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# MANPOWER

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR A FUTURE DEFENCE FORCE \*

*By Jakkie Cilliers*  
*Co-Director of the Institute for Defence Politics*

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is, as we are all aware, in the midst of a fundamental political transition. This transition will severely impact upon the role, composition and ethos of the military. One way in which such change is going to impact is in terms of changed military manpower procurement policies.

The decline of the mass army based on systems of universal conscription and the rise of the modern all-volunteer force in Western democratic societies has gained considerable strength since the Second World War. To no small degree it is an expression of underlying processes of social change. In particular higher levels of education and modern patterns of mass consumption have led wide segments of the population to a diffuse but persistent reluctance to serve in the military. Important segments of these populations have come to believe that service to the nation and the solution of pressing economic and social issues require skills and outlooks other than those associated with military life and military organization. In the absence of hostilities, conscription is seen as unnecessary and undesirable since it involves compulsion and interference with personal decision-making. In part hedonism and the importance of self-expression supply a new basis for resistance to military authority among young people. It is often difficult to draw the line between highly personal opposition to military institutions and broader, more moralistic and political viewpoints which generate a powerful sense of neutralism and new forms of pacifism. Needless the say, this debate has also permeated our South African situation and has been further exacerbated by past racial policies and resistance to them. It is indeed a fascinating debate and one within which myth and fact have become virtually indistinguishable.

In my research for this paper I have utilized a portion of the vast pool of research and debate on the issue of the selective draft (which was ended on 30 June 1973) conscription and voluntary forces which emanated from the United States, particularly during and after the Vietnam war, and more recently, the debate which followed the proposal by President Jimmy Carter to restore conscription. I make no excuse for this, apart from readily admitting to the all too obvious differences between the situation in South Africa and that in the United States. In effect the use of comparative analysis is necessitated by the veil of secrecy with which the SADF deals with manpower procurement issues.

I will also be using the term manpower, although I am aware of how hard this falls on the ear of many modern and more enlightened personnel practitioners. Military men are by their nature conservative and the South African military which has suffered a degree of isolation, perhaps more so than most. I sometimes shudder when I contemplate the nature of the debate on feminism and the military which is set to descend upon the SADF.

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Finally, inevitably my topic requires me to allude to the effect of the future integration of members of the armed forces of the TBVC countries and MK into a future national defence force for South Africa. The accommodation of the TBVC armies in a future defence force will be extremely expensive, for the TBVC armies are essentially all-volunteer forces within which enlisted men receive much higher pay than is the case with SADF conscripts. Such integration would, however, serve at least three purposes. First, it would compensate, to a limited degree, for the manpower loss which will follow the ending of white conscription. This loss, as I will try to point out, may not necessarily have to be made up. It all depends on what role and tasks we expect of our military in the future. Second, it would provide a pool of black officers which, to some degree, could positively influence the imbalance in the racial composition of the officer cadre of the present SADF. Finally, such integration will hasten the inevitable reorientation in professional attitude and actions which is going to be required of all military men in a future Defence Force.

Whereas, in the past, the SADF occupied a central position in white society at large, and more specifically within the formal state structures, this is set to change. Not only will the military in future have to deal with the legacy of distrust and lack of legitimacy of the SADF, but the steady erosion of the prestige and moral worth accorded to the military profession in Western democracies will and is already affecting South Africa. Widespread attitudes of indifference, disdain and even hostility vis a vis the military characterizes large sections of the populace in many countries. In South Africa the increased support and popularity for the introduction of an all-volunteer force is at least in part a reaction to the militarization of white society in the past, as well as the moral questions raised by many South African citizens who questioned the legitimacy of defence of a system of institutionalized racial discrimination. However, these developments should not be allowed to lower standards of military proficiency and expertise.

The system of white male conscription, which is in part our present system of military manpower procurement, is an obvious anomaly that will surely end shortly. Any new system taking the place of white conscription should be the result of wide debate, exhaustive research and negotiation involving all the interested parties as well as the public. Neither the politicians, nor the military should be allowed to take unilateral decisions on these matters. These are vital national issues which could threaten the stability of any political settlement if not given adequate attention. Should the SADF not be involved in internal peacekeeping in support of the SA Police, white conscription could probably have been ended unilaterally, pending negotiations and investigations regarding the role, tasks and composition of a future Defence Force. One suspects, however, that it is on the insistence of the hard-pressed SA Police and politicians that this is not occurring, for the almost unanimous consensus within the SADF and amongst academics would appear strongly in favour of ending the role of the military in support of internal law and order actions by the police. On professional military grounds such an approach is the only sound long-term one. But then few political decisions in South Africa appear to be taken in the national interests.

What then are the most appropriate manning and manpower utilization patterns for the armed forces in a future, changed constitutional and social setting? Can we make do with smaller forces? Should quality be emphasized over quantity? Can the military recruit, at a reasonable price, an adequate number of personnel with the desired intelligence and training skills? Or will our manpower procurement policies still rely on some form of conscription? These are crucial issues facing not only the military but our larger society.

This is essentially a technical paper. I make no excuse for this. But would like to place it in some context. In a very comprehensive first submission to CODESA, the Institute for Defence Politics nailed its colours to the mast. Succinctly we argued that:

*Peace in freedom are the preconditions for the protection of individual rights and the basis for prosperity of the society. To secure peace is, therefore, the purpose of democratic political action and the prime responsibility of the state. <sup>1</sup>*



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And:

*South African security policy must aim to contribute to stability and security with a defence concept which is based on the rule of law and a respect for human rights. ... those choices that are presently being made should ensure:*

- multiparty control of the armed forces ...;*
- a military completely answerable to parliament;*
- dedicated to acting constitutionally and legally;*
- built on a respect for individual rights, providing for alternative forms of service if so required;*
- an open debate on defence and defence related issues ...;*
- a smaller, more professional, highly trained but more flexible military suited to a variety of tasks in an unstable region;*
- built upon careful leadership selection and uncompromising standards of selection and promotion;*
- but sensitive to its tasks in terms of building consensus among the democratic values contained in the constitution and bill of rights. 2*

## **2.0 THE QUESTION OF FORCE SIZE - HOW LARGE A DEFENCE FORCE IN FUTURE?**

Security is not a military matter, but multifaceted and complex. *'In a changed local and international context our understanding of the terms 'security' and 'threat' will have to take on a more comprehensive character than has been the case in the past. In the highly interdependent world of today no development can be considered in isolation. There are no 'islands of security' and security concepts can no longer be based on the former bipolar era.'* 3

South Africa is not faced with the threat of military invasion from any of its neighbours, but its own stability is necessarily very readily influenced by that in the wider region. In this context I have argued elsewhere that *'South African security cannot be divorced from its regional context. In the long run there can be little doubt that our security and prosperity is best served within some type of regional security arrangement. Such an arrangement should be nothing less than a stated objective of South African foreign and military policy.'* 4 And further that *'in the South Africa of the future, military forces will be less part and parcel of a combat strategy designed principally for the ultimate eventuality of all-out war than instruments of crisis prevention and crisis management.'* 5 The key question regarding the future composition and size of our national defence force is, once again, what its internal role will be - and present indications are not reassuring in this regard.

