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sanctions

18 February 1991

The international campaign - emanating from Pretoria and its friends and allies overseas - to eliminate economic sanctions against South Africa accelerates at stealthy fever pitch. The declarations by President F. W. De Klerk on February 1st is being hailed as a decisive move to abolish apartheid forever. As a good antidote read this and other analyses in this bulletin.

Reform Called Incomplete in South Africa

No Action Planned Soon On Key Black Demands

By David B. Ottaway
 Washington Post Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG, Feb. 10—President Frederik W. de Klerk's recent announcement that several basic apartheid laws will soon be repealed may help convince the United States and Europe to lift sanctions against Pretoria, but the changes are unlikely to meet the expectations of South Africa's black majority and could fuel demands for further reform.

Top government ministers made clear in briefings in Cape Town that virtually no fundamental changes are contemplated—at least until a new constitution is negotiated several years from now—in the segregated tricameral Parliament or its racially separated voting system that excludes blacks entirely.

Black nationalist groups say this is the essence of the apartheid system of segregation and discrimination, and until blacks are granted the right to vote and are elected to Parliament, they will remain excluded from the political process. These groups say the reforms amount to an attempt by whites to keep South Africa safe for continued segregation and white privilege in new guises, and could heighten frustration among blacks.

De Klerk made his announcement in Parliament on Feb. 1, saying legislation would be introduced to scrap the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, which reserve 87 percent of the country's land for the white minority, as well as the 1984 Black Communities Act, which enforces rigid segregation.

He also said the Population Registration Act, which separates all South Africans into racial groups for living, voting and identification purposes, would be eliminated.

The United States and the European Community welcomed de Klerk's announcement, and some governments indicated that sanctions imposed to protest apartheid could now be lifted. The African National Congress, South Africa's largest black nationalist group, said the reforms would have little impact on the daily lives of blacks here and urged foreign govern-

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A14 MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1991

THE WASHINGTON POST

South African Reforms Unlikely

SOUTH AFRICA, From A1

ments not to "be hasty" in ending sanctions.

Ever since de Klerk's announcement, Pretoria's new buzzword in discussing the reforms has been "community rights." But the minister of constitutional development, Gerrit Viljoen, admitted last week in a briefing that "there isn't really much difference" between "community rights" and "minority rights," a concept blacks regard as a euphemism for maintenance of white privileges.

The ministers also said no changes will be made during the interim period in the government's "own-affairs" policy, in which whites, Indians and mixed-race Coloreds run separate education, health and other services.

The only hint that some radical change might occur in the near future, at least at the local level, came from Planning and Provincial Affairs Minister Herus Kriel. He said formation of a single municipal council and voting for its members on a common voters' roll that includes blacks would be possible now—if neighboring black and white town councils agreed to such steps in negotiations.

Viljoen, however, seemed opposed to such voting, saying the issue of giving blacks the vote was "a basic and fundamental matter of a new constitution" that could not be negotiated "in a piecemeal, interim, transitional way."

Viljoen said the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 will be repealed in the current session of Parliament, but he did not indicate what would replace these laws or suggest any massive restitution of land to its original owners.

He also acknowledged that "much more" was necessary than just the repeal of the two acts to ensure that all South Africans have equal access to land and that existing private property and title rights are protected.

However, according to Kriel, there are "no plans underway" to provide compensation for land and

property forcibly taken from black individuals and tribes by the government. He also dismissed "so-called affirmative action" as a failed approach to correcting social wrongs in Western countries that would not be adopted here.

About the best non-whites could hope for, at least those with sufficient money, was access to loans from the Land Bank to enable them to buy farms and plots of land just like whites do now, according to Kriel and other ministers.

While de Klerk also announced that the Group Areas Act of 1966 will be scrapped, he left unclear just what would happen afterward to promote integration, if anything.

According to Kriel, the integration of segregated neighborhoods would be left to "market forces" to resolve over time. "We're not going to try and force through some gimmick that neighborhoods go black or go white," said Kriel.

He acknowledged that the repeal of this act would do little to resolve the housing problem for blacks "because the majority of black people in this country do not form part of the higher-income group" with money to buy homes in white areas.

"We will have to live with informal housing for a long, long time to come," he said. "We haven't got the money. It is just not possible to provide formal housing for everybody in this country of ours."

