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NOTE TO: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

While the two of you were out of the city over the Holiday, the Washington Post ran a very long three-part series on South Africa. Because of its likely wide readership in the Administration and on the Hill, I asked both ALA and Fred Wettering to evaluate the article. The texts of the article and the two evaluations are attached. I think all three are worth skimming.

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Robert M. Gates

Deputy Director for Intelligence

Attachments:
As Stated

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

6 January 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: Frederick L. Wettering *fw*
National Intelligence Officer for Africa

SUBJECT: South Africa: The Washington Post Articles
and DI/ALA Analysis

1. I do not have strong differences with ALA's analysis of last week's three-part Washington Post series on South Africa, but I have some nuanced differences in how we view it.

2. I was rather less impressed by the series for two reasons: first, because the authors, after some dramatic leads, then watered their conclusions down to pap; and second, because the articles contained some explicit and implicit assumptions which are challengeable.

3. Specifically, the first article leads with the eye-catching thesis that the foundations of white minority rule are starting to crack, then proceeds to explain in the fine print that in fact "most whites" believe they can hold on (to power) indefinitely." Second--as ALA noted--the authors suggest that the SAG is adrift without a plan as to how to go forward, but then go on to cursorily describe and dismiss the successor plan to apartheid, termed neoapartheid, which promotes a middle class alliance with black urban elites. This gives short shrift to the SAG plan of reform and cooption, and I, like ALA, see no indication that the Botha Government will do anything but plod ahead with its reformist scheme. While the SAG has certainly not effectively articulated this scheme to either South Africans or the world, I believe they have a definite vision and have not been deterred from it by last year's violence.

4. There are two implicit assumptions in the series that I take issue with: first (as in the recent State/INR series) is the assumption that black rule is inevitable and that the only ways it will come about are through a prolonged, violent revolutionary struggle or a quicker, negotiated turnover of power. While these are both arguable scenarios, they are not the only ones nor in my view even the most likely. Second,

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there is the assumption that the middle ground for blacks--a black leadership which would negotiate with the SAG on power sharing but accept the SAG gradualist approach and not insist on a total and revolutionary role reversal--has disappeared forever due to confrontation and intimidation. The authors--and I suspect many in this Agency--see only an increasing racial polarization and confrontation. Again, while this is an arguable scenario, I contend that there remain possibilities for blacks with sufficient followings to deal with the SAG and accept and participate in government reforms just as elements of the Indians and Coloureds did (Inkatha/Buthelezi being the most noteworthy current example, but I suspect others may well emerge). I find the Algerian scenario a bad analogy.

5. In sum, I agree with DI/ALA that the series is better than most appearing in the popular press and conveys some useful thoughts--the most useful perhaps being the phrase "blacks have created an enduring crisis, not a revolution." Nonetheless, as a serious professional analysis (as opposed to popular journalism) the series is flawed by questionable assumptions, overdramatic assertions at the beginning, and wishy-washy conclusions.


Frederick L. Wettering

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SUBJECT: South Africa: The Washington Post Articles and
DI/ALA Analysis

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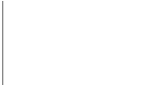
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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE
7 January 1986


SOUTH AFRICA: COMMENTS ON THE WASHINGTON POST SERIES

Summary

The recent series in The Washington Post, "Black Power, White Control: South Africa's Year of Struggle,"* gives a generally well-balanced description of the major dynamics shaping the South African situation. We agree with most points made in the series, particularly that blacks "have created an enduring crisis, not a revolution," even though a new and more radical fervor is gripping urban blacks, especially youths. We also agree that events have shaken many South African whites and that most plausible scenarios for the country's future include intensified violence and repression. 

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* * *

The recent series of articles in The Washington Post, "Black Power, White Control: South Africa's Year of Struggle," is well-written and a cut above most analyses on the topic by journalists or scholars. Drawing on relevant current events as well as historical background, Glenn Frankel paints a vivid portrait of an intransigent white regime besieged by restive blacks showing unprecedented political consciousness and an increasingly hostile international community. 

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* See the series in The Washington Post, 29-31 December 1985, written by Post correspondent Glenn Frankel (a US citizen) with the assistance of Allister Sparks (a South African journalist). (U)

* * *

This paper was prepared for the DCI by  South Africa Branch, Office of African and Latin American Analysis. Comments and queries may be directed to the Chief, South Africa Branch 

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Frankel correctly points out that the unrest and international pressure have exposed some vulnerabilities of South African whites:

- Declining economic conditions have hurt white morale.
- Many whites have been shaken by the sporadic attacks against members of their community and by the ferocity of the fratricide in black townships as the number of victims with even remote ties to the government increases daily.
- The ability of blacks to unite behind and sustain protests such as consumer boycotts of white-owned stores does not augur well in the view of many whites who fear further flexing of black economic muscle.
- Many skilled white workers and professionals are leaving South Africa. [redacted]

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Strengths and Weaknesses

Frankel deserves credit, in our judgment, for putting the last 16 months of violence in a context that bucks the trend established by many journalists who have seasoned their reports with cataclysmic language. He writes, and we agree, that:

"while blacks have succeeded for the first time in a generation in seriously damaging white South Africa, they remain far from their goal of toppling white rule. The dream that many youths believe is around the corner remains elusive. And because white military power remains intact, there is no clear path to get there. Blacks have created an enduring crisis, not a revolution." [redacted]

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We believe that Frankel correctly emphasizes the importance of white reactions to growing pressures from the black populace and the international community. White resolve and unity, in our view, are the most important factors affecting South Africa's political future, as evidenced by their central position in the various scenarios outlined in the series. As one South African expert on black politics is quoted by Frankel, "in the end, the (white) regime will collapse from within, when the groups whose support it enjoys withdraw." Frankel skillfully, and correctly in our view, explains why pressures from the black populace and the international community are likely to continue to build. He also gives the reader an appreciation of the diverse factors, such as the

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unique history of the Afrikaners, that one must consider when assessing potential white responses to those pressures. [REDACTED]

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We believe Frankel is strongest in his analysis on trends in the black community. He offers some poignant insights into the causes and effects of a growing nihilism among young urban blacks. He also describes vividly the dramatic phenomenon of attacks on black collaborators and the losing battle that black moderates are waging to retain credibility among their dwindling constituencies. Departing from the romanticism that frequently characterizes other journalists' work on the topic, Frankel depicts the African National Congress as a two-faced group--sometimes moderate in appearance, other times radical--that is heading toward full-fledged urban terrorism, but faces almost insurmountable obstacles to overthrowing the white regime.* This is consistent with our own views.

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Our criticisms of the series are relatively minor:

- Frankel occasionally overstates his case; e.g., he writes that "there is virtually no one in the black community who expects to be ruled by whites in the year 2000." Even some influential black leaders, including Colored activist Allan Boesak and ANC head Oliver Tambo, have stated [REDACTED] that it may be several decades before the white regime falls.
- Frankel dismisses the rightwing threat to the National Party too quickly without explaining its constraining influence on the government's attitude toward reform. Similarly, he does not adequately address the trauma that the reform issue has generated within National Party ranks and the larger white community.
- We believe that Frankel's observation that the government is "unsure of its direction after decades of certainty" is somewhat off the mark. This has become a familiar theme of critics of the government, and a growing lament among even

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* Frankel quotes analysts who believe, as we do, that the ANC "is still far from developing the disciplined clandestine networks that could launch a sustained guerrilla war or endure a long-term tit-for-tat campaign with the South Africans...rural warfare is unlikely because of South Africa's vast barren spaces and the long distances between its borders and population centers." [REDACTED]

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some of its supporters. The government, nonetheless, has continued to stick to a course of reform roughly hewn by senior officials. Although seemingly blind to the unviability of some of its plans, the government has partially unveiled them in the past year while continuing to work out the details behind the scenes.

- Frankel writes that, "for the first time, there is a tension and contradiction between the state's military and economic power..Unbridled use of the former...causes direct, measurable harm to the latter." There is no question that heavyhanded security actions have contributed to the institution of international sanctions against South Africa and the introduction of black economic protests at home. This is not, however, unprecedented; South Africa went through the same experiences during outbreaks of violence in 1960 and 1976-77. Moreover, the government to date has eschewed the option of an all-out, unbridled security response to the unrest. Its reluctance to do so, in our view, is tied more closely to lingering hopes it can succeed in coopting blacks, rather than to fears of the economic consequences of its actions. [redacted]

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Open-Ended Outcome

Frankel shies away from making a specific prediction on the most likely outcome of the racial tensions in South Africa, ending the series by laying out some of the best-known scenarios with little indication of his own thoughts on which is the most probable. However, he seems attracted to an Algerian-type scenario in which increasingly repressive measures by the government would only steel the resolve of blacks to perpetuate violence. In his defense, each cycle of violence in South Africa's modern history has spawned a multitude of predictions about the country's future (as Frankel himself notes, a cottage industry of forecasting on South Africa has developed recently). His reluctance to select one future scenario as his personal favorite probably reflects a healthy respect for the fast pace at which events are unfolding and the host of factors that could affect both the nature and timing of the eventual outcome. [redacted]

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APPENDIX

Major Points in
"Black Power, White Control: South Africa's Year of Struggle"

Black Threat

1. The "comrades," angry young urban blacks, now control many townships.
2. Unrest has spread even to rural, traditionally conservative black areas.
3. Blacks have refined their protest tactics, including consumer boycotts, and these are likely to continue.
4. The political middle ground has all but vanished.
5. Nonetheless, the black movement at times seems leaderless and without direction, is not united, and remains far from toppling white rule.
6. Young urban blacks believe liberation is one or two years away; their elders speak of 5 or 10 years; virtually no blacks expect to be ruled by whites in the year 2000.
7. Black students may boycott schools to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Soweto riots.
8. A new black labor federation may become more politically active.

