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| â\200\224 T T R

It has often been asserted that Âç, i
the tâ\200\230t:rst casualty of war, Th;tu:râ\200\230;;;
A certainly be said of the violence
whic,lz is' lacerating Pietermaritz-
burgâ\200\231s to wnships. People are mortally
- the authorities refuse
0; and the emergency regulations
shroud the frightening situation inan
eerie half-silence. This article does
not pretend to be the final word on the
causes of the violence; it presents an

overview of the situation, in the ho
that correct diagnosis is essential fâ\200\230;:

afraid to talk;

any lasting peace,

A SOURCE at Edendale Hospi
revealed that the number o? ::aelo?:
passing through its theatres with vio-
lent injuries (bullet and stab wounds
skull.injuries. etc) increased by 80 per-'
cent in the final month of 1987, A new
(overflow) male surgical ward has had
to be opened; most of the patients hurt
in the violence are between 15 and 25
years old. The number of burn vietims
;argely women and children, is rocket-,
ing. These facts offer an alarming
glimpse â\200\224 as alarming as the daily
body counts released by the South Afri-
can 'Pollce â\200\224 of the extent of the fight-
Ing in the townships, Edendale Hospi-
â\200\230tâ\200\234::a ::gi bsc_ox&e Igd war hospital; the
-zoneâ\200\235 is the
th;}::ar reier endale valley. And
ere are several theories ab
causes and nature of the unre:tl.â\200\230t'leg:
first is the mastermind theory, which
asserts that everything is orchestrated
, by a preordained plan. The violence is
the_ work o_f â\200\234agitatorsâ\200\235 from outside.
This explains why the national unrest
has moved from area to area, flaring up
and then dying down â\200\224 first Cross-
roads, then the Eastern Cape, then the
Regf, and now Natal. It would also ex-
plain why the local violence has moved

â\200\231.

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from one area to another inthe Eden-
dale valley (although a more convine-
Ing argument is simply that the areas

fall into the hands of one side or the

other). But it does not fully explain why

Inkatha and the UDF should be at log-
unless the mastermind

gerheads,
theory is coupled with another,

Marxist-Leninist theory

This can be called the Marxist-Le-
ninist theory, according to which mod-
erates cannot be tolerated in the ranks

~ of the revolutionaries if the revolution

is not to fail. Inkatha members are the

moderates in this deadly scenario. A

third theory assumes that communities
are c}ynamic and can act of their own
vol_ltlon. Without detracting from the
salience of the other theories â\200\224 indeed
the latter may loom large in the minds
of many of the protagonists themselves
â\200\224 th.eâ\200\230 third seems to be the most per-
suasive explanation of the war in the
Edendale valley. The fighting is a ma-
nifestation of a profound and funda-
mental division which has sundered
black society in the region.

Let us look back briefly at a few of its
earliest manifestations, and attempt to

.interpretthem. -

19{30: In KwaMashu (a township
administered by KwaZulu in the Dur-
ban area) two prominent community
leaders, a Mrs Mnguni and a Reverend
Mbambo, were beaten up at a rally.
They had criticised the KwaZulu admi-

" nistration.

1981: There were further beatings,
and a tarring, for similar reasons, ;

1982: Five students at the University
of Zululand were murdered. The stu-
gients had protested in a way seen to be
insulting to Zulu royalty.

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maritzburg

These were the beginnings of what
has now become the sundering of the

Zulu nation. The formation of the |

United Democratic Front in 1983 gave |

voice, and an identity, to the one side,
as Inkatha had for many years given the

- other. The split was, without any doubt,

between rural-based traditionalists on
the one hand, and the new progressive
ideas from the cities, which challenged
traditional norms and beliefs, on the
other. The divide should be seen in age
terms as well. Indeed, one is tempted to
call it a generation gap of significant
proportions. The traditionalists were
adult Zulus, loyal to Ulundi and proud
of it; the young people in the cities
were coming to reject Zulu nationalism
as a political option. They began to re-
gard the KwaZulu Government and In-
katha as inside and part of a system, de-
signed by Pretoria, based on ethnicity,
which they could no longer tolerate.
Ironically, in 1983 both Inkatha and
the UDF were implacably opposed to
the new tricameral constitution for the
same reason - the exclusion of blacks
from parliament. But beneath the sur-
face a deadly struggle had begun to win
over grass-roots support. It was essen-
tially an ideological struggle between
people who believed in the power of
their own nationalism, and people who

)
the fired Sarmcol workers. By this
time, too, the major protagonists had

been joined by their trade union wings:
the UDF by Cosatu, Inkatha by Uwusa.

