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MCH91-20-6-4

University of London

Institute of Commonwealth Studies

SYMPOSIUM ON

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICA
FROM APARTHEID TO?

Saturday 30th June 1990

Paper for discussion at 11.15 a.m.

BACK TO THE BARRACKS: THE SADF AND THE CHANGING
NATURE OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS
UNDER THE BOTHA AND DE KLERK ADMINISTRATIONS

by

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REFERENCES.

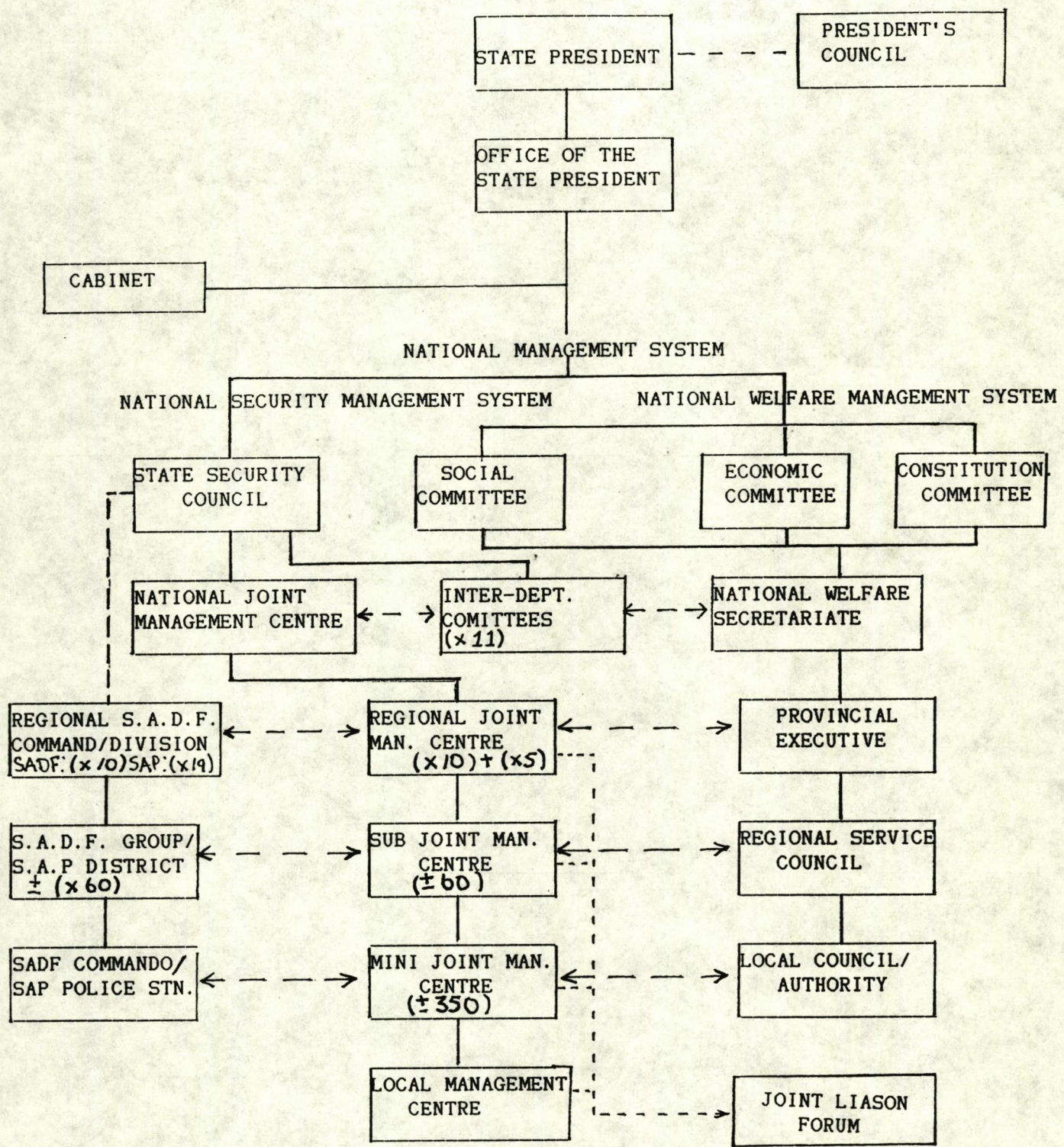
- 1.) Exceptions to this trend have been P. Frankel (Pretoria's Praetorians: 1984); K.W. Grundy (The Rise of the South African Security Establishment: 1983) and various journal articles by Annette Seegers (Political Science Department, University of Cape Town).
- 2.) This terminology, despite its usefulness as a descriptive short-hand at the level of political and journalistic writing, has also found its way into the academic literature on the role of the S.A.D.F. in the 1980's.
- 3.) Representatives of the "societal" or "externalist" approach in Western Military sociology include S.E. Finer (particularly his "The Man on Horseback"; 1988) and Samuel Huntington.
- 4.) Prominent representatives of the "internalist" approach include M. Janowitz and H. Lasswell.
- 5.) Quoted in S.E. Finer's "The Man on Horseback", Westview Press, Colorado, 1988, page 188.
- 6.) The four component areas of military sociology can be regarded as being 1. the organization of the armed forces; 2. the professionalism of the armed forces; 3. disorganization of the armed forces and 4. the nature and scope of civil-military relations.
- 7.) Finer specifies 6 general forms of military influence: 1. normal constitutional influence; 2. collusion and/or competition with the authorities; 3. intimidation of the civilian authorities; 4. threats of non-cooperation with the authorities or violence towards them; 5. failure to defend the authorities against violence and 6. violence.
- 8.) The case for a relational theory of state power is argued cogently in Nicos Poulantzas's "State, Power and Socialism", NLB, 1978.
- 9.) General G.E. Brink in the "Introduction" to Neil Orpen's "East African and Abyssinian Campaigns: South African Forces in World War Two", Vols 1-4, Purnell, Johannesburg, 1968.
- 10.) Du Toit, J.J. "Die Geskiedenis van die Personeelfunksie in die S.A. Weermag sedert WO1 tot 31 Januarie 1981", in Militaria, 18/4, pages 14-16.
- 11.) Orpen, N. op cit, pages 331-332.
- 12.) Tylden, G. "The Armed Forces of South Africa", City of Johannesburg Africana Museum, Trophy Press, Johannesburg, 1982.
- 13.) Jacobs, C.J. "Die Rol van die Unieverdigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die nywerheidsnluste van Januarie 1914", Militaria, 18/4, 1988, page 49.
- 14.) Orpen, N. op cit, page 33.
- 15.) Steenkamp, W. "The Soldiers", Don Nelson Publishers, 1978 - see section on General Poole.
- 16.) Daily Telegraph, 19 September 1961
- 17.) Times, June 7th 1961
- 18.) Sunday Times, June 15th 1961.
- 19.) Guardian, 26 April 1965.
- 20.) Kaplan, D. "The S.A. State: the origins of a racially exclusive democracy" in Insurgent Socialist, 1980, page 85.
- 21.) Wolpe, H. Race, Class and the Apartheid State, James Curry, 1988.
- 22.) Picard, J.H. (Brig.) Militaria, 19/2, 1989, pages 2-3.
- 23.) Tylden, G. op cit, pages 44-45.
- 24.) Dale, R. The South African Armed Forces and their links with the United Kingdom, mimeo (Militaria 1978).
- 25.) Guardian, 26 April 1965.

1989.

