

# Mob 'set corpse on fire for TV camera'

By JEREMY McCABE

A CRAZED mob of "comrades" set fire to a mutilated corpse so that a television crew could film them.

While the camera rolled, they danced round the flaming body, chanting and grinning and poking it with sticks.

His startling evidence was given in the Port Elizabeth Supreme Court this week at the trial of five youths accused of the horrific Kinikini killings at Uitenhage on May 23 last year.

The court was shown six minutes of the TV footage, but the prosecution has declined to identify the crew who filmed it.

The murders — two days after the Langa massacre — marked the beginning of a wave of brutality and intimidation in the townships which later saw the birth to the gruesome "necklace" method.

The Kwanobuhle mayor, Mr Benjamin Kinikini, 57, his sons Stanley, 13, Qondile, 18, and Silumko, 20, his nephew, Eric Kinikini, 25, and a friend, Xolisile Pram, 20, were set upon by a mob — apparently as an act of retribution following the police killing of 20 people at Langa.

Mr Kinikini was a wealthy undertaker and had become a hated figure among township radicals because he refused to resign from the Kwanobuhle Town Council.

## Attacks

Several attacks had been made on his property shortly before he was murdered, and his house and funeral parlour razed by fire.

The reference to the "fire show" for the television cameras was contained in the statement made by a 21-year-old accused, Mnyanda Moses Jantjies.

He said the TV crew arrived after the victim — one of Mr Kinikini's sons — had already been killed and burnt.

The body was again doused with petrol and set alight, and this was filmed by the TV crew.

Other horrifying details emerged from the statements, which have not been contested by the defence:

● When Mr Kinikini was caught by a mob of "comrades" outside his home, he apologised to them and, in a desperate bid to save his life, offered to pay them R5 000 if they let him go.

They refused. He was stabbed in the heart and disembowelled.

Children were seen playing with part of one of the corpses the next day.

One of the victims had his finger and an arm severed while he was still alive.

## Singing

All the time people stood around singing.

In his statement, Jantjies said he was a member of the "comrades," led by a man called Kwebesi.

"I was told to commit murder by leaders of the 'comrades' in Kwanobuhle," he told the court.

The other accused are Zandisile Ndwanya, 18, Mlamli Mielies, a 17-year-old youth, and another youth aged 15.

Originally 10 people were charged, but five have been acquitted.

The trial, before Mr Justice Mullins and two assessors, continues on October 29.



"IT'S the only show in town ... " And it's the only long-running production in all South Africa — there hasn't been one like it for 80 years.

Despite its six-month run it has had inadequate publicity; no rave notices; no critical reviews.

Today, for the first time, "Indaba" is due to join the hustings razzmatazz by advertising in the local Sunday Press — and that in itself is causing controversy behind closed doors.

I travelled to Durban this week to see what it was all about. The result was two days of astonishingly frank discussion with participants of all colours and many political creeds. Their passions, and sometimes pent-up feelings, were so quickly offered to me that I felt almost as if I were intruding on private emotions.

That, possibly, is due to so much secret talk and so little open debate. The Indaba may have been right in deciding that public debate would prevent delegates talking frankly or moving away from publicly stated stances... but secrecy has major drawbacks.

As an outsider who was allowed in (in the sense of having access to the chairman and every available delegate) I could almost feel attitudes crystallising as delegates voiced them to a stranger. In the circumstances I shall try not to be judgmental here but will attempt only to sketch, in too few words, what Indaba really is all about.

"Indaba" is one of the better words in the South African lexicon though, like all politically tainted words, it has different meanings for different people. To add to its interest Indaba is being staged in Natal where there is more individualised, occasionally eccentric, politics than anywhere else a nation of increasingly inflexible divisions.

While the white and brown delegates are as diverse as it is possible to be, the black representation in practice amounts to a single entity under the sophisticated and cool leadership of Dr Oscar Dhlomo of kwaZulu (and Inkatha). This is another unique feature in South African politics.

The Indaba was called, as you know, to try to create a single legislature for a non-dependent homeland and a non-representative Provincial Executive.

