

informed the Namibian government's decisions: limited financial resources, a range of social and welfare priorities, the absence of a major external threat, a pervasive war psychosis and a militaristic police force.

Namibia provides an outstanding example of how these issues can be addressed. The ending of apartheid will in fact create the potential to demilitarise Southern Africa as well as South Africa. It is possible to envisage a future regional security alliance with a collective programme to reduce force levels, military spending and arms production.

The problems

Three serious problems have arisen in the course of establishing the Namibian army.

First, there is mounting discontent among NDF troops over low pay. In October 1990 a group of soldiers staged a 'work stayaway' around this issue.

Second, thousands of former Plan and SWATF soldiers have not been incorporated into the NDF and are unemployed. They are becoming increasingly frustrated and may turn to banditry if their situation is not addressed.

Third, the appointment of Solomon Hawala as chief of the army was highly controversial. Hawala was previously the head of Plan's security department that detained, tortured and allegedly killed hundreds of Swapo members in exile.

The opposition parties bitterly condemned his appointment as undermining the country's policy of reconciliation and commitment to human rights. The move was welcomed by Swapo groups though, and justified by the government in terms of its decision to not exclude anyone from the NDF or Nampol because of their prior role.

Despite these problems, the formation of the NDF has been a remarkable success. Perhaps the most important lesson for South Africa is symbolic: the seemingly unimaginable prospect of uniting former enemies-in-arms is not only possible but can be done in such a way that it contributes to national and regional peace and stability. •

• Laurie Nathan is a senior researcher on peace and security at the Centre for Inter-group Studies in Cape Town. The research for these articles was conducted under the auspices of the Centre for Southern African Studies (University of the Western Cape) and included interviews with members of the Namibian government, military and police. A research report will be published as 'Southern African Perspectives: a working paper series, No. 4'.

From a police force to a police service

Despite the dissatisfaction caused by the disproportionate number of white policemen at the top echelons of Nampol, enormous strides have been made to make the police force accountable, democratic and effective. LAURIE NATHAN reports

The Namibian government's efforts to transform the South West African Police (Swapol) provides a useful case study of a project to fundamentally alter the nature of apartheid policing. Established by Pretoria in 1981, Swapol had the same features and limitations as the South African Police (SAP) and played a similar role in enforcing oppressive and repressive laws.

The formation of the Namibian police service (Nampol) points to the policy and practical changes that could be made in South Africa and to the problems that might arise in making those changes.

Unlike the colonial army, Swapol was not disbanded during the transition to Namibian independence. Its leadership and structure form the basis of Nampol. The definition of its role - to prevent, detect and investigate crime and to maintain internal security and law and order - has also been retained.

The new government is determined, however, to transform the character of the police and the way it fulfills these functions. Swapol is regarded as having been an 'instrument of suppression in the hands of the state', with 'militaristic and brutal anti-people features'; the public consequently developed a negative attitude towards the police and would not co-operate with them (Minister Designate of Home Affairs, press statement, 19.2.1990). The Ministry of Home Affairs, which is responsible for policing, is committed to reversing these tendencies and perceptions. The overriding objective is to establish a conventional police force that serves the entire population. Specific aims are to civilianise the police force, improve its relations with the public, promote public co-operation with

it and reorientate its focus from counter-insurgency to crime prevention.

Since independence the Ministry has sought to realise these aims through a number of measures: a new weapons policy; the replacement of military-style uniforms and vehicles; a crime prevention programme; a new training programme; and a campaign to promote public co-operation with the police. Each of these measures is discussed below.

Crime prevention

The Minister of Home Affairs refers to the high level of crime in Namibia as 'public enemy number one; it is becoming a daily phenomenon in our society and leading to a situation bordering on anarchy and lawlessness'.

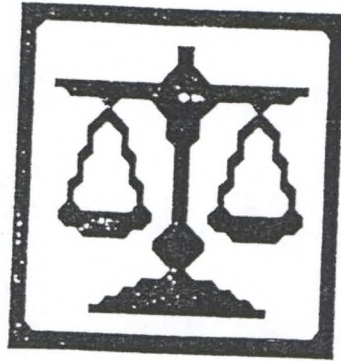
In response to this crisis the authorities have created a special cabinet committee on organised crime, formed a new criminal investigation unit, increased the salaries of the lower categories of police personnel, deployed police on 24-hour patrols in certain areas and repeatedly appealed to the public to hand in unlicensed arms and ammunition.

The government has also enlisted the support of the business community to reduce unemployment through job-creation programmes; it believes that this is the most effective way of reducing crime in the long run.

The Ministry of Home Affairs is convinced though that the above steps will be inadequate without a high level of public trust in, and co-operation with, the police. British police officers in Namibia have advised the ministry that sound police-community relations are the main ingredient in successful crime prevention.

The authorities have launched a media

THE POLICE



'The Ministry of Home Affairs has devised a new weapons policy — police may only draw their firearms if their lives or those of the public are threatened'

campaign to promote the new role and character of the police, emphasise its commitment to serving all Namibians and underline the necessity of public co-operation in tackling crime. The campaign has been reinforced by cabinet ministers and police officers travelling round the country to address urban and rural communities on these issues.

Of greater importance has been the introduction of Public-Police Relations Committees (PPRCs) in each of the ten police districts. The committees comprise representatives of Nampol, major public organisations, employer federations, trade unions, political parties and church, sport, student and community groups. The PPRCs are intended to provide a forum for the police and the public to discuss matters related to crime, policing and 'the fostering of proper relations'. The initiative also aims to encourage public involvement in the prevention and combating of crime.

Nampol officials believe that the PPRCs have improved public perceptions and co-operation, as well as lowered the crime rate in certain areas. There has been less success in the northern Ovambo region though, where the majority of people still mistrust the police.

Some black residents share the positive aspects of this assessment. In southern towns they have noted that 'trouble-makers' in Nampol have been replaced by more sympathetic officers, police have become more responsive to requests for assistance, they are no longer 'rude' and 'rough', and they now consult community leaders and social workers.

The significance of the PPRCs is that they are more than an exercise in public relations and crime prevention, as important as this is. They also provide a direct line of communication between Nampol and the people it serves, with the result that policing in Namibia is likely to become more accountable, democratic and effective.

Recruitment and training

When the new government came to power it was confronted with an acute shortage of trained police. Many South African officers in Swapol had left Namibia shortly before independence and there was a large contingent of 'special constables' who had only received a few weeks of training.

The government immediately recruited a substantial number of additional special constables. Roughly one third of the new recruits were previously in Swapol's army, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (Plan); some of them had undergone police training in

exile.

A new training programme, devised and supervised by a British advisory police team, was introduced to facilitate the transformation of the police and 'ensure that its members are capable of serving the people professionally, diligently and efficiently'.