- 58.) Author's personal experience in the S.A.D.F.
- 59.) Author's knowledge of DM I structures based on interviews with former DMI personnel and his own involvement in the S.A.D.F. (1978-1986).
- 60.) Interviews with former S.A.D.F. personnel.
- 61.) Guardian, 25 March 1980.
- 62.) See Geldenhuys, D. and Kotze, H. "Aspects of Political Decision-making in South Africa", Politikon, Vol 10, No 1, June 1983.
- 63.) "State Security Council Not Sinister" in Paratus, November 1983, pages 9 -11.
- 64.) Cawthra, G. op cit, see chapters four and five.
- 65.) Works of the following counter-insurgency theorists feature prominently in the training courses conducted at the S.A.D.F. College; Army College; Air Force College; Naval Staff College and the DMI's Intelligence Centre (Waterkloof): 1. McCuen, J. The Art of Counter-Revolutionary Warfare, Faber, 1964; 2.) Beaufre, A. Introduction to Strategy, Faber and Faber, London, 1963; 3.) Liddell-Hart. Strategy, Praeger, New York, 1968; 4.) Calula, D. Counter-insurgency Warfare, Pall Mall Press, London, 1964.
- 66.) See Rhodie, E. op cit, for an account of the "De Gaulle option".
- 67.) Willie Breytenbach in the Financial Mail, 8 August 1980.
- 68.) Jack Spence "Why Botha need not fear a palace revolution" in The Times, 28 August 1985.
- 69.) In researching the backgrounds of a selected sample of 50 senior officers between 1966-1990 the author observed that many had trained at military institutions abroad in both the U.S.A. and the U.K. - Camberley Staff College, Imperial War College, various Royal Naval institutions as well as at Fort Bragg and Fort Leavenworth in the U.S.A.
- 70.) ST, 24 March 1983.
- 71.) Guardian, 13 March 1990.
- 72.) International Herald Tribune, 4 September 1984.
- 73.) Guardian, 24 October 1984.
- 74.) IHT, 5 September 1984.
- 75.) IHT, 7 September 1984.
- 76.) Financial Times, 12 September 1984.
- 77.) IHT, 24 October 1984.
- 78.) Guardian, 19 November 1984.
- 79.) Star, 26 November 1984.
- 80.) Star, 15 November 1984.
- 81.) McCuen, J. op cit. and mimeo of confidential document circulated to various middle-ranking and senior civil servants.
- 82.) Paratus, op cit. pages 9-11.
- 83.) "Burokrasie het hef in die hande: Regering agter skerms" by H. Kotse in INSIG, Maart 1989 pages 11-14.
- 84.) Information drawn from Hough, M. and Van Der Merwe, M. op cit. and from author's own experience in the JMC structures of the Eastern Cape.
- 85.) See the contribution by General Van Rensburg (Deputy-Director of the Strategy Branch in the State Security Council) on "Strategy" in Jackson, R.L. Security - A National Strategy, Perskor, 1987.
- 86.) Star, 17 March 1986.
- 87.) Star. op cit. 1986
- 88.) Authors [personal experience in S.A.D.F. deployment in the "townships".
- 89.) Southscan, 13 January 1988.
- 90.) Paratus, March 1989, page 30.

- 125.) Ries and Dommissiee (1990) pages 101-102.
 - 126.) BBC MR (Sapa) 21 January 1990 and Weekly Mail 26 January 1990.
 - 127.) Star, 7 March 1990.
 - 128.) Financial Mail, 15 December 1989.
 - 129.) South, 25 April 1990.
 - 130.) Cawthra, G. op cit, page 262.
 - 131.) Author's personal experience in the S.A.D.F.
 - 132.) Survey conducted by the author over a period ranging from 1966-1990.
 - 133.) Weekly Mail, 1 June 1990, pages 10-11.
 - 134.) Weekly Mail, 25 May 1990.
 - 135.) Daily Despatch (SA), 4 August 1989.
 - 136.) Independant, 29 August 1989.
 - 137.) Star, 7 March 1990.
 - 138.) See Cawthra, op cit, page 262 and IISS "The Military Balance", 138-~~139~~.
 - 139.) Ferguson, G, The Coup d'eta, Arms and Armour Press, 1987, New york, page 8.
 - 140.) Golub, G. The Bolsheviks and the Armed Forces in Three Revolutions, Progress Publishers, Moscow.
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THE DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORITY DURING THE BOTHA-PERIOD (1978-1989).



argument is that the ultra-right constitute a separate military entity and must be dealt with accordingly. This argument needs to be critically confronted - as does the argument that armed units of Inkhata are separate from the S.A.P. and the KwaZulu Police. The stark reality behind these para-military groupings is the fact that far from being external to the S.A.D.F. and the S.A.P. they are structures that are based WITHIN and at times organised by the S.A.P. and the S.A.D.F. The AWB and other far-right groupings find their power bases in the S.A.D.F. Commando system and the uniformed ranks of the S.A.P. These structures (the S.A.D.F. Commando system and the S.A.P. uniformed and reservist complements) are officially part of the S.A.D.F. and the S.A.P. and it therefore remains the duty of the S.A.P. and the S.A.D.F. "om hierdie probleem uit te wis". A similar parallel exists with Inkhata and the activities of the KwaZulu police. The KZP is not an autonomous organ "outside" of the South African security establishment. It is organised, trained and supplied by the S.A.P. and its control lies solidly within the province of the S.A.P.'s responsibilities.

A third point of importance relates to clandestine activities of both the Special Forces and D.M.I.'s Directorate of Special Tasks. If De Klerk's rhetoric of internal and regional peace is to be taken seriously then surely a corollary of this argument would be the disbanding and/or restructuring of the Department of Military Intelligence and the Special Forces Directorate? It should be strongly argued that the Special Forces in their entirety (Reconnaissance Regiments, 32 Battalion and the C.C.B.) should be disbanded and their personnel retired (a preferable option). The activities of DMI must be reduced to that of standard military intelligence organ - the tactical intelligence tasks of "counting the tanks and the areoplanes". Their involvement in the activities of MNR, UNITA and the various "cells" of the CCB must be ended. A final point pertains to the issue of conscription in its many forms - "national service", Citizen Force, Commando etc. Economically, politically and militarily a post-apartheid South Africa has no need for conscription as blanket policy. A post-apartheid military need not constitute more than 40 000 standing personnel (as opposed to the current 250 000 standing) and these can be constituted out of the present P.F. cadre, full-time M.K. combatants and the soldiers of the homeland "defence forces".

Without a co-ordinated approach to these issues the capacities of the S.A.D.F./S.A.P. and their auxiliaries will greatly enhanced both now and at a future juncture. Although the bulk of the Permanent Force officer corps has remained obedient (if not loyal) to De Klerk it must be remembered that not all S.A.D.F. and even less S.A.P. personnel have returned to the barracks.

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"Displacing a government and either proclaiming one's own rule or putting a nominee in power is an exercise in control: control of the country, control of its rulers, control of the armed forces." (139)

In choosing the targets of a coup it remains important for the plotters to:

1. locate the real centre of political power.
2. subordinate or neutralise party leaders and bureaucratic heads.
3. win the support of business.
4. neutralise trade-unions, civic organizations etc.
5. neutralise political opposition.
6. neutralise local government structures.
7. preserve the unity and morale of one's armed forces.

"Coups" can involve the execution of the coup from the top involving a small group of senior trusted officers; a civilian/military plot to oust unpopular civilian rulers or a putsch in which a clique within the armed forces acts against the civilian authorities. It is important to recall that coups are not necessarily mounted by senior officers and can be mounted by small groups of junior officers or even middle-level commanders. Also important in a consideration of a right-wing coup is the fact that the loyalty of the bulk of white policemen lies largely within the orbit of the C.P.; H.N.P. and A.W.B. A large number of senior S.A.P. ex-officers are now active members of the C.P. - including former BOSS supremo General Hendrik Van Den Berghe, "Rooi Rus" Swanepoel, General Kobus Visser, Jimmy Kruger (former Minister of Police under Vorster) and others. Another factor to be considered is the possibility of ex-C.C.B. members throwing their support behind these groupings in their preparations for some form of military action - whether at a national, regional or local level.

The threat of right-wing action must be taken seriously but the possibility of a "coup" in the classic sense is unlikely. Firstly, the right-wing does not have the technical, logistical and administrative presence at the General Staff or senior officer level to co-ordinate and muster the requisite personnel essential for such actions. Secondly, the Conservative Party believes it can win a whites-only election and for this reason it will most probably tend to act constitutionally. Thirdly, the S.A.D.F. Permanent Force cadre would most probably block any such attempt either overtly - through confrontation - or covertly - through threats, intimidation and blackmail. However, the real damage that independent right-wing military and police action could cause would be evident at a local and regional level. Using their access to arms and the support they enjoy amongst certain strata of the white population they could use their influence to delay, derail and damage the negotiating process. Individual members could (and in all probability will) attack returning exiles and impede the organizational development of the A.N.C. and its allies. It is at this level, that of local right-wing "destabilization", that the real danger of armed action remains.

suppression - and we're seeing it again now - is ridiculous, because you surely know revolt will surface again. Military pressure should be used as a temporary measure and then you must involve and address the causes" (136)

Other senior S.A.D.F. officers who stood for the D.P. in the election included Colonel Hilda Burnett (former head of the S.A. Army Women's College in George), Commodore Vic Holderness (former O.C. Simonstown Dockyard) and Commandant Marriner (OC Cape Town Highlanders). In addition we should also consider the progressive sympathies of large sections of the officer corps of the Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskeian "Defence Forces". Together these armies command the support of some 9 000 members.

Little evidence of far-right wing sympathies within the senior officer echelons is available - although it must certainly exist. It is known that the former Chief-of-the-S.A.D.F. General Constance Viljoen, who resigned in 1985 over the Cabinda raid, is currently an active supporter and organiser for the Conservative Party. An undetermined variable at this stage remains the likely impact which Malan's likely removal from Cabinet will produce amongst senior S.A.D.F. officers. The possibility of a number of senior officers "going" with Malan cannot be ruled out and the possibility of them attempting to side with the right-wing cannot be ignored either. The general tendency amongst National Party members who have been individually ousted or discredited (as opposed to leaving the Party en-masse, Treurnicht-style) is their relegation to embittered isolation in the political wilderness (witness Generals Botha, Smuts and Hertzog and Vorster, Havenga and Botha). The Conservative Party, for its part, has also been baying for Malan's blood in connection with the Angolan invasion and the C.C.B. revelations although a healthy dose of opportunism towards his possible incorporation into the C.P. cannot be ruled out.

