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# Zulu impis do battle in 'Place of the Gun'

By Anton Ferreira

Mhlupheki Shange died because he was a good man in a bad place in a violent country.

He lived in Msinga district, in the rural heart of Natal, where Zulu warriors have been killing each other in tribal wars for more than a century.

One night last month a band of armed men surrounded Shange's hut and demanded that he join them in a war party.

"He refused to go," his mother told police. "So they killed him."

## Chased impi

Police chased the impi across a boulder-strewn hillside and arrested 21 people. They seized six AK-47 assault rifles, ten .303 carbines and a shotgun.

The impi was about to do battle in the latest round of the faction fighting which rages almost continuously in Msinga.

"Msinga is known as 'The Place of the Gun'," said Creina Alcock, a de-

velopment worker who has lived in the area for 17 years.

"It is like coming across a dinosaur — no Whites or missionaries came here in the old days, so tribal traditions and structures remain strong."

Mrs Alcock, whose husband Neil was killed in an ambush in 1983 while mediating between rival Msinga factions, said one reason for the violence was a tradition of trial by combat.

"You get young men growing up dying for a fight, so they deliberately provoke wars."

Much of the fighting is between members of the same clan, although one clan will sometimes take on another in a feud dating back to ancient history.

## AK-47 favoured

"In almost every instance, the original root cause of the ill-feeling is unknown to all concerned," said KwaZulu police officer Brigadier Sipho Mathe.

In the old days wars were fought with sticks and spears, and casualties were relatively low. Now the weapon of choice is the AK-47, and scores of Msinga people die every year.

Last month at least 14 people were killed and 15 injured in a bloody battle when two impis of 300 men each clashed over the murder of a tribal leader in nearby Ladysmith.

Sergeant Eddie Aucamp, a member of a special police unit based in Msinga's main town of Tugela Ferry, said the pastoral beauty of the district belied its dangers.

"We have orders not to drive around at night. Even in broad daylight, on the main road, we've been shot at," Sgt Aucamp said, pointing out a bullet hole in his vehicle.

His unit, charged with confiscating illegal firearms, has seized an average of 650 a year over the last three years.

Weapons range from

home-made guns crafted from plumber's supplies to vintage muzzle-loaders and modern automatic rifles.

Most of the Soviet-designed AK-47s — and some of the fights — are imported from Johannesburg, where hundreds of Msinga men work in industry and the gold mines.

"If two Msinga men brawl in Soweto, 500 km away, there'll be a faction fight here," said Lieut Tommy Pakkari, who led the police squad that rounded up Shange's killers.

Police efforts to negotiate peaceful settlements seldom succeeded. "These people believe fighting is the only way to settle an argument."

## More warlike

Faction fighting occurs throughout Natal, but is particularly bad in Msinga, a district of about 200 000 people. Some researchers believe the reason is fierce competition for resources in a moun-

tainous area where only 10 percent of the land is arable.

Anthropologist John Argyle said that while environmental factors might play a part, Msinga people seemed to be more warlike than Zulus elsewhere.

"It's hard to pin down, but for example, when a group of Msinga residents were moved to another area, fighting erupted there," he said.