Police training currently includes instruction on the handling and use of firearms, courses on human rights and an emphasis on public relations. It is orientated towards the detection, investigation and prevention of crime.

As a result of the shortage of police and the length of time required to train new recruits, two units comprised of former soldiers employed as special constables - the Presidential Guard and the border guards - were deployed without being properly trained. These units were repeatedly accused of undisciplined behaviour.

In September 1990 the border guards were withdrawn from active duty following a wave of allegations of misconduct: they were incorporated into the army for military training. The government also pledged to retrain the Presidential Guard after members of the unit fired shots at motorists who failed to give way to the President's motorcade quickly enough.

Civilianising the police

After independence the Ministry of Home Affairs made a concerted effort to demilitarise the police. It believed that the para-military character of Swapol had

instilled fear in the population and was wholly inappropriate to conventional policing.

The ministry replaced military-style uniforms, vehicles and rank designations. Riot-control training, which had previously been extended to all police personnel, was restricted to a special task force. The notorious counter-insurgency police unit, Koevoet, was disbanded in 1989 and has not been replaced.

The ministry also devised a new weapons policy. Police may now only draw their firearms if their lives or those of the public are threatened. Unlike before, weapons may no longer be used in the apprehension of criminals or the prevention of crime if these circumstances do not prevail.

The government's success in civilianising Nampol is most evident in the Ovambo region, previously known as the Operational Area. Under colonial rule the police were scarcely distinguishable from soldiers with their brown uniforms, military vehicles and heavy weaponry. Today the police wear light blue uniforms, travel in land cruisers and in most circumstances do not carry guns.

White leadership

In February 1990 the Minister Designate of Home Affairs announced that the leadership of Swapol would not be expelled from the police after independence; he insisted that these officers were all 'sons and daughters of Namibia'.

This decision is not as surprising as it initially appears. It was based on the policy of national reconciliation, which guarantees that former members of the colonial administration and security forces will keep their jobs, and on the fact that Swapol had no police experience of its own.

The top echelon of Nampol is currently comprised almost exclusively of white former members of Swapol. This includes the Inspector-General (chief of police) and the heads of all line functions. The sole exception is the Deputy Inspector-General who was a commander in Plan.

Although this situation stems from sound policy considerations, it has given rise to considerable tension. The Swapol Youth League has called for the dismissal of 'white thugs' in Nampol and Swapol newspapers have accused the police leadership of attempting to destabilise the government.

These criticisms are rejected by the government and bitterly resented by senior officers.

Furthermore, in October 1990 a group of black officers publicly called on the

Towards democracy or neo-colonialism?

CHRIS TAPSCOTT looks at the political economy of Namibia one year after independence, and argues that, although the process of transition has been handled with maturity and tolerance, much more will have to be done to eradicate the deep scars of apartheid

Inspector-General to address the racial composition of Nampol's command structure: they claimed that 82% of the officers of and above the rank of Inspector were white. The group threatened to resort to legal action to correct the 'un-constitutional imbalance'.

Senior police officials are sympathetic to this problem but oppose affirmative action that is not based on merit. They are unhappy that the government has promoted a number of inexperienced ex-Plan members in the police; this has 'undermined standards of professionalism and efficiency and led to resentment among non-Swapo police persons' (Brigadier Eimbeck, interview).

Lesson for South Africa

In mid-1990 Archbishop Tutu summed up the central challenges facing the South African Police (SAP): 'We would be insistent that the police ought to be using normal international standards of policing. They should not only be impartial but be seen to be impartial. We really need a police force that enjoys the confidence of everybody'.

Outside government circles it is widely accepted that the SAP does not meet these criteria: it is overwhelmingly partisan; it lacks the support of the majority of citizens; it is racially segregated and biased; it is geared more towards counter-insurgency than crime prevention; it is understaffed and underpaid; and it has a deep rooted culture of violence, extra-legal activity and disrespect for human rights.

Although the changes that the Namibian government has made to its police force are all worthwhile in themselves, their real value lies in the fact that they are part of an endeavour to effect a fundamental reorientation of the police.

If the SAP is ever to meet the essential requirements identified by Tutu - impartiality, credibility and compliance with internationally accepted standards - the South African government will similarly have to develop a new philosophy of policing.

Above all, this philosophy demands that the police are accountable to the public at both a parliamentary and grass-roots level, that they serve all sections of the population in a fair, unbiased and efficient manner, and that their leadership and membership reflect the ethnic composition of the country.

At the heart of the Namibian government's approach is the desire that Nampol comes to be regarded by its members and the public as a 'police service' rather than a 'police force'.

As the last colony in Africa to attain independence, Namibia is unique both because of the promise it holds as a democratic and stable society and because of the difficulties which it must overcome.

The transition from colonial rule to independence in Namibia has been hailed as perhaps the most successful intervention yet by a United Nations task force. The Namibian constitution, forged through inter-party negotiation, has likewise been heralded as a model of democracy for the rest of Africa, while the policy of national reconciliation has been lauded as a mark of political maturity. Despite the praise, Namibia still bears the scars of its recent and distant past. As a consequence, the tasks of transforming an ethnically fragmented society, of redressing extreme imbalances in access to resources and of building a more advanced and equitable economy, remain formidable.

The legacy of apartheid

The legacy of colonialism in Namibia is far-reaching, and apartheid policies have created and deepened racial and ethnic divisions within the society, to the extent that different communities still remain segregated geographically, economically and socially. Namibian society has inherited structured inequalities which manifest themselves in severe income distribution skews (the top 5% of the population are estimated to command 71% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while the bottom 55% control just 3%) and unequal access to productive assets and basic social services.

Extreme differences in income between racial/ethnic groups further serve to distort standard measurements of national production to a point where they

are largely meaningless as indicators of human development. Applying a simple arithmetic mean, the GDP per capita for the total population was estimated by the UN Statistical Office and Population Division to be \$1 044 in 1988, placing Namibia amongst the lower-middle to middle income countries. In part as a consequence of this, attempts to acquire 'least developed country' status for Namibia were initially turned down by multilateral funding agencies.

However, when this indicator is broken down, a markedly different picture emerges. GDP per capita amongst the white population, which constitutes no more than 5% of the total, was estimated to be \$14 560, equivalent to norms in high income countries (falling between the Netherlands and Austria) (UN 1989).

By contrast, figures for the black population are comparable to those amongst the lowest income countries. According to 1988 indices, the GDP per capita of about \$319 amongst the black population (roughly 95% of the total population) would place Namibia amongst the world's 20 poorest countries (lying between Rwanda and Niger). Figures for the black rural population present an even bleaker picture. The estimated GDP per capita (including subsistence income) of \$63 amongst black people living in the 'traditional' economy (an estimated 55% of the population), is lower than that of Mozambique, the world's poorest country in 1988.

Markedly uneven access to productive resources, markets and services, as well as to education and incomes, has resulted in patterns of inequality closely related to race and ethnicity.

