Boipatong

8 July 1992

At the funeral for 36 of the 42 Boipatong men, women and children massacred 17 June, the African National Congress's secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa stated in his oration that South African President F. W. De Klerk admitted in May to ANC President Nelson Mandela that he had 'no power over the policemen'. This admission was furiously denied by Roelf Meyer, Pretoria's constitutional affairs minister. This exchange raises again the issue - responsibility for the violent actions of the security forces at the very top in Pretoria. If De Klerk's confession is so what good is he at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa negotiations? Meyer's angry refutation says his boss is in charge and that a two-track policy - utilized for so many years in Namibia - has been and is in full swing.

The ANC has suspended its participation in the CODESA talks until a number of conditions are met, chief among them the defanging of the South African Police and the South African Defence Force and their spawn of assassination squads and terror gangs, and the public trials of members. Pretoria responds with protestations of sincerity, of an urgent wish to commence CODESA again. Pretoria and its friends promote the notion that the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party are equally to blame for the countrywide violence, the 'black-on-black' syndrome. Security forces personnel all the way up to generals, more than one of whom have been shown to be directly involved in state terrorism, continue at their posts undeterred. Another wrinkle in the deception is the offer that local policemen go their own way in terror without notifying their superiors, who appear unable to read the newspapers.

The call now is for teams of international observers to go in and report on the terror. The ANC and others want monitors to keep watch on the security forces. Pretoria has acceded to some sort of the former (they will be stingily selected), but not the latter. The United Nations is being drawn into the situation and a Security Council meeting is set for next week to consider dispatching observers. In the meanwhile the terrorized people of South Africa will see no let-up in their suffering. South Africa and the world will have to rely for the grisly facts, as heretofore, on courageous human rights groups and some newspapers.

THE INDEPENDENT

Monday 22 June 1992
Black South Africans vent rage at De Klerk

FORTY THOUSAND black South Africans packed into the shabby little soccer stadium at Boipatong yesterday to bury 36 of the 42 innocents massacred two weeks ago by supporters of Inkatha.

Enraged by reports that police delivered the Inkatha killings to the township, that bound the town and the speakers, politicians and churchmen of all persuasions, was the desire to bury the government of President F W de Klerk.

The spectacle of the rows of coffins, of the bereaved families, solemnly apart, somehow, from the political proceedings, in tears of pain and grief. Speaker after speaker offered condolences to the mourners, but more as an afterthought, it seemed.

It was the denunciations of the "murderous De Klerk regime", the metaphorical call to arms for "the final battle" against apartheid, the chant "Down with De Klerk! Down!"; the clamour for the international community to use its clout to help bring down the government, that rang through with real conviction, that ignored the passions of the crowd.

"Enough!" the banners read, "it's enough!"
The day's most militant speaker, Jay Naidoo, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, received the loudest cheers. The Inkatha "vigilantes", he declared, had been armed by Mr de Klerk to the teeth and let loose on the black communities.

Mr Naidoo warned of a national strike unless the government altered course. He said: "Cosatu is not making an idle threat. We are mobilising for the type of mass action that will bring this country to a standstill. The issue is simple: We want majority rule now!"

To chants of "De Klerk must go! De Klerk must go!" he stepped back from the microphone for Chris Hani, general secretary of the South African Communist Party. Mr Hani called the government "vampires" and merchants of death, and said their hands were "dripping with blood".

Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC's secretary-general, who is normally statesmanlike, led the crowd in the chant "Down with De Klerk! Down!". Announcing that South Africa had reached "disaster point", he said talks with the government had brought nothing so far, "just misery."

Mr de Klerk was useless and incompetent, he said, a fact revealed, he claimed, by his admission to Nelson Mandela in a private meeting last month that he had "no power over the police men". Mr de Klerk and his Minister of Police, Hernus Kriel, had to go, for the ANC would "no longer tolerate the politics of murder".

Leaders of the Pan-Africanist Congress and Azapo, radical organisations that have scorned the ANC for negotiating with the government, shared the podium yesterday with the likes of Mr Ramaphosa. They echoed the cries of rage against "De Klerk and his killers" and called for Boipatong to unify all liberation movements behind the call for democracy.