The government, he said, intends to allow each community to set its own "standards and norms" short of discriminating on the basis of color, race or creed. Kriel said these would include regulating such things as housing density, health regulations and animal ownership.

The only piece of proposed new legislation dealing specifically with racial discrimination—which was not mentioned by any of the ministers—is the General Law Amendment Bill. Press reports say it prohibits any discrimination on the basis of race or class in any land or property transactions.

The biggest surprise in de Klerk's announcement was that the Population Registration Act of 1950—which separates all South

to Satisfy Blacks

Africans into four major racial groups at birth, affecting virtually all aspects of life—would be repealed. But it will be replaced by "temporary transitional measures" keeping the present tricameral Parliament in place and assuring that any by-elections will still be on the basis of separate voters' rolls.

Ministers also made clear that as long as the apartheid Parliament remains in place, there is unlikely to be any progress toward establishing a single national education system, a chief demand of blacks.

"The [education] system as we know it is part and parcel of the constitution," Minister of National Education Louis Pienaar told reporters. "If you want to change

that, you need to change the constitution."

Similarly, Minister of Law and Order Adriaan Vlok quashed expectations of fundamental changes in the Internal Security Act, notably its Section 29 which allows the police to detain people for unlimited time without trial. Vlok said this was needed to combat "terrorism" from both white and black extremists opposed to the reform process.

Saying that the police had solved 90 percent of white right-wing terrorist cases, he said this would not have been possible "if we were not able to use Section 29 to detain people and question them until they give satisfactory replies to our questions."

Charge these men, say legal teams

The judgment on Lieutenant-General Lothar Neethling's suit against two Johannesburg newspapers provides powerful ground for the state to consider criminal action against several top policemen.

By GAVIN EVANS and CHARLES LEONARD



Lieutenant-General Lothar Neethling ... Down but not out

Photo: KEVIN CARTER



Captain Paul Van Dyk



Brigadier Willem Schoon

THE curtain has fallen on General Lothar Paul Neethling — and he may take several other top policemen down with him.

The attorney-general should investigate charges of murder, attempted murder and several other serious criminal offences against at least five senior South African Police officers following the Neethling judgment, according to several lawyers and legal experts from the Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression interviewed by *The Weekly Mail*.

For the moment Neethling remains in his job. So do all of the other policemen implicated by last Friday's judgment — except those who had previously retired.

As police spokesman have been quick to point out, Neethling's failed suit against *Vrye Weekblad* and *The Weekly Mail* was a civil matter in which the requirement of proof is a balance of probabilities, whereas a criminal case requires proof beyond reasonable doubt.

But the judgment of Mr Justice Krieger was detailed and emphatic — and provides powerful grounds for the state to consider criminal action against some of the SAP's current and former top brass.

Below are the names of men and the charges which could be brought against them, according to the legal experts.

Lieutenant-General Lothar Paul Neethling: Attempted murder, assault, perjury and perhaps murder.

The court accepted Captain Dirk Coetzee's account of his visits to Neethling's office and house to obtain poison to assassinate the unreliable Askari (turned African National Congress member) Peter Dhlamini and unco-operative ANC member Vusi Mavuso. Neethling supplied the poison, which did not work — clearing the general of a murder charge in this instance. Instead there was a *nova cause* (new cause) of their deaths: when the poison failed to take effect, Captain Koos Vermeulen shot the two men.

But, in deliberately supplying the poison, Neethling carried out an act with the intended consequence of the death of two men — sufficient for a charge of attempted murder, if Krieger's judgment is accepted. The fact that the poison was administered could justify an alternative charge of assault.

Coetzee said he also supplied the "knock-out drops" used to poison ANC member Sizwe Kondile in June 1981. Kondile was later shot dead by a security policeman from Komatiport, Coetzee said.

Coetzee also quoted Major Archie Flemington as saying that Neethling had supplied poison in alcohol bottles intended for the murder of

ANC members in Maputo. Flemington denied this in court, but was found not to be a credible witness. However, Krieger found that this particular allegation had not been proved to be true (though he did not find it had been disproved).

Similarly, former Military Intelligence agent Leslie Lesia told the court that poisoned beer supplied by Neethling's laboratory had been used for the murder of ANC member Gibson Ncube. Krieger found that Lesia was a credible witness, but it had not been proved that the beer came from the Police Forensic Laboratory.

Krieger also found that Neethling had consistently lied to the court and the Harms Commission, and endeavoured to mislead both — the basis for possible charges of perjury.