This unequal access has also, inevitably, resulted in unequal employment between ethnic groups. Whilst compre-

University of Cape Town
 RONDEBOSCH
 7700 South Africa

Tel: (021) 650-2503/4
 650-3770
 Fax: (021) 685-2142
 Telex: 5-21439

p/a Universiteit van Kaapstad
 RONDEBOSCH
 7700 Suid-Afrika

PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MONITORING FORCE IN SOUTH AFRICA
 =====

Laurie Nathan, June 1992

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There is currently growing domestic support for some kind of international presence in the transition to democracy in South Africa. A variety of calls to this effect have recently been made by the SACC, the ANC, the PAC, Azapo and other groups.
- 1.2 There is very little clarity, however, on the purpose, role and nature of such a presence, the feasibility of the exercise and the auspices under which an international team would operate.
- 1.3 This briefing paper seeks to shed some light on these issues. It makes two proposals:
 - 1.3.1 a large United Nations force should be invited by Codesa or the Transitional Executive Council to monitor the conduct of government, the media, political parties and the security forces in the transition period, and to assess whether the elections for an interim government are free and fair; and
 - 1.3.2 as a matter of urgency, a team of 3 or 4 people with relevant international experience should be invited to South Africa to conduct a feasibility study into this and other options.

2. The international experience

- 2.1 The experience of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Haiti, El Salvador, Cambodia and many other countries provides compelling evidence of the invaluable role that the international community can play in transitions to democracy.
- 2.2 The role, size and nature of the international presence has differed from case to case, depending on the circumstances and the extent to which the international community is prepared to become involved in a particular situation.
- 2.3 The international community's role in the above countries has encompassed one or more of the following: facilitating negotiations between government and opposition parties;

supervising a formal ceasefire; training the new defence force and police; monitoring the conduct of security forces and political parties; certifying election results; acting as a transitional administration; and peacekeeping.

3. A role for the international community in South Africa

3.1 In the current South African debate there is confusion between international fact finding, monitoring and peace-keeping. Each of these roles is entirely different, serves a different purpose and requires a team with different skills and experience:

3.1.1 Fact-finding usually involves a small group of people from a prominent non-governmental international organisation who spend a limited period in a particular place, conduct a once-off investigation into human rights abuses and the causes of violence, and issue a report on their findings and recommendations.

An example of this kind of exercise was the recent visit to South Africa by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ).

3.1.2 Monitoring usually involves a larger body of people from a non-governmental or inter-governmental organisation who engage in on-going observation at grassroots level of political parties, government, the media and the security forces during the run-up to an election, and make frequent proposals on improving their behaviour and checking infringements of agreed codes of conduct. The body may also be entrusted to certify whether the election was free and fair.

An example of this kind of exercise was the United Nations operation in Namibia in 1989.

3.1.3 Peacekeeping involves a large contingent of soldiers, possibly backed up by mediators, who intervene directly in situations of physical conflict in order to keep warring groups apart, reduce the level of violence and maintain order.

An example of this kind of exercise was the UN military operation in Congo from 1960 to 1964.

3.2 Fact finding is clearly the weakest form of international intervention; its reports may have some moral force but are unlikely to lead to tangible results, particularly if the mission is not sanctioned by government.

3.3 Peacekeeping is the strongest form of intervention but one the international community is least likely to make because

of the complexity and financial costs of the operation and because of the risks to soldiers from countries which are not directly involved in the local conflict.

- 3.4 Monitoring has the advantage of being stronger than fact-finding and more feasible than peacekeeping. The Namibian experience, where 7 500 UNTAG personnel accompanied the security forces and set up offices throughout the country, suggests that an international monitoring team in South Africa could potentially have the following positive effects:
- 3.4.1 restraining the government, security forces and political parties from harrassing and intimidating citizens;
 - 3.4.2 restraining the security forces and political parties from engaging in violence;
 - 3.4.3 providing citizens with an independent office to which to make complaints about the behaviour of the security forces or political parties;
 - 3.4.4 monitoring the fairness of the electronic and print media in terms of its coverage of events and treatment of political parties;
 - 3.4.5 providing an independent overview of elections to ensure that they are free and fair; and
 - 3.4.6 raising the confidence of the internal parties and the general population in the transition process.
- 3.5 Some human rights organisations in South Africa have argued against an international monitoring force on the grounds that it will detract from the efforts of local groups which can play this role as effectively.

There is little evidence to support the argument. International monitoring in other countries has complemented rather than undermined local monitoring. Furthermore, local monitoring in South Africa has not been able to check human rights abuses and violence in a significant way.

- 3.6 For an international monitoring force to have the positive effects listed above, the auspices under which it operates internationally and locally are critical issues.

4. International auspices

- 4.1 A critical decision concerns the international auspices under which the monitoring force operates. The options currently being considered in South Africa are the Organisation of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the UN.

4.2 The UN is by a long way the preferable option since it is the only organisation with the experience and logistical infrastructure to mount such an operation.

4.3 In addition, the UN commands unparalleled international legitimacy and authority, and would thus be able to exert a greater positive influence on the South African transition than any other body.

4.4 The South African government is likely to object to a UN force on the following two grounds:

4.4.1 The institution has historically been biased against it.

This objection can be countered in three ways:

i) since the demise of the Cold War the UN Security Council can no longer be considered antagonistic to Pretoria;

ii) all the internal parties, including government, should participate in selecting which UN member states form part of the monitoring force; and

iii) the experience of the UN in monitoring transitions to democracy elsewhere testifies to its ability to play an impartial role.

4.4.2 An international monitoring force would constitute an infringement of South Africa's sovereignty.

In actual fact, South Africa's sovereignty would only be undermined if the international community intervenes directly in South Africa without the consent of the government. If, on the other hand, the government invites the international community to participate in any way in the transition, its sovereignty will not be affected.

5. Domestic auspices

5.1 Some political parties in favour of an international team in South Africa believe that the team should be invited and hosted by local churches or the SACC.

5.2 This option is only tenable for fact-finding or observer missions by non-governmental organisations like the ICJ. Inter-governmental bodies, like the UN, Commonwealth or OAU, are unlikely to embark on a substantial role without the support of the major internal parties and government.

5.3 In addition, only an international team invited collectively by the internal parties and government will command the

authority necessary to influence their conduct and that of the security forces in a substantial way.

- 5.4 The ideal option is therefore for the international team to be invited into South Africa by Codesa or the Transitional Executive Council, and to operate inside the country under the auspices of the TEC.