This having been said, one cannot, unfortunately, disregard the instability in our region. A number of recent articles have appeared which speculate upon Third World security in the post-bipolar era. 6. The content and thrust of the deliberations generally agree that *'The end of the Cold War, combined with the wave of political and economic liberalization sweeping the continent, heralds the beginning of a new era for Africa'*. 7 These changes pose new dilemmas for national sovereignty and security in Africa and for her leaders. Africa could be on the throes of an era of massive instability and perhaps even of chaos. *'... the world-wide tendency towards political pluralism, and the renaissance of ethnic/nationalist sentiment (together with the sacrifices inherent in economic reform programmes), almost certainly mean that Africa can expect continued, indeed heightened, levels of turmoil during the next decade and beyond'*. 8



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Such instability does not obviate the requirement for '*... drastic force reductions, which have to be addressed through a new manpower policy and organization*'.<sup>9</sup> Given the lack of any clear external military threat, the requirement for quite drastic force reductions in a future national defence force when compared to the SADF at present is obvious. The SADF is presently constituted roughly as follows: The 33 800 members of the Permanent Force constitute 32% of the 105 000 members of the so-called full-time SADF. Civilians and conscripts each constitute a further 29 000 to 30 000 or 28% each. The remainder is mostly composed of Auxiliary Services. The Citizen Force has a paper mobilization strength of about 180 000 men and roughly 155 000 men are in the Reserve. A further 105 000 men are in the Commando's providing a total part time mobilisation force of about 420 000 - 440 000 men and women. While the members of the Permanent Force serving in the Army constitute 42% or roughly 14 000 of the Permanent Force, it gets 80% or 24 000 of the annual conscripts. The Air Force is 32% or 10 600 of the Permanent Force and get 10% or 3 000 conscripts annually. The Navy is 11% or 3 800 of the Permanent Force and gets only 3% or 900 conscripts annually. The Medical Services represent 8% or 2 700 of the Permanent Force and get 7% or 2 100 conscripts annually.<sup>10</sup> Given that there is considerable room for the more efficient utilization of lower ranking personnel (still essentially provided by conscription) and that the integration of the TBVC armed forces and MK into a future military could provide a total of thirteen thousand soldiers,<sup>11</sup> the shortfall a future Defence Force would have had to make up if it wanted to maintain the present personnel strength of the SADF is probably in the region of 10 000 to 15 000 - not a large number by any standard. Since the ending of white conscription will effect the Army most significantly, it is there that most of the shortfall will occur.

The Army conventional forces are structured into three part-time divisions (this is a recent development during which the previous two divisions were restructured into three smaller but more balanced 'mini-divisions' or 'maxi-brigades') and a rapid deployment force which includes 44 Parachute Brigade and 60 Mechanized Brigade. This force has never come close to being mobilized in full. The largest mobilization probably occurred during operations Protea and Askari when only a single additional brigade was mobilized. These troops were, however, additional to those forces already in the northern Namibian operational area and dedicated to the specific operations, which I estimate at roughly a further brigade. I.e. the total force used during these external operations constituted roughly two conventional brigades. On the basis of past experience one could therefore argue that a total mobilization strength of 4 to 6 brigades plus a rapid deployment brigade would suffice for some time to come (as opposed to the present 11 brigades plus large numbers of area or counter-insurgency forces) and that a ready conventional force of 2 mechanized brigades (part of the 4 to 6 brigades) would be sufficient to deal with all realistic threat scenario's to South Africa. This is, of course, the most simple of analysis, and I do present it somewhat tongue in cheek, but it does serve to point to the severe force reductions (particularly if coupled with increases in efficiency) possible in South Africa in the future. Such force reductions, I hasten to add, should however coincide with increases in efficiency and upgraded equipment.

A very large number of SADF soldiers, such as the commando's, and large portions of the various territorial commands are either involved or earmarked for service in internal law-and-order type duties. Personally I can see little life left in the commando system, which must already be suffering very severely from the effects of the white depopulation of the platteland. The SADF also experienced a massive growth in staff function complement commensurate with its increased involvement in civilian affairs during the total onslaught era. There is, one would suspect, considerable scope for slimming down a very large and top heavy military bureaucracy. I am personally in favour of transferring as many military officers and other ranks to the Police as a matter of urgency, as controversial as this may be. But that is another debate.

The crucial political decision that has to be made is that defining the role and tasks of the Defence Force in future. And all present indications are that we are making the wrong choices. The clearest example is the most recent changes made to the Defence Act.



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### 3.0 ROLE AND TASKS

The Defence Act, No 44 of 1957, has recently been amended (by Act No 132 of 1992) to provide that (Section 3):

*(2) The South African Defence Force or any portion or member thereof may -*

*(a) at any time be employed by the State President to be used by the executive military command of the South African Defence Force -*

*(i) on service in defence of the Republic:*

*(ii) on service in the prevention or suppression of terrorism:*

*(iii) on service in the prevention or suppression of internal disorder in the Republic:*

*(iv) on service in the preservation of life, health or property: and*

*(v) on service in the maintenance of essential services, including the maintenance of law and order and the prevention of crime in co-operation with the South African Police;*

*(2A) (a) If in the opinion of the Chief of the South African Defence Force it is necessary that a portion or a member of the said Force be employed on service as contemplated in subsection (2)(a)(iv) and the matter, owing to the urgency thereof, cannot be delayed until the State President can give a decision thereon, the said Chief may so employ the said portion or member.*

*(b) If the said Chief has so employed a portion or a member of the said Force, he shall as soon as possible inform the Minister thereof and at the same time notify him of the reasons therefor and the results thereof.*

The act goes on to restrict such deployment to areas requested by the Minister of Law and Order and requires a proclamation in the Government Gazette within 24 hours thereafter.