The second question pertaining to the parameters of civil-military relations under the De Klerk administration concerned the cohesiveness behind De Klerk's strategy and the extent to which his supporters and constituents have been prepared for its implementation. The measures De Klerk has been implementing have found a receptive audience amongst the bulk of the National Party parliamentarians. The N.P. has increasingly become the party of Big Business and the professional classes and its links with its original populist elements have been loosened. Testimony to this is the composition of De Klerk's "negotiating team" - almost all (with the exception of Vlok) "verlig", urban-based and educated National Party individuals. The apparent popularity of De Klerk with the National Party must rest on their belief that his "reforms" will "carry the day". The general guidelines behind these measures appear to correspond to the Broederbond's 1986 blueprint in which it was maintained that a system of universal franchise could be implemented provided certain constitutional guarantees were provided for whites (this explains the influence of Gerrit Viljoen in the present administration). Similarly, so long as the bulk of the S.A.D.F. Permanent Force cadre believes that this strategy "works" then it is unlikely that they will be impelled into action. But it remains starkly evident that De Klerk is way ahead of his constituents and that both he and his M.P.'s have not prepared them for the changes they intend introducing. It is at this level that much of De Klerk's strategic planning

different political directions in periods of political crisis. The stark reality behind many military coups - whether successful or unsuccessful - is that they are rarely mounted by an officer corps in its entirety. Groups or factions within the armed forces acting on their own or in collaboration with political actors engage in armed intervention. The second point pertains to a question that was raised in the preceding section: "What is De Klerk's strategy and to what extent has he prepared his Party, his State and his constituency for these developments?".

In analysing the likely response of the S.A.D.F. initial attention should be devoted to its regular Permanent Force "core" - those occupying Command and Control positions at the General Staff, senior officer and middle-level commander levels. The first point that requires mention with reference to the Permanent force, and this point was emphasised repeatedly in the first section of this paper, is that the S.A.D.F. has only recently enjoyed the institutional prominence that it enjoys today. Because of this fact, and the resilience and legitimacy of the political culture in the eyes of its white support base, it has not developed an "interventionist" ethic. Its corporate identity remains largely circumscribed within the parameters of respect for civilian authority and derives from a compound of influences in this regard - the British influence, the Boer influence and the counter-insurgency doctrines to which it has been exposed. Secondly it should be noted that the S.A.D.F. remains a primarily conscript army and that the Permanent Force cadre only accounts for 24% of the standing strength of the S.A.D.F. and a mere 6.7% of its total strength (130). Furthermore P.F. personnel are not deployed in combat positions - with the exception of Special Forces personnel and S.A.A.F. pilots - and are almost exclusively used in command and control, training, administrative and support functions (131). Whilst their predominance at the senior Command and Control levels equips them with the structural means to effect and coordinate any form of military action, it also limits their ability to galvanise a conscript army in support of their objectives.

The third point relates to the attitudes of the P.F. officer corps towards De Klerk's reform programme. Although a loose corporate identity and professional ethic constrains the type of actions pursued by the officer corps at both an individual and collective level, the political and ideological divisions reflected within society do exist within their ranks. However, the social backgrounds from which the officer corps are drawn tends to suggest that the extremes of political opinion are not as pronounced as in the conscript rank-and-file for instance. A survey of some 50 S.A.D.F. Generals and senior officers (colonels and brigadiers) conducted between 1966-1989 reveals that almost all are urban and well-educated officers drawn extensively from both the English and Afrikaans sectors of society (132). Surprisingly few belong to the Broederbond and most have progressed through the S.A.D.F. on the basis of the experience, competence and training. It is from this type of professional category that the Democratic Party and the "New Nats" draw their support and it is reasonable to assume that the senior levels of the officer corps tend in the same political direction. It seems a reasonable assumption that such urbane middle-of-the-road Generals such as Jannie Geldenhuys (Chief-of-the-S.A.D.F.), Major-General Meiring (Officer Commanding Far Northern Transvaal Command) and Admiral Woodburne (Chief-of-the-Navy) could be classified as "De Klerkmanne. For instance it was recently revealed that

leadership struggle. Such actions definitely constituted a new style vis a vis internal National Party politicking (124).

De Klerk acted swiftly and decisively in restoring the Cabinet to the centre of the political decision-making process. Cabinet now met every week, as opposed to every other week, and all important decisions were now referred to it rather than the State Security Council. The National Security Management System was renamed and military and police dominance of its various levels was replaced with civilian authorities (125). De Klerk undertook a series of measures aimed at reducing the official Defence budget by 20% from R10 billion to R8 billion. Announcing the cuts in January the Chief-of-the-S.A.D.F., General Kat Liebenberg, stated that certain S.A.D.F. units would be disbanded, a number of arms projects scrapped, various S.A.A.F. aircraft would be withdrawn from service, personnel would be retrenched with the intention of making the S.A.D.F. a "leaner and meaner" fighting machine. The South African Navy was to retrench 2 000 members, Armscor was to lay-off 2 100 personnel and certain S.A.A.F. and S.A.N. formations and units were either to be disbanded or scaled-down. The South African Army was to cancel 11 major weapons projects, its R250 million Defence H.Q. project was to be put on ice and the South African Army Women's College was to be closed. The South African Air Force was also to have several projects scrapped, 5 types of aircraft withdrawn and its command structure was to be scaled down. A similar "pruning" applied to the South African Medical Services. De Klerk also announced in late 1989 that "national service" would be reduced by a year and that Citizen Force obligations would be halved (126).

After considerable international and domestic pressure De Klerk also conceded to a Judicial Commission of Enquiry into the death-squads and stated:

"I believe that covert operations must be limited to the absolute minimum. I will see this when the enquiry I ordered is complete."

In a surprise development De Klerk allowed a snap debate in parliament over the activities of the C.C.B. (and in a rare move the debate was televised live on the S.A.B.C.) and although protecting Malan (despite the fact that he had voted for Barend du Plessis in the leadership race) he assured parliamentarians that "criminals" would be brought to justice. These measures were widely interpreted in the media as an attack on the S.A.D.F. by De Klerk but the process was actually more subtle - and possibly cynical - than it appeared (127).

Firstly, the decision to replace police and military heads of the JMCs with civilians did not entail a suspension of their operations. There was a change in management style but they continued functioning. The State Security Council, although relegated to its constitutional position as just "another" of the four Cabinet Committees still continued to deliberate on a wide range of security issues. The decision to reduce "national service" was motivated by a host of non-military factors. Roughly one-third of the S.A.D.F.'s manpower had been deployed in combat and support roles in Namibia and the S.A.D.F.'s withdrawal no longer necessitated their presence under arms. The decrease in conflict at both a regional and international

De Klerk's history in the National Party was unique in that he was never identified with either the "verlig" or "verkramp" factions of the party and he assiduously avoided involving himself in the intrigue and conspiracy that characterised its internal politicking. He is most aptly situated in the category of a "party-loyalist", a "man van die middelgrond" who remained unwaveringly loyal to the National Party and who was deeply aware of the internal fragility of the National Party itself. Indeed his history in the National Party had been that of continually attempting to reconcile the different factions within the provincial and federal structures - his role was that of "versoening" (reconciliation). This became particularly evident in the Transvaal National Party leadership struggle in 1982 in which his mediating role prevented the Transvaal National Party from being rent asunder by the "verlig" and the "Verkramp" factions. His unanimous election as Transvaal National Party leader after the defection of Treunicht and his 22 supporters reflected the support he enjoyed amongst those middle-of-the-road National Party supporters. Had the Transvaal National Party split, as the largest and the most influential of the provincial National Parties, then the consequences for the general unity of the Federal National Party would have been dire.

It was precisely these qualities - that of reconciliation and non-factionalism - that De Klerk sought to bear in the 1989 leadership struggle. The National Party had been wracked by a series of corruption scandals involving its most senior members - including those who were standing for leadership. In January 1989 Pietie du Plessis resigned as both Cabinet Minister and M.P. for Lydenburg after details of a property transaction involving his department were revealed. Pietie du Plessis was strongly associated with the Pik Botha faction (the so-called "New Nats" or "Club of 22" as they were known) and was regarded as Pik Botha's right-hand man (121). The intrigue continued further. The Harms Commission revealed that Albert Vermaas had moved R100 million and R150 million out of the country to purchase merely R20 million in aircraft spares for his Chieftain Airlines. A total of R300 million fraud was mentioned in his various dealings (122). Chieftain airlines had been used to fly important political figures to South Africa and was purportedly involved in the sanctions-busting activities of ARMSCOR - Vermaas was also a director on the ARMSCOR affiliate of KENTRON. However, most intriguing was the extent of Vermaas's connection in the upper echelons of State and National Party.

