

'Quick job' to replace destroyed Sasol tanks

Staff Reporters

Only the twisted hulks of the fuel tanks burnt out after the bomb blasts in Sasolburg remain as stark reminders of Sunday's saboteur attack.

The other debris and wreckage at the Sasol and Natref plants has been cleared away and the rebuilding of the giant tanks that once held millions of litres of fuel is due to begin soon.

"Sasol estimates that

the blasts cost the company R5,8-m but within a concern of this size it can be appreciated that the repairs will be completed very quickly," a spokesman said.

He said that only a very small percentage of the tanks at the two plants was hit in the attack and safety measures had contained the fires very well.

Security systems were constantly under review, he said.

Free public access to

the highway which passes in full view of the Sasol 1 and Natref complexes may need to be restricted in the wake of the bombings.

At least one top security expert approached by The Star says access to the vicinity of fuel storage depots should be totally restricted.

The expert, who did not want to be named, confirmed that public access was a common factor in the sabotage incidents at Salisbury in December 1978 and those at Sasolburg.

Salisbury's fuel depot fire was within a few hundred metres of a public road, and so are the installations at Sasolburg.

Sasol attacks 'were isolated'

The Star Bureau

LONDON — The sabotage of South Africa's Sasol refineries were isolated incidents which did not necessarily indicate an increased capacity for revolution in the Republic, says an international strategic expert.

"By no means does this mean that the African National Congress has the capacity for a sustained campaign," said Dr Peter Janke, head of research at the London-based Institute for the Study of Conflict.

Revolutionary potential in general in South Africa was increasing but much depended on the reaction of the South African authorities.

Reform as opposed to revolution was still pos-

sible if the authorities acted calmly and did not get "hot under the collar."

Dr Janke, author of the Africa section of the newly published 1979-80 annual of Power and Conflict, said: "Don't look at revolution as being likely just because one incident succeeds."

The balance of power had not changed, and the State, as always, was still much stronger than any terrorist group.

There was a level of terrorism which modern societies had to accept and live with. Obviously this had to be contained, but not by over-reaction.

More than anything else the Sasol incidents reflected a need for better security, rather than the start of a revolution, he said.

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The expert noted that South Africans had learned a great deal from the Salisbury sabotage. Local security was tightened up considerably as a result.

But he pointed out that there are two key problems to security over fuel storage areas:

- Basic to all security is the problem of finding dedicated men who remain alert on what is essentially a boring job.

- There is no effective alarm system which does not have a high incidence of false alarms and does not require highly skilled maintenance.

Security would have to rely mainly on men with guard dogs and with visual aids such as closed circuit television and night vision.