This amendment gives rise to two serious causes for concern. First, civilian and political control over the military has been weakened. Not only does the Chief of the South African Defence Force (CSADF) now have statutory powers to deploy the SADF internally on his own recognition, but the Act provides for the use of the SADF for law and order duties as part and parcel of its primary functions, which is the second equally serious cause for worry. These developments are going in completely the wrong direction and setting completely the wrong precedent. The argument, I am aware, is that the SA Police are vitally dependent upon the SADF manpower supply in combating crime and political violence in South Africa. The correct approach, I submit, is to take from the SADF those units and structures which are superfluous, or better suited to an internal role, and give them to the SA Police. The military are not the police. If you feel the police are inadequate, strengthen the police, but disentangle the military from internal law and order supportive duties as a matter of urgency.



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In the introduction to his book *Military conflict* Morris Janowitz focuses our attention on the essential characteristics of the military in what he calls advanced industrial societies: '*... a central political issue is not the threat of a coup d'etat, but rather the necessity of ensuring that the military are strictly limited in their internal police role. The hallmark of a political democracy is the sharp differentiation of the domestic police units from the military formations of national defence. With the trend towards an all-volunteer force, the military during a period of domestic tension run the risk of becoming a pressure group with a distinct right-wing ideological overtone that could serve as a source of political tension and political dissension*'.<sup>12</sup>

Armed forces in a democracy are established and maintained to protect and defend the country from external threats to its sovereignty. That is their primary purpose. Should either internal law and order functions or development priorities achieve any more than secondary importance in the funding or justification of armed forces it is surely indicative of severe problems within that society and its primary institutions. This does not imply that the resources captive to the armed forces should stand idly by when they could be put to productive use in times of peace, nor does it imply that the armed forces should not serve as a back-up of last resort in times of internal crises. In fact, it could be argued that it is necessary that the military periodically use its manpower and vast resources to keep it an active and effective institution. This would include assistance in times of man-made disasters such as oil-spills, power failures, industrial accidents, etc., as well as during natural disasters such as floods, drought, etc.<sup>13</sup> What it does imply, however, is a severe redefinition and restriction of the internal role of the military.

In our situation a future Defence Force will also have to give particular attention to its social responsibilities. It should, as a minimum, offer equal employment opportunities. It also serves a role as a human resource development institution with all the positive spillovers on society. This latter consideration is particularly important since even the all-volunteer force typically adopts a high turnover policy as a deliberate measure to maintain a youthful composition. Education and training not only increases the well-being of those who serve their country, but also improves the nations stock of human resources.<sup>14</sup> But, as with its internal rule, there is a limit to the use of the military as a national development asset. Janowitz is scathing: '*There was never any doubt among serious scholars that the military of the developing nations had no special advantages in approaching the tasks of economic development, social change, and the political institution-building*'.<sup>15</sup>

The military cannot be expected to solve the problems of civilian society. Yet it is expected to solve its **own** problems without repeating or perpetuating the defects of civilian life. We should expect our armed forces to operate at higher standards of social justice and due process than civilian society because it is a national institution and one charged with grave responsibilities.

#### 4.0 FUTURE PROSPECTS

That the SADF is already far advanced in investigating alternative proposals to replace the existing system of white male conscription is evident from a press release as early as 20 August 1991 to the effect that '*The whole spectrum of National Service is currently under review, no date for an announcement regarding a change to the present system (if any), has been determined*'.<sup>16</sup> A much more recent press release by Lt Genl Pierre Steyn, Chief of Staff Personnel of the SADF<sup>17</sup> provides some indication of SADF thinking in this regard:

*Without wishing to preempt negotiations on the issue, but because the principles are universally applicable to defence forces throughout the world, the SADF is of the opinion that the future manpower requirements could conceptually consist of the following:*



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*A core of Permanent Force members who man the infrastructure as well as where continuity and certain skills are required. (such as strategic management)*

*A Flexible Service component which provides for voluntary members who wish to do shorter periods of service in the military.*

*A Part Time Force which is maintained through some of other national service system to satisfy extraordinary operational demands from time to time. This component particularly takes economic considerations into account since no country can afford to maintain its mobilization reserve on a permanent basis.*

Official thinking, therefore, would appear to include some movement away from a compulsory to a voluntary system, although the extent to which the SADF is already served by a whole variety of full-time voluntary soldiers (the so-called ethnic battalions) is commonly underestimated.

However, SADF spokesmen have also stated that an all-volunteer force would be unaffordable. A statement dated 16 August 1991 put it as follows: '*Initial indications are that the country could not afford an all-volunteer system since it would not be able to provide the required supply of high-level manpower needed by the SADF.*'<sup>18</sup> This view was reaffirmed more recently by the Chief of the SADF, General Liebenberg, in an interview with Rapport in June 1992 during which he confirmed that the SADF was considering a retention of a changed system of conscription in the future.<sup>19</sup> To my mind, he can only be referring to a resumption of the selective draft system. At the same time there has been recognition of the logistical problems which would accompany any selective draft system of conscription.<sup>20</sup> As I will attempt to indicate, the cost differences between a voluntary and selective draft system are perhaps not that simple, nor is it readily apparent which is really the cheaper.

In its most recent policy document, the ANC was clear in its view that:

*'P3.1 The ANC is committed to the formation of a new Defence Force which shall enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of the entire population. ...*

*P3.2.5 The Defence Force shall endeavour to reflect the national and gender composition of South African society. In regard to recruitment, training, deployment and promotions, a programme of affirmative action shall be implemented. ...*

*P3.2.10 There shall be no conscription in the new defence force, save where in exceptional and extreme situations, parliament authorises such conscription and in which event the rights of conscientious objectors shall be respected. ...*

*P3.2.15 The defence force shall not be engaged in any internal policing role except in extreme circumstances and where so authorised specifically by parliament.'*<sup>21</sup>

The End Conscription Campaign is suggesting '*... that the new defence force comprise a fully professional permanent force and a short service volunteer force. The latter force would be recruited from the public and recruits would serve a period between two and four years ... before retirement into a reserve force.*'<sup>22</sup> This essentially follows the deliberations of a meeting between a wide variety of groups in Lusaka during May 1990.<sup>23</sup>



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There is, therefore, considerable agreement across the political spectrum that the future military manpower procurement policy of the military will to some degree comprise an increase in the volunteer component of the forces. This move towards a greater component of volunteer forces will have wide-ranging implications for the SADF as it is presently constituted.