The African National Congress

1. The group has gained stature and is perhaps the biggest winner in the unrest.
2. Usually one step behind events, the ANC's role has been mainly inspirational.
3. The group has two faces: one moderate, the other radical and violent.
4. ANC attacks--widely applauded by blacks--are up significantly but do little damage to the country's energy infrastructure or white morale; attacks unite whites behind retaliatory strikes.



5. The ANC shows signs of developing into a more hardline, terrorist group, but it is still far from developing capability to launch sustained guerrilla war or endure all-out effort by South Africa to wipe it out.

Government Program and Plans

1. Apartheid is no longer viable, because it is too expensive and unwieldy.
2. The white regime is losing its grip, unsure of direction after decades of certainty.
3. Both liberal businessmen and the right wing lack adequate leverage to coerce the National Party.
4. The pace of reform is glacial; reforms are not mollifying the blacks as intended.
5. Attacks on black moderates undermine the deal the government had hoped to forge with the black urban middle class, but Pretoria is likely to continue to pursue measured reform while cracking down hard on dissidents. It probably hopes that after black radicals have been subdued by security measures, black moderates will come to bargain.
6. Botha may call for a snap election before support for the ruling National Party erodes further, and may hold a referendum for whites on new constitutional proposals.

Scenarios

1. Analysts at a multinational firm believe South Africa might hobble into the next century under a rightwing white regime that responds fiercely to increasing black unrest and international sanctions by taking extreme measures against the black opposition, repudiating South Africa's foreign debt, seizing foreign assets, and stopping foreign currency flows.
2. The Rhodesian scenario: an intractable guerrilla war wears down white resolve and ends in a political settlement with major concessions to blacks.
3. The Algerian scenario: increasingly repressive measures by the white regime only steel the resolve of blacks to perpetuate violence;

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security forces always maintain the upper hand, but their actions also swell the ranks of blacks bitterly opposed to any compromise; a crisis among whites over government tactics eventually results in complete victory for blacks.

4. Following intensified black unrest, the white regime averts an all-out race war by reaching lasting compromise with blacks (this scenario is based on the belief that Afrikaners are "survivors": once they see the choice is between survival under black rule or destruction, they will seek a settlement).

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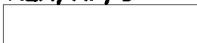
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THE WASHINGTON POST

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1985

BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL

SOUTH AFRICA'S YEAR OF STRUGGLE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Black youth takes aim with a stone in township near Cape Town in August.

Unrest Pierces Cocoon Of Ruling Minority

Political, Fiscal Vulnerability Exposed

First of three articles

By Glenn Frankel
Washington Post Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG—It is morning in the largest city in South Africa, a country torn by racial strife that has claimed about 1,000 lives during the past 16 months. But the scene here looks a lot like St. Louis or Cleveland, not at all like Beirut or even Belfast.

Blacks and whites share the sidewalks. They carry briefcases, newspapers and shopping bags, not pistols or rocks. The trains are on time. Traffic lights are working. The banks are open, as is the stock exchange. The only police in sight are on traffic duty, not riot patrol.

This portrait of tranquility can be viewed every working morning in the business districts of every major city in South Africa. It is beguiling, puzzling—and in many ways misleading. For below the surface, out of the sight of most of the 5 million whites who rule this country, South Africa's foundations are beginning to crack.

Black unrest and protest have

damaged this country's economy, done permanent harm to its standing abroad and threatened its vital links to the West. They have derailed, and very likely destroyed, the white government's carefully constructed strategy of limited political change. At the same time, they have helped build the confidence of blacks that time is on their side and that three centuries of white rule may be coming to an end.

But the main achievement of the black unrest and protest thus far has been more subtle: they have managed, for the first time in a generation, to pierce the protective cocoon of power, privilege and silence that the apartheid system has built around South Africa's whites. They have exposed an economic and political vulnerability that this society had long managed to conceal—and in the process have damaged white morale and shaken one of the world's most entrenched governments.

The damage at this point is mostly economic; the state's formidable military and police power remains entirely intact. The security forces have managed to



SHUMA

Whites, blacks share escape in Johannesburg shopping center in October.

confine almost all of the unrest to the bleak, segregated townships that ring South Africa's cities like a noose. By any measure, the government looks virtually immune to violent overthrow.

But for the first time, there is a tension and contradiction between the state's military and economic power. Unbridled use of the former—whether it be the deaths from police fire of 20 blacks in the eastern Cape Province township

of Langa last March or the exercise of extraordinary powers under the five-month-old state of emergency—causes direct, measurable harm to the latter.

"When you look at the basic power equations and at the hard core of state power, probably nothing much has changed," said Hermann Giliomee, one of the country's most noted political sci-

See SOUTH AFRICA, A24, Col. 1

artists. "But what makes 1985 different is it spelled out for whites what may be in store the longer they hold out."

This three-part series, written by a correspondent who has witnessed firsthand the conflict between black power and white control, seeks to look back at South Africa's year of struggle to define what has changed and sift for clues about the future.

It was a year when the young blacks of this country's segregated townships challenged the white government for control of their streets. In the process, western banks, corporate board rooms and even the White House joined in actions that shook the government.

It was also a year of increasing polarization in which the middle ground between the government and its radical foes shrank dramatically. Political moderates on both sides found their constituencies and credibility eroded along with their ability to influence events.

South Africa now seems to have stepped down a long, twisted road. An older generation of leaders of both the government and its main black opposition is soon to step down, and a younger one looks all too ready to continue their war. Although the death toll remains comparatively low, a process of self-destruction has set in that could lead to a tragedy as large and convulsive as the liberation war that claimed as many as 1 million lives in Algeria a generation ago.

This series begins with South Africa's whites, who first came to these shores 333 years ago and gradually developed their own African-tinged culture and vernacular. These Afrikaners, who were the first white settlers on the African continent, who consider themselves as much a part of Africa as black natives and comprise 60 percent of South Africa's whites, have managed to cling to power long after whites in the rest of the African continent have relinquished it and moved on.

Earlier Crises Overcome

They have overcome political crises before. After the mass protests of 1960 and the Soweto riots of 1976, many believed white rule was on the verge of collapse or dramatic change. But as Oxford historian Richard W. Johnson noted after the Soweto uprising, "The most striking feature of the demise of white South Africa is that it has constantly been prophesied and that it has not come about."

This year has not brought about the demise of white rule, but it has seen new holes in the once solid facade of white power. After decades of knowing exactly who they were and where they were going, South Africa's white rulers now seem to have lost their sure grip. They are trapped in a crisis that took them by surprise and each move they make seems only to ensnare them further.

The July 21 state of emergency, designed to restore order and rally white support, led to more deaths and considerable international criticism. The Sept. 1 partial freeze on debt repayments, designed to stabilize the country's plummeting currency, the rand, and keep foreign capital inside the country, undermined investor confidence and failed to strengthen the rand. Charges of police torture and brutality and the recent dismissal of treason charges against leaders of the opposition United Democratic Front have exposed the government to further international condemnation.

Pretoria's plan for converting its military domination of the southern Africa region into new diplomatic ties has collapsed following revelations that its military clandestinely aided Mozambican rebels in violation of its peace accord with the Maputo government. Even its once ironclad relationship with a sympathetic Reagan administration has veered toward collapse.

Faced with this reality, some whites have drawn radical conclusions and begun to contemplate the prospect of a black-majority government, perhaps even one led by the outlawed African National Congress, the main black resistance movement. Some white business leaders and liberal politicians openly defied President Pieter W. Botha by journeying to Lusaka, Zambia, to meet with ANC leaders.

But most whites still appear to believe they can hold on to power indefinitely. Recent surveys indicate that more than 80 percent of Afrikaners still support laws preserving segregated schools and residential areas and that more than 60 percent of whites believe black rule is not inevitable.

"Most whites are totally oblivious," said the Rev. Nico Smith, a Dutch Reformed minister whose own plan to visit the ANC in Lusaka

with a group of church leaders was blocked by the government. "The more intelligent ones are aware something is wrong but they don't know what. They have become captives of their own structures."

Others have sought to fill the leadership gap with little success. White conservatives, who formally broke with the ruling National Party in 1982 to take an even tougher stand, made some gains in recent parliamentary by-elections, but few analysts believe they will pose a major threat to the government by 1990, when the next general elections are likely to occur.

The business community, frustrated by the growing economic crisis, also has sought greater influence. But business, which is dominated by the English-speaking white minority, lacks both the leverage and the will to challenge the government. Most business spokesmen supported Botha's new constitution in 1983 and welcomed the state of emergency, although many now have recanted. As Anthony Bloom, chairman of the Premier Group, a major holding company, put it, most are "unwilling to stand up and be seen in open conflict with government."

White politics look unglued primarily because the radical ideology that held it together for two generations is dying—and the new ideology designed to replace it is still-born.

Apartheid was more than a set of laws enforcing racial segregation. It was a total system, designed by the Nationalists, who came to power in 1948, to enshrine South Africa as an Afrikaner nation by preserving for them permanent political domination: It became for Afrikaners what Israel, founded the same year, was for Jews—a homeland and the fulfillment of a biblical dream.