Neethling still holds his position as head of the police forensic laboratory, and his rank as one of three SAP lieutenants.

Brigadier Willem Schoon:

Murder, attempted murder, arson, receiving stolen goods and accessory after the fact to several crimes.

Schoon, who headed the key C Section (dealing with the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress) of the security police in Pretoria, was implicated by Coetzee in several murders and attempted murders.

Coetzee said it was Schoon who phoned Neethling to supply the poison to murder Dhlamini and Mavuso, and knew of the order given by his colleague in Natal, Brigadier Johan van der Hoven for the murder of human rights lawyer Griffiths Mxenge.

He said Schoon also gave orders for the burning of Mxenge's car near the Swaziland border.

He also gave the orders for the Botswana raid on the house of ANC member Joyce Dipale where there was an attempted murder of two ANC

members by Coetzee's squad.

Coetzee also said that Schoon knew of the incident where dagga was planted on a kombi transporting union members from Port Elizabeth to Harare. The unionists were stopped at Craddock and no dagga was found.

When the men slept over in Johannesburg their kombi was stolen from the parking garage of their hotel. Coetzee alleged that the thieves were in his squad and that Schoon was informed of this incident.

Another incident was that of the diamond dealer in Lesotho who "double-crossed" Coetzee's men in a diamond deal. Schoon was allegedly informed of the dealer's killing afterwards but took no action against those involved.

Coetzee claimed that Schoon received the radio from the man's car when it was stripped before the car was sold in Swaziland.

Schoon, who attended some of the Neethling trial, is now retired.

Major Paul van Dyk: Murder, attempted murder, theft, arson.

Coetzee claimed that Van Dyk was involved with him in several car thefts in Swaziland. The cars were then used in South African security operations in the then Rhodesia and South West Africa.

He was involved in the bombing of the "White House", an ANC transit house in Swaziland. One person was evidently killed in this attack.

After the Griffiths Mxenge murder he accompanied Coetzee and others in burning Mxenge's car.

He was also allegedly involved in the Botswana raid on the Dipale house.

He went along with Coetzee when Mavuso and Dhlamini were shot near Komatiport.

He was, according to Coetzee, an accomplice in the Sizwe Kondile killing. Kondile was released officially but he then disappeared mysteriously. Coetzee said the young ANC activist was abducted by security police, given "knockout drops" supplied by Neethling and then shot in the head.

Van Dyk was an accomplice in the Port Elizabeth unionists incident, according to Coetzee.

He also attended the trial but was never called by Neethling as a witness.

Van Dyk is a former head of the Vlakplaas Askari base and is now at security police headquarters in Pretoria.

Captain Koos Vermeulen:

Murder, attempted murder, theft, arson.

When Lothar Neethling's "poison" failed to kill Dhlamini and Mavuso, the two men were given "knock-out drops" to make them drowsy after which Vermeulen stamped on their heads and then shot them both through the skulls, using a Makarov pistol, Coetzee said.

Vermeulen was aware of the Griffiths Mxenge killing. He was also involved in burning Mxenge's car after the human rights lawyer was killed by Coetzee's squad. He was also involved in the Botswana raid, according to Coetzee.

Relating to the Port Elizabeth unionists incident, Coetzee said that Vermeulen was the man who stole the kombi from the parking garage of the Johannesburg Hotel where the men were staying.

Vermeulen, who also attended the trial but was not called as a witness, is currently on detached duty with the Bophuthatswana security police.

Major Archie Flemington: Murder or accessory thereto.

He supplied the pistol for the Kondile murder and was alleged by Coetzee to have been present when it occurred.

He was also allegedly present when the bodies of Mavuso and Dhlamini were buried.

He is now retired.



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PRESS STATEMENT ON FW DE KLERK'S SPEECH

1/2/91

No doubt FW DeKlerk's speech today to the tri-cameral parliament will be hailed by some as a major advance. However, an initial analysis of the speech suggests that FW DeKlerk and the Nationalist Party have failed to grasp the nettle of democracy.

The speech does not provide answers on key questions: removing the obstacles to negotiations, mechanisms for a democratic transition to a new constitution, and the massive socio-economic crisis facing our country. The proposals contained in the speech do not empower the mass of ordinary people in our country to participate in the making of a new South Africa. The overwhelming impression is that the government, which represents a small minority of South Africans, remains intent on determining the pace and content of change from above.