It was left to Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking last, to attempt to defuse a palpable anti-white sentiment among parts of the audience, which runs counter to the ANC bedrock concept of "non-racialism".

But the archbishop, like other church leaders who spoke before him, demanded that Mr de Klerk arrest the Boipatong murderers, admit international monitors to supervise the security forces and hold elections for a democratically elected constituent assembly.

He, too, however, could not resist a dig at his white compatriots.

"For most white people the killings of Boipatong were just statistics until I said: What about Barcelona?" It was the threat of pulling out of the Olympic Games, he said, that stirred white consciences, not the killing of black children.

The proposal was expected to be approved by heads of state at a three-day annual meeting of the Organisation of African Unity.

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De Klerk's hidden concessions 'too little, too late'

HIDDEN deep in a memorandum sent on Thursday by the South African Government to the African National Congress — after dozens of pages full of an anti-Communist sound and fury — were three interesting political concessions which, had they been made earlier, might have averted the present crisis.

A six-page memo from President F W de Klerk to Nelson Mandela was followed by six demure and detailed annexes.

The last one, "Annexe F", revealed a government decision to back down on the hardline positions that they had adopted in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) negotiations on 16 May, positions that wrecked any chance of a deal and precipitated the hostile new mood that has seized South African politics.

The straw that broke Codessa's back was the government's insistence on 75 per cent as the majority required in an elected assembly to approve a new constitution.

The ANC, whose opening position had been 66.66 per cent, shifted at the eleventh hour to 70 per cent. The government did not budge and the talks collapsed, leaving the ANC to conclude that the government was "not serious about democracy" and that the only option was to take politics to the streets.

"Mass action" was born — or, rather, re-born — and the ANC's enemies replied with the Boipatong massacre, which led the ANC to call off all involvement in Codesa and issue the government with a list of 14 demands to end the violence. The consequence of the Codesa breakdown in May has been that today, it is widely agreed, South Africa faces the serious possibility of anarchy and economic collapse.

Mr de Klerk indicated as much in a televised speech on Thursday.

"Annexe F", said the government was now prepared to accept 70 per cent as the constitution-making majority but there is no question of the ANC accepting this now as it has since moved its position back to 66.66 per cent and, what is more, added its list of demands — including the suspension and arrest of police and army officers involved in township violence — for a return to the negotiating table.

None of these demands received a response on Thursday from the government, which instead counter-attacked with the charge that the ANC, not the government, was staking up the township violence.

"Annexe F", again seeking to turn the clock back to the May Codesa meeting, answered the ANC's charge that the government wished to hold on to power indefinitely with the proposal that if a new constitution had not been agreed by a transitional government within three years a general election should be held.

The annexure also dropped a particularly contentious government clause demanding disproportionately high representation for minorities in that transitional government.

Effectively the government has thus admitted to a serious blunder at the Codesa talks in May. Had it accepted the ANC's compromise then, the chances are that the three-stage sequence of mass action, massacre and breakdown of negotiations would have been avoided.

As it is, political temperatures are higher than they have been at any point since Mr de Klerk came to power in September 1989 and the likelihood of the ANC accepting the government's invitation to talks is nil. Indeed, the government seems to have accepted as much otherwise it would have made a point of highlighting its three concessions on Thursday instead of deliberately hiding them from public view. As it was, Mr de Klerk's speech made no mention of the government's shift in tactics, concentrating instead on a vituperative offensive against the ANC and its alleged plans to seize power by force.

"Annexe F", as a senior South African political reporter observed yesterday, might unlock doors when and if negotiations restart, but offer no short-term solution to the crisis. It was a case of too little, too late.
March after massacre puts blame on De Klerk

FOLLOWING the massacre of 39 people on Wednesday night in Boipatong township, F.W. de Klerk, South Africa’s first reform-minded president, is being viewed by the African National Congress with barely less distrust than his predecessor, F.W. Botha.

ANC leaders, marched through Johannesburg on Saturday in protest at the killing of men, women and children by members of Inkatha forces who were later found inside the township, according to eyewitnesses, by police in armoured vehicles.

A new ANC poster was unveiled at the march, with a photograph of Mr de Klerk under a “wanted” sign. The small print read: “Wanted for the murder of the people of South Africa.”

