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# VIOLENCE IN PMB

A Memorandum  
by COSATU and UDF

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## COSATU AND UDF MEMORANDUM ON VIOLENCE IN THE PIETERMARITZBURG AREA

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## INTRODUCTION

At least 130 people died in political violence in the Pietermaritzburg area in the last year. 40 of these deaths occurred in the past month. Despite the floods that have devastated the city, the killings continue. There is no sign that they are going to abate.

The townships in and around Pietermaritzburg are gripped with fear. The residents are in a permanent state of tension. People are insecure, anxious, frustrated. A sense of demoralisation and hopelessness is seeping in. The killings are clearly taking their toll on the community as a whole and are increasingly destabilising the city of Pietermaritzburg.

The overwhelming majority of the violence is perpetrated by Inkatha-supporting vigilantes. They are responsible for what is literally a "reign of terror" in the townships. Their victims are not just UDF and COSATU members, but a substantial number of people not linked to any political or trade union organisation. More recently there has been a backlash from the community against the vigilantes and no doubt sympathisers of COSATU and the UDF, and others in the community have committed acts of violence against Inkatha members. But it is beyond doubt that the main perpetrators of the violence are Inkatha-supporting vigilantes and that they are responsible for the escalation of violence since August 1985.

This document records the extent and significance of the violence. It is addressed to the Press and the wider public, both South African and international. It aims to inform the public - as to motivate important sections of it to intervene to halt the intensifying violence that is tearing the townships of Pietermaritzburg apart.

What is happening in Pietermaritzburg reflects seriously on the prospects of peace and stability in South African society as a whole. It epitomizes the civil war that is ravaging this country. It is therefore of concern to all those who want to see a solution to the South African conflict and the establishment of a non-racial, democratic and just society in this country.

## 2. DIFFICULTIES IN RECORDING THE VIOLENCE

It is extremely difficult to arrive at an accurate or complete picture of the violence in the townships. Some of the reasons are:

### 2.1 People are frightened to talk

People are petrified. They fear for their lives if they are to be found out to be exposing the vigilantes. So they are not prepared to come forward and report on their activities, even when they - or people close to them - have been direct victims of the vigilante violence. People have been terrorised into a sullen, stultifying silence.

### 2.2 State of Emergency

The State of Emergency regulations restrict what can be published. Police permission often has to be sought for the publication of information on the violence. Moreover, the Press is highly reliant on the police for information. The police are obviously not providing the Press with adequate information. And it seems as if the police subsume some of the vigilante attacks under the general crime rate statistics, instead of recording them for what they are.

### 2.3 Role of the Press

The newspapers haven't reported adequately on what is happening. There seem to be a number of reasons for this: most of the newspapers have committed themselves fully to the Indaba and that might make them less inclined to expose the role of Inkatha supporters in the violence; there is also the threat of legal action by Inkatha; and finally there have allegedly been cases of reporters being intimidated by vigilantes in the townships, if they do not present a certain kind of picture.

### 2.4 The Threat of Legal Actions

There are difficulties in identifying Inkatha with the violence carried out by its supporters. Inkatha has been ever-ready to take legal action against those who dare to suggest that it has been responsible for violence. Several such legal cases are pending at the moment. People are therefore very reluctant to point to violence perpetrated by Inkatha supporters.

### 2.5 Identification Problems

It is sometimes difficult to conclusively identify the perpetrators of violence. They wear balaclavas. They are active at night. They are sometimes total strangers not known to be living in the areas in which they commit their crimes. Sometimes only the bodies of their victims are found. There is no trace of who the killers are.



Notwithstanding the above difficulties, it is certainly possible to arrive at a more accurate and complete picture of the nature of the violence than has been provided so far. This memorandum aims to do that. It is based on intensive legal and research work undertaken over the past three weeks. It is based on legal affidavits from a wide range of people affected by the violence; interviews carried out with people in the townships; reports of unrest monitoring agencies; and press reports. Despite this, the tragic truth is that nobody as yet has a complete picture of the actual numbers killed or injured.