Without any doubt the Sarmcol situa-
tion helped fuel the growing conflict.
The fired workers belonged to Mawu

' (which fell under the Cosatu umbrella),

while the replacement workers at
Sarmcol were soon organised by
Uwusa. Understandably, this resulted
in deep divisions in many communi-
ties. Throughout the civil upheavals
which shook the country in 1985 and
1986, Pietermaritzburg's townships
were generally subdued. The national
violence, however, in spite of interne-
cine conflict within black communi-
ties, was fundamentally a confronta-
tion between rulers (the State) and the
ruled. Can the same be said of the vio-
lence here? .

Police presence

It would be foolish to assume that the
potential for confrontation does not
exist here. At the moment, though, most
people in the townships appear to wel-

- come the presence of the police and the military. And it would be simplistic, in spite of allegations about police collaboration and assistance, to see Inkatha

perceived their nationalism and its traditions to have been used by the state to ensnare people in the bantustan trap. .

Durban townships

The struggle swept, often violently, through the Durban townships of Umhlanga, Lamontville and others, and then began to manifest itself in the Pietermaritzburg area in 1985, where a conflict had developed between the Inkatha-controlled Imbali Township Council and the Imbali Civic Association, which later affiliated itself to the UDF. This conflict was exacerbated by attitudes to the methods used to sustain the consumer boycott in support of

as merely another vigilante force, carrying the State's battle to its predominantly youthful enemies. Or, as a Zulu remarked: "Did the vigilantes in Crossroads or Soweto have a King?"

The struggle here seems much more fundamental than this. It is a manifestation of the classic conflict of post-colonial Africa: traditionalism against the newer idea of a kind of social democracy in a "unitary" state. The conflict is profoundly exacerbated by the apartheid structures under which black people have laboured for generations. The question is often asked: why Pietermaritzburg, when the rest of the country is relatively calm? The answer is, at least in part, geographical. No-

where else is the mix of urban and :

rural so complex and entangled as in the Edendale valley. â\200\234Urbanâ\200\235, as we have seen, represents the new radical ideas held by the young; â\200\234ruralâ\200\235, the older more traditional ones. This geographical mix, and the conflict inherent in it, is why Pietermaritzburg has

become the flashpoint of the entire

country. . ' Â¢

â\200\234I saw a youth of no more than fourteen, a firearm in each hand.â\200\235 This comment by a township dweller sums up the horror, the desperation and the deadly seriousness of the conflict. But it provides no clear picture of the real nature of the two sides. Inkatha and the UDF: the latter a loose association of â\200\234progressiveâ\200\235 organisations; the former a closely-knit cultural organisa-

tion fashioned on paramilitary lines.

On one side the conservative, proud

and disciplined Zulu; on the other a

wildly angry and radicalised youth.

Apartheidâ\200\231s the cause

People speak truly when they say that the single most important cause of the violence is apartheid. The Stateâ\200\231s attitude to urbanisation, and especially to the educational needs of black people, has sown the seeds of the anger which is being so horrifyingly vented today. The official response to urbanisation, an inevitable although painful process vital to the economic growth of any country, was influx control and the creation of a migrant labour system which ripped apart millions of black families and communities. At the best of times â\200\224 as Afrikaners learnt from their own urbanisation process earlier this century â\200\224 urbanisation tends to create a sense of alienation and pur-

poselessness, which finally manifests '

itself in political mobilisation. Add to this the humiliations and dislocation caused by influx control and you have an explosive mixture.

Speaking generally, the conservative:

Zulu has begun to win his battle against humiliation and alienation. He has his own state, his own flag. Inkatha returned to him his native pride, It has also provided him with political mus-

' cle. Coincidentally, influx control has

now been abolished, although the State still retains control through the release of land for urban housing. But these limited concessions appear irrelevant to the young. They beat our fathers; they have not beaten us is their slogan. Deprived of stable family life, of the discipline inherent in community living, the youth have emerged as a formidable force which cannot be ignored. And their power is growing: more than 50 percent of Kwa-Zulu/Natal blacks are under 16 years of age.

Bantu education

The concept of so-called Bantu education is perhaps the single most hated aspect of apartheid, and is a crucial element in the anger and turmoil in the townships now. Bantu education, declared Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, its father, should stand with both feet in

the reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of bantu society.