ANC statements issued earlier contained the harshest condemnation of the government to date. Placing the blame for Wednesday’s massacre on Mr De Klerk, the statement said: “His administration is less than six years in office and yet the death toll of black people during its brief period of office exceeds that of 40 years of National Party rule.”

In Amasini, outside Durban, a report last week echoed: “In more restrained language – the ANC’s perception that its views carry a responsibility for the political violence – the post given for the number of deaths of 39.”

In Mbete, who was one of the country’s most active six weeks before, but who was Boipatong on Sunday, the ANC, has frequently denounced Mr De Klerk’s failure to express sympathy for the victims of the recent township massacres. The amnesty over the Boipatong slaughter prompted him to break with precedent, however.

In a statement on Thursday night, Mr de Klerk expressed “deepest condolences” to the families of the victims. He promised “not to rest until the perpetrators have been brought to justice.” But, he was also hospitalised, doctors, with the “short year two for the action to be taken against the Inkatha-controlled hostel across the road from Boipatong.”

Police said the hostel across the road from Boipatong had been “no massacre, no need to issue an order to justice.” The man who were in 25 Boipatong, but all over the national and densely populated area of Soweto and Sebenk_throw 40 victims of Boipatong.

A report from the month by the Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression (IBIR) on the Inkatha hostel, entitled “For the host at the source of the latest killings has long inspired terror” writes John Carlin in Johannesburg.

IT IS impossible to see the massacre in Boipatong last week, the event that precipitated the crisis in South African politics, as anything other than an orchestrated attack in a deliberate political manoeuvre. In its logic and consequences, it is impossible to see the township wars of the past two years, in which 7,000 people have died in any other light.

In Boipatong, as in the vast majority of other massacres, the people who actually do the killing are blacks lined to the Inkatha Freedom Party, the right-wing Zulu organisation led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Those who direct them are whites operating within the intelligence structures of the police and army.

The only issue in doubt is how high up does the authority come from? Does it stop at the “securocrats,” the generals and colonels who effectively ran the country during the Eighties? Or does it rise even further up to F.W. de Klerk, as Nellie Mandela claims? These questions have not been conclusively answered.

What is certain, however, is that President de Klerk has displayed no inclination either to rein in these sinister elements within the security forces or to express anything other than public approval of Inkatha, an organisation whose chief instrument of political persuasion is terror.

“Either De Klerk is totally indifferent to the killings,” said an ANC diplomat last week, “or they suit his political purposes.”

There can be no question that the killings have suited Mr de Klerk’s political agenda, an agenda brutal in its simplicity: to prevent majority rule in South Africa. The killings that would undoubtedly lead to an African National Congress (ANC) government, and to hit upon a new political system that entrenches the political power of his National Party and the economic privilege of the white population.

Who benefits from the killings that have plunged South Africa into crisis? John Carlin reports from Johannesburg.

The politics of survival, Nationalists call it. And when survival is the issue, humans are not the only animals who will stop at nothing.

How has the township terror suited Mr de Klerk? In four identifiable ways. Launched in the Transvaal heartland in July 1990, five months after the ANC had been unbanned, it wreaked havoc on the movement’s capacity to carry out its principal task, to organise; it undermined the mythical image of the ANC in the majority of black people’s minds as an all-powerful, unstoppable, redeeming force for a general political perception at home and abroad essential to the “Nati” game plan, namely that blacks are savages who cannot be expected to run a country without the controlling hand of the whites; and it boosted Inkatha’s bargaining power in negotiations in a manner disproportionate to the support the organisation enjoys.

One of South Africa’s most abiding myths is that the majority of Zulus support Inkatha. It is highly questionable that 30 per cent do. Nevertheless, Mr de Klerk perceives Inkatha as vital to his political objectives. Already allied openly in constitutional negotiations, it is Mr de Klerk’s intention to forge an electoral alliance when the time comes. Inkatha – which shares the Nationalists’ fears of democracy, the ANC and loss of privilege – offers him his only door to the black constituency.

How is it that Inkatha and the South African government have discovered this confuence of political interests? In fact, the security police and military intelligence discovered it in the mid-Eighties, when they started funding Inkatha, seeing in it an excellent tool to help them do their counter-insurgency dirty work against the ANC’s legal surrogates at the time, the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Not only that, the spectacle of black-on-black violence could only be beneficial, both in terms of projecting political messages and dividing and ruling.