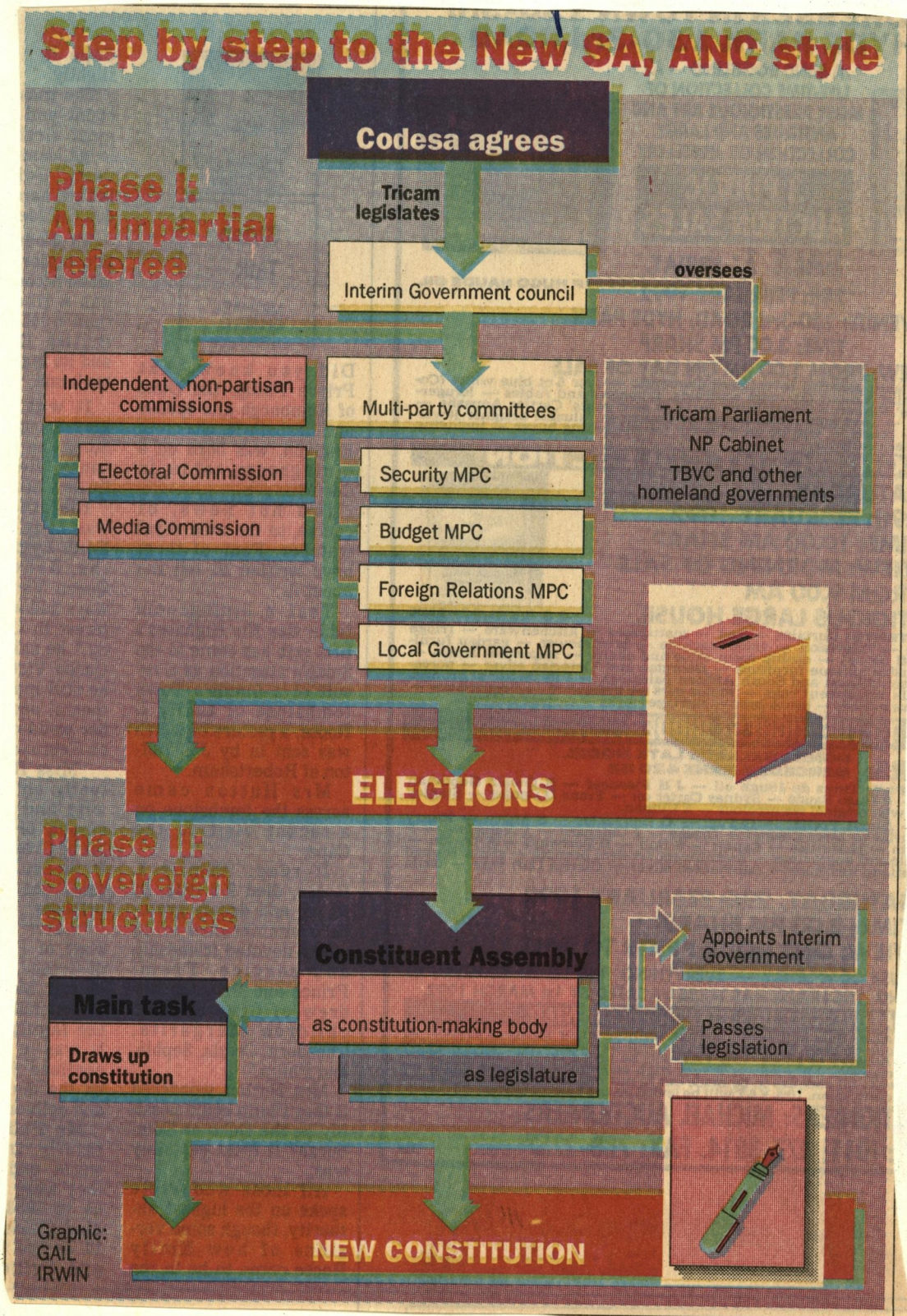
"It's a cycle which is difficult to escape — a pattern of revenge that has no beginning and no end."

There were similarities with fighting in other parts of Natal province between Zulus supporting rival political groups — the Inkatha Freedom Party and the African National Congress.

"They both try to create local fiefdoms over which they want exclusive control. The national leadership can appeal for peace, but what counts is the local competition." — Sapa-Reuter



STAR  
26 FEBRUARY '92





# Ramodike's rule violates our freedom

26 FEBRUARY 1992

I AM a resident of Mapela in Lebowa near Mahwelereng township. I was shocked at the silence of Lebowa chief minister Nelson Ramodike about the situation in the area.

Mapela has been without a chief since July 1990. Tribal officials impose unlawful taxes on innocent pensioners.