A volunteer force implies that strategic considerations are not the sole determinant of decisions affecting manpower supply - the marketplace and the laws of supply and demand inevitably impinge upon these considerations. Increasingly the military will have to face the same questions as other employers: How should the manpower be recruited, assigned, promoted, and separated? What pay is necessary to attract and retain the needed complement of employees? What investment should be made in their training and development? How should the social problems of the work force and the demands of society or employers be met? I am, of course, not suggesting that considerations such as these have been completely disregarded in the past, but they were certainly given inadequate attention in the SADF.

## **5.0 CONSCRIPTION VS VOLUNTEER FORCES - ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES**

### *5.1 BASIC CONSIDERATIONS*

All the sophisticated weaponry in the world will not compensate for a fighting force which is poorly organized, deficiently motivated, ill-trained and defectively deployed. In fact, the growing complexity of armaments and sophistication of military strategies requires increasingly better trained and educated manpower. The most basic strategy in this regard, and one common to all armed forces, is to impose certain minimum entry standards which all personnel should meet. Such standards typically include physical criteria (certain absolute criteria or requirements such as height and quality of eyesight and certain relative requirements such as height/mass relationships and fitness) mental ability (typically through educational records and the writing of an entry exam) and attitudinal tests. In addition there is the obvious requirement to screen applicants for drug abuse or criminal records, with positive findings on these issues dealt with on a case-by-case evaluation basis.

Since everybody cannot become a general (or admiral), the basic requirement in any military manpower procurement system is for a two-tiered system, with high turnover in the lower ranks (also to feed a reserve or mobilisation system) and low turnover in officer, senior non-commissioned and technical ranks, with very limited lateral entry in order to maintain esprit. Lateral entry is, however, often necessary in order to recruit doctors and lawyers at the officer level and for some specialists at the lower level of rank. By lateral entry it is possible to draw on a larger and already trained manpower pool, i.e. that within the civilian sector. This is, apparently, particularly used by the volunteer systems in Britain and in Canada. <sup>24</sup>

Before discussing the various military manpower procurement options, we should recognize that the various arms of the service each have their own traditions and composition throughout the world which will necessarily impact upon our future manpower requirements. Thus we can expect the Navy to continue to display a strong interest in maintaining and enriching its style of life and its internal social cohesion. It has a tradition of allowing its personnel a sense of personal autonomy not common to the other arms of the service. The Air Force, on the other hand, likes to view itself as a modern technological organization already staffed by professionals. In South Africa our military posture has been orientated towards meeting a landward threat more so than an air or seaborne assault. As a result the Army dominates in budget allocation as well in the representation of army officers in the top echelons of the SADF. Inevitably it is these forces which face the deepest crisis since the Army receives the highest component of conscripts and is also most heavily tainted by allegations of shadowy dealings.



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Although it is typical to think of military manpower procurement policy in terms of the choice between volunteerism and conscription, it is perhaps more useful to categorize the policy options into one of three classes of systems: volunteers, selective service, and universal conscription. <sup>25</sup> There are many variations of each of these.

## 5.2 CONSCRIPTION

Systems of universal conscription generally differ from one another in terms of the level and length of initial continuous training provided before the soldier is allocated to the mobilisation forces on a part-time capacity. Apart from the extent of initial training, a further distinction need be made regarding the requirement for conscripts to serve in a substantive capacity in the armed forces after their initial period of training. I think that we can safely assume that it requires a minimum of 9 months of continuous training to train a modern soldier from raw recruit to trained combatant, ready for participation in combined arms warfare. Under the two year period of national service, for example, South African white conscripts were available for roughly 15 months of productive use. In other words, should our military not be required for duty in support of the SA Police and in the absence of any external threat, we could reduce any initial system of national conscription or selective service to 9 months (as opposed to the present period of 12 months), should this be our choice of manpower procurement.

South Africa has had considerable experience with conscription based systems. Following the recommendations of the Groenewoud Committee a compulsory national service system for medically fit white males aged 18 years of age was introduced in South Africa on 1 January 1968. The initial continuous period of training was increased to 12 months (from the previous 9 months under the ballot system) and service in the Citizen Force was also increased (to 10 years). The first continuous period of National Service was subsequently increased to a period not exceeding 24 months in January 1978. With effect from January 1983 the total service commitment period of Citizen Force personnel, subsequent to the completion of their National Service, was extended to 720 days over a period of 12 years. <sup>26</sup> On 7 December 1989, during the opening of the new Armscor headquarter in Erasmusrand which the SADF is now occupying, the State President announced that the initial period of conscription would be reduced from 24 to 12 months with effect from 1 January 1990.

The primary purpose of a conscript system is to establish a sufficiently large trained pool of manpower for mobilization in times of war. Doing away with conscription inevitably means that you are going to severely reduce your reserves. The question that must be answered is what is the total mobilization force required? In South Africa, the ending of conscription threatens the existence of our Citizen Force units and commando's and makes any comparable system unsustainable. I.e. any future conflict, crisis or task will have to be dealt with by the permanent forces in existence, commonly referred to as the 'ready' forces or 'force in being', while those forces available for mobilization are much smaller.

During the era of white, male conscription, the South African military tapped as much of the white civilian population as it needed to carry out its operations. By the early nineties, white conscription was providing an annual intake of roughly 30 000 conscripts each year - a figure which had probably already started to decline as the aged structure of the white population in South Africa started to impact upon the source of military manpower. In this, the SADF was no different from most other conscript-based armies. Since military duty was considered a service to the country, there was no need to pay the market price for utilized labour. To a degree, therefore, manpower considerations have been secondary to strategic considerations, as the ample supply of manpower has tended to place low priority on the efficient utilization of personnel. In the SADF, for example, the Directorate Public Relations stated in a cryptic manner that 50% of the February 1990 intake were '*directly involved in operations, 40% indirectly involved in operations and 10% not involved.*' <sup>27</sup> Conscripted individuals could, and often are, treated with a combination of rigorous



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discipline and paternalism with no fear that this would affect the supply of labour. Pay could be kept at minimal levels as long as provisions were made to maintain the well-being of conscripts.