The war against the UDF in Natal province, Zulu country, began in earnest in 1987, the year that Boipatong massacre was carried out by Inkatha supporters from Kwa-Madala hostel. It was from here that Inkatha began its Transvaal offensive on 22 July 1990, which was from this attack by the UDF.

A policy of “million hostels” was launched in the Transvaal province. Inkatha supporters were bussed in their thousands to take over the single men’s hostels in the townships and establish them as barracks from which to launch attacks on the resident population.

The Boipatong massacre last Wednesday was carried out by Inkatha supporters from Kwa-Madala hostel. It was from here that Inkatha began its Transvaal offensive on 22 July 1990, which was from this attack by the UDF.

The police were “inoculated” when the time comes. Inkatha – which shares the Nationalists’ fears of democracy, the ANC and loss of privilege – offers him his only door to the black constituency.

How is it that Inkatha and the South African government have
White plotters aim to divide and rule

THE OBSEerver Sunday 28 June 1992

THE ACTION by the ANC in breaking off South Africa's constitutional negotiations, while still committing itself to a negotiated settlement, epitomises the agonising position it has been forced into, squeezed between the rising militancy of its followers and the obduracy of the De Klerk Government.

Disillusionment at the slow pace of negotiations and the continuing violence in the townships has been building up for months. It boiled over with the Boipatong massacre and the mini-Sharpeville which I witnessed afterwards. When Nelson Mandela went to nearby Evaton to address a rally last Sunday, angry people in the 20,000 crowd yelled at him: 'You are like lambs while the Government is killing us.'

SUSpending the talks was the least the ANC could do to appease that anger. Otherwise it would have forfeited wholesale support to the extreme Pan-Africanist Congress, which has been denouncing the ANC as sellouts for sitting down to talk with the Government, instead of fighting it to the finish.

The ANC knows the white establishment cannot be overthrown by force. It knows there is no viable alternative to negotiations, and so it must hang in there even though President de Klerk and his Ministers have been making it increasingly difficult. Hence the egg-dance of breaking off negotiations while setting what Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa called 'these perfectly reasonable and do-able demands' for getting back. Now we must see whether De Klerk will respond - or keep up the squeeze.

De Klerk has been toughening his stance ever since his big white referendum victory in March. Instead of seeing

that as clearing his path to move faster, as most observers expected, the President took it as a sign of booming support for his National Party. This stirred hopes that maybe he would not have to relinquish power after all; that if he could forge alliances with conservative non-white movements he might yet emerge at the head of the biggest political bloc in the country, or at least force the ANC into a coalition that would neutralise its ability to undertake any significant post-apartheid restructuring.

De Klerk needs to play for time, which he believes is on his side. Time tolock South Africa's major trading partners in as allies of his government, to see sanctions collapse, take credit for an economic recovery - and to let the ANC twist in the wind as disillusionment sets in among its followers at the lack of progress in the negotiations.

So the Government deliberately stalled Codesa II. It did so by playing hardball on the issue of the majority needed to agree on a new constitution, making demands it knew the ANC could not accept. Then came the alliance-building phase. On 16 June, Soweto Day, the most important anniversary in black South Africa's calendar, President de Klerk made a high-profile appearance as Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's guest in the KwaZulu capital of Ulundi. Next day the National Party announced a campaign programme naming the ANC 'enemy number one'.

Some analysts believe - and this is the critical question - that part of this strategy is a covert operation to destabilise the ANC. Those who believe this claim that Military Intelligence and the Security Police are now manipulating cleavages in the black community to promote 'black-on-black' violence by 'vigilante' groups in the townships, mainly rural Zulus living in the migrant workers' hostels of the Witwatersrand.

The purpose is, first, to convince Western powers that black South Africans are unfit to govern the country alone, and, second, to destabilise the ANC by disrupting its ability to organise, making people fearful to be associated with it. Those who hold this theory say they are uncertain whether De Klerk himself is directing the operation; whether it is being pursued freelance by anti-reformists in the security forces - old seconcrats still loyal to ex-Presidents P. W. Botha and his predecessors, or whether it is a bit of both, that De Klerk cannot fully control them and has rationalised this by taking the view that a whiff of destabilisation will help his cause.

