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THE KILLING STREETS

Andrew Roberts reports on the
black-on-black violence that will
determine the fate of South Africa

Pictermaritzbury, Natal
| AT 4.00 p.m. on 16 August last year a car
! putted into a garage in the Zulu highlands
3 village of Ixopo carrying three ANC hit-
men. Jerome Ndlovu, Chief of the Vakani
I tribe, was busy repairing his Kombi
| minibus when they opened up with AK-
. 47s. Ten seconds later they drove off, leav-
ing him and his 18-year-old daughter dead.
I was shown the Kombi by one of the
Lief's ex-hodyguards and counted 25 bul-
holes through the upholstery alone.
ird Bjili, who was keen to display the
whete a bullet had passed through
ast belly in the attack, explained how
it bore all the hallmarks of an ANC hit-
squad operation. It was fast, efficient, used
the trademark Soviet-made automatic
weapon and was carried out against a lead-
er of the Inkatha Freedom Party

Since 1985, the ANC have assassinated
nearly 200 senior Inkatha officials â\200\224
branch chaitmen, mayors, arca secreturics,
ward organisers, Âçoun - AN sys-
lematic campaign lo te the move-
ment, The mainly Zuty wis responded
with equal, if less well-directed, ferocity
and in the last 15 months more than 3,000
people have dicd. If anything, the embry-
onic civil war has hotted up since Nelson
Mandela and Chief Buthelezi signed a
peace accord last September Estimates of
10,000 deaths since the feud began a
decade ago makes the ANC/Inkatha war
five times bloodier than Northern Ireland

The Pietermaritzburg townships, which
due to apartheid were located five miles
outside the city, have seen the worst of the
fighting. There are endless similarities
between the situation here and in Ulster.
No-man's-land, arms caches, protection
rackets, hunger strikes, zones of control,
graffiti, godfathers, abduction, no-go areas,
informers - all the familiar paraphernalia
of insurrection are here.

But there is a special viciousness to this
black-on-black violence at which even the
IRA might balk. One 22-year-old woman
whom the ANC necklaced recently took 35
minutes to die. When three bus-loads of
Inkatha supporters were returning from a
'prayer meeting' - a euphemism for rally
| last February they were ambushed in

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the Kwa Shange Valley, Pinned down on
both sides, 16 died in the massacre. When
eventually the bodies were recovered they
were unidentifiable after women from the
attacking village had smashed the corpses'
faces in with rocks. By 6.00 a.m. the next
day - in a tribute to the Zulus' mobilisa-
tional ability - an impi of 5000 had
massed at the house of the man the ANC
dub Inkatha's 'Warlord Number One',
David Ntombela. It took all the blandish-
ments of Chief Buthelezr and Ntombela to
disperse them - more, one suspects,
because the army had been alerted than
for any humanitarian reasons. Today, the
valley and its neighbouring villages are
uninhabitable, with hundred of huts and
Kruals burnt-out shells,

The whites who live in Pietermaritzburg
seem fairly ambivalent about the violence
~ which hardly ever claims white lives -
and consider it a purely internal black
problem. A number will practically admit
themselves pleased that the blacks' energy
is being concentrated in this way, rather
than against them - and assume it little
matters who eventually triumphs. They
could not be more wrong.

The future of South Africa will not be
decided in constituent assemblies or at
talks about talks but here in the killing
streets of the Transvaal and Natal satel-
lites. With the National Party acceding to
one-man-one-vote and the conservatives
marginalised, the only place ANC power
can be broken is here, by Inkatha,

The Zulus, who make up the vast major-
ity of Inkatha members, are the Tories of
southern Africa, exhibiting qualities which
might have been designed to appeal to a

â\200\230Take the mail train, Miss Tinson.*

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British Conservative. They are proud (vall- |
ing (hemselves *Children of Heaven'), |
dependable, God-fearing monarchists,
They respect their elders und are natural
capitalists. They are also unimaginably war-
like when provoked â\200\224 any Essex Man
would thrill to the sight of an impi on the
rampage, which would renund him of the
aggression shown by British footbali hooli-
gans abroad, who cheerfully take on forces
far greater than they. It is no coincidence
that white farmers in Natal â\200\224 who often
fcarnt Zulu as their first language and
describe their provinee as â\200\234LEngland's Last
Frontier' - arc joining Inkatha in ever.
increasing numbers,