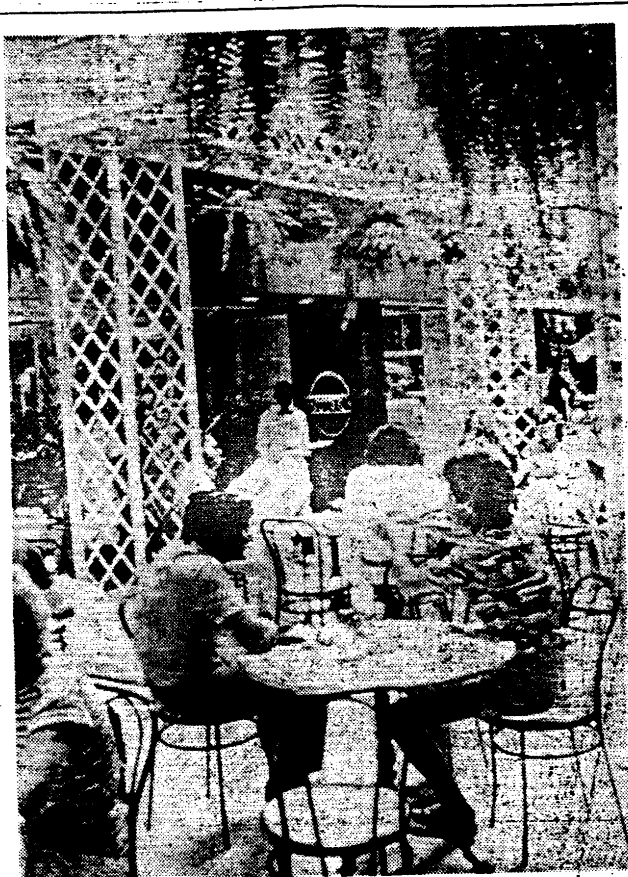
By fettering blacks in laws limiting their mobility, employment and education, apartheid weakened the Afrikaners' most feared opponent. By establishing a huge, bloated bureaucracy to administer itself, apartheid offered economic deliverance to Afrikaners, awarding them the incomes and job security they had never enjoyed under English rule—an estimated 46 percent of white workers are employed directly or indirectly by the government.

Structures of Apartheid

By establishing independent tribal "homelands" where blacks theoretically could enjoy full political rights, apartheid provided an elaborate, although transparent, moral justification for its cruelties.

But, like the political party that created it, apartheid has run out of steam. The costs of the bureaucracy, bearable during the boom years of the 1960s and early '70s, have grown too burdensome for an economy under stress. The need for skilled labor to service the sophisticated economy of 1985—South Africa is estimated to be short as many as 500,000 skilled workers—has grown too great for a system expressly designed to smother black achievement, not nurture it.

BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL



Black unrest and protest have pierced the cocoon of power, privilege and idleness that the apartheid system has built around South Africa's whites.

For the first time, there is a tension between the state's military and economic power. Unbridled use of the former causes direct harm to the latter.

South African whites enjoy an outdoor cafe north of Johannesburg, while in the Crossroads settlement outside Cape Town blacks flee birdshot and rubber bullets fired by riot police trying to quell violence in February. The scenes underscored the polarities of a tumultuous year in South Africa.



Similarly, the party's visionaries and true believers of the '50s, who designed the apartheid ideal with missionary zeal, have been succeeded by gray men widely viewed by white critics here as more interested in retaining power and privilege than in furthering a mythology.

These are practical men, and the Soweto riots of 1976 and further episodes of unrest in 1980 convinced them that urban blacks would never fit into the homelands scheme. Instead they devised a plan to forge a new middle-class alliance with the black urban elite, bringing it into a system that would grant it privileges yet preserve Afrikaner control. The first step was to be a new tricameral parliament with separate houses for whites, mixed-race "Coloreds" and Indians—but not for blacks, whose exclusion was to become one of the issues triggering the unrest. Later urban blacks would be included as well in some broader national structure.

Viewed through the peculiar prism of Afrikanerdom, the changes looked dramatic. Black trade unions were legalized and outdated appendages of apartheid, such as the legal reservation of certain job categories to whites, were abolished. The permanence of urban blacks, previously considered temporary sojourners in "white" cities, was acknowledged.

Critics called the plan "neoapartheid" because it entrenched Afrikaner rule even as it expanded its base. But its architects called it a "process," and themselves "reformers." The injustices of apartheid, inadvertent and otherwise, would be identified and eliminated—one at a time, in a painstakingly slow process that would have the twin advantages of being defensibly progressive yet totally under white control.

"Apartheid is dead," they proclaimed, a statement belied and ridiculed by the profusion of laws and customs that keep South Africa's suburbs, bedrooms, classrooms and swimming pools strictly segregated. What they meant was that apartheid no longer was necessary, that like a political Ice Age it would gradually, over decades, be thawed.

Pace of Acceptable Change

The pace of acceptable change is illustrated in the government's decision to begin opening all-white downtown shopping districts to black businessmen, first announced on Feb. 28, 1984. Nearly two years later, applications from local communities are mired in red tape by an unwieldy and conservative bureaucracy and not a single district has been desegregated.

The new reform concept reached its apogee in November 1983 when whites approved by 68 percent an intricately designed new constitution. But there was a missing element in this political game, one whose absence went largely unnoticed by whites even though it cast a shadow over the entire proceedings.

What was missing was the approval of any of the ethnic groups to be affected. The idea of Colored and Indian referendums on the new constitution was scrapped when it became clear that neither group was likely to vote yes. The idea of a black referendum was never considered.

In effect, the white reformers had fallen victim to the ideology they said they were discarding. Apartheid had taken urban blacks out of white areas, deposited them in townships or distant homelands, dehumanized and depoliticized them, leaving in white eyes strictly economic units—cheap, disposable labor. When black leaders arose, they generally wound up in jail or exile. So when the time came, not only was there no one to consult, but the very concept of consultation, of enlisting black support, was radical and alien.

New local governing bodies in the townships were supposed to win black support. Instead they generated wrath. Taking office following elections with minuscule turnouts, they lacked legitimacy, yet proceeded to assert their authority by seeking rent and utility rate increases. Those became the fuse to ignite a storehouse of explosive anger.

The unrest began in the Vaal townships south of Johannesburg on Sept. 3, 1984—the same day the new constitution took effect. From then on, the two were inextricably linked: As the unrest continued and spread, the reform process began unraveling, then fell apart.

With its undertrained and understaffed police force—its 45,000 members nationwide are not much more than that of New York City—and its lack of reliable intelligence in the townships, the government found itself trapped between halfhearted reform and halfhearted repression. Each township shooting, every case of police overreaction

exacerbated the problem, recruiting new black opposition, making it impossible for black moderates to be seen talking to the government. The state of emergency, originally declared in 36 cities and towns, was an official admission that the situation was out of control.

At first officials argued that nothing had changed, that the reform process was still on track. A few thugs and militants were terrorizing the townships, keeping moderates from the bargaining table. Once they were removed from the scene, all would return to normal, they said. But more than 7,000 arrests under the emergency have failed to achieve the goal. Even some of the homeland leaders, the most collaborationist of all blacks, told President Botha at a recent meeting in Pretoria that they cannot be seen negotiating with the government.—

As a result, some white officials are now conceding publicly that something has gone badly wrong. "There certainly has arisen a very strong frustration and bitterness amongst black leaders," said Gerrit Vijoen, the Cabinet minister in charge of education and black economic development, in a recent interview. "Vijoen not only blames manipulation by radicals," but also what he calls the "wrong perception" that the new tricameral parliament meant the permanent exclusion of blacks from national political rights. He concedes that South Africa is in a political crisis and that getting blacks to the table, as he put it, "is perhaps our biggest problem."

Good Life in Suburbs

Still, for a long time most whites felt no impact. Perhaps the maid didn't come to work one day. But the unrest was out of sight and out of mind. The good life of the white suburbs was untouched.

But if apartheid protects whites, it also isolates them and leaves them dependent for knowledge on a government whose own sources of information are less than reliable. When the shock came, both were unprepared. It hit where they were most vulnerable—the economy.

It is one of the world's most top-heavy and unbalanced economic systems, an inverted pyramid of a fragile base. At the top is a luxury, consumption-oriented economy, whose spending patterns reflect those of the United States, the society white South Africans most seek to emulate. The old Boer War image of the Afrikaner as spartan commando carrying all his possessions on horseback is as outdated as the American plainsman. South Africa until recently boasted 11 automobile manufacturers, including a Mercedes-Benz plant and the only BMW factory outside Germany. There are swimming pools in most white backyards and even many of the poorest households keep black servants.

This aspiring version of Beverly Hills sits atop a Third World society of nearly 25 million blacks, whose average income, birth and infant mortality rates reflect those of its African neighbors. They have provided the reservoir of cheap labor that for generations has kept the

The Washington Post
29 December 1985

Page 5 of 7

system functioning, but at the same time their own needs and demands have increased geometrically—South Africa's black education budget alone has increased more than 1,000 percent over the last decade, although per capita expenditure for blacks is still only one-seventh the amount for whites.

South Africa has Africa's most highly industrialized economy, but it remains dominated by minerals such as gold, diamonds and coal, which comprise 75 percent of its export earnings. During the 1970s, dramatic increases in the price of gold papered over cracks in the economy. But gold and other mineral prices generally have stagnated in the 1980s while South Africa's once robust farming sector has come to resemble some of its weaker African neighbors due to drought and a decline in government subsidies.

Diverse demands from urban blacks, middle-class whites and the apartheid bureaucracy have also caused economic strains. Despite a 25 to 30 percent pay increase for civil servants last year, white living standards in real terms have fallen every year since 1981.

Foreign investment capital built South Africa, but it has been quietly flowing out of the country since the Soweto uprising of 1976. To fill the investment gap and finance its deficit, Pretoria has looked mainly overseas for loan capital, borrowing to the point where short-term foreign debt hit \$14 billion earlier this year. South Africa, critics warned, was mortgaging its future.

Still, the debt posed no immediate problem so long as international bankers were willing to roll over the loans. But last August, they abruptly stopped.

Chase Manhattan, engaged in a broad campaign to reduce its lending exposure overseas, led the way, using Botha's emergency declaration as its rationale in attempting to call in \$350 million in outstanding loans. Others lagged, waiting for some signal that the government was aware of the depth of the crisis and prepared to launch dramatic reforms. Instead Botha delivered his Durban speech, a message of cold defiance. The banks suspended new loans, investment capital began a headlong flight and the government was forced to declare a debt freeze and institute strict foreign exchange controls.