Vermaas was a close friend of both Pik Botha and Magnus Malan both of whom frequently visited him at his private game farm near Pretoria. Barend du Plessis also became acquainted with him after an introduction by Pik Botha and the late Gerard de Kok - who had opened a R1 million game auction on his farm. Indeed despite being aware of irregularities in Vermaas's dealings the Reserve Bank had still provided him with a further R30 million in foreign exchange in 1988. A further scandal concerned the acquisition of the Learntech accounting system by the Department of Education and Training - Gerrit Viljoen's department - in which bribery had been involved. The prospects of this bomb bursting were only narrowly averted when Kobie Coetsee made use of his extraordinary powers as Minister of Justice to charge Vermaas immediately - thereby silencing speculation against him and

the military. It is now accepted by the civilians. It took a bit of education. But they learned very quickly after 1984." (115)

The second was a quote by a certain Commandant Jakkie Cilliers (a former member of the State Security Council Secretariate) in April 1989 regarding the role of the S.A.D.F. in the NSMS. He stated:

"..When the current State President hands over the reigns to his successor many S.A.D.F. officers will welcome a return to the primary function of the S.A.D.F. In place of wooly revolutionary threats and operations in the full view of the international and local media, the S.A.D.F. will concentrate its energies, training and expansion on its primary task: Namely the preservation of the territorial sovereignty of the RSA. If military men have a choice, they rather choose an easily accessible, conventional and definable enemy (116)"

But what then was the likely role of the S.A.D.F. under De Klerk and what were the possibilities of them derailing this process?

5. COUP, INTERVENTION OR INFLUENCE: THE S.A.D.F. AND THE DE KLERK

ADMINISTRATION.

The election of De Klerk and the relative decline in prominence of the S.A.D.F. cannot be attributed to a struggle of personalities alone. Although the ousting of P.W. Botha in the leadership struggle was an important contributory factor in this process it remained, in a sense, "the form behind which necessity lurked". As the preceding scenario illustrates the decline of the S.A.D.F. as a power base within the State and the National Party had its roots in a complex of other factors - military, political and personal. However, the fact that it was via the National Party (or a faction thereof) that the S.A.D.F. initially assumed its position of institutional prominence and that it was via the Party again that its wings were finally clipped indicates the importance of the party-political sphere in its history. It is for this reason that the leadership struggle and the personal history of F.W. De Klerk requires brief mention.

A.) The 1989 leadership struggle within the National Party.

P.W. Botha's stroke and his announcement that he intended separating the posts of Party leader and State President precipitated a flurry of activity within the various National Party factions. Six candidates were initially mooted - Chris Heunis (leader of the Cape National Party), Barend du Plessis (who held no executive position in the Transvaal National Party),

Southern Angolan battlefields. It alienated many of the younger and more "verlig" National Party M.P.'s from the regional concerns espoused by both Botha and the S.A.D.F. and even Treurnicht was to question Malan as to the logic of despatching S.A.D.F. troops on such an operation. Traditional supporters of the N.P. queried whether the staggering losses and humiliation that the S.A.D.F. sustained was sufficient justification for the S.A.D.F.'s concern with establishing, in Jannie Geldenhuys's words, "strategic depth" (107) in the continent (including strong criticisms of S.A.D.F. actions by DIE BURGER and DIE KERKBODE). The "cover-up" of casualties was extensive and it is reliably estimated that 1 in 33 people who participated in the invasion were killed - and this excludes the logically higher percentage of wounded (108). Contributing to the general air of disillusionment with the regional role of the S.A.D.F. was the international climate of reconciliation and the regional resolution of conflicts. The continued destabilization of the sub-continent by the S.A.D.F. was become internationally unacceptable and even Malan had to reluctantly concede that the "S.A.D.F. was prepared to disucess the Angolan situation with the U.S.S.R. following the Afghan example" (109).

The S.A.D.F. had been further tarnished via its mention in the Harms Commission of Enquiry into exchange control irregularities. The investigation of Harms into the affairs of one Albert Vermaas led to a total of 22 charges being laid against him for fraud totalling over R300 million. Albert Vermaas had exceptionally good links with the S.A.D.F. - a number of his companies were ARMSCOR sub-contractors - and evidence revealed that he was a personal friend of Magnus Malan, Pik Botha, P.W. Botha and Barend Du Plessis. Further evidence emerged that his airloine company, Chieftain Airlines, had been involved in a series of ARMSCOR sanctions-busting ventures in Africa and that Malan had been implicated in these exercises (110). Although the details of these transactions were never fully released, the amount of money involved and the clandestine nature of the deals had the capacity, as one source put it, "to make the Information Scandal look like a picnic" (111).

Further dissatisfaction in both political and society surfaced over the revelations concerning the hit-squads of the S.B. and the D.M.I. Although it had long been known that the Special Branch operated hit-squads inside and outside the country it had generally been assumed that the Department of Military Intelligence had abstained from this area of operation. The revelations of the Harms Commission into the CCB produced a backlash from the public, the A.N.C., the MDM, National Party and even Conservative Party M.P.'s. The falsification of the UNTAG messages in November 1989 also elicited strong criticism from traditional National Party quarters. Piet Muller, former editor of DIE BEELD and a prominent National Party member, made the following observation in this regard (an observation that can be taken as fairly representative of the mood within the National Party):

"There must be something seriously wrong inside the South African security establishment if unclarified intelligence with such far-reaching implications for the truth is handed over to the Cabinet. Serious reflection must now be given to the question as to whether South Africa really needs three separate intelligence gathering agencies.... The immense influence which the armed forces have bought

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captured S.A. Army tanks, Armoured Personnel Carriers and weapons. Denied air superiority by the Angolan MIG 23s the S.A.D.F. only really managed to sustain the offensive through its monopoly of artillery ground-fire (using the G5 and the mobile G6 155mm cannons). It was a defeat that was to resound and echo out way beyond the confines of the Angolan battlefield (despite Wynand Breytenbach's ludicrous claim in 1989 that the "winning team" in the form of the S.A.D.F. had destroyed 7 000 enemy troops and 94 tanks for the loss of only 31 "heroes"!) (104).

B.) Analysis of the 1984-1989 period.

What were the factors which contributed to the S.A.D.F.'s rise and its relative decline? The S.A.D.F.'s prominence in the 1984-1989 period had its roots in the partnership it forged with P.W. Botha in the 1966-1984 period. However, it was greatly hastened and facilitated in its role by two factors: the State of Emergency and the implementation of the Executive Presidency. The State of Emergency gave the S.A.D.F. powers and influence it had not previously possessed. A legion of armed bureaucrats emerged in the structures of the NSMS whose careers were defined according to the counter-insurgency rationale behind this structure. S.A.D.F. personnel were effectively indemnified from prosecution from actions emerging from the emergency and a veil of secrecy screened their activities from public view.

But part of the reasons for the growth in the influence of the S.A.D.F. - and indeed the security establishment in its entirety - must be seen in tandem with the establishment of the Executive Presidency in 1984. The position of the State President now carried with it the following functions:

1. The S.P. was the supreme commander of the S.A.D.F.
2. He could address one or more parliaments in a joint sitting.
3. He could pardon offenders.
4. He could approve and ratify international agreements.
5. He could declare martial law, declare war and conduct peace.
6. He could make appointments (including to the Cabinet, the Ministers councils, the Presidents council, the provincial administration and the provincial executive committees) (105).

