

ON PARADE/Willem Steenkamp

ANC's internal battle still on?

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I WAS disappointed that no real clarification of the "armed struggle" issue resulted from the latest round of talks with the ANC; I say this because to my mind it is quite clear that the "armed struggle" is not necessarily the same thing as simple acts of terrorism like detonating car bombs in crowded streets.

The ANC's standard reply on this matter, I gather, is that it does not condone such acts of terrorism, but its field operatives periodically become so infuriated by the apartheid regime that they act off their own bat.

This explanation does not hold water. Military operations have been defined as the projection of controlled violence: If the ANC cannot control its people on the ground it cannot claim to be a coherent "liberation movement".

This is important because it is not calculated to inspire the sort of credibility which is a cornerstone of any sort of meaningful dialogue. If one ignores the possibility that the ANC is merely avoiding blame, the only explanation is that the internal battle between the armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and the National Executive Committee greybeards is still in progress.

This is the question the latest talkers-with-the-ANC should have asked Mr Joe Slovo, since, when last I heard, he was running Umkhonto we Sizwe: I am sure he could have provided some interesting insights. Alas, it did not happen.

At the same time, the psychological importance of the "armed struggle" must not be lightly dismissed. I am given to understand that it is regarded as the only thing which stops the ANC from being a mere exile organization rather than an active insurgent movement; consequently it would be a serious mistake to dismiss it as a mere manifestation of brutal intent, whatever its effects.

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THE army's liaison officer at Air Force Base Waterkloof, a certain Commandant Matthews, recently proved to be hell on wheels when a large contingent of Citizen Force men arrived by air from the operational area, the plan being that buses would be waiting to take them to a troop train.

WOMFU! The buses weren't there, the Army had closed down for the night and it was raining hard. Enter Commandant Matthews, who found shelter for the new arrivals, then got on the blower and soon conjured up the necessary transport.

That's the sort of man who makes the military's wheels revolve.

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THOSE who believe the SADF's official languages are Afrikaans and Afrikaans may like to know that a reliable source tells me the Chief of the Army, Lieutenant-General Kat Liebenberg, has decreed strict observance of the SADF's alternating-month language policy, including verbal as well as written communications.

Finish, as one might say, and klaar.

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THE record for the fastest mass conversion from one aircraft type to another must surely belong to Colonel Alex Jandrell DSO DFC, wartime OC 21 Squadron SAAF, who died in Johannesburg last week after a long illness.

Reader Mr R H Aitchison, his successor, recalls: "He converted the squadron from Baltimores to Marauders without going off operations — a raid with Baltimores one day and Marauders the next. He had first to persuade Wing and Desert Air Force that it was possible, and then he went ahead and did it ... surely no other bomber squadron anywhere achieved the equivalent."

A pre-war Air Training Scheme pilot who went short service for a while, he was recalled in 1939, became an instructor, went "up North" in 1942 as a flight commander in 21 Squadron, and between 1943 and 1944 twice commanded it.

Mr Aitchison, his successor as squadron commander, remembers him as "gifted with a very keen intellect, real courage, super flying ability and great humanity; he led by example without any fuss or noise".

He later served on the staff of Desert Air Force and was then OC 3 Wing. [Willem Steenkamp is a reservist in the Citizen Force].

By ROBIN
HALLETT

BRITISH Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher, so I read recently in a South African newspaper, is regarded by Nationalists as an "arch-heroine". So it was hardly surprising to find President Botha drawing inspiration from the restrictions recently imposed by the British government on broadcast or televised interviews with members of any organisation, including the legal political party Sinn Fein, thought to be supporting terrorism in Northern Ireland.

Speaking on the Reef on October 21, Mr Botha urged the South African Press to "exercise self-discipline and smother the views of people advocating violence".

"If they do not," he went on to say, "they must not complain when we adopt measures similar to those used by the British government in its fight against terrorism."

It has, of course, long been asserted by official South African propagandists that the ANC is to be equated with the IRA, an assertion which reveals a singular ignorance both of

Irish and of South African history.

The IRA has behind it a long tradition of political violence which can be traced back to the Fenian movement in the 19th century. Both in the republic and in Northern Ireland, the IRA has its political wing, the party known as Sinn Fein. In Northern Ireland Sinn Fein holds one parliamentary seat in Westminster and 60 seats in local councils. The party is reckoned to have at least 80 000 supporters.

Sinn Fein-IRA looks towards the creation of a united Ireland. The political means of trying to achieve that goal are open to the party through the ballot box and the normal process of democracy. The peculiar

atrocities of the IRA's policy is that with peaceful means of campaigning open to it, it attempts to shoot its way into power and in so doing provokes a Loyalist backlash that has taken the form of the growth of Loyalist paramilitary organisations whose tactics are little different to those of the IRA.