There is no conclusive evidence of these allegations, but the circumstantial evidence pointing to security force involvement in the violence has become overwhelming. Even more important, the perception in the townships that the police are involved is now universal.

The Human Rights Commission, a private research group in Johannesburg, reports that between July 1990 and April 1992 armed gangs from the migrant hostels carried out 281 attacks on black township residents, killing 1,207 and injuring 3,697.

In March 1990 police opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators in Sebokeng township, near Boipatong, killing 11 and wounding 28. A commission of inquiry into the shooting found the force used by the police was 'quite immoderate and disproportionate to any lawful object to be attained'. Twenty-seven months after the shooting there is still no trial.

All this has whipped up a huge sense of outrage in the townships, and the ANC is having to respond to that mood in its constituency. It must respond or it will be dead. Yet it must also keep the hope of a negotiated settlement alive. If the squeeze becomes too great and it fails in that, there will be no hope for South Africa.

De Klerk is a clever and subtle man, very different from the crude P. W. Botha who preceded him, yet perhaps he has been too clever by half. It never did make sense to try to destabilise the ANC.

What De Klerk and his colleagues have never understood, is that the ANC is essentially a moderate organisation, yet one that is widely acceptable in the black community because of its record as the primary resistance movement and its long list of heroes and martyrs. That placed the ANC in the unique position of being able to carry a black community radicalised by years of apartheid into a negotiated settlement.

The sensible thing would have been for De Klerk to harness that capability and work with it. Instead, the desire to keep his own party in power has caused him to try to destabilise it. In the process he has destabilised South Africa and the future security of his own people.

Allister Sparks, in Johannesburg, exposes President de Klerk's manoeuvring to frustrate a deal with the ANC and cling to power.
Amnesty mooted to rein in the SA military

Annika Savill, Diplomatic Editor, looks at a startling solution to the hit squads

PRETORIA — As President F W de Klerk met with senior advisers yesterday in an attempt to find ways out of South Africa's political crisis, new facts emerged to reinforce the African National Congress belief that the government's security forces are directly involved in township killings, writer John Carlos. A security link has been found between the effectively elite unit used by the South African police in the Namibian war, "Koevoet" (Crowbar), and "the faceless men" who have been waging war on township residents, 7,000 of whom have died in the last two and a half years. Several hundred members of Koevoet, who fought with the South African army, were absorbed into the South African police after Namibian independence early in 1990.

This week it was revealed that a detachment of at least 20 former Koevoet members are based at a coalmine near Ogies, a small town near Luderitz, Namibia. The men are being guarded by mine police. Earlier this week one of the Koevoet men, it was reliably learnt yesterday, spoke to a miner at the colliery and told him he was fed up with killing blacks and children in place of Boipatong. The miner contacted the ANC, which contacted the Goldstone Commission, a judicial commission appointed by Mr de Klerk last year to investigate political violence. On Wednesday afternoon two Goldstone lawyers and an ANC official raided the colliery with 30 police officers under the command of Mr de Klerk himself.

But Mr de Klerk cannot do anything to rein in the hit squads on his own and he lacks the support of the military structure, the very structure that provides the hit squads. For the same reason the calls for investigations of the Boipatong massacre can never be satisfied because the culprits cannot be brought to book. Mr de Klerk has denied any calibrated effort to rein in the hit squads.

It may be inconceivable that the ANC will ever be a serious political competitor in South Africa, but there are clear-cut reasons why it is a serious political force in South Africa. The ANC has 400,000 members and 300,000 people on its waiting list. It has been fighting against apartheid for over 50 years and it has the backing of the black masses. The ANC is a serious political force and it is a serious political competitor. The ANC has the ability to win elections and it has the ability to govern South Africa.

One thing is certain: the British government will not endorse any action that Mr de Klerk does not want. "We are not supporting any kind of action that does not have the blessing of the main parties in South Africa," said a British diplomat yesterday. "And de Klerk has said that any intervention, whether by foreign government or international institution, is unacceptable. But he also said that he would welcome, on the other hand, advice.

