

A small civil war: political conflict in the Pietermaritzburg region in the 1980s and early 1990s¹

by Christopher Merrett

DURING the single week from 25 to 31 March 1990 a small-scale war took place to the west of Pietermaritzburg. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 200 people died and 20 000 were displaced. They were mainly from Ashdown, Caluza, Mpumuzu, Gezubuso, KwaShange and KwaMnyandu in the lower Vulindlela and Edendale areas. There are no figures for those who were injured or disabled.² Twenty years later ruined, abandoned buildings were still to be found from what became known as the Seven Day War.³ At the same time, with superior media coverage, the battle for Beirut was taking place across the Green Line between Syrian forces and General Michel Aoun's Lebanese army: 300 people were killed and 1 200 injured.⁴

Prelude

IN THE lead up to the Seven Day War, 1 145 people had died in political violence in the greater Pietermaritzburg region over the previous three years.⁵ The origins of this conflict in a region previously known as relatively

peaceful are complex and much argued. They include

- socio-economic factors such as housing shortages and rent increases, bus fares and a growing private, largely unregulated minibus taxi industry;

- administrative change involving the transfer of Pietermaritzburg townships and peri-urban areas from the municipality to the KwaZulu homeland and, from 1983 onwards, the establishment of black local authorities; and
- a schools crisis with demands for student representative councils, free textbooks and an end to corporal punishment.

But the underlying reason for conflict was the crisis within the apartheid state after the Soweto Uprising of 1976. The National Party government sought reform and adaptation to perpetuate the basic relationships within South African society. Consequent volatility and uncertainty provided opportunity for predominantly black, rival political groupings.

The Edendale valley had traditionally been an area broadly sympathetic to the African National Congress (ANC). But in March 1975 Inkatha, a largely cultural grouping in its original 1920s form, was revived under the leadership of Mangosuthu Buthelezi.⁶ It took on a significant role in the politics and administration of the KwaZulu bantustan, but consistently resisted the eventual quasi-independence intended by the South African government. Nonetheless, it used bantustan resources for political mobilisation and in 1979 broke what had been cordial relations with the ANC. Inkatha was Zulu traditionalist, a major conservative force in black politics and it sided with the Pretoria government on certain issues such as opposition to sanctions.⁷ In 1983 a wide range of anti-apartheid organisations, reputed to number about 600, many of which supported the Freedom Charter, established the United Democratic Front (UDF). Amongst

its affiliates were radically-inclined youth and community organisations in the Edendale valley as well as a number of human rights organisations based in Pietermaritzburg. By 1983 the political parameters within which future conflict would take place had been clearly demarcated. Its specific location has been identified as the border area between Natal and the KwaZulu bantustan where rapid, but highly controlled, urbanisation was taking place.⁸

In April 1980, Imbali and Ashdown townships and the freehold area of Slangspruit became part of the KwaZulu bantustan. The main focus of discontent was township schools where boycotts and sporadic violence were commonplace.⁹ Significantly, in February 1980 a branch of the Inkatha Youth Brigade had been established at Mehlokazulu High School in Imbali. In August a Sobantu policeman was ambushed in an incident involving an AK47, presumably an operation conducted by uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK); and in October youths were detained at the Lay Ecumenical Centre in Edendale for alleged ANC activity.¹⁰ In 1981, a vigilante group was founded in Ashdown under Reverend M. Majola and named Oqondo (straighteners). A pattern of youth activism and unrest countered by vigilantism had been established.

By early 1982, Oqondo was active in Imbali and Slangspruit with support from local councillors and the South African Police (SAP). Tensions heightened on Republic Day (31 May) and 43 students at the Federal Theological Seminary in Imbali were arrested on charges of illegal gathering. Further discontent was fuelled by Inkatha-aligned chiefs and *indunas* extorting money over the crucial matter

of attaching the KwaZulu homeland stamp to pensions applications. But serious violence was restricted to the municipal township of Sobantu where Graham Radebe (aged 17) was shot by police in September 1982. Unrest over rent increases led to an attack on the offices of the Drakensberg Bantu Administration Board (DBAB) in October and the torching of the beerhall and attacks on firemen in November, while the homes of councillors were regularly stoned. In mid-August 1983 rent increases were suspended and replaced by a system of earnings-related payments.

Bus fare increases in January 1983 had added to discontent over housing and schools. Government attempts to establish township councils were met by boycotts. In Ashdown the council was rejected outright and in Imbali three contests in six wards attracted just 248 votes. In Sobantu a popular Committee of Twelve liaised with the DBAB and unofficially with the municipality. Then in September 1984 the Edendale Advisory Board collapsed leaving the Edendale Landowners' Association as the sole representative body.

In mid-1984 Zulu king Goodwill Zwelithini, in an oblique attack on the UDF, accused white sympathisers of the ANC of splitting the Zulu people.¹¹ The nature of this red herring was immediately made evident in June 1984 by the sentencing to 10 years' imprisonment of Ben Dikobe Martins, leader of the D.C.O. Matiwane Youth League in Edendale for ANC activity. When Minister of Co-operation and Development Piet Koornhof visited Imbali in August 1984, 1 500 youths protested and at least one was shot dead by police. In an ominous sign of events to