Officials allegedly take bribes from people but are never arrested. People pay licences of up to R400, cattle, goats and donkey taxes. To my surprise Lebowa police are alleged to help these illegitimate officials

enforce payments at gunpoint.

People are without water but the local MP has water. He waters his orchard daily.

I appeal to all South Africans to help us eradicate this inhuman system.

No individual or group has any right to govern others

without their consent.

The Ramodike system violates all fundamental and universal principles of freedom.

This is crime against humanity.

**DONALD MAPELA,  
Mapela,  
Lebowa.**

## Violence is not just between ANC, IFP

I AM not happy about the way violence is being reported in our newspaper. It is high time that editors gave us what is really happening.

I am totally against reports that violence sweeping the country is between

the ANC and IFP.

The violence is between the IFP and the people who do not want to join it.

Innocent people have been killed by IFP members coming back from rallies.

If the violence was be-

tween these two organisations IFP members would have attacked members of the ANC when they came from their rallies.

**JJN,  
Sebokeng,  
Vereeniging.**

### Letters to the Editor

Short letters, with writer's name for publication, are preferred, though pseudonyms may be used. No letter is considered unless it is signed, with the writer's full address. When possible, please give phone numbers. Letters may be cut or summarised for space reasons. Write to: The Editor, Sowetan, PO Box 6663, Johannesburg 2000.

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### Letters

## ANC wings part of same bird

**SIR** — The article by Patrick Laurence (ANC's economy policy: a seepage of contradictions) regarding the double game played by the ANC on nationalisation deserves a few comments.

The ANC's theoreticians and leadership have never quite understood the nature of the worker they claim to represent.

They see private property as a threat rather than an incentive for the worker.

Hence comes the supposed necessity that the State nationalise all property.

Actually, human nature responds much to the contrary.

Creating the conditions to realise this hope ensures the foundation of a vigorous economy and a thriving middle class.

In the name of the working class, socialist governments have nationalised major industries — thereby often stagnating the economy and impoverishing the workers.

Reading the recent and past ANC statements on nationalisation, public opinion could be led to a false impression: the existence of two antagonistic wings inside the ANC.

One, soft-spoken, "more civilized, people-with-whom-we-can-talk", led by Mr Mandela, is master of vague assertions: "Nationalisation is our policy, but there is a shift in our thinking."

Of course, Mr Mandela doesn't disclose this "shift". Tactical and ambiguous blah

blah blah. Or defending a mixed economy "based on the principles of democracy, participation and development". What do these three "principles" mean?

On the other hand, there is another wing, insensible to the failure of socialism.

This wing openly contradicts Mr Mandela and defends nationalisation as an untouchable sacred cow.

Despite the apparent differences, the so-called two wings go hand in hand together towards the ANC's April Conference.

After all, they are two wings of the same bird and the bird knows very well which moment to use either wing. Bird of prey!

**W.D.S. DIAS  
Westville**



# ANC's twin-edged plan

26 FEBRUARY 1992

The latest ANC blueprint for the transition period and beyond is both a concession and a challenge to the Government, writes Political Editor SHAUN JOHNSON.

THE MAJOR parties to negotiations are nearing an advanced stage in designing a mutually acceptable "package" for how South Africa should be ruled during the transition and how a final constitution should be drawn up.

It is a process not unlike that of building model aeroplanes. Each has been busily cutting and gluing pieces together, and showing the product of their labours to the others. Each has then gone back and altered its model in the light of what it has seen, trying to make it look a little more like the others. The ultimate object of the exercise is to settle on a single structure which includes parts taken from each — and can still fly.

This is the context in which the ANC's newest model for interim government and constitution-making, presented at Codesa this week, should be seen. It is an adaptation of earlier positions, and includes clear attempts to address the Government's concerns; but without discarding the principles of the original design. It will, no doubt, prompt an updated model from the Government.

