

MASS MOBILISATION. BOYCOTTS. STAYAWAYS. MARCHES. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING FOR UMKHONTO WE SIZWE

The result: violence and intimidation

The ANC has announced its continued commitment to "mass mobilisation and action", its intention to "crush" various political opponents, and ongoing training and recruitment for its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Mrs Winnie Mandela, wife of ANC deputy president Dr Nelson Mandela, said in a recent speech in Atteridgeville that "if the government misbehaved", the ANC's commanders "standing at attention at base

will listen for the next order to fire..." Dr Mandela has called for an "intensification of the struggle on all fronts..."

In the wake of ANC support for and involvement in rent and services boycotts in black townships and squatter camps, the ousting of black town councillors throughout the country, various boycotts, marches, and work stayaways, violence has escalated.

Sides have been taken, lines of agreement and opposition drawn. Tension is the order of the day for ordinary black South Africans.

The ANC have instructed residents in black townships to form "defence units."

In a recent report the South African Institute of Race Relations notes that ten people are being killed every day in South Africa in political violence.

Releasing its latest political fatalities statistics, the Institute said that the 1990 toll "by far the grimmest ever." In the first ten months of this year, 3038 people had died in political violence. This was an average daily rate of ten, against a figure of 3.25 for the comparative period last year.

The Institute said that between September 1984, when the present cycle of violence first erupted, and the end of last month, the total number of fatalities was 8577.

"1990 alone already accounts for more than a third of all the people killed in political violence over this six-year period," the Institute added.

Whereas security forces accounted for most of the political fatalities when violence first erupted, the position had soon changed, the Institute said.

Security forces now accounted for a relatively small proportion of the deaths in

"... When the ANC resorts to "mass mobilisation" with the specific and announced aim of terrorising petty officials into abandoning office, it exceeds the legitimate limits of peaceful assembly and sets the stage for intimidation, violence and inevitable conflict with the police and the army.

"Among whites, there is a growing suspicion that the ANC means to use mass action – in effect, terror – to destroy all potential rivals in advance of real negotiations; among blacks, that the government means to emasculate the ANC by security action. It is essential for President De Klerk and Mr Mandela to repair this damaged trust..."

– *Editorial, Sunday Times, November 25, 1990.*

Who is suffering? Black South Africans

political violence.

"Conflict within the black community continues to be the main source of casualties."

A major feature of this year's violence was the rise in fatalities outside Natal. Political fatalities outside Natal accounted for only 10 percent of the total in the first ten months of last year, but this proportion had now risen to 46 percent.

On a comparative basis, there had been an increase of more than 1200 percent in the death-rate outside Natal.

An editorial in the Sunday Times of November 25 noted, in part: "... The ANC and its supporters have an absolute right to assemble in peaceful protest, and while certain practical arrangements regarding time, traffic and order are clearly necessary, that right should not be removed on the whim of a magistrate or a police officer.

"On the other hand, when the ANC resorts to 'mass mobilisation' with the specific and announced aim of terrorising petty officials into abandoning office, it exceeds the legitimate limits of peaceful assembly and sets the stage for intimidation, violence and inevitable conflict with the police and the army.

"Among whites, there is a growing suspicion that the ANC means to use mass action – in effect, terror – to destroy all potential rivals in advance of real negotiation; among blacks, that the government means to emasculate the ANC by security action..."

An editorial in The Natal Mercury of November 13 said, in part:

"... The objective, seemingly, (of the ANC) is to keep fanning the fears of opposition while delaying negotiations until the waverers are intimidated into 'united in support', while those who are expected to forget the past must accept ANC leadership or be isolated.

"All of which should come as no surprise to anyone, considering it was almost five years ago in Lusaka that the ANC, as part of its strategy to dominate the 'handover', (of power in SA) declared its determination to destroy Inkatha and neutralise Dr Buthelezi, then seen as its main opposition.

"The tactics serve the ANC purpose well; force, or the threat of it, though crude politics, having been a major ingredient of independence struggles in Africa.

"Of greater concern is that the strategy

reflects considerable intolerance and bodes ill for democracy in a post-apartheid South Africa, with multi-party politics likely to be short lived and hopes of a balancing coalition of non-racial groupings more difficult of attainment.

"Which poses the question whether there were ever any 'moderates' in the ANC and whether the faint murmurings of conciliation that have been heard at times were not simply intended for those 'useful idiots' who want to believe a negotiated democratic future possible?"

Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi said at a recent Press conference that negotiations between the government should continue but not under the threat of mass protest actions.

Although there was nothing wrong with such protests per se, they should not be used as blackmail and did not auger well for any progress in the reconciliation process.

With reference to ANC supported rent and services boycotts in black townships, Dr Buthelezi said in a recent speech to the KwaZulu Local Government Association that he thought it was "morally decadent" of any human being to want something for nothing.

"We as a people will yet have to pull ourselves up by our own boot straps because there really is, in the final analysis, nothing for nothing. To win Party political battles residents of townships are told that they should not pay rent and they should not pay for services... Hundreds of millions of rands are now already involved in rent backlogs.

"This actually means that there are hundreds of millions less to pay for education or to tackle health issues.

"The people who organise rent boycotts are the people who also organise strike action, stay-away action and consumer boycott action. That would be fine if these were people's events controlled by the people for people's purposes.

"I have nothing against workers taking worker action whenever they have reached deadlocks because they face recalcitrant bosses. I would have nothing against consumer boycotts against commercial malpractices. I would have nothing against these things if they were people's developments.

"When, however, they only succeed because of the politics of intimidation, I say no to them. I say no to them very emphatically."

"The objective, seemingly, (of the ANC) is to keep fanning the fears of opposition while delaying negotiations until the waverers are intimidated into 'uniting in support', while those who are expected to forget the past must accept ANC leadership or be isolated..."

—Editorial, *The Natal Mercury*, November 13, 1990.