### 3. EXTENT OF THE VIOLENCE

It is clear that the sheer scale of the violence is frightening. PACSA figures indicate that 130 people have died since January. What our figures also show is that the vast majority of these deaths have occurred as a direct result of the actions of Inkatha supporting vigilantes. While it cannot be denied that a number of Inkatha members have lost their lives - V.V. Mvelase the KwaZulu Assistant Urban Representative gives a figure of 18 killed (letter to Echo, October 15 1987) - our figures indicate that over 70 people have been killed by vigilantes since the beginning of the year. A large number of these have been members of the UDF and COSATU or have been associated with our organisations in one way or another. Many have been relatives of COSATU or UDF activists who were killed because the intended target was not around. A substantial number have also been people who simply happened to get in the way, or whose sole "crime" it was that they refused to join Inkatha.

In fact, our townships have become a battleground with the vigilantes on the one side and everybody else who refuses to bow to their dictates on the other. This central fact has, we believe, been systematically obscured by press and police reports which have labelled the conflict as "faction fighting" or simply as a fight between UDF and Inkatha for "territory". In the process, the role and culpability of the vigilantes has been completely obscured.

### 4. OVERALL TRENDS IN THE VIOLENCE

The picture usually presented is that of random violence, of one group of people arbitrarily and aimlessly killing off another. The implication has sometimes been that it is somehow in the "African mind" to kill and murder without reason. This is far from accurate. The violence in fact displays a remarkably consistent pattern.

#### 1 Attempts to destroy progressive organisation

The violence usually follows the setting up of progressive structures or the launching of campaigns by progressive

organisations. The aim is clear. It is to prevent the growth of these organisations. It is to stamp out all non-Inkatha political activity. The following are some examples in point:

#### 4.1.1 Aftermath of Sarmcol Stayaway and consumer boycotts

The first acts of organised vigilante violence in the Pietermaritzburg area can be traced back to the organisation of the July 18 stayaway and consumer boycott in support of the SARMCOL workers in 1985. At the same time, the UDF-affiliated Imbali Civic Association was formed and had begun to take up a campaign against evictions. The response of the vigilantes was to attack Robert Duma, the Chairperson of the Imbali Civic Association and burn his house. A week later, Inkatha supporters marched on Federal Theological Seminary and demanded that the seminary vacate the buildings and property.

#### 4.1.2 1986 Christmas against the Emergency campaign

Together with the South African Council of Churches, the UDF and COSATU launched the "Christmas against the Emergency" Campaign in December last year. In Pietermaritzburg people were asked to switch off the lights in their homes for an hour on the night of December 16. The Press reported that about 90% of Imbali residents did so. The vigilantes responded by stoning houses which had their lights off and attempting to force people to switch on their lights.

#### 4.1.3 Stayaway against the May 1987 elections

A hugely successful stayaway against the white elections took place on May 5 and 6 this year. The vigilantes held the bus drivers responsible for its success. Buses were stoned and drivers were attacked. In the Maswazini area, this happened allegedly at the instigation of the Induna, Mtombela. The drivers are members of the COSATU-affiliated Transport and General Workers Union.

The conflict between the vigilantes and bus drivers is still simmering.

#### 4.1.4 Progressive organisation must be rooted out

The increase in violence in recent months is in many areas clearly a response to the establishment of structures in the townships by progressive organisations. For example on May 5 this year, the Sweetwaters Youth Organisation (SYO) was formed at a meeting attended by about 60 people. While this meeting was in progress it was attacked by members of the Inkatha Youth Brigade. The following day the SYO had another meeting which was also disbanded when Inkatha supporters approached. Due to these threats members of the organisation stayed in hiding up in the mountains. When they came down the mountain that evening the group was fired on by unknown people driving a Combi owned by Mr Thabatha, an UWUSA member. A number of SYO members suffered



bullet wounds. Derek Ngubane, who had been elected onto the BYO committee, died as a result of bullet and multiple stab wounds.

It is no coincidence either that vigilante activity in the Vulindlela area has increased drastically following the formation of the Dindi Youth Congress, the Mveleni Youth Congress and other UDF structures.