The period between 1984-1989 marked a real diminution of the power of parliament, the judiciary and the National Party and a shift from parliamentary to executive power. The tri-cameral system was increasingly bypassed by the President's Council, Cabinet was bypassed by the S.S.C., the judiciary was severely limited by the Emergency regulations, the civilian administration was bypassed by the NSMS and the National Party had had much of its power removed when Botha declared in 1982 that Federal and Provincial N.P. caucuses would only have influence of matters of party principle and not matters of party policy. Increasingly Botha came to rely on the advice of those technocrats assembled around him - soldiers, senior civil servants, intelligence officers and confidantes (such as Malan and Heunis). It was the untenability of this system, the inability of Botha on

The attitude of the official opposition was best summarised in the statement of one of the Cape Town P.F.P. councillors that:

"We are being bypassed....officials of our Council are being co-opted to the committees and we don't even know about it. They meddle in the affairs of the council without us being aware of what they are discussing. Decisions are taken and orders are given and we don't even get to see the minutes." (96)

Both English and Afrikaans capital yet again expressed their displeasure with the style of management Botha had adopted in dealing with the Emergency - only to receive the curt response from Botha at a meeting between himself and 200 business leaders that the meeting "was not a party political congress". (97)

Even within the National Party differences of opinion were to surface over the behaviour of the security forces in the townships. In June 1985 Justice Kannemeyer blamed the S.A.P. for "a serious lack of discipline" for their actions in the Langa massacre and many National Party M.P.'s began calling for Le Grange's resignation (98). In November 1986 Le Grange was retired from his position as minister of Police, but not without a power struggle being waged against other "reformist" elements in the S.A.P. by the conservative elements of the S.A.P. hierarchy - the most obvious victim being the transfer of Coetzee (99). One National Party member described the situation as being:

"We are going to have an executive president governing in conjunction with the military and the security apparatus. It is what I call the age of the mandarins. It is going to be government by managers - security managers and other managers. The party's no longer important, it's the structure that matters." (100)

3. S.A.D.F. influence at the regional level: the importance of "strategic depth".

S.A.D.F. influence at a regional level became much more ominous. In May 1986 the S.A.D.F. raided three targets in the Frontline states - a response to both the EPG mission and P.W. Botha's intended visit to Pietersburg in four days time (101). Although the S.A.D.F. had been an ardent proponent of this move - as against the "doves" in the forms of Kobie Coetzee, Gerrit Viljoen, Pik Botha and even Chris Heunis (with Dennis Worrall later citing the raid as the reason behind his resignation) - other Ministers such as De Klerk supported also such a move (102). In the following months the military and civilian hawks of the cabinet were to gain ascendancy. In August 1986 Malan threatened the Frontline state and said "we have not even started using our muscle and capabilities" and at the same Transvaal National Party Congress seconding a motion on order and stability went

4. Communication Committees were responsible for the compilation and distribution of propaganda within a particular area.
5. Joint Liaison Forums were aimed at the incorporation of the private sector into the various upgrading and redevelopment schemes aimed at the "oilspots" (84).
(See Appendix A)

The above-mentioned scenario reveals that the S.A.P. in addition to the S.A.D.F. was also an influential actor in the structures of the N.S.M.S. At Sub-J.M.C. (District) and Mini-J.M.C. levels it was S.A.P. personnel who commanded both the J.M.C. and its most influential committees - the Security committee and the Joint Operational Centre. This division of responsibilities between the influence of the S.A.D.F. at an executive level (the S.S.C., the inter-departmental committees and the regional J.M.C.) and the influence of the S.A.P. at a local level appears to be linked to the primacy afforded the S.A.P. in the "maintenance of law and order" at a local level. At a regional and executive level it was S.A.D.F. structures, more readily available S.A.D.F. personnel and S.A.D.F. strategy that proved more capable of co-ordinating the vast N.S.M.S. network. This last point requires elaboration.

The S.A.D.F. became a prominent actor in these JMCs for a number of reasons. Firstly many of the JMC committees were situated at S.A.D.F. structures and staffed by S.A.D.F. personnel. Secondly, it had been S.A.D.F. representatives in the Strategy Branch of the S.S.C. who had provided the strategy behind the NSMS and it was they who were the most able practitioners of the strategy (85). Thirdly it was increasingly the S.A.D.F. who took the initiative in initiating local development programmes as a result of the lack of familiarity of local bureaucrats with what was essentially a "new" counter-insurgency strategy. A second reason was the inertia, politicization and persistence of a statist ideology that plagued local bureaucracy. Malan, in response to questions put to him by the PFP, maintained in parliament that the JMCs had stabilised such areas as the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and the PWV area (86). JMCs would, according to Malan, decide on an issue that was construed as a legitimate threat to national security and the S.S.C. would recommend that the Treasury release the funds to the appropriate department concerned (87). It was the S.A.D.F. that often determined these priorities on the basis of its own pre-conceived notions of measures essential for "winning hearts and minds".

Upgrading schemes were, however, often financed by the S.A.D.F. itself via the Special Defence Account simply because of the lack of departmental co-ordination at a local level. This had the twin effort of speedily implementing decisions without recourse to local administration and, it was hoped, improving the eyes of the S.A.D.F. in the eyes of the people as the providers of these "services" (in 1986 Malan even referred to the S.A.D.F. as a "service" sector) (88). 30+ "oilspots" were identified throughout the country and upgrading schemes were implemented in each one of them. Included amongst these were Alexandra, Bonteheuwel, Atlanta, Seboken, Tembisa and Kwanobuhle (89). S.A.D.F. presence within the townships was continually caught between the tension of its civic-action programmes - what was ubiquitously referred to as "nie-skiët oorlogaksies" (90) (non-shooting war measures) - and its overtly repressive functions. S.A.D.F.

a precipitous step such as this can only exacerbate a very difficult situation." (78)

The Association of Chambers of Commerce, the Afrikaanse Handels Institute and the Federated chamber of Industries then went on to request a meeting with Le Grange. Although Le Grange agreed to the meeting he was clearly piqued by this condemnation and said that their response was an "extremely serious matter which left the government dissatisfied and sad" (79). The official opposition in the white parliament reacted strongly to the deployment of troops and their Defence spokesman, Harry Schwartz, maintained that troops should only be used in the defence of the country's borders and not in the suppression of internal unrest. The response to these allegations by Malan and the regimes counter-insurgency strategy theorists such as Deon Fourie was to justify the use of the S.A.D.F. on the basis of historical precedent and national security (80). It was against this background that the National Security Management System was activated at district and local levels to provide a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the near-insurrectionary climate in the townships.

2. Strategy and structure of the National Security Management System.

Whilst Andre Beaufre provided the S.A. state with the general framework for its counter-revolutionary strategy it was the American Special Warfare counter-insurgency theorist, Colonel John McCuen (1964), who provided it with its specifics. A document circulated to civil servants explaining the rationale behind the Joint Management Centres contains in its "Strategy" section an almost word-for-word transcription of the counter-revolutionary strategy developed by McCuen in his book "The Art of Counter-Revolutionary Warfare" (a book which was also to exercise and influence on the counter-insurgency strategies and campaigns conducted in Vietnam, Angola, Mocambique and Rhodesia). McCuen constructs his theory through the rather simple expedient of reversing what he sees as the principles of Mao's revolutionary warfare theory and applying them against the enemy. This involved a series of stages directed against "affected areas" in which it was hoped that a complex of political, social and military measures would subdue these areas and the positive effects would spread out as in an "oilspot". These measures were defined as: the self-preservation of oneself and the obliteration of the enemy; the counter-organization of strategic bases; the mobilization of the masses; the acquisition of international support to discredit the revolutionaries and the unity of all efforts to accomplish the objective (81).

Whilst the micro-strategy of the J.M.C. was a result of an almost exclusively American influence, the actual structures of the J.M.C.'s were modelled on the Committee System used by the British forces in the Malayan counter-insurgency campaign. Although the idea of a National Security Management System had first been contained in the suggestions of the Potgieter Commission in 1972 (82), it had only been formalised in August 1979 (83). However, the first 6 years of the Botha regime had mainly concentrated on the implementation of "reform" at a national level and the activation of the J.M.C. structures at a local level was thus a hasty effort. The basic building block of the National Security Management System was the Joint Management Centre and this existed at three levels -

4. Beyond the Barracks: the S.A.D.F. and the Emergency State between 1984

and 1989

A. Synopsis of the 1984-1989 period.

1. Sebokeng and the S.A.D.F. response.

In any study of civil-military relations it remains almost axiomatic that the power of the security forces increases substantially during declarations of national emergency. The Sebokeng uprising in 1984, the deployment of S.A.D.F. troops in the townships in response to the revolt, the declaration of the first State of Emergency and the activation of the National Security Management System at a grassroots level was also to witness a substantial growth in the influence of the "security establishment" - particularly that of the S.A.D.F.

The events of the 1984-1986 period appear, by all accounts, to have caught the S.A. state off-guard. The final implementation of the tri-cameral constitutional proposals, delayed for more than 6 years by the continuing in-fighting within the National Party, had misjudged both the intensity and scope of popular resistance. The words of The Star newspaper, commenting on the "Battle of the Berge" by-elections indicates the concern which certain sectors of society viewed these internal squabbles:

"The anxieties of our rulers to win in the far Northern Transvaal should not cause them to lose their nerve on much larger national issues. Indeed if they do not quickly recover their composure they could find themselves winning the local battles - but losing the larger war of reform" (70).

In the unusually candid words of Gerrit Viljoen commenting on the events made retrospectively in early 1990, itself possibly a product of the De Klerk "glasnost", he stated:

"It is, in retrospect, quite clear that the government at the time underestimated the emotional impact of not including blacks in that constitution" (71).