That advice is now being pondered in Whitehall, but if Britain were to push the amnesty line, it is unlikely that it would do so overtly: it is already accused of having stayed in bed for too long with the whites of South Africa.
THE MAGNITUDE OF THE MASSACRE RECORD

In the 2 years there have been 49 massacres costing the lives of 1250 people or, on the average, 25 deaths per massacre. In 15 cases the death toll was higher than 25. However, it is important to note that our premise of 10 or more deaths qualifying an incident as a massacre, does not take into account numerous other incidents encompassing over 6000 deaths and 13,000 injuries during the period, which could also properly be described as massacres.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MASSACRES

A number of points emerge very strongly about the nature and objectives of the massacres:
* The drive by Inkatha to establish political influence, membership and even territory, is the predominant theme.
* The tactics of extreme terror, used indiscriminately against township communities, to paralyse, immobilise and disorganise, is a complementary theme.
* The use of hostels as bases from which to plan and launch these activities.
* The persistent reports of security force complicity in these massacres, as well as involvement of unidentified whites.
* Retaliation which sometimes produces its own massacres.

WHERE THE MASSACRES TOOK PLACE

Natal
During the last two years, 11 massacres costing the lives of 167 people were recorded in Natal. It must be added that these have not been the only massacres experienced by the region; one must go back a further five years or so to grasp the full picture. The sub-regional breakdown is as follows:

- Midlands - 5 massacres (79 lives)
- North Coast - 3 massacres (35 lives)
- South Coast - 2 massacres (37 lives)
- Durban - 1 massacre (18 lives)

PWV
Since July 1990, there have been 38 massacres costing the lives of 1083 people in the PWV area as follows:

- East Rand - 14 massacres (476 lives)
- Soweto - 9 massacres (245 lives)
- Vaal - 8 massacres (135 lives)
- Alexandra - 4 massacres (89 lives)
- West Rand - 2 massacres (57 lives)
- Johannesburg - 1 massacre (21 lives)
WHO WERE THE PERPETRATORS?
In most cases, media and other reports on massacres refer to allegations or deductions about the identity or source of the attackers, sometimes corroborated by legal evidence. On this basis it has been possible to make assessments as to the identity of the alleged attackers. An analysis of the lists yields the following:

- IFP (members, supporters, elements) were responsible for 33 massacres (69%).
- "Vigilantes" of unspecified affiliation, but certainly aligned with IFP, were responsible for 3 massacres (6%).
- Security Forces (SAP, SADF, KZP) were directly responsible for 4 massacres (8%).
- Township residents and ANC supporters had a responsibility in 5 massacres (12%).
- No clue as to the identity of the attackers was available in 10 massacres.
- There was shared responsibility in 8 massacres, either in the case of two parties openly attacking together, or in the case of opposing parties being equally responsible.

WHO WERE THE VICTIMS?
Assessment of the identity or affiliation of the victims is obviously an easier matter than in the case of the perpetrators. Furthermore being exactly complementary to the attackers, statistics on victims provide additional confirmation of statistics on perpetrators.

- The following emerges from the lists:
  - Township residents were the victims in 36 massacres (73%).
  - Residents specifically identified as ANC supporters were additionally victims in 10 massacres (20%).
  - IFP members and supporters were victims in 9 massacres (18%).
  - In 8 massacres both opposing parties were assessed to be victims of one another, and having a joint responsibility.

Mention should also be made of the following features of a number of massacres:
- Funerals and vigils were attacked on 3 occasions.
- Places of public recreation (beehive, tavern) were attacked on 2 occasions.
- Commuters (train, bus) were attacked on 3 occasions.

THE ISSUE OF COLLUSION
Repeated and persistent reports have emerged, both in Natal since the mid-eighties and in the PWV since July 1990, of collusion between the Security Forces (SAP, SADF, KZP, etc.) and vigilante groupings, primarily elements within Inkatha.


In the attached lists, such allegations have been made in the cases of 19 massacres (39%), which is a frequency difficult to ignore.

Furthermore, allegations of the presence of unspecified or unidentified whites in support of vigilante massacres appears in 8 cases. Again such reports are so persistent that they cannot be discounted.