In two areas, in particular, the latest ANC scenario seeks to satisfy — or at least take the sting out of — Government objections.

Firstly, the Government has insisted from the outset of the negotiations process that it would not accept a transitional arrangement which involves leaping into a "constitutional vacuum", or ceding power to an unelected body which would rule by decree. The ANC previously demanded that the present Parliament be dissolved or suspended, and power transferred *in toto* to a representative, but unelected, body.

Now the ANC is proposing that the tricameral Parliament be maintained — possibly in a rationalised form — in order to give legislative effect to decisions taken by an "interim government council" appointed from the ranks of Codesa. This offers the Government a compromise: Parliament survives, but loses its ultimate authority.

Secondly, the Government has been set against the idea of

a constituent assembly (CA) drawing up a new constitution ever since the ANC first proposed the body. Now, however, the ANC proposals offer the possibility that a CA could operate as a legislature subject to checks and balances at the same time as it performed its constitution-drafting function.

This would allow for an interim Cabinet operating under suf-

ficient or even full consensus, and interim measures such as the requirement of a two-thirds majority for legislation to be passed. There would also be agreement that all parties receiving more than 5 percent of the vote under proportional representation, would be represented in the CA.

In these and other areas, the ANC and Government positions

are converging markedly — not to the extent that full agreement is imminent, but rather in the sense that details of similar concepts are being debated.

The ANC's detailed step-by-step plan for a two-step path towards a final negotiated solution is set out, in its distinct phases, in the accompanying diagram. In summarised form, it would operate as follows:

Phase one, which can only come into being once agreement has been achieved on the matter at Codesa, would seek to "level the political playing field". Interim structures would be charged with ensuring equal treatment for all political competitors, particularly regarding elections.

Codesa would appoint from its ranks an interim government council (IGC), in effect a supreme transitional Cabinet with final powers over Parliament and homeland structures.

Beneath the IGC would operate independent commissions charged with overseeing elections and ensuring equal access to the public media. There would also be four multiparty committees, enjoying final control in the key areas of security, the Budget, foreign relations

and local government.

The international community would be invited to become involved, at least at the level of the electoral commission.

Phase one would lead to elections for a CA. The first phase should not last for more than six months beyond the date of its inception.

Phase two begins once the CA has been elected. All South Africans over 18 would vote on the basis of proportional representation.

The main task of the CA would be the drafting of a final constitution, but it would appoint an interim Cabinet and perform transitional legislative functions. The process of constitution-making should not exceed nine months, and incentives and penalties would be devised to ensure the timetable was adhered to. The constitution could include "sunset" clauses to help ease the country into full-blooded democracy.

The new ANC "transitional package" takes the tactical fight to the Government: it cannot but demand a serious and considered response from Dr Gerriit Viljoen and his strategists. There are certainly still points of difference — the Government will argue that the IGC is still a form of "rule by decree", for example — but many of its elements will not be easily dismissed.

The likely next step is a revised Government plan, swallowing what it feels it can swallow from the ANC blueprint, and finessing those areas with which it still has problems. The model aeroplane-building route to agreement is a long one, requiring patience — but it has achieved an extraordinary amount thus far and is speeding up all the time. □



# ANC bomber tells of blast at city hotel

By Philip Zoio

ANC member Jeremy Seeber, yesterday convicted on charges of attempted murder and unlawfully causing an explosion, told the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court that he was acting on instructions of an ANC military commander when he planted an explosive device in a Johannesburg hotel in 1986.

Seeber (25) told the court how his desire for democracy in South Africa drew him into active involvement in the ANC's armed struggle.

In a written explanation of his plea of guilty on both charges Seeber said he had placed a mini-limpet mine in a towel dispenser in a men's cloakroom of the Devonshire Hotel in Braamfontein on September 26 1986.

The device exploded, causing slight injuries to Michael Paulson, Richard Zuma and Henning Snyman and R80 000 damage.

