

THE TOTAL ONSLAUGHT AND THE
TOTAL STRATEGY

Adaptations to the Security Intelligence Decision-
Making Structures under P W Botha's administration

by
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PREFACE

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ABSTRACT

In the years after Mr P W Botha became Prime Minister of South Africa, it became generally noticed that the military as an institution had become a more important actor within the central decision-making structures. While this excited a great deal of contemporary comment, few appreciated that this represented not necessarily a formal coup, but rather the culmination of a meticulously planned counter-revolutionary strategy - the response of the Botha government to a perceived "total onslaught".

This study traces the rise of the "total onslaught" rhetoric and links it to changes which occurred in the security intelligence apparatus. It describes the structure of the National Security Management System (NSMS) in detail, and it advances various arguments in an attempt to assess the significance of the changes which have occurred in the decision-making structures, as well as the efficacy and durability of the NSMS.

The study concludes that, because of the dedication of its proponents and because of its efficiency, the NSMS may afford the regime a breathing-space, but that ultimately the international environment, and internal demographic and economic pressures are such as to make the degenerative collapse of the regime a more likely long-term scenario.

INTRODUCTION

The 1970's were profoundly disturbing years for the Afrikaner élite who had effectively ruled South Africa since 1948. In 1971, the International Court of Justice ruled, in an advisory opinion, that South Africa was in illegal occupation of South West Africa. Later that year, thousands of Ovambo workers in the territory went on strike, shattering the illusion that the local population was content with South African rule. In 1972, the Pearce Commission, appointed to investigate Douglas-Home's settlement plan for Rhodesia, reported that the plan was unacceptable to black Rhodesians, and this heralded an escalation in the guerilla war to the north of South Africa's borders. In 1973, hundreds of thousands of black workers, particularly in the Durban area, went on strike, ending a period of relative quiescence in labour relations. Early in 1974, a coup in Portugal caused the downfall of Caetano and presaged the withdrawal of the Portuguese administrations in Angola and Mozambique placing, as one Air Force officer put it, a potentially hostile regime within the distance of a "30 minute flight in a Boeing passenger aircraft" from the Reef. (1) In 1975, the gold price plummeted, according to a semi-official source, because of US manipulation (2) and South Africa was obliged to devalue the rand. Early in 1976, South African troops were forced, somewhat ignominiously, to withdraw from Angola, after

attempting to forestall an MPLA victory in the civil war. In June of that year black students began rioting in Soweto and riots soon broke out all over the country. In 1977, the black consciousness leader, Steve Biko, died in mysterious circumstances in detention, causing a world-wide outcry, and prompting the United Nations to impose a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa.

International developments served to sustain the gloomy outlook : the resignation of President Nixon; the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam, and the Viet Cong victory there; the victory of the Labour Party in the 1974 British general election and the election of President Carter in the US (and the consequent uncompromising stand taken by both governments on South Africa's policy of apartheid); the fall of the regime of the Shah in Iran and the consequent difficulty in obtaining oil supplies all served to make South Africa's position in the world community extremely vulnerable.

All these factors were perceived to constitute a threat to the security not only of South Africa as a whole, but to the Afrikaner volk in particular. (3) Indeed, the Nationalist government of South Africa has been almost obsessed with the issue of security since their accession to power in 1948, and has perceived threats to Afrikanerdom as equivalent to threats to South Africa, and vice versa. (4) But because the "threats" to South Africa, and thus to Afrikanerdom, had increased "both in intensity and scope", (5) this induced South African policy-makers to conclude that the country was the subject of a "total onslaught" masterminded by the Soviet Union. (6) This perception, in turn, induced a great deal of thought amongst the top policy-makers of the National Party about how this "onslaught" ought to be "countered".

Because of the structure of Mr Vorster's cabinet, his style of leadership and, in later years, his bad health, the response by the Government to this perceived "onslaught" was at first ad hoc and fumbling. Immediately after the Portuguese coup, Mr Vorster made an attempt to develop a modus vivendi with some of the more moderate

African leaders, in order to defuse the escalating conflict in Rhodesia and to present to the world - if not to Africa - the image that South Africa was an African power with which to be reckoned. (7) This attempt was wrecked both because of the unwillingness of the South African government to compromise on its internal policy and because of its involvement in the Angolan civil war. (8) South Africa also embarked on a strategy of direct military involvement in Angola, but this was abandoned, reportedly because assistance promised by the US government failed to materialise. (9) Finally, the South African government tried, through its Department of Information, to project a favourable image of itself abroad by a mixture of public relations, covert diplomacy and bribery. This bid ended when it was discovered that key officials in the Department were engaging in financial irregularities and internal party politics. (10)

The disbanding of the Department of Information also caused the political ruin of Dr Connie Mulder, who had been tipped to succeed Mr Vorster, and secured the election of Mr P W Botha as Prime Minister. It also coincided with a time of re-assessment by Afrikaner intellectuals of the policy of apartheid. The word "change", for so long a taboo concept in Afrikaner circles, suddenly took on a respectable air. (11)

Mr Botha was not unaffected by this soul-searching. Certainly, since the early 1970's, his military advisors, and particularly the Chief of the South African Defence Force, General Magnus Malan, had been telling him that changes would have to be made to the political system in South Africa if the "total onslaught" was effectively to be "countered". (12)

It was some time after Mr Botha became Prime Minister before he committed himself openly to change, but this can be attributed to his first having to clear up the Information Department scandal, culminating in the resignation of Mr Vorster as State President in June 1979. However, in July, Mr Botha made his celebrated "adapt or die" speech in Upington, warning Afrikaners that an adaptation of

traditional apartheid was a prerequisite for their continued existence. (13) He followed this up at the Natal Congress of the National Party in August with the exposition of his twelve-point plan, which included, significantly, a commitment to "remove unnecessary and hurtful discrimination". (14) These were followed in turn by a commitment to "improve" the Mixed Marriages Act and Section 16 of the Immorality Act, a promise to "listen" to the business community and so on. (15) All these statements of intent created the impression that fundamental change was, if not imminent, then at least on the agenda of Mr Botha's new administration.

Most of these statements promised changes in style and emphasis, and could, to some extent, be said to reflect the differences between the temperament and personality of Mr Botha and that of his predecessor. (16) To the more gullible, the statements presaged greater things to come; to those more versed in the realities of Afrikaner politics, the subsequent retreat and vacillation of Mr Botha in the light of a suddenly powerful right wing came as a saddening, if not wholly unpredictable, development.

However, it was precisely Mr Botha's understanding of these politics that caused changes to the very decision-making structures - changes which have been more substantive, more significant and more enduring. Although he is by nature haughty, disdainful and aggressive, Mr Botha understood perfectly the complex relationship between the grassroots of his party and its leadership; between the congresses, which in terms of the National Party constitution are vested with the policy-making function (17) and the Members of Parliament and Cabinet, who are supposed to implement that policy. (To be sure, Mr Vorster was also haughty, but consulted widely before making decisions, and frequently did nothing rather than antagonise a significant section of the Party). (18)

Mr Botha realised, too, that for thirty years, the rank and file of the Party had been fed a diet of racial prejudice with the result that many were inculcated with the belief that the grand apartheid

system was both morally defensible and likely to endure indefinitely. Whatever soul-searching might be going on amongst the élite had not permeated, and was not likely to permeate, through to the rank and file. To make matters worse, some of the members of the Party opposed to change were to be found in his caucus and even the Cabinet. (19)

Mr Botha realised therefore that if change was to take place, it would have to be effected almost by stealth, at the same time as giving the congresses of the Party the illusion that they still controlled the policy-making function. In order to realise this goal, Mr Botha substantially altered the top decision-making structure of government, and mirroring this, rationalised the structure and organisation of the bureaucracy. Thus Spicer notes that -

"a quiet revolution in the structures, procedure and personnel of party, government and bureaucracy was the means used by the Prime Minister to consolidate his position and prepare for change." (20)

An understanding of organisational politics was, of course, something for which Mr Botha's political experience had pre-eminently prepared him. He had started his political career in the 1940's as a National Party organiser and had later become head of the most tightly-knit and efficient political machine in the country - the National Party of the Cape. He understood that pure organisation in politics can sometimes overcome problems as effectively as charm, charisma and debating prowess. Spicer concludes that -

"Beyond its technical impressiveness, revealing Mr Botha's background as a long-time and skilled party organiser, this court revolution reflects his determination that change should be tightly managed and controlled through centralised policy-making and a streamlined administration." (21)

Nowhere have these organisational changes been more significant than in the area of security decision-making. The far-reaching changes made by the new Prime Minister in this area were attributable to three interrelated factors. The first was Mr Botha's long association

with the Defence Force as Minister of Defence from 1966 until 1980. This meant that Mr Botha was constantly briefed on the security risk which South Africa faced - or at least the Directorate of Military Intelligence's perception of it - and tended to view policy problems from a security perspective, so much so that Seiler argues that Mr Botha has a "preoccupation with defence capabilities." (22)

Secondly, as has been mentioned, Mr Botha was profoundly influenced by General Malan, who, according to one source, has "tutored" Mr Botha in military theory -

"Malan used to prepare reading lists for Botha, who would go to the library, pick up an armful of volumes on military history, read them and return for the next batch." (23)

General Malan has, in turn, been a student of revolutionary warfare. He has publicly maintained that the revolutionary (and, by implication, the counter-revolutionary) war is "a war through the hearts and minds of the people". The counter-insurgency war, he argued, was only 20% military and 80% "on the social, political and economic level". (24) Thus for General Malan, and for Mr Botha, the issues of security and social, political and economic change were inextricably connected.

Thirdly, as Mr Botha realised that change - so necessary in order to meet the security challenge - was likely to be painful and unpopular amongst whites, and thus politically inexpedient for his administration (25) it would be expedient if this change took place, as far as possible, in secret. The cloud of secrecy which surrounded the security intelligence apparatus, in terms of the old Official Secrets Act (now the Protection of Information Act) and Section 118 of the Defence Act, made this apparatus ideal for bringing about change by stealth. During his period of office as Minister of Defence, Mr Botha had already transformed the Defence Force in this way - for the first time in South Africa's history, black troops were armed, blacks were commissioned and some units integrated (the latter measure being at

least arguably a contravention of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the Group Areas Act, two of apartheid's cornerstones). (26)

Aside from Mr Botha's own predilection to employ the security intelligence apparatus as an agent of change, this option held two other advantages. As Professor Carter has noted, Mr Botha was "used to working with the Army and to making, and having precise determinations carried out". (27)

When he became Prime Minister, he sought to change the top decision-making structures to make this style of leadership over the entire administration possible. Secondly, both as a result of his "tutoring" by General Malan, and of his perception of the very visible deterioration of events in Iran, there can be no doubt that Mr Botha was familiar with the concept of a revolution of rising expectations that so often accompanies periods of rapid social, political and economic change, and with the necessity of such change being, to use Spicer's phrase, "tightly managed". His preoccupation with the theme of "orderly" change, prevalent in his speeches and those of his military advisors, bears testimony to this. The security forces were the only agents which could ensure that change would take place in an orderly manner.

This argument, of course, presupposes that the Prime Minister was firmly in control of Party and Government and that the changes were made on his initiative. Some sources, particularly the sensational press, dispute this, arguing that it was the Defence Force itself that was in control. Thus one account reads -

"The generals now form the most powerful source of inspiration for Cabinet-level decisions ... The Defence Force plays a prominent role in most areas of policy."
(28)

Gutteridge, however, persuasively discounts this argument -

"There has even been the suggestion that in the aftermath of the Muldergate affair, the commanders of the armed forces have to all intents and purposes seized power in the fields of foreign policy and defence and are profoundly influencing domestic developments on the basis of a new concept of security. To emphasise the role of military personnel in this way is to under-estimate the importance of Mr P W Botha's twelve years as Minister of Defence before he became Prime Minister. His experience in the policy-making field, is therefore, exceptional for a politician and far greater than any of the generals who are now supposed to be so influential." (29)

Neither of these two views seems adequately to reflect what has actually happened. It is obviously true that Mr Botha is still "in charge", but it is equally true that "the generals" are more influential than they were when Mr Vorster was Prime Minister. What has occurred is that Mr Botha, perhaps at the insistence of his military advisors, has accepted that a "total national strategy" has to be created in order to meet the "total onslaught". This "total national strategy" has an internal and a sub-regional dimension; one deals with re-organising the state to meet an internal revolutionary challenge to the status quo, while a distinct but complementary strategy is directed towards neutralising the challenges posed by the front-line states and the challenge they, or their guests, the ANC, pose from without. The acceptance of the "total national strategy" has had two important effects - it has changed the organisational structures, and it has changed the way in which policy, particularly security policy, is made.

The organisational changes which Mr Botha has made to the security policy-making apparatus have given prominence to certain key SADF members, and the changes to the method of policy-making have given these members more influence in policy determination. This influence has been most dramatic in the style of sub-regional foreign policy, but because the "total onslaught" is perceived to have an internal dimension, so, too has the influence of the SADF grown in the internal management of the "total strategy" (30), thereby giving "the generals" an internal policy-making competence which goes beyond what

is accepted in Western societies as legitimate.

These developments have not gone unnoticed by political scientists and observers of the political process in South Africa. Although small, this school of writers is highly perceptive and articulate. The most complete study of the developments has been undertaken by Dr Philip Frankel, whose major contribution to the debate is his Pretoria's Praetorians, published in 1984. (31)

Dr Frankel has very ambitiously tackled the whole subject of civil-military relations in South Africa, a topic which, as he says, is "essentially unexplored" (p.xi), despite its cardinality to understanding the nature of the modern South African state. He fills this gap admirably. He traces the development of the Union Defence Force and later the SADF, and analyses its place within the South African body-politic. He argues that the SADF has been subjected to two important traditions, firstly, the British tradition, emphasising the liberal view that a clear distinction needs to be kept between the "professional" soldiers who are nominally neutral, and the "amateur" political controllers of such soldiers, and secondly, the Boer tradition, emphasising the ethos of a citizen army whose role vis-à-vis the state is essentially synonymous, as it is a microcosm of the state. Over time, but especially since 1960, South African society has become increasingly militarised, and this has served to tip the scales in favour of the Boer tradition. In turn, this has led to a more easy absorption of the military chiefs into the top decision-making structures.

He has been correct too, in isolating the importance of the total strategy idea, and the undoubted influence which the idea has had on the SADF and on Mr Botha himself. He points to the many consequences of the infusion of the idea in the central decision-making structures, on the one hand, and in the SADF itself, on the other. Alone amongst the other commentators he has realised that many seemingly unconnected developments, for example, the formation and continued importance of Armscor, and the subsequent co-option of many

of the captains of South African industry within the "total defence effort", must be seen within the context of the total strategy, and as part, therefore, of a coherent whole. Unlike Professor Grundy, he has also based this proposition on a series of documented occurrences; he has shied away from speculative and exploratory hypotheses and contained himself within the arena of what is known.

Similarly, he has correctly assumed that the recruitment of minority groups, particularly the coloureds and Indians into the SADF, is a crucial and necessary part of the total strategy, and that the very militarisation of South African society facilitates the adoption of the idea of a total strategy, even across what would otherwise be antagonistic ideological barriers. This serves to allow the apartheid system to become updated and made more efficient, even while becoming peripherally liberalised.

Dr Frankel's most important insight is that, despite indications to the contrary in sensational accounts, the military are only as effective as the National Party politicians allow them to be, largely because of the improbability of the SADF throwing in its lot with an attempt to overthrow the apartheid state. In the absence of their ability to "threaten unfaithfulness" the SADF, and the bureaucratic machinery which it has spawned in operationalising the concept of a total strategy, can do little more than facilitate and manage the "violent evolution" in which South Africa, with the seeming approval of the politicians, is in any event engaged. Thus, while from a strictly sociological point of view, the total strategy has undermined the traditional "liberal" model of civil-military relations - and many view this as a sinister development - the rise of the military should not be seen as presaging the possibility of a junta in South Africa.

The book is, as I have said, admirable, and, with his other contributions to this topic (32), Dr Frankel has served to impress upon us the necessity of taking the military seriously in any serious analysis of the South African state. Yet his perspective in tackling

this topic is essentially sociological : the structural analysis of the organs of government is, with one or two exceptions, absent, and the relationship between key political actors is dealt with only scantily. He does not, for example, deal with the precise structure of the National Security Management System, nor does he explore the relations between the various elements of this system, except on central government level, and even then with no great exactitude. (33) It may be that, at the time of his research, he was denied access to credible sources of information, or alternatively, he may have felt constrained to suppress certain information to ensure that this book did not fall foul of the legislation governing official information. Whatever the reason, this absence of detail detracts from his otherwise complete account.

It is also surprising that, despite his comprehensive treatment of the structure of the SADF in historical perspective, he did not deal with the security intelligence apparatus, and the conflicts which the components of this area of state activity have experienced over time. Although he is aware that these various bodies exist, he has chosen to describe the present composite and co-ordinated central structure without attributing sufficient weight to the interaction of these bodies over time, nor indeed, to the fact that one of the most important reasons for the present centralisation is precisely the lack of co-ordination which persisted for so long within the security intelligence family. (34)

What is also surprising is Frankel's lack of emphasis on any role which the conflict of key political actors has played in the creation of the security intelligence framework which now exists. Mr Vorster's relationship with General van den Bergh was a crucial determinant in security intelligence decision-making prior to Mr Botha's administration, just as Mr Botha's relationship with General Malan is to the present situation. Dr Frankel remarks, almost in passing, that "the political in-fighting surrounding the collapse of the Vorster government in the wake of the so-called 'Information Scandal'" was undoubtedly important, but says that this "is still a matter for

speculation". (35) I would argue that the nature of the present security intelligence arrangements was in very large measure the result of a deliberate strategy to avoid a repetition of such political in-fighting by a master of state organisation - P W Botha. The "in-fighting" was the result of differing interpretations both of the "total onslaught" and of the methods needed to "counter" such an onslaught. The victory of Mr Botha in this political battle meant that a particular type of security intelligence structure emerged; had Dr Mulder won, there are strong grounds for assuming that very different structures would have emerged, affecting the entire scope of civil-military relationships and certainly, the centrality of the SADF in the total political power equation. It is evident from the Erasmus Commission Reports, for example, that General van den Bergh would have occupied a central position in Dr Mulder's structures; as it was, he was summarily removed from his position as Security Advisor to the Prime Minister and even had his passport confiscated.

Another odd feature of Dr Frankel's analysis - and this has also been noticed by Dr Seegers (36) - is that he sees a clear distinction between a pre-1960 and a post-1960 view on civil-military relationships. As Dr Seegers has noted, and I will try to demonstrate, the situation is far too complex to attempt to place an exact date on the rise of the military. As with any other bureaucracy, there was a measure of ebb and flow in the influence of the constituent elements of the South African bureaucracy since Union itself. If a date has to be placed on the current resurgence in the influence of the SADF, it is surely the date on which Mr Botha became Minister of Defence. It is probably the case, though, that subsequent to becoming Prime Minister and having to reconcile the demands of a large bureaucracy, the influence of the military started to decline. Subsequent study will have to determine whether this postulation is correct.

If it is true that Dr Frankel's study went much wider than the specific question of the security intelligence decision-making structures, the same cannot be said of Professor Grundy's two early studies, The Rise of the South African Security Establishment (37)

and "South Africa's Domestic Strategy" (38), which specifically concerned themselves with this topic. Grundy examines the various institutional organs of security intelligence in some detail, both in historical and contemporary context, and correctly argues that personalities had a great deal to do with the relative importance of these organs over time.

Grundy also highlights the militarisation of white society and quotes specific examples of how this has facilitated the growth of the SADF as a power in domestic politics, even to the extent of having become involved in partisan politics. Professor Grundy provides valuable insights concerning the role which the SADF has played in regional politics and in South Africa's relationships with the front-line states, and specifically in the campaign of destabilisation of these states. Like Dr Frankel, Professor Grundy is also sceptical of the ability of the SADF top structure to convert itself into a political junta, and correctly exposes the realities of South African politics, that without a secure domestic political base, the generals are no more than influential advisors to the politicians. To be sure, their influence has become more extensive than formerly, but this can be attributed mainly to their close personal relationship with the head of state. Their influence can accordingly be expected to decline were the head of state to be replaced.