The delegates represent the entire middle ground of Natal, from the Black Canegrowers' Association to the Junior Rapportryers; from the Trade Union Council to the Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging; from the Islamic

# INDABA:

*The Sunday Star, 19/10/86*

## The show that must go on

**Harvey Tyson, Editor of The Star**

Council to the Coloured Labour Party. Commerce, industry, the Natal Agriculture Union and Municipal Association, the Woman's Bureau and many other regional cultural bodies and religious organisations are there.

The Government party has "observers", but the white Right and black Left declined invitations.

The ambition of the majority of all interests representing the "middle-ground" is breathtaking: to create in one sweep a non-racial, democratic federal legislature based on universal franchise with proportional representation for minority cultural and political interests.

Indaba is about 90 percent of the way to its goal. It quickly agreed to a Bill of Rights; it quickly reached agreement on "six points of departure", including abolition of race in all its laws. It has consensus on much of its proposed constitution. But the last hurdles are the highest and could prove insurmountable so far as consensus is concerned.

There seem to be two opposing beliefs.

One is that the proposed single democratic federal state will be unsaleable to white voters unless there are built-in group (ie ethnic/racial) guarantees. This school of thought varies in the amount of racial protection it wants spelt out (Group Areas, schools, etc).

The view of the vast majority of

delegates is that if race is allowed to be a factor in the proposed "kwaNatal" the constitution will not only be unsaleable, the whole project will sink without trace.

Can guarantees be provided to minorities without involving indirect racialism or implicit discrimination by "over-loading"?

"Yes," says the majority of the Indaba, "we have already ensured not only representation of minorities but their say in administration. Cultural interests will also be protected but without regard to colour."

"No," says a minority within the delegations of whites. "We need specific rules ensuring group rights in specific areas. We cannot accept vague promises."

This is countered by the white majority with: "But we have already agreed on guaranteed individual rights and an independent judiciary, and a Bill of Rights, and the principle of cultural councils to safeguard religious and language sensibilities."

Ironically Natal no longer has a black problem. It has a white one.

Representatives of Afrikaans interests say that "the Zulus have been impeccable — it's the others who do all the arguing for them".

In fact the kwaZulu/Inkatha delegates repeatedly state their appreciation of the fears of the whites and Indians and say that they will accom-



- 2 -

moderate these in every way anyone can suggest — so long as it is not a safeguard based on race classification.

There clearly is a "white problem". Firstly, the white politicians distrust each other. Each claims the other parties are seeking surreptitiously to exploit the situation. Some of the white interests appear to be the main threat to consensus.

Can Indaba succeed without consensus?

"No," says the Right of the gathering of moderates. "If there is not special protection for whites we can destroy this project through the ballot box."

"Yes," says the white Left. "We can go ahead without consensus and still win majority support from every section of the population in Natal."

Indeed some delegates wonder whether consensus would not add a problem. Consensus would mean almost automatic Government support. "Which is worse, a Government blessing, or Government opposition?" they ask.

KwaZulu continues to seek consensus; Government spokesmen outside the Indaba continue to express uneasy reservations.

Indaba hopes to provide a model of federalism for the rest of the country; a practical model which will be non-racial and invulnerable to the inevitable attacks from the Left and Right. The Left, and its vociferous supporters overseas, are seen as the stronger threat.

The Indaba may be in the balance, but it has several things going for it:

1. No participant wants to be the one to pull out. Hopes are too high; success pretends to be within reach.
2. The unique status afforded by a marriage of kwaZulu and Natal (the one a province which has been robbed of its former constitutional powers; the other a potential "independent state" that has no independence) provides mutual benefits. It also provides the legal machinery to delegate powers from central Government to a strong federal state.
3. Here is the first practical opportunity for devolution of power outside the apartheid system.
4. Indaba remains "the only show in town" so far as negotiated settlement is concerned.

"Finally," say delegates, "this is Natal's own negotiated compromise — and if it is acceptable to a majority of all the sectors of Natal it will be beyond criticism and deserving of national and international support."

19/10/86