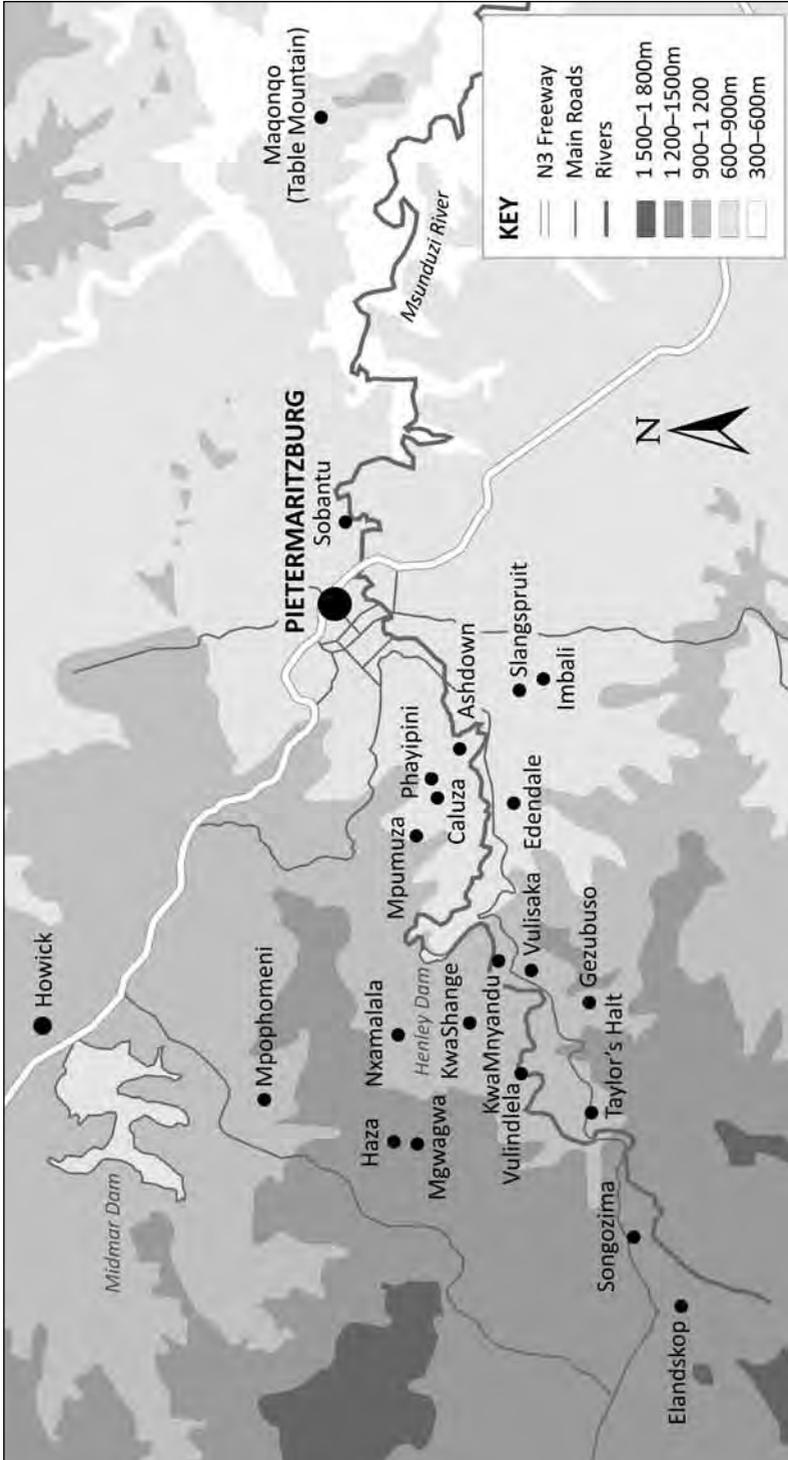
come, UDF supporters started moving out of Sobantu fearing for their safety.

During mid-1985 a partial State of Emergency was declared in South Africa, but Natal was unaffected. In the Pietermaritzburg area there were widespread school boycotts and at Mehlokazulu High School police tear-gassed pupils. Most significantly the government's vision of black local government was directly challenged by the election of 50 street representatives in Sobantu;¹² and foundation of the Imbali and Ashdown Civic Associations. Opposition to the apartheid state was also shown in more robust ways in Imbali: by the petrol bombing of the house of mayor Patrick Pakkies and that of Inkatha official Abdul Awetha, both urban warlords.¹³ There was also an arson attack on a clinic and attacks on the beerhall. On Soweto Day, 16 June 1985 a demonstration at St Mark's Church, Imbali was dispersed by police using teargas and rubber bullets. Further into the Edendale valley stores and the beerhall in the area of Chief Mini's homestead were attacked.

In retaliation, on 24 August Inkatha officials Pakkies, Velaphi Ndlovu and Ben Jele led a march on the Federal Theological Seminary (Fedsem) in Imbali giving the occupants warning to leave.¹⁴ Amongst other activity Fedsem was sheltering Robert Duma of the Imbali Civic Association. Fedsem was granted an injunction, the first of four.¹⁵ By September there were reports of vigilantes searching for members of the civic association, other UDF-aligned organisations and the black consciousness-aligned Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo).

At the beginning of 1986, the year in which a four-year national State of Emergency (SoE) would be declared,

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the landscape of future conflict had been clearly mapped out, although at this stage it was localised and personal, and relatively few guns were involved. On the one hand was a loose coalition of anti-apartheid youth organisations and civic associations affiliated to the UDF. Allied with them to various degrees were human rights and faith-based organisations. The most important ally was the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), founded in November 1985 with linkage between the shop floor and community struggles as one of its objectives.¹⁶

Opposing them was the bantustan authority and its dominant political party, Inkatha, with a penchant for vigilantism and traditionalism that operated along patriarchal, authoritarian lines. In May 1986 Inkatha was joined by a trade union wing, the United Workers Union of South Africa.¹⁷ Largely absent from this grouping was MK, although 40–50 soldiers were thought to have been recruited from the Pietermaritzburg area. There is no hard evidence of its operational presence until 1990.¹⁸ Another, relatively small, component of this equation were members of Azapo and its youth and student wings (Azayo and Azasm), often involved in clashes with the UDF.

Conflict under a State of Emergency

The national SoE was declared on 12 June 1986. Over the preceding six months the Pietermaritzburg area was affected by low-key, persistent unrest and the occasional violent death, but it was quiet relative to many other parts of the country. The impact of the SoE was initially notable for the detention of relatively small numbers of

community leaders and anti-apartheid activists. However, in December 1986 at Mpophomeni (near Howick), three trade union shop stewards involved with the long-term BTR-Sarmcol strike and a volunteer at the local co-operative were abducted after armed Inkatha members invaded the township. Three of them were murdered in a rehearsal of violence to come.¹⁹ From early 1987 onwards the situation deteriorated with the emergence of warlords whose names were attached to numerous violent incidents that accounted for an average of 14 deaths per month from January to August. An exacerbating factor was a two-day stayaway in May, strongly supported by the bus drivers of the Transport and General Workers Union, against the whites-only general election. In November 1987 Brigadier Jacques Buchner took over command of the police Special Branch (SB) in Pietermaritzburg.²⁰

September marked the beginning of an intensified struggle for the Edendale valley and an eventual wider war in the Natal Midlands. A number of contributory factors brought the situation to boiling point. The corrosive effect of low-level conflict and associated death, injury and damage to property was the symptom of an increasingly aggressive Inkatha recruitment drive supported by vigilantism and backed by acts of omission and commission on the part of the SAP.²¹ Its version of law and order at its most benign was to support traditional authority in the form of Inkatha.²² This was opposed by self-defence units (SDUs) set up by youths with various degrees of commitment to the UDF. In early September there were heavy rains and flooding in the area and corruption in the distribution of aid may have been

the last straw. One particularly violent incident on 25 September 1987 at KwaShange in which 13 youths died was in fact the action of a renegade member of the SAP, but it fuelled the tension.²³ An attempt by the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce to facilitate peace talks foundered when the UDF negotiators were detained. In October fatalities numbered 83. From this point on Edendale became known as the valley of death; or, in Cosatu's view, the valley of widows.²⁴