Professor Grundy's paper suffers from two major weaknesses. First, like Dr Frankel, he has concerned himself principally with the organisational changes which have occurred on the central government level. He deals, therefore, at length, with the structure of the State Security Council, the Working Committee, the Secretariat of the State Security Council and with the Interdepartmental Committees. He does not, however, enlighten us as to the exact interaction between these elements, nor can he tell us which of the elements is the most important in the application of the total strategy idea. A major omission is any mention of the Joint Management Centres, which are crucial from the perspective of day-to-day management of "countering" the total onslaught. Indeed, while he correctly identifies the

domestic element of the total strategy (for example, in the campaign of selective disinformation), he fails to isolate the agency responsible for this. Similarly, while he correctly argues that the Cabinet is unlikely to reject recommendations of the State Security Council because of the political and administrative prestige which its members possess (39), it appears that this alone constitutes his case for the SSC's centrality. Given the workload of members of the SSC, it seems equally unlikely that they have any more time dispassionately to consider the recommendations emanating from the Working Committee, or from Interdepartmental Committees, than the Cabinet has similarly to consider SSC resolutions. No-one doubts the importance of the Security Management System in the decision-making process, but this System needs to be seen in its entirety, and the relative importance of each of its components needs correctly to be identified.

Secondly, and again we are indebted to Dr Seegers for highlighting this general weakness in published material on the Security Management System, Professor Grundy's study does not really ever rise above the level of informed journalism. Dr Seegers tellingly remarks that "the result is that recent scholarship has developed a serious credibility problem: we simply do not know how much of the scholarship is based on demonstrable facts and reasonable deductions and how much is mere contrivance" (40), and this criticism is particularly apposite in Grundy's study. In fairness, Grundy's was the first comprehensive study of its kind, and he may have had to rely on rumours and tendencies, rather than hard facts. Further, he himself admits that his examples "do not represent a complete picture of defence involvement in matters not entirely defensive or strategic in nature", but rather serve to "illustrate some of the broad observations" (41). Nonetheless, when he adduces, as evidence of his proposition that the SADF "contributed to, if not imposed, the decision not to turn District Six in Cape Town back into a coloured group area", and then says that "it has not been possible to confirm the story", one is entitled to look askance at the original statement. (42) In other places, he says that there "appears to be an

uncanny confluence of strategic and economic thinking" (43), that it is "difficult" to establish the extent to which government and SADF thinking overlap (44), that "it would appear that the homelands policy has a strategic element" (45) and so on. There is a wealth of interesting and even illuminating statements made in Grundy's work, but these statements are based, to use Seeger's phrase, "on questionable (though perhaps suggestive) evidence". (46) The study as a whole suffers as a result of this.

Many (though not all) of these weaknesses were avoided in Grundy's second, and more comprehensive treatment of the subject, The Militarisation of South African Politics. (47) As its title implies, this book seeks to locate the rise of the South African security establishment within the wider context of the developments in South African politics.

In his study, Professor Grundy examines the phenomenon of the total onslaught and traces the use to which it has been put, chiefly as a means of persuading whites generally and the political establishment in particular that a restructuring of the central government decision-making structures was vital to ensure continued white domination. It has, as other commentators have noted, also been used as a mechanism to effect a considerable militarisation of South African society, even while the actual numbers (and percentage of the population) of the SADF remain small.

Grundy also treats, at some length, the changes which have occurred in the central decision-making structures and isolates the reasons for the rise of the military within these structures. Both because the military suit Mr Botha's style of leadership and because there has been a "cross-fertilisation process" between Mr Botha and the top leadership of the SADF, the military now play an "enlarged" role in decision-making. Perceptively, Professor Grundy has predicted a longer-term diminution of SADF influence in this role, as Mr Botha increasingly searches for talent outside his former bailiwick. At the same time, the military have supplied, and will continue to supply,

advice on coercion and on the formulation and execution of policy. This leads Grundy to conclude that while the influence of the military is undoubtedly important, their influence is more particularly a technical, rather than political, one.

He also deals in detail with the State Security Council and the effect that this has had on the style of government decision-making. While the institution of the SSC has catapulted top SADF officers into very crucial forums, it has also had the same effect on top officials in other departments. However, both because they are experts on security management in the context of an accepted "total onslaught" and because of their demonstrated personal loyalty to Mr Botha, these senior military officers have a more central role in the SSC. Given the decline of other institutions formerly politically powerful in South Africa, such as the National Party caucus and Parliament, as well as the rationalisation of the Cabinet Committee Structure, the SSC, and by implication its key advisors, the military, are therefore very much more powerful than ever before. This has enabled the SADF to make policy inputs - even if they are technical in nature - on a wide variety of security-related issues. Furthermore, because of the status of the SSC, and because of the very fact that decisions of the Council are backed up by expert technical advice, decisions of the SSC are accepted by the Cabinet almost as a formality.

As was the case in his previous study, Professor Grundy leaves other elements of the NSMS, such as the Joint Management Centres, essentially unexplored. While he acknowledges their existence, and indeed importance, he fails to describe or analyse their role in the formulation of total strategy and in its implementation. Instead, he attempts to show how the very militarisation of white society has facilitated the supremacy of the military in civilian politics. While this is undoubtedly true, an examination of the penetration of the local structures of the NSMS into local and regional government would have been far more convincing. Even in his discussion of militarisation, he omits to examine the system of conscription, surely one of

the most powerful socialising factors in the white group.

Professor Grundy concludes, and extends his earlier work, by examining the role of the Defence Force in relation to the homelands and to South Africa's position in the sub-region. He suggests that the military is taking a far more active part in the formulation of foreign policy as well. While destabilisation, as an accepted policy, is evidence of a declining role for the Department of Foreign Affairs vis-à-vis the SADF, Grundy is unable to determine a coherent pattern to acts of destabilisation. This seems to derive from the fact that he fails, in his analysis, to delineate clear foreign policy objectives in the sub-region. To be sure, there are departmental conflicts, but the basic foreign policy objectives are discernible, and the activities of both the Department of Foreign Affairs and those of the SADF are directed to the same ends, precisely by the institution of the NSMS.

His conclusions about the role of the SADF in civil government are that while it occupies a central position in the new decision-making structures brought about by Mr Botha's "managerial revolution", its role in the future will continue to be circumscribed. The SADF is unable, he argues, to act independently, both because of a political tradition which militates against such a step and also, more practically, because the top management of the SADF shares the objectives of the National Party. Grundy is at pains to point out that the "defence family" does not always get its own way, nor is it internally homogeneous, and that its influence may decline with a change in the political leadership of the National Party. Its apparent success so far can be attributed to the fact that, by and large, its top structures share the belief in reform while simultaneously retaining white domination.

Professor Grundy's new study fleshes out the bare bones of his earlier monograph, and the result is a more polished product. Yet key questions remain unanswered. Chief amongst these is the extent to which the military will voluntarily abdicate from positions of power

and influence. It appears dubious enough whether having established themselves as advisors extraordinary to the Government, the top leadership of the SADF will voluntarily divest themselves of such influence, even under another Nationalist leader, let alone one committed to radical restructuring of the polity. Besides, as Grundy himself has demonstrated, the ethos of militarisation has too firmly been established, and the structures too securely embedded, for the military to collapse like "a house of cards", his description of the demise of BOSS after the fall of Vorster. (48) This is obviously an area for further study.

Many questions also remain unanswered in the short article by Geldenhuys and Kotzé, "Aspects of Political Decision-Making in South Africa". (49) Although the authors provide a disclaimer by way of their introduction, and say that their study "intends achieving nothing more than paving the way for further research" (50), the article is extremely thin on hard evidence, nor has such evidence as is readily available, been properly exploited.

Geldenhuys and Kotzé argue that the best way to identify the locus of power in a decision-making system is not by constitutional analysis, but by institutional or structural analysis. They proceed to embark on such an analysis of the central decision-making structures with specific reference to the place of the State Security Council, and the other components of the Security Management System, within these structures. They argue that because of a number of factors, the State Security Council can be regarded as the "first amongst equals" of the five (and later four) Cabinet Committees set up when Mr Botha became Prime Minister. Among these reasons is the fact that the supporting bodies of the SSC are far more powerful than is the case with the other Cabinet Committees, and that the Secretariat of the SSC is a homogeneous and efficient integrated body.

It is in describing the role of these supporting bodies that Geldenhuys and Kotzé's study is most valuable : they alone seem to have recognized that the SSC sits at the pinnacle of an awesome (

structure consisting of all the security intelligence agencies in South Africa, and both because of its access to co-ordinated intelligence, and to the Secretariat and the executive intelligence-gathering bodies, it is extremely powerful. If the SSC is the primus inter pares of the Cabinet Committees, then the Secretariat is the primus inter pares of the officials with ready access to the members of the Cabinet.

These authors have also correctly described the role and importance of the Joint Management Centres, which form the local eyes and ears of the Security Management System, and which act as the agents of the SSC in implementing the total strategy in domestic and in regional matters. But while they have seen the importance of these bodies, they have not gone into the structure of the Joint Management Centres, nor their modus operandi. We are also left in the dark as to the relationship between the JMC's and the rest of the Security Management System. Who makes decisions and who implements those decisions? What role do the Interdepartmental Committees play in the implementation of total strategies by such JMC's? Because the authors are hesitant to provide examples of the work of the JMC's, it is difficult to know whether their description would stand up to rigorous scrutiny.

In part this is because their methodology is wrong. They have argued that structural analysis is the correct way to approach a study of the Security Management System. They are undoubtedly right, but only up to a point. In order to understand the interaction between the various elements of the System and to appreciate the relationship between each of them, one needs to involve oneself in process analysis. They have correctly said that this involves the case study, but they have rejected this approach without giving reasons for doing so. Had they adopted this approach they themselves would have been able authoritatively to answer the various questions they have posed to give direction to future research. To focus on structures alone is a sterile approach; it gives one a detailed photograph, but is not able to do an action replay by which we may know where the actors

have come from and where they are likely to go from there.

This criticism is all the more applicable to the contribution of Dr Hough. In his "Nasionale Veiligheid, Strategie en Strategiese Beplanning" (51) he outlines the various elements of the Security Management System drawing heavily and uncritically from official publications and, predictably, from the works of Beaufre and Liddel-Hart.

He accepts, seemingly without question, that the formulation of national security policy consists of a logical extrapolation of the national interest, coupled with specific national objectives and specific national policy directives. This is what the 1977 Defence White Paper would have us believe, and this makes the formulation of national security policy seem inoffensive and non-partisan. The problem is that this methodology was developed for societies in which basic consensus about national security exists. This presupposes that there is consensus about the political system within which such national interests are formulated and expressed. In South Africa this basic consensus does not exist, and thus the execution of national security policy is inevitably controversial. If his interpretation is correct, the Security Management System would merely be a means of implementing National Party policy, but it is surely more subtle and far-reaching than that.

Dr Hough's article does, however, throw important light on the subject of national security policy. Perhaps because he has stuck closely to official sources, he has emphasised the difference between total strategy on the one hand, and departmental strategies on the other. This distinction is crucial to the understanding of the role of the Interdepartmental Committees, and the relationship which these committees have with the State Security Council itself. He has also usefully provided examples (albeit only in terms of military strategy) of how joint strategies are arrived at, and by these examples we are able to infer the nature and scope of others. (52) He has also been careful to separate the policy formulation function

from the execution function, something that other commentators have glossed over. This prevents him from assuming that the State Security Council is all-powerful and sinister. The ability of the SSC to formulate total strategy is dependent on the ability of the executive departments to carry these out, and here one deals with problems which plague other bureaucracies the world over, such as the unwillingness of civil servants to deviate from standard operational procedures.

If Dr Hough's article seemed somewhat uncritical, Professor Roherty's contribution (53) is characterised by a positively slavish adherence to what he has been told and what he has read in official publications. It apparently escapes him that "political generals" (a genre he says does not exist in South Africa) have a vested interest in telling people that they are not "political". So Professor Roherty treats one to a series of folksy anecdotes about the maps in General van der Westhuizen's office and General van Deventer's informal view of his masters, without critically examining the value (or indeed truth) of what he was told. It was not that he did not have other sources to consult which might have induced a more sober perspective; on the contrary, he devotes considerable space to precisely the type of vituperous attacks he has accused (quite wrongly, as it happens) other scholars of making on the "apolitical generals", on the work of these scholars. At best, his contribution was based on naive gullibility; his article does not advance the debate one iota.

Roherty's problem is that he seems unable to steer a middle course between the official and semi-official accounts (which have a patent tendency to minimise the political role of the "generals") and another school of authors who impute to the SADF a role far beyond its actual capabilities. Michael Evans (54) appears to belong to the latter school, and seems to portray the SADF as an all-powerful amalgam of official and private sector knowledge and political clout, bent on the wholesale oppression of the people of Namibia and on the rigorous application of the policy of apartheid. Not that Evans is necessarily wrong. It is simply that if one wishes to avoid appearing

conspiratorial, one owes it to readers who are not familiar with one's basic tenets to develop these theses more fully than Evans was able to do in six brief pages. Even if one accepts that this was a very early work (and therefore commendable in terms of the importance of what he was revealing), one cannot but accuse it of being a rather superficial treatment of what are very complex relationships.

Much the same criticism can be levelled at Robert Jaster. Professor Jaster is a foremost scholar in the field of civil-military relations and the influence of the military on political decision-making. Despite this, his contribution to the debate on this topic - "South African Defence Strategy and the Growing Influence of the Military" - is somewhat superficial, perhaps because he covers so much ground in so short an article. (55)

Professor Jaster traces the strategic imperatives which have governed South African policy-making (particularly in the area of foreign policy) since the 1948 election. He correctly concludes that the coup d'état in Portugal in 1974 heralded a fundamental shift in this policy and allowed "the military" to become more integrally involved in public policy-making than had hitherto been possible. This was inter alia because South Africa's policy-makers prepared for a "worst-case contingency" (56), and the implicit or explicit acceptance of this scenario demanded the inclusion of the military in decision-making to counteract the contingency.

Jaster also correctly postulates that the military advisors that have become powerful require not only military action but also political reform, and alone amongst the commentators, recognises that the relationship between the military and Mr Botha is symbiotic - the military requiring Mr Botha to carry through his political "reform programme", while Mr Botha requires the military to ensure him the stability necessary for rapid political, social and economic reform. Indeed, Jaster goes further : he suggests that the military might seriously consider a coup -

"with or without Botha, in which a military dictatorship would take the necessary steps to ram through a series of reform measures over the stubborn opposition of right-wing whites". (57)

This speculation about the role of the military is, however, journalistic and flies in the face of hard realities. The SADF is only 12% permanent force - and the major instruments of coercion (the conventional forces) lie foursquare in citizen force commanders' hands. While it is true that socialisation and methods of selection of citizen force commanders are such that they do not rock the boat, it is also true that such commanders are half-soldiers, half-civilians, and do not easily believe that the military are the custodians of all political virtue. Besides, the very business of mounting a coup would involve a fearful amount of quite explicit preparatory action (e.g. dispatching call-up instructions, drawing equipment, booking troop-trains, etc.) which would inevitably draw attention to what was occurring. A coup, a military dictatorship, depends for its success on a large number of standing troops, and that is simply not available to the South African military commanders. In short, the "military" do not constitute an internally homogeneous group, and are not therefore a unit of sociological analysis.

However, this does not contradict the statement that a de facto coup has not already taken place in South Africa, if "coup" is the right word for it. South Africa's politicians have voluntarily surrendered their responsibility over security intelligence management to an élite within the security forces. Professor Jaster suggests - again correctly, if tautologically - that the influence of "the military" has increased markedly under Mr Botha's administration. Perceptively, he argues that, at the moment, this influence is only as powerful as Mr Botha allows it to be, but that, faced with increasingly complex military and military/technical questions connected to Afrikaner survival, any subsequent administration would find it impossible to ignore the military inputs to policy-making. Thus, what has occurred is at once less dramatic yet more enduring than he would have (in other parts of his work) us believe : a creeping coup by consent; a

steadily improving institutional position commanding a vast range of technical information without which the amateur politicians cannot survive.

His penchant for the dramatic has led Professor Jaster to ignore the vital role played by key professionals in the SADF in setting up the National Security Management System. Indeed, his grasp of the system as a whole seems limited - he identifies only two elements (the State Security System and the Interdepartmental Committees) of it (58) - and this has perhaps led him to underestimate the importance of other key institutional actors in the formulation and execution of total strategy.

We remarked that Professor Grundy's study fell short of providing a clear pattern of sub-regional foreign policy in the Total National Strategy era. This gap has more than adequately been filled by Professor Price's "Pretoria's Southern African Strategy". (59) Price is careful to demonstrate that what lies behind South African foreign policy is the striving towards international acquiescence of white minority rule. Threats to this come, he argues, principally from three potential sources - the liberation movements, the threat of conventional war and the threat of international economic pressure.

As part of its total national strategy, the South African policy-making élite has delineated short, medium and long term security goals, and has devised a specific set of policies designed to realise these goals. Some of these policies may have a "spill-over" effect, making the achievement of other (lesser or incidental) goals more attainable.

Price suggests that the collapse of the cordon sanitaire which the Portuguese colonies and Rhodesia had constituted for South Africa, made it necessary to construct an "alternative means of protecting (South Africa) from the potential politico-military threat from the north" (60). Therefore, as a long term strategy, it has become necessary to create a "Constellation of Southern African States" - in

which arrangement South Africa will be the lynch-pin. This long term strategy has at least four advantages. First, it would lock all South Africa's potential enemies into a state of economic subjugation which would severely limit those enemies' freedom of movement. Secondly, it would afford a degree of international recognition to South Africa's "independent" homelands; in that formally independent and internationally recognised sovereign states would have to negotiate with such independent homelands as equal partners. Thirdly, the fact that Southern African states were tied into South African patronage would split the OAU, and make the dream of an all-African army of liberation impossible to realise. Finally, the creation of the Constellation would allow for Western rapprochement with South Africa, both because of its status as a regional Leviathan and because the African bloc would be split on what the West should do.

The inducements to becoming part of the Constellation are, according to Price, somewhat vague at this stage, but the disincentive for remaining without the Constellation is the possibility of being destabilised. The primary purpose of destabilisation is the collapse of "radical" anti-South African regimes in the sub-continent. But the great advantage of the destabilisation campaign is that it does not even have to be wholly successful. If it causes impoverished developing countries to divert scarce foreign exchange to counteract such a campaign, this might cause sufficient popular dissatisfaction as to lead to the collapse of "radical" regimes, as it were, "naturally".

However, as Professor Price is quick to point out, destabilisation is a costly and time-consuming tactic, whose outcome is by no means able to be guaranteed. It is therefore essential to have a fall-back, medium term strategy. This strategy seeks to neutralise the activities of hostile neighbours by a combination of "forward defence" and economic leverage. "Forward defence" (or, more commonly, "pre-emptive strikes") seeks both to inflict maximum damage on the facilities of anti-government guerilla forces and to lower the credibility of the country hosting these forces. Economic leverage is

derived from the fact that the Southern African economy is highly integrated, and dependent on the economic muscle of its southernmost member. Naturally, destabilisation plays an important role in this strategy, promoting transport dependency and undermining development ventures initiated by the Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC).

Price argues convincingly that the seemingly ironical short term goal of South African regional policy is precisely to retain Russian/Cuban troop presences within the sub-region. He correctly suggests that South Africa's strategic value to the West in itself is marginal, but what increases South Africa's strategic importance is the perception that the country is under direct military threat from the Soviet Union.

Professor Price's piece has been invaluable in determining (as he puts it) "the inner logic" of South African regional policy. He carefully avoids commenting on its likely success, except to point out that the costs of a policy of destabilisation succeeding - namely, maintaining the client state in power - would be prohibitive. But he, too, avoids commenting on the way in which this policy has been arrived at. Clearly, if his interpretation is correct, it is a policy which will have been sponsored by the hawks within the South African decision-making apparatus, and presumably can be attributed to the increased role of the military within such apparatus, but this is not considered in detail. Similarly, to refer, as he did throughout his piece, to "Pretoria's strategy" implies an internal consistency and an internal continuity in respect of regional policy. This may now be the case, but it certainly was not true under Vorster. What has changed to provide the consistency and continuity? On this, Price is silent.

Price's article relied heavily for examples of destabilisation on Simon Jenkins' article "Destabilisation in Southern Africa" which appeared the previous year. (61) Jenkins was writing for a news magazine, and not surprisingly, has written a journalistic piece

which is speculative and, in many places, unsubstantiated. Yet he was the first commentator to have argued that there was a pattern to South African destabilisation, although its purpose was, at that stage, unclear.

Jenkins shares Price's view that the purpose of both destabilisation and "pro-active defence" (which he treats as essentially the same thing) is to recreate the buffer zone, and he attributes the new style of regional policy precisely to the ascendancy of the military. He goes further and dates this ascendancy to beginning in 1977 when the first major Angolan offensive after Operation Savannah was launched, precisely at the time that the Department of Foreign Affairs was engaged in delicate negotiation on Namibia. Thereafter, and more particularly after P W Botha became Prime Minister, the influence of the military has waxed and that of the Department of Foreign Affairs waned.