The ANC, for all its superb propaganda
and cachet amongst Western hberals, has
{carnt nothing and forgotten nothing from
its long years of struggle against Pretoriu
Although many of its members do believe
in democracy, the South African Commu-
nist Party â\200\224 which has recently reatfirmed
its faith in Marxism-Leninism â\200\224 is stitl in

the vanguard of policy-making. High tuxa-
tion, nationahsation and large-scale cco-
NOMIC . intervention unite the various
tactions which might otherwise have sphit
when apartheid ended. The senior ANC

warlord here, Harry Gwala â\200\224 nicknamed |
â\200\230Lion of the Midlands' by his friends and |

â\200\230the PenguainÂ® by his enemies â\200\224 is an unie-
pentant Stalinist. The Natal ANC sent o
telegram of congratulations (o the plotters
of the August coup against Gorbachev
ANC arcas it the Edendale Valley here
have heen renamed â\200\230Moscow', â\200\230Cubaâ\200\231 and
*Swapoâ\200\231 by the comrades.

It is debatable how far Mandela, Â«ho is
73, coptrols the younger radicals (he

same day he and Buthelezi <igned the
One hundred yoo o ago
THIINFLUENZA spreads st and

is becoming so deadly in its assaults on

all weak constitutions, that any preventive which seems effectual deserves attention. A correspondent of the Times declares that in the office of the Royal Insurance Company, Lombaid Street, rooms protected by Scattering a few drops of eucalyptus oil on the blotting-paper have been free from the scourge; while in another department where the oil was not used, five clerks out of twenty-five were prostrated by the disease. The immunity produced by the oil has been noticed during two outbursts of the pest, and though more evidence is required, it is certain that extracts of eucalyptus act as powerful disinfectants. The tree itself, it will be remembered, is believed to suck up the malarious influence of marshes. As yet the doctors seem certain of nothing except that fighting up against the disease 15 fatal Patients should go to bed at once

The Spectator 16 January 1892

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peace accord, the comrades burnt down four Inkatha members' houses and shortly afterwards the body of an IFP leader was found necklaced on a municipal dump. A Kwa Zulu Cabinet Minister, N.J. Ngabene, told me: 'Mandela is more in prison now than he was on Robben Island. He's invaluable as a statesman-like figurehead who can raise lots of money overseas, but he is constantly overruled by his lieutenants.' It is thought that his statements in support of the national liberation struggles of Castro, Gaddafi, Arafat and the IRA were not so much the result of being caught in a time-warp after 27 years in prison as an attempt to appease the ANC's ultra-left wing.

Warlord Number One, David Ntombela, nicknamed 'Napoleon Zulu' by the newspapers and the Unstoppable Tractor' by his supporters directs Inkatha's military operations in Natal. He has lost two sons since the unrest began one in an ANC ambush and has survived no fewer than 27 assassination attempts, including a recent petrol bombing of his house.

Once past the heavily defended stockade asked the warlord, who is 62 and very wary of journalists, about ANC accusations of police bias. 'The whites are generally fair,' he claimed, 'but the Cape Coloureds and the army sell weapons and ammunition to the ANC and three policemen were in the massacre of 13 of our teenagers at a pyjama party last year.' Ntombela is adamant that Inkatha is winning, but then he also solemnly informed me that he had never harmed anyone in his life and Christ was on

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Inkatha's side. He had a disconcerting habit of clicking his fingers near my car during conversation, making a sound like the automatic weapon fire he was discussing: 'With assassins we kill people who have AK-47s' Click. 'ANC never shoot straight.' Click, 'With Jesus in my house and my heart I could fight with nothing. A bottle,' he eyes a beer bottle on the table between us, 'I could kill you with a bottle if you had an AK-47 and I had Christ.'

Less religious analysts put Inkatha's proven ability to overcome automatic weapon fire with sharpened sticks and knobkerries down to more mundane factors. The comrades often fire too high, believing the harder they pull the trigger the faster the bullets will emerge, and their fondness for automatic fire rather than individual shots tends to make the gun ride up. Once all 30 rounds in an AK-47 magazine are exhausted, the comrade invariably given a chance to reload. In a recent skirmish in the Richmond township, 13 well-armed ANC gunmen were killed at a cost to Inkatha of four.