In general the rural reaches (*ngaPhezulu*) of the Edendale valley at its head and on the higher slopes, especially the area of Vulindlela, tended to be under the control of traditional authorities and therefore Inkatha-aligned. However, there were pockets of non-Inkatha territory along the main road further into the valley. The initial struggle over newly-established authorities in the townships close to Pietermaritzburg and in the old centre of Edendale (where Inkatha's patronage was limited because land, housing and trading licences for historic reasons did not fall under the KwaZulu government) saw the UDF predominate and the violence moved further west into the valley.²⁵ Inkatha's reaction, through its spokesperson Vitus Mvelase, was to deny involvement and call for peace. Cosatu's tactic was to collect evidence against known warlords and apply for restraining interdicts, but applicants and witnesses were highly vulnerable. By the end of 1987 Vulindlela was in administrative and economic disarray.

The most striking example of conflict at this point occurred in January 1988 at the township of Ashdown when in an incident known as Operation Doom (or Cleanup) heavily-armed Inkatha members, incited by David

Ntombela, the KwaMncane *induna*, who said that "anyone who did not want to belong to Inkatha should be killed", invaded from the surrounding hills of Mpumzuza. They were overtly supported by SAP officers who fired on residents and handed over *amaqabane* (comrades) to vigilantes.²⁶ It was at this time that a new unit known as *kitskonstabels* (instant police) armed with pump-action shotguns made its appearance. They were hastily trained. In Natal a criterion for selection was endorsement by Inkatha officials and *indunas*. Some recruits had criminal records.²⁷ Three hundred of them appeared in the Pietermaritzburg area as part of Riot Police Unit 8 under the command of Major Deon Terreblanche.²⁸

Striking evidence of partisanship was provided by Adriaan Vlok, the Minister of Police himself, when he delivered a notorious speech at Town Hill Police Station in February 1988: "Radicals ... will not be tolerated. We will fight them. We have put our foot in that direction and we will eventually win the Pietermaritzburg area."²⁹ His intentions were made clear by a mass round-up of UDF supporters and detention of UDF negotiators. That same month Cosatu, the UDF and other Charterist organisations including a number of human rights bodies were restricted by the government.³⁰ By this time there were estimated to be 60 000 displaced persons in the greater Pietermaritzburg area. This had a devastating effect on school attendance and shifted some violence into the city centre with incidents at bus stations, in particular, where targets could be easily identified.³¹ The early months of 1988 represented the peak of the violence during the Emergency years.

The average number of monthly deaths declined to 44 by November 1988. However, the conflict became more widespread and moved into rural areas outside the Edendale valley. This was thought to be the result of the politicisation of tribal factionalism. Cosatu and the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu) organised a stayaway with a 65% success rate in June in protest at labour law changes and there was even greater support for the Soweto Day boycott. The Complaints Adjudication Board (CAB) set up to address the violence managed to get agreement about an end to forced recruitment, but Inkatha warlords like Shayabantu Zondi refused to acknowledge it.³² In Imbali, Awetha and the *kitskonstabels* were incited by elements of the SB and pursued vigilante action to the extent that women residents appealed for deployment of the army.³³ At Taylor's Halt, deep in the Edendale valley, a Shaka Day rally on 25 September attracted 15 000 Inkatha supporters who were treated by Buthelezi to a verbal attack on white radicals. By contrast at Table Mountain (Maqonqo) to the south east of Pietermaritzburg, Chief Mhlabunzima Maphumulo declared an effective neutral zone that sheltered 500 families.³⁴

On 3 December the massacre of 11 people at Trust Feed provided one of the best-known episodes of the conflict. This was a police operation under the command of Captain Brian Mitchell from New Hanover police station in collusion with Inkatha's Ntombela, using *kitskonstabels* from Terreblanche's riot police unit. The accepted version is that the intention was to eliminate UDF sympathisers, but instead the wrong house was targeted and the victims turned out to be Inkatha support-

ers, mainly elderly women and two children. There is, however, another interpretation: that the Sithole household was targeted in order to provoke an extreme reaction from Inkatha supporters opposed to the Trust Feed Crisis Committee.³⁵

By 1989 the pattern of violence was well established. Further attacks were made on Ashdown and Caluza from Mpumuza with police support. The latter was also obvious in Imbali while Vlok claimed that only persons of violent disposition were held in detention. Inkatha *impis* violently suppressed real and imagined dissent in Vulindlela, especially at KwaMnyandu, Haza and Mgwagwa. Refugees from these areas subsequently attacked buses travelling from Vulindlela into the city. And, spasmodically the violence spilled over into the streets of Pietermaritzburg.

While the average monthly death toll declined to 30, serious violence persisted and became more widespread, affecting Richmond, Camperdown and Wartburg. The murder at Imbali of a witness in a case before the CAB led to the withdrawal of Cosatu. On the other hand a church peace initiative backed by Cosatu and the UDF was rejected by Inkatha, supported by Vlok who detected the hidden hands of the banned ANC and South African Communist Party. The churches made strenuous efforts to bring the two sides together, taking advantage of the fact that Buthelezi was an Anglican. But church leaders were hampered by their prophetic duty to proclaim the truth, which made them appear partisan.³⁶ Inkatha was also unnerved at this time by the formation of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) by chiefs

sympathetic to the UDF.³⁷ The government in May rejected a Church request for a commission of inquiry into the violence, blaming revolutionaries and *comtsotsis* (criminals, many of them refugees, masquerading as comrades). Vlok's defence of Inkatha was called into question by the murder in May of the Imbali community leader Jabu Ndlovu and members of her family.³⁸ An Inkatha Youth organiser was subsequently arrested.

An upsurge of violence at Imbali in August 1989 was linked to a renewed Inkatha recruitment drive and the suspected involvement of a special police unit. Evictions from corner houses were followed by occupation by *kit-skonstabels* who turned them into command posts.³⁹ At the head of the valley at Elandskop a Roman Catholic priest, Tim Smith, warned of the emergence of death squads. Increased violence may be linked to national mass defiance with stayaways, invasion of whites-only facilities and marches: Pietermaritzburg's march took place on 21 September and involved a demonstration outside the main police station. Apartheid was about to fall apart.