Finally, it must be said that the abysmal record of the authorities in arresting and prosecuting the perpetrators, provides further reason to believe that they are part of the problem.

CONCLUSION
Major massacres over the last two years have been happening at the rate of two a month. There can be little doubt that there is a design and purpose behind most of them that places them alongside the gas chambers of Nazi Germany in sheer cold-blooded cynicism and brutality. The horrifying trail of massacre after massacre fully confirms the correctness of the declaration by the international community that the Apartheid system is a crime against humanity.

THE GUARDIAN
Thursday June 23 1992

South Africa's ruling elite fails to grasp black despair

Whites miss point about Boipatong

David Beresford
in Johannesburg

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NE of the more threatening aspects of the political crisis arising out of last week's Boipatong massacre is the apparent failure of the white population to comprehend the feelings of blacks about the political slaughter.

On South Africa's breakfast television yesterday morning a white interviewer was pluckily asking political scientists why there was any distinction — other than that of numbers — between the killings in Boipatong township and those of whites on farms murdered by "men carrying AK-47 rifles".

A current affairs programme on Tuesday night ran a lengthy documentary on Palestinian killings of informers in the occupied territories. Clearly intended to show that South Africa was not the only country with political troubles, "More than 600 people have died there in the last five years," said the anchorman solemnly, seemingly oblivious to the contrast with South Africa where 8,000 people have been killed in less than two and a half years.

On radio chat shows, white callers betray an unmissional but appalling indifference to the impact the violence has on the lives of blacks. Yesterday a saleswoman was too忙 to hear complaining about the dangers she ran when driving in the vicinity of a black township. "I feel quite safe at home," she said brightly of her white suburb which has gone untouched.

A caller described what it is like to drive in the white areas to try to bring home to the ruling elite the crisis of violence. Nelson Mandela said in a recent speech that such a strategy would be a "disaster of the first magnitude", adding: "One cannot stop the violence by killing innocent people."

But there was some understanding of the desperation in the township from an unexpected quarter yesterday: the white business community. The Johannesburg newspaper, Business Day, ran an editorial sympathetic to the ANC's withdrawal from the Codesa constitutional talks in protest over official sanction on the Boipatong killings.

Describing the ANC position as "conciliatory", it said: "It could have been all too easy for the ANC's leadership to respond to supporters' frustration by taking the battle back to the streets..."

"What is now needed from government's side, from the side of white business, church and political groups, and from the side of other participants in Codesa, is a display of awareness of the plight of black South Africans."

"The ANC has called for June 29 to be a day of mourning for the people slaughtered in Boipatong. That call is not an attempt to win cheap political points. Rather, it provides an opportunity for all South Africans to show their compassion, which is their common need for peace. We must all mourn on that day."
...from January 1990 to the end of March 1992 - more than 7,000 people have been killed, victims of large-scale attacks on whole communities, of targeted assassinations, of attacks by mysterious killers on commuter trains, of unprovoked shootings by the security forces, or of torture in police custody. Many others have been injured, made homeless, or forced to go into hiding out of fear of assassination. More than 400 people died in March 1992 alone, during a surge in political violence particularly marked in the run-up to the 17 March referendum. During these two years of intense violence, the victims have come from across the political spectrum. The overwhelming majority of them, however, have been members or perceived sympathizers of the ANC and other formerly banned organizations, members of trade unions and human rights and peace groups, as well as people of unknown affiliation who died during attacks on commuter trains.'


'Natal and large parts of the Transvaal are being torn apart by a terrible strife. Fear stalks the townships and the countryside. Law and order has broken down, the police do not protect the people and people do not trust the police. Policemen are partisan and misconduct is rife. The situation has become significantly worse since the International Commission of Jurists' last mission to South Africa in August and September 1990. We suspect this is mainly because the Government has failed to take effective action to curb the violence. The result is that it would not be possible at present to hold free and fair elections, on the basis of one person one vote, in the parts of South Africa we have visited. Elections must be held soon. Bringing the violence under control is, therefore, the most serious challenge which faces South Africa.'