No one knows how many billions have fled—much of the loss will be artfully concealed on corporate balance sheets—but Reserve Bank Governor Gerhard de Kock has suggested the loss may approximate the size of South Africa's large current account trade surplus, which amounts to at least \$2.5 billion this year. The loss, and the accompanying plunge of the South African rand—it has fallen farther and faster than even the devalued currencies of African economic basket cases such as Zambia and Tanzania—reflects a stunning drop in both foreign and local business confi-

"The banks accomplished in just two weeks what the entire international disinvestment movement couldn't do in five years," said Premier Group's Bloom.

Economic Pain

Whites have begun to feel the result. The fall of the rand has meant steep price increases in imported goods—South Africa in essence is exporting capital and importing inflation. A recent business seminar here was told the country is losing 1,000 jobs per week, and the government is even contemplating layoffs inside the formerly sacrosanct white civil service. For the first time in decades there are reports of hunger among white schoolchildren. The apartheid system, designed to guarantee white comfort, now inflicts economic pain on some whites.

The net result has seriously damaged white morale. Official emigration statistics remain low, and many whites are trapped here by the sharp decline of the rand. If they left now, their assets would be worth less than half what they could buy only two years ago. Were the rand to regain even a fraction of its former value, many believe white emigration would soar.

The whites who can afford to leave now are those the economy can least afford to lose. They include recent college graduates who have yet to accumulate assets yet have needed, marketable skills, and older specialists being recruited by overseas corporations willing to make up the potential loss of moving. In the past 18 months one estimate is that at least eight of the 30 best investment analysts on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange have quit and moved abroad.

Companies were also leaving—the American Chamber of Commerce here estimated at least 20 American firms pulled out in the first eight months of 1985—until the government's Sept. 1 debt freeze made it prohibitive to pull out their assets. Many multinationals instead are said to be using bookkeeping maneuvers such as "transfer pricing," which involves the parent firm's overcharging for goods it sells to its South African subsidiary, to quietly move their money out of the country. De Kock has publicly conceded there is little he can do to prevent such practices.

The financial crisis also has long-term implications for blacks, for it comes at a time when South Africa's economy desperately needs to grow if it is to meet black aspirations without destroying white life styles. Most analysts believe the economy must grow at 5 percent annually just to stay even with the estimated 300,000 new job seekers each year. Black unemployment, according to University of Cape Town researchers, already has passed 25 percent and in depressed areas such as Port Elizabeth it exceeds 50 percent. Yet this year the gross national product is projected to decline nearly 2 percent.

Faced with these stark economic realities, an increasing number of businessmen are calling for a return to strict government controls on imports, an artificially fixed rand price and even tighter restrictions on foreign exchange. Others argue convincingly that such measures would be a first step toward a siege economy. South Africa could come to resemble Africa's largest economic sick man, Nigeria, which boasts huge loan defaults, declining agricultural productivity, a thriving black market in currency and chronic corruption in its massive bureaucracy.

Government supporters point out that while white morale may be down, white will to rule remains, as does the military and police power to enforce that will. "We've had turbulent times but the government is still firmly in control," said Carl Noffke, a former South African diplomat who now heads the Institute for American Studies at Rand Afrikaans University here. "There may even be a drastic decrease in our standard of living and in social services for blacks—but South Africa can survive."

Other observers do not dispute South Africa's ability to hang on, but contend that the price of exclusive white control will continue to rise.

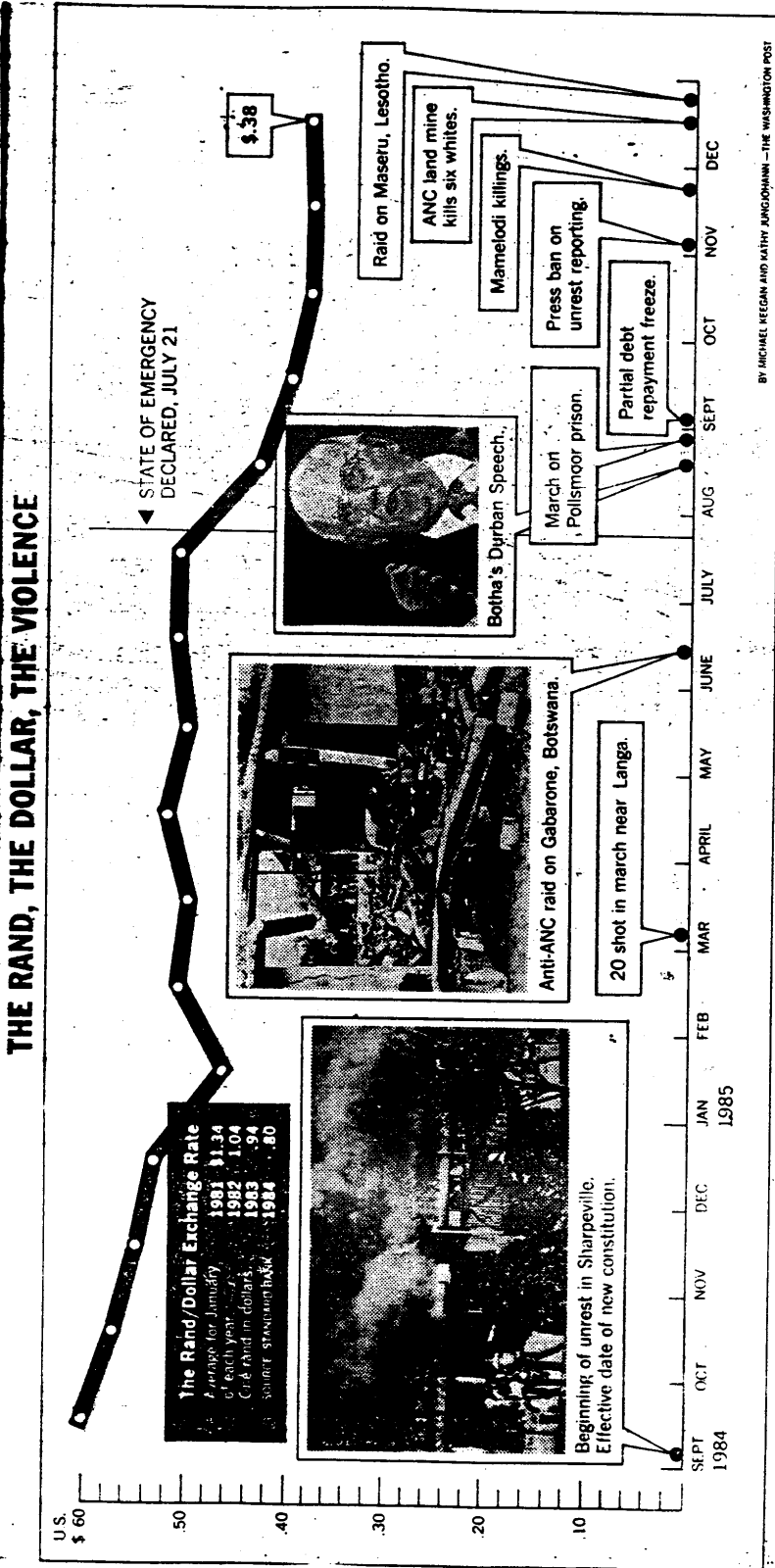
'Period of Attrition'

"What we're looking at is not an economic collapse," said one analyst, "but a long period of attrition where the economy is eroded steadily and irrecoverably. It's very likely that those who leave, companies and people, will never come back."

But whether whites, swathed in protective layers of privilege and complacency, recognize how much is at risk is an unanswered question. Outside of business and liberal circles there still appears to be little sense of urgency.

"They are prepared to change," said Afrikaner political scientist Andre du Toit, "but only as far and as fast as absolutely necessary. The danger is that it will always be too little and too late."

Special correspondent Allister Sparks contributed to this article.
NEXT: Conflict among blacks





THE WASHINGTON POST

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1985



Second of three articles

By Glenn Frankel
Washington Post Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG—They are called the "comrades," and in this year of struggle, burning and death they have emerged as the young foot soldiers of a largely leaderless, faceless movement that has challenged the power of Africa's last white bastion.

In their angry passion, their certainty and their self-destructiveness, young urban blacks have set their own communities aflame—but they have also plunged white South Africa into its most severe political and financial crisis since the Boer War of 1899.

Aided by a government whose police tactics consistently have undercut its expressed desire for "reform," they have succeeded in sustaining 16 months of civil unrest. They have discredited Pretoria's strategy of limited change, damaged its economy and done permanent harm to its standing abroad.

Unrest has spread from traditional urban flashpoints like Soweto, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, into townships and rural areas once noted for their tranquility and conservatism. In the

BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL

SOUTH AFRICA'S YEAR OF STRUGGLE

process, blacks have revived and refined economic weapons such as consumer boycotts that have jolted segments of the white community in a way they never had been touched before.

The unrest also has helped revive the standing of the organization with which many blacks identify most closely, the outlawed African National Congress. The United Democratic Front, the internal political movement that most nearly reflects the congress' concept of a future South Africa, survived a year of harsh repression.

'Comrades' in Townships Lead Own Campaign

At the same time, many black moderates have found themselves trapped between their often radicalized children and a police force many of them see as brutal and unyielding.

The political middle ground has all but vanished. Those who have been perceived as cooperating in any way with the white authorities have lost credibility, support and, in some cases, their lives.

Still, while blacks have succeeded for the first time in a generation in seriously damaging white South Africa, they remain far from their goal of toppling white rule. The dream that many youths believe is around the corner remains elusive. And because white military power remains intact, there is no clear path to get there. Blacks have created an enduring crisis, not a revolution.



"We have tested the regime to some extent, but we have failed to realize our potential," said the Rev. Joe Seoka, an Anglican cleric and deputy president of the Azanian People's Organization, a radical group whose Black Consciousness philosophy sets it apart from the multiracial stance of the ANC and the UDF.

"It is worrying to us," said a young activist, known as Lucas, in Crossroads, the bleak squatter community outside Cape Town that has been the scene of periodic spasms of violence and police roundups for the past year.