6. Feasibility study

- 6.1 This briefing paper needs to conclude with the disclaimer that it is based only on the writer's field trips to Namibia in 1989 and an extremely limited knowledge of UN and other monitoring and peacekeeping exercises around the world.
- 6.2 The writer is not in a position to answer some crucial questions about the logistics and feasibility of an international force in South Africa: how large should it be, what would it cost, what kind of infrastructure would it need, how would it relate to the TEC, how soon could it get to South Africa, would the UN (or OAU or Commonwealth) support such a venture, and is a peacekeeping operation completely out of the question.
- 6.3 It is therefore recommended that a team of 3-4 people with experience in relevant international exercises should be invited to South Africa as soon as possible to conduct a feasibility study and help answer these and other questions. Local political leaders will then be in a position to assess the options available to them on the basis of professional advice.

SUNDAY TIMES • 5/4/92

Integrate armies to foster trust

THE first plenary session of Codesa last December was marred by a fiery showdown between President FW de Klerk and Nelson Mandela over ANC arms caches and the status of its army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

These issues continue to plague negotiations. The government insists transitional structures will not be established until the ANC agrees to end its armed struggle and disband MK.

The ANC refuses to demobilise MK "until a democratic government is in place". It argues further that "there is no difference between MK and the SADF, which is the National Party's army".

The way out of this impasse would be to focus briefly on a longer term issue: the political parties represented at Codesa could agree in principle that the future defence force will be an amalgamation of the SADF, MK and the homeland armies.

The actual integration of these forces will undoubtedly be difficult. But agreement in principle at this stage would clarify their future status and thereby make it easier to identify the steps required to control them in the interim.

In one form or another, integration is inevitable. Neither the government nor the ANC has the strength to ensure its army is installed exclusively as the new defence force.

Both parties are commit-

LAURIE NATHAN argues that agreement to integrate all military forces will lead to the ANC finally abandoning the armed struggle

ted to a negotiated settlement precisely because they recognise this reality. They accept, too, that negotiations necessarily entail compromising hard-line positions. It would be absurd to imagine military affairs as exempt from such a compromise.

Integration is also politically and strategically desirable. By virtue of their historic roles and characters, neither the SADF nor MK on its own would be regarded as a genuinely national defence force after apartheid.

Both armies have played a partisan role in the South African conflict.

The SADF's credibility is weakened by its aggressive defence of minority rule, while MK is regarded by many whites as a "terrorist organisation".

The exclusion of the SADF or MK from the new defence force would fatally undermine its legitimacy, embitter one or another political constituency and create the danger of banditry and armed resistance to the state.

Conversely, the merging of government and guerrilla forces would signal a real commitment by the major players to overcoming the

divisions of the past.

The logic of the above arguments was accepted at independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe. It has been accepted more recently in Mozambique and Angola — and it provided the basis for the formation of the Union Defence Force in South Africa in 1912.

The UDF was forged out of British colonial forces and Boer commando armies which had fought a bloody war only 10 years earlier.

If the parties at Codesa agreed to a similar integration of the SADF, MK and the homeland armies, the way would be clear to resolving controversial military issues and devising means of regulating these forces during the transition.

The government could agree to subject the SADF to a code of conduct and multi-party control. The ANC could formally end its armed struggle, surrender its arms caches and recognise the SADF as South Africa's legal defence force in the interim period.

A number of structures could be set up to implement and monitor these agreements. At political level, the

interim government could exercise civilian control over all the armies through a multi-party commission of security.

The commission could monitor SADF compliance with the code of conduct and MK compliance with the Pretoria, DF Malan and Groot-Schuur minutes. It could also begin formulating new defence policy and planning the reconstitution of the security forces.

At a military level, a Joint Monitoring Committee comprised of senior officers from each of the armies could be created along the lines of the JMC's established by South Africa with Mozambique in 1984 and with Angola in 1985 and 1988.

An outstanding issue would be the status of the armed wings of the AWB, Azapo and the PAC, which have all rejected participation in Codesa.

These armies should be outlawed if they reject the option of multi-party control and eventual incorporation into the new defence force.

The essential point, though, is that every effort should be made to accommodate the various armies that exist in South Africa.

● Laurie Nathan is a senior researcher at the Centre for Intergroup Studies, an independent mediation group attached to UCT.

A remarkable though central feature of the transition to independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe was the merging of government and guerilla armies in the establishment of new national defence forces. The possibility of a similar development occurring in South Africa has become an intriguing question as the country moves painfully but inexorably towards a non-racial dispensation. The resolution of that question will have long term consequences for the security and stability of both South Africa and southern Africa.

This article explores, with reference to the experiences of Namibia and Zimbabwe, the prospects and problems associated with integrating the South African Defence Force (SADF), the homeland forces and the army of the African National Congress (ANC), Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). The armed wings of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) are not discussed because of the lack of sufficient contemporary information about them.¹

In the current phase of 'talks about talks' between the government and the ANC, Pretoria has categorically ruled out the possibility of a future integration of armed forces. Nevertheless, some form of merger is inevitable because of the likely nature of the transition from apartheid and the prevailing balance of power between the major players.

The transition is expected to occur through multi-party negotiations followed by popular elections for either a new government or a Constituent Assembly charged with drawing up a new constitution. Neither the ruling National Party nor the ANC has the political or military strength to determine exclusively the outcome of this process; certainly, neither has the strength to ensure that its army is solely installed as the new defence force. Both sides will be obliged to compromise on a number of key issues, including those related to the future military institution.

Such compromises are not only inevitable but also politically and strategically desirable. In terms of their respective roles and characteristics, neither the SADF nor MK could on their own legitimately become a genuinely national defence force after apartheid. Both armies have played a partisan role in the South African conflict, acting directly in support of political parties and in the interests of particular sectors of the population. The SADF's legitimacy is further undermined by its enforcement of apartheid legislation, its repressive actions in the black community and its predominantly white composition and leadership.² Umkhonto we Sizwe, on the other hand, is regarded by many whites as a 'terrorist' organisation.

The exclusion of either the SADF or MK from the post-apartheid defence force would fatally undermine its credibility, embitter one or another political constituency and create the danger of banditry and

armed resistance to the state. Conversely, as in Namibia and Zimbabwe, the unification of government and guerilla forces could contribute to the building of national unity and reconciliation.

The merging of South African armies is unlikely to take the same course as in those countries, however. For a number of reasons the process may be more conflictual, and the inequalities in size and capacity between the SADF and MK are likely to result in the absorption of MK into the SADF rather than a balanced integration of the two forces. The new defence force will probably be dominated by white SADF officers. A kind of 'dual power' may exist after apartheid, with formal political power held by the ANC while the military and police institutions effectively remain in the hands of the incumbent security establishment.

None of the writers concerned with the future South African defence force deal adequately with the implications of this scenario. They either implicitly or explicitly accept it as a foregone conclusion without further discussion,³ or they describe it as a positive result in the sense that it will serve to allay white fears about the creation of a non-racial political regime.⁴ Given the history of the SADF, this omission is surprising and shortsighted. Continued white control of the armed forces after apartheid could conceivably give rise to a range of problems in terms of both the military's potential to play a disruptive role, and regional and domestic perceptions of the army whatever its role.