From 1987 to 1989 violence monitors recorded 4 458 incidents that resulted in hundreds of deaths and injuries and extensive property damage in the greater Pietermaritzburg area.⁴⁰ It was estimated that approximately 1 000 houses had been destroyed and many others damaged by stoning and arson, devastating for an area already suffering from poverty and the consequences of apartheid. One resident summed up the situation: "There's always darkness".⁴¹ More gunshot wounds were recorded in Natal at this time than in the two decades of the South African border war. Edendale

Hospital was regarded as too vulnerable and casualties were treated at Northdale Hospital in the Indian group area of Pietermaritzburg.⁴² However, many young people avoided hospitals altogether and sought help at the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (Pacsa), which "looked like a First Aid Station".⁴³ Some incidents of rape were reported and a number of abductions led to murder. Many young men were permanently on the run and refugees had a significant effect on the social stability and economy of the region. There were also public health consequences with, for example, an increase in rabies.⁴⁴

Seven Day War

The culmination of the violence occurred during the Seven Day War. On 23 March a meeting of *amakhosi* was held at Ulundi at which King Zwelithini made a number of threatening allusions to the historical treatment of opponents. How and why the war was ignited is not in dispute: retaliation for the stoning on the Edendale Road by UDF supporters of buses returning from a poorly-attended Inkatha rally in Durban on Sunday 25 March, which it later transpired had been funded by the government to the tune of R152 000.⁴⁵ This attack led to several deaths amongst Inkatha members and eventually cut the upper valley off from Pietermaritzburg. The main unanswered question is why the security forces with their considerable firepower had not created a safe corridor through the valley. This incident could not have taken the security forces by surprise: control of the main road through Edendale by anti-Inkatha forces had frequently been used to impose a stranglehold over the people and economy of the upper valley.⁴⁶

The response appeared to be well planned and in the opinion of Paddy Kearney may have been fuelled by disappointment at the relative success of a Durban rally addressed by Nelson Mandela two weeks earlier.⁴⁷ Attacks by up to 3 000 well-armed men from the upper valley started on the Tuesday at Caluza and Ashdown. Houses were torched and looted and there was little resistance except for a small counter-attack by the UDF at Phayipini. Defensive action by Caluza and Ashdown residents was obstructed by police. By Wednesday the Edendale valley was a war zone. After a meeting at David Ntombela's house at Mncane, Elandskop, attended by other Inkatha heavyweights, a KwaZulu government (KZG) official from Ulundi, the SAP Riot Unit and *kitskonstabels*, at which the men were sprinkled with war medicine (*intelezi*), an army of 12 000 swept down the valley. It was accompanied by KZG trucks with obscured number plates, some of them carrying petrol for arsonists. The TRC report records Ntombela, an *induna* described by Tim Smith as possessing "extraordinary power ... in the community [instilling] ... awe and fear", and festooned with ammunition belts, directing attacks and instructing the Riot Squad not to intervene. Looted goods were taken to his house in police vehicles together with stolen cattle. Riot Unit member William Harrington later confirmed police and *kitskonstabel* involvement.⁴⁸ Radley Keys of the Progressive Federal Party and two *Natal Witness* journalists observed the area from the air and noted the police involvement, together with at least 25 vehicles, *impis* hundreds strong and general destruction particularly at Gezibuso, Vulisaka, KwaShange

and KwaMnyandu.⁴⁹ On police orders South African Defence Force armoured vehicles were held back on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg when a major attack could have been prevented by the presence of just one of them at a bridge over the flooded Msunduzi River.⁵⁰

Attacks continued on the Thursday. One involved the burning of four homesteads at Songozima, a non-Inkatha area, and the deaths of two women. Tim Smith records the probable involvement of *kitskonstabels* and the presence of Ntombela with two white riot police at Elandskop mission.⁵¹ Conversely the police tear-gassed a peaceful protest march by women.⁵² The violence petered out over the weekend. Whatever the provocation suffered by Inkatha members, the response was disproportionate and clearly planned. Various descriptions have been used, such as armed invasion and licensed massacre. Murder, arson, wilful damage to property, theft, were widespread. Attacks were specifically directed at houses while public buildings were largely ignored. Ironically, the only high-profile assassination of this period, that of the Anglican priest at St Mark's, Imbali, Victor Africander, who had ministered to people on all sides of the conflict, happened on 4 May 1990 once the violence had tailed off.⁵³

The government failed in its most important duty: to protect ordinary, law-abiding people. Although Vulindlela fell under the KwaZulu bantustan, the SAP still operated there with KwaZulu police present as bodyguards.⁵⁴ The army was deployed in sufficient numbers seven days after the violence had abated. Among its units was the largely Portuguese-speaking,

poorly regarded 32 Battalion, used by the South African government on the Namibian border. The TRC found that delay had the deliberate intention of allowing Inkatha free rein. The authorities offered no assistance in the aftermath of the massacre and help came only from churches, human rights organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Edendale was not declared a disaster area.

The TRC found that there had been gross human rights violations. It held Ntombela accountable, but named no one else and referred simply to persons unknown. Inkatha was assigned overwhelming responsibility together with the SAP. The KwaZulu bantustan government and its police force were also blamed. Apart from the TRC and the research of NGOs there was no further investigation of a devastating event that deserved a judicial commission of inquiry.⁵⁵ Aside from a few minor cases there were no prosecutions for serious criminal acts and no ultimate justice.⁵⁶

This was a systematic and well-organised act of political cleansing aided and abetted by the government of the day after years of simmering unrest and low-intensity conflict. Clues for this are contained in an analysis of the refugee population. Whereas in earlier conflict this had consisted largely of young men, the refugees of March 1990 were demographically representative, showing that “entire communities were attacked”.⁵⁷ The evidence has been interpreted in a number of different ways.

Analysing the evidence

The casualty rate amongst UDF members was over twice as high as Inkatha’s. The latter were more aggressive, better armed and actively and passively as-

sisted by the SAP and KwaZulu Police. Indeed, the latter were described by Jenny Irish and Howard Varney as “inextricably interwoven into the conflict”.⁵⁸ The geography of conflict showed that it had spread from relatively new townships near Pietermaritzburg up the valley through Edendale to Vulindlela and tended to reflect Inkatha recruitment drives and resistance to them. It also followed refugees as in the case of Sobantu where UDF members fought black consciousness affiliated youth. Imbali remained in constant conflict.⁵⁹ Violence flared spasmodically in Edendale, but Vulindlela was the main locus. From 1989 conflict spread more broadly, and with great rapidity, through the Natal Midlands to Richmond, Swazimani, Ehlanzeni and Fredville.