Jenkins has gone further and has argued that the institutional means of securing the domination of the military in regional policy has been its control over the SSC and that body's associated bureaucracy. He builds a very impressive, if circumstantial, case for individual cases of destabilisation being part of a pattern to secure a military-sponsored grand design in Southern Africa. This amounts, he suggests, to a type of Brezhnev doctrine in Southern Africa; the exerting, in other words, of the same type of hegemony which Russia exerts over Eastern Europe, and achieved by the same mix of economic and military domination. Jenkins detects an almost crusader-like attitude within the military, which sees itself as being the "catalyst of capitalist counter-revolution" against Russian expansionism. (62)

Like Price, Jenkins argues that the major potential weakness of the destabilisation strategy (apart, naturally, from its colossal human and developmental cost) is the possibility of its succeeding. Jenkins was, of course, writing prior to the Nkomati Accord, and before the secret non-aggression pact with Swaziland had become public know-

ledge, and he can perhaps be excused for not appreciating that destabilisation was never intended to succeed to the extent of toppling "radical" regimes. Its purpose, more correctly, was to induce such countries to adapt their policies and arguably their public pronouncements. The exact "mix" of strategies that were brought to bear depended on the country concerned.

Despite professing themselves dissatisfied with "much recent writing on the region", which focusses on "mere crude 'destabilisation'", Davies and O'Meara find themselves largely in agreement with Professor Price's conclusions. (63) Like him, they discern "a sophisticated matrix of economic and other 'incentives' applied together with military and other 'disincentives'" which conjointly constitute Total National Strategy applied to the region. (64) Like Price, they suggest that the object of the regional total strategy is to "create a new network of regional economic and social relationships which would persuade Southern African states that it is in their interests to collaborate with Pretoria". (65)

These authors trace the historical development of relations in the region which have made the application of this strategy possible. They share the view that the primary purpose of the strategy is to realise Mr P W Botha's cherished goal of a Constellation of Southern African states, but that there are "lesser goals" which can be simultaneously pursued by the same means. They admit that the bureaucratic reorganisation of the State under P W Botha has had an important effect on the formulation and execution of this policy, and that the SSC plays a primordial part in shaping such policy. Indeed, they argue, there is not one aspect of regional policy that is not sanctioned by this body.

They suggest that regional policy has developed through four distinct phases. The first of these was associated with the aggressive promotion of the Constellation idea, and this lasted until mid-1980, when the victory of Mr Mugabe and the formation of the SADCC made the creation of a Constellation impossible. The second phase, lasting

until the end of 1981, saw destabilisation applied on a wide and fairly indiscriminate basis. This was followed by a phase of more selective and intensive destabilisation, culminating in the signing of the Nkomati Accord. Finally, South African policy in the post-Nkomati phase is directed to trying "to reproduce the subordination to South African capital" in the front-line states. (66) They admit that the policy has been successful to the extent that the ANC has been placed under pressure, but that the crisis facing South Africa is internal and no amount of terminological confusion nor internationalisation of the problem will resolve it.

Part of the purpose of this article was apparently an attempt to place the debate on South African regional policy within a Marxist framework, hence the authors' disapproval of the existing literature whilst seemingly coming to the same conclusions. Much space is taken up in rather personal (and semantic) reference to Professor Geldenhuys, to which he, in another article (67) rightly took exception. But the adoption of this perspective places the authors in a number of difficult and often contradictory situations. They argue, for example, that the aggressive regional policy is not as much attributable to the military predominance in the "apartheid state" as to a "reorganisation of the ruling capitalist class", which share an "unquestioned vision of strategic objectives". (68) Yet, the authors themselves refer to "top military strategists" who were increasingly uneasy with the ad hoc nature of Vorster's leadership, and who on this account carved out a new prominence for themselves in the central decision-making structures (69), and argue that P W Botha's new bureaucratic organisation was precisely intended to resolve "institutional conflicts". (70) The authors are undoubtedly right : there were, and still are, such institutional conflicts, and this accounts for a great deal of policy variation over time. To suggest that the State operates perfectly consistently (and that "monopoly capital" fits in with the State's plans as well) is, like Evans, to oversimplify what are in fact very complex internal relationships of power and influence.

Seemingly, few scholars have appreciated that the campaign to cow South Africa's neighbouring states and the internal security management campaign are both products of "total strategy"; or at least those that do recognise the nexus choose to imply, rather than to expose and analyse, this relationship. An exception to this general tendency is Professor Geldenhuys. Although he has dealt with each aspect separately in previous articles, (71) he has drawn the two together in his book The Diplomacy of Isolation. (72)

Much of this work goes beyond the scope of this study, in that it presents a global analysis of South African foreign policy-making since Union, and because he has chosen as units of analysis the persons and institutions involved in foreign policy formulation. This method of analysis is at the same time an asset and a liability. It is a comprehensive and even exhaustive treatment, which has perforce considered a variety of actors whose influence on policy-making was and is probably at best marginal. At the same time, the same net has caught the really important actors, and in Geldenhuys' analysis of the interrelationship between these actors he has been able to recognise the plurality and complexity of influences of the "state". While authors like Davies and O'Meara might (and do) criticise the fact that Geldenhuys tends not to assess the relative importance of the persons and institutions he describes, at least he does not present a conception of the "state" as merely the extension of the machinations of "monopoly capital".

Professor Geldenhuys treats the role of the Defence Force in foreign policy carefully, and highlights the fact that the perceptions of "total onslaught" and "total national strategy" have significantly affected the Defence "family's" modus operandi in its foreign dealings, particularly since Angola. (73) Likewise, he recognises that, in dealing with the "onslaught" defence planners see little or no distinction between external and internal operations. (74) He traces the rise to prominence of the doctrine of "total onslaught" from the early 1970's, and refers, in admirably meticulous detail, to the personality and institutional conflicts during Vorster's premier-

ship, which made the "organisation man", P W Botha, determined to place policy-making on a more rational footing. (75) While he recognises the centrality of the SSC in both domestic and foreign dealings, he does not present it in a melodramatic light, arguing that its very institution was a tacit admission of the dangers of the military having too free a hand, as it had during the Angolan campaign. (76) Perhaps most refreshingly of all, his arguments are carefully illustrated by specific examples, largely culled from a wide variety of personal interviews he obtained with key politicians and officials involved in the events at the time.

As Dr Seegers has noted, the literature on the subject of the "total onslaught" and the institution of the National Security Management System is fraught with oversimplifications and generalisations.

Yet viewed conjointly it is remarkable how much information has been provided by a relatively small corpus of literature on a subject so swathed in official secrecy. Each of the authors has provided a little more information which gives us further insight into what actually happens within the Security Management System. If their conclusions are somewhat tentative, these do at least provide us with avenues to pursue in additional research. Each published study has, in turn, prompted the authorities to be slightly more forthcoming with essential information. (77) For, despite official protestations that there is nothing secret about the Security Management System, information is extraordinarily hard to come by. One's normal avenue when secondary sources are scarce is to resort to personal interviews as Geldenhuys has done, but even here one comes up against either an understandable reluctance to divulge too much information lest this be construed as a breach of the laws governing official secrets, or else an equally understandable tendency to "reinterpret" history to justify particular actions.

With these restrictions very much in mind, this study will attempt, in the first instance, to describe and analyse the National Security Management System. This will involve an examination of the changes

which have occurred in the central decision-making structures as a result of the adoption of the "total strategy". To do this, it will be necessary to compare and contrast the structures in existence before Mr Botha became Prime Minister with those set up under his direction subsequently. This study will also show that the "technocratic revolution" in the central decision-making structures is directly related to the adoption of the concept of a total strategy and in turn to the perception that South Africa is the subject of a total onslaught. Too often, commentators are inclined to play down the significance of the sometimes florid and melodramatic statements of politicians as being unfounded and therefore irrelevant. This is a pity, since as often as not, such politicians sincerely believe such statements and act accordingly.

This has certainly been the case with Mr Botha, and had the commentators taken his statements prior to 1978 seriously, they could with a reasonable degree of accuracy have predicted the organisational changes he brought about.

Finally, this study will examine some of the strategies which have emanated from the National Security Management System. The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, the study will illustrate in the working of the System the complex interrelationship between the politicians and the security technocrats. The System has presented opportunities and constraints to both groups, and it is in an examination of this symbiotic relationship that some finality can be reached on the controversy about which group is "in charge". Secondly, this dissertation will trace the motives which lie behind the strategies, in order to assess the real reasons which have caused Mr Botha and his advisors to adopt the quasi-ideology of total onslaught and the correspondent organisational metamorphosis involved in the total strategy. This might enable us to assess to what extent this System will be able to guarantee the survival of white power and privilege into the twenty-first century.

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CHAPTER 1

THE TOTAL ONSLAUGHT : DOMESTIC PERCEPTIONS IN
SECURITY INTELLIGENCE DECISION-MAKING

Mr P W Botha became Minister of Defence on the 5th April 1966 and it was evident from the start that he took the responsibilities of his portfolio very seriously. Whereas his predecessors, Mr J J Fouché and Mr F C Erasmus, had devoted their speeches largely to threats specifically directed against South Africa, Mr Botha's speeches were characterised by a broader vision of security, encompassing the East-West conflict and South Africa's role in it. From the outset, three themes dominated Mr Botha's speeches; first, that the West was being threatened by Soviet expansionism, and secondly, that South Africa was part of the West. This led Mr Botha to the third theme - that Soviet strategy called for the subjugation of Europe by subjugating Africa, thus cutting Europe off from its vital raw materials. Both because of South Africa's mineral wealth, and because of its strategic position on the oil routes, South Africa, Mr Botha therefore concluded, had a dual responsibility - to defend itself and thereby to assist in the defence of the West. (1)

It was a source of irritation and chagrin to Mr Botha that the West failed, on the whole, to share his view of Soviet strategy and thus to appreciate South Africa's role in their defence. Indeed, several attempts had been made by Mr Botha's predecessors to bind the West

closer to South Africa by means of defence treaties; notably the Middle East Defence Organisation in 1951/52 (which never got off the ground) and the Dakar Conference on Defence Facilities in 1954 (which never proceeded beyond the talking stage). (2) The closest which South Africa was able to come to securing a Western commitment to its defence, was the Simon's Town Agreement, signed in 1955.

Even then, this hardly "bound" the West to South Africa's defence. While the agreement provided for the supply of naval vessels and other hardware to South Africa and for joint SA Navy and Royal Navy co-operation, it was, in fact, so vaguely worded as to make the treaty almost meaningless. (3) Indeed, according to one interpretation, the Simon's Town Agreement of 1955 actually facilitated Britain's disengagement from South Africa's defence, since it revoked the arrangement, contained in the 1921 Smuts-Churchill treaty, whereby the Royal Navy was given "the right of perpetual use for naval purposes" over the Simon's Town base. (4)

If the West's responses to South Africa's overtures were lukewarm while South Africa was still a member of the Commonwealth, the reaction after Sharpeville and the departure of South Africa from the Commonwealth was openly hostile. In 1963 and 1964, the Security Council of the United Nations adopted three major resolutions urging (although not compelling) member states not to supply arms to South Africa. (5) The Democratic administration in the United States immediately signified that they considered themselves bound by the resolutions, and the British Labour government which came to power in 1964 fulfilled a pre-election promise by refusing to supply any further arms to South Africa, notwithstanding the provisions of the Simon's Town Agreement. (6)

The "voluntary" arms embargo against South Africa did not materially affect South African arms acquisition. South Africa was still able to buy arms from France, Spain, Italy and Switzerland and even the government of Mr Wilson allowed the delivery of arms which had already been ordered. The alienation of the Western powers from South

Africa, already apparent in the early 1960's was, however, a bitter pill for the Government to swallow; that a country so demonstrably anti-communist should be rejected summarily in this way. This feeling was expressed most clearly by a Government senator in 1961 -

"Mr President, are we not a member of the Western bloc? Are we not ... the country amongst the Western nations which is convincingly anti-communist? Have we not proved, by word and by deed that we stand on the side of the West? ... Will the Western nations not respect such a friend in their midst and situated in a strategic place?" (7)

There was, however, a persuasive lobby in "the West" which denied the strategic importance of South Africa. A world war, they argued, would be a rapid affair, and over long before the Soviet Union could deploy ships to cut off the West's oil supplies. In any event, oil supplies could as effectively, if not more effectively, be cut off by a blockade of the Straits of Hormuz, the Arabian Sea or even the ports of Western Europe. As far as strategic minerals were concerned, the lobby argued that the Soviet Union did not itself need the minerals, and if the Soviet Union wanted to put pressure on the West, it could do so more effectively, and with less cost, by occupying the oil-producing Gulf States. The lobby was also unimpressed by South African protestations of anti-communism; both communism and apartheid were, in their view, equally objectionable. Finally, the lobby argued that in the struggle against communism it was more important to foster ties with the newly independent black states in Africa than with South Africa; indeed, support for what black states saw as a morally repugnant regime might induce these states to seek aid from the Soviet bloc. Spence summed up the position neatly in a contemporary account -

"Given the nature of the struggle, the Western powers are unlikely to welcome South Africa into an anti-communist alliance; nor can the latter 'threaten unfaithfulness' ... as the Republic requires Western support far more than the West requires any strategic or military advantages possessed by it." (8)

The Government responded in four ways to the apparent lack of appreciation by the West for South Africa's strategic worth. The first was to test the British government's commitment to the Simon's Town Agreement. This it did in January 1967 by submitting a "shopping list" of maritime defence equipment that it would require during the next ten years in order to fulfil its obligations in terms of the Agreement. The British Prime Minister responded on the 14th December, and merely reiterated to the House of Commons his government's commitment to the arms embargo. (9) This provoked Mr Vorster to state, in turn, during his New Year's Message for 1968, that -

"We now know after a long time of stalling and hedging exactly where we stand with the Wilson government and in the coming year I will look anew at the Simon's Town Agreement." (10)

Secondly, the Government responded by stepping up the local production of arms. In April 1968 Mr Botha introduced the Armaments Development and Production Act, which repealed the Munitions Production Act and set up the parastatal corporation, ARMSCOR. Mr Botha told Parliament that -

"It is the Government's policy to make the country self-sufficient in the field of defence as soon as possible." (11)

The third response was to attempt to involve other countries in the defence of the Cape Sea Route and, by implication, in South Africa's defence. Mr Botha told Parliament that the British withdrawal east of Suez had caused a power vacuum, which worried the South African government -

"If this situation is taken into account, along with the importance of the southern sea routes and the apparent preoccupation of certain Western nations with their own political objectives, with which they are saddled, we must ask ourselves whether the time has not come to encourage greater co-operation among friendly nations in the southern ocean area." (12)

Mr Botha revealed that contact had been made with various countries "at service level". These were followed up by a visit by Dr Hilgard Muller to Brazil in March 1969, during which the possibility of a defence treaty was raised.

Dr Muller flew on to Argentina and held talks with Mr van Peborgh, the Argentine Minister of National Defence. In May 1969, Admiral Pedro Alberto Jose Gnavi visited South Africa to make arrangements for joint South Africa/Argentinian naval exercises. In July, Dr Caetano expressed interest in a Southern Atlantic Defence Pact involving Brazil, Portugal and South Africa. (13)

The final response was more subtle, and involved stressing the gradual nature of the Soviet strategy to ensure world domination. The factors which denied South Africa's strategic value referred almost exclusively to a full-scale conventional war between East and West, but Mr Botha started to propagate the idea that war was in progress, even if it had not been declared -

"In the world in which we live the dividing line between war and peace is generally no longer a clear one, and the South African Defence Force, as indeed the defence force of every free country in the world, must take that situation into account. In a recently published article, somebody put it as follows - terrorism gives way to guerilla war, then to full scale war." (14)

And later, he put it differently -

"One must include here an East-West conflict even though it is not at the moment a direct conflict of military force." (15)

Mr Botha bemoaned the fact that few Western governments appreciated this. (A notable exception was the Portuguese government of Mr Salazar, whose speeches Mr Botha used to cite from time to time approvingly). (16) In order to persuade the West of the seriousness of this creeping war, it was necessary for Mr Botha to quote concrete

examples of its manifestation. This Mr Botha did for the first time in 1970. (17) He argued that there was a global struggle between the "forces of communism" on the one hand, and the "forces of stability, security and progress" on the other. He said that the "forces of communism" had a long term strategy to subdue the West, and that the campaign would be conducted in a variety of spheres. The threat, he said, covered all spheres -

"It is operative in the economic sphere. It manifests itself in the form of incitement to boycotts and illegal strikes. It manifests itself in the sowing of confusion in government ranks, such as by means of student unrest, etc. It manifests itself, consciously or unconsciously, in the news media of the world. It manifests itself through subversion, infiltration and the sowing of disorder, and in terrorism in its various forms ... The military and economic fronts are but two of the ways in which that onslaught is being made on the Western World, but there are numerous others. Today, virtually every sphere of life is part of that overall strategy and that total onslaught on the free world and the people of the West."

This, Mr Botha argued, was merely the first stage of a wider campaign -

"The unconventional onslaught will increase until bases are in readiness for a conventional onslaught. The subversion, the sowing of confusion, the creation of disorder, will increase until the death blow can be struck by conventional forces. This is the essence of the struggle we are involved in."

Mr Botha was careful to stress the gradual and indirect nature of the Soviet strategy, and was at pains to point out Africa's role in this strategy. Africa was Europe's "soft underbelly" - the supplier of Europe's raw materials, without which European industry would collapse. The object of stressing the gradual nature of the Soviet "onslaught" was to persuade Western governments that the Soviet Union was unlikely to embark on a conventional attack against the West until it had control, either directly, or more likely, through puppet regimes of those areas of the Third World crucial for the supply of

raw materials. Obviously, Mr Botha argued, South Africa occupied a key position in Soviet strategy, both because of her supply of strategic minerals and because of her position on the Cape Sea Route. Nor was the subversion in any way connected with the policy of apartheid -

"It is not primarily a matter of apartheid or parallel development. The struggle against South Africa is not primarily concerned with that, because in Rhodesia it is not a matter of apartheid, neither is it in the Portuguese areas north of our borders. Apartheid does not exist there." (18)

This motivation for the "onslaught" against South Africa was perhaps best expressed by Mr Vorster somewhat later in this way -

"The ultimate aim of the communist and leftist powers is not Rhodesia, Mozambique or Angola - their ultimate aim is South Africa. The ultimate aim is what can be taken from South African soil. But what is perhaps more important to them is the control over the Cape Sea Route in the event of another conventional war." (19)

This campaign was given considerable impetus by the election of the Conservative Party government in Britain in 1970. In February of that year, a committee of the Conservative Party under chairmanship of Sir Frederick Bennett had recommended to the leadership that the Simon's Town Agreement should be "reactivated"; that a Royal Navy Commander-in-Chief should be reappointed; that the advisability of extending the NATO area of commitment to include the Cape Sea Route should be canvassed; failing this, that a separate alliance be concluded between Britain, several of the South American states and South Africa to guarantee this Route; and finally, that at least one aircraft carrier and one nuclear submarine of the Royal Navy ought permanently to be stationed at the Cape. (20)

Mr Heath was not prepared to commit himself to the recommendations of the committee, but talked vaguely of resuming the sales of "limited categories of arms for maritime defence" to South Africa. Under

pressure from various groups he moderated his position still further; he was prepared to sell arms to South Africa only when "very full consultation" with other members of the Commonwealth had taken place.

(21)

It was clear, however, that the Commonwealth was far from unanimous on the issue of arms sales to South Africa. At the Conference of Commonwealth heads of government held in Singapore between the 13th and 20th February 1971, the matter was debated extensively and at one stage threatened to split the Commonwealth. Mr Heath's view was that a significant build-up of Soviet naval power had occurred in the Indian Ocean and that, since a quarter of British trade and half its oil supplies came via the Cape Sea Route, the supply of maritime defence equipment was both justified and in Britain's interests. The former Dominions - Canada, Australia and New Zealand - generally accepted this reasoning, but the African states, supported by India and Ceylon, were outraged that the arms embargo was to be breached. They argued that the arms supplied to South Africa could easily be used for landward aggression, and this constituted a threat to the territorial integrity of the independent states north of the Zambezi. A compromise was eventually reached; a study group, consisting of representatives of Australia, Britain, Canada, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia and Nigeria, was set up to investigate the matter and report to the Commonwealth Secretary-General as soon as possible. Mr Heath announced, however, that he refused to be bound by the study group's recommendations, and argued that it was his government's right -

"to take such action as it considers necessary to give effect to its global defence policy, in which the facilities at Simon's Town constitute an important element."