It was, however, also an indication of the extent to which the state's counter-revolutionary strategy, hide-bound by its technocratic belief in its ability to "manage" grievances, had failed to anticipate these

An overview of the Cabinet Committee System, the Office of the State President and even the State Security Council itself was vivid testimony of the extent to which the "verlig" faction of the National Party, aided by non-party "experts", technocrats, businessmen, soldiers and academics had consolidated themselves in certain "core" centres of power at the expense of the "verkramp" faction of the National Party. Although the 1976-1984 period had witnessed much talk of the "De Gaulle option" in business, military and government circles, it was an option that involved a host of actors in addition to the S.A.D.F. (66). The rationale behind this was lucidly spelled out by Willie Breytenbach who maintained that a temporary phase of "enlightened authoritarianism" (the so-called "Sobhuza option") was necessary so that:

"Botha will bypass the rebellious right wing by acting outside the normal parliamentary channels of elected officials. He will make use of the appointed President's Council, the 12 nominated M.P.'s, the considerable extra-parliamentary powers available to his Cabinet Ministers and a streamlined and more co-operative civil service" (67)

Rather than referring to the S.S.C. and its various levels as evidence of military dominance it would be more apt to describe it as the rule by a group of technocrats within which the S.A.D.F. was an influential partner. The recent rather glib pronouncements by senior National Party members and civil servants (itself uncannily reminiscent of the denunciations of East European socialism by former East European communists) regarding the excesses of Botha and the so-called "securocrats" conveniently ignores the extent to which the partners in executive rule were more than two in number (and the extent to which most of these technocrats are still "in-place" within the National Party). As Jack Spence observed in 1985:

"Thus although the military role in decision-making has assumed greater importance, evidence suggests that the politicians still define policy goals; there is an intimate civil-military collaboration in which Botha's views predominate." (68)

Finally the 1978-1984 period also witnessed the emergence of a new category of S.A.D.F. soldier that typified and remained immensely influential within the "Total Strategy" period. Hitherto three broad categories of professional officer could be discerned. Firstly, there existed those senior officers and General Staff members (both English and Afrikaans) who had seen active service in the Second World War, the Korean War and the Berlin air-lift. Well-represented in the South African Air Force and the South African Navy, whose cultures remained - and remain - distinctively British in origin, they were also, nevertheless, present in the South African Army. Liberal in attitude, and some even having been active in the Springbok Legion, these officers tended to frame their identities in the "professionally neutral" mould characteristic of the British armed forces. These themes had been reinforced through their training abroad at such institutions as the Royal Naval College, Camberley Staff College and the Imperial War College. The second category involved those officers who had been trained (mainly abroad) in counter-insurgency theory and who had

prominent "establishment" academics such as Deon Geldenhuys and Hennie Kotze were to publish a series of articles in which the extent of S.A.D.F. influence within the state was exposed. Factual and non-emotional these articles and their findings were to echo out through the academic world and the local and international media (62). In response to these articles, the fact that they were written by academics hitherto assumed to be "sympathetic" to the regime and evidence of disquiet amongst certain National Party members regarding the influence of the S.S.C., the Secretary of the S.S.C. made a public announcement vis a vis the functioning of the S.S.C. pyramid. Lt General Van Deventer detailed its structure, its history and its method of operation and retorted, incorrectly, that only 15% of the S.S.C. were S.A.D.F. personnel (63). It too remained an indication of the extent to which the S.A.D.F. still felt itself accountable to public opinion.

B.) Analysis of the 1978-1984 period.

A transformation of the traditional parameters of civil-military relations undoubtedly occurred during the 1978 - 1984 period. This military influence was discernible at a number of levels. The most vivid testimony to this influence indisputably lay in the nature, functioning and responsibilities of the State Security Council and its various executive levels. For the first time in the history of the National Party a professional soldier was appointed as Cabinet Minister and subsequently went on to hold several positions of importance in the Transvaal National Party. S.A.D.F. personnel began appearing prominently in a variety of forums - addressing university audiences, businessmen and chairing inter-departmental committees. The institution of "Operation Buttermilk" (the campaign to mobilise all conscriptable manpower between the ages of 18-55 nationwide) saw the S.A.D.F.'s potential strength increase to in the region of 800 000 men. The defence budget also increased by 300% during this period (64). Indeed the whole terminology of "Total Strategy" was redolent with a particularly military hue reflecting the influence of such counter-insurgency and Cold War theorists as Liddel-Hart, Huntington, Beaufre, McCuen and Calula (65). It thus remains pertinent to ask whether indeed a "silent" or "creeping coup" had taken place within the heart of the South African state. Perhaps this question can be best broached by firstly stating the reasons attributable to S.A.D.F. influence within the state and then secondly analysing the extent to which it was limited by, or was part of, broader processes within both state and political society.

The S.A.D.F. became a prominent actor in the structures of the state for a number of specific reasons. Firstly, the State Security Council as the revamped central decision-making node of the state, was concerned pre-eminently with matters of security and the S.A.D.F., as the largest component of the security establishment, was bound to feature prominently in its structures. Secondly the very logic of the State Security Council with its emphasis on a centralised and co-ordinated approach to national security management had been central to the arguments elaborated by the S.A.D.F. in their formulation of the "Total Strategy" doctrine. Thirdly the S.A.D.F. was to feature prominently in both the S.S.C. and the various regions of the N.S.M.S. because of the extent of the bureaucratic restructuring envisaged by the "Total Strategy" project. This last point

Testimony to this expanded S.A.D.F. influence surfaces repeatedly during the 1978-1984 period. Nowhere is this more evident than in the sphere of regional policy and strategy. The pre-Botha years had been characterised by two major military incursions into neighbouring countries - Operations Savannah (1975-76) and Reindeer - both of which had been strongly opposed by Van Den Berghe and only reluctantly conceded to by Vorster (fearing that they would jeopardise the floundering detente initiative). The 1978-1984 period, however, was to be characterised by a host of mechanised, motorised, armoured, airborne and clandestine "externals" into mainly Angola but also Mocambique, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Botswana. Numerous conventional-style assaults were launched against Angola ranging in size from battalion to brigade strength and of varying duration and purpose (prominent amongst these were Operations Rekstok, Safraan, Sceptic, Klipkop, Protea - which developed into Smokeshell - Daisy and a host of minor operations). Late 1978-early 1980 had also witnessed the deployment of company and battalion sized units in Rhodesia - a move that Vorster had resolutely opposed during his premiership (57).

Whilst most of the above-mentioned operations were conducted by conventional forces (mainly conscripts) the S.A.D.F. was also to engage in a more sinister campaign of clandestine operations. Prominent in this regard was the evidence of the growing influence of the Department of Military Intelligence in both the sphere of regional policy and the executive nodes of the state through the role played by its Directorate/Special Tasks and the Special Forces arm of the S.A.D.F. (58). Consequent to both Botha's election and the Coetsee Commission of Enquiry into the intelligence services had been an extensive re-organization of the intelligence functions of the S.A.D.F. The traditional tasks of a military intelligence organ - that of "counting the tanks and the aeroplanes" of one's adversaries - were devolved onto four tactical intelligence directorates namely Army Intelligence, Air Force Intelligence, Naval Intelligence and, in 1982, Medical Intelligence. However, as stated above, a host of other functions were transferred to a separate Strategic Intelligence formation known as the Department of Military Intelligence. D.M.I. consisted of five directorates - Directorate/Counter-Intelligence (responsible for protecting "own" information from penetration by the enemy), Directorate/Military Intelligence (responsible for gathering of strategic intelligence and the fielding of agents at home and abroad), Directorate/Communication Operations (the psychological warfare section of the S.A.D.F. entrusted with the "winning hearts and minds" of the population and presenting the S.A.D.F. in a favourable light), Directorate Foreign Relations (detailing the formal activities of the S.A.D.F. abroad) and the notorious Directorate/Special Tasks (59).

The Directorate/Special Tasks was entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the activities of the Special Forces and surrogate forces deployed within and against the Frontline States. They consequently liaised and directed the activities of the fifth "unofficial" arm of the S.A.D.F. - the Special Forces (the others being Army, Navy, Air Force and Medical Services). Special Forces consisted of 4 Reconnaissance Regiments (1, 2, 4 and 5 Recce Regiments) 32 Battalion and 1985 saw the formation of a further unit for "internal" operations - the Civilian Co-operation Bureau. The "external" Recce Regiments consisted largely of former Portuguese colonial soldiers, ex-Rhodesian Special Forces personnel, a fair sprinkling of

The post-1978 period was to witness an extensive reorganization of the Vorster state and a corresponding growth in the influence of the S.A.D.F. in the executive reaches of the state ensemble. The first indication of this influence centred around what has been called "the battle for the intelligence brief" (43). This revolved around the restructuring and redefinition of the activities of BOSS and the transfer of its critical functions to the Department of Military Intelligence (D.M.I.). Almost immediately after assuming power Botha appointed Kobie Coetsee (then deputy-chairman of the Orange Free State National Party) as Deputy-Minister of Defence and National Security and instructed him to head a Commission of Enquiry into the "rationalization" of the affairs of the three different intelligence agencies (44). Mainly on the advice of senior S.A.D.F. intelligence officers BOSS was substantially reduced in scope and the responsibility for strategic intelligence was transferred to the D.M.I. Control of the strategic intelligence function put the S.A.D.F., as it had done with BOSS under Vorster, in an extremely influential position. Strategic "threat perceptions" provided the basis upon which much domestic, foreign and military policy was decided (45).