### 5.3 SELECTIVE SERVICE

A selective service system differs from universal conscription in that not all eligibles are required to serve. It is thus the form of conscription used when the size of the qualified and eligible population base exceeds the military requirements for new recruits but there are insufficient volunteers to meet the requirement, or other considerations dominate. Again a selective system has a wide range of variations. It can be used to augment or fill the active forces, or reserve forces, or both. Often a selective draft system is only used to augment the supply of volunteers, as was the case in the United States for many years. A period of initial continuous service may excuse a person from any reserve duties, or compel service in reserve duties for a minimum period. Typically a random lottery system is used to select which individuals will be conscripted into the military, although a system of deferments and exemptions can also be used to channel conscripts to the military. In the latter case choices are made in terms of the specific manpower requirements of the military and/or the 'value' of the individual to civilian society. This latter option is obviously often a highly subjective and controversial choice, often only adopted in time of extreme emergency.

Selective selective service systems have often been popular because they allow the military to ensure the social and geographic representation of the armed forces. This is generally achieved by allocating quotas to various geographic areas, such areas often corresponding with particular ethnic and language groupings. The major problem with draft systems is the element of compulsion that remains and the selective penalization of individuals who feel that they are relatively disadvantaged compared to their peers when selected for military service. It serves to bear in mind that the demise of the selective draft in the United States was not only as a result of the Vietnam War, which served as the catalyst for the debate, but the root cause was a growing concern about the inequality of the selective draft.

The resort to a draft system in South Africa will not necessarily be much cheaper than an all-volunteer system. A strong argument can be made that people selected for selective military service should not be expected to pay a financial price on top of their other 'penalties' in being selected for military service. As a result wages roughly commensurate with those of their peers in the civilian sector have to be paid. Richard Cooper argues persuasively that the real costs associated with a draft system as opposed to a volunteer system is deceptive in that many of the costs of a drafted force are hidden from public view, while those of a volunteer force appear in the budget: *'A selective service draft is more expensive than a volunteer force for three reasons. First, individuals who have a higher valued use outside the military in fact end up serving in the military. Second, enormous resources were [in the US], and would again, be spent on draft avoidance activities. And third, a draft encourages the military to misallocate its resources - e.g. too much labour relative to capital; too many uniformed personnel, relative to civilians; and too many junior personnel, relative to more experienced service members.'* <sup>28</sup>

It is well known, and remembered by many, that South Africa had a selective draft system for many years. Despite the fact that the Defence Act of 1912 rested on the principle that the defence of the Union was the responsibility of every individual (white) citizen, the Act provided for a ballot system to compel white male citizens to undergo periods of military training over a period of four years between their seventeenth and twenty-fifth year. The ballot system was, however, only instituted after the Second World War, in 1953, with the result that the Active Citizen Force was composed essentially of volunteers. The remainder had to become members of Rifle Associations (the predecessor of the present system of commando's). This system provided that the percentage of citizens selected from each magisterial district for the three month period of full-time training in the first year and 21 days of training in each of the remaining three years, would, as far as possible, be the same. <sup>29</sup> The selective draft system remained in place until the institution of white male national conscription in 1968.



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#### 5.4 VOLUNTARY SYSTEMS

As the name implies volunteer systems rely solely on individuals who join the military for voluntary reasons. The emphasis is on a host of incentives to fill the ranks: pay, education, job training, patriotism, adventure, etc. As a result all-volunteer systems differ generally in terms of the nature and scope of the incentives offered, as well as the periods of service. Typically recruits would be expected to join for a minimum tour of duty of at least 3 to 4 years after which they could re-enlist. Officers or persons entering officer training are also required to enlist for longer periods, at least double the minimum tour of duty and often longer.

Whereas, with a conscript system, little attention needs to be paid to the military as an employer, in the volunteer armed forces market considerations grow in importance. But armed forces and the personnel that fulfill the duty of protection of the state differ from other employees. *'Military men do not want to think of themselves as mercenaries and a democratic society cannot treat its military as if they were mercenaries. The military profession requires a sense of purpose, an operational logic and a basis for social cohesion. The heroic model of the traditional military officer no longer suffices as a basis for career commitment, but military professionals cannot and do not operate as a group of technicians or administrators.'*<sup>30</sup> Yet the gap between civilian and military occupations are narrowing as the latter tasks become more logistical and technological.

It is misleading to regard the all-volunteer military force necessarily or exclusively as a long-term occupation. The vast bulk of military personnel, even in the all-volunteer format, are and will be single-term soldiers. In other words, most people join the military for a few years, and then move on to other pastures, although the retention rates for volunteer systems are obviously much higher than those for conscripted systems.<sup>31</sup>

Another effect of any movement to a voluntary system, is to broaden the basis from which recruits are sought. I.e. the military target other communities for recruitment such as women on a much more concerted base as well as attempting to restrict the use of (expensive) military personnel to those postings where their special training is required. I.e., there would also appear to be a move to greater use of civilian personnel and agencies where possible.<sup>32</sup> At the other extreme, care is required so as to ensure that recruitment does not over-represent any single ethnic language or racial group.

For some years the SADF has had limited experience with what was known as a 'short-service' scheme. This, it would appear, was an attempt to retain for a longer period the skills and expertise of National Servicemen leadership (i.e. corporals and lieutenants). As a result the numbers involved were small, but the quality probably quite high. For example the SA Army gained 471 short term staff from the January 1990 intake and 123 from the August 1990 intake, i.e. a total of 594 from the 1990 national service component. During the same year 1 178 soldiers also signed up for short service periods from other years of intake.<sup>33</sup>

By seeking to maintain a youthful fighting force, military retention and promotion practices in all-volunteer forces part sharply from prevailing civilian norms. Because wartime requires the rapid expansion of the armed forces, there must be a solid nucleus of career soldiers. For this reason volunteers who join the armed forces on a short-service type scheme, should be encouraged to make it their career. At the same time, the high turnover which characterizes all armed forces provides a pool which can be drawn upon in times of severe need. I.e. only a certain level of re-enlistment after an initial period of a few years of service is in fact desirable, all other things being equal. As a result, high turnover among first term enlistees is accepted and should even be encouraged. In the US, at the time of the introduction of the all-volunteer system, the expectation was that only one in five enlisted recruits will still be in the service after five years (following their initial contract of 3 or 4 years) but that almost half of enlisted personnel with five years service would remain in the armed forces for another fifteen years. The retention of officers was considerable higher. Two of five new officers remain after five years, but three-fourths of these



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continue their careers through retirement. <sup>34</sup> Interestingly enough, the US experience initially appeared to indicate that re-enlistment rather than first time enlistment is more likely to be influenced by economic considerations. <sup>35</sup> By 1982 this opinion had changed. The Vietnam war had been worked out of the American system and first-term enlistment reached the highest levels since the Korean War. More extensive experience with the all-volunteer force now indicated that pay incentives do in fact play an important part in military recruitment and retention. <sup>36</sup>