This is unacceptable for a government which has no mandate from the majority of the people to govern. In this respect COSATU finds it extremely disturbing that the government has rejected out of hand the overwhelming demand for a Constituent Assembly and an Interim Government. This refusal to democratise the negotiations process bodes ill for our future.

Furthermore, the government's acceptance of the ANC's proposal for an all-party conference will be stillborn unless the government takes decisive steps to remove the obstacles to negotiations. DeKlerk's speech is inexplicably silent on the vital issues of a general amnesty for political prisoners and exiles, the repeal of the Internal Security Act and other security legislation, measures to bring the security forces under control, the ending of political trials, and disbanding of death squads and vigilantes.

Furthermore there was no indication in the speech that there will be a speeding up in implementing the agreements reached between the government and the ANC.

The democratic movement has made it clear that unless the government acts to remove these obstacles to the creation of a climate of free political activity, it will be impossible for the negotiations process to commence in earnest. The government is displaying an alarming lack of seriousness about addressing these

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issues.

COSATU welcomes the government's long-overdue decision to repeal the Land Act and Group Areas Act. However, the government itself has conceded that the racial patterns of land ownership and residence will remain essentially undisturbed by the repeal of decades-old legislation which has firmly entrenched these patterns. Meaningful affirmative action will have to be taken to address the historical inequalities created by apartheid in these areas.

The fact that the Population Registration Act will be replaced by interim measures to keep racial structures intact clearly demonstrates that apartheid institutions will continue to exist until a new, democratic and non-racial constitution is adopted.

The government has only gone half-way in accepting the need for non-racial municipalities with a single tax base. Giving white local authorities the prerogative on whether to create single structures with adjacent communities is like the schools option which the government has implemented: it effectively gives whites at local level the right to maintain apartheid structures intact, regardless of the views of black people living in those areas. The government is abrogating its responsibility to dismantle unpopular and illegitimate apartheid structures.

COSATU is in agreement with the government that there will have to be a vigorous debate on the process of economic restructuring. This debate however cannot be carried out on terms laid out by business and government alone. There is a need for a dialogue which includes the views of those who have been excluded from policy-making in this arena, particularly the trade unions. Real consultation must take place on how the economy should be restructured.

In this regard, free market sloganeering is not particularly helpful. Nor is it constructive to blame workers for inflation and unemployment. The demands of workers arise from the fact that they are struggling to survive. A recent survey indicates that about 70% of black people are living below the poverty line.

It is not good enough to say that we need economic growth. We must ensure that the economy of our country grows in a way which meets the needs of South Africa's people, and addresses the most unequal distribution of wealth in the world.

We need to address the legacy of apartheid at a social level, and not simply at a legal level. In this regard FW deKlerk's statement that the disparity in social spending will not be eliminated in the near future is particularly disturbing. The extent of this inequality is reflected in the fact that the government's social spending in the last year has been five times more per capita on whites than it has on black people.

Issues of housing, education, training, literacy, unemployment and health have to be addressed at the macro level. The government's shifting of responsibility to the private sector in these areas holds out no prospect of meaningful development for the overwhelming majority of our people.

In the final analysis, COSATU is still looking for meaningful signs that the government has committed itself to a thoroughgoing and genuine negotiation process for the political, social and economic transformation of our country.

To: Africa Fund staff
From: Jim Cason

January 24, 1991

The U.S. government is lobbying heavily against the ANC's demand for a Constituent Assembly and against the campaign of mass action to protest apartheid laws.

The Africa Fund's Mike Fleshman reports that White House National Security Council staffer Bob Frasura is pressing top ANC leaders to drop their demand for a Constituent Assembly and to stop the campaign of mass action. In meetings with Mandela and other top ANC leaders, Fraiser is reportedly "leaning very very heavily" on the ANC to accept what are essentially South African State President F. W. de Klerk's proposals for change.

De Klerk is proposing that an all party conference draft a new constitution by consensus, the constitution would then be approved in a referendum of the entire South Africa electorate. Under these provisions, Fleshman points out, the Conservative Party (which would presumably have to be a part of the all party conference) would have a veto over the shape of the new constitution.

The ANC position, as outlined in Mandela's January 8 paper, calls for an all party conference, but explicitly says this could not be a substitute for an elected constituent assembly to draw up the new constitution (unless the delegates to the all party congress "obtains a specific popular mandate" through elections).