#### 4.1.5 UDF members must leave the township

The vigilantes have consistently threatened UDF and COSATU members with violence if they do not leave the townships. In September 1985, for example, the families of several UDF activists in Imballi sought a legal interdict against Mr Abdul Awetha and 9 other Inkatha members, for threatening the families with violence if they did not leave the area.

Again before June 16 last year, a pamphlet issued in the name of Inkatha called upon all UDF members in Imballi and Dambuza Road to leave the area. According to a Press report (Echo 22/5/86) Mr Mvelase, the KwaZulu Assistant Urban Representative denied any knowledge of the pamphlet but added that its existence was brought to his attention. "I was not informed before it was drafted. I called Joseph Mabaso this morning to my office and asked him about it and he agreed that he knew all about it," explained Mr Mvelase. Joseph Mabaso is the regional organiser of the Inkatha Youth Brigade.

#### 4.2 Forced Recruitment and Mobilisation

The drastic increase in violence in recent weeks is clearly linked to a concerted forced recruitment drive by Inkatha supporters in many areas. In the Edendale area, this began to be stepped up from early September. If people do not join Inkatha they are warned to leave the townships or they will be assaulted and their houses burnt down. The following are among the many cases that can be cited:

4.2.1 In the Mgwagwa area there have been a number of attacks on people who refused to join Inkatha. On Sunday 6 September 1987 Mlindwa Mthemba was stabbed, allegedly by an Inkatha member, apparently because he had not been at an Inkatha meeting and had not joined the organisation. Similarly Bhekithemba Richard Malembe was seriously assaulted around the 15th September allegedly by a group of Inkatha members. He was taken to the Induna's house where "the Induna insisted that I join Inkatha, or face continued assaults. Afraid for my life, I agreed to join Inkatha."

4.2.2 In the Sweetwaters area, Chief Zondi has allegedly been involved in many attempts to coerce people to join Inkatha. According to an affidavit by a COSATU organiser, the Chief told him that he could not live in the same area as a COSATU man. In a later meeting the Chief "told me that he

only wanted two answers. Would I join Inkatha and would I leave COSATU."

In another incident in Sweetwaters, Aaron Bhakabantu Mpulo was murdered on October 4 1987, allegedly by a mob of Inkatha members. One of the leaders of the mob wanted to know "why he did not come to join Inkatha at our meeting."

4.2.3 In the Harewood and Sinathing areas it was reported that a man was invading houses at night and trying to force people to join Inkatha. According to the Natal Witness (3/9/87) residents said that he had forced people to sign papers and give him a R5 joining fee. A number of people had been hurt during his house calls, they said. They reported that he intimidated them by firing shots into the air while walking in the streets. The city's KwaZulu MP Mr V. Ndlovu said that no-one was authorised to go house-to-house recruiting people for Inkatha.

Such denials have, however, not halted the practice.

Even if people have formally joined Inkatha, there is no guarantee that they will not be harassed. The vigilantes insist that people participate actively in Inkatha activities. If they don't it is taken as a sign that they are secretly harbouring UDF sympathies.

4.2.4 In the already cited case of Bhekithemba Malembe from Mgwagwa, for example, he was approached by a number of vigilantes shortly after joining. "The group demanded that I join their group and participate in an Inkatha march. I informed them that as a result of their attack I was still too weak and ill to march with them. They threatened me, took my trousers and departed."

What emerges clearly is that the community is being terrorised into joining Inkatha and participating in its activities. Either they join or they leave the townships. If they do neither, they risk being assaulted or killed and having their houses burnt down.

4.3 The notion of "own territory" and the attempt to gain complete control

Once the vigilantes have claimed a territory as "theirs" they do not tolerate the presence of any organisation or individual that is not part of them. Some of the incidents already referred to make this quite clear. Among the many others that can be cited are:

4.3.1 In August 1985 the Federal Theological Seminary (FEDSEM) in Imballi was identified by Inkatha supporters as being "hostile" to Inkatha, as the Seminary had given refuge to a number of people who had fled attacks. On Sunday August 25



a large group of armed Inkatha members, including the MP for Imbali, Mr V. Ndlovu, the mayor, Mr Pakkies, the Inkatha Chairman of Imbali, Mr Ben Jele and others marched up to Fedsem and told the Seminary to vacate the buildings and grounds by Friday, August 30 failing which "things could get worse". The Seminary was granted an urgent interdict against Pakkies and Ndlovu.