South African experience would probably concur with that in the US that the minimum period of short-term enlistment should be two years, and probably at least three. <sup>37</sup>

An obvious factor which influences the propensity to enlist as a volunteer is the relative attractiveness and availability of alternative employment. Pay and conditions of service play an important role in this regard, but are obviously restricted within the constraints of the military budget. A particular dilemma which the US military faced in this regard was that potential recruits tended to underestimate the service benefits such as free medical when translating the proposed military entry pay level with comparative civilian jobs. This problem was rectified by adopting a more 'civilian' pay structure where benefits received were deducted from a (higher) initial pay packet. <sup>38</sup>

This has not, however, been an entirely satisfactory solution since there are obvious and important distinctions between the nature of military remuneration and that within most other public and private sector categories of employment <sup>39</sup>. Most prominent among these is the importance of fringe benefits such as medical assistance as part of the total remuneration package. A second category of differences are those related to the specific, often disruptive, nature of military service. Military personnel are compensated for exposing themselves to danger and the discomfort and disruption that may accompany specific postings and deployment. Finally, the requirement to keep the armed forces young impacts severely upon normal retirement and severance pay measures. Normal public sector retirement schemes and criteria necessarily stymie the military which, in the case of countries such as Israel, aim for retirement ages in the region of 45 to 55 years of age after which individuals are encouraged to embark upon a second career - the most common in Israel apparently being that of politician! <sup>40</sup>

In brief, the nature of military service and duty demands specifically designed remuneration packages. The introduction of a voluntary system demands a particularly greater degree of flexibility than is the case with conscript systems since a constant supply of manpower must be maintained in often changed manpower supply conditions (e.g. changed economic conditions).

Although South Africa suffers from massive unemployment which will ensure a ready supply of recruits, our armed forces also suffer a severe legitimacy problem in the eyes of large sections of our populace. Although relative pay rates and alternative employment and educational options are critical variables in the success of recruitment policies, the attitudes and perceptions of youth towards the military is also important - particularly from those more highly educated sections within the black, coloured and Indian communities from which the military will wish to draw their future officers.

While we are on the subject, the issue of remuneration of military personnel is a highly contentious one. In South Africa the SADF fall under the Commission for Administration. As a result, with very little deviation, military rank and therefore pay is determined by the same public service rules and regulations as those for all other public servants. This is a situation which appears to have impacted very negatively on the military profession as distinct from other public duties. Without entertaining any specific comments, the sum impact has been to further institutionalize the bureaucratization of the South African armed forces. It has also tended to place unnecessary emphasis on promotion as a source of increased pay, although there have been some changes to this system. The result is rapid, often too rapid, promotion and a top heavy system within which there are simply too many officers of too high a rank and too little emphasis on the retention of skills at the level of senior Non-Commissioned Officers, Warrant Officers and officers up to and



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including the rank of major. A second problem is the different pay scales for Permanent and Citizen Force which has caused a wide degree of resentment among the latter. 41

### 5.5 SO WHAT?

Analysts have often pointed to a major concern when it comes to all-volunteer forces. That concern is the propensity of armed forces to intervene in the internal political processes and institutions of the larger society. It is a concern particularly cogent in developing countries with little or no institutionalized democratic culture, nor with established cultures of accountability as is the case in South Africa. Succinctly, an all-volunteer can be a political threat, especially in an unstable country. A large professional army is an invitation for a coup; a conscript army is an automatic restraint. That the advent of an all-volunteer system tends to develop more clear-cut boundaries between military and civilian society and increases the danger of the social isolation and political particularism of the military has been a longstanding concern. 42 This is a legitimate worry, and one which has led to an organization generally opposed to conscription such as the Military Research Group (MRG) to search for an alternative in the form of the example of the British Territorial Army. This system draws its mobilization forces from reserves in the form of civilian volunteers who join the Territorial Army for a period of 3 years Part Time service. 43 A different model, built upon that of the Swiss military is also being suggested by Prof Deon Fourie of UNISA at a conference which we hosted on 23 April 1992. 44

All-volunteer forces are intrinsically biased in terms of the social sections of the broader society amenable to military service. Janowitz is concise in his dictum '*A volunteer military can be expected to have selective social characteristics, but if it becomes highly unrepresentative [of society], it creates internal socio-political problems.*' 45 The dangers are those of geographical or regional over-representation and class selectivity. In the South African case both are, of course, almost analogous to racial and ethnic imbalances. In the past discrimination severely restricted black, coloured and Indian access to all but the lower ranks. As a result the SADF as it is composed today is dominated by white leadership, and, within the largest of the services the Army, by Afrikaners. Yet one should bear in mind that the SADF is probably ahead of most other government departments when it comes to integration and black advancement. As the American military found in Korea and Vietnam, war does not countenance the luxuries of institutional racial discrimination as easily as does civilian society. Charles Moskos makes the following observation: '*It is a well-recognized fact that the educational levels of blacks in America have trailed behind that of whites. But the intersection of race and education is quite different among entrants in the all-volunteer Army. ... In point of fact, today's Army enlisted ranks are the only major arena in American society where black educational levels surpass those of whites, and by a significant degree. Whereas the black soldier seems fairly representative of the black community in terms of educational and social background, white entrants in the all-volunteer Army have been coming from the least educated sectors of the white community.*' 46 This is apparently caused by the fact that increased numbers of black youth qualified for military service while facing particularly severe economic prospects in the civilian job market at the time. 47

What is the situation within the SADF? While the SADF is not prepared to disclose its total number of officers, Warrant Officers and NCO's per rank, it has made some figures and percentages regarding officers available, from which it would appear that in September 1991 there were a total of 25 black officers, 14 Indian officers, 123 coloured officers and 7 191 white officers up to and including the rank of colonel in the Permanent Force. Citizen force and commando officers are probably almost universally white. At the time the highest rank held by a non-white officer was that of colonel. 48 I think it safe to assume that the percentages of non-white Warrant and Non-Commissioned Officers would probably be higher than those of non-white officers. 49 We also know that in mid 1991 a quarter of the full-time SADF component of personnel comprised black volunteers. 50



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Presently roughly 10% of the strength of the SADF comprises female Permanent Force members. Yet only one non-white female has reached officer rank. <sup>51</sup>

I think it is important to realize that **there is no basis for arguing the moral superiority of any specific manpower system.** For South Africa there is no intrinsically wrong or intrinsically right choice that has to be made. We should rather view our military manpower procurement policy in comparative terms - what would be the best mix for us? What will ensure a non-interventionist military? What will ensure and entrench civilian political accountability? There will always be groups in our society vehemently opposed to both national conscription, a selective draft system and an all-volunteer system. That is the nature of the issue.