Mr Heath added that -

"The British Government has received from the South African Government an assurance that the South African Government has no aggressive intentions and that it

will not use any items of maritime equipment supplied by the British Government for purposes other than those for which they have been supplied." (22)

Simultaneously, the British government released a White Paper, entitled Legal Obligations of HM Government arising out of the Simon's Town Agreements, in which it was argued that the British government did have definite, if limited, legal obligations to supply certain maritime defence equipment. Principally this involved an obligation to supply "sufficient number of helicopters to equip the three anti-submarine frigates supplied under the Sea Routes Agreement ... if these are requested by the South African Government." The White Paper was careful, however, to point out that there was no continuing obligation on Britain to supply any further arms -

"It would not be reasonable ... to impute to the parties an intention to include a term in the Sea Routes Agreement which would place any general and continuing legal obligation on HM Government to permit the supply of arms to the South African Government."
(23)

In accordance with the assurance contained in the White Paper that helicopters would be supplied, Mr Botha promptly placed an order for seven Westland Wasps on the 22nd February 1971. (24)

Mr Botha was, however, enough of a realist to take note of the White Paper's conclusion that there existed no "general and continuing legal obligation" on Britain to provide any further arms. By this stage, this issue of arms procurement was certainly less serious than it had been in the 1960's; indeed, Mr Botha was able to entertain Parliament during the 1971 Defence Vote with an account of the extent of the development of local arms production. He said that South Africa was self-sufficient in the manufacture of explosives and propelling agents, a wide variety of types of ammunition, air-borne bombs and rockets, rifles and submachine guns, mortars and certain artillery pieces, armoured cars and most recently an anti-aircraft missile. (25) A month later, he travelled to France where he signed a

licence agreement with Dassault providing for the South African manufacture of the Mirage III and Mirage F1 jet fighters. (26)

Why then did Mr Botha not consider scrapping the Simon's Town Agreement? In part, as Spence has argued, this action would have spelt the end of "the only military link of any significance with the Western Powers" and "would have left the Republic completely isolated in strategic terms". (27) Certainly, Mr Botha would have been loath to give up the Agreement while there was still a chance that a subsequent Conservative administration might interpret its provisions differently.

Did he perhaps hope that France, which was now South Africa's major supplier of arms, might listen sympathetically to the arguments of Soviet expansionism he had fruitlessly been propagating? This might have been the case, but, according to Johnson, the arguments cut no ice with the Gaullists. Johnson argues that France had no interest in a defence alliance with South Africa, but was prepared to supply arms which South Africa needed, both to obtain gold, and also, more significantly, as part of a deliberate strategy of fostering "special relationships around the world with major second-ranking powers", so that France could "deal equally with the two super powers". The key to this policy was being able to dump the client states quickly if the costs of the association outweighed the benefits, as France had shown it could do with Israel in 1967. (28) Any hopes, then, of replacing the Agreement with a pact with France were doomed to disappointment.

Mr Botha might also have entertained fond hopes that a Southern Atlantic Treaty Organisation could still be set up, following the service links which had been established in the late 1960's. However, the obvious participants in such a treaty (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) were already members of the Organisation of American States and signatories of the Treaty of Rio (the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance) (29) and it made little sense to exchange the patronage of the United States for the

opprobrium of an association with South Africa. A Southern Indian Ocean Treaty Organisation was equally unthinkable : not only were Australia and New Zealand already members of ANZUS, but also members of the Commonwealth, whose mood had been made clear in Singapore.

Mr Botha and the South African government were thus obliged to be satisfied with defensive arrangements with the other "pariah" states threatened by "Soviet expansionism" in Southern Africa - Rhodesia and Portugal. Units of the SA Police, initially numbering 50 members, 10 armoured cars and four helicopters, were dispatched to Rhodesia in September 1967, ostensibly, in Mr Vorster's words, to fight against men, "who originally came from South Africa and are on their way back to commit terrorism in South Africa". (30) Mr Botha said late in 1972 that military assistance to supplement the police presence would be "given freely on request" to Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies, (31) and limited numbers of SA Defence Force personnel were stationed near Lake Kariba in 1974. (32) At the same time, two frigates and a submarine paid what was described as "an operational visit" to Lourenco Marques from the 29th March to the 7th April 1973 (33) and on the 4th July 1973 General Kaulze de Arriage, the Chief of the Armed Forces in Mozambique, visited South Africa and held discussions with Mr Botha and Admiral Biermann. (34)

Of course, the South African government's offer of troops to the Portuguese colonies, and the deployment of troops in Rhodesia was only partly motivated by an anti-communist "crusade". Of more practical importance was the fact that these states formed an effective buffer against direct foreign intervention by force of arms. Indeed, the desire to keep the "defence line" as far away from South Africa itself as possible had always been an important security consideration for the Nationalist government, as Geldenhuys has correctly identified. (35) While this "defence line" had been growing progressively closer to South Africa's borders ever since 1948 (in the early 1950's the line was at Suez; by the late 1950's it had become the Sahara; and by 1964 it had reached the Zambezi), the cordon sanitaire formed by Angola, Rhodesia, Mozambique and the BLS

countries was still comfortable enough for the South African government safely to ignore the possibility of direct military pressures emanating from beyond the country's northern borders.

Nor was military aid the only advantage which the Portuguese colonies and Rhodesia derived from acting as South Africa's buffer. Substantial aid was forthcoming, too. In Rhodesia's case, fairly obviously the fact that South Africa was her sole source of imports confirmed her client status vis-á-vis South Africa. But South Africa also provided the capital for the construction of the Cunene Dam in Angola and for the Cabora Bassa Dam in Mozambique. Aid, in the form of a loan for the construction of the town of Lilongwe was also granted to Malawi, while Portugal received remitted Mozambican miners' wages in gold.

The fact that Mr Botha's preoccupation with South Africa's place in super power strategy had, in practical terms, to be scaled down - thanks to Western indifference - to merely bolstering the buffer states, did not mean that he lost this interest; indeed, on the contrary. Much of his introduction to the 1973 Defence White Paper was devoted to this subject.

Stressing the integral part which he believed South Africa played in world politics, he wrote -

"The RSA is part of the modern world, and as such, involuntarily involved in the prevailing international struggle for power. Furthermore, as a result of the relative check-mate obtaining between the super powers in the sphere of nuclear weapons, we find ourselves in a position of increasing strategic importance in that struggle ... Geographically the RSA is part of the Third World; in the military and cultural spheres it is a captive ally of the West, and ideologically a direct obstacle in the path of communism." (36)

Later in the preface, he returned to this theme again -

"In the view of the Government, the RSA's survival is closely interwoven with the future of the present Free

World. Consequently, the measures instituted for our defence are designed constantly also to assist in promoting the security of the Free World in general." (37)

He went further, again developing the familiar theme of the Soviet Union's use of "indirect strategy" -

"Like the rest of the Free World, the RSA is a target for international communism and its cohorts - leftist activists, exaggerated humanism, permissiveness, materialism, and related ideologies ... Because the RSA holds a position of strategic importance, these ideological attacks on the RSA are progressively being converted into more tangible action in the form of sanctions, boycotts, isolation, demonstrations and the like. This renders us - and the Free World - the more vulnerable to the indirect strategy applied by the radical powers in the form of undermining activities and limited violence, whether employed openly, or dissimulated behind ideological fronts." (38)

Nor was this solely an ideological battle. South Africa was, Mr Botha said, already engaged in a "low-intensity war" and warned that -

"This situation will probably continue for some considerable time to come. There is no cause for anxiety or fear but there is every reason for each of us to take note of the situation and to contribute his share towards ensuring our safety. A proper appreciation of the dangers is essential." (39)

This call to arms - however muted - was emphasised elsewhere in the White Paper -

"The conclusion to be stressed is that our defence is not a matter for the Defence Force only, but also for each department and citizen; it demands dedication, vigilance and sacrifice - not only from the Defence Force, but from all who are privileged to find a home in this country." (40)

It was all very well to caution against panic in 1973, but the sudden and, for the South African government, totally unexpected, coup in

Portugal on the 25th April 1974 brought South Africa's defence line - and the concomitant threat 'of large-scale insurgency - right up to its borders, and this changed the Government's perceptions of foreign affairs and security in a very dramatic way. Writing at the time, Schlemmer et al argued that it was -

"Almost impossible to overestimate the significance for Southern Africa of the military coup in Portugal ... it has meant that at least one, and possibly two of the buffer zones between South Africa and the independent African states have been removed. This means that anti-government South African guerilla movements would at least potentially have direct access to South Africa's borders." (41)

A similar observation was made by Hirschmann -

"South Africa was also confronted with dramatically changed circumstances. Not only had two long-standing buffer zones collapsed, but in consequence, a third, Rhodesia, suddenly looked extremely vulnerable; and in addition, the nature of Namibia's long border with Angola has altered." (42)

The drastic effects of the collapse of the two Portuguese colonies as buffer zones for South Africa was felt most keenly by top decision-makers in the South African Defence Force.

Admiral Biermann, the Chief of the SADF, said, during a radio interview on the 16th June 1974 that -

"As far as the RSA is concerned, there certainly never has been a precedent to the current vast number of events with potential impact, individually and collectively, on our national security."

Further, while he was quick to point out that "the change which has occurred in Lisbon ... does not ipso facto portend an aggravation of the threat against our security", and while he stated that South Africa had no aggressive intentions towards whatever governments were established in Mozambique and Angola, he nonetheless said that there

were many factors which militated against pro-South African governments coming to power in the ex-colonies.- He concluded that these factors had -

"been constant factors in the appreciation to determine our strategic policy. In the short and intermediate terms, the SADF is prepared to meet any challenge that could emerge on these fronts." (43)

This feeling of apprehension was expressed even more clearly by other senior officers in the Defence Force. The Chief of Army Staff Operations, Maj-Gen J R Dutton told the Pretoria branch of the National Council of Women on the 2nd August 1974 that -

"the intensity of our present war will most probably escalate, and every effort must be made to ensure that we as a nation are ready for this new onslaught." (44)

While Commodore W N du Plessis was reported to have told an Afrikaanse Studentebond Seminar on the same day that pressure would be brought to bear on the two ex-colonies "to open their doors for the establishment of terrorist bases. The current terrorist onslaught is only the tip of the iceberg". (45) In an editorial, Paratus, the official journal of the SADF, commented -

"The RSA is their (the communists) ultimate objective, and one has seen two approaches to their rich prize : via Angola and SWA, and via Mozambique (with Rhodesia en route ...). The revolutionary war against Southern Africa does not consist, therefore, of isolated wars in neighbouring territories, but of phases of one war - with the RSA as the final goal." (46)

If these views were held by the top decision-makers in the SADF, they were evidently not shared uniformly by Mr Vorster nor other key politicians in the Cabinet. Neither Mr Vorster nor Dr Mulder mentioned the Portuguese coup or its implications when Parliament reconvened at the beginning of August 1974. When Mr Vorster did deal with the issue during his Vote, his remarks were low-key and

conciliatory. He said that it was "inevitable" that an "indigenous" government would be established in Mozambique, and that "it was not South Africa's policy to lay down what kind of government they should have there". He continued -

"It goes without saying that South Africa will take the first opportunity to make contact with that government and to reach an understanding with that government. It is not only in South Africa's interests to do so, but pre-eminently, in the interests of that government as well"

and went on to outline the advantages which would flow from co-operation with South Africa. Mr Vorster was careful to point out that South Africa's policy was one of non-interference in the affairs of neighbouring states, and concluded that -

"The only thing that South Africa will ever do is to defend itself with its full striking power in the event of its being attacked." (47)

This theme was also emphasised by Dr Hilgard Muller, the Foreign Minister. He said of the Portuguese coup that -

"these events may hold benefits for us and for our sub-continent. What has happened should rather be regarded as a challenge and not as a disaster or a threat."

He said that he based his confidence that co-operation between South Africa and the ex-colonies was possible on the fact that South Africa had co-operated with the states for a considerable length of time, and thus that the region was economically interdependent. He concluded by stating unequivocally -

"The Government's attitude in regard to these developments on our borders amounts to the hand of friendship being extended anew by South Africa to all African states, irrespective of whether they are already independent or whether they are gaining their independence, as is the case with the two neighbouring on our borders." (48)

This spate of conciliatory speeches culminated in Vorster's celebrated address to the South African Senate on the 23rd October 1974. Stressing the need for all African countries to co-operate thereby to promote development, Mr Vorster argued -

"I believe that Southern Africa has come to the crossroads. I think Southern Africa has to make a choice. I think that choice lies between peace on the one hand or (sic) an escalation of strife on the other ... Southern Africa should guard against its heading for chaos. However, this is not necessary and I think hon. Senators will agree with me that it is not necessary, for there is an alternative, there is a way. That way is the way of peace, the way of normalisation of relations, the way of sound understanding and normal association. I believe that Southern Africa can take that way. I have reason to believe that it is prepared to take that way, and I believe that it will do so in the end. In fact ... I have never been more optimistic that the climate and the will to do so is there." (49)

The next day, Mr Pik Botha, at that time South Africa's Permanent Representative at the United Nations, told the Security Council that -

"my Government does not condone discrimination purely on the grounds of race or colour. Discrimination based solely on the colour of a man's skin cannot be defended. And we shall do everything in our power to move away from discrimination based on race or colour."

He also reiterated the view that -

"A Black Government in Mozambique holds no fear for us. We are surrounded by Black Governments and we are ourselves in the process of creating more by leading our Black territories to independence." (50)

Did the sanguineness displayed by Mr Vorster, Dr Mulder and Mr Pik Botha compared to the near panic which was evident from statements from the top decision-makers in the Defence Force signify a difference of opinion within the Cabinet at that time? At first glance, the differences appeared to concern tactics and emphasis

rather than fundamental approaches to the problem. Both Mr Vorster et al and Mr Botha wanted a strong Defence Force, and Mr Vorster had made it clear both in his Assembly and in his Senate speeches that he was prepared to use the Defence Force if South Africa was in any way threatened. As if to mirror this determination, an amount of R692 025 000 was provided for Defence in the 1974/75 estimates, an increase of 43% over the previous year. Yet Mr Vorster did not want to use the Defence Force unless he was provoked - he hoped, by dramatic diplomacy, to reach a modus vivendi with the black-ruled states on his borders that would effectively replace the buffers previously provided by the Portuguese colonies. Thus, he embarked on the celebrated policy of détente.

It goes beyond the scope of this study to examine the détente policy in any depth, and it will suffice to say that in the latter part of 1974, Vorster visited a number of African countries privately and received a special emissary from President Kaunda. The objective of this diplomatic activity only became clear later. Vorster did not want to become involved in a protracted war in Rhodesia, the outcome of which would be far from certain, and the advantages of which would be doubtful. Instead, he hoped to create a commonwealth of Southern African states, and thereby a more permanent buffer than Rhodesia, the Portuguese colonies and the BLS countries had proved to be. For his part, he was prepared to exert pressure on Mr Ian Smith, the Rhodesian Prime Minister, to negotiate a settlement with the black nationalist organisations with a view to an internationally recognised settlement.

He was also prepared to grant financial and other aid to the countries to the north of South Africa. For Kaunda, the idea of settling the guerilla war in Rhodesia was attractive, since the war had already proved costly to him, and was likely to become more so the more the war escalated. He also genuinely hoped to prevail upon Mr Vorster to make domestic changes to the political system within South Africa. He was prepared to put pressure on the Rhodesian black nationalist leaders to negotiate with Smith, and was prepared to

reiterate the principles contained in the Lusaka Manifesto that whites in South Africa were not settlers. Of course, neither of the participants was prepared to give in to the other's major demands - Mr Vorster was not interested in doing away with apartheid, nor was President Kaunda interested in being a member of a South African-dominated economic community (51) - but this did not stop their co-operation on the issue of Rhodesia. (52)

Yet there seems no doubt that Mr P W Botha's conception that there was a total onslaught against the Republic was at least temporarily no longer official policy. It made little sense, after all, to accuse states to the north of South Africa of being part of a communist-inspired plot against the Republic while at the same time coaxing the same states into a pro-South African alliance. In addition, there is evidence which suggests that not all the key decision-makers in the National Party were convinced of the totality of the "onslaught". Mr Pik Botha, for example, in one of his last speeches in Parliament before becoming Ambassador to the United Nations, asked whether it was -

"not possible for us to have a measure of consensus in respect of those aspects of security which are a threat to us" (53)

while Dr Connie Mulder said, during a visit to Rhodesia that South Africa would not be sending troops to Rhodesia as this would be interpreted as "involvement in total war" and he did not think that this was the case. (54)

Mr P W Botha's reaction was very interesting. He certainly did not compromise his position that the world as a whole was threatened by Soviet expansionism. He said, at the beginning of 1975, that -

"the present tension in the world has its origin in Russia's expansionist urge and in its indirect strategy and militaristic intimidation of peoples" (55)

and argued that détente between South Africa and states to the north of its borders would not lessen this Soviet expansionism one iota. This theme he followed up in the preface to the 1975 White Paper on Defence -

"It is ... an irrefutable reality that no country - and this certainly holds true for the RSA - can escape events elsewhere in the world. We are all inevitably involved ... and are intimately affected by interwoven economic patterns, diminishing resources and militant ideologies."

He continued by referring somewhat disparagingly to the likely success of the policy of détente, which he gratuitously described as "a wise policy to pursue", but was quick to point out that -

"On the other hand, appeasement is a policy of weakness. The preparedness of the SA Defence Force is a guarantee that a policy of weakness and appeasement need not be followed." (56)

It is almost certain that these muted differences marked a much more significant Cabinet split, the significance of which will be discussed in more detail later, which was to have its resolution in the ill-fated South African invasion of Angola. Mr Vorster was by 1975 already ill, and there must have been speculation about his successor. Up until then, the détente policy had been a product, largely, though not exclusively, of the Department of Information and this had rebounded to the credit of Dr Mulder, the responsible Minister and the Transvaal leader of the Party. Mr Botha, by that time the most senior Cabinet Minister, wanted to participate in an independent foreign policy venture which would redress the balance in his favour. He saw his chance in Angola.

Personal ambition was, however, not only not Mr Botha's only consideration, but may not have been the most important. On the 16th June 1975, the Simon's Town Agreement was finally terminated by the British Labour Party government (57) thus realising Mr Botha's worst fears - international ostracisation in the area of defence. The

termination of the agreement was particularly painful to Mr Botha since it signified that the British government did not believe that the Cape Sea Route was strategically vital to the defence of the West. It was therefore necessary to demonstrate by some other means South Africa's strategic importance and the country's bona fides as an ally of the West.

If, in hindsight, it seems absurd for Mr Botha to have imagined that the invasion of a sovereign black African state could have restored South Africa to its position within the Western alliance, there is evidence which suggests that Mr Botha was secretly encouraged to do so by both the United States and France, although for radically different reasons. The involvement of the United States can be traced back to the acceptance by the Nixon administration in 1969 of the National Security Council's "Option Two" as the basis of its security appraisal of Southern Africa. (58) "Option Two" was based on the premise that whites were firmly in control in the sub-continent, and that blacks were unlikely to overthrow the minority regimes by force; moreover, support for military blacks would "only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists". As soon after the Portuguese coup, therefore, as May 1974, Admiral Biermann visited the United States and met both the Secretary of the Navy and the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. (59) It is naturally impossible to ascertain what was discussed at these meetings, but Stockwell makes it clear that both Kissinger and the CIA were not only aware of South Africa's involvement in the Angolan civil war, but indeed saw South Africa's support of UNITA as a complementary strategy to their support of the FNLA. (60) Mr Botha himself admitted to Parliament during 1976 that the United States -

"knew about our actions in Angola and tacitly approved of them. Not only did they do so tacitly, but at one stage they also adopted a standpoint against the Russians and Cubans in theory as well as in practice"
(61)

while two years later, he went still further -

"We are being condemned because we were in Angola on a limited scale, but there was a time when American aircraft offloaded arms at military bases and positions in Angola which were held by South African troops. I was there myself and I saw those arms being offloaded."
(62)

France's role in prompting a South African invasion was significant but far less definitive. Amongst all the commentators on Angola, it appears that only Johnson has speculated on it, but he advances a well-reasoned case. He bases his case on the incomprehensible phenomenon of France continuing to supply both sophisticated armaments (five Daphne class submarines, an unspecified number of corvettes and Mirage F1 fighter/bombers) and atomic know-how in the face of UN and vociferous Afro-Asian opposition. For France to have taken such a diplomatic risk, Johnson argues, the pay-off must have been considerable, and he identifies three advantages which accrued to France. In the first place, France earned South Africa's gratitude, and, as a result, South Africa's clientage. This Johnson sees as part of a deliberate policy by France of establishing a series of alliances with a series of second order powers (China, Israel, Pakistan and South Africa), but without involving any long term commitment to these states' survival - a necessary implication of long term economic investment. In the second place, South Africa could, unlike Israel, pay for her arms purchases in hard gold bullion, a proposition which appealed to the French government. Thirdly, and more germane to the issue of Angola, Johnson maintains that France was at that time trying to diversify the sources of her supply of oil and to reduce her dependence on the Arab bloc. French policy-makers saw in the chaotic conditions prevailing in Angola the chance to establish a French monopoly in the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda.