"The power of the people is very strong, but we lack the means of confronting the regime. The regime is the one that does the shooting and the people do the dying." To a great extent, Lucas and his fellow "comrades" have become the heart and soul of the challenge to white rule, and there are groups who identify themselves as "comrades" in virtually every major black urban center. Through inspiration and intimidation—and, on occasion, through public killings—they have compelled fellow blacks, many of whom already support their goals, to acquiesce in their tactics.

The "comrades" are a mixed bag of militants, street thugs and bored teen-agers. In black communities like Soweto and Crossroads, many come from the long-organized network of street gangs that operate like little mafias among the squalor and the poverty of the townships. Elsewhere they are groups that have spontaneously risen from early episodes of unrest. Massive unemployment among young blacks—it exceeds 50 percent in many urban areas—swells their ranks, as does the stifling inferiority of South Africa's segregated black schools.

Their politics, as suggested by the name they have chosen for themselves, is often an amorphous blend of vague socialism, black nationalism and, increasingly, anti-Americanism. But mostly they define themselves by their enemy—the "system" in all its hated manifestations: the schools, police, soldiers and those blacks who "collaborate" by working for the government and its various agencies.



Through a process of alienation and polarization, black youths have lost their "sensitivity for life," a white minister says.



Those blacks perceived as cooperating in any way with the white authorities have lost credibility, support and, in some cases, their lives.

The "Necklace" Becomes a Symbol

Those who defy the will of the comrades face retribution. Shoppers who buy goods from boycotted white stores have been forced to drink liquid detergent or eat raw meat. A 20-year-old man was stoned and then burned to death in Soweto two weeks ago for holding a house party in violation of a "people's ban" on Christmas-time festivities. A young student nurse accused of breaking a strike at a Soweto hospital last month was set ablaze.

The "necklace"—a tire filled with gasoline, placed around the neck of a "traitor" and set on fire—has become the macabre symbol of a generation that believes it has nothing to lose. Of the nearly 1,000 blacks who have died since the unrest began in September 1984, almost one-third have been killed by other blacks, with most of the remainder shot by police or soldiers.

"We have gained the power," said Scipho, a teen-aged activist in Crossroads. "Everybody now is prepared to die for his rights. People no longer feel threatened by the bullets. When they see soldiers and police they are eager to confront them. They [the government] have arrested our leaders but the situation just goes from bad to worse."

Consumer boycotts of white businesses have been a key element in the rise of black power in perhaps a dozen urban areas. In areas like eastern Cape Province, boycotts forced the white business community to intercede with the government for the release of local black leaders and for the withdrawal of the Army from black townships.

While organized by community groups linked to the United Democratic Front, the boycotts have been most effective when endorsed by the comrades, often operating with the tacit consent of UDF leaders. In many townships the comrades have used the boycotts to consolidate their own hold.

A year ago, Mamelodi, a black satellite town on the outskirts of Pretoria, the seat of white rule, was a quiet, model community with a well-defined and compliant black power structure. Today it is under the de facto control of the comrades.

School boycott committees decide when children go to school and when they stay home. A business boycott committee determines when and where people shop. A "people's court" even decides, in some cases, who lives and who dies.

The government lost control of Mamelodi through a now familiar combination of black grievances and police repression. A school boycott organized by the UDF-affiliated Congress of South African Students turned into a running street battle between stone-throwing youths and armed police when authorities tried to force students back to the classrooms. A black policeman was killed. Some children died and others were beaten by black police, who seemed to residents to be out of control.

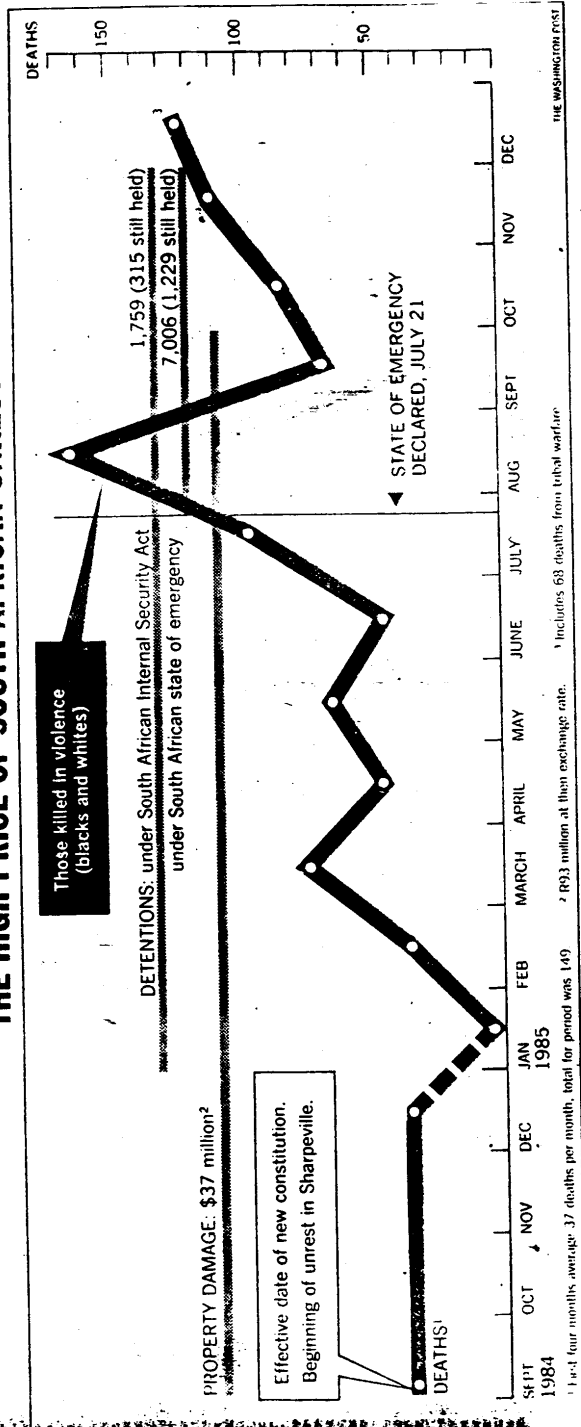
Adults who intervened found themselves under assault. The car of Louis Khumalo, a pharmacist who organized a parents' association, was blown up last May. In October he was detained without charge for a week. Last month, Khumalo said, he was clubbed repeatedly by a black police lieutenant on a Mamelodi street and later arrested and beaten while in custody by police who accused him of instigating unrest. Last week he was detained once more, along with the president of the town's chamber of commerce and five other businessmen and clerics, accused of helping to organize a boycott of white businesses.



TOP PHOTO BY JO-ANN BEMER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST; PHOTO ABOVE, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A target of black violence in Kwazakele Township, Port Elizabeth, is killed in a "necklace" burning last June. At top, youths in uniform wield wooden rifles at a funeral for blacks killed at Queenstown in early December.

THE HIGH PRICE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNREST



The bitterness and the alienation came to a head Nov. 21 when a peaceful protest rally of nearly 50,000 residents outside township offices dissolved into a bloody showdown. Rocks were thrown and police opened fire with shotguns and tear gas. At least 13 blacks died. The radicalization of Mamelodi was complete.

What happened in Mamelodi has been repeated in variations throughout South Africa's urban townships. It has been a process of alienation and polarization. Black youths, said the Rev. Nico Smith, a sympathetic, white Dutch Reformed minister who lives on the outskirts of Mamelodi and leads a black congregation there, have "lost their sensitivity for life. They have reached the point of no hope."

Smith recalled a recent meeting he had with some of the comrades in which he argued that they should return to school because, as he put it, "education is power."

"They said it indicated how little I knew," said Smith. One youth described how his father, a high school principal with two university degrees, had been stopped at a police roadblock and hauled off to jail in front of his son because he had left at home his "pass," the identity book that all urban blacks are required to carry. The lesson, the youth told Smith, was that "even the most educated black man is treated like dirt—the schools are there to make us better trained slaves."

In this charged and bitter atmosphere, the ties binding parents and children have been tested and strained. If they hold, it is often because the parents recognize in their children the same discontent they carry in themselves.

"Young people are driven by the same anger and frustration that I feel," said Zodwa Mabaso, a UDF supporter and Soweto mother of four who spent four months without charge in detention last year. "But they are more bitter. I can still feel sorry for the policeman, but that's not the same for young people."

"Our children are no longer children. They become adults and we ourselves become the children. Even a 10-year-old will tell you there's no time for play and no time for school, only time to think about what you do if the policeman comes tonight."

The discontent that underlies the unrest had sat like unfused dynamite in the pit of black souls since the Soweto uprising of 1976. Ironically, it took an act of government "reform" to set it off again.

The uprising was one of a series of events that gradually pushed Pretoria's planners away from classic apartheid, South Africa's system of white domination, toward a new concept that would include an alliance between the white government and an identifiable black urban elite.

Whites would remain the senior partners, but the right of local self-government, home ownership and even a form of citizenship would be bestowed upon a black middle class. Give them a stake in the system, the argument went, and a network of conservative black professionals, businessmen and local officials would arise that would defend the status quo.

The government's black foes quickly recognized the strategy as a threat to their efforts to build a united opposition. When Pretoria announced the first phase—a new constitution granting limited political rights to Indians and mixed-race "Coloreds" and a new plan for local government in black townships—opponents mobilized. Activists took advantage of a loosening of the state's usually tight grip on political dissent to form the United Democratic Front. Moderates such as Zulu Chief Gatsha Buthelezi also mounted a strong campaign against the new "dispensation."

They failed to defeat the constitution at the ballot box—a whites-only referendum approved it by a resounding margin. But the activists were more successful in the streets of black townships.