The security forces produced ineffective and partisan policing. Initially they denied there was a major problem and under-reported the death rate, but once there was massive police deployment at the beginning of 1988 the bias was clearly evident. The pattern of detention without trial permitted under the SoE provides one example.⁶⁰ Most detainees fell into two categories, both linked to the UDF: leaders of civic and human rights organisations and trade unions, often detained as peace initiatives were about to start; and *amaqabane* from anti-Inkatha SDUs. The object was to reduce the numbers resisting Inkatha domination and the quality of their leadership. There is reason to believe that some *amaqabane* became *comtsotsis* in the absence of their leaders. At the height of the conflict in January 1988, 1 000 detainees were held, but by the time of the Seven Day War the authorities had abandoned detention without trial.⁶¹ This was in part the result of a successful hunger strike

among detainees in early 1989.⁶²

Notorious killers remained at large; warnings such as that given by a delegation of women prior to the Slang-spruit killings of late June 1988 were ignored; and where court cases did result, key witnesses were not produced. Inkatha-backed marches and gatherings featuring paramilitary personnel were tolerated even though illegal under the SoE; and many *kitskonstabels* had questionable backgrounds and loyalties. It is significant that elsewhere in South Africa the SoE dampened violence, but in the Pietermaritzburg area it provided a catalyst: Natal in general was a “crucial battleground”.⁶³ Both the law and conservative judgments in court provided the security forces with indemnified power and without this the activities of warlords, basically gang leaders exploiting the political situation, would not have been possible, yet the police propaganda machine blandly insisted that it played a neutral role.⁶⁴ In many cases violence flourished as a result of deliberate police inactivity.⁶⁵ Furthermore, there were 38 incidents of alleged active security force collusion. The majority involved the SAP with 25% blamed on the SADF and KZP.⁶⁶

Inkatha blamed the violence on poverty, arguing that the conflict between *amaqabane* and *thelweni* was otherwise irrational;⁶⁷ on an ANC campaign directed from its external mission to render the area ungovernable; and on local left-wing antagonists in the white and Indian communities. In emphasising its traditional and ethnic roots and defending the positions of the king and chiefs, Inkatha became intemperate in its language: Indian (*amaNdiya*) and, worse, Coolie (*amaKhula*), for example, became terms of political abuse.

Buthelezi called peace talks a trap and Ndlovu criticised the involvement in them of Indians and whites.⁶⁸ Fifteen thousand people at an Mpumzuza prayer meeting on 31 January 1988 were treated to anti-Indian speeches by Vusumuzi Mvelase and threats of forced relocation and killing of township opponents seen as supporters of Nelson Mandela. The anti-Indian sentiment was echoed in calls to turn UDF areas into sugar cane fields. Fundamentally this was an attempt to deny Zulu identity to those opposing Inkatha and emphasise their otherness. Spokespersons for the state chose to see the conflict in terms of moderates (Inkatha) versus radicals (UDF). Buchner put forward a common official viewpoint when he stated that his aim was to bolster the power of traditional structures.⁶⁹ It has been suggested that contemporary attempts at controlled transition in Namibia were regarded as a relevant model.⁷⁰

The UDF saw its affiliates as victims of Inkatha aggression, although it did not deny violence on the part of its supporters. Its ally, the ANC, blamed the government for fomenting black-on-black violence as a means of weakening opposition to apartheid; while Cosatu accused the state of specifically targeting community organisations and unions. However, the ANC produced its own warlords, one of them being the veteran Harry Gwala who was uncompromisingly aggressive and incited violence.⁷¹ The non-aligned (*asilutho*) accused both sides, but were particularly critical of Inkatha recruitment drives.⁷² An old man whose wife had been a victim at Swayimane suggested that Inkatha should be restricted to territory north of the Thukela River.⁷³

Both sides paraded conspiracy theories: the government its view on exiles promoting ungovernability and pursuing a total onslaught on South Africa; its opponents blaming the state for a “third force” destabilising the progressive movement.⁷⁴ However, there were only five incidents in the area linked to MK in the period 1987–9, no hard evidence of effective orchestration from external radio and no overall radical conspiracy. Similarly, sweeping statements about a third force are unsustainable in the area. Counter-insurgency (COIN) theory led to opportunistic use of vigilantes and any other conservative group, many of which had violent tendencies. There is no documented trace of *askaris* such as Inkatha’s Caprivi trainees in the area.⁷⁵ The police had their freelance operators, but there is no evidence that they were organised.

Government propaganda about black-on-black violence was an essentially racist and hypocritical view of the conflict. However, it was given encouragement by the generally high murder rate in the area (300 per annum prior to the political conflict), which was in turn a consequence of poor or non-existent policing.⁷⁶ In rural areas such as Maqonqo faction fighting added to the climate of conflict. And those, ranging from left-wing commentators to the SAP, who put forward a theory based on socio-economic factors failed to answer the question why poverty induced violence. Gavin Woods of Inkatha argued, for instance, that violence would not decline until unemployment, running at 37–39% in Edendale and Vulindlela with disproportionate numbers amongst those under 35 and a strong structural component, was reduced by a growing

economy. In these two areas most people lived without running water, a water-borne sewerage system, electricity, refuse removal or a road network.⁷⁷ The weakness in this socio-economic argument was that the upheaval in people’s lives created by violence caused further unemployment.⁷⁸ There was an element of criminality, territorial and generational competition, and a struggle for resources involved. But while hopelessness might have induced a degree of despairing aggression there was no underlying pattern. The focus of consistent conflict, Imbali, was relatively prosperous.

The most plausible explanation involves competing political interests, although elements of all the factors addressed above played a part. Michael Nuttall puts it well: “a struggle for political turf, indeed for the political soul of the people”.⁷⁹ Steven Collins describes this as the establishment through violence of a “false hegemony”.⁸⁰ A study of an anti-Inkatha enclave at Nxamalala in the Vulindlela area north west of Pietermaritzburg bears this out. People were defined by their place of residence, regardless of their political allegiance, or otherwise.⁸¹ In a self-sustaining cycle of violence, of attack and retaliation, everyone was a target, and a particular point of vulnerability was the transport system, especially at the bus stops. Policing was limited to the collection of bodies, although the authors of the Nxamalala study accuse the police of inciting both sides. This chaotic situation, also fuelled by criminality, seems finally to have come to an end through collective exhaustion.⁸²

By the mid-1980s influential sections of government recognised that political accommodation in a post-

apartheid society was inevitable. Their priority was to create an alliance with conservative black groups.⁸³ Inkatha was the perfect fit in Natal: a high political profile, charismatic leadership, ethnic bias and links to the business community.⁸⁴ The government was not averse to low-intensity conflict and a good measure of state-sponsored lawlessness to achieve its aims. Inkatha for its part aspired to a national role in the imminent new dispensation, but knew that even its local presence was not as strong as it claimed, while its national imprint was fading.⁸⁵ It had control of tribal structures co-opted by the government, but was challenged by urbanisation and modernisation and the fractures they represented in Zulu society between educated and uneducated, urban and rural, young and old, and formally employed and subsistence-based. The coincidence of interests between the government and Inkatha led to accusations that the latter was the equivalent of Angola's Unita, although it was an autonomous and unpredictable force.⁸⁶ While it is possible to argue that the conflict around Pietermaritzburg was a delayed reaction to government policy against which other parts of the country had revolted in 1984, the evidence shows that its dynamics were of a different nature.⁸⁷

Overall, Natal had been marginalised as a region under the apartheid regime and assumed a distinctive political dynamic. The violence had complex causes even when considered simply through a political prism. Peace initiatives collapsed because they did not serve the interests of all parties simultaneously. Organised business failed to appreciate its potential to influence the government, while the

UDF was hamstrung by the detention of leaders. Cosatu was the most effective and honest peace broker. The actions of Inkatha and the state suggested lack of commitment.