Bantu education, coupled with the Bantu Authorities Act and the homeland or bantustan concept, was designed to return black people to tribalism even while South Africa surged towards high industrialisation. It was education for deliberate inferiority. Dr Verwoerd: There is no place for him (the African) in the European commu-

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nity above the level of certain forms of labour ... Bantu education was doomed to fail because it was neither beneficial nor acceptable to the people for whom it was designed.

Yet the concepts of exclusion and inferiority have remained in the minds of millions of blacks. Even though the bad old days are no longer, and the need for skills, development and massive injections of capital is at last realised, the spirit and economic disparities of Bantu education still survive. The legacy is a semi-literate population and a youth which feels cheated, to put it mildly, out of not only a decent education but reasonable employment prospects as well. That boy with a firearm in either hand almost certainly sees himself as someone with nothing to lose. Yet it would be a mistake to perceive the comrades (they are called amaqabane in the Edendale valley, and a great many of them have no official affiliation with the UDF) simply as unstructured bands of criminals and des-

perados. They are capable of desperate deeds, certainly, yet in some spheres their actions have a remarkable coherence - ;

â\200\234In some rural communities high up in the valley,â\200\235 a black intellectual from Imbali said recently, â\200\234the youth are emerging as a stabilising force. They

- are tackling the problem of crime and

promoting respect for their elders. In one case, they have repaired a road so that the buses can get through; in

- another, they have asked for permis-

sion to repair a school. They are also challenging the powers, so often abused, of the chiefs and indunas, and they are winning the hearts and minds of people. I have seen elderly rural people in the valley speak glowingly of â\200\230our boysâ\200\231. It is a revolution of ideas. They are not so much anti-tradition as they are anti the manipulation of tradition in the bantustan set-up.â\200\235

Tragedy of conflict

Seen in this light, the conflict is tragic. Neither side is blameless; and neither side is either wholly right or entirely wrong. Indeed, it is impossible not to respect the fundamental position of both the traditionalists and the young. However, if the conflict is also marked by downright thuggery and more importantly by what someone called the â\200\234revenge phenomenonâ\200\235, is there any way of resolving it. Or is the situation out of control? Is the 14-year-old youth with a firearm in each hand simply running amuck, or is he controllable? Could it even be that he is acting on someoneâ\200\231s orders? There is no clear evidence either way. Some observers

believe that the leadership of both par-

ties, who have twice sat down at peace talks, could stop the conflict if they wanted to; others believe these leaders have lost or never had control. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere in between.

Listen again to the black intellectual from Imbali: â\200\234To be honest,â\200\235 he said, â\200\234only the complete crushing of one side by the other will stop it now. The introduction of more police will only prolong the process.â\200\235 When asked if he thought that the respective leaderships had lost control over their followers, he replied: â\200\234They have lost control, but not all of it.â\200\235

Is there, then, a way forward towards

peace through negotiation? Or must the
Edendale valley, and indeed the city of
Pietermaritzburg, brace itself now for
the â\200\234complete crushingâ\200\235 of one side or
the other? !

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Scufi¬\202eÃ©,mteargas disrupt Ministerâ\200\231s Standerton speech

AWB breaks upâ\200\235

STANDERTON â\200\224 Fights broke out and teargas disrupted a National Party by-election meeting last night after Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) supporters shouted down the Minister of National Education, Mr F.W. de Klerk.

Half an hour later Mr de Klerk addressed a depleted audience in the dark after the centre of the town was plunged into darkness by a power failure. |

The conflict at the city hall centred around AWB calls for a debate between its leader Mr Eugene Terreblanche and the Minister, As the audience fled the hall after the scuffles, stinkbombs were thrown.

All around the town last night were posters advertising Mr de Klerk's meeting â\200\224 some saying the town would be NP again. Conservative Party posters, often attached to the same tree, stated: â\200\234 This is CP territory, the Nats can only dream. â\200\235

The by-election in Standerton was ordered after CP MP Mr J.R. de Ville was found to have contravened the Electoral Act.

Mr de Ville, who won a large majority in the May election, was in government service when elected.

The meeting was tense from the opening sing-along when the AWB supporters repeatedly requested â\200\234 song number sevenâ\200\235. The centre of the AWB flag is composed of three sevens,

F.W. DE KLERK

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While the hall was
being emptied, the chair-
man continued to exhort
people not to leave,

When the meeting resumed, Mr de Klerk exhorted those present to come back to the NP to build a prosperous and safe South Africa,

Also present on the platform were the former Minister of Transport, Mr Hendrik Schoeman, and the previous NP candidate Mr w. Heser.

Closing the meeting, Mr Schoeman said it was one of the most difficult he had had to contend with in his 21 years of politics Sapa.

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