Yet, the debate in South Africa has on the issue of future manpower systems for the military has been less than satisfactory. The most serious problem is the lack of substantial academic analysis which is due to the extreme politicization of the debate and the lack of information. The organization most vociferous in its hostility to conscription has been the End Conscription Campaign (ECC). ECC objections to conscription have almost exclusively been religiously and politically motivated. <sup>52</sup> Commentators such as Willem Steenkamp and Helmoed-Romer Heitman have again been arguing for the retention of some type of conscription on technical and logistical grounds but their arguments have often been emotional and speculative rather than analytical. <sup>53</sup>

#### 5.6 RELATIVE COSTS

The most obvious question we have to answer when considering future armed forces is **how much are we prepared to spend on defence?** The quick answer, of course, is less and less. That this is not a simple equation, has been demonstrated by André Buys. Following the development of a comprehensive system dynamic model of the South African military industrial system and national economy, he finds that: *'The model shows that if defence spending were reduced from 4,2% of GDP in 1989 to 2,5% by 1993, and the resources were optimally invested, the economic growth rate would be 0,6% higher and 120 000 new jobs would be created. ... At the current rate of decline of the defence budget the number of jobs available in the Defence Force and Armscor would be reduced by 54 200 between 1989 and 1993.'* <sup>54</sup> The nett effect is, therefore, a gain of 65 800 jobs.

The IMF and the World Bank have become the dominant external economic forces in Africa. As part and parcel of the structural adjustment programmes of these institutions, specific demands are also being made as regards reductions in military expenditure and the reallocation of resources to pressing welfare and economic needs. In fact, a conditionality appears to have been agreed upon regarding a maximum of 2% of GDP which can be spent on the armed forces. South Africa presently spends about 2,8% of GDP on its military, considerably below the world average, and down from a level of 4,2% in 1989. Since then the South African defence budget has been declining at a rate of 10% per annum. Part and parcel of the international fear, one should point out, relates to the potential proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic delivery systems could threaten global security. As a result *'... there can be no doubt that the machinery of an American dominated UN will be heavily geared to increasingly interventionist anti-proliferation and arms control verification programmes.'* <sup>55</sup> We can rest assured that prescriptive involvement on the issue of military expenditure will also be applied to South Africa, although I personally feel that spending 2% of GDP on the military is roughly in the right ballpark.

Reductions in defence expenditure in South Africa have not, as yet, had a dramatic impact upon the operating costs of the SADF, apart from increasing the relative size of the operating costs of the SADF as a fraction of the total defence budget. In fact, to a large degree it would appear as if the considerable reductions in the defence budget that have occurred in the last few years have been passed on to the armaments industry. Reducing operating costs, in particular personnel costs, is invariable a medium to long term policy if the political will for more dramatic interventions is lacking. And it is obvious that such cuts are taking place, and have been taking place for some time. <sup>56</sup>



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The SADF have not released any statistics on the relative costs of running a conscript military, without which any analysis is virtually impossible. At the macro level personnel expenditure accounted for 21,22% of the 1990/91 defence budget and 27,7% of the 1991/92 budget. The only other figure I could find stated that '*the average total cost to the Defence Force is +/- R28-00 per day per National Serviceman*', which seems suspiciously low, for once pay has been subtracted (R9-45 for an unmarried private) it leaves only R18-55 for food, clothing, etc.<sup>57</sup> Such a figure obviously does not take the increased training costs for national servicemen into account (in terms of the shorter period of service of the average soldier in any conscripted system a more intensive repetitive training cycle is required than is the case with volunteer systems where the initial term of enlistment is at least 3 to 4 years), nor would it include other related costs such as increased wear and tear of equipment, etc. In a normal society such costings could also have been criticised in that they focus on reducing state expenditure as opposed to the costs of conscription for the economy as a whole, i.e. the loss of income and expertise suffered by the economy while the conscript is in service.

In the US manpower costs as a percentage of the total annual defence budget rose from 34% in the fiscal year 1964 (with a system of national conscription) to 40% in the fiscal year 1973 (by which time the transition to an all-volunteer force had been completed, including substantial increases in salaries, much greater funds allocated to recruitment costs, etc.).<sup>58</sup> Even this increase would not have compensated for the complete 'life-cycle' costs of manpower which would only have become apparent when the volunteer system had stabilized (i.e. to include retirement and pension pay-outs).

The first obvious response to increased labour costs, which is generally perceived to accompany any movement towards a voluntary system, is a greater investment in labour-saving technology, typically through better and more weaponry per soldier, sailor or airman. The second response is generally a greater investment in training and skill development. Recruitment of lower quality workers is cheaper (as with conscription) but increases training costs and turnover. Promotion policies which retain workers reduce recruitment needs but increase average pay and skills levels. Under conscription the SADF, particularly the SA Army, could obtain a large supply of conscripts at low costs. The high costs of initial and repetitive training, as well as those of greater wear and tear as a result of more intensive training which is necessary with conscription are therefore at least partly offset by low pay scales. A voluntary system raises recruitment and personnel costs and alters the tradeoff, particularly regarding pension and retirement benefits. To reduce costs of voluntary systems, policies of improving the quality of recruits is often instituted, which appear to temporarily increase personnel turnover as the bad apples are weeded out and an attempt is made to find the correct criteria for such decisions.<sup>59</sup>

It should be clear from the above that the present lack of information inhibits any serious analysis of the relative costs of various alternative manpower procurement systems as they would impact on the military.

## 6.0 NOTES ON THE IMPACT OF A FEDERAL DISPENSATION

The basic features of our future constitutional system is a factor which will severely impact upon the armed forces. South Africa is a plural society. Our best intentions will not remove this essential characteristic of our society, divided as it is in terms of race, ethnicity and class. In many respects we are once again out of step with the rest of the world where ethno-nationalism is acknowledged to be on the rise. Locally many political parties place a great deal of emphasis on nation-building and the creation of a non-racial society as if these are simply matters of policy and not deeply entrenched features of our society. There is an equally discernable international trend towards the accommodation of cultural and other groupings through decentralisation, the protection of individual rights and a smaller, leaner government. One would tend to suspect that many of these features would also be evident in our future South African constitutional dispensation. R.W. Johnson goes as far as stating that '*... nowhere else in the world has democratic government been achieved in a state the size of South Africa without resort to federalism.*'<sup>60</sup>



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This is not the forum to discuss and debate the constitutional options facing South Africa. Many analysts are, however, convinced that our future dispensation will entail strong regional if not federal features - a vision that is appearing to gain support across the political spectrum as a practical method of achieving democracy and limiting the power of central government whilst allaying fears of domination. It would serve, therefore, to perhaps pause and briefly comment upon the structure of our armed forces within a federal or regional-type dispensation.