Pretoria way off the mark in lumping ANC and IRA together

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The ANC, by contrast, has never been allowed to express its views on the sort of political stage that is open to Sinn Fein. Nor has violence been an integral part of ANC policy from the start as it has been with the IRA. Outside South Africa the leaders of the ANC operate openly and are held in high regard by politicians and the media the

world over. The IRA, on the other hand, sticks to the shadows. Its spokesmen rarely make appearances in public.

The reasons for the British government's recent decision to restrict interviews with supporters of terrorism in Northern Ireland are not difficult to understand. "Few people", wrote the Observer on October 23, "have more first-hand experience of the murderous efficiency of modern terrorism than Margaret Thatcher... No peacetime leader in our history has been accorded such protection", 10 Downing Street being regularly ringed with armed policemen and every journey being made in a four-and-a-half ton armoured Daimler capable of surviving a landmine explosion and with windows thick enough to deflect any bullet fired at point blank range. Even President Botha, one suspects, is not so elaborately protected; little wonder then that Mrs Thatcher is obsessed with terrorism.

Two months ago the IRA secured one of their more spectacular successes when they blew up a bus carrying 40 young British soldiers, killing eight of them. The Prime Minister promptly broke off her holiday to discuss counter measures. Had not

the time come to declare Sinn Fein an illegal organisation and to reintroduce internment (a form of detention without trial)? No, said senior officers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the British army in Ulster, that would only alienate many moderate members of the Catholic population and drive Sinn Fein activists underground. What was needed was more effective intelligence, the greater use of helicopters in moving soldiers about, and more frequent roadblocks.

But there was also seen to be a need for some sort of political action. This should take the form of denying Sinn Fein and other extremists access "the easy platform" — the phrase used by the Home Secretary Douglas Hurd — of radio and TV to propagate their views. This after all was doing no more than the Irish government itself had done with Sinn Fein for close on 20 years.

In the fight against terrorism the step which the British government has taken is in fact a very modest one, but it has serious implications and it has been attacked on grounds both of practicality and of principle. Sinn Fein leaders may no longer be inter-

viewed on TV, but what if a member of Sinn Fein takes advantage of a radio discussion or phone-in programme to put forward the party's line? And are Sinn Fein councillors not to be allowed to state their case on such less controversial matters as local government finance or social services? Broadcasters are going to have a very tricky time keeping within the government's guidelines.

More serious is the point of principle, the restrictions on freedom of speech. Do not accuse the government of restricting this freedom, the Home Secretary told the House of Commons; members of Sinn Fein can still be quoted verbatim in the press and indirectly on radio and TV. What is now denied the extremists is "the extra impact" that comes when they are allowed to make their case themselves on radio or TV.

But do the extremists really succeed in win-

ning friends and influencing people when they speak their minds in public? Richard Ingrams, former editor of Private Eye and now a columnist for the Observer, makes the point that most British people know very little about Ulster. But one impression they have gained "an intense dislike for The Rev Ian Paisley and all his works". Why? Because over the years they have been able to observe this bigoted bully of an Ulster Unionist "raging away on TV".

More recently, Ingrams argues, Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein leader, has come to challenge Paisley as "Ulster's Mr Nasty". "With his cold, dark eyes, spade-shaped beard and frightening gap-toothed smile Mr Adams has conveyed the sinister nature of the IRA on TV far better than anonymous reports of IRA atrocities". Others have made the same point: The more the public sees and hears the exponents of

violence, whether Republican or Loyalist, the greater their repulsion will be. Partial banning is an absurd policy. Total banning would make phoney heroes out of some very dubious characters.

All this goes to show how very different the South African situation is from the Ulster one. Most of those South Africans who have had the chance of meeting leading members of the ANC in the last couple of years have come away impressed and moved by their intelligence, warmth and decency. No wonder that the South African government is concerned to keep such persuasive spokesmen off the TV screens.

No wonder too that Pretoria's spokesmen labour so mightily to equate ANC with IRA. In so doing they reveal yet again how little they really know about the outside world, and hence the shallowness of their analysis.

NDUNDULU. — South Africa would devastate the whole of southern, central, eastern and western Africa if it destroyed the prospects it had of grappling successfully with poverty, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi said in Ndundulu yesterday.

He was opening the Ndundulu Rural Centre, which is part of the Biyela integrated rural development project undertaken by the University of Natal's Institute of Natural Resources with full KwaZulu Government co-operation.