Confirmation from Washington

Reached in Washington this evening, a State Department official confirmed that the U.S. government is against the idea of a constituent assembly. "Our general position is that we are against the idea of a constituent assembly," he said. "We are encouraging the parties not to pursue the idea of a Constituent Assembly."

This State Department official characterized this position as supportive of Nelson Mandela's January 8 call for a all parties conference. It was pointed out that Mandela specifically said that the all parties conference could not be a substitute for an elected constituent assembly, the State Department still reiterated that the U.S. government did not believe that an elected constituent assembly was necessary for drawing up a new constitution.

When asked if the Namibia model would hold for South Africa, the State Department official again said that he did not believe a constituent assembly was the way to go. Asked about the ANC call for an interim government, the State Department official said that it was premature to talk of an interim government.

The U.S. does believe that negotiations, based on an all party congress, are the best way to manage the transition. While trying not to get drawn into it, the official said that perhaps a referendum following the all party conference might be one option for approving the new constitution. "We support negotiations," he said, "an elected constituent assembly is putting the cart before the horse."

The State official also said the U.S. is opposed to the "ANC program of confrontation" which he asserted had increased the level of violence in the country.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

4 FEBRUARY 1991

PRESS STATEMENT 91/2

PRESS STATEMENT ON F.W. DE KLERK'S
ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT ON 1 FEB 1991

The Human Rights Commission welcomes the stated intention of the Government to repeal the Land Acts and Group Areas Act and notes with interest that means are now being devised to achieve what was formerly regarded as impossible, namely, the repeal, or at least the suspension, of the Population Registration Act. We regard these measures as the direct product of the twin pressures of the determined rejection of apartheid by the majority population of South Africa and of the universal condemnation and isolation from the rest of the world; we do not see them as favours dispensed by a benign government. At the same time we feel it essential to emphasise that the repeal of these key laws of apartheid will not resolve the conflict in our society if unaccompanied by steps to eliminate the social and economic distortions wrought by nearly 80 years of exclusion of 85% of the population from access to ownership of 87% of South Africa's land; and by 40 years of exclusion similarly of residence rights.

The issue of the repeal or amendment of politically repressive legislation, in particular the Internal Security Act, has been totally avoided by State President De Klerk in his address and we find this glaring omission to be extremely disturbing, if not ominous. It can hardly be interpreted as an oversight on the part of Mr De Klerk, since the whole issue of the removal of obstacles to free political expression as a precursor to meaningful negotiation has been clearly spelt out in the Harare Declaration of August 1989, the United Nation's Declaration of December 1989, and also acknowledged in the Grooté Schuur and Pretoria Minutes to which the Government is a signatory.

The undertakings by the Government in these Minutes "to review existing security legislation... in order to ensure normal and free political activities"(Grooté Schuur Minute) and to "continue reviewing security legislation and its application in order to ensure free political activity and with the view of introducing amending legislation at the next session of Parliament"(Pretoria

Minutes) seems to have been studiously avoided by Mr De Klerk in his address. This side-stepping does not bode well for the early removal of obstacles to negotiation.

The situation on the ground is that detention without trial continues on a daily basis, freedom of assembly is denied as a right and is often refused when applied for, gatherings are declared unlawful and broken up with force resulting in frequent loss of life and injuries, political trials are at their highest level ever, the release of political prisoners is proceeding at a snail's pace, and innumerable obstacles are being placed in the way of the return of exiles.

We should have been at the point where the Parliamentary address would have included a statement to the effect that the Internal Security Act, the embodiment of these draconian powers was to be scrapped or at least drastically amended alongside the repeal of apartheid laws. It seems that Mr De Klerk has not yet been able to convince his security establishment that the time has come to honour the commitments made in terms of the Grooté Schuur and Pretoria Minutes.

SA police face dual accusation

THE GUARDIAN
Thursday January 24 1991

Reuter in Johannesburg

A US-based human rights group and an international lawyers' organisation both yesterday accused South African security forces of fuelling South Africa's township violence.

The Independent Africa Watch said in a report that police and defence forces were stoking the conflict, which killed more than 3,000 people last year, by siding with the Inkatha Freedom Party in its bitter feud with the African National Congress.

And a report by a three-man mission of the International Commission of Jurists, which spent two weeks last August investigating violence in Natal, said that the police there were regarded as partisan, and that serious police misconduct went unchecked.