The likelihood and possible consequences of the new defence force being dominated by the SADF constitute the main themes of this article. These will be explored after first describing the major parties' perspectives on integration and the post-apartheid army, as outlined at conferences and in various articles and public statements.

Perspectives of the Major Parties

The question of integrating armies and establishing a post-apartheid defence force has not been formally discussed in the current phase of talks between the government and the ANC. Nor is it likely to be put on the negotiating agenda until a host of other substantial issues are resolved. At a public level the major parties have done little more than state their positions on the question in the broadest of terms, and with a fair deal of rhetoric and posturing. These positions nevertheless indicate the likely starting points of a more substantial debate on military related issues in the future.

SADF and Government

The essential premise of the stand of the government and SADF is that the armed forces of the state will not undergo significant changes after apartheid. While the security establishment has presumably set up study commissions to explore the matter more fully, the publicly stated official views are characterised by a lack of flexibility, imagination and considered thought.

A good illustration of this was an interview in *Armed Forces* in June 1990 with Lt Gen Meiring, the newly appointed chief of the South African army. Addressing the theme of 'the new army in the new South Africa', Meiring spoke only of the need for a renewed emphasis on the basics of training, such as marching, fitness and musketry; the introduction of a professional code of honour and of military competitions to hone soldiers' skills; and the retention of whites-only conscription and the commando system. Meiring did not envisage any change to the racial composition and political orientation of the defence force. He insisted that the SADF was 'the only organisation in South Africa that spans the whole political spectrum'; it had 'succeeded in welding a diversity of cultures, population groups and also political beliefs into a formidable fighting machine' that had a 'unifying effect' on the country. ⁵

During the parliamentary defence debate in May 1990 the Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, emphatically rejected the possibility of integrating the SADF and MK. His reasons related principally to the incompatibility of the role and technical capability of the two armies.

The SADF is an instrument of the state which protects the security, life and property of all people. On the other hand, MK acknowledges that it is a revolutionary organisation. It conducts the revolutionary struggle against the population and aims to destroy that part of society it disagrees with. ⁶

The type of army that is planned for the future is of such a nature that it is doubtful that MK's man who handles an AK [assault rifle] will feel at home there. Weaponry such as the G5, G6 [cannons] and others are exceptionally advanced technically. ...The difference between the SADF and MK is not just the level of training. The SADF creates technology, MK is simply a user. ...We are not on the road to using the army to keep unemployment off the streets. ⁷

In August 1991 President De Klerk replaced General Malan as Minister of Defence with Roelf Meier, the Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development. Given Meier's lack of significant prior association with the military and his reputation for flexibility as one of the government's key negotiators with the ANC, the move was viewed as an attempt to civilianise the Defence Ministry and bring the SADF into line with the new political circumstances in South Africa.⁸ Meier is widely regarded as being more liberal than Malan and is expected to take a more open-minded approach to the merging of armies. Shortly after taking office he indicated that negotiations between the ANC and government on a professional and non-partisan defence force were likely, and MK leader Chris Hanu expressed confidence that the new minister would involve the ANC in discussions on the role of the security forces in a democratic South Africa.⁹

Nevertheless, De Klerk is on record as saying that the maintenance of a 'professional security force' will be one of the safeguards sought by the government in relinquishing minority rule.¹⁰ While this phrase is open to interpretation, it suggests that during negotiations the National Party will attempt to forestall efforts by a future government to reshape the composition of the leadership of the defence force through affirmative action or political appointments. As will be discussed further below, the National Party is likely to seek a substantial measure of white control over the post-apartheid military and police.

African National Congress

The ANC's publicly stated position on the integration of armies and creation of a new defence force is characterised by a mixture of concrete proposals and anti-militarist ideals. The proposals can be summarised as follows from a series of interviews conducted in 1990/1 with Umkhonto we Sizwe chief-of-staff Chris Hanu:

- ❖ It is 'inconceivable' that the SADF will continue to serve as the South African defence force after apartheid. The SADF is the 'military wing' of the National Party, has a racist orientation and has repeatedly been used as a 'brutal army to suppress the aspirations of the people'.
- ❖ The absorption of ANC soldiers into the SADF after apartheid is therefore not a viable option. South Africa requires an entirely new defence force, comprised of elements of MK, the SADF, the homeland armies and the armed wings of the Pan Africanist Congress and Azapo. The SADF will constitute a substantial portion of this defence force because of its size, expertise, professionalism and sophistication.
- ❖ The new defence force would be distinguished from the SADF by the fact that it upholds democratic norms, is politically non-partisan and accountable to parliament, and 'avoids as much as possible involvement in civil activities like [maintaining] law and order'.

❖ During the transition period a multi-party interim government should be formed to oversee the political process, the maintenance of law and order, the organised return of MK to South Africa and the confinement of both the SADF and MK to barracks.

❖ The responsibility for establishing the post-apartheid defence force will that of the new democratically elected government and parliament.¹¹

At its first ever national conference, held in Venda in August 1991, MK reiterated the above proposals. The conference also resolved to establish a research unit to explore policy options for the new defence force, and called for an independent organisation to convene a forum of representatives of all the armed forces in the country. Military leaders added that steps were underway to prepare MK for a role in a future conventional army; ANC soldiers' skills were being upgraded in various African countries and professional military training was being sought from Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Canada, Australia and Britain.¹²

At an earlier conference on 'The future of security and defence in South Africa', jointly hosted by the ANC and the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (Idasa) in Lusaka in May 1990, ANC executive member John Nkadimeng outlined some basic principles of the organisation's future defence policy: the new army should be a 'factor for peace' in South Africa and the region; it should be equipped to defend South Africa's sovereignty and be capable of defending and developing non-racialism, unity and democracy; and it should be a 'democratic army built on the democratic principles enshrined in the new constitution'. The size, composition and structure of the defence force should be determined not only by the tasks facing it but also by the extent to which it could draw on the country's resources without undermining 'a commitment to a high level of overall economic, social, cultural and spiritual upliftment'.