The KwaZulu Chief

Growing poverty in Southern Africa causes concern

Minister and Inkatha president said poverty had actually grown in Southern Africa in the post colonial period.

"I am disturbed that some cannot see it, but the growing poverty in Southern Africa is bring-

ing the storm centres in which endless cycles of revolution and counter-revolution take place further south.

"I stand in no judgment of anybody when I say that we in this country will devastate the whole

of Southern Africa, central Africa as well as east and west Africa if we destroy the prospects we have of grappling successfully with poverty."

South Africa had a particular problem: the world's donor agencies

shared the perception that unless a government saw the need to reinforce the best that could be done in poverty relief programmes, they would fail.

In this country, the agencies could not seek government assistance and sympathy as they did elsewhere.

"Millions of dollars are in fact poured into South Africa to assist in combating poverty, ignorance and disease," Dr Buthelezi said. "But this money comes in as some kind of protest money against apartheid.

"In that apartheid is being attacked, it is good that it is protest money. In that the money spent achieves less than it ought to, it is bad."

He expressed appreciation of the extent to which the country's commercial, mining and industrial undertakings now supported the Biyela project. There was a long list of donors, and the George Giannopoulos Trust, the Goldfields Foundation and the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company had alone made R250 000 available for the Ndundulu rural service centre. — Sapa.

Lack of motivation and discipline among pupils;
Dilapidated schools;
Demotivation among teachers as a result of assaults.

Parents blamed pupils' lack of discipline but also cited detentions and the presence of security forces, the survey said.

Criticism of school boycotts by the National Council of Trade Unions and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania are recorded in the survey.

The survey mentions a statement by the Minister of National Education, Mr FW de Klerk, that the Government's 10-year plan for greater parity in education has been stalled by the country's weak economic growth.

The plan, originally announced in 1986, had been based on an expected economic growth rate of 4,1%. Mr de Klerk

Segregation

'worsens the costs'

said that did not mean the plan would not materialise.

The survey reports little progress as a result of calls for a single education department, and it notes that the Minister for Education and Development Aid, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, says that will not be possible because of the high number of African pupils at schools in South Africa, including all the homelands.

While the Government said that under-utilised white facilities would continue to be offered to other white departments before being offered to black departments, the survey found that in some cases facilities were transferred to the Department of Education and Training, which controls African schools.

The National Manpower Commission reported an enrolment explosion at all black educational institutions and said the demand for infrastructure was so extensive that special efforts would be necessary to achieve any success at all. But it is still not clear whether the Government will go ahead with plans to levy tuition fees at white Government schools in order to free spending resources for black education.

Church/State tensions

Among major political trends during 1987/88 was a renewal of Church/State tension following the imposition of restrictions on various organisations on February 24.

The Survey records a statement by Dr Allan Boesak that it is the Church's duty to step into the gap left by bannings. It points to some uneasiness about this within the churches and notes that in an address to a meeting convened by the South African Council of Churches the organisation's president, Dr Manas Buthelezi, warned against total politicisation of the Church.

Twenty-six church leaders called on all Christians in the country to boycott the municipal elections on October 26, saying they intended to disseminate their appeal through church newsletters and news agencies and by word of mouth.

The survey notes that Pope John Paul II said during a visit to Zimbabwe in September that he opposed election boycotts and that he also rejected violence and spoke in favour of negotiation.

It also points out that the then president-elect of the

Methodist Church of Southern Africa, the Rev Stanley Mogoba, has said that he could not subscribe 'to a school of thought that recognised that while violence was a fact at present, its continuation was inevitable'. He rejected the notion of a just or holy war and, in March, also called for negotiation.

Statistics problems

The fragmentation of information arising from the tricameral Parliament has made it extremely difficult to obtain accurate statistics about South Africa.

'Restrictions on the media and other forms of censorship complicate matters even further,' the institute says.

In a special preface to the survey, the institute reports that statistics covering the entire country (including all 10 of the homelands) are often very difficult to obtain and in some cases do not appear to be kept by anyone.

'To make matters worse, even official publications, never mind the public media, sometimes do not indicate whether figures relating to some or all of the homelands are included or not.'

It was once possible to obtain a figure for spending on African education by asking one minister one question in Parliament. Obtaining such figures today might necessitate approaching 10 homeland education departments as well as the central Government.

'This time-consuming difficulty has been with us for some time,' the institute says, 'and it has recently been made more difficult by the introduction of the "own affairs" system.'

'To get a complete statistical picture of education now involves approaching two "general affairs" ministries of the central Government (National Education, and Education and Development Aid), three "own affairs" departments (white, coloured, and Indian) and 10 homeland administrations — 15 departments in all.'