Under Botha the Office of the Prime Minister was upgraded to departmental status and was to effectively constitute the main "core" centre of power of the Botha period (it consisted of +- 120 full-time personnel) (46). The influence of the armed forces within the office was manifest in its technocratic reorganization, its functions and its personnel. "Die Botha-styl" was epitomised by the belief that "reform" could be managed - taking the form of a reliance upon managerial and technical criteria and an exaggerated administrative approach to ordering society. The OPM was the first to feel the effects of this style and it was a style that was to eventually flow out and permeate all levels of the bureaucracy (although in an asymmetrical manner). The head of the OPM was, and remains, General Jannie Roux (47) - a technocrat who previously served as the Commissioner of Prisons. Botha's private secretary was a certain Captain (naval) Ters Ehlers and his chief of household was a Major John Reynders (48). The co-location of the National Joint Management Centre in the OPM in 1986 (or Office of the State President as it was subsequently renamed in 1984) further accenuated the militarization of this office (49).

The Cabinet Committee System was to witness a further expansion of the influence of the S.A.D.F. in the executive reaches of the state. Botha created five Cabinet Committees (Security, Economic, Social, Finance and Constitutional) which were headed by either a Minister or a Departmental head who, with other departmental heads and specialists, constituted the "core" working committee of the Cabinet Committee itself (50). Although technically on the same footing it was the State Security Council that was to assume an importance disproportionate to others. The S.A.D.F. was represented on the "core" committee of the S.S.C. and the working committee of the S.S.C. where it sat with ministers and senior representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Justice, the South African Police, the Prime Minister and the senior member of the Cabinet. It provided the bulk of the personnel for the S.S.C.'s Secretariate (51) (70% of the members were S.A.D.F., 20% were from the National Intelligence Service and 10% were from the Department of Foreign Affairs) (52) and both the head and the deputy-head of the State Security Council's Strategy Branch were seasoned S.A.D.F. counter-insurgency generals. It was also

the discourse of "Total Strategy" was to be articulated. The S.A.D.F. also become instrumental in initiating and/or featuring prominently in a series of seminars, debates and forums at which various representatives of capital (both English and Afrikaans), academia, the media, foreign businessmen and academics, "verlig" officers from the S.A.P., bureaucrats from other state departments (Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Finance etc) and senior S.A.D.F. representatives attended (40). In the 1977 Defence White Paper Botha also referred to the manner in which not only had the S.A.D.F. itself become a testing ground for these theories but that the S.A.D.F. had also been galvanising support elsewhere within the state for these ventures:

"Within the Defence Force we have made considerable progress in this regard. With the aid of other state departments we have made considerable progress obtaining co-operation...."

Such influence, however, can be construed as falling within the "legitimate" constitutional brief of any military organization in a bourgeois democratic system (although in the South African case it was quite clearly a racially exclusive democracy). Where the S.A.D.F. certainly did exceed its constitutionally designated mandate was with regard to its more covert activities during the "Information Scandal" period. For instance even before the details of the Information Scandal precipitated a crisis within the National Party the Department of Military Intelligence had been procuring information on the more explosive details of Project Senekal. The intentions behind these ventures was obvious - the use of this information to discredit BOSS, the Department of Information, Van Den Berghe and Connie Mulder (Botha's main rival within the National Party) and the political interests they represented (41). Also despite Botha's indignant protestations that BOSS was monitoring his activities, it emerged that D.M.I. was bugging BOSS's offices as well. 1978-1979 was also replete with journalistic exposes in the "verlig" Nasionale Pers newspapers and particularly the newspapers of the "Engelsepers" as the result of confidential information which various intrepid journalists had somehow "obtained". One can quite reasonably speculate as to the origins of this documentation (42).

B.) Analysis of the 1966-1978 period

The victory of P.W. Botha was, however, secured via political society. In a series of factional intrigues and conspiracies, not least of which was the joint decisions by Alwyn Schlebusch and Pik Botha to throw the weight of their respective factions behind P.W. Botha, Mulder, Van Den Berghe and Vorster were ousted from their positions of influence. The relative prominence of the S.A.D.F. in this process indicates a shift in the parameters of pre-1966 civil-military relations. Clearly the S.A.D.F. emerges as a more confident actor in inter-apparatus relations and the political struggles which encompass them. It frames its demands for a "militarily defensible" political solution with more assertiveness than before. Although it does not venture to undermine the parliamentary and judicial features of the state it does engage in a certain amount of conspiracy and factionalism. Its senior officer and General Staff echelons

African Who's Who of Big Business) (28). The conventional and counter-insurgency warfare capacities of the S.A.D.F. were also modified in response to the nature and intensity of perceived internal and external "threats". This received formal expression in the division of the S.A.D.F. into a Counter-Insurgency Force and a Conventional Force in 1975 (29). The assumed possibility of a conventional threat led to an extensive rearming and reorganization of the S.A.D.F.'s conventional forces into an Armoured and an Infantry Division and three independent brigades. The reorganization of the counter-insurgency capacities of the S.A.D.F. received its most eloquent expression in the "Area Defence" system (the zoning of the country into different commando areas) and the extension of the conscription cycle to include all men up to the age of 55 years (30).

But the nature of the relationship between Botha and the S.A.D.F. went beyond the simple technical revitalization of the S.A.D.F. Botha bought to the S.A.D.F. a history as an experienced organiser with a personal emphasis on efficiency and discipline. He also carried within him his position as leader of the Cape National Party - long regarded as the "verlig" wing of the Federal National Party and possessing of considerable backing amongst Afrikaner capital and the growing "verlig" faction within the Transvaal National Party. The S.A.D.F. for its part provided Botha with a loyal officer corps who had been exposed to both the experience and political rationale behind counter-insurgency warfare - the essence of which was that no national security policy could be considered viable unless an acceptable and legitimate political system was provided for the population. Despite Botha's lack of military experience, it was his insistence on personal and practical involvement in the affairs of his ministry, his curiosity, his discipline and his receptivity to these ideas of the officer corps that was to provide the basis for a symbiotic relationship that was to persist for more than two decades. The words of the former Chief-of-Staff Intelligence, General Fritz Loots, expresses the magnitude of this relationship:

"Mr Botha can today ask anything from the Defence Force and he will not be dissatisfied. There was never so much goodwill, unity and enthusiasm in my whole thirty years experience....The Defence Force is an instrument in the hands of the politician, but we felt that many of the politicians had no sympathy with the Defence Force. The sympathy for the military in countries such as Britain, France and Germany was much better than in South Africa. Under P.W. Botha this changed. The modern South African Defence Force is today largely P.W. Botha's creation. It is his monument." (31)

Given this congruence of interests it is thus not surprising that the S.A.D.F. became constituted as a power base for the "verlig" faction within the National Party and the state. Already the Vorster years had seen the S.A.D.F. using the considerable departmental autonomy bestowed by Vorster on the various apparatuses of the state ensemble in pursuit of its own objectives. In 1964-1965 the S.A.D.F. had supported Tshombe in the Katanga Secession wrangle (32). During the Biafran War the S.A.D.F. provided General Odumegwu Ojukwu with arms, training personnel and medical supplies without the prior knowledge of Vorster (it was only after the CIA tipped off General Hendrik Van Den Berghe of BOSS that the arms supplies were

the bourgeoisie to abolish operations of this democracy or to substitute an alternative form...." (20)

Clearly the level of political culture within white society was reasonably developed (albeit racially exclusive), with its decision-making forums and its forms of political organization being regarded as legitimate by its supporters. The attempts by either the armed forces, or any other repressive apparatus, to displace this authority would have been relatively short lived. Although the form of the state was to undergo substantial change in the late 1970's and 1980's with a constant shift and tension between the centres of white parliamentary and executive power, it was a process that was never to be finally completed in favour of the latter. It is to this feature that Wolpe refers when he observes that:

"the existence of a white parliamentary democracy and judiciary that has never been completely subordinated to the executive...and despite the inroads into the functioning of both, their maintenance as institutions of white politics (perhaps particularly the judiciary) seems to have certain limiting effects on the capacities of the executive in relation to the excluded black population." (21)