4.3.2 In January 1987 in Ashdown, there was a full scale clash between members of the Inkatha Youth Brigade and the Young Buccaneers, a soccer club. A star player of this club had been associated with the UDF in the past and so was attacked by vigilantes. When other players and supporters of the club came to his defence, the whole soccer club was viewed as being "hostile" to Inkatha.

4.3.3 This notion of "our territory" is poignantly captured in this statement from Lucky Gumede:

"Sometime in June this year Andries stated that Alson, Bheki and I should join Inkatha. We stated that we did not want to join. He stated that we were UDF members, the reason for us not wanting to join. He then started swearing. Sometime in July, Andries informed me that since they were Inkatha members and we were UDF members we were not allowed to go into their territory. They drew a dividing line that we were not allowed to cross. They said that if we ever dared to cross the line they would shoot us. We never ever ventured across the line. They however, used to come to our side and interfere with us."

The converse to the definition of a certain area as "our territory" is the definition of other areas as "not our territory". Such areas then become subject to "invasions" and attempts to "take them over".

4.3.4 In the last few weeks we have seen a number of attacks launched from areas which the vigilantes have claimed as their own into those areas where people have refused to join Inkatha. Such clashes have taken place for example between vigilantes from Harewood and residents from the surrounding parts of Edendale. It was due to these attacks that "defence units" have been set up in various areas. Residents who refuse to submit to Inkatha have had to organise themselves. As a result of this Edendale has now become "zoned" into "Inkatha areas" and "UDF" areas.

4.3.5 Another case, which fortunately did not end violently was a march in March 1986 by armed Inkatha members through Sobantu township in which Inkatha has no overt support. According to Mike Tarr, then PFP MP for Pietermaritzburg South, "it would not have taken much for violence to have broken out at the march" (Natal Witness 10/3/86).

#### 4.4 The emergence of "warlords"

Closely linked to this notion of "our territory" and complete control over it is the emergence of what are effectively "warlords". Certain key figures can be identified with much of the violence in each area. These are people known to be Inkatha members and officials. They expect total obedience to them and their organisation. Their prestige seems to derive from their "exploits".

Residents of the townships report that this war lord phenomenon is proving to be highly destabilising. Violent acts are openly carried out by armed groups that are identified with Inkatha by others in the community. This has led to incidents of retaliation against ordinary Inkatha members. Such blow-for-blow escalations of violence could have been halted if the police had taken decisive action against these warlords and their gangs. Why such groups can continue to function for so long raises very serious questions about the role of the police. In these circumstances it is little wonder that people become frustrated and move outside the law.

#### 4.5 The violence fits into a national pattern

It is clear that the violence in the townships of Pietermaritzburg is not random. It represents a systematic campaign of destabilisation of progressive organisations. It is also the result of a major forced recruitment drive into Inkatha of entire communities in certain areas.

The systematic rather than random nature of the violence is suggested also in the way the vigilante phenomenon in the townships of Pietermaritzburg fits into a broader regional and national pattern. Is it simply a coincidence that the first vigilante attacks in Pietermaritzburg occurred in August 1985, at the time that vigilante attacks in other parts of the country were stepped up and the first State of Emergency was being put into operation?

Again, is it simply a coincidence that the vigilante attacks in Pietermaritzburg tailed off during the first few months of the second state of emergency - and at a time when vigilante attacks nationally were in a state of lull?

We find it difficult to believe that it was simply coincidental. This together with the alleged complicity of the police in vigilante violence (see 5.3 below) makes us believe that what our organisations and members have experienced locally is simply part of the broader attempts of the state and conservative forces to crush progressive organisation.



## SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE VIOLENCE

besides the general trends in the violence identified in 4 above, here are a number of specific features to it.