Indeed, the conflict served the long-term objectives of no one except the state, which had long used violence to maintain its power. It was obviously not in the interests of any organisation aspiring to a democratic outcome, nor was it ultimately in the interests of Inkatha. In the 1970s its credentials had been considerable and it was widely accepted that it would use the bantustan system against its cynical creators. But the events of the late 1980s, during which it clearly sought to "control political space for [its] own ends"⁸⁸ seriously damaged its image and it came to be seen as a surrogate of government, a position that bore little benefit for its largely poor supporters. Years later under a democratic dispensation it failed to fulfill its electoral potential partly because of its compromised reputation. But this was a situation that suited the destabilisation theorists of a government run by securocrats.⁸⁹ The conflict tied down Inkatha, posed major problems for the political left and deflected attention from the chronic weakness of the government.⁹⁰ As Collins notes, there emerged "an ethos where violence is the first rather than the last option chosen in resolving any conflict."⁹¹ Of all the legacies of the apartheid era, this is perhaps the most serious.

Endgame

Persistent conflict affected the area during the period of negotiations leading up to the elections of 1994, but it tended to be overshadowed by violence on the Witwatersrand. The Natal con-

flict, it was popularly assumed, was transposed to the economic heartland of the country where its intensity and the number of deaths were far greater. This view has some validity in the sense that Inkatha members fought opponents now clearly identified with the ANC. And in the view of one commentator, the alliance between Inkatha and the police was “forged in the war in the Natal Midlands”.⁹² Indeed “in KwaZulu and on the Reef, the security forces transported, escorted and joined Inkatha offences or remained inactive during Inkatha attacks – failing to disarm the protagonists, often with the excuse that Inkatha weapons were ‘cultural’ or that the security forces were ‘waiting for orders’.”⁹³ Thousands were killed in random routine terror that had more in common with a strategy of general destabilisation, in particular of a negotiated political future, than struggles over specific geo-political turf around Pietermaritzburg that had more clearly defined objectives.

While attacks on and from migrant worker hostels had features in common with the Natal Midlands war, assaults on commuter trains and beerhalls were distinctive to the Reef and suggested a different motivation. Similarly the participants were more complex. Clearly MK was now involved on the side of the ANC and there was the alleged involvement of a “third force”, neither of which had featured in and around Pietermaritzburg. Whether this was a continuation of local acts of commission and omission by the security forces that supported the cause of Inkatha, or organised state strategy resulting from decision making at the highest levels of government, remains a debatable point. Theories abounded that the violence was turned off and on according

to the state of negotiations. Wisely, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission took an agnostic view, although some regarded this as politically convenient.⁹⁴

Meanwhile in the Natal Midlands, a particularly noteworthy incident was the Table Mountain massacre of March 1993 in which a truck carrying school-children was ambushed by AK47-wielding gunmen. Six died, including three children of a prominent Inkatha official. Inkatha blamed the ANC; the ANC blamed the third force;⁹⁵ and a cycle of retaliatory violence ensued. Another hotspot was the town of Richmond, an unrest area in 1991 and focus of conflict between ANC and supporters of the expelled Sifiso Nkabinde in the late 1990s in which over 100 people died.⁹⁶

Although the first decade of the twenty-first century saw only sporadic incidents of political violence in the Pietermaritzburg region, there was considerable symbolism in 2011 when the four remaining wards in Inkatha hands in Vulindlela fell to the ANC in the local government elections for Msunduzi Municipality. The ANC had finally achieved total political control over the area.⁹⁷

NOTES

- 1 Basic sources on Pietermaritzburg during this period are: J. Aitchison, *Numbering the Dead: the Course and Pattern of Political Violence in the Natal Midlands, 1987–9* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 1993); J. Aitchison (ed.), *The Seven Days War, 25–31 March 1990: The Victims’ Narrative* (Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal, 1991); and P. Forsyth, *Pietermaritzburg Conflict Chronology: Political Developments in Pietermaritzburg, 1980–1986* (Pietermaritzburg: Department of Historical Studies, University of Natal, 1991).