The wave of violence began Sept. 3, 1984, in Sharpeville, the same township where 69 blacks had been cut down by police fire in a famous incident 24 years earlier, and one of the first victims was the black deputy mayor. After police opened fire on demonstrators, a mob descended on Sam Dlamini's house, hacked him to death at his front door, then dragged his body to his car and set it ablaze. Five other local councilmen died in similar fashion in other townships in the region.

The pattern was set. From then on, as the unrest spread from town to town, the targets almost always included blacks identified with "the system." Black policemen, town councilmen, alleged police informers—all were singled out, their houses burned, their shops looted, their lives put at risk.

The idea, as a young activist in the East Rand township of KwaThema put it, was to make them "feel the same pain that we are feeling." The effect was to undermine and wreck the incipient deal South Africa's white rulers had hoped to forge with an urban black middle class.

Perhaps the biggest winner in the unrest is an organization that had little role in initiating it—the African National Congress.

Leaders of the congress have been in jail or exile since the organization was outlawed in 1960 after the Sharpeville Massacre. The low-level sabotage campaign they have been waging against the government seemed to reach a dead end in early 1984 when South Africa signed a nonaggression pact with Mozambique, the black Marxist state that had provided the main springboard for ANC attacks. With its main operatives expelled from Maputo and with President Pieter W. Botha received as a reformer on his June tour of Europe, the ANC appeared to retreat into a sullen shell.

Devotion to the ANC

But even at its lowest moment, the ANC had a crucial weapon in its depleted armory—black devotion. Many looked to it as the only organization willing to mount a military challenge, however small or ineffective, against white rule. Older blacks based their loyalty on the memory of the organization's mass protests in the 1950s, while the young idealized a movement they had never seen and leaders they had never heard.

"Where are you, Oliver Tambo?" go the words to one of the many freedom songs that resound at funerals for victims of the violence. It goes on to plead with the ANC leader for machine guns and bazookas to kill white soldiers. "We are waiting for you to lead us to freedom."

The congress was quick to react to the unrest with calls for youths to attack "enemy personnel" and render the black townships "ungovernable." In some areas, mostly around Cape Province, the ANC's traditional stronghold, congress operatives have played a major role in planning attacks on policemen and organizing actions such as boycotts.

Elsewhere its role has been mostly inspirational, its calls for insurrection usually at least one step behind events. Recent South African visitors to Lusaka, white businessmen and liberal politicians, have come away with the impression that the ANC's leadership fears that the anarchy on township streets is out of its control.

There are at least two contrasting sides to the ANC as seen from South Africa, and the organization is considered to have alternated smoothly between them this year.

The side the businessmen saw in Lusaka is that of moderation and reasonableness. It is the same one Oliver Tambo presented to Cape Times editor Anthony Heard in the interview Heard published here in November in defiance of South African law.

Tambo stressed the movement's hopes for a nonracial South Africa where "everybody's property is secure." Violence could be suspended and negotiations with the government could begin, he said, as soon as Pretoria demonstrates its readiness by releasing imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, lifting the state of emergency, pulling troops out of the townships and ending the ban on the ANC.

"There is always the possibility of a truce," said Tambo. "It would be very, very easy if, for example, we started negotiations."

Those deftly worded statements have helped to drive a new wedge into the once rock-solid white community here and to nurture doubts among some whites about their government's ironclad refusal to release Mandela or talk to the ANC until it denounces violence, cuts all ties to Communists and submits, in Botha's words, to "constitutional means."

ANC's Violent Side

The other side of the ANC is more radical and more violent. Its voice can be heard on Radio Freedom, broadcast from Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zambia, urging blacks not only to "eliminate enemy agents within our community," but to take the struggle into white suburbs. "Let them feel that the country is at war," instructed an Aug. 2 broadcast from Addis Ababa. Other broadcasts encouraged black maids to attack the homes of their white employers.

The ANC's military wing has dramatically stepped up the number of its attacks inside South Africa this past year—122 as of Dec. 15 compared to only 44 for all of 1984, according to the Institute of Strategic Studies at the University of Pretoria. Among them was the recent land-mine explosion that took the lives of six white women and children in a northern farming community near the Zimbabwean border.

Such attacks are too infrequent to terrorize the white community into submission or to do major economic damage. They tend instead to have the opposite effect—uniting whites behind retaliatory raids into neighboring states and the government's no-talks policy.

Among blacks, however, the attacks are widely applauded as one of the few ways whites can be made to feel some of the same despair that permeates the townships. "There is a greater respect for the ANC," says Lucas, the young Crossroads activist. "Wherever you hear the word ANC, people listen."

There is evidence that even blacks in more conservative rural areas believe the violence is justified in fighting white rule. A recent survey of 120 school teachers and civil servants in Lebowa, a nonindependent "homeland" in the northern Transvaal, found that 78 percent approved of student boycotts and other actions even when they lead to violence.

"Even damage to buildings, injuries to people and other forms of physical violence are mostly described as the inevitable consequence of apartheid," wrote Johan Malan, a white anthropologist who conducted the survey. "The general contention is that if less boycotts and violence occur, the government will not be embarrassed enough to consider the dismantling of apartheid."

The Soviet Bloc provides the ANC with most of its military hardware, and analysts estimate there are about a dozen members of the small South African Communist Party on the ANC's 30-member National Executive Council. But Tambo, himself a noncommunist, centrist figure, has been careful to keep the movement broad-based and flexible, emphasizing his pragmatism to western governments and businessmen at events such as the private dinner he held with American corporate leaders in New York earlier this year.

Again, the politically moderate tones of Tambo contrast with the strident Marxism displayed by such information organs as *Sechaba*, the ANC's monthly magazine published in East Germany. As the struggle continues and Tambo and other older nationalists are replaced, many analysts believe the congress inevitably will shift farther to the left.

While the ANC has gained stature this year, political moderates identified to any extent with the government have been the biggest losers. The Labor Party, once the foremost political movement of mixed-race or Colored South Africans, is widely believed to have lost much of its urban constituency because of its participation in the new constitution's tricameral Parliament.

When Colored students in Cape Town stepped up a series of school boycotts in September, the party's minister of education closed the schools for nearly a month and fired dozens of activist teachers. As a result, the party has been more closely identified with the government it once bitterly opposed.

Similarly, Zulu Chief Buthelezi, whom many white moderates see as the black leader they can most readily bargain with, found himself at war with the ANC and supporters of the United Democratic Front, who accused him of being a "puppet" of the government.

Buthelezi preaches nonviolence, but members of his Inkatha cultural movement formed vigilante committees and participated in the factional fighting that rocked Durban's townships in August with at least 70 deaths. The Zulu groups, armed with traditional clubs and spears, operated with the tacit consent of white police, who stood aside while they restored "order."

His critics contend that Buthelezi someday will be enticed into playing the same collaborationist role that Methodist Bishop Abel Muzorewa played in preindependence Zimbabwe. But Buthelezi has held back, strongly criticizing the Botha government and refusing to be seen negotiating until a minimum set of conditions, including the release of Mandela, is met.

He is seen as more likely to end up in the same role as another Zimbabwean nationalist, Joshua Nkomo, who could not expand his strong regional following into a national power base.

Even white liberals have begun to have second thoughts about Buthelezi. The trips to Lusaka to meet the ANC, the arch-rival of Buthelezi's Inkatha organization, were considered a blow to the chief's stature. So too was the failure of a much publicized alliance for a national constitutional convention launched by Buthelezi and the white Progressive Federal Party.

The movement failed to enlist black support outside Inkatha after the ANC reportedly sent word that it believed the alliance "premature." Buthelezi's supporters eventually resigned from the steering committee of the alliance, which is still searching for black moderates.

The failure of the movement was another indication of how thin the political middle ground has become here for both whites and blacks. It also illustrated the control the ANC can wield.

But while the ANC-UDF phalanx may be ascendant, blacks are still far from united. The battles between the UDF and Buthelezi, between the UDF and supporters of Black Consciousness, and the endless search for "traitors" and "collaborators" have had a corrosive effect. Even older UDF leaders have found themselves at times under attack from the young comrades for preaching an unacceptable brand of moderation.

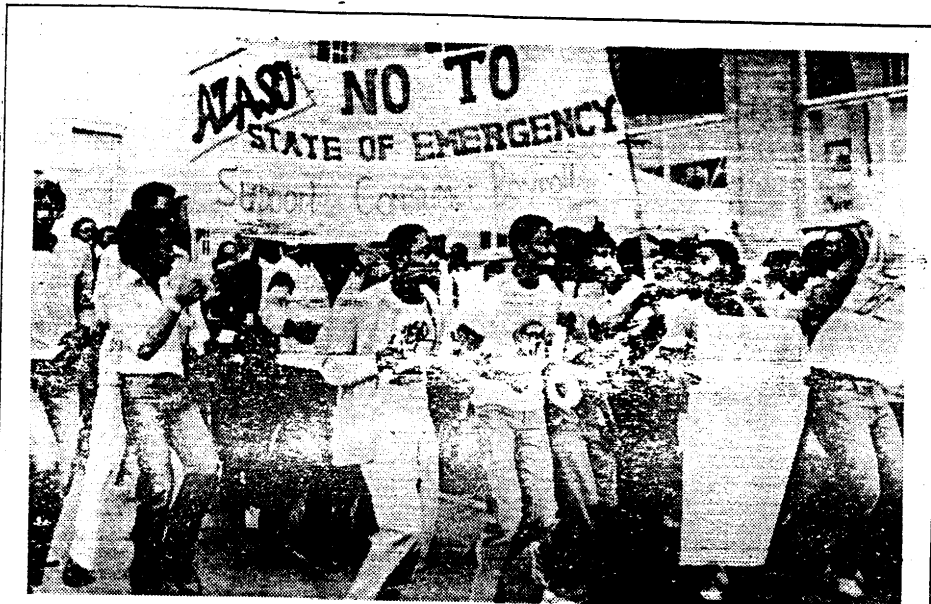
The result is a movement that at times seems leaderless and directionless, a weakness some black strategists themselves acknowledge.