The Institute says that sometimes it is impossible to obtain a complete picture. For example, the latest figure for per capita spending on African education in white-designated areas is R477, but the figures for the four homelands are all less than that. To complicate matters even further, figures for the other six homelands are not available.

Leaving out the homelands could give an extremely distorted picture, the Institute says. — (Sapa)

● See Editorial Opinion

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THE FORUM Letters to the Editor

Buthlezi replies to Coovadia

SIR — On his return from his political pilgrimage to Lusaka, Professor Gerry Coovadia, vice-president of the Natal Indian Congress, yet again attempted to smear myself and Inkatha and further sow seeds of black disunity. That he should choose to be a mouth-piece for the ANC comes as no surprise but that he should repeat untruths about the late Bishop Alphaeus Zulu is unacceptable.

At Mr Oliver Tambo's request Bishop Zulu chaired the ANC/Inkatha talks in London in 1979. From that date and up until Bishop Zulu's death in February this year, I have openly detailed certain facts about that meeting and others have been kept, as agreed, confidential.

It should be noted that at no time during all these years did Bishop Zulu, a man of renowned honour and integrity, feel compelled to contradict any of my utterances in this regard.

Not once, as Professor Coovadia alleges, have I revealed anything that Mr Tambo and I agreed should remain confidential.

There was never a 'majority decision' that the talks be kept a secret — even though this was the desire of the ANC — for the very reason that I pointed out to them that there was absolutely no way in which the fact that a large Inkatha delegation had left South Africa could remain unnoticed.

I could not and would not expose Inkatha's representatives at the meeting to interrogation once they returned home and expect them to lie.

Miss Suzanne Vos, who now acts as my media consultant but who then was the Sunday Times representative in London, had already learned of the meeting from her ANC contacts abroad and had established the venue from them — not from me. They knew this and she was present at an evening function attended by members of the ANC well known to her as well as those of us from Inkatha.

How could any of us have prevented her from breaking the story?

Propagandist

As it turned out, a man purporting to represent an Afrikaans newspaper was waiting for us when we landed in London, even before the talks began, wanting a statement from me. I declined to make any comment.

Why then does Professor Coovadia take it upon himself to attempt to be a propagandist for the ANC at the expense of Inkatha in suddenly coming up with this new fabrication that 'Bishop Zulu told Dr Buthelezi to abide by the majority decision that the talks should be kept confidential'?

In addition to this is his mind-boggling allegation that, according to the ANC, Inkatha had agreed to disinvestment and violence that the meeting foundered.

I find it appalling that these new twists to the ongoing distortions about the meeting should be made after nine years and after Bishop Zulu's death.

The ANC, as Professor Coovadia says, may have 'difficulty' in speaking to me but, on the other hand, I have no desperate desire to speak to them either.

I am on record as saying that in the best interests of the struggle for liberation and black unity, I am prepared to speak to Mr Tambo anywhere at any time and this still stands. That certain of their leaders continue to attempt to crush Inkatha because it will not act as an ANC surrogate is a strategy they have adopted at great cost to black South Africa.

Whether Mr Tambo is aware of it or not, Inkatha still continues to talk to members of the ANC abroad from time to time. Inkatha holds dear the non-violent and democratic aims and aspirations of the founding fathers of the ANC and among both our ranks there are likeminds seeking what is best for South Africa.

Laughable

I therefore find it laughable that Professor Coovadia should have tried the old divide and rule tactic of claiming that the ANC says it has 'many supporters' who are so-called 'forced' members of Inkatha for personal gain. So much for the integrity of their supporters!

For him to regurgitate this bilge really spells out where he is coming from.

As Inkatha has 1.6 million members and this statement is clearly defamatory of our general membership, I therefore challenge Professor Coovadia to provide me with proof of this. Not just one or two disaffected names but a substantial list of the 'many' he claims were 'forced to join Inkatha in order to obtain houses and jobs'.

Can he do this? I doubt it.

The tragedy is that until all political parties and their leaders, and that includes the ANC, are free to operate openly in South Africa, such distortions will continue.

Am I paying a price of having gone to London to see Mr Tambo and his colleagues at their request with all these smears? Professor Coovadia and the droves of others who now go on pilgrimage to see the ANC in Lusaka or Europe every few days, should never forget that I and my colleagues went to see the ANC before it became fashionable to do so.

The Commissioner of Police at that time, General Johann Coetzee, stated at the time that he was under pressure to 'thumb-screw' me. He stated to those who suggested this, that 'it was not as easy as all that'.

MANGOSUTHU G BUTHELEZI
Chief Minister of KwaZulu and President of Inkatha