'Residents of Boipatong in the Vaal area claim the dilapidated KwaMadala hostel on the edge of Iscor's Vanderbijlpark steelworks is being used as a springboard for Inkatha attacks on residents in the Vaal. A comprehensive report compiled by the Congress of South African Trade Union's Western Transvaal Region shows a significant increase in the number of incidents of violence and intimidation in the area since November 1990. Residents in the area have claimed that the KwaMadala hostel is used to house people who are not employees of Iscor. The hostel was re-opened after clashes between Inkatha supporters and ANC supporters at the Iscor's KwaMaziza hostel. Despite denials by Iscor that people who are not employed at the company reside at the hostel - eight of the accused in the Nangalembe Night Vigil attack gave their addresses as KwaMadala despite the fact that they do not work for the company. Khetisi Kheswa implicated in various assaults and murders in the Vaal has on more than one occasion sought refuge at the KwaMadala Hostel. He too was never employed by Iscor.'

FORTRESSES OF FEAR, Independent Board of Inquiry, Johannesburg, June 1992

'Cynics might suggest that the violence can be used as a reason to postpone the elections for a Constituent Assembly, but this is not an option. If the violence is not stopped now, it will run out of control and become endemic and there will be no winners. It is also having a very adverse effect on the economy. Violence is the most pressing problem which South Africa faces.'

'On the basis of the many interviews with South Africans conducted for this report, Africa Watch concludes that there is abundant evidence that the state is implicated in the past six years of so-called "black on black" violence. The bias of the state security forces, who have either intervened or failed to intervene on a selective basis, has fueled the conflict. Despite the pressure for reform from some elements in the state, the government has failed to deal effectively with the violence and the behavior of the security forces. While the reasons for the actions of the security forces and government officials are complex, one of the most obvious factors is frequently overlooked by the press and by political commentators. That is, the Inkatha movement led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi holds government power in the KwaZulu "homeland" and has at its direct disposal an arm of the South African state - namely, the KwaZulu Police. The other major party to the conflict, the ANC and a constellation of organizations affiliated with it, was only legalized in February 1990, following three decades of underground operation and severe state repression. Inkatha members hold government office, while government agents have imprisoned, tortured and executed ANC members. On those grounds alone, it is scarcely surprising that the organs of the state display some partiality between the two in the current conflict.'


'The overwhelming message received by Amnesty International's representatives in the townships and squatter camps was one of enormous frustration, anger and fear. The residents felt unprotected from murderous attacks against them in their homes and while commuting to and from work. As one resident of the East Rand township of Thokoza expressed it, "the situation is very tense. You feel that you can die at any time." The residents saw the police as indifferent and unresponsive when they went to them for assistance. They felt helpless - that they had nowhere to go when they heard shooting during the night or when armed thugs turned up outside their homes. They saw the police, as of old, as hostile and biased. They viewed with bitterness and cynicism the failure of the police to catch killers or act against mobs of heavily armed men moving about the streets with impunity. They compared the rarity with which the police searched and seized weapons from the black migrant workers' hostels, which in many areas had been taken over by Inkatha Freedom Party supporters, with the vigour, indeed brutality, with which the same police raided the homes of ANC supporters, especially where they were suspected of being members of self-defence units or the armed wing of the ANC. The anger at this lack of even-handedness by the police was compounded by the occasions when residents saw the police as actively colluding with their attackers.

'Amnesty International's representatives were moved by the patience and courage of many community leaders who, despite highly provocative circumstances, were resisting the temptation to retaliate with violence. Instead, they were working through "dispute resolution committees", which were gradually being set up under the terms of the September 1991 National Peace Accord agreed between representatives of the government, ANC, IFP and other political parties. Despite government pronouncements on the need for neutral policing, township residents evidently feared and distrusted the police. They saw police conduct as a major force perpetuating the violence.

'Confronting this dangerous and apparently intractable situation are human rights groups, lawyers, religious leaders, researchers and other monitoring and support groups. Amnesty International's representatives met a number of them and were struck by their dedication and courage. In quite different regional situations, all of them referred to instances over the past two years where the police had consistently failed to respond or intervene quickly to calls for help, even when human rights monitors had alerted them to an impending attack. In the wake of violent incidents, monitors described going to great lengths to encourage victims and witnesses to make sworn statements. These statements were handed to the police for investigation. Almost invariably, in the monitors' experience, nothing further had happened.'