For this strategy to succeed, the Angolan civil war would, in fact, have to be promoted so as to allow the French, from bases in Zaire, to patronise the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda. Only South Africa could promote the civil war in Angola and was accordingly asked to do so. (63)

Although Johnson admits that there is no hard evidence to support his view, he does suggest that "the elements" of a deal between Pretoria and Paris "stare one rudely in the face". He also correctly argues that for arms "Pretoria might well have been willing to pay in blood". (64) Johnson could further have substantiated his case if he had considered the nature and the timing of the South African orders for defence equipment. The cancellation of the Simon's Town Agreement left South Africa isolated from the Western Alliance; however, submarines and corvettes could re-establish South Africa's strategic worth as the custodian of the Cape Sea Route. For that, Mr Botha would indeed have been prepared to pay in blood.

One should not ignore Mr Botha's official explanation of the invasion. He told Parliament that it had been necessary for a "limited force" to enter Angola to achieve "limited objectives". He said that South African investments at Calueque needed to be protected, as did the inhabitants of Ovamboland, from acts of terror. He also maintained that certain indirect benefits had accrued to the SADF as a result of the invasion - it had provided the Defence Force with practical experience and it had shown the rest of Africa South Africa's military power. Finally he argued that it had demonstrated conclusively the willingness of South Africa to shoulder its responsibilities as an ally of the "free world". (65)

However "limited" Mr Botha regarded the "objectives" of the SADF in Angola, it was most certainly not a "limited force" that invaded the country, nor was this force's task - by any stretch of the imagination - confined to the protection of South African investments at Calueque. To be sure, South African troops were dispatched to Calueque towards the beginning of August 1975, but these troops were intended to protect Calueque from the FNLA and UNITA forces, who were slogging it out for mastery of Southern Angola. (66) The main South African force - Task Force Zulu - only left Rundu on the 14th October 1975, and consisted initially of approximately 1 000 troops and eventually, during December, of between 4 000 and 5 000 men. (67)

Mr Botha's other statements are equally difficult to substantiate. Africa could hardly have been less impressed with the fact that South Africa's much vaunted army advanced virtually all the way to Luanda before being forced to retreat. South African defence equipment was shown to be obsolete (their artillery, particularly, which dated from the Second World War) and their logistical support system a shambles. It was only thanks to particular resourcefulness shown on the part of the South African commanders and the inexperience on the part of their opponents, that disaster - in the form of visible defeat - was avoided. Furthermore, the "free world", even the most conservative elements of it, could hardly have blessed the South Africans for the presence of an estimated 25 000 Cubans whose presence in Angola the South African invasion had helped to justify.

The white electorate in South Africa was fed a careful diet of propaganda which portrayed the SADF either as victorious, or else, where this clearly was not the case, as having performed magnificently under very difficult circumstances. (68) During the Durban North by-election, fought in the early months of 1976, the Nationalist candidate boasted publicly that the SADF "were in fact knocking the hell out of the Cubans". (69) A special television documentary, entitled "Brug 14" depicted a minor skirmish in the most favourable light. Even Mr Botha suggested that the SADF had not wanted to pull out of Angola, but that -

"When it became clear to us that we would be left in the lurch, we decided that we would not fight to the last South African on behalf of the free world, if they themselves were not prepared to fight." (70)

Others, however, perceived things differently. On the one hand, the reverses which had been inflicted on the SADF did not escape the voteless blacks in South Africa, more particularly as these reverses had been inflicted by black, or at the very least, Third World troops. Previously, the SADF had been assumed to be invincible, and this had reinforced the attitude of powerlessness felt by many blacks in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The events in Angola induced a

greater feeling of confidence which in no small way contributed to the riots in Soweto and elsewhere later in 1976. (71)

The other actor whose perceptions were radically changed by the events in Angola was the SADF itself. The top decision-makers in the SADF were very well aware that neither their equipment nor their tactics were appropriate to the type of war which had been fought. In addition, the discipline of the troops left much to be desired, while the logistical support system was so chaotic that troops in the front-line were often without essential ordinance for long periods of time. It had always been boasted that the SADF was the strongest army on the African continent; suddenly, the generals weren't sure.

This new realism induced, in turn, far-reaching changes within the SADF itself, and changes in the relationship between the SADF and other agencies. In the second half of 1976 an enquiry was conducted into the discipline of the Defence Force which recommended substantial tightening up of discipline. At that time, the enquiry found, South Africa's Defence Force could be compared favourably only with those of Italy and Greece. (72) Secondly, planning went ahead with the acquisition of a suitable terrain for the SADF, and particularly its ground forces, to train in the techniques of conventional war. The Army Battle School was thus established at Lohattha, and brigade exercises were conducted there in the last months of 1978. Such was the importance attached to this project that the Officer Commanding of the Battle School was given the rank of Brigadier and the status of an Officer Commanding a Command, with direct access to the Chief of the Army. (73) The logistics system was also thoroughly overhauled and the concept of "log-ops" - logistics in support of operations - introduced. (74)

As was to be expected, the set-back in Angola, and the perceived spinelessness of the West, also found expression in the 1977 Defence White Paper. Writing somewhat moodily, Mr Botha noted that -

"During the past two years there have been far-reaching political, economic and military developments in both the global and regional contexts, with direct implications for the Republic of South Africa. Marxist militarism is casting a shadow over Africa. Nevertheless the Western countries still take part in a senseless arms embargo against the RSA." (75)

However, this apparent lack of interest did not seem to affect the desire to project South Africa at the centre stage of East-West relations. The White Paper commented -

"Developments in Africa and elsewhere have today thrust the Republic of South Africa against its will into the foreground, where the attainment of the National Security Aims is directly affected by occurrences and trends of thought beyond our borders." (76)

It continued -

"World peace rests mainly upon the balance of military might between the Western democracies and the Marxist powers, and it is this very balance which is the foundation of a stable international order. Paradoxically, however, the state of international stability, based largely on the essential nuclear balance between the two super powers, lends itself to instability at lower levels, and Southern Africa is one of the many victims of this ... insecurity." (77)

The White Paper bemoaned the fact that "minority governments" had been established in both Angola and Mozambique, but that whereas the latter's transformation to independent status had been "comparatively" peaceful -

"The circumstances in Angola were quite different and had a considerable effect on the RSA's security interests." (78)

This had had the effect of requiring South Africa's involvement in the Angolan Civil War and had resulted in Soviet and Cuban intervention in that war on the MPLA side. The White Paper deprecates

this development most strongly. The reason for this unwarranted involvement was -

"with the aim of bringing to power a government which would be well-disposed towards the Marxist cause. This is a clear indication of Soviet imperialism which will confront Africa in the future. One can justifiably say that there is a Soviet shadow over parts of Africa."
(79)

The White Paper was careful to point out that while the developments in Angola did not in themselves materially affect the "form and substance" of the threat as it had been exposed in the 1973 White Paper, subsequent events had -

"led to an increase in the tempo of developments and this has brought the threats nearer in time." (80)

The White Paper concluded that this increased tempo would of necessity have to affect the State's response thereto, and -

"Adaptations must continually be made in order to keep the degree of readiness in balance with the various threats." (81)

The White Paper was equally explicit in its view of the nature of the attack on South Africa, an exposition characterised in equal measure by its simplicity and its naivety. The "Strategy, Policies and Aims of the RSA's Enemies" are specified as follows:

- "a. The expansion of Marxism by fomenting revolution in Southern Africa.
- b. The overthrow of the white regimes in Southern Africa so that the militant Africa bloc can realise its aspirations with regard to the destruction of so-called colonialism and racialism and the establishment of Pan-Africanism. In its desire to destroy alleged racism, the Arab bloc can, with certain exceptions, be regarded as the partner of the Africa bloc in its hostile actions as far as this serves its own purpose.

- c. The striving after an indirect strategy in order to unleash revolutionary warfare in Southern Africa and, by means of isolation, to force the RSA to change its domestic policy in favour of Pan-Africanism." (82)

These statements are extraordinary, not least because no African leader of note, far less a Soviet one, was at that stage promoting "Pan-Africanism". But more significantly, this was the Defence Force's first serious mention of the concept of "indirect strategy", which was to become so central in Mr Botha's proposed counter-revolutionary strategy.

Nor was this mere sophistry aimed at convincing Mr Botha's colleagues that he would make a tough, "kragdadige" and worthy successor to Mr Vorster as Prime Minister. Had this been so, one would have expected the rhetoric promoting the "total onslaught" to have diminished once the correspondent notion of "total strategy" came to be the accepted modus operandi of the State to deal with perceived security threats, once Mr Botha became that successor. However this missionary zeal did not diminish; indeed, just the reverse. Now that Mr Botha had become Prime Minister it was necessary to persuade, not only the public at large, but more crucially, the rest of the State machinery, that the onslaught was real and all-embracing.

In the 1979 White Paper on Defence, for example, the writer records "increased political, economic and military pressure on the RSA", and says that "the military threat against the RSA is intensifying at an alarming rate". (83) In another place, the White Paper argues that "the total onslaught such as is being waged against South Africa" requires "highly co-ordinated action" if it is successfully to be counteracted. (84) The following year, General Malan, who was shortly to become Minister of Defence, addressed the University of Pretoria's Institute of Strategic Studies specifically on the subject of the "total onslaught". (85)

He argued that the Republic was the subject of a co-ordinated

onslaught aimed specifically at what he termed "die RSA se vier magsbasiswa".

The bases of power were the political/diplomatic, the economic, the social/psychological and the security bases. The political/diplomatic onslaught was specifically directed at driving a wedge between South Africa and the West, between South Africa and the rest of Africa and between the Government and certain parts of the population. It was clear that the United Nations was the catalyst of this onslaught, and that the United Nations itself was under communist domination. Because the Western countries did not take a firm line on communism in the UN -

"Daar kan met reg beweer word dat die Westerse moonthede hulleself as handlangers van die kommunistiese beskikbaar stel en indirek besig is om mee te werk aan die vernietiging van kapitalisme en die vestiging van wêreldkommunistiese."

The economic "onslaught" consisted of attempts to isolate the Republic economically, and of the imposition of codes of conduct on South African business. The arms boycott, General Malan maintained, was only the precedent of other, more serious boycotts. (86)

While the economic onslaught was fairly easy to discern, the "social/psychological onslaught" was a more subtle campaign, "vanweë die bedekte aard daarvan". In part, the onslaught was directed at instilling a mood of defeatism in the ruling class in South Africa, but more importantly, it was aimed at creating a "revolutionary climate" in the working classes in the Republic. The aim of this was -

"by nie-blanke groepe die gevoel te skep dat geweld, en nie onderhandelinge nie, die enigste oplossing is." (87)

Finally, there was, he argued, a very well-developed "onslaught" on the security bases of the Republic. This was quite simply a campaign of aggression, involving (again in a multi-dimensional way) terror-

ism, semi-conventional operations and sabotage, directed against the government and people of South Africa. The proof of Soviet designs in this area lay in the large numbers of troops and weapons which it pushed into the front-line states, as well as in the assistance which it gave to the principal terrorism organisation, the ANC.

General Malan concluded his analysis of the onslaught against the Republic with the words -

"Die ontwerp van 'n totale aanslag, meesterlik deur Rusland gehanteer, ontnem die voorgenome slagoffer die luuksheid van voorbereiding vanaf mobilisasie tot 'n formelê oorlogstand. Die RSA het die noodsaaklikheid besef van 'n voortdurende gereedheidstand om die aanslag op sy vier magsbassisse te bekamp. Hiervoor is 'n totale strategie nodig, aangesien die totale aanslag teen die RSA slegs afgestaan kan word deur 'n koördineerde aanwending van al die middele tot die RSA se beskikking." (88)

The idea that the total onslaught was directed against these four "bases of power" enjoyed a brief period of official sanction. In the semi-official publication, Militaria, for example, a Lt-Cdr Meyer attempted to demonstrate that all revolutions the world had ever seen had been started by propaganda which had exploited political, economic, social or military grievances. Like General Malan, his analysis convinced him that revolutions might be avoided if "noodwendige veranderinge deur evolusionêre ontwikkeling" were accomplished in the "polities-staatkundig, ekonomie, nasionale veiligheid en maatskaplik" areas of governmental activity. (89)

However, this approach seemed to be regarded as too sophisticated for the average man-in-the-street. By 1982, the official line appeared to have reverted back to a blanket total onslaught, encompassing not only onslaught against these four bases of power, but on the whole fabric of society. In a special series of articles in Paratus, headlined "Total Involvement", the SADF built up a picture of the Soviet Union having definite and comprehensive aims in Southern Africa, which undeniably involved the military overthrow of the South

African government. (90) Using Marxist-Leninist and Maoist doctrines interchangeably, the articles argued that the Soviets, by means of a grand design, encouraged terrorist organisations to infiltrate the rural areas, exploited conditions of unrest in the towns, made use of surrogate forces to step up the insurgency war into a semi-conventional war, and then -

"the enemies of the RSA will eventually try to deliver the coup de grâce by means of a conventional onslaught from one or more of the neighbouring states ... This onslaught would include maritime action and be accompanied by large-scale internal unrest. The USSR is for this reason using the so-called threat that South Africa's military potential holds for its neighbouring states as an excuse to supply huge quantities of arms to those countries. This build-up also includes the gradual increase in involvement by Soviet-bloc military personnel as well as the development of these countries' infrastructures for war."

The article concluded with the familiar theme : that South Africa was merely a pawn in the Soviet grand design. This was to cut off the West from its strategic minerals and to control the Cape Sea Route. It was thus justified to infer that "the RSA is Moscow's stepping stone to world conquest." (91)

The extent of the onslaught seemingly knew no bounds. In February 1982, the Defence Force announced that a new programme of sports promotion would be introduced, inter alia to enhance the image projected by the organisation. But, in announcing this programme, the SADF could not resist bringing the theme of a total onslaught to bear -

"With the total onslaught against the country, the SA Defence Force also has the duty to develop the talents of its top sportsmen to the utmost, so that the onslaught may also be resisted in the field of sports."
(92)

The imagination boggles at the idea of a Kremlin strategy to bring a "sports onslaught" to bear on South Africa, but its reality was evidently believed by the SADF.

At the same time, the Steyn Commission Report was tabled in the House of Assembly. This 1 367 page Report nominally dealt with the subject of the South African Media; in fact, it was probably the most comprehensive treatment of the idea of a "total onslaught" ever assembled. (93)

The Steyn Commission "found" that there was a total onslaught against the West by the Soviet Union, and that South Africa occupied a pivotal position in this onslaught. Indeed, it went further, suggesting that a Third World War was already in progress. It argued - using terminology borrowed from the 1973 and 1977 Defence White Papers - that "we are involved in a war against our will and whether we like it or not". (94)

According to the Commission, the Soviet Union's aim was world domination. Seldom, if ever, did the Soviets commit their ground forces, relying instead on methods of subversion and the employment of surrogate forces. Their methods, according to the Commission were -

"subversion, disinformation, psychological war, espionage, diplomatic negotiations, military and economic aid programmes, terrorism and guerilla war." (95)

The Commission established that the surrogate forces which the Soviets were employing in South Africa included the ANC, SWAPO, the PAC, the SA Communist Party and related subsidiary organisations. The methods used by the organisations included political warfare (the fomenting of political instability, disorder, chaos and disruption, so as to achieve a revolutionary climate), psychological warfare (described as subverting "the mental structure and fundamental beliefs of people living in a society"), infiltration and subversion. (96) The Commission found that the "nerve centre" of the total onslaught was the KGB, described in the Report as "the terrible instrument of torture, suppression, murder and subversion". (97) The KGB, so the Commission believed, transmitted its orders from the Kremlin to the surrogate forces through their agents at the Soviet

Embassies in Lusaka and Dar-es-Salaam.

The Commission summed up its findings on the total onslaught as follows :

"From the above wide-ranging survey, it is clear that the threats and dangers of varying nature and degree are simultaneously besetting the dynamically developing and aggressively heterogeneous South African Community, some of those dangers and threats being more visible and tangible than others and consequently more easily detectable and capable of being handled and countered, while others are less so, and consequently of possibly greater potential danger." (98)

While it is true that the Government neither accepted nor outrightly rejected the Report and its recommendations, this near hysterical treatment served a useful socialisation process, not least for members of Mr Botha's own Party.

The total onslaught theme was dutifully reiterated in the 1982 White Paper on Defence, the first to be tabled under the new administration of General Malan. For the first time, the White Paper had a separate section entitled "The Threat", with a sub-heading dealing with the "Onslaught against South Africa". The writer, presuming it unnecessary to support his contentions with any proof, blandly states, as if self-evident, that -

"The ultimate aim of the Soviet Union and its allies is to overthrow the present body politic in the RSA and to replace it with a Marxist-orientated form of government to further the objectives of the USSR. Therefore all possible methods and means are used to attain this objective. This includes instigating social and labour unrest, civilian resistance, terrorism attacks against the infrastructure of the RSA and the intimidation of Black leaders and members of the Security Forces. This onslaught is supported by a world-wide propaganda campaign and the involvement of various front organisations, such as trade unions and even certain church organisations and leaders." (99)

It did not evidently occur to the writer that, while he may have

correctly identified some of the manifestations of political discontent (and these were evident, for example, from the demonstrations surrounding the Republic Festival in 1981), these might more correctly be ascribed to the absence of legitimate political platforms on the part of the majority of the population, than to the efforts of the Soviet Union.

1982 probably marked the high point of the total onslaught propaganda, and the reason for this was not difficult to discern. In that year, a Defence Amendment Bill was introduced to Parliament, which provided for very comprehensive extensions to the periods of service required to be completed by white males in terms of the Defence Act. The service commitment for the Citizen Force was increased from 240 days to 720 days, and that of the regular Commandos from 240 days to 1 000 days. In addition, provision was also made for the registration and call-up of all white males who had hitherto not done military service. Such persons were required to undergo an initial training period of 30 days, and subsequent periods of 12 days a year until the age of 55 years, in what became known as the "area commandos".

This then, was the "total involvement" of the population in the defence of the country, about which Paratus had talked. It amounted to an extraordinary militarisation of the South African society, on a hitherto unprecedented scale. But it did not stop at white males, either. The 1982 Defence White Paper sets, as one of the goals of the SADF, the policy of militarising the entire society -

"It is policy that all population groups be involved in defending the RSA. This means the representation of all population groups in the SA Defence Force, in other words, a Defence Force of the people for the people."
(100)

In practical terms, this meant the expansion of the existing facilities of the SA Cape Corps near Faure, so as to accommodate more recruits, and the establishment of battalions in each of the national states. In the latter case, it was envisaged that such battalions

would form the nucleus of the post-independence defence forces of these states. (101)

Militarisation was a goal in respect of (at least) white females as well. While formal training facilities existed for white women, both permanent force and volunteers, at George (in the case of the Army) and Fish Hoek (in the case of the Navy), attempts were increasingly made to involve women in defence activities on a non-formal basis. In a recruiting document, distributed through the medium of women's organisations in the Eastern Cape, mention is made of the necessity for the "preparedness of women". The document advances several reasons why "preparedness" is desirable -

"The onslaught against SA is only 20% of a military nature. The other 80% takes the form of political, economical and social actions. It is in the social field that the woman can play a valuable role." (102)

The document continues by pointing out that the woman can contribute materially to winning the battle against the onslaught, inter alia by adopting a positive attitude to national service -

"If the woman wants to contribute to the elimination of the revolutionary onslaught, it is essential that she has a deeper and broader understanding of the problems and the solutions thereof. She must also have a complete understanding of the need for military service (National Service). In these ways, she will be equipped to morally support her husband when he carries out his duties for his country. Through training, women will be able to identify with the contribution that men are making in respect of defence and will thus be able to give absolute moral support." (103)

What did all this amount to? We have seen that in the 1940's and 1950's, South Africa's defence policy was based on the assumption that it was an integral part of the West, and that in super power conflicts it would throw in its lot with the West, as it had done in the Second World War and in Korea. With the increasing distaste by the West for South Africa's internal policies becoming evident, the

defence planners came to realise that the West did not require South Africa as an ally. As this perception became more rooted, official statements began to portray the West more and more as an unwitting ally of the Soviets, and as a collective institution which did not realise when its own interests were being vitally affected. This, in turn, caused South African government spokesmen to seek to develop domestic resources, firstly in the area of armaments provision, and secondly in terms of manpower. The successful "sale" of this to the political establishment and to the public was made possible by means of the assiduous marketing of the concept that South Africa was the subject of a "total onslaught".