"Africa Watch charges that the police and defence forces have contributed significantly to the bloodshed that has raged in Natal province for the last six years and more recently in the townships around Johannesburg," the US report says.

It criticised President Bush for keeping quiet about the factional violence during President F.W. de Klerk's official visit to Washington last year.

"The silence of the US on this issue, combined with the Bush Administration's high praise for Mr De Klerk's reforms, presents an unfortunately unbalanced view of the human rights situation in South Africa," the report said.

Africa Watch called on the

South African government to restrain its security forces and said that Washington should maintain strict anti-apartheid sanctions until Pretoria had met all conditions that would end human rights abuses.

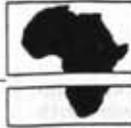
Africa Watch based its report on the testimony of 40 South Africans in the affected areas, and listed cases where police joined with Inkatha in attacks on ANC supporters and their allies. The report alleged that police refused to disarm Inkatha supporters in Natal or to prevent attacks on ANC targets.

The report from the international Commission of Jurists claimed that South African police regularly detained members of two ANC allied organisations, the United Democratic Front and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and searched their supporters for arms.

In a 36-page document it said that "the police allowed violent acts to be perpetrated by Inkatha without taking any action. They did not show the same indulgence to the UDF and COSATU."

The ICJ, a private body campaigning for the rule of law, said that there should be substantial increase in police resources in Natal and that police must be ordered to prevent clashes, and not to remain on the sidelines.

During their stay, the members of the mission, including a British lawyer specialising in human rights, John Macdonald, met government ministers, senior police officers and ANC and Inkatha leaders.



Massive police crime drive masks bid to remove ANC's armed option

JOHANNESBURG/ President FW de Klerk's government has embarked on probably the most substantial security force mobilisation since the 1986 state of emergency.

Centred on 'Operation Sentry', euphemistically described as a plan to get "bobbies back on the beat", the mobilisation will flood the country with security force personnel for the next six months.

They will have two main objectives: restricting the ANC's tactical flexibility in the run-up to negotiations by preventing any prospect of resuming its armed struggle; and curbing a massive surge of violent crime throughout the country.

In targeting the ANC, the timing of Operation Sentry takes account of the ANC's warning, at its December 16 conference, that it will consider resuming its 30-year guerrilla war if Pretoria does not stick to the agreed time-table of removing obstacles to negotiations.

Operation Sentry will also bolster security force presence during the precise period of the ANC's planned campaign of mass protest, from this month to July. And it comes as the ANC is preparing to establish "township self-defence units".

The liberation movement's December consultative conference voted for the rapid establishment of these forces to prevent a repeat of the slaughter of almost 1,000 people in the invasion of black residential townships surrounding Johannesburg by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkatha movement in the wake of the ANC's ceasefire in August.

Viable self-defence units, trained by specialists from the ANC's *Umkhonto weSizwe* army, would limit the leverage a renewed outbreak of violence would give De Klerk during crucial pre-negotiations talks.

Operation Sentry, however, goes beyond this

explicit political objective. A real and substantial explosion in levels of violent crimes saw 8,000 people murdered in non-political killings last year - almost 20 a day. This is in addition to the 4,000 people slaughtered in political conflicts and pushes South Africa to the top of the rankings in non-political killings per capita in the world.

Three key factors have ensured that the government's response would be substantial:

- * The increase in police fatalities and injuries - eight deaths a month on average last year, with one in 10 members of the 70,000 force injured in the line of duty;

- * The increasingly common use of firearms - and particularly AK-47 assault rifles, flooding into South Africa from all over the region - in criminal activities from bank

heists to bag-snatchings; and

- * The increasing numbers of whites becoming victims of these crimes.

While the national murder figure for 1990 represents a 25% increase on 1989 figures, the last months of 1990 saw the number of white murder victims jump by 50% on the '89 statistics.

These factors came together most graphically two days before Christmas when car thieves armed with an AK-47 shot dead a white housewife in the driveway of her home in the elite northern Johannesburg suburb of Morningside when she attempted to stop them stealing her car.

Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok announced Operation Sentry four days later.

The campaign includes:

- * A major recruitment drive intended to attract 10,000 additions to the 70,000-strong force by July plus increasing the proportion of police actually out on the streets rather than staffing police stations and offices. Given the reassuring label of "bobbies on the beat", the new police patrols will, in fact be paramilitary, armed and equipped with bullet-proof vests.