"We have gotten caught up too much in our political differences and weaknesses," says Seoka of the Azanian People's Organization. "Organizations become ambulances. They go into an area after people start dying and they leave as soon as things calm down. We still have a long way to go."

Special correspondent Allister Sparks contributed to this report.

NEXT: Scenarios for an uneasy future

BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL



Blacks have revived such economic weapons as consumer boycotts. Above, a march in Johannesburg in June. SYGMA



At least six protesters were killed and scores injured when marchers clashed with police Nov. 21 in Mamelodi. ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE WASHINGTON POST
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1985

Grim Scenarios for Future

Urban Terrorism, Economic Decline Likely to Continue

Last of three articles

By Glenn Frankel
Washington Post Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG—On a sunny Friday afternoon in late October a pickup truck pulled up beside a bus stop in downtown Johannesburg. Several black youths jumped out and joined a small band gathered there. They grabbed bags of rocks and bricks from the back of the truck and headed for nearby shops.

It was over in a matter of minutes. About 20 white-owned stores were hit, windows

BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL

SOUTH AFRICA'S YEAR OF STRUGGLE

smashed, goods in a few cases looted. By the time police arrived, the youths had melted away into the crowds on the sidewalks.

In the 16 months of riots, burnings and killings that have descended upon South Africa, the incident was little more than a footnote, one of a handful this past year in which black violence briefly spilled over into white areas. But in its premeditated organization and swift execution, it seemed like something more—perhaps a prelude, a warning of things to come and of a day when blacks might take to the streets of white South Africa armed with guns and explosives, not just rocks.

Urban terrorism, as reflected in that incident and in last week's bomb blast that killed seven whites at a shopping center south of Durban, is one of the likely directions that analysts believe the struggle for South Africa could take if it is not resolved peacefully within the next few years.

There are many scenarios; indeed, predictions about the future have become almost a cottage industry here, reflecting the deep anxiety of whites and the great expectations of blacks.

There is no agreement on a timetable. The young "comrades" on the streets of black townships believe their liberation is only a year or two away. Their elders speak of five years, or 10. There is virtually no one in the black community who expects to be ruled by whites in the year 2000.

Among whites, the future is more hazy, although there is general agreement that South Africa will not remain the same. Many believe the unrest may be a chronic phenomenon and that the economic slide that has begun, and the flight of foreign firms and investment capital, is irreversible. Many South African firms have begun making plans to cope with further economic sanctions, which they believe are inevitable should liberal governments come to power

in the United States, Britain and West Germany.

But the majority of the country's 5 million whites do not seem ready to accept the idea that black rule is inevitable. Many believe they can hold out indefinitely, albeit with a reduced standard of living and a higher, but tolerable, level of violence.

The attitude among many whites toward South Africa's approximately 22 million

blacks, says political columnist Ken Owen, is that "we're giving up the notion we can rule them, but they won't rule us." Much of that attitude stems from the privileged economic and social position whites enjoy in South Africa and their fear of losing their status and their property under black rule. But for the Afrikaners, who make up 60 percent of the whites here and who control the govern-

ment, there is another, deeper fear—that of forfeiting their destiny as a nation, of becoming just another minority group in a country that is no longer theirs.

Afrikaners believed they had a divine right to nationhood and that they would always be vulnerable to hostile forces around them until they had a homeland of their own. The apartheid system of racial domination was designed to preserve and justify that homeland. To dismantle it now is to surrender a dream and to risk survival as a people and a culture. Many Afrikaners would rather partition the country and seal themselves off in a small enclave than face such a prospect.

"Afrikaners are not ready to entertain the notion of giving up power," said political scientist Hermann Giliomee. "The game is not about apartheid, it is about power. If you lose power, everything is up for grabs. In the end, whites will keep on shooting to protect their way of life, or they will pay others to do it."

Assuming white intransigence will prevail, planners for one major multinational firm have drawn up a grim but perhaps plausible scenario:

The noose of international sanctions slowly tightens around a defiant government, the economy continues to deteriorate and the resulting growth of black unemployment feeds township unrest. Black insurgents step up attacks on whites and an increasing number with marketable skills or liberal beliefs flee overseas. Eventually, the govern-

ment falls, but it is succeeded not by black-majority rule but by a regime composed of extreme right-wing elements of the ruling National Party with strong support from the military and police.

Unfettered by the need to placate western critics, the new government proceeds to imprison, even execute, the country's internal "enemies." It authorizes new and larger military incursions into neighboring states to eliminate South African insurgents based there. It also strikes out against the West by repudiating the country's debt, seizing foreign assets and stopping foreign currency flows. South Africa hobbles into the 21st century under economic and political siege—but still under white rule.

Searching for Alternatives

A small but growing number of white moderates, believing they are faced with such a nightmare, are desperately searching for alternatives. They have bowed to the inevitability of black rule, even under the outlawed African National Congress, the main black resistance movement, but many see no path short of a bloodbath to get there. Their conversations often are laced with apocalyptic visions.

The Rev. Nico Smith, a Dutch Reformed minister, spoke of "a catharsis that will purify the entire country." Hennie Bester, one of the Afrikaner students at Stellenbosch University who, like Smith, was prevented by the government from traveling to Zambia to meet with the ANC, said he longs for "something dramatic" within the next year or two, something that would shock and alter white thinking.

"Otherwise," Bester warned, "we are looking at a protracted age of darkness, a civil war in which the whites, the Afrikaner and the English, will lose whatever they have."

One reason the future is so uncertain is that both the government and the ANC are nearing a generational change of leadership. South African President Pieter W. Botha is 69; ANC President Oliver Tambo, 68; and Nelson Mandela, the congress' imprisoned leader, 67.

While Botha stays in office, the government is likely to continue its two-pronged strategy of cracking down harshly on unrest and on political dissidents while pursuing its program of measured change. The state of emergency, which Botha first declared July 21, may be dropped, but many analysts expect some of its more stringent provisions to be retained, including the nationwide immunity for police and military actions taken to quell unrest and the ban on unauthorized press coverage.

When Parliament reconvenes at the end of January, Botha is likely to offer a legislative package that could include the restoration of black citizenship, changes in the country's restrictions on black movement, a legalized end to forced removals and new black property rights, all of which he unveiled in a series of double-edged, semantically dense speeches this year.

He is also expected to give some indication of his plans for a new constitution that would finally give blacks a political role in the national government, although probably as part of a racially based confederation that virtually no black leaders outside the nominally independent "homelands" would find acceptable.

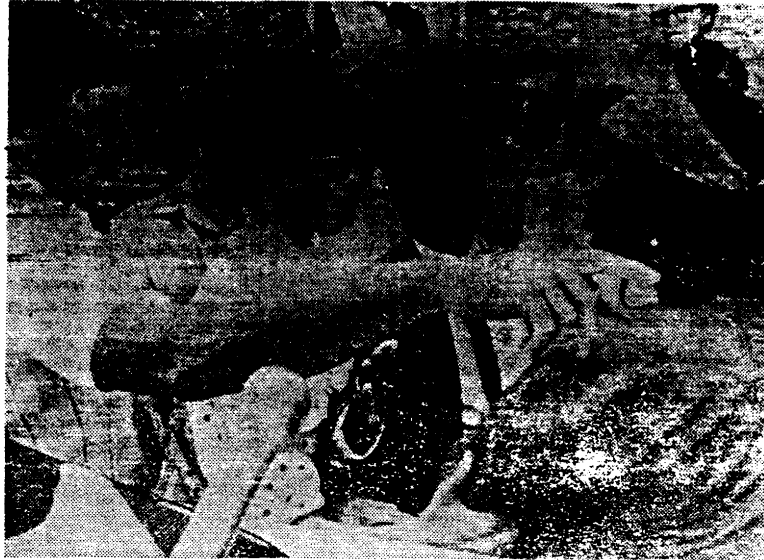
Botha: Angry Politician

Botha is a visceral politician, tough, angry and at times unpredictable. Some analysts believe he may call a snap election next year—he doesn't have to hold one until 1989—in an attempt to hold a solid parliamentary majority for his National Party before its support is eroded further by a worsening economy and black violence. He may even call a white referendum to ask white support for whatever new constitutional plan Pretoria devises.

Once an election is out of the way, Botha could then retire gracefully, without appearing to have been hounded from office by the critics he so clearly despises.

He is unlikely to make the kind of dramatic concessions that most black leaders believe are necessary to defuse the crisis. Those would include releasing Mandela and other longtime ANC political prisoners, legalizing the organization and inviting its exiled leaders to return home for talks.

Botha has said he will not make such a move until the ANC leadership denounces violence, disowns its ties to South Africa's small Communist Party and submits to "constitutional means." Others believe he cannot afford a dramatic gesture because the government would risk losing control and the political initiative to the ANC—and control is crucial to the cautious, incremental process Pretoria is wedded to.



Black nationalist Winnie Mandela, right, argues with South African police as they arrest her for defying an order banning her from her home in the Johannesburg suburb of Soweto. Story, A13.

More likely is that the government will continue down its present path and hope that at some point, after the radicals have been subdued by the police, black moderates will shed some of their natural distrust and come to Pretoria's bargaining table.

Gerrit Viljoen, the Cabinet minister in charge of black affairs and education and one of those tapped as a likely contender for power when Botha retires, conceded in an interview that even the government's white constituents were "impatient."

"They want dramatic steps," said Viljoen. "They want to know what's going to happen. There is definitely an impatience and a readiness on the part of the majority of the electorate to get [on with] reform."

Viljoen said he believes that "in the really short-term future, blacks will occupy 'positions of power.'" Nonetheless, he added, the government is still committed to preserving "group rights and group security," which he defined as "differentiated residential areas, education and some form of group representation in political structures." That means the preservation of race classification statutes, which define "groups" and specify their members, and of the Group Areas Act, which enforces segregation in housing and schools. It also means rejection of the principle of one person, one vote.