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CHAPTER 2

THE SECURITY INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS

PRIOR TO P W BOTHA

The contemporary formal structure of the security intelligence apparatus conceals the changes which have occurred within it both over time and as a result of the domestic political power-play. From the time of the Union of South Africa in 1910 until the Second World War, successive South African governments relied heavily on the British Military Intelligence for external intelligence. (1) A military intelligence section was established as part of the Union Defence Force by General Smuts during the Second World War, and in addition to its tactical duties with the South African forces during the war, it had additional responsibilities for internal security. Of particular importance was the role which this section played in combating the activities, and interning the members of the Ossewa-brandwag, a militant, pro-Nazi organisation which had loose links with the National Party. (2) Unfortunately for General Smuts, the military intelligence section continued to submit reports about certain right-wing politicians long after the war had ended, and some of these reports fell into the hands of the National Party after the 1948 election. (3) Perhaps because of the outrage of the Nationalists when they discovered that the military intelligence section had been used for party-political purposes, the section was disbanded late in 1948.

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Shortly before this, however, it was decided to establish a section of the South African Police to deal specifically with the perceived internal security threats. The "Special Branch", as it was then known, was formed as a plainclothes unit, its members being employed as undercover agents, often infiltrating organisations suspected of being subversive. (4) Much of their work involved the implementation of the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950. This Act gave such an extraordinarily wide definition of the term "communist", that the Special Branch spent much of its time and energies monitoring the activities of trade unions, civil liberty organisations and opposition political parties advocating non-racial policies. (5)

During the early years of its existence, the Special Branch had little formal organisation, and no legal provision to circumscribe its responsibilities. Initially consisting of no more than a dozen officers, the Branch gradually expanded until it had branches in all the centres throughout the country. (6) In recognition of its growing size and importance, the Branch was also given legality by the insertion, in 1955, of a further function of the South African Police, into the Police Act, viz. "the preservation of the internal security of the Union". (7) During the unrest in the 1960's following Sharpeville, the Special Branch played an integral role in internal security operations, more particularly under the energetic leadership of General H J van den Bergh, who was appointed head of the Branch in 1963. (8) Amongst their successes could be counted the effective neutralisation, within the country, of Umkhonto we Sizwe and Poqo, the military wings of the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress respectively, and the rounding up of the leadership of the South African Communist Party while they were in the process of plotting armed insurrection, in 1965. The name of the Special Branch was changed to that of Security Police when General van den Bergh became its commander.

During the same period, the intelligence section of the SADF was revived. The withdrawal of South Africa from the British Commonwealth and increasing repugnance amongst Western nations of South Africa's

racial policies meant that the limited military co-operation which had existed between South Africa and some NATO countries, notably Britain, was severely curtailed. One of the implications of this was that South Africa was no longer privileged with intelligence from her "anti-communist allies", and in recognition of this fact, the Commandant-General of the Defence Force established an intelligence staff which fell initially under the Chief of the General Staff, in 1960. During 1964, this section was given independent status as the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI). (9)

After a very short while, it was clear that, while the DMI and the Security Police ostensibly had different responsibilities, there was considerable overlapping in their functions. The DMI's responsibilities were primarily external; the "revolutionary war" in which the SADF perceived itself - even at that stage - to be engaged, however, demanded that some of its intelligence had to be obtained inside the country. Similarly, as the headquarters of the ANC and PAC were outside the country, the Security Police were obliged to monitor activities of these organisations there, rather than inside the country, despite their formal responsibility for exclusively internal intelligence. To complicate the matter still further, other government departments, notably the Department of Foreign Affairs, received intelligence in the normal course of events which could have been of use to either or both the DMI or the Security Police. As a result of this confusion, the head of the DMI, General Retief, submitted a memorandum to his superiors in 1963; which proposed the establishment of a central body to co-ordinate intelligence. (10) The Government reacted positively to the suggestion, and a State Security Committee was set up to streamline procedures and present evaluated intelligence to the Cabinet. (11)

Unfortunately neither this body nor its successors, the State Security Advisory Council and the Intelligence Co-ordinating Section, operated at all efficiently. All these bodies relied on regular meetings of the Ministers of State and permanent civil service heads of the various government departments concerned with security

intelligence. The personalities concerned were as often as not too occupied with other responsibilities. An attempt was made to provide a permanent secretariat, but this too, foundered owing as much to lack of specific direction from above, as to a lack of statutory recognition, which made co-operation by other state bodies a favour rather than an obligation. (12)

Accordingly, in 1968, another attempt was made to streamline the security intelligence apparatus. Mr Vorster, the Prime Minister, summoned General van den Bergh, and instructed him to establish a permanent and professional central intelligence organisation. (13) Between August 1968 and May 1969, General van den Bergh proceeded to establish this organisation, and on the 1st May 1969, the new department, known as the Bureau for State Security, was formally established by a proclamation of the State President.

The duties assigned to the Bureau in the proclamation were as wide as they were vague. The Bureau was to -

"(1) Investigate all matters affecting the security of the State, to correlate and evaluate the information collected and, where necessary, to inform and advise the Government, interested government departments and other bodies in regard thereto; and

(2) perform such other functions and responsibilities as may be determined from time to time." (14)

The actual operations of the Bureau, too, were shrouded in secrecy right from the start. By virtue of amendments to the Public Service Act (15) passed by Parliament in 1969, the Minister responsible for the Bureau (the Prime Minister) was allowed to make regulations for the Bureau without referring these to Parliament. (16) Further, none of the usual provisions which regulated the civil service (e.g. dismissal for misconduct, promotions, etc.) applied to the Bureau. (17) In addition, Section 10 of the General Laws Amendment Act, passed in the same year, placed the activities of the Bureau within the ambit of the Official Secrets Act, thus precluding the press from

reporting on the activities of the organisation. Moreover, Section 29 of the General Laws Amendment Act provided that no information need be given in a court of law if the Prime Minister or any other Minister of State certified that this information would be prejudicial to the security of the State in general or that of the Bureau in particular.

Finally, Parliament simultaneously passed the Security Services Special Account Act, which created a new, secret account to cover the expenses - even to the extent of the salaries - of the Bureau.

When the Public Service Amendment Act was introduced to Parliament, the Minister of the Interior referred to the lack of co-ordination which had existed in the intelligence services, and said that the Bureau was being established to facilitate such co-ordination. Referring to the wide powers of the Prime Minister in making regulations for the Bureau, he somewhat blandly remarked -

"The functions of such an organisation are necessarily of a confidential nature, which necessitates avoiding any unnecessary disclosure of such functions ... in broad outline, the amendments propose to vest the Minister who is responsible for the Bureau with the power, inter alia, to make regulations and in general do what is necessary in order to enable the Bureau to function." (18)

Sir de Villiers Graaff, at the time the Leader of the Opposition, gave the establishment of the Bureau his blessing, albeit with certain misgiving. He warned that, because the Act removed the control of Parliament over the activities of the Bureau -

"A great responsibility is placed on the Government ... a great responsibility is placed on the Minister concerned ... I think it is right that I should express the hope that those few thoughts will always be borne in mind in the application of this legislation." (19)

The provisions of the General Laws Amendment Act which afforded the Bureau protection under the Official Secrets Act and indemnity from

court proceedings were, however, bitterly criticised by the Opposition. It was pointed out that the provisions could be employed to protect the members of the Bureau from civil proceedings, and that, given the nature of the responsibilities entrusted to the Bureau, the organisation could operate in complete stealth over just about the whole of South African society.

Mr Mike Mitchell, the Chief Opposition spokesman, argued -

"Let me say that you subvert your internal security perhaps more when you disregard the normal processes of justice, than you do when you try to produce some law which is an iron fist of the Executive ... Surely if you subvert those processes you provide for such insecurity amongst the individuals who make up the State, as to subvert the very State itself. Such a situation cannot strengthen the State. This Bill ... reflect(s) the difference which exists between the two sides of the House. We believe that the State exists for the benefit of the individual, and not vice versa."
(20)

Whereas the United Party moved a reasoned amendment to the Act, Mrs Helen Suzman, at that time sitting as the lone Progressive Party member, invoked the strongest form of Parliamentary opposition, moving that the Bill be read "this day six months". She warned, with remarkable foresight, that the provisions of Section 29 could be employed to suppress information which could be germane to inquests into the deaths of detainees held under the already wide security legislation. (21) In his reply, the Deputy Minister of Justice retorted that the Act merely provided statutory codification for an already existent prerogative of the Executive, and the measure passed into law after a division. The Security Services Special Account Act was passed shortly afterwards without opposition.

The Bureau was thus legally created and vested with wide and vague powers, protected from public scrutiny from both the press and the courts, and funded by a secret account, the details of which could not even be disclosed to Parliament. As Graaff had said, an enormous

responsibility had been placed on the Government and the Prime Minister to ensure that the Bureau, exempt as it was from public control, was at least controlled by the Government and the Prime Minister. The Opposition was at that time prepared to trust the Prime Minister - Sir de Villiers and Mr Vorster had a very trusting relationship - to perform this function.

They hoped that the Bureau would facilitate the co-ordination of the intelligence and security agencies in South Africa, and were prepared to trade their, and the public's, control over the Bureau in the interests of greater efficiency.

Their trust was sadly misplaced, for a number of reasons. In the first place, the Prime Minister, Mr Vorster, and General van den Bergh were personal friends, having been fellow internees together during the Second World War for displaying pro-Nazi sympathies. This meant that, far from controlling the activities of the Bureau, Mr Vorster allowed General van den Bergh pretty much of a free hand in running it. Secondly, the system relied on the vigilance of the Prime Minister to exercise proper control, and while Mr Vorster might have been able to exercise that control, in the latter years of his administration, he assumed responsibilities (e.g. in the field of Foreign Affairs) which allowed him very little time to attend to administrative details in his own department. He was also dogged by bad health in those years which affected his powers of concentration.

Thirdly, account must be taken of the extraordinary personality of General van den Bergh himself. From evidence which was submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Irregularities in the former Department of Information (the Erasmus Commission), it becomes clear that General van den Bergh had wildly inflated ideas of his own importance, and of his central role in South African politics. In his testimony to the Erasmus Commission, he remarked (translation) -

"Mr Commissioner, I want to tell you in all honesty that my Department and I are capable of doing the impossible. This is not boasting ... I can tell you

today, not for the records, but I can tell you that I have enough men who will commit murder if I order them to ..." (22)

Throughout his testimony, he referred to meetings with Cabinet Ministers and the Prime Minister which were conducted entirely on first name terms.

He boasted that he had direct access to the Prime Minister at all times, and represented himself as a sort of confidant cum confidential messenger for Mr Vorster. (23) At the same time, the Commission revealed that he had deliberately disobeyed some of Mr Vorster's orders. (24)

Finally, the terms of reference of the Bureau contained in the proclamation which established it, required it "to investigate all matters affecting the security of the State" and to "correlate and evaluate" such information. Whatever Mr Vorster's intentions may have been, the implication of this was that the Bureau had an investigative function over and above the function of security intelligence co-ordination for which it had ostensibly been created. The description thus allowed the Bureau to interfere with, and take over, functions formerly performed either by the Security Police or the DMI. Indeed, for a short period between September 1968 and April 1969, the Government toyed with the idea of absorbing the DMI into the Bureau, but the scheme was later dropped. (25) By 1972, for example, the Bureau had six divisions dealing, respectively, with subversion, counter-espionage, political and economic threats, military threats, administration, and research and special duties. (26) This was resented, particularly by the DMI (27) who could see no valid reason for the Bureau's involvement in the evaluation of military threats. (28) In turn, this led to unseemly bureaucratic wrangling between the DMI and the Bureau, often defeating the very objective for which the Bureau had been formed. In short, far from establishing an intelligence clearing house, the Government had merely created yet another security intelligence organ in competition with the two already in existence. (29)

General van den Bergh and his Bureau, however, underestimated Mr P W Botha, at that stage the Minister of Defence, who possessed two qualities which made him a formidable political opponent. In the first place, Mr Botha was a seasoned politician who had first come to Parliament in 1948, and who had been a National Party organiser before that. He understood political in-fighting perhaps better than any other member of Mr Vorster's cabinet. Secondly, Mr Botha's political power base was the Defence Force which he had built up very successfully since he became Minister in 1966. He was not prepared to countenance his department playing second fiddle to the Bureau.

What subsequently emerged was that the Bureau was instructed to submit its evaluated reports to the committee of the Cabinet dealing with defence matters. For obvious reasons, it is not possible to chronicle the part Mr Botha himself played in securing this arrangement, but it seems likely that his part would not have been insignificant. While Mr Botha was not chairman of the committee unless Mr Vorster was absent, he did have a number of political allies on the committee, and could presumably get his way if he wanted it. The committee was later officially designated the State Security Council. (30)

Simultaneously, a Commission of Inquiry was appointed under Mr Justice H J Potgieter, a Judge of Appeal, to inquire whether the agencies which were concerned with security intelligence "function properly and act in a co-ordinated manner". The Judge was further asked to recommend amendments, if any, to the existing legislation to improve the efficiency of the security services. (31)

The Commission submitted two reports, one which concerned allegations which had been made about the functioning and financing of the Bureau by Dr Albert Hertzog and Mr Jaap Marais, two members of the newly-formed Herstigte Nasionale Party, and another which dealt with the substance of its terms of reference. The latter report was submitted to the Government in 1971, and after it had been edited by a Parliamentary committee to remove details which may have affected

the security of the State, it was made available to the public in an abridged form in 1972.

The report was interesting in a number of ways. It gave a brief historical review of the security intelligence apparatus up until that date, and compared the South African set-up with similar institutions in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, the Netherlands, France and Portugal. The report dealt with the powers of the Bureau, some aspects of the Bureau's modus operandi and extensively with the Bureau's recommendations about how it would have liked to operate. It recommended, amongst other things, a more precise definition of the Bureau's role vis-à-vis those of the other agencies, the statutory recognition of the State Security Council and some modifications of Sections 10 and 29 of the General Laws Amendment Act of 1969.

However, the Commission's report was marred by an over-legalistic approach to its subject matter. It rejected, for example, allegations that the Bureau was assuming executive functions (e.g. the powers of arrest and interrogation) simply on the grounds that the Public Service Amendment Act of 1969 did not make provision for such functions. Similarly, the Commission rejected the possibility that the Bureau was intercepting mail articles, because such an action "would require an Act of Parliament". (32) In addition, the Commission adopted an interpretation of the words "in the interests of the security of the State" which leaned heavily in favour of the State and away from the individual. (33) Such facile observations made the Commission's report seem highly superficial.

On the other hand, it is clear from the report that the mere establishment of the Bureau had done little or nothing to co-ordinate security intelligence resources, especially between the DMI and the Bureau, and important sections of the report recommended what amounted to a diminution of the powers of the DMI. (34) Indeed, the Commissioner expressed some doubt as to whether the activities of the DMI were not, in fact, illegal in terms of the Defence Act, however

well-intentioned such activities may have been. The Judge summed up the lack of co-ordination as follows -

"I do not wish to create the impression ... that the DMI took this task upon itself because it wanted to arrogate powers unto itself which it did not have or which were none of its concern. There was an assumption of implied powers ... and the national security was a matter with which the South African Defence Force was most certainly concerned physically. There was no national intelligence agency, and the DMI simply felt that it was up to it to assume the responsibility for intelligence relating to the security of the State. Since, as I have indicated, the South African Police were also collecting intelligence on threats to internal security through its Security Police, there was naturally overlapping of the intelligence activities of the DMI and the Security Police, as both were operating in the same field, a field which in practice could not be divided feasibly into two ... The DMI and the Security Police often saw the same intelligence as intelligence relating to a threat which belonged to their particular field of operations" (35)

and expressed the hope that, with better definition of the powers and responsibilities of the Bureau, these problems would disappear. Needless to say, a more perceptive Commission would have recognised the Bureau as part of the problem, and not offered it as a solution. Finally, the Commission trusted that statutory recognition of the State Security Council would facilitate interdepartmental co-operation in the field of security intelligence.

The Government, however, announced that it was accepting the Commission's report in its entirety, and during the 1972 session of Parliament, introduced a number of pieces of legislation designed to give effect to its recommendations. The most important piece of legislation was the Security Intelligence and State Security Council Act.

The Act provided for the statutory recognition of the State Security Council (SSC), consisting of the Prime Minister, the senior Minister of the Republic (if he was not already a member in some other

capacity), the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Justice and Police, the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Security Intelligence, the Commissioner of the South African Police and the Chief of the SADF. In addition, the Prime Minister was given the power to co-opt other Ministers or officials as and when he saw fit.
(36)

The Act also spelled out the functions of the Council. It was to advise the Government with regard to -

- "(i) the formulation of national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the Republic and the manner in which such policy or strategy shall be implemented and be executed;
- (ii) a policy to combat any particular threat to the security of the Republic; (and) ... to determine intelligence priorities." (37)

The wording of this section is instructive. For the first time, the term "national strategy" was introduced into legislation - a term which, as we have seen, was the particular preserve of Mr Botha. However, it was made clear that not only was the SSC to formulate national strategy, it was also to monitor it. The SSC was to determine how such strategy was "implemented" and "executed". Clearly, the members of the Cabinet and civil service Secretaries could not themselves monitor particular strategies. This task would, of necessity, have to be performed by a separate staff, employed for that task.

The Act, however, remained silent on this aspect. In the context of the Act, it seems that the Bureau was intended to have performed the task, as Section 2 of the Act laid down more precise powers and functions of the Bureau, in line with the recommendations of the Potgieter Commission.

Section 2 of the Act laid down these functions and powers. The Bureau was to collect, evaluate, correlate and interpret security intelli-

gence with a view to detecting threats against the Republic, and to prepare intelligence "estimates" for the SSC. They could, in addition, at the request of any government department, collect "departmental intelligence", which was defined as information required by any government department in order to perform functions entrusted to it "by law" relating to the security of the Republic. Finally, it was empowered to formulate national intelligence policy (which had to be ratified by the SSC) and to facilitate the flow of security intelligence between departments of state.

Here was clearly a lapsus in the law which could be exploited by bureaucrats. How could the Bureau facilitate the flow of security intelligence between departments of state if these departments were themselves collecting security intelligence? How could officials at the Bureau collect "departmental intelligence" for the SADF, when the SADF already had its own staff performing this function?

To overcome these obvious difficulties, Section 3 was inserted. This section provided that where a particular department of state had already been given the statutory responsibility for "combating ... any threat to the security of the Republic", that department was empowered to collect, evaluate, correlate and interpret departmental intelligence for the purpose of discharging such statutory responsibility. The section goes on, however, to limit this power. Neither the SADF nor the SAP was entitled to collect such departmental intelligence in a "covert manner", nor was the SADF or the SAP entitled to collect such intelligence overseas, without the knowledge and approval of the Bureau. This limitation aside, Section 3(3) makes it quite clear that the new delineation of the responsibilities of the Bureau in no way affected "the continued existence or the establishment of any intelligence service attached to any department of state."

Again, more is implied than explicit in Section 3. The prohibition on covert operations by the DMI and the Security Police inside the country, and the vetting of overseas operations by the Bureau,

implied both that the Bureau was going to engage in covert and/or overseas operations, and that the DMI and the Security Police had done so previously. Seen in this light, the duties of the Bureau to collect security intelligence took on a new significance. Despite its original mandate as a security intelligence "clearing house", and the conceptualisation of the Potgieter Commission, the Bureau was, if anything, given additional executive powers by the Act.

The second reading of the Security Intelligence and State Security Council Bill took place on the 24th May 1972. Mr Vorster, who introduced the debate, quoted approvingly and at length from the Potgieter Commission's report to "prove" that the Bureau was staffed only with the best personnel, that the Bureau had no executive responsibilities, that the Bureau had acquired its poor reputation from ignorant, malicious or misinformed rumours, and that, as a result of the report, these rumours could now be laid to rest. What was more interesting was Mr Vorster's justification for establishing the SSC. War was no longer formally declared, he argued, but -

"A new element has crept in over the years, i.e. the element of softening up the country one wants to attack ... in the first place, there is the revolutionary undermining of the authority structure of the State ... In the second place ... the enemy makes use of people who commit sabotage ... but physical violence is not all that is involved. Another aspect ... is the casting of suspicion on and the boycotting of a country on every possible front so as to isolate that country ... In the case of South Africa, considering its strategic position as far as the Cape Sea Route is concerned, and its strategic position in Africa, as well as its natural resources, it has become increasingly important ... to take cognizance of the procurement and organisation of advanced bases or bridgeheads from where the country may eventually be attacked." (38)

The implication seemed to be that the SSC was being instituted precisely to "counter" this new method of waging war - the total onslaught. The Bill was supported by both opposition parties and passed into law.

In line with their commitment to accept all the recommendations of the Potgieter Commission, the Government also introduced legislation to amend (albeit marginally) the secrecy provisions of the General Laws Amendment Act of 1969 and to regulate the circumstances under which the recording of telephone calls and the interception of mail might take place.