- * A further addition to the force, Vlok announced, was the deployment of former members

of the notorious Koevoet counter-insurgency unit in Namibia in a new rural unit whose nominal objective will be tracking stolen cattle.

- * An effective but undeclared reimposition of elements of the state of emergency lifted by De Klerk last February. Backed by army units to "provide assistance to the civic authority" police plan a six-month blitz of road-blocks, intensified border patrols, and

cordon-and-search operations in black residential townships, rural areas and even white cities and suburbs throughout

the country. Many of these operations are directed at locating and seizing weapons, particularly AK-47s rifles now available for as little as R1,000 (Sterling 200) on increasingly saturated township black markets. This is about half the going price early last year. The major source is Mozambique - where Renamo fighters are making a killing from their South African-supplied stocks, but individuals in the Mozambican armed forces are also getting in on the act - Namibia (courtesy of arms caches established prior to South Africa's withdrawal) and even, apparently, Angola.

Ironically, many of

these weapons were supplied by Pretoria or bought with South African funds; the government's policy of regional destabilisation is coming home to roost.

To cut into the trade, but with an eye on restricting ANC preparations for a possible resumption of its guerrilla actions, Vlok announced, as part of Operation Sentry, huge increases in rewards offered for information on illegal weapons or their surrender to police.

The inflated rewards could see a massive increase in cross-border AK-47 traffic from Mozambique.

Police
are now offering
R6,000 for
an AK-47
(more than
double the

figure of R2,500 offered from mid-1990) and R5,000 for radio-controlled explosive equipment - not conventional equipment even for South Africa's relatively well-catered-for criminals.

The rewards have, however, not so far found any takers. Last year's R2 500 offering plus indemnity from prosecution won the grant total of five AK-47s for the police. This is hardly surprising: Local cynics point out that AK-47s are worth far more when taken to banks than at police stations.

If handing over AK-47s for a quick return of R5,000 on an initial R1,000 investment catches on however - and local journalists have calculated by ploughing the reward money back into AK-47 purchases at township rates, budding entrepreneurs would need just four transactions to become Rand millionaires - the inflated rewards could see a massive increase in cross-border AK-47 traffic from Mozambique.

Already Swazi police have arrested a South African after finding in his car boot 10 AK-47s, a Scorpion machine pistol, three pistols and 10,000 rounds of ammunition - a haul which probably cost

him R10,000 in Mozambique, but would have netted him nearly R100,000 from South African authorities.

Linked to the rewards are proposals going before parliament later this year for stiffer penalties for illegal possession of firearms and the introduction of penalties for negligence resulting in the theft of firearms.

Vlok also announced plans to extend the government's informer network, still recovering from the decimation resulting from the 'necklacings' of township informers in 1985-86.

But Operation Sentry's objectives extend beyond the immediate.

Later this month the Johannesburg-based Wilsenach advertising agency launches an extensive television and newspaper advertising campaign to "soften" the police's present "violent image".

The campaign, the cost of which advertising industry sources say is

"high", is apparently intended to persuade South Africans that the function of the police force is to protect lives and property - something not immediately obvious here.

Another of Sentry's elements is the establishment of a think-tank of senior police officer, academic criminologists, politicians and civilians.

Although the think-tank will in theory be mandated to formulate an anti-crime strategy, both it and the advertising campaign appear to be part of an initiative to head off demands for the dissolution of the present force and its replacement by a politically neutral policing structure under an interim or transitional government.

Late last year reports from within the country's security establishment spoke of an investigation by former security police chief Johan Coetzee into different means of avoiding this, and entrenching the existing force. *(Own correspondent.)*

Big boost in rewards for AKs

New government financial rewards for hand-over of illegal weapons marks a massive increase - more than double in the case of AK-47 rifles, which go from R2,500 to R6,000. The new rewards, announced by Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok at New Year, are:

- * AK-47 rifle or any machine-gun - R6,000 (£1 200)
- * Discovery of an arms-cache - R5,000
- * Radio-controlled explosive equipment - R5,000
- * Vehicle mine - R4,000
- * Anti-personnel mine - R1,000
- * RPG-7 rocket launcher - R3,000
- * RPG-7 rocket - R1,500
- * Pistol - R950
- * R800 - handgrenade
- * Detonators - R150

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