- 2 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, *Report* vol. 3 (Cape Town: TRC, 1998), 259.
- 3 T. Magubane, "Scarred survivors tell their stories" *Weekend Witness* 20 March 2010.
- 4 *Keesing's Review of World Events* 1990, 3660.
- 5 J. Aitchison, *Numbering the Dead*, table 19.
- 6 B. Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Zulu Statesman: a Biography* (Cape Town: Purnell, 1975), 197–8.
- 7 G. Maré and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the Politics of Loyal Resistance* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1987); C. McCaul, "The wild card: Inkatha and contemporary black politics" in *State, Resistance and Change in South Africa* edited by P. Frankel, N. Pines and M. Swilling (Johannesburg: Southern, 1988), 146–73. The Human Rights Commission described Inkatha as "tribalist in ideology" (HRC, *Human Rights and Repression in South Africa: The Apartheid Machine Grinds On* (Johannesburg: HRC, South African Council of Churches and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, 1989), 25).
- 8 R. Taylor and M. Shaw, "The dying days of apartheid" in *South Africa in Transition: New Theoretical Perspectives* edited by D.R. Howarth and A.J. Norval (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 14.
- 9 In Pietermaritzburg itself there were boycotts at Coloured and Indian schools.
- 10 *Natal Witness* 27 October 1980.
- 11 The South African government routinely blamed political unrest on the subversive influence of left-wing whites.
- 12 In August 1985 the relatively progressive Pietermaritzburg City Council resolved to reincorporate Sobantu.
- 13 M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War: Inside the Conflict in Pietermaritzburg* (Cape Town: Philip, 1990), 183.
- 14 P. Denis, "'Men of the cloth': the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa, Inkatha and the struggle against apartheid" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 34(2) 2008, 305–6.
- 15 Fedsem had experienced a troubled history, moved from Alice in the Eastern Cape to Umtata in Transkei and then to Imbali. It was shared by the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists.
- 16 In contrast to its forerunner the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), which had an agenda more inclined to shopfloor issues and suspicious of political alignment.
- 17 Mzala [Jabulani Nxumalo], *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief With a Double Agenda* (London: Zed, 1988), 178–80.
- 18 South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: v.1. 1960-1970* (Cape Town: Zebra, 2004), 109.
- 19 Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, 181–3; TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 238–9.
- 20 T. Bell with D.B. Ntsebeza, *Unfinished Business: South Africa, Apartheid and Truth* (Observatory: RedWorks, 2001), 254. Regarded as an expert on the ANC, Buchner was reputedly a founder member of the hit squad operating from Vlakplaas in the Transvaal. He later became head of the KwaZulu Police.
- 21 *Now Everyone Is Afraid ... The Changing Face of Policing in South Africa* (London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1988), 189–91.
- 22 M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, 208.
- 23 A. Jeffery, *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2009), 172, 185. Constable Hlengwa received a 12-year sentence for leading the attack, which he justified as pre-emptive.
- 24 R. Keys, "March 27th and 28th 1990: Edendale/Vulindlela Valley, Pietermaritzburg" in *Faith in Turmoil: The Seven Days War* edited by L. Levine (Pietermaritzburg: Pacsa, 1999), 93; *A Crime Against Humanity: Analysing the Repression of the Apartheid State* edited by M. Coleman (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 112.
- 25 N. Gwala, "Political violence and the struggle for control in Pietermaritzburg" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15(3) 1989, 519, 520. UDF members gave names such as Moscow, Cuba, Luanda and Angola to liberated zones under its control. Ashdown was Zambia.
- 26 *Faith in turmoil: the Seven Days War* edited by L. Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 1999), 59; T. Smith, "The warlord and the police" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 58.
- 27 *Kitskonstabels in Crisis: A Closer Look at Black on Black Policing* (Cape Town: Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town, 1990), 12.
- 28 TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 194, 196.
- 29 *Natal Witness* 27 February 1988. The Liberal Democratic Alliance asked the crucial question: what business did a police force have "to fight anyone?" (*Echo* 3 March 1988). An editorial in the local paper expanded, describing Vlok's statement as outrageous: "the mere holding of opinions is not illegal,

- nor is it the job of the police to engage in any kind of thought control" (*Natal Witness* 9 April 1988).
- 30 Government notice 334 *Government Gazette* 11157, 24 February 1988 in terms of Proclamation R23 of the same date (*GG* 11156). They were not, as is commonly believed and recorded, banned. They remained legal, but were effectively prevented from political work. See also: "Lest we forget: what the 17 organisations did" *Weekly Mail* 26 February 1988.
- 31 M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, 90–3.
- 32 In Zulu, Shayabantu appropriately means "hit the people".
- 33 TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 240.
- 34 For a full account see TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 198–202. In April 1992 Mitchell was sentenced to death, but this was commuted to 30 years in prison. The *kiiskonstabels* received 15 years each.
- 35 D. Coombe, "Of murder and deceit: the Trust Feed killings" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 232.
- 36 M. Nuttall, "Mediation efforts in turbulent times" *Natalia* 30 (2000), 27; M. Mbona, "On embassy to Ulundi: the Natal Church Leaders Group's mediation attempts in war-torn Natal (1987–1990)" *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 36(1) 2010, 161.
- 37 On 25 February 1991 the president of CONTRALESA, Mhlabunzima Maphumulo, was assassinated in Havelock Road, Pietermaritzburg while engaged in peace talks. The inquest a year later concluded that the hit had been planned and committed by persons unknown, although security police, Inkatha and military police were all implicated in various statements. For further detail see: C. Payze "The elimination of political opponents: the Maphumulo assassination" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 247–55; P. Stilwell, "Mhlabunzima Joseph Maphumulo (1950–1991)" *Natalia* 21 (1991), 71–2.
- 38 Under a democratically-elected municipal authority, Loop Street in Pietermaritzburg was renamed after Jabu Ndlovu.
- 39 The situation in Imbali became so acute that a support group of human rights activists from Pietermaritzburg spent their nights in particularly vulnerable households to afford protection and act as witnesses.
- 40 This work was undertaken primarily at the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) and recorded in J. Aitchison, *Numbering the Dead*.
- 41 B. B. Ndlovu, "What's happening in Maritzburg?" *Echo* 18 February 1988.
- 42 J. Aitchison, *Numbering the Dead*, 118–19. There is disagreement about the role of Edendale Hospital. Another writer describes it as a "war hospital" so well patronised that another male surgical ward had to be opened. It is also said to have been inundated with burn cases (A. Jeffery, *People's War*, 178).
- 43 M. Wittenberg, "PACSA as refuge and first aid station" in *Hope Beyond Apartheid: the Peter Kerchhoff Years of PACSA, 1979–1999* edited by Lou Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 2002), 154.
- 44 J. Dyer, *Health in Pietermaritzburg (1838–2008): a History of Urbanisation and Disease in an African City* (Pietermaritzburg: Natal Society Foundation, 2012), 187.
- 45 B. Morrow, "*To Serve and Protect*": the *Inkathagate Scandal* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010), x. The story broke in *The Guardian* (London) and *Weekly Mail* (Johannesburg) and showed that the government had funded other conservative organisations including Inkatha's trade union wing, UWUSA.
- 46 A. Jeffery, *People's War*, 241–2.
- 47 P. Kearney, *Guardian of the Light: Denis Hurley: Renewing the Church, Opposing Apartheid* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), 284.
- 48 TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 264; T. Smith, "The warlord and police", 57.
- 49 R. Keys, "March 27th and 28th 1990", 100. A police helicopter ordered them out of the area, but they refused to leave.
- 50 J. Aitchison, "The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990): background, course and questions" *Faith in turmoil: the Seven Days War* edited by L. Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 1999), 123, 124.
- 51 T. Smith, "Trust Feed wasn't a one-off massacre" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 245.
- 52 C. Kerchhoff, "Women's march, 29 March 1990" in *Faith in turmoil: the Seven Days War* edited by L. Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 1999), 20–1.
- 53 R. Lundie, *Victor* (Howick: Brevitas, 1995), 24–8.
- 54 J. Aitchison, "The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990)", 111.
- 55 For details about unresolved issues see P.