Mrs Suzman was alone in her opposition to the measures. (39)

However, despite having created more formal procedures regulating the gathering and dissemination of security intelligence, the structures thus created still demanded strong, unified and goal-directed political leadership. But towards the end of 1973, the Cabinet, which had formerly provided this leadership, became the scene of intense factionalism. This power-play was destined vitally to affect not only the structure of the security intelligence apparatus, but indeed the very way in which central government decisions were made in South Africa. To appreciate the significance of these changes and their ramifications, it is important to place them in context, and to do this, it will be necessary to digress slightly.

The reasons for the breakdown of the monolithic political leadership of Afrikanerdom were highly complex and are worthy of study in their own right. (40) One of the most important reasons was the election, in September 1973, of Dr Connie Mulder as the Transvaal leader of the National Party. This had a special significance. Because of the fact that members of the National Party caucus elect the leader of the Party, and because the Transvaal commanded the biggest bloc of votes in such elections, the Transvaal leader was regarded as the most likely candidate to succeed the Prime Minister. Certainly, this had secured the election of Mr Strijdom (despite the objections of Dr Malan), Dr Verwoerd and Mr Vorster as Prime Minister, and Dr Mulder had no reason to believe that this pattern should not repeat itself.

Dr Mulder was, however, relatively junior, both to be a serious contender for the premiership, and, indeed, to be leader of the

Transvaal. He was only ranked eleventh in the Cabinet, and of the ten more senior Ministers, eight were from the Transvaal. One of the other two was Mr P W Botha, the leader of the Party in the Cape, and a person who had been a member of the Cabinet since 1961.

Both Dr Mulder and Mr Botha were aware that Mr Vorster's health was indifferent and both realised the potential fruits which lay just within their grasp were he to retire. It was against this background of personal ambition that subsequent events unfolded.

At the stage that Dr Mulder became leader of the Transvaal, he held the portfolios of Interior and Information in the Cabinet. Neither of these portfolios was particularly politically significant and neither was allocated a significant section of the national budget. In the 1972/73 financial year, for example, the Departments of Interior and Information together were allocated R12 559 000 or 0,71% of the total appropriation. By contrast, Mr Botha's Defence portfolio affected - through the system of national service - virtually every white household in the country, and in the same financial year, Mr Botha induced the Exchequer to allocate R335 336 000 or 12,21% of the national budget to the South African Defence Force. (41) If in no other way, then certainly in terms of institutional politics, Mr Botha was a more credible successor to Mr Vorster.

Dr Mulder set about redressing this imbalance in a single-minded way. The first imperative was to increase his department's responsibilities, and thereby to increase its share of the appropriations. He thereby first persuaded Mr Vorster that the Department of Information could undertake important overseas responsibilities. Ironically - or perhaps shrewdly - he suggested that the Department could have an important role in countering the total onslaught which was being waged against the country, as this onslaught also had a propaganda or misinformation element. Mr Vorster agreed, and in December 1973, minuted the Ministers of Finance, Defence, Foreign Affairs, Bantu Administration, Economic Affairs and Police, and Mines, Immigration, Sport and Recreation, setting out the new responsibilities of the

Department of Information. This read, in part, as follows -

"In die lig van die toenemende politieke en propaganda-aanslae teen die Republiek, beide in intensiteit en omvang, asook die onortodokse en gesofistikeerde vorme wat dit aanneem, het dit noodsaaklik geword om die funksie van die Departement van Inligting in die bevordering van landsbelang in die algemeen en nasionale veiligheid in besonder dienooreenkomstig aan te pas."

The document went on to outline some of these functions, which amounted to "selling" government policy to opinion-formers overseas. The document concluded -

"Die uitvoering van die opdrag van die Departement, die verwesentliking van sy doelstellings, die metodiek wat aangewend word, asook die finansiering van alle aksies maak deel uit van die portefeuljeverantwoordelikheid van die Minister van Inligting in oorleg met die Minister van Buitelandse Sake. In die uitvoering van sy opdrag, is dit aan die Minister van Inligting oorgelaat om te bepaal watter metodes, middele en aksies, hetsy openbaar of geheim, noodsaaklik en mees effektief sal wees om bogenoemde doelstellings te verwesentlik." (42)

The minute seems so bland, and yet is remarkable in its scope. The Prime Minister was delegating to Dr Mulder the responsibility for determining the methods, means and actions, whether public or secret, to be pursued in this overseas campaign. It was also part of Dr Mulder's responsibilities to obtain the finances for these methods, means and actions. Nowhere, however, in the Department's responsibilities as outlined in the proclamation establishing it, was there the implicit or explicit expectation that covert programmes would be necessary. More to the point, the Department did not have the statutory authority to use secret funds, which would be spent if the Department was to engage in secret activities.

However, having achieved this extended description of his responsibilities, it became necessary for Dr Mulder to increase the Department of Information's appropriation substantially, so as to

underscore the importance of these new responsibilities.

This was not as problematic as it might have been, owing to the fortuitous increase in the price of gold on the world markets. After maintaining a steady price of \$35 per ounce for decades, gold suddenly "took off", averaging \$57,42 per ounce in 1972, \$96,99 in 1973 and \$156,65 in 1974. (43) The South African economy was then - as now - heavily dependent on gold exports, and the increased earnings thus derived from gold sparked off an unparalleled programme of State spending. Information's formal appropriation rose from R7 961 000 in 1973/74 to R10 651 000 in 1974/75 and R11 801 000 in 1975/76. (44)

But this was not enough - and this is how the security intelligence apparatus became involved. The Department of Information required secret funds, but, in 1973, only one department, the Bureau, had such funds in terms of the Security Services Special Account Act of 1969. Parliament the next year created a similar account for the SADF - to facilitate the purchase of defence supplies, parts and related equipment bought on what was, in effect, the black market (45) but Information could not, at this stage, lay claim to such funds.

It is tempting to speculate why such an account was not immediately created for the Department of Information. One possible explanation was that Dr Mulder and his ubiquitous permanent Secretary, Dr Rhodie, did not want the merest hint of their secret projects to leak out, especially as projects within the country were, even at that stage, being contemplated. (46) It is, however, also possible that Dr Mulder wished deliberately to take his secret appropriations from the Defence Special Account so as to compromise Mr Botha and make him a party - however unwilling - to Information's schemes. (47)

In point of fact, Dr Mulder took from both funds. In 1973/74 R793 000 was allocated from the Security Services Special Account, in 1974/75 R2 500 000 from this account and R10 950 000 from the Defence Special Account, in 1975/76 R2 500 000 from the Security Services Special

Account and in 1976/77 and 1977/78 a further R31 000 000 from the Defence Special Account.

Between the time the Department began its secret projects and the time it was disestablished, it received thus R5 793 000 from the Security Services Special Account and R57 869 494 from the Defence Special Account. (48)

In the process of obtaining these funds, and subsequently in the process of spending them, Dr Mulder contrived to alienate Mr Botha and the South African Defence Force, and later, Mr Pik Botha and the Department of Foreign Affairs. But during this period, he and General van den Bergh became staunch political allies and personal friends. They had much in common. Both were unscrupulous and devious in their political dealings. Perhaps most importantly, both realised that the continued survival of whites in South Africa depended in large measure on the rest of the continent accepting them as fellow Africans. Both were united in a pragmatic if cynical view that every politician - black or white - had a price and could be corrupted. (49)

In fact, Dr Mulder's campaign was remarkably successful, and had he kept his subordinates, particularly Dr Eschel Rhoodie, under better control, the chances are that he would have been still more successful. In 1974, for example, Dr Mulder went on an extended tour of the United States and met President Ford and (whether by coincidence or good management) also Governor Carter. (50) On the same trip, Dr Mulder authorised direct lobbying of US Senators and Congressmen and their aides, with the result that when a matter affecting South African trade came before the House of Representatives "they did their best to swing the matter in the Republic's favour". (51) Dr Mulder was also involved extensively with the arrangements for the State visit of General Alfredo Stroessner, the President of Paraguay, in April of the same year.

But it was primarily in the field of relations with the rest of

Africa that Dr Mulder's swashbuckling style of diplomacy was most effective. It was he who pioneered the contacts with the Ivory Coast which culminated in a meeting between Mr Vorster and President Houphouët-Boigny in 1975, and it was he who established the link with President Bokassa of the Central African Republic. His methods were unconventional and he was frequently compelled to make use (as he was internally) of unscrupulous intermediaries, but the initial success of the détente policy in the period 1974/75 was as much his work as that of the Department of Foreign Affairs, which arranged the meeting between Mr Vorster and President Kaunda late in 1974.

One example serves to illustrate the extent to which Dr Mulder was able to alienate his Cabinet colleagues. During a tour of the United States in June 1975, Dr Mulder "offered" the United States the use of the Simon's Town naval base, in a speech to the Washington Press Club, apparently without clearing the speech either with Mr Vorster or Mr Botha. Not unnaturally, Mr Botha, whose portfolio this matter concerned, complained to Mr Vorster. Rapport commented as follows -

"Min. Botha is bekend daarvoor dat hy jaloers en trots is op sy portefeulje Verdediging en geen man kan ligtelik d  ar gaan inmeng nie. Daarby sit dr Mulder reeds met 'n probleem met Buitelandse Sake, wat meen dat hy as Minister van Inligting dikwels op sy gebied oortree." (52)

However, the successes which Dr Mulder had achieved were undermined, and the policy of d  tente scuppered, by the invasion of Angola. The involvement of South African troops on the side of the UNITA movement was a crucial factor not only in facilitating the recognition of the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola, but also in unifying the OAU at its summit in January 1976 into a hard-line, anti-South African stance, thus cauterising the divisions within the organisation which had been caused by those states which had succumbed to the policy of d  tente with South Africa.

It is tempting to speculate why a policy which was so palpably destined to fail was embarked upon in the first place. It could be,

after all, that Mr Botha desired deliberately to undermine Dr Mulder's successes, but even given the very fluid political situation surrounding the leadership of the National Party, and the personal ambitions of the politicians involved, this seems too melodramatic an explanation. What seems more likely is that Mr Botha saw the challenge in direct terms, and responded accordingly. Here was a chance for Mr Botha to strike a blow against communism, and deliver a country to the West out of the clutches of the Russians. While he doubtless appreciated the threats posed by internal subversion, diplomatic isolation and malicious disinformation, the primary threat had suddenly become a threat from external infiltration or even invasion. It was a threat with which Mr Botha's Defence Force was competent, and (even given the Potgieter Commission's implied derogation of its role) entitled to deal.

The failure of the "military" option in regional events had powerful implications within South Africa, too. It promoted the perception amongst blacks that the whites had lost control over events. The victories of the Frelimo and MPLA movements were greeted with scenes of rejoicing in the black townships. It became increasingly apparent, too, that in the light of the new regional realities, the Smith regime in Rhodesia would not last long. But most significantly, blacks perceived that the SADF had been forced to withdraw from Angola - that the South African military machine, formerly assumed to be an invincible force externally and an exceptionally powerful instrument of repression internally, had suffered a reverse at the hands of black troops. (53)

This perception was recognised by the top structures in the SADF and the danger of its spreading appreciated. What had started out as the employment of the SADF in a strictly limited foreign policy objective had now developed disturbing internal political ramifications.

The Defence Force realised that the two problems were intimately intertwined. To solve both problems a multi-disciplined approach to security intelligence was required. Clearly a structure was required

to provide the requisite solutions, and clearly the State Security Council would have to form part of this structure. General Malan put it thus -

"The events in Angola in 1975/76 focussed the attention on the urgent necessity for the State Security Council to play a much fuller role in the national security of the Republic than hitherto." (54)

However, this did not immediately occur. Although the military chiefs began to take a more active role in the formulation of national security objectives, as was evidenced, for example, in the appointment of an interdepartmental committee "to go urgently into the matter of the formulation of strategy on the national level, as well as the organisational structures necessary for the purpose" and in the organisation of a national security symposium, under the auspices of the Institute of Strategic Studies of the University of Pretoria, (55) national security policy tended to be a matter which Mr Vorster preferred to formulate either single-handedly, or after conferring with General van den Bergh. The evidence of the Erasmus Commission showed the extent to which Mr Vorster relied on General van den Bergh's advice until at least the end of 1977; perhaps it was only when his Security Adviser had been forced to retire in the middle of 1978, that Mr Vorster began to listen more carefully to the military. Certainly, Mr Botha told Parliament that his predecessor had not yet made extensive use of the State Security Council in this respect. (56)

But by the middle of 1978, the writing was on the wall for the Security Adviser and his Prime Minister. By that time, two investigations by Dr Reynders and by Mr Barrie had proved beyond reasonable doubt that irregularities had occurred in the Department of Information.

Mr Vorster's health continued to be indifferent, and in September 1978 he announced that he would be retiring from the premiership. The way was clear for Mr Botha to assume the premiership and to institute

a clear system for the management of national security - the total strategy necessary to counter the perceived total onslaught.

CHAPTER 2

REFERENCES

- (1) Republic of South Africa Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Security of the State (The Potgieter Commission Report) (RP 102/1971), para. 19; and Le Grange, S C, "Die Geskiedenis van Hoof van Staf Inligting" in Militaria, 12(2), 1982, pp. 56-57.
- (2) Interview with Mrs J E G Beck, a wartime member of the Military Intelligence Section.
- (3) See House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 65, 17th September 1948, cols. 2699 ff.
- (4) Potgieter Commission Report, para. 24.
- (5) "Communist" was defined in the Act as follows:

"a person who ... is deemed by the Governor-General ... to be a communist on the ground that he is advocating, advising, defending or encouraging ... any of the objects of communism".

One of the objects of communism, as defined in the Act, was aiming "at the encouragement of feelings of hostility between

the European and non-European races in the Union". See Act 44 of 1959, Section 1.

- (6) Potgieter Commission Report, para. 24.
- (7) Section 3 of the Police Amendment Act (No 15 of 1955).
- (8) Potgieter Commission Report, paras. 26-28.
- (9) Ibid., para. 20. See also Le Grange, S C, op. cit., pp. 56-58.
- (10) Potgieter Commission Report, para. 31.
- (11) Ibid., para. 32.
- (12) Ibid., paras. 34-39.
- (13) Ibid., paras. 40-41. See also Van den Bergh, H J, "Die Buro vir Staatsveiligheid : 'n Bekendstelling van die Buro se Werkzaamhede", in Die Staatsamptenaar, LV1 (8), August 1976, p. 16.
- (14) Government Notice 808 of 1969 (16th May 1969).
- (15) Public Service Amendment Act (No 86 of 1969).
- (16) Sec. 10(b) of the Amendment Act (secs. 26(3) and (4) of the Principal Act, read with sec. 6A of the Principal Act).
- (17) Passim throughout the Act appear the words "other than ... an officer employed in the Bureau".
- (18) House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 27, 13th May 1969, col. 5878.

- (19) Ibid., cols. 5881-2.
- (20) Ibid., col. 7804.
- (21) Ibid., col. 7827.
- (22) Republic of South Africa Evidence and Exhibits of the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Irregularities in the Former Department of Information, vol. 3, p. 921.
- (23) Republic of South Africa Supplementary Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Irregularities in the Former Department of Information. (The Erasmus Supplementary Report) (RP 63/1979), Appendix A.
- (24) Ibid., para. 2.36.
- (25) Le Grange, S C, op. cit., p. 57.
- (26) Potgieter Commission Report, para. 162.
- (27) See Speech by Mr W V Raw, MP, in the House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 26, 21st April 1969, col. 4422.
- (28) Potgieter Commission Report, paras. 167 and 188-191.
- (29) That the Bureau and the other security intelligence agencies were at loggerheads was disputed both by Mr Vorster, in parliamentary debates, and by the Potgieter Commission. However, the way the Potgieter Commission Report is phrased, especially para. 138, is to my mind a significant indicator that there was conflict. There is also an almost universal distrust in Defence Force circles of the Bureau, or its successors. See also Geldenhuys, D, The Diplomacy of Isolation (Braamfontein : MacMillan, 1984), pp. 80-85.

(30) The actual date on which the State Security Council was formed is not known, nor its exact composition, until the body was formally constituted by legislation. I make the conclusion that the State Security Council and the Defence Cabinet Committee were one and the same body by the following extracts from Hansard debates -

MR VORSTER : The Potgieter Report recommended that a body, which I have already established, i.e. a State Security Council, be established in legislation.

(21st April 1971, col. 4846)

and

SIR DE VILLIERS GRAAFF : There is one last aspect to which I wish to draw attention, namely that the State Security Council, as the Prime Minister has already told us, is already in existence and already active. It has no statutory recognition yet, but the hon. gentleman told us some considerable time ago in this House that he had already appointed such a council.

MR VORSTER : The Defence Cabinet Committee.

(24th May 1972, col. 7933). See also Van den Bergh, H J, op. cit., p. 16.

(31) Potgieter Commission Report, para. 1.

(32) Ibid., para. 174.

(33) See especially Chapter XXIII of the Potgieter Commission Report.

(34) Ibid., Chapter XXII in particular.

(35) Ibid., para. 138.

- (36) Security Intelligence and State Security Council Act (No 64 of 1972), sec. 4.
- (37) Ibid., sec. 5.
- (38) House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 39, 24th May 1972, cols. 7927-9.
- (39) Ibid., 8th June 1972, cols. 9088, 9121-3 and 9194-8.
- (40) See inter alia the scholarly study by Adam, H and H Giliomee, The Rise and Crisis of Afrikaner Power (Cape Town : David Philip, 1979).
- (41) Republic of South Africa Estimates of Expenditure to be Defrayed from the State Revenue Account for the Financial Year ending 31st March 1973 (RP 2/1972).
- (42) Republic of South Africa Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Irregularities in the Former Department of Information (The Erasmus Commission Report) (RP 113/1978), para. 9.239.
- (43) Department of Information Official Year Book of the Republic of South Africa (Pretoria : The Department, 1977), p. 388.
- (44) Republic of South Africa Estimates of Expenditure to be Defrayed from the State Revenue Account, 1973/74 (RP 2/1973), 1974/75 (RP 2/1974) and 1975/76 (RP 2/1975 and RP 6/1975).
- (45) A Defence Special Equipment Fund did exist previously, but funds from this account (a) could only be used for equipment purchases; and (b) could only be expended with Treasury approval. See the Defence Special Equipment Account Act (No 8 of 1952). The Defence Special Account Act placed no restrictions of this nature. See House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 47, 14th February 1974, cols. 911-4.

- (46) Erasmus Commission Report (RP 113/1978), para. 9.245.
- (47) The Prime Minister was empowered to authorise such expenditure.
- (48) Erasmus Commission Report (RP 113/1978), para. 2.26.
- (49) De Borchgrave, A, "The Way BOSS Sees It" in Newsweek, 25th October 1976, pp. 19-20.
- (50) Republic of South Africa Annual Report of the Department of Information, 1st January - 31st December 1974 (Cape Town : Government Printer, 1975), pp. 4 and 41.
- (51) Ibid., p. 43.
- (52) Rapport, "PW, Connie haaks oor toespraak", 15th June 1975; see also Sunday Times, "Mulder-Botha row over Simonstown", 22nd June 1975.
- (53) This perception was, of course, not wholly justified. The SADF was by no means fully committed to the Angolan campaign (only a single column was deployed) and the failure of the SADF to achieve its goals can be attributed to factors other than military prowess. It is nonetheless true that the SADF had to withdraw and that this had a powerful effect on black perceptions about the efficiency of the SADF. See Johnson, R W, op. cit., Chapter 8 and pp. 172 and 208; Karis, T G, "Revolution in the Making : Black Politics in South Africa" in Foreign Affairs (Winter 1983/84), p. 384; and Geldenhuys, D, op. cit., pp. 75-81.
- (54) Malan, M A, Die Aanslag teen Suid-Afrika (Pretoria : Issup, 1980), p. 14.
- (55) Ibid., p. 14.

- (56) House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), cols. 5242-3, 26th April 1984.

CHAPTER 3

THE TOTAL STRATEGY : THE DOMESTIC REPLY

Mr P W Botha has always insisted that the answer to the total onslaught correctly lies in adopting a total strategy, a marshalling of the creative (and destructive) talents of the modern state. His belief in the efficacy of the total onslaught is not, however, original, nor does he claim it to be. The concept of a total strategy was developed by a French general, André Beaufre, in a book, Introduction to Strategy, first published in 1965.