We have a small Air Force and Navy. These forces would, inevitably, have to be placed under control of the federal government and could effectively be called federal forces. They would therefore, be under the direct command of central government, although stationed in and operating from the territory of various constituent states. The situation of the much more larger ground or Army forces would be different. Those forces, which constitute the ready or full-time forces (the 2 brigades I mentioned earlier), would probably fall under central government control, i.e. part of the federal forces. Those reserve units within any of the constituent states should only be activated with the permission and on the authority of that particular state, except in time of war. Similarly, apart from when a formal state of war exists, as defined by the federal parliament, such forces should be limited in their deployment in support of any internal situation (emergency, law and order, etc.) to the territory of that particular state. Any deployment outside of the state would have to be sanctioned by both the federal parliament as well as that of the particular state.

As should be the case in any democracy, the military should have a very restricted role in support of the police, except in time of martial law. Prior to the declaration of martial law, military forces deployed in any type of law and order function should be placed under the operational command of the police. Such deployment should, of course, only occur after due parliamentary sanction. In the case of an emergency or national disaster, any military forces authorized for activation/deployment should be placed under the operational command of the appropriate civilian authority. At no stage should ground forces deployed inside the country be under direct central military operational command. This is, I should add, obviously very different from the present situation in our country.

The reasons for these checks and balances are, I hope, rather self-evident. They serve to restrict the potential involvement of the military in national political affairs while reaffirming, at every level, the principle relating to the supremacy of civilian and political control over the armed forces.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

I hope that I have raised sufficient diverse and interrelated considerations to indicate the necessarily complexity of the choices that face politicians, their advisors and the military themselves in these times of change. Richard Cooper writes: *'The complexity and controversy surrounding the military manpower procurement policy problem stems in large part from the fact that so many different factors must be taken into account; not only military effectiveness, but also a myriad of economic, social, political, and equity considerations as well. In short, military manpower procurement policy is a military problem, an economic problem, and a social/political problem all rolled into one.'*<sup>61</sup> One thing that my study has brought home to me is exactly the complexity of the issues at stake and the inevitable dissatisfaction in large sections of the society regarding whatever choices are ultimately made.

The military, by its nature, is a large and bureaucratic organization. It tends to see the group before it sees the individual. Abuse, misuse and a host of other problems tend to follow all systems of manpower procurement, be they conscription or a volunteer-based. We will not, in South Africa, succeed in defining a manpower system for our military which satisfies either all the political parties, civilian and military groups, nor the academics and side-line critics such as myself. All that we can hope to achieve is to make informed choices based on a realistic assessment of our requirements and capabilities. None of the problems we have or will experience in this process are unique, but have fixated analysts and soldiers for generations.



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Nor will we be able to make final and correct decisions about the future manpower policies for our armed forces on a one-off basis. To expect continued incremental changes to any new system is simply a statement of the obvious. In the US the transition from a selective conscript system to the all-volunteer force was spread over 6 years (from 1968 to 1973) during which time ballot calls were steadily reduced. Because of the numbers involved and the requirement for stability and a just system, dramatic changes to the manpower systems need to take place with care. At the same time I hope that I have made a strong case for a much more vigorous and informed debate on these issues. We cannot expect informed decisions by our leaders if there is a continuation of the present virtual black-out of information on existing systems of manpower procurement.

I want to conclude by making a call for the appointment of an open commission of inquiry on the issue of the manpower systems for our future defence needs. This obviously cannot occur in isolation from addressing the wider military posture and force composition itself - issues equally demanding of vigorous investigation. Instead of relegating the future of our armed forces to political horse-trading I propose that agreement be sought between the major political parties in South Africa for the appointment of an independent civilian chairman who should put together a select public commission for this purpose. Three or four members will suffice, if they have the ability and the clout to demand information, commission research and hear evidence. This commission should hear evidence from all interested parties, in particular from all military groupings, the military-industrial sector, political parties, interested groupings, various other Government departments concerned (such as Manpower and Justice) etc. It should sit in public and bring out a formal report submitted to all the political parties through either a future government of national unity or to the constitutional negotiation forum. Prior to such an appointment, the veil of secrecy that presently surrounds the manpower composition of the SADF, but also that of the armed forces of the TBVC states and MK should be lifted. In this manner as wide a consensus as possible could be sought and the crucial issue relating to the future of our armed forces will be removed from the party-political struggle for power.

Thank you

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<sup>2</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 1-2

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<sup>4</sup>*ibid.*, p. 3

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<sup>7</sup>Herbst, *op. cit.* 105

<sup>8</sup>Baynham, *op. cit.* p. 88



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<sup>9</sup>IDP, *op cit.*, p. 1

<sup>10</sup>I readily admit that these figures may be inaccurate since I have calculated them from the often cryptic press releases of the SADF. SADF Directorate Public Relations (DPR), **Response to the Weekly Mail**, 31 July 1991; **Response to the Sunday Star**, 16 August 1991 and Anon., *The Defence Force - somewhere on the border*, in **Financial Mail**, 11 October 1991.

<sup>11</sup>Bophuthatswana 3 500 to 4 000; Venda 1 500 to 2 000; Ciskei 2 000 to 2 500; Transkei 3 500 as well as perhaps 1 500 to 2 000 MK members. G. Mills & G. Wood, *A handful of armies - the future prospects of the homeland defence force*, in **South African Defence Review**, no. 5, 1992 (forthcoming), pp. 1-7; J.K. Cilliers, **Quo Vadis TBVC - the security and military dimension**, a paper delivered at a conference on the future of the TBVC countries, 30 October to 1 November 1991, Nuanedi Conference Centre, Venda, p. 5. The MK figure is a guesstimate from the Military Research Group (MRG) as to the number of MK members who may wish to serve in a future conventional-type Defence Force. This does not, however, reflect the actual strength of MK, which is generally considered to anything from 5 000 to 7 000 trained members, with a much larger 'informal' following.

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