- Kerchhoff, "The Seven Days War (25 to 31 March 1990): some comments on the aftermath of the "war": submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pietermaritzburg, 21 March 1996" in *Hope Beyond Apartheid: the Peter Kerchhoff Years of PACSA, 1979–1999* edited by Lou Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 2002), 158–63.
- 56 T. Smith, "The Seven Days War 1990" in *Faith in turmoil: the Seven Days War* edited by L. Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 1999), 108.
- 57 V. John, 'Pietermaritzburg's refugees: a profile' in J. Aitchison, W. Leeb and V. John, *Political Violence in the Natal Midlands: the Unrest Monitoring Project Papers, 1988–1994* (Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010), 161.
- 58 J. Irish and H. Varney, "The Kwazulu Police: obstacle to peace?" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 55.
- 59 M. Butler and A. Harley with J. Aitchison, *Imbali* (Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of Natal, 1993), 158–71.
- 60 The SoE was declared under the Public Safety Act of 1953 (Proclamation R108, *Government Gazette* 10279, 12 June 1986). Emergency regulations (Proclamation R109, *GG* 10280, 12 June 1986) provided for preventive detention for the remaining lifespan of any particular emergency, which could last up to a year and was infinitely renewable. Although the powers generally replicated those of the Internal Security Act, they were more flexible. Any member of the security forces could detain without warrant in the interests of public order.
- 61 C. Merrett, "Emergency of the state: detention without trial in Pietermaritzburg and the Natal Midlands, 1986–90" *Natalia* 41 (2011), 25. See also: C. Merrett, *Detention Under Three Emergencies* (Pietermaritzburg: Detainees Aid Committee, 1989).
- 62 C. Merrett, *Sidla Ekhlaya: We Shall Eat at Home: The Detainees' Hunger Strike in Pietermaritzburg, 1989* (Pietermaritzburg: Detainees Aid Committee, 1990).
- 63 C. McCaul, "The wild card", 170.
- 64 D. Foster, D. Davis and D. Sandler, *Detention and Torture in South Africa: Psychological, Legal and Historical Studies* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1987), 154–5; M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, 197–8; A. Truluck, *No Blood on Our Hands: Political Violence in the Natal Midlands 1987–mid-1992 and the Role of the State, White Political Parties and Business* (Pietermaritzburg: Black Sash, 1992), 22–3; A. Minnaar, "Undisputed kings: warlordism in Natal" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 87–8.
- 65 International Defence and Aid Fund, *The Natal Violence: South Africa's Killing Fields* (London: IDAF, 1990), 3–4.
- 66 V. John, 'Security force collusion in the Midlands conflict' in J. Aitchison, W. Leeb and V. John, *Political Violence in the Natal Midlands: the Unrest Monitoring Project Papers, 1988–1994* (Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010), 272.
- 67 *Theleweni* was a derogatory term equating Inkatha members with men of Shaka's regiment who threw enemies off cliffs in the nineteenth century. The derogatory term *klova* (country bumpkins) was also applied to Inkatha.
- 68 *Natal Witness* 17 December 1987.
- 69 M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, 207, 208–9.
- 70 R.A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 77.
- 71 TRC, *Report* vol. 3, 214.
- 72 *Echo* 3 December 1987. *Asilutho* can also be translated as fence-sitters.
- 73 *Natal Witness* 30 January 1990. This is a fascinating evocation of the situation prior to the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War.
- 74 The idea of a third force, an orchestrated violent group acting on behalf of the government and its allies, remains a contested concept in recent South African history.
- 75 *Askaris* were turned cadres of the ANC. Some had formed part of Inkatha's para-military unit trained in the Caprivi Strip.
- 76 There were eight police stations in the Pietermaritzburg area, only one of which (at Plessislaer) served the Edendale Valley. It was supported by a mobile station at Imbali upgraded during the Emergency (V.S. and K. Harris, *Pietermaritzburg in Profile, 1987* (Pietermaritzburg: Natal Midlands Region of the Black Sash and the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness, 1987), 16).
- 77 G. Woods, "Natal violence: a contemporary analysis of underlying dynamics" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by

- Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 48; N. Gwala, "Political violence and the struggle for control in Pietermaritzburg", 507.
- 78 P. Kerchhoff, "People in crisis" in *Hope Beyond Apartheid: the Peter Kerchhoff Years of PACSA, 1979–1999* edited by Lou Levine (Pietermaritzburg: PACSA, 2002), 151.
- 79 M. Nuttall, *Number Two to Tutu: a Memoir* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003), 55.
- 80 S. Collins, "Things fall apart: the culture of violence becomes entrenched" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 95.
- 81 P. Denis, R. Ntsimane and T. Cannell, *Indians versus Russians: an Oral History of Political Violence at Nxamalala (1987–1993)* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2010), 18.
- 82 P. Denis, R. Ntsimane and T. Cannell, *Indians versus Russians*, 20, 37–8, 57.
- 83 N. Basson, "De Klerk's double agenda" *Work in Progress* 79 (1991), 12.
- 84 J. Aitchison, "Can the Inkathagate be closed?" *Work in Progress* 77(1991), 6, 8.
- 85 D. Niddrie, "Into the valley of death" *Work in Progress* 52(1988), 15; C. McCaul, "The wild card", 169.
- 86 C. McCaul, "The wild card", 146.
- 87 J. Aitchison, 'Natal's wastelands: why the war won't stop' in J. Aitchison, W. Leeb and V. John, *Political Violence in the Natal Midlands: the Unrest Monitoring Project Papers, 1988–1994* (Pietermaritzburg: Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010), 172.
- 88 S. Collins, "Things fall apart", 101.
- 89 For details of the security state of the 1980s see HRC, *Human Rights and Repression in South Africa*, 30–4.
- 90 These conclusions are diametrically opposed by other writers who maintain that the catalyst for the conflict was an externally orchestrated ANC campaign to render South Africa ungovernable and ripe for revolutionary takeover. See, for instance, A. Jeffery, *People's War*. Her theory that the ANC was following a blueprint based on the Vietnamese people's war was shared by the SB under Buchner (M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, 211).
- 91 S. Collins, "Things fall apart", 95.
- 92 R.A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*, 75.
- 93 R. Taylor and M. Shaw, "The dying days of apartheid", 21–2.
- 94 R.A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*, 71–3.
- 95 A. Jeffery, *People's War*, 375–7.
- 96 A. Ragavaloo, *Richmond: Living in the Shadow of Death* (Johannesburg: STE, 2008). See also H. Osborn, "The Richmond war: a struggle for supremacy" and "Richmond: the war continues" in *Patterns of Violence: Case Studies of Conflict* edited by Anthony Minnaar (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 163–86, 187–201.
- 97 N. Naidoo and C. Merrett, "A quiet, historic moment: a conflict that started 20 years ago has finally been put to rest by votes cast in a ballot box" *The Witness* 25 May 2011.