, since they operate under government licenses. Anyone disregarding a boycott or a strike called by the comrades may be condemned. A 20-year-old Sowe-

holding a party; he was found guilty of defying a people's ban on Christmas festivities.

Killer, one of Bongani's friends, related how he helped to necklace a 62-year-old

woman, Mary Skhosana, who worked in a funeral parlor. Since she sold funeral insurance, he said, she was part of the system. "We knew she was a police informer," Killer recounted coolly. "We did not need proof. She was pleading for mercy and crying and screaming. She said she'd pay us 7,000 rands [\$3,080] if we let her go. We told her we didn't need her money; we needed her life. Then we put a tire around her legs and another around her neck and shoulders. We forced her to drink petrol. We poured the rest into the tires and onto her and set her alight. But the fire went out. Another tin of petrol was fetched, and it took about an hour.

The necklace is brutal but

. effective. When you attend

" a funeral,â\200\235 says Diliza Ma-  
' choba of the South African  
. Council of Churches, â\200\234and

you hear these young com-

â\200\230 rades chanting, â\200\230Long live

the necklace,â\200\235 you're going  
to think twice about doing  
anything which will in any  
way offend the comrades. It

. is the ultimate deterrence.

And itâ\200\231s also a symbol of the  
wrath of the people. What  
we're trying to do, we older

" leaders, is point out that

blind action is no good and  
that action and reflection  
must go together.â\200\235 The town-  
shipsâ\200\231 angry young radicals  
have little patience with such  
talk, and their elders will  
have a hard time persuading  
them to forgo their most po-  
tent weapon.

RICHARD MANNIXNG  
in Johannesburg.

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nessâ\200\235 group that opposes power sharing with the whites. In other areas conflict | stems from a combustible mix of political and tribal differences. In Natal Province, Zulus loyal to moderate chief Gatsha Buthelezi have repeatedly attacked Xhossas, who represent a major share of the ANC'â\200\231s constituency. In KwaNdebele, supporters of the homeland leader, Simon Skhosana, have been dispensing savage beatingsâ\200\224what one South African scholar describes as â\200\234'Black Shirt justice'â\200\235â\200\224to comrades who don'â\200\231t back their chief.

Police role? Finally, there are old-fashioned thugs who resent the radicals for threatening their turf. In Soweto, a small gang called Kabasa has operated for 40 years. Recently it has specialized in break-

ing into houses and in stealing cars. Now

they have turned on the radicalsâ\200\224and some township residents charge they have received guns and tear gas from the police.

Two weeks ago Kabasa members roamed = j

the township firing automatic weapons

and tear-gassing houses of suspected radi-

cals. â\200\234The police gave these gangsters guns and told them to use them on us,â\200\235 said one militant named Bongani. â\200\234Now we will treat the gangsters the same way we treat the police and the town councilors.â\200\235 Police spokesmen deny giving any support to the vigilantes. But township residents insist otherwise. At the very least, many say, the police turn the other way when antiradical blacks attack. â\200\234When the police Caspirs [armored troop carriers] come.â\200\235 says one Crossroads man, â\200\234the witdoeke [white capsâ\200\224after the vigilantesâ\200\231 white headbands] hide behind them and the police do nothing to them.â\200\235 Other Crossroads residents say they saw white police chatting with fathers during last weekâ\200\231s fighting. Still others claim they saw

masked white men among the antimilitant

blacks:they say the whites were also identifiable by their speech.

Itâ\200\231s unclear how long the vigilantes can sustain the struggle against the radicals. In the long run the comrades may have numbers and revolutionary zeal on their side. But if the radicals do prevailâ\200\224and if they keep up their attacks against policeâ\200\224the government may eventually crack down harder. Pretoria has yet to use a fraction of its might. It could turn the townships i) (\to

virtual concentration camps, teeming with soldiers, surrounded with roadblocks by day and searchlights by night. The tragedy of it is that the kids believe the system is on its last legs and about to totter over, says-John Kane-Berman, head of the South African Institute of Race Relations. But the system hasn't flexed its muscles yet. When it does, the black backlash against the radicals may look tame in comparison.

Mark WhitaAKER with RICHARD MANNING  
in Johannesburg und PETER YO UNGHUSBAND  
in Crossroads

" NATO missiles, bu

' governments stu

The Politics  
of Chernobyl

Nuclear wins and losses

all accounts the Dutch prime minis-  
should have been a loser. His aus-

ble. I'm a bit surprlsd he\said. Itâ\200\231s a  
very remarkable result.â\200\235 \

In the immediate aftermath of Chernobyl, many analysts had predicted that anti-nuclear sentiment would sweep across Europe, pushing pro-NATO governments to the left. The disaster did prove a bdon to West Germanyâ\200\231s aggressive Green Party; the coalition of Chancellor Helmut Kohl dropped below 50 percent in the polls. Elsewhere, however, Chernobyl has produced remarkably little political chapgÂ®) The muted reaction follows a pattep has prevailed for several yeargs Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands were rocked by masgive demonstrations against the depfoyment of new their conservative with deployment and survived. Belgjah Prime Minister Wilfried Martens was handily re-elected last Octo-

] : West German Chancellor Kohl

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that |  
n 1983 '

Gmn tide: Protest j

Wackersdorf

" ber despite his support for Euromissiles.

In Finland, thÃ© center-left government  
brazenly threhtened to resign this week  
unless oppongÃ©nts withdraw a proposal to  
scrap nucledr power by the year 2000.

In West/Germany, the issue of nuclear  
power hgs triggered an especially strong  
politicgd response. Last week 5,000 protest-  
ers asgembled near the site of a new nucle-  
ar-yaste reprocessing plant in Wackers-  
derf, Bavaria, fighting hit-and-run battles  
with police. West Germanyâ\200\231s nuclear pro-  
gram may be a decisive factor in key state  
elections scheduled for June and October,  
and perhaps for the national elections in  
â\200\230\January 1987. The countryâ\200\231s powerful  
farm bloc is angry over crop losses result-  
ing from the Chernobyl accident. and ac-

. cording to a poll published by Der Spiegel.

69 percent of West German voters oppose  
further construction of nuclear power  
plants. For now, however, Kohl remains  
committed to promoting nuclear power.  
Poles apart: Far greater strains are being

nERMANN J KaippErTzâ\200\224ap | feltin Eastern Europe, where Poland, Hun-  
gary and nonaligned Yugoslavia have been

' hard hit by West European restrictions on

farm imports possibly contaminated by ra-  
dioactive fallout. Polish authorities have  
complained that the boycott might cost  
them as much as \$300 million in hard-

| currency exportsâ\200\224money vitally needed to  
' service Warsawâ\200\231s massive foreign debt.

The Soviet market will not give them dol-

' lars and Deutsche marks. The shower of  
. rubles that will fall instead can only add to  
| their resentment of what sarcastic Poles  
. now call the â\200\234cloud of friendship.â\200\235

HARRY ANDERSON with SCOTT SULLIVAN

in Paris, FRED CoLEMAN in The Hague and  
DesBie SEWARD (n Bonn

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