In his plea explanation Seeber said he was following ANC military strategies at a time when the ANC and its armed wing, Umkonto we Sizwe, were banned.

Questioned by prosecutor J van der Bijl, Seeber said the victims were unfortunate casualties of a war situation.

"I regret that I had to go to such an extent to demonstrate my opposition for the Government as it was then," he said.

Seeber testified that his parents had brought him up on

principles of democracy and racial equality.

In 1986 he was introduced to MK members in Swaziland through a close friend, a black political activist and fellow University of the Witwatersrand student. There he enlisted and underwent military training.

In September he was given instructions by his commander, whom he knew only by his code-name, Jabu, to examine targets in the business community for "armed propaganda", Seeber said. Jabu told him to set explosives in the upstairs bar at the Devonshire Hotel after Seeber reported it was accessible and frequented by many SA Breweries and Liberty Life employees.

The operation was later described by MK commanders as successful, Seeber said.

Mr van der Bijl said the act had been unnecessary and caused only fear and destruction.

Seeber was arrested in August 1990. He said that while in custody he had many discussions with rightwingers, particularly Orde Boerevolk chief-of-staff Leonard Veenendal, who is still wanted by Namibia in connection with the sabotage of a United Nations base in 1989.

Seeber's lawyer Gilbert Marcus told magistrate J Esterhuizen that the most recent application for indemnity in terms of the Pretoria Minute had not yet been considered. No reasons were given for the previous refusal, he said.

Arguments in mitigation of sentence continue.

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## Goldstone told of SADF trainees

PRETORIA — A group of 78 trainees allegedly given training at an SA Defence Force military camp in the Caprivi Strip had been appointed aides to KwaZulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi or had been sent to Inkatha regional offices before being absorbed into the KwaZulu Police, according to a statement by a senior KwaZulu policeman to the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into public violence and intimidation yesterday.

A committee of the commission, sitting in Pretoria, is investigating Weekly Mail allegations of SADF funding of front organisations sponsoring violence.

Brig Sipho Mathe of the KwaZulu Police said the remaining group of about 113 Caprivi trainees had been appointed as aides to ministers and VIPs.

Nineteen were absorbed into the KwaZulu police in June 1987.

Of the remaining 172 trainees, 94 were taken from their positions and given training by the SA Police as special constables and 96 went to an Inkatha training facility.

"Between September 1988 and June 1989 the trainees were instructed to visit schools to talk to pupils about the revolutionary slogan of the ANC — 'liberation first, education

later' and to attempt to convince the children rather to adhere to the Inkatha principle of 'liberation through education'."

In June 1989 the remaining Caprivi trainees were absorbed into the KwaZulu police or appointed special constables, Mathe said.

Mathe said that since the groups returned from Caprivi they had not been under the SADF's command.

Asked if he knew of SADF funding of the Caprivi group, he said he would not know. "This was handled by Mr M J Khumalo (former personal assistant to Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi)." — Sapa



## ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD

### Mandela vows struggle if supremacists take power

African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela declared Tuesday that should South African white supremacists return to power, they would have to throw him back in jail, where he spent 27 years for anti-apartheid activities. "I would remain in the country and would use every type of struggle necessary," he told the Afrikaans-language *Beeld* newspaper, widely read among South Africa's 5 million white minority. His organization, South Africa's largest black group, has attacked a March 17 whites-only referendum on political reform as racist, preferring to quicken the pace of democracy talks. President F.W. de Klerk, stunned by right-wing victories in recent parliamentary elections, announced the referendum last week. If he loses, he says, he will resign. Anti-apartheid groups fear white conservatives will come to power and cast aside de Klerk's reforms.



AP

**MANDELA:** Attacks whites-only vote



*The Independent*  
*26/2/92 - London*

## SA's right abandons boycott of referendum

SOUTH AFRICA'S pro-apartheid Conservative Party (CP) backed away from a boycott of next month's whites-only referendum on constitutional reform yesterday, but then came close to surrendering on the spot to President F W de Klerk.