In addition to the objective limitations referred to above a further subjective limitation involved the corporate identity of the S.A.D.F. officer corps itself. A strong contingent link existed between the legitimacy of the political process in the eyes of white South Africans and the extent to which the S.A.D.F. internalised these themes into its own corporate discourse. The corporate identity of the S.A.D.F. reflected a mixture of indigenous Boer military experience, the British model of a "professional" and politically neutral military, the influence of Cold War "national security" doctrines and, from the 1960's onwards, the influence of counter-insurgency doctrines and experiences. The British influence was discernible in the theme pertaining to the corporate neutrality of the S.A.D.F. (the notion of the Defence Force "standing above politics"). It was particularly pronounced in those arms of the S.A.D.F. with a more overtly "English" culture - the South African Air Force and the South African Navy. (22)

The Afrikaner influence on this corporate identity, felt primarily in the South African Army, contained a similar level of respect for the principle of civil supremacy. Prior to the formation of the U.D.F. the Boer Republics had not possessed the tradition of large standing armies. Military service was seen as a functional necessity to be delivered in the conquest of land and the protection of community. A rough, patriarchal equality existed in these kommandos with the tradition of men electing officers and all men jointly deliberating on strategy (23). The transition from civilian to fighter was easily effected amongst members of these settler communities and the phenomenon of an institutionally separate military imbued with its own political designs was virtually unknown. Indeed, as Richard Dale emphasises, the armed forces did not constitute a threat to the civilian authorities:

A study of the history of South African civil-military relations reveals that the armed forces have not always enjoyed the institutional centrality that they enjoyed under P.W. Botha. Even prior to the formation of the U.D.F. South Africa had not possessed a tradition of large standing armies. The institutional separation of a national Defence Force from the body-politic of society only really proceeded apace, and then very haltingly, with the creation of the Union Defence Force in accordance with the Defence Act of 1912 (9). Formed out of the Skietkommandos and Staatsartillerie of the old Boer Republics and the colonial volunteer units of all four provinces, the U.D.F. represented a synthesis of diverse military traditions and structures (a phenomenon that was to exert a strong influence on the development of its corporate identity) (10). It also embodied certain characteristics that were to remain a feature of the S.A.D.F. until today - a small complement of full-time, professional soldiers supported by a large reserve of Citizen Force manpower. The S.A.D.F. was, and remained, a primarily conscript army (11).

Professionalization of the Union Defence force did not come easy and it took decades before the U.D.F. was capable of overcoming the obstacles that finance, traditional military custom and political division within the armed forces presented (12). For the first 10 years of its existence the function of the U.D.F. was that of the maintenance of "law and order" - mainly by supplementing the activities of the South African Police. It was deployed variously against the workers in the 1913 Rand strike, against the rebels of the 1914 Rebellion (a factor which precipitated much division and mutiny within the U.D.F.), as an invasion force in German West Africa at the beginning of the First World War and in 1922 against the mineworkers strike and the Bondelswarts rebels. It is thus not surprising that a former Commandant-General of the U.D.F. was forced to admit that "the Defence Force was in bad odour owing to the stern measures it was called upon to adopt during the 1914 rebellion and the 1922 revolt" (13).

An increase in the size of the South African Police and the passing of the S.A. Defence Amendment Act of 1922 freed the U.D.F. from its policing duties. Although the U.D.F. was periodically deployed in police or police-supportive roles (a historical feature to which Magnus Malan repeatedly referred when justifying the deployments of S.A.D.F. personnel in the townships), the notion of the U.D.F. as a politically "neutral" actor standing "above politics" preponderated. The Depression saw the reduction of the U.D.F.'s permanent force quota by more than a third as the U.D.F., along with other state departments, felt the effects of budgetary cuts pervading the civil service. The appointment of the pro-Nazi Minister of Defence, Oswald Pirow, heralded a reorganization of the U.D.F. As a result of a series of visits to Britain and France and much impressed by his meetings with senior officers in the Wehrmacht High Command, Pirow instituted a Five-Year plan aimed at reorganizing the command structures, inventories, corps distribution and air component of the U.D.F. This process of modernization received a boost with the advent of World War Two and the development of a fairly extensive arms industry (14).

The Second World War saw an increase in the number of men under arms in the U.D.F. but the cessation of hostilities saw an equally rapid diminution in

Finally an understanding of the S.A.D.F. has undeniable practical implications at this specific historical conjuncture. The current period of political and economic transition within South Africa has raised, more than ever, the question regarding the loyalty of the South African Defence Force towards this process. This is all the more important given both the size of the S.A.D.F. and the institutional prominence that it has achieved over the last 15 years. Although the recent meeting between senior former S.A.D.F. officers and commanders from Umkhonto We Sizwe has indicated that the predisposition of the military to intervene is not as pronounced as many assume, rumours and allegations of military coups abound (not least of all from the volatile right-wing groupings within white politics). The probability/improbability of military intervention has important repercussions both for current political strategies and for the current political process as does its relations with the De Klerk administration. Underestimating the likelihood of independent military action can leave a people either defenceless or incapable of responding to such actions. An overestimation of both the strength of the armed forces and their predisposition towards intervention can absolutise the power of the military, underestimate the extent to which the armed forces are themselves internally fissured and divided and narrow the political space within which political strategies and demands are framed. It thus remains important to examine those objective and subjective factors which either facilitate/impede the likelihood of S.A.D.F. intervention.

1. Conceptual considerations.

The debate regarding the level of militarization within the state has been partially bedevilled by a degree of conceptual confusion regarding the terms "militarization", "intervention" and "power". The militarization of the state and the extent of military influence within its various structures can assume many different forms depending on the corporate identity of the armed forces in question, the level of political organization within society, the balance of power between different social forces and the degree of international influence on the actions of the state ensemble itself. "Militarization" of state and society cannot simply be deduced from the force levels, organizational features and corporate philosophies of the armed forces in question. A high degree of militarization may exist in civil society without a corresponding level of militarization within the state. Similarly armed forces may exercise an influence in the executive and decision-making nodes of the state that is disproportionate to their numerical strength on the ground. The tendency to read each and every instance of military influence in the state as testimony to "intervention" of some kind ignores the many permutations which this influence can assume.

"Intervention", for instance, remains but one type of military involvement in politics and is characterised by specific modes of coercion - violence, failure to protect the civilian authorities from violence, threats of non-cooperation with or violence towards the civilian authorities and intimidation of the civilian authorities themselves (7). Not all forms of military influence seek to substitute their organizational forms,

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BACK TO THE BARRACKS: THE S.A.D.F. AND THE CHANGING NATURE OF CIVIL -
MILITARY RELATIONS UNDER THE BOTHA AND DE KLERK ADMINISTRATIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

There exists a marked absence of any sustained theoretical writing on the relationship between the armed forces and the civilian authorities in South Africa. Whilst a variety of military historical works exist further attempts to situate an analysis of the armed forces within the orbit of civil-military relations have been few in number (1). It is thus not surprising that analyses of the extent of military influence within the state have ranged from the conspiratorial (the "creeping coup", the rule by an inner cabal of securocrats) to the sensational (i.e. that a de facto military coup has - or in pre-De Klerk days had - taken place) (2). But armed forces are constrained in their actions by a host of factors and it is the inter-relationship between these factors that enriches an understanding of civil-military relations. This analysis seeks to isolate those broad areas of enquiry that most contribute towards an understanding of the political role of the S.A.D.F. under the Botha and now De Klerk administrations.

The first involves those variables which in a general context (whether applied to the S.A.D.F. or any other military) determine both the predisposition and the opportunity for military involvement in politics. The second involves an understanding of the nature of inter and intra-apparatus struggles within the state and the extent to which the S.A.D.F. itself was constituted as a power base for the "verlig" interests within power bloc, National Party and state. The third pertains to the political implications that an understanding of the S.A.D.F. provides at this particular historical moment. What, in essence, is the probability of S.A.D.F. intervention both now and in the near future and what is its relationship with the De Klerk administration? In short, can De Klerk count on the loyalty of the S.A.D.F. in the present political process?.

Military intervention/influence/involvement is invariably the outcome of two sets of factors: the objective (external) (3) conditions and the subjective (internal) conditions (4). The internal features of the armed forces emphasise the organization of the armed forces, the social composition of their personnel, their hierarchy and authority, their professionalism and corporate identity, their skill patterns and the fissures and cleavages within the armed forces. The objective or external factors concentrate on the relationship between the armed forces and civilian authority, the legitimacy of civilian rule, the social struggles within the particular society concerned, the structural features of the country's politics and economy etc. Internal characteristics remain an important variable in determining the predisposition of the military to intervene but the emphasis on the internal to the detriment of the external variables often leads to a subjectivism where conspiracy theories reign supreme and where military intervention is reduced to a voluntarist account of personalities, intentions and designs. Whilst not denying the importance