### 1 Looting and general thuggery

Any of the vigilante attacks have been accompanied by looting and theft. Sometimes people are assaulted for no apparent reason. Some examples include:

1.1 It has been alleged in the legal action against Sichizo Zuma heard on 3 November 1987 in Pietermaritzburg, that Inkatha members attacked the Mkhize household on Saturday 3.10.87 at night. The group smashed windows and thereafter, allegedly removed the entire contents of the house. The Mkhize cow was dragged off to the soccer field and allegedly shot by Sichizo Zuma (the alleged leader of the Inkatha Youth Brigade in Harewood). The cow was slaughtered and the meat was purportedly brought back to Sichizo's house where members of Inkatha and others had a feast.

1.2 In a legal action against Chief Zuma of Slangspruit lodged in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court on 3 November 1987 it is alleged that a vigilante attack took place on Mr Themba Kunene's house in Slangspruit in June 1987. Kunene's tuckshop was ransacked and groceries, a large sum of money, a pair of shoes and a new axe had been taken. It is alleged that Zuma, an Inkatha member was responsible for this.

1.3 People are simply assaulted in the streets of the township for no apparent reason. A typical case is that of Mr Richard Khanyile of Imballi. The "Echo" reported (6/3/86) that he was driving in Zikhali Road in Imballi at about 7.15pm when he encountered a group of about 150 armed men. "I stopped the car as there was no way to pass. Then, without saying a word, one of them came straight to me and knocked my windscreen with a 'mulkei' (bolted stick)." The Inkatha Youth Brigade was having a march in the township at that time.

In his comment on these incidents, Mr V.V. Mvelase, KwaZulu Assistant Urban Representative apologised to members of the community who fell victim to elements which he described as "bloodthirsty" (Echo 6/3/86). "After investigating the complaints I have found that youth members did accompany their colleagues in the township and somehow unruly elements joined the march and caused problems."

In a statement attributed also to Mr Mvelase in April of this year, he again comments on the thug element: "our organisation has grown so much that it has been infiltrated by some thugs and mad people who go and disrupt schools." (Echo 16/4/87)

The number of occasions where such "thug elements" are linked to Inkatha activities is at best disquieting, but surely such explanations cannot be endlessly accepted.

### 5.2 Inkatha involvement

It is clear beyond reasonable doubt that Inkatha members are centrally involved in the township violence. It is also evident that a lot of the violence is designed to directly benefit Inkatha - particularly the attempts to force people to join the organisation. The link between the violence and the organisation is, however, a lot clearer than that. In a number of incidents, key Inkatha members were directly implicated:

5.2.1 In the march on Fedsem, the KwaZulu MP for Imballi, Mr V. Ndlovu and the Inkatha Chairperson Ben Jele were present and played important roles.

5.2.2 In a number of incidents of intimidation in the Vulindlela area, the traditional Inkatha leadership were in the forefront. For example in Mgawagwa the Induna Mshayena Mbanjwa has been implicated in attempts to intimidate people to join Inkatha. Chief Zondi has also been directly implicated.

5.2.3 According to affidavits lodged in a legal action in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court on 3 November 1987, the Induna of Maswazini, Mtombela has also been involved in a number of cases of violence, intimidation and murder.

5.2.4 In Slangspruit the Inkatha chief of the area, Zuma, has allegedly been involved in a number of incidents of violence. The allegations are contained in a legal action lodged in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme court on 3 November 1987.

5.2.5 The Inkatha Youth Brigade chief of the Harewood area, Sichizo Zuma has also been allegedly involved in numerous acts of violence. These allegations are contained in the above mentioned legal action.

The list could be extended.

We would contend that certain of the political positions adopted by Inkatha and the KwaZulu government have contributed to the kind of climate that makes for attacks at a local level. Statements made by senior members of the KwaZulu government and Inkatha, and a number of steps taken by the KwaZulu government indicate the same desire to exercise complete control over "their" territory that characterises vigilante leaders at a local level.

Dr Buthelezi is on record (Natal Witness 20/12/85) as saying that he would dismiss KwaZulu civil servants who worked with the United Democratic Front.