*The ultimate objective of our society should not be to build more barracks but more schools and hospitals. It should not be to manufacture more AK and R1 [rifles] but more tennis rackets and golf clubs. Not more tanks and Hippos [military vehicles] but more tractors and harvesters.*¹³

Speaking at the same conference, MK head of intelligence Keith Mokoape called for the relationship between the SADF and Umkhonto we Sizwe to be 'normalised' in the transition period. A basis of mutual trust should be established between the respective command structures through formal discussions on the role of armed forces in guaranteeing the success of the negotiating process. Following these discussions, 'joint and politically accountable commands' should be formed at national and regional levels to assist in the prevention of violence. In addition, a concerted effort should be made to break down suspicion between the rank-and-file of the two armies through 'political reorientation programmes'.¹⁴

Homelands

At the Lusaka conference senior military officers from Venda, Transkei and Ciskei stated that they expected their armies to be incorporated into a united defence force under central government control after apartheid. They believed that these armies could contribute to the building of the new defence force since they had well developed administrative and logistical infrastructures as well as skilled personnel with the ability to train or retrain other soldiers. ¹⁵

In May 1991 Major General Holomisa, Chairman of the Transkei Military Council, called on the chiefs of the liberation armies and the national and homeland defence forces to come together to devise methods of accommodating each other during the transition period and to formulate a blueprint for eventual integration. However, the implementation of the integration exercise should await the appointment of a democratically elected government. ¹⁶

The Lusaka Indaba

In addition to the perspectives of particular parties outlined above, the Lusaka conference in May 1990 provided an opportunity for senior ANC leaders, homeland army officers and an unofficial SADF delegation to engage in collective discussion on integration and the post-apartheid defence force. ¹⁷ Their joint proposals at the end of the conference were sufficiently comprehensive and far-sighted to serve as a basis for further debate on these issues, possibly in the negotiating process itself.

The main proposals were the following: ¹⁸

- ❖ There should be a mutually binding ceasefire prior to the commencement of negotiations. This would entail a suspension or ending of the ANC's armed struggle, the withdrawal of SADF troops from the townships 'where conditions permit', and the ending of security force 'search and destroy' operations against guerillas.
- ❖ In anticipation of integration, the SADF and MK should initiate 'political sensitising programmes' to reduce soldiers' fears and antagonism and prepare them for the future.
- ❖ The SADF should also commence a programme of affirmative action; this would involve stepping up the training of black soldiers and the recruitment of blacks with higher levels of education.
- ❖ A joint commission made up of defence experts and SADF and MK leaders should be formed to look into the process of integration and the formation of a new defence force.

- ❖ An all-party agency should be established to monitor the security forces in the transition period. The agency should include representatives of as many political groups as possible, operate at national, regional and local levels and have some power of enforcement.
- ❖ Once negotiations have commenced, the return of ANC soldiers to South Africa should be organised in a formal manner. The SADF should make bases and logistical support available to them under MK control.
- ❖ At the conclusion of negotiations, the SADF, the homeland armies and Umkhonto we Sizwe should be formally integrated. A number of MK officers should be placed in senior command and control positions in the new defence force. Other armed forces, such as that of the Pan Africanist Congress, should be either integrated or dissolved.
- ❖ The post-apartheid defence force should be established on the basis of the following principles: it should be non-racial; its primary role should be to protect the territorial integrity of South Africa; it should uphold the 'democratic values of South Africa'; it should be fully accountable to parliament; it should be a 'professional-type organisation with high standards of efficiency'; and it should adhere to the Geneva Convention and other applicable international treaties and agreements that govern the conduct of warfare.
- ❖ The new defence force should be politically non-partisan. Its members should not belong to any political party but should be free to hold their own political opinions and vote for the party of their choice.
- ❖ With regard to questions of structure, there should be an army with a conventional and counter-insurgency capacity, a navy, an airforce and special forces; the commando system should be scrapped; the system of conscription should be phased out and replaced by a professional permanent force and a volunteer reserve; and there should be a 'gradual but substantial' reduction in force levels of up to 50%.
- ❖ Intensive all-round training should be provided to all personnel in the new defence force. The aims of such training would be to maintain high standards of professionalism, promote a common patriotism and 'ensure that South Africans from every language group and education level can play their part and develop to the top levels of the military'.
- ❖ Recruitment and promotions should ultimately be based on merit alone but in the short and medium term a programme of affirmative action or 'Africanisation' will be necessary. Special attention should also be paid to the career development of female personnel.

❖ There should be no Nuremberg-type prosecutions of soldiers and police for 'war crimes' and atrocities committed under apartheid. Such prosecutions would be 'inconsistent with the spirit of negotiations and the future democratic South Africa'.

The most controversial issue at the conference concerned the fate of SADF special forces, such as the elite commando units deployed in southern Africa and the 'hit squads' responsible for assassinating anti-apartheid activists. There was consensus that these forces should be disbanded but disagreement over whether their members could be incorporated into the new army. ANC delegates felt particularly strongly about 32 Battalion, one of the SADF's main fighting units in Angola in the 1980s. They argued that the unit's members, recruited from the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) in 1976, were 'Angolan mercenaries' and should therefore be dismissed from the defence force. The SADF delegation rejected this position on the grounds that the soldiers had 'served South Africa loyally' and had been granted 'honorary' South African citizenship.

Nor was agreement reached on the future of Armscor, the state run armaments industry. The SADF contingent believed that Armscor should be maintained on the grounds that it was cheaper to manufacture arms domestically than import them, and that South Africa should continue exporting arms to take advantage of economies of scale. Some ANC members felt that the retention of an arms producing and exporting capacity after apartheid was strategically unnecessary, economically inefficient and morally unacceptable. All delegates agreed that South Africa should be committed to developing a nuclear weapon-free zone in Africa and the surrounding oceans.

As important as the content of the conference proposals was the fact that they were agreed to by soldiers who had only recently been enemies. The emotional outbursts and mutual antagonism that initially characterised the proceedings were soon replaced by an atmosphere of co-operation and a willingness to compromise hard-line positions. It remains to be seen whether the same spirit of reconciliation prevails when military issues become the subject of real negotiation.

Integration or Absorption?

At first sight the Lusaka proposals appear both reasonable and realistic. They implicitly suggest too that integration could occur in a fairly smooth manner. Without deeper analysis, the relatively successful merg-

ing of government and guerilla forces in Namibia and Zimbabwe may reinforce this optimistic prognosis.

However, the situation in South Africa differs markedly from that in Namibia and Zimbabwe in a number of important respects, with the result that the integration of armies is likely to be more complicated than in those countries. Four factors in particular, which were not explored fully at the Lusaka conference, may give rise to a high level of conflict, work to the disadvantage of the ANC and result in the post-apartheid defence force being dominated by the SADF. These factors are the lack of international involvement during and after the transition; the absence of formal ceasefire arrangements; the quantitative and qualitative disparities between the SADF and MK; and the unequal balance of power between the government and the liberation movements during negotiations.

The International Community

During the transition to independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe respectively, a United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) and a Commonwealth Monitoring Force (CMF) supervised and monitored, among other things, the formal cessation of hostilities and the demobilisation or confinement to base of the opposing armies. The CMF comprised 1 200 troops and police from Kenya, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the United Kingdom. UNTAG included 4 500 military personnel and 1 500 police monitors from 36 countries.