Viljoen insists that all these matters can be discussed with blacks and perhaps altered at the bargaining table. Everything is negotiable, he says, except for a commitment to nonviolence. But Botha himself has sent out different signals, telling the Nationalist faithful at party congresses this year that Group Areas and segregated schools were inviolable.

Boycotts Likely to Go On

None of this is acceptable to the vast majority of urban blacks, especially to the hard, young "comrades" who serve as the shock troops in the low-level insurrection that continues to boil in black and mixed-race townships. They have plans to make 1986 a "no-go" year for township schools in honor of the 10th anniversary of the Soweto riots. It is also likely that blacks will continue to use and refine economic weapons such as the boycotts against white businesses that proved devastatingly effective in the eastern Cape Province and parts of Cape Town this past year.

The "comrades" and the black community organizations that fall under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front may have an activist ally in the newly formed Congress of South African Trade Unions, whose leadership has pledged a new era of labor activism. If so, it could mean an increase in strikes, even a coordination between work absences and store boycotts that could further weaken South Africa's economy by withholding the two most important contributions blacks make—their labor and their buying power.

The ANC, convinced Pretoria is a long way from the bargaining table, appears determined to step up its insurgency. After vowing to conduct a "people's war" at a consultative conference last June, the movement is beginning to hit at "soft" targets. Last week's shopping center bomb, planted in a wastebasket outside an ice cream parlor, was one of the first to have been aimed exclusively at white civilians. While the ANC has yet to either claim or deny responsibility for the blast, the incident suggests a new mood of angry militancy following a South

The Washington Post
31 December 1985

Page 3 of 6

African assassination raid on refugees in Lesotho. That raid, in turn, followed a land mine explosion in the northern Transvaal that killed six whites.

Analysts believe the ANC is still far from developing the disciplined clandestine networks that could launch a sustained guerrilla war or endure a long-term tit-for-tat campaign with the South Africans. Rural warfare is unlikely because of South Africa's vast barren spaces and the long distances between its borders and population centers. But the ANC is clearly moving in the direction of urban terror, with congress radio broadcasts from Ethiopia and Tanzania calling for blacks to organize and expand a network of small military cells. The recurring theme is that blacks must begin to bring the struggle into white areas, to pierce the protective veil around the white community.

"The whole country must go up in flames," said an August ANC broadcast from Addis Ababa. "Let there be no peace in all areas."

The rhetoric suggests a future in which Afrikaner and black nationalists are locked in a death grip that destroys them both and takes down several of South Africa's black neighboring states as well. But where most see intransigence and attrition, a few analysts see a glimmer of hope in the psychology of the Afrikaner.

Afrikaners are above all survivors, who withstood years of hardship on the high, hostile plateaus of southern Africa. Once they see that the choice is between survival under black rule or destruction, this argument goes, they will settle.

"There may be occasional episodes of organized violence against whites, but I don't see the ANC sustaining a major expansion of guerrilla activity," said political scientist Tom Lodge, an academic authority on black resistance movements. "In the end, the regime will collapse from within, when the groups whose support it enjoys withdraw."

The Rhodesian Example

When considering the future, many South Africans look north to Zimbabwe, the former Rhodesia, which went through a seven-year struggle in which nearly 30,000 people died before blacks took power.

Like most historical analogies, it is imprecise and in some ways misleading. Landlocked Rhodesia's white population was far smaller than South Africa's, as was its economy. But in some ways it was less vulnerable to economic sanctions than South Africa, where 40 percent of the gross national product is tied in some way to foreign trade.

The international trade embargo on Rhodesia, which South Africa helped break, encouraged an economic boomlet for nearly a decade—until gradually, combined with the assaults of black guerrillas, it began to wear the country down.

Nonetheless, the similarities between these two white bastions still echo. One of white Rhodesian prime minister Ian Smith's top security aides, who still lives in Zimbabwe and insists upon anonymity, has some pertinent advice to offer white South Africa.

He recalled that at one stage Rhodesian troops were killing 1,000 black guerrillas a month and were assuming they would quickly win the war. But at the same time, he said, black recruits were signing up with the guerrillas at the rate of 2,000 per month. "The measure of your success is not the number you kill but by the number of recruits your enemy is getting," said the aide. "For every guerrilla we killed we made at least two new enemies."

The aide had another piece of advice for South Africans: "You're better off settling it while you're ahead. We could have gotten a much better deal in 1971 than we got in 1979. Once things start going downhill you're in no position to negotiate anything except as a loser."

Analogy in Algeria

But South Africans pondering the future might also look much further to the north to Algeria, where Africa's most bitter and brutal independence war was fought.

Again the parallels are imprecise. Algeria was a French colony, while South Africa is an independent nation, and there is no mother country to pull the plug on the Afrikaners the way the government of Gen. Charles de Gaulle finally put an end to French rule there. Before he did, as many as 1 million people died in eight years—1,000 times the number killed so far in South Africa.

But in other, less tangible ways, the Algerian nightmare has many frightening lessons to teach—and both sides in the South African struggle have gone there to learn. Before independence, South African police and soldiers were sent to Algeria for training in combating urban guerrillas and in the brutal interrogation techniques that the French refined. In recent years, ANC insurgents have received guerrilla training in camps outside Algiers.

Heavy-handed repression, including the widespread use of police torture, was as common in Algeria as it is in South Africa. So, too, was the brutal response of the rebels to those branded as collaborators. Perhaps one-third of all the deaths in the war were Algerians killed by fellow Algerians—a statistic that grimly parallels South Africa, where the same rough proportion of deaths in political violence has been the result of blacks killing other blacks.

The nature of the struggle also has eerie echoes. By any measure, France won the shooting war, gradually eliminating the guerrillas from urban centers and isolating them in small rural pockets. But it could never win the war for the loyalty of Algerians and, as in modern South Africa, every police or military operation that took civilian lives became a tool of radicalization and recruitment for the rebels.

The struggle finally triggered a crisis in French society similar to the one black activists hope to trigger in white society here.

Lesson Learned Late

The French found out too late what some whites in South Africa are just learning—that the elimination or imprisonment of opposition leaders may not crush a freedom movement so much as remake it into a faceless and even more uncontrollable force.

When white businessmen in the eastern Cape region sought to negotiate an end to this year's crippling economic boycotts, they found to their dismay that the black leaders they needed to approach were being held incommunicado. Until they were released there was no one to talk to.

In his book, "A Savage War of Peace," British historian Allister Horne described a process of cruel inevitability that began to grind away at Algeria, destroying any middle ground between the warring sides.

"Once it took hold, there seemed no halting the pitiless spread of violence," wrote Horne. "It seemed as if events had escaped all human control; often, in Algeria, the essential tragedy was heightened by the feeling that—with a little more trust, magnanimity, a little more trust, moderation and compassion—the worst might have been avoided."

31 December 1985

Page 4

of 6

Although the killing is still at a low level, the same process of human erosion appears to be taking hold in South Africa. Its shadow was evident earlier this month at two funerals in widely different settings.

The first was the mass rally of 50,000 gathered to bury 12 blacks killed by police in Mamelodi, a township on the outskirts of Pretoria, South Africa's capital. There were emotional displays of anger, ANC banners and slogans and vows of revenge.

But the most poignant moment came when a young father carried the small white coffin of his 2-month-old baby. She had suffocated to death from the fumes of tear gas fired by the police.

Two weeks later, two almost identical white coffins were buried in Tzaneen, a small Afrikaner farming town in the northern Transvaal. Inside were the bodies of an 8-year-old girl and her 2-year-old brother, who were among six whites killed when an ANC land mine blew up their pickup truck. Their mother was buried nearby. The ceremony was more subdued than at Mamelodi, but the anger and the longing for revenge ran just as deep.

It is likely that few participants at either ceremony could sense the invisible lines that ran from one funeral to the other, could see that the children buried at each had been the victims of the same war or that in death black and white were now, finally, equal. Nor would many at these funerals see that the war that claimed these small martyrs could be ended tomorrow if the will and the political nerve to do so could be found.

Until that happens, only one thing is certain: There will be many more funerals, more small white boxes, more victims of the struggle for South Africa.

Special correspondent Allister Sparks contributed to this report.



In a September speech, South African president Pieter W. Botha rejects negotiations with the outlawed African National Congress. He is viewed as unlikely to make the dramatic concessions that most black leaders believe are necessary to defuse South Africa's crisis.



Black violence briefly spilled over into Johannesburg twice in October. Top, a white man flees a mob protesting the execution of Benjamin Moloi; above, an unidentified man is aided after being beaten when he tried to stop looters in another outbreak later in the month.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Above, angry youths at a mass funeral this month for 12 black residents of Mamelodi township near Pretoria killed by police during a demonstration in November; below, grieving family at funeral in Tzaneen for Jacoba van Eck and her two children, among six whites killed when an ANC land mine blew up their truck.

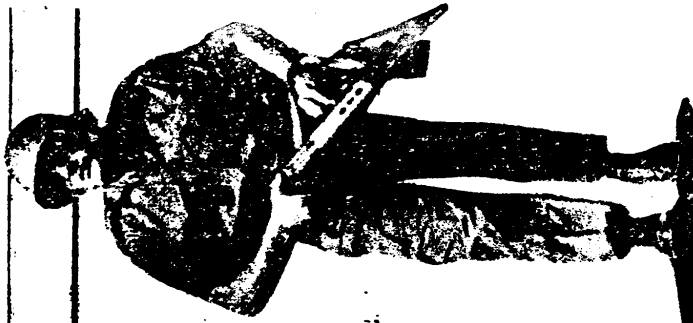
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BLACK POWER, WHITE CONTROL



The young comrades believe their liberation is a year or two away. Their elders speak of five or 10 years. There is virtually no black who expects to be ruled by whites in the year 2000.



Urban terrorism like the Durban bombing that killed seven is one of the directions that the struggle for South Africa could take if it is not resolved peacefully in the next few years.