Another glaring example is the "loyalty pledge" which teachers and medical students are required to sign. According to a Weekly Mail report (16/1/87) teachers at one school in Edendale were



told that KwaZulu did not need teachers who were not members of Inkatha.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the KwaZulu government is as willing to use detention without trial and bannings against the UDF and similar organisations as the central state is. It needs to be remembered that KwaZulu banned the student organisation COSAS long before the central government did. And only recently it was reported in the press that the KwaZulu police had detained a number of people under emergency regulations.

When Buthelezi demanded that the right to issue firearm licences and control over police stations be handed over to KwaZulu, he justified the request in these terms, "I am talking here about the need that there is for the KwaZulu government and the KwaZulu police to be put in a position to eradicate the kind of brutality that is now inherent in intimidatory politics and particularly for the black community to be in a position to protect themselves from such brutality within the law." (Weekly Mail 13/3/87) This statement is completely silent about the intimidatory tactics and brutality of the Inkatha supporting vigilantes, who are, in fact the major perpetrators of violence in the region.

It also finds an ominous echo in the recent demand by the local Inkatha committee that Pietermaritzburg police stations be handed over to KwaZulu government control (Weekly Mail 30/10/87).

### 5.3 Police complicity

Another striking feature of the violence is the direct and indirect support of certain policemen for the vigilantes. Residents have persistently complained that police do not act against the vigilantes even when they are identified as being responsible for the attacks. The police are also accused of refusing to provide protection for the residents against the vigilante attacks. In fact, they allegedly refuse to intervene at times in clashes between the vigilantes and residents. And in some cases they have been identified by residents to have actually participated in the attacks together with the vigilantes. Some examples:

5.3.1 It has been alleged in recent court documents filed in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court that in or about June 1987, in Slangspruit, Themba Kunene's house and tuckshop were attacked. Inkatha leader Zuma and others were named as the assailants. It was claimed that though the events had transpired over three months ago, and notwithstanding that full reports had been made to the police naming those responsible, no action had been taken thus far.

5.3.2 Additional court papers filed in the same action state that in or about June 1987, again in Slangspruit, Joseph Siphwe Hadebe was assaulted and left for dead, apparently by a gang of Inkatha members. Despite charges having been filed against three individuals, it was asserted that there

was neither an effective investigation or any prosecution of those responsible. Indeed, it was further claimed that no potential witnesses to the crime had yet been interviewed by the police.

5.3.3 In another Slangspruit incident, the report of which was set forth in the legal action, it was alleged that Sergeant Hene of the Plessislaer Police Station, refused to take a statement from the victim, Mrs Makhosazana Hadebe, and advised the complainant that her best course was to join Inkatha.

5.3.4 In the Harewood area there is concrete evidence linking Sichizo Zuma to unlawful activities, yet police have held him and then released him shortly thereafter.

5.3.5 In a number of instances the police were called while an attack was in progress, but they either did not arrive at all, or only arrived after the event. For example on October 4 1987 the house of Willie Mpulo aged 49 was attacked, allegedly by Inkatha, and his son Bhekabantu murdered. While the attack was in progress one of Mpulo's children, Busizwe, ran to the Hilton police station to ask for assistance. Help was promised, but never arrived.

5.3.6 Policemen attacked youth in the Mgwagwa area. On September 6 1987 SAP member Dumisani Ngwengwe allegedly participated in an attack on Mgwagwa youth, while in May SAP member Sampson Mbanjwa allegedly assaulted a youth.

5.3.7 According to a statement, on 6 August during an attack by Inkatha members on a group of "comrades" in the Nhlazatshe area a number of policemen intervened: "They drew fire arms and chased us. One of these police vans loaded in the Inkatha people and also chased us. The police cornered us and ordered us to get into the waiting police van. They then called the Inkatha members and told them to beat us."

5.3.8 It has also been reported that Slangspruit Inkatha leader Zuma was alleged to have been given a firearm by Warber, a member of the Security Branch. Indeed, it was claimed that when Zuma was arrested for crimes against Themba Kunene, as set forth in paragraph 5.1.2 above, he was immediately released after Officer Warber interceded on his behalf.