The international teams were unable to prevent these developments from being completely free of violence. For example, immediately after the ceasefire in Zimbabwe fighting broke out when the Rhodesian security forces were deployed to scout for guerillas who had not reported to designated assembly points.¹⁹ In Namibia a more serious crisis arose when Swapo combatants entered the country from Angola shortly before the start of the ceasefire in April 1989. Pretoria claimed that their movement across the border was a violation of international agreements. The UN Special Representative in Namibia, Martti Ahtisaari, sanctioned the release of colonial force units from confinement to base. The ensuing clashes left at least 278 soldiers dead and jeopardised the implementation of the entire settlement plan.²⁰

Notwithstanding these incidents, however, the presence of UNTAG and the CMF had the invaluable effect of introducing neutral and authoritative third parties into situations that were highly polarised, volatile and fraught with mistrust. The international teams restrained the rival armies from engaging in on-going hostilities, adjudicated disputes

that arose and raised the confidence of the public and the internal parties in the transition.

In South Africa a non-racial dispensation is likely to be devised and implemented exclusively through a process of internal negotiations and elections. Pretoria has categorically ruled out the possibility of the international community playing a direct role in the process on the grounds that this would be a violation of the country's sovereignty. While the PAC and Azapo have contested this position, the ANC's stand has been ambivalent.

The absence of an impartial third party could have serious negative consequences: the National Party may emerge as both 'referee' and 'player' during negotiations; the SADF and South African Police (SAP), collectively known as the security forces, will not be restrained by any external pressure from harassing opposition groups; and anti-apartheid organisations will not have recourse to an international arbitrator in the event of their being unhappy with government decisions or the conduct of the security forces.

As noted above, the ANC has proposed the formation of a multi-party interim government as a means of ameliorating the severity of these problems. It is unclear at this stage whether Pretoria will agree to the proposal. Even if it does, an interim government is unlikely to enjoy the moral authority of an international body and to have an impartial peacekeeping agency and sufficient monitoring forces at its disposal.

After independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe the international community was intimately involved in the unification of armies. The newly elected governments of both countries invited British Military Advisory and Training Teams (BMATTs) to assist in the process of integration, the formation of the new defence forces and the training of officers. The contribution of the British teams was significant in reducing antagonism among rival soldiers and ensuring the adoption of conventional military standards and practices. 21

The introduction of such teams in South Africa is possible but highly unlikely. The SADF will undoubtedly insist that it has sufficient expertise and professionalism to assume sole responsibility for training the post-apartheid defence force. In consequence, many of the negative features of the SADF may prevail in the new army.

Ceasefire

A second, related factor that will make the transition to democracy and merging of armies more complicated in South Africa than in Namibia and Zimbabwe, as well as potentially undermine the ANC, is that there are no plans for a formal ceasefire.

The ANC called for a mutually binding ceasefire through the Organisation of African Unity's 'Declaration on the Question of South Africa' in

August 1989,²² but has since suspended its armed struggle without a reciprocal concession from the government. The repressive powers of the state and the security forces remain virtually intact. For example, there has been no repeal or amendment of the Public Safety Act, which authorises the Minister of Law and Order to declare a state of emergency and confers on police and soldiers the right of arbitrary arrest, detention and search and seizure, as well as the right to disperse 'illegal' gatherings by force.

Following the unbanning of the ANC in February 1990, security legislation was invoked on a number of occasions in response to the intense violence that swept the country. The government imposed 'mini-states of emergency' in afflicted areas, subjecting township residents to curfews and roadblocks. Black hostels and squatter camps were encircled with barbed wire, police personnel were armed with SADF assault rifles, demonstrations and marches were forcibly broken up and anti-apartheid activists were detained without trial. The ANC claims that these measures, some of which continue to be applied at the time of writing in late 1991, are designed as much to limit its capacity to organise and mobilise support as to end the violence.

Under President De Klerk the security forces have at times respected the newly established political rights of anti-apartheid organisations but have generally behaved in the aggressive and partisan manner that characterised their conduct in the PW Botha era. In the course of 1990\1 the police and military were repeatedly accused of provoking and exacerbating conflict in the townships, and of acting in collusion with the Inkatha Freedom Party against the ANC.²³

The most serious allegation was that certain security elements, referred to as a 'third force', were engaged in a covert campaign to disrupt the negotiating process by committing acts of terror and fuelling sectarian township violence. There is mounting evidence that the 'third force' is located in the Department of Military Intelligence (DMI), which is responsible for the operations of SADF special forces. In the course of 1991 a number of former soldiers broke ranks to reveal that DMI and special forces were funding and arming Inkatha, training members of Inkatha and Renamo in urban warfare at secret camps, and dispatching hit teams to massacre civilians and kill ANC members.²⁴

Although the allegations were denied by the SADF, two phenomena in the spiral of violence provided circumstantial corroborating evidence: the assassination of at least 25 ANC activists after the unbanning of the organisation, and a spate of apparently unmotivated massacres of black civilians.²⁵ Eyewitnesses reported that many of these incidents appeared to have been carried out by professional teams in military-type operations.

Major Nico Basson, a former military intelligence officer, has claimed that the incidents are part of an elaborate plan, codenamed Operation Agree, which was drawn up by the SADF and the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1988 to manipulate democratic elections in Namibia, Angola

and South Africa.²⁶ This claim was also dismissed by the authorities but it was subsequently substantiated in part when the Minister of Foreign Affairs revealed that his department had given 'well-over' R100 million to anti-Swapo parties during the transition to Namibian independence.

In September 1991 a National Peace Accord - signed by the government, the ANC, Inkatha and numerous other groups - was launched in a major bid to regulate the conduct of the security forces and address the endemic violence in black areas. In relation to the former aim, the Accord provides for an SAP code of conduct and set of principles;²⁷ a board with police and public representatives to advise on future policing policy; a special police unit to investigate allegations of misconduct by members of the force; regional ombudsmen to ensure the proper investigation of complaints against the police; and a statutory commission to investigate the causes of violence and allegations of covert security operations intended to undermine or promote a political party. Similar provisions affecting the SADF were being finalised at the time of writing.²⁸

The Accord is a highly significant development, but it acknowledges that its success depends on the commitment of the parties involved. A number of factors militate against such a commitment on the part of the police and military: both institutions are characterised by an organisational culture that sanctions the excessive use of force; the partisanship of their rank-and-file members is deeply entrenched;²⁹ and sections of their leadership are believed to be resistant to De Klerk's new policies.³⁰

It also remains to be seen whether the SAP and SADF can be reined in if they breach the Accord. There are two major limitations in this regard: the responsibility for investigating allegations of security force misconduct is that of the authorities, and disciplinary action against errant soldiers and police is at the discretion of the state. The Accord would undoubtedly be strengthened if it were supervised by a multi-national oversight committee and monitoring force, and if it included a ceasefire agreement that confined the SADF and MK to barracks under international supervision.

Unequal armies

A third factor distinguishing South Africa from Namibia and Zimbabwe concerns the relative size, capability and technical sophistication of government and guerilla forces.