The leader of the CP, Andries Treurnicht, was overruled in a deeply divisive caucus of party MPs and officials, and emerged talking not of victory but of carrying on the battle beyond the plebiscite.

The CP eventually advised its supporters to reject Mr de Klerk's plea for endorsement of negotiations with the black majority after Mr Treurnicht had recommended a boycott of the poll. A dejected party leader said the referendum would not be the last word, and the CP would continue to demand a general election.

"We advise our people to vote 'no' in this referendum, but we say should we lose this is not the end

## of referendum

From Chris McGreal in Cape Town

of the political war in South Africa. There is still a white nation, it cannot be wished away. That white nation will continue to demand its freedom," he said.

Mr Treurnicht said the CP would recognise the referendum result "as the actual situation, but not for all eternity". He would seek a common strategy with the paramilitary Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), which at first had said that it would do its best to disrupt the poll, but reconsidered after the CP decision.

The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codessa) and the Anglo-American mining house both called on whites to support Mr de Klerk, saying a

"no" vote would be disastrous. The ANC is expected to follow suit today.

A meeting of the partial CP caucus after Mr de Klerk announced the referendum question on Monday had initially decided to carry through Mr Treurnicht's boycott threat.

But when regional CP representatives arrived yesterday they overturned the decision, in the face of furious objections from those in the caucus who resented the speed with which the vote is to be held and rejected Mr de Klerk's assertion that the referendum fulfilled his election pledge to seek white voters' approval for constitutional changes. The poll

clearly does not meet that promise because South Africans still only have a very broad picture of the new system. But the right knew it had been out-manoeuvred. It has, after all, constantly called on Mr de Klerk to go back to the white electorate for a mandate.

The CP faces a test of its national policies and strategy, unlike the Potchefstroom by-election, where its victory pushed Mr de Klerk into calling the referendum. Faced with the prospect of a party split, the boycotters were prevailed upon to give way.

The party strife was still dogging Mr Treurnicht as he announced CP participation, and it came across as defeatist. "Should we lose in this referendum it is the loss of one battle but it's not the end of the war," he said.

"It's not the end of the struggle for survival in freedom of a people." Not once did he say he expected to win.



## South Africa

## A normality all its own

Our special correspondent describes some of the confusion that besets a country between apartheid and democracy

**T**HOUGH the restaurant is too new to be listed in the telephone book, lunchtime sees it thronged. Most of its patrons are the striped-shirted set who busy themselves in central Johannesburg's tall office buildings, but no one is surprised to see the manager solicitously describing the *plat du jour* to a prominent member of the African National Congress. Two years and two weeks ago the ANC was still banned, its members regarded as dangerous revolutionaries. Now they eat at La Bastille. No mob is storming the prisons of the *ancien régime*; no tumbrils are rolling; no guillotines swishing. After decades of abnormality, South Africa is normal at last. This is the most extraordinary thing about it.

Normal countries, of course, have problems, and in this respect South Africa is super-normal. Apartheid has left it divided, not just black against white, but black against black, Xhosa against Zulu, Coloured (mixed race) against Indian, and so on. Today the old alliances and divisions are all changing. On the one hand some frightened whites, and not just Afrikaners, are taking up arms against the reforms being introduced by President F.W. de Klerk's National government. On the other inter-racial mar-

riage is becoming almost a commonplace among young liberals, and the dinner parties of cabinet ministers may include black guests met for the first time six months ago in talks aimed at bringing peace to the townships.

For many the change is confusing. Coloureds—nearly 3m are thus classified—are reacting by joining the National Party. Though apartheid often treated them cruelly, disfranchising them in 1968 and dispossessing them of their homes (most notoriously in District Six in Cape Town), and though the ANC has made a bid for their support (recruiting Allan Boesak, a Coloured leader), they seem to fear the black masses more than their former white oppressors. Their representatives have been defecting to the Nationalists and, to judge by the paucity of Coloured marchers in recent ANC demonstrations, their votes will go the same way.