5.3.9 Police bias is also reflected in the use of emergency regulations to detain people. When the emergency was declared it was justified as being necessary in order to "reduce the level of violence in the townships". The fact, however, is that in the Pietermaritzburg situation, no Inkatha member or vigilante has, to our knowledge ever been detained. By contrast our organisations, already reeling under the vigilante onslaught also had to face the full brunt of emergency rule. In the Midlands area something like 200 people linked to our organisations were detained



at some stage or another - including the Secretary of the Natal Midlands UDF, Bkhumbuzo Ngwenya who was kept in detention for twelve months. Alfred Ndlovu, the COSATU Regional Chairperson is at present detained under emergency regulations.

## 6. CONCLUSION

We feel that it is a reasonable and inescapable conclusion that the violence that has become so much part of everyday life in the townships has largely been the result of a systematic attempt to smash our organisations. In the process life in the townships has become a nightmare for the ordinary residents.

In coming to this conclusion, we do not wish to dispute that members of our organisation have been involved in acts of violence. Nevertheless the evidence points to the fact that the lion's share of the violence can be directly credited to the vigilantes and the failure of the police to intervene or prevent further violence. Furthermore, in a situation where our membership feels and has evidence to believe that the police is a good deal less than sympathetic to the victims of vigilante attacks, it is hardly surprising that people are starting to take the law into their own hands and retaliating in kind.

### 6.1 Conflict is generated by a lack of democracy

The underlying reason for the bloodletting in Pietermaritzburg is the lack of a democratic process in South Africa. In a situation where organisations do not have to prove their popular support, it is possible for conservative groupings which do not have significant popular support to emerge and to impose themselves on the population.

Because their political message is more palatable to official circles than that of their more "radical" rivals, it seems that the police are willing to turn a blind eye to some of their coercive practices. In this situation any kind of resistance to these groupings will launch a spiral of violence.

The more they lose the support of the population due to the use of force, the more desperate they become and the more willing they are to resort to force to bolster their political position.

The suppression of information due to the State of Emergency compounds the situation, because those people who would have the influence to curtail the coercive activities of these groups do not have accurate information at their disposal. Consequently they are blinded by their political sympathy for these groups.

The result is the kind of polarisation and escalating conflict that we have seen in the Pietermaritzburg area.

### 6.2 How can peace be established?

We feel that it would be dishonest and futile to talk about a resolution of the conflict without concrete steps being taken to eliminate the vigilante phenomenon. Peace cannot be established in a situation where every attempt on our part to organise or to campaign is forcibly disrupted. It also cannot be established in a climate where attacks on our membership are actually intensified.

Our organisations believe in peace. We have called on our members to use utmost restraint and to use legitimate methods of self-defence. We also accept the principle that peace can be facilitated by talks and negotiations. But it is crucial that any agreement reached will be lasting. In a situation where warlords are allowed to act freely, where forced recruitment takes place and where it is difficult for us to report back adequately to our constituency, no agreement would last. Such a failure of negotiations would be disastrous.

In view of this, we feel that a climate needs to be created in which meaningful talks could take place. This requires the intervention of everybody who is genuinely concerned about peace and the prospects of building a better society.

6.2.1 For the Press this means exposing the truth of what is happening in our townships.

6.2.2 For the Police this means to stop harassing our organisations and to start to take action against the real culprits.

6.2.3 For organised business it is necessary to take note of the facts presented in this memorandum, and to consider whether blind political support for organisations like Inkatha is in their interests or in the interests of the wider community. Business should also note that the kind of pressures their workers have been subjected to are also not in their interests.

6.2.4 For Inkatha it means to start taking concrete steps to discipline those who are guilty of the violence. Furthermore it means to open up the space for other organisations to exist and to campaign.

We believe that the situation in Pietermaritzburg has long ago reached crisis proportions. If the situation cannot be resolved here, it reflects very dimly on the prospects of peace in the region or indeed the country as a whole.