In terms of these criteria the disparity between the rival armies in the latter countries was not of great significance. With the withdrawal of the SADF from Namibia in 1989, the colonial administration's army, the South West African Territory Force (SWATF), was left roughly equivalent in size and capacity to Swapo's armed wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN).³¹ A similar situation existed in Zimbabwe at the end of the war. The Rhodesian army numbered 14 000 regulars, as-

sisted by about 60000 reservists and auxiliary and para-military forces; the combined strength of the liberation movements' forces was estimated at between 35 000 and 40 000.³²

At independence it was consequently possible, and deemed politically necessary, to incorporate members of the opposing armies into the new Namibian Defence Force (NDF) in roughly equal number and into the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) in proportion to the relative strength of the major political constituencies. In both cases senior and middle-level positions were shared by the main political parties but tended to be dominated by the party that had established a clear majority of popular support in democratic elections.³³

In South Africa the circumstances are completely different. The SADF is generally regarded as the most formidable force in Africa. It is comprised of a modern army, navy and airforce with extensive conventional battle experience, a highly developed infrastructure and technically advanced weaponry and equipment. It was estimated to have an active force of 77 400 and reserves of 425 000 in 1990-91;³⁴ the Permanent Force had 75 000 members in 1990.³⁵

Umkhonto we Sizwe, on the other hand, is a comparatively ill-equipped and ill-trained guerilla army. Some analysts put its total size at 10 000.³⁶ However, many of its members do not see themselves as career soldiers and do not anticipate joining the post-apartheid defence force.³⁷ In August 1991 MK sources were reported to have said that the ANC had 3 000 soldiers in camps outside South Africa and 800 cadres inside the country, excluding several thousand 'passive deserters'.³⁸

The ANC is currently attempting to address these disparities. In July 1990 Chris Hani announced plans to strengthen MK by sending cadres abroad for training as pilots, navy personnel and members of mechanised battalions.³⁹ More recently, as noted above, the ANC stated that it was seeking professional military training from a range of countries. A number of combatants are also believed to have been integrated into the Transkei Defence Force (TDF), although this has been denied by ANC and Transkei officials; the apparent game plan is to upgrade the combatants' skills and enable the ANC to enter into negotiations around the future military institution with a combined TDF-MK force.

Yet even if the ANC is successful in these efforts, there is little that it can do to overcome the qualitative and quantitative differences between its army and the SADF. The relatively balanced integration of government and guerilla forces that occurred in Namibia and Zimbabwe is simply not possible in South Africa. It is far more likely that MK soldiers will be absorbed into the SADF after apartheid. Some of these soldiers may be placed in top posts in the new defence force for political reasons, but for practical reasons most of the senior and middle-level positions will be filled by white SADF officers with the skills and experience to manage a large and complex organisation. The situation may be marginally, but not substantially, affected by the inclusion of the small homeland armies, which collectively number around 8 000.⁴⁰

Balance of Power

The probability of white domination of the post-apartheid defence force is strengthened by a fourth factor that distinguishes South Africa from Namibia and Zimbabwe, namely that the inequalities between the SADF and MK give rise to an unequal balance of power between the liberation movements and the government in the context of negotiations.

This was not the case in the latter countries. In Namibia the gap was narrowed when South African troops left the territory at the start of the settlement plan, which in any case was predetermined in the form of UN Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978. By the end of the war in Zimbabwe the liberation armies had a physical and military presence in half the country and had the capacity to mount major attacks in the other half.⁴¹

In South Africa, in contrast, Umkhonto we Sizwe has never presented a serious military threat to the state. Pretoria enjoys a virtual monopoly of military and police power. The countervailing strength of black opposition groups lies in their popular support; this may be exerted through mass action but will only be fully realised towards the end of the negotiating process with the advent of democratic elections. The government will consequently enter into the process in a relatively powerful position to influence the nature of both the new political dispensation and the new defence force.

The government will seek, above all, to ensure a substantial measure of protection for the future well-being of its constituency. Heribert Adam suggests that 'in return for relinquishing exclusive political control, Afrikaner nationalists would most likely insist on a security fallback in case the constitutional guarantees are violated. There is as yet no evidence as to what kind of compromise in this area would be acceptable to the ANC'.⁴²

An obvious 'security fallback' would be continued white control of the military - the 'maintenance of a professional security force', as De Klerk put it - in the expectation that this would be a more effective guarantor of the preservation of the status quo than any constitutional provision. Given the features of the transition discussed above, the ANC may well not have a great deal to say in the matter. It is also worth noting that the officer corps of the SAP is likely to remain unchanged since the new government will not have experienced police personnel with which to replace them.

It is therefore possible to imagine a 'new South Africa' in which formal political power is held by the ANC or a coalition of anti-apartheid groups, while the military and police institutions remain in the hands of the incumbent security establishment. The political and strategic implications of this scenario are considered below.

The Spectre of Military Intervention

Continued SADF control of the defence force after apartheid could conceivably give rise to a range of problems at two levels: the military's potential to be a disruptive force, and regional and domestic perceptions of the institution whatever its role.

At the level of perceptions, Baynham makes the following general observation:

In societies deeply divided by race, ethnicity or other primordial affiliations, the composition of the security forces is of vital importance to the state and its inhabitants. Minorities - and indeed majorities - who regard themselves as under-represented in the armed services invariably view such imbalances as inimical to their political power and safety. 43

A new defence force dominated by SADF officers is, to say the least, unlikely to enjoy a high level of public confidence. Some commentators dismiss the problem with the claim that the army has not acquired the negative image of the police and will consequently not encounter the same lack of credibility in the future.⁴⁴ This assertion is based on a misreading of the call by a number of black groups in recent years for the SADF to replace the SAP in dealing with violence in their communities. The call in fact favours the army only as 'the lesser of two evils' where the police are regarded as hopelessly partisan and as contributing to the violence.

In the 1970s and 1980s the army was frequently deployed to suppress popular resistance and enforce apartheid legislation. During the state of emergency in the mid-1980s soldiers exercised extraordinary powers of arrest, detention and search and seizure, and were repeatedly accused of committing human rights abuses. The hostile response of township residents was evident in a number of opinion polls, attacks on soldiers by black youths and widespread demands for the withdrawal of troops from the townships.⁴⁵

Real or apparent control of the post-apartheid defence force by personnel associated with the SADF and white minority parties will hence inevitably undermine the legitimacy of the armed forces. It may give rise to considerable tension, both within the military and between it and the government and sectors of the population.

An analogous situation currently pertains to the Namibian police, whose leadership is mainly comprised of white officers who served in the South West African Police. In the first year of independence the Swapo Youth League campaigned for the dismissal of these officers, Swapo-supporting newspapers accused them of attempting to destabilise the government, and a group of black junior officers threatened to resort to legal action to

Collection Number: AG1977

END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.