South Africa's Indians have long been involved in politics (even before Mahatma Gandhi was forced off the pavement by a Pretoria policeman in 1893 and decided to take on the white government). In this they have differed from the Indians of East and Central Africa, who have preferred to stick

to commerce. Now South Africa's Indians ~~are withdrawing from politics~~, turning instead to religion and to their own affairs. Indian organisations (closely allied to the ANC) are represented at Codesa, the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, where 19 groups are trying to reach agreement on the path to a new constitution, but they speak for ever fewer people.

Coloureds and Indians know that the main players on the South African stage are the 4.5m whites and the 27m blacks. For more than 40 years the National Party has spoken for the whites, invariably defeating the only opponents it allowed to challenge it; and for even longer—it has just turned 80—the ANC has spoken for the blacks, untested in formal elections but probably with majority support.

Since Mr de Klerk took over the Nationalists in 1989, these two ancient antagonists have come not perhaps to love one another but certainly to need each other. The Nationalists can hardly revert to apartheid and repression: to do so would send South Africa up a bloody cul-de-sac. The ANC can hardly return to the armed struggle: without Soviet support it would be even less menacing than in the past. In the organisations' mutual need lies the cause for optimism.

The optimistic outlook foresees agreement at Codesa on a set of constitutional principles, which will, if the government gets its way, be endorsed by a referendum (maybe in September). The current Parliament, in which blacks are not represented, will then legislate itself out of existence, to

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London*



THE CITIZEN

Wednesday 26 February 1992

## Inkatha blames ANC for Katlehong deaths

Citizen Reporter

THE Inkatha Freedom Party has blamed the African National Congress for the deaths of four people in Katlehong on the East Rand yesterday morning. The victims were the latest in a wave of violence around the country, which has left at least 57 dead since Friday last week.

"They can go to hell," said ANC Department of Information and Publicity spokesman, Mr Saki Macozomo. "We are sick and tired of the IFP running to the Press and blaming us every time their people are attacked."

The Zulu-speaking victims, three men and a woman, died after an AK-47 rifle attack on a minibus at dawn, accord-

ing to police, who suspect a revenge attack.

In a statement from IFP leadership in the Transvaal, the organisation claimed the attack marked a new pattern to the violence in the Transvaal.

A spokesman, Mr Kim Hodgson, said about 52 people have been killed in Katlehong and Soweto in the past two weeks, of which more than 30 were IFP supporters or Zulus.

The statement said that some of the attacks were against Zulus because of their ethnic identity, and not for their political affiliations.

Mr Macozomo described the claim as "trash". "How do they know that the victims are their people? The ANC rejects these claims with

absolute contempt."

The statement further claimed: "Another trend which is becoming increasingly apparent in both Natal and the Transvaal is the use of sophisticated weaponry against the IFP. Over 80% of attacks involve the use of AK-47 rifles and other weapons closely associated with Umkhonto we Sizwe."

Mr Macozomo denied this flatly.

"If they were attacked with R4-rifles, would they blame the South African Defence Force? The IFP has a large stockpile of AK-47s," he claimed.

The IFP also called for the disbanding of Umkhonto we Sizwe, which Mr Macozomo said was "none of their business".

"It is a matter between the government and the ANC, and will only be done once an interim government is agreed upon. In future we will not respond to the claims of the IFP," he said.

- An unidentified man died and another was injured in another East Rand attack at 7 am yesterday, when they were thrown off a train between Katlehong and Elspark in Germiston.

Shortly before, another man was hacked with a panga at Isando Station in Kempton Park.

At least 17 people died in attacks in a Sebokeng bedroom, tavern in Katlehong, Soweto and in an attack on the Alexandra Clinic near Sandton, and police confirmed the use of AK-47s in some of the attacks.