General Beaufre's thesis, written out of experiences of defeats in both conventional (World War Two) and unconventional (Indo-China) wars is simple. He is convinced that while strategy had hitherto been a study largely undertaken by members of the Armed Forces, its place lies more correctly with the politicians, who have at their disposal not only the resources of the armed forces, but of the whole state machinery. Beaufre is convinced that von Clausewitz had been correct in suggesting that war was merely the extension of politics, but is convinced that the converse was also true - that in waging war, use had also to be made of political weapons. (1)

A state, then, which wishes to win a war needs to develop a strategy which encompasses and harnesses the resources at the disposal of that

state as a co-ordinated whole. This is necessary because war itself no longer takes place only (or even principally) on the battlefield, but in hosts of other spheres. If one wishes to win such a war, one needs to engage the enemy on a variety of fronts. Clearly, because the organisation of modern democracies has given rise to a variety of autonomous statal actors, it is necessary to co-ordinate their activities in pursuit of a common goal. For this it is necessary both to formulate a clear strategic plan, and to direct that plan at the highest level. Beaufre expresses it thus -

"We are therefore faced with a veritable pyramid of differing, though interdependent, forms of strategy; these must be clearly defined if they are to be welded into the best series of co-ordinated actions, all aimed at the same overall object." (2)

But how are the conductors of these strategies to be directed towards the "same overall object"? Beaufre has no doubt -

"At the top of the pyramid, and under the direct control of the Government - i.e. of the political authority - is total strategy, whose task it is to define how total war should be conducted. Its task is to lay down the object for each specialised category of strategy and the manner in which all - political, economic, diplomatic and military - should be woven in together." (3)

How was this overall control to be exercised, in practical terms? Again, Beaufre is unequivocal -

"This level of strategy is clearly the prerogative of Heads of Government, assisted by a Chief of the Defence Staff and some high-level Defence Committee or Committees." (4)

On the "total strategy" level, political direction is given and priorities are determined. It is then up to the executive departments of state to determine the correct way in which to approach the activity -

"Below the level of total strategy there must in each field (military, political, economic or diplomatic) be an overall strategy, the function of which is to allot tasks and co-ordinate the various forms of activity within the field concerned. It should be noted here that in the military field the notion of overall strategy already exists; its object is to co-ordinate action on land, in the air and on the sea. There is, however, no such thing as overall strategy in the political field (e.g. co-ordination of general political policy, internal policy, external policy and propaganda), nor in the economic field (e.g. co-ordination of production, financial policy and overseas trade), nor in the diplomatic field ... For every field there should be an overall strategy implemented by the Minister concerned, assisted by his Chief of Staff or Permanent Secretary." (5)

Beaufre then expands, at some length, on the strategic imperatives, as he sees them, of the superpowers and comes to the conclusion that in an era of nuclear capability on both sides of the ideological spectrum, very little place exists for conventional military operations. This is not to say that strategic gains have not been made, particularly by the Soviet bloc. These gains have, however, been made by means of what Beaufre calls "indirect strategy".

He makes it clear that despite being "indirect", this strategy forms part of a "total strategy", and is therefore also directed by politicians. "Indirect strategy", he argues, "is therefore total war played on a minor key". (6) He continues -

"(Indirect strategy) is often thought to lie more in the realm of politics; people say that the indirect strategy of the type I have described is not 'strategy' but 'policy'. This terminological argument is of little importance in itself, particularly since it is clear that indirect strategy will be conducted at Heads of Government level." (7)

Nor should it be haphazard -

"The 'political line' is in fact the general concept for a true operational plan ... it must be worked out with the same precision as an operational plan in military strategy." (8)

"Indirect strategy" is, in layman's terms, guerilla or revolutionary warfare, and Beaufre describes its symptoms in a fair amount of detail. He maintains, however, that with a carefully worked out counter-strategy, such wars can and should be won. Such a counter-strategy should contain at least three components, a political, a psychological and a military. It is essential, though, that the counter-strategy should be planned in depth -

"The psychological factor, which invariably plays some part in any form of strategy, in indirect strategy becomes dominant. Material force not being available, its place must be taken by the force of some well-reasoned ideology, and by the effectiveness of intelligently and meticulously worked-out plans." (9)

There are two arenas in which a state faced with a revolutionary war can develop counter-revolutionary strategies. The first is outside one's own territory. In such an "exterior counter-manoeuvre", a political campaign should "attack the weak points in the enemy's ideological system" (10) but the exterior campaign must be primarily military. A military campaign could involve "eliminating those peripheral bases from which the enemy can carry out indirect aggression". (11) This is "still feasible and possibly extremely rewarding - particularly if, as Israel has done on several occasions, it can be presented as being defensive in character". (12) The key in such a campaign is, however, rapid results, "completed in forty-eight hours, the minimum reaction time for international diplomacy". (13) Equally, "the objective must appear to be of a sufficiently limited nature to be acceptable to international opinion". (14)

Another "exterior manoeuvre" is also feasible, and that is to turn the tables on one's enemy by practising the same tactics in reverse. The central feature of such a campaign -

"is to assure for oneself the maximum freedom of action while at the same time paralysing the enemy with a multitude of deterrent checks, somewhat as the Lilliputians tied up Gulliver. As with all operations designed to deter, action will, of course, be primarily

psychological; political, economic, diplomatic and military measures will all be combined towards the same end." (15)

This results in a situation of protracted conflict "so designed and organised that it becomes more and more burdensome to the enemy". (16)

Alternatively, or perhaps simultaneously, one can engage the enemy in the second, internal arena. In this arena, political and psychological weapons are paramount; the use of force must, however, not be excluded. If at all possible, the government should retain control without the deployment of large contingents of security forces. However -

"In this case also, the essential factor is the political line, the object of which must be to deprive the enemy of his trump cards. There are two facets to this: we must first maintain and increase our prestige, not merely by showing that we have adequate force available, but also by showing that the future we hold out has possibilities (progress of our civilisation, international aid, etc.); (and) secondly, by thorough-going reforms, we must cut the ground from under the feet of the malcontents." (17)

Beaufre's thesis had a profound effect on the thinking of the SADF top structure, as it became the basis of lectures on strategy at the Joint Defence College, the primary socialisation experience for "red stream" staff officers in civil-military relations. Through its influence on these gentlemen, Beaufre began to have an influence on Mr Botha himself. (18)

Early in the 1970 session, Mr Botha told Parliament that if South Africa was successfully to resist a "diabolical, overall world strategy", it would require "an opposing will". That "opposing will", he argued, "must be just as total on your side in order to offer resistance". People who stood in the way of the Government, he said, "are undermining the total strategic will of South Africa in many places," and concluded by stating -

"We must try to realise that we are involved in a total struggle in which we must bring to bear our united will." (19)

At this stage Mr Botha's concept of the format of an opposing total strategy was hazy; he spoke of the necessity of sound race relations, not only between Afrikaans and English speakers, but also between whites and "Non-Whites"; of the necessity for a different approach to labour and production; and of the necessity for "balanced" news coverage. It was, however, primarily through the medium of the bi-annual Defence White Papers that his ideas became fully known.

Thus it was that in his preface to the 1973 White Paper, Mr Botha stated -

"The RSA is a target for international communism and its cohorts - leftist activists, exaggerated humanism, permissiveness, materialism and related ideologies. In addition, the RSA has been singled out as a special target for the by-products of their ideologies, such as black radicalism, exaggerated individual freedom, one-man-one-vote, and a host of other slogans employed against us on the basis of double standards ... Because the RSA holds a position of strategic importance, these ideological attacks on the RSA are progressively being converted into more tangible action in the form of sanctions, boycotts, isolation, demonstrations and the like. This renders us - and the Free World - the more vulnerable to the indirect strategy applied by the radical powers in the form of undermining activities and limited violence, whether employed openly or dissimulated behind ideological fronts." (20)

Having thus set the scene, Mr Botha proceeded -

"It is against this global background that the Government is developing its policy. Traditionally, a country's policy structure comprises three basic elements - internal policy, foreign policy and defence policy. The last is determined by the preceding two, but these, in turn, cannot be developed properly unless they are sustained by a sound and adequate defence policy. These basic elements must therefore be closely co-ordinated and integrated; this is of vital importance, particularly in the present international

climate which is typified by total strategy and which obliges us to face the onslaught of monolithic organisations which are in absolute control of all the means available to their states.

"As this White Paper deals with the Government's defence policy, a discussion here of internal and foreign policy would be inappropriate.

"It is relevant, however, to emphasise the interaction and interdependence of these three basic elements. The conclusion to be stressed is that our defence is not a matter for the Defence Force only, but also for each department and citizen, it demands dedication, vigilance, and sacrifice - not only from the Defence Force, but from all who are privileged to find a home in this country." (21)

This theme was amplified by one of Mr Botha's confidants, the then Commodore R A Edwards, who later became Chief of the Navy, in an article in the semi-official Paratus. Edwards, too, depicted a scenario of South Africa beleaguered in a totally hostile world, and commented -

"The hostile strategy has been sketched in some detail in order to emphasise the totality of that strategy, total inasmuch that every means available, including armed conflict, is being used against the RSA. Countering such a hostile total strategy is not the task of the security forces alone - a total onslaught requires a total defence, and every means available to the RSA must accordingly be used in our defence." (22)

Here was a far more definite call to arms, a far more specific adaptation of Beaufre's work. Edwards continues -

"This means that a total defence strategy must be devised to meet and withstand and prevail against the total hostile strategy. It then falls to the various Government departments to execute such a total defence strategy. In other words, departmental and operational strategies must be devised within the framework of the total strategy." (23)

Edwards goes on to describe the operational strategy which ought to be adopted by the SADF. He couches this in careful and conventional

terms, but ends with a plea for unconventional tactics within the ambit of the total strategy -

"It may be deduced from the Government's statement that the maintenance of favourably disposed, or at the very least, non-hostile governments in neighbouring countries is an important aspect of the Government's total counter-strategy. It could also be deduced that this could also be affected (sic) by military means." (24)

This was a truly extraordinary statement, coming from so senior an officer, made all the more extraordinary by the fact that all government spokesmen, including his own Minister, were at pains to point out that South Africa had no aggressive intentions towards its neighbours. Furthermore, Edwards, in his article, also spelt out how this ought to be achieved -

"Should the RSA (not) take the lessons of its own history, and that of the state of Israel, to heart and, if pre-emptive action is required, to undertake such action swiftly and with the full employment of all the means at its disposal?" (25)

Here, too, General Beaufre's theory of the "exterior counter-manoeuvre" had found a receptive student.

During the next two years, the theme of a total strategy was taken up on various occasions both by Mr Botha and by various of Commodore Edwards' colleagues. When he opened the Joint Defence College in Voortrekkerhoogte in 1973, Mr Botha reiterated that in the struggle for existence, a nation should employ not only its military power, but "all the means at its disposal". He continued -

"Sound planning is based on a thorough knowledge of all aspects of strategy and on co-ordination and co-operation between all departments and agencies who could make a contribution to the security of the State." (26)

While in August 1974, during a speech given to the Youth Branch of

the National Party, Mr Botha referred to the fact that defence, expressed as armed force, only formed a small part of the means of protection of a state against outside interference. (27)

Mr Botha also pursued this theme in the 1975 White Paper on Defence. In his preface, Mr Botha wrote -

"A credible military capability still remains a requirement for survival. This does not mean that, in the prevailing circumstances, any country can rely on military power alone. All countries must, more than ever, muster all their activities - political, economic, diplomatic and military - for their defence. This, in fact, is the meaning of 'total strategy'". (28)

While in the section entitled "General Review", the White Paper expressed itself thus -

"Defence strategy embraces much more than military strategy. It involves economy, ideology, technology and even social matters and can therefore only be meaningful and valid if proper account is taken of those other spheres.

"As indicated in the 1973 White Paper, and repeatedly stated by the Government, it is not Government policy to base our national defence on military capacity alone (or even primarily). Consequently, the military means do not play the major role in our total defence policy, yet it remains the one really vital element since it must maintain and ensure that firm base from which the State can employ its other means." (29)

Mr Botha reiterated this ideal in a speech to the University of Stellenbosch in February 1976. He said -

"Our national defence policy must not be based only, or even mainly, on our military capacity. Military capacity should not be neglected, paralysed or left stagnant, it has to be reinforced. But all national activities have to be combined into a defence effort. It is a total effort against a total onslaught." (30)

Later in the same speech, he introduced a new theme -

"Military as well as political leaders, and professionals in all fields, must in increasing measure be able to communicate with one another if we are to win this struggle. Communication ... has become a prerequisite for leaders of a people and of a sovereign state who want to master the art of survival." (31) -

The mention of "social matters" in the White Paper was novel, as not even Beaufre had used the term. Later in the White Paper it became clear what was meant by this reference -

"Any preventative operation naturally is a costly undertaking, but it is also valuable military experience as well as an exercise in interdepartmental and interethnic co-operation. Apart from its primary protective task, the SA Army thus constantly endeavours to make a positive contribution in the interests of good relations. The military resources already in the area are employed to this end." (32)

This "positive contribution" consisted of the deployment of troops with civilian skills in various of the homelands in the north of South West Africa/Namibia -

"In the underdeveloped homelands of Kavango and Caprivi in South West Africa, call-up soldiers with farming backgrounds, or agricultural training, serving on the borders of Angola and Zambia, are helping local Africans develop the land, repairing broken-down tractors and trucks in the process ... 'Operation Aid for Africans' must ultimately make for better understanding between the races and create an atmosphere of friendliness." (33)

This scheme, officially announced on the 27th May 1975, also made provision for the deployment of teachers and doctors. (34)

The necessity for such assistance was underscored in an important speech by General G J J Boshoff, the Army Chief of Staff (Logistics) in August 1975. He, too, elaborated on the nature of the threat facing the Republic, but argued that many of the conditions in which subversion flourished could and should be done away with. The removal

of colour and racial discrimination and "a change of heart" on the part of whites would immeasurably assist the "anti-revolutionary struggle". He argued further that the whole concept of war had changed, and that the objective of war was no longer territory, but the "hearts and minds of men". 80% of the "anti-revolutionary struggle" was a socio-political effort, and only 20% was military. (35)

This theme was repeated by two other generals in short succession. Addressing a Rotary lunch in Durban, the Chief of the Air Force, General R H D Rogers, said that to win the revolutionary war, psychological and economic measures would have to be taken, and injustices corrected. This campaign would require "the co-ordinated action of many Government departments" and the involvement of the public of South Africa. He concluded that -

"We have to do all we can to win the hearts and minds of our indigenous peoples. It is most important to convince Africa and the world that we are part of Africa.

"But if we are part of Africa, and particularly Southern Africa, we have to learn to live together." (36)

While General Neil Webster, the Army's Director-General of Resources, warned that -

"If we do not have all the people of this country behind us we will have very serious problems." (37)

This view was heartily endorsed by the recently-appointed Chief of the SADF, General Malan, in a newspaper interview early in 1977. He maintained that a campaign to win the "hearts and minds" of the local population was an essential part of the total strategy. After emphasising that such a campaign was only part of a "united and collective effort which includes diplomacy, politics, economics, industry, local authorities (and) the military", General Malan said -

"Objectives must be defined. These must include the welfare of the State and its peoples. Here I must stress good relationships."

He illustrated what he meant by referring to recent SADF civic action operations in Kavango -

"There was no contact between our patrols and the local people. Who speaks to a man in uniform? So we sent them out with a handful of headache powders, a handful of seed, and books. Now there's a two-way system going that is fantastic for our boys and beneficial to the people. We clear the bush, teach them to plant and to live off the land." (38)

A semi-official SADF publication published a year later went further, attempting to locate this type of activity within accepted concepts of warfare. The author argues that -

"In the context of 'total war', which is increasingly the form of conflict between nations, it is insufficient for a military force to defend the country it serves merely by preparing itself for conventional warfare.

"If a war is 'being conducted simultaneously in all spheres - political, economic, diplomatic and military', as one definition of 'total war' puts it, it would seem logical that the military authorities who have been entrusted with the task of defending a country should try to contribute as much as possible to countering this threat, not only in the battlefield, but also in other fields of activity.

"Of course, the military cannot be expected to counter all the different types of onslaughts entailed in a 'total war' on its own : the proponents of this view concede that the government of a country must take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the campaign to counter the total threat. Nevertheless, the military authorities in many countries have evidently thought it advisable for their forces to make a contribution to national development, in order to ensure that their preparations for defence in the traditional military sphere are not in vain." (39)

Expressed in this way, one is left with the impression that were the

military authorities to ignore the necessity of national development, any military campaigns they may wage would in any event be in vain. Indeed, the publication went further : the military preparations and "national development" were the prerogative of the military authorities, and the contribution which these authorities could make to winning against the total onslaught.

What was novel about these statements was not only their content : it was acceptable by 1975 to be "verlig", even in orthodox Afrikaner circles. Yet, these generals had been expressing their "verligtheid" in strategic terms. South Africa's survival, they were arguing, was threatened, and 80% of the strategic answer to that threat lay in political reform. Nor were these maverick generals out of line with departmental policy - on the 3rd September 1975, P W Botha himself endorsed the 80%/20% theory of counter-revolutionary war (although he thought 75%/25% to be a more realistic proportion, at no less an occasion than the Cape Congress of the National Party. (40)

"Die soldate aan die grens handhaaf die veiligheid van die land nie alleen met die wapen in die hand nie, maar ook met mediese dienste, onderwysdienste, bybelverspreiding en andersins." (41)

It was, however, principally in the 1977 White Paper on Defence that the idea of a total strategy was most fully developed. In his preface to this document, Mr Botha recalled that in the 1975 White Paper, he had -

"stressed the growing need for a 'total strategy' which requires every country in the free world to muster all its resources for survival. The passage of time has confirmed the validity of this assertion and has also illustrated that a credible defence capability is an indispensable element of these resources ... military strategy forms part of a broader national strategy ..."
(42)

In the body of the White Paper, it is unequivocally stated that -

"The process of ensuring and maintaining the sovereignty of a state's authority in a conflict situation has, through the evolution of warfare, shifted from a purely military to an integrated national action ... The resolution of a conflict in the times in which we now live demands interdependent and co-ordinated action in all fields - military, psychological, economic, political, sociological, technological, diplomatic, ideological, cultural, etc." (43)

Like Beaufre, the author of the White Paper was convinced that -

"It is therefore essential that a Total National Strategy be formulated at the highest level. The defence of the RSA is not solely the responsibility of the Department of Defence. On the contrary, the maintenance of the sovereignty of the RSA is the combined responsibility of all government departments ... The striving for specific aims cannot take place in isolation. It must be co-ordinated with all the means available to the state." (44)

This necessity for co-ordination had already been recognised by the Government, and to effect this co-ordination, it had established the State Security Council -

"As already indicated, one of the functions of the State Security Council is to formulate the total national strategy for the RSA. Total strategy is, however, a complex subject. It can perhaps be described as the comprehensive plan to utilise all the means available to a state according to an integrated pattern in order to achieve the national aims within the framework of the specific policies. A total national strategy is, therefore, not confined to a particular sphere, but is applicable at all levels and to all functions of the state structure." (45)

The White Paper recognised that because one's strategy is determined by factors which are in continuous flux, the total strategy, too, needs to be "dynamic and interacting". Constant revision of planning is therefore required. Also, because the enemy's strategy will also not be constant, it is necessary to have "an outstanding intelligence service in order to forecast the actions of the enemy" -

"It is clear that in order to formulate and implement military strategy meaningfully, there is a need for a total national strategy. This has already been acknowledged by the Government. It is because of the complexity of this need ... that co-ordination between government departments is of the utmost importance. There are few, if any, government departments which are not concerned with one or other aspect of national security, or which do not contribute to the realisation of national security." (46)

Mr Botha and his defence staffs had already identified the areas which required interdepartmental action. In the course of 1976, a committee of the State Security Council had been established to review the national security set-up. This committee had come to the conclusion that the State Security Council itself was the proper body to undertake the co-ordination of the national security planning, but that the SSC ought to be assisted in this task by a permanent working committee, as well as by a staff body, to undertake both the staff work for the SSC and for its working committee. This committee also identified a number of areas of common interest in the national security field, which affected more than one government department and which would therefore require interdepartmental action. (47) The White Paper proceeds to chronicle these areas of "interdepartmental action", as follows -

- "- Political action
- Military/Para-Military action
- Economic action
- Psychological action
- Scientific and technological action
- Religious/Cultural action
- Manpower services
- Intelligence services
- Security services
- National supplies, resources and procurement services
- Transport and distribution services
- Financial services
- Community services
- Telecommunication services."

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"Together", the White Paper states, "the above fields cover the whole spectrum of national security". (48)

Within the ambit of a total national strategy, the White Paper continued, the State had certain goals. These included -

- "a. the orderly development and maintenance of the body politic;
- b. the preservation of the identity, dignity, the right to self-determination and the integrity of all population groups;
- c. the identification, prevention and countering of revolution, subversion and any other form of unconstitutional action;
- d. the maintenance of a sound balance of military power in relation to neighbouring states and other states in Southern Africa;
- e. aiming for the greatest possible measure of economic and social development, and the