Attacks are made more vicious by the application of potions mixed by witch doctors, which they believe makes their warriors invincible. Every tribe has its own form of this potion 'muti' which is smeared into warriors' open wounds before battle. The ingredients range from animal fats, bark and roots, although a really superior muti might include the odd finger, ear or penis. Ritualistic magic, like ancestor worship, may not fit into Western

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prince, ex-laboratory technician and PTA chairman I was staying with believed in its power. Both sides also pep themselves up with 'dagga' - a form of marijuana which grows everywhere and, unusually, makes the smoker more aggressive.

The warring continues even after death. By desecrating Inkatha graves, the mainly Xhosa ANC have managed to introduce a new terror into the conflict. To the Zulus, the body is still ritually important after death. They are buried facing the sun with a spear, blanket and money for the journey. If a Zulu dies away from home, his relations must visit the grave a year later to retrieve his spirit. Several families have arrived at far-off graves recently to find the tombs vandalised and, in some cases, corpses mutilated - possibly to provide the necessary ingredients for some first-class muti. Today, concrete has to be poured over Inkatha graves to counter this particularly malevolent and distressing

form of psychological warfare.

There is no end to this war in sight. Indeed, most analysts believe it will worsen as the one-man-one-vote elections approach. The best outcome would be an Inkatha victory, which might allow Natal to win a real measure of autonomy from any future ANC central government. The worst would be an attempt by the ANC to disarm the Zulus or treat them as Mugabe treated the Matabele tribe after Zimbabwean independence. That could result in a civil war so brutal that blacks of all tribes would look back to apartheid with nostalgia, just

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I WAS ON duty at the prison last weekend. All was calm and quiet: as I inspected the kitchens (I'm still not quite sure what for), a rapist offered me the apple crumble for which he is famous throughout D wing. Just about edible when it leaves the kitchen, the crumble arrives in the wing as appetising as a tagout of old socks. As the French ask of good Scots porridge, "Does one eat it, or has one eaten it?"

There were only two patients for me (0 see, so different yet so similar. The first, Bill, was a petty criminal whom the courts finally lost patience with and sent down for a long time. Apart from house-breaking, Bill has one interest in life: swallowing razorbills. If he has done it once, he has done it a hundred times. I've given up asking why: he always says, "If I knew that, doctor, I'd stop." This, of course, is the central misconception of psychotherapy, a misconception which has filtered its way down into the underworld.

Of later Bill has developed a new interest: pushing wires through his abdominal wall into what we doctors call

THE SPECTATOR 8 January 1992

ideas about 'the new South' as many Azerbaijanis must today long for Africa but even the well-educated tribal the old certainties of the cold war "refer, of course, to the orthography.) If Synaptol I like "You, you bastard, did not when I was vulnerable. I confess that point

persist. . .

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describe, except to say that they are aesthetically unpleasing.

It is amazing how Bill can find & wire (or push into himself, even when placed in a cell completely devoid of metal of any kind, I'm beginning to suspect the other prisoners smuggle wires to him: there's a black market for everything on the inside,

Then there was Fred, a failed murderer. Fred had come to the conclusion that everything was the fault of the authorities, and had therefore written to his former probation officer threatening to kill him in almost Magwitchian terms to kill him on his release from prison.

The governor asked me to do something about Fred. I had a copy of the letter he had written before, and it was enough to make one's blood curdle. (1

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I thought of the Venerable Bede, who died in Jarrow in AD 776, Fred wrote that he would cut the probation officer's throat, but if he went to the police with the letter he would die a far more horrible death, by a means sure and lingering, but otherwise unspecified.

Among other allegations in the file Fred asserted that the probation office had so done his head in that he had been reduced to swallowing razor-blades

How could he have done that?' I asked

Well, he's an authority, isn't he?

What wonderful totalitarians we British would make, I mused as I wrote my recommendation to the governor that Fred be prosecuted for uttering a threat (to Kill, contrary to some Act or other. How eager we are to ascribe guilt, for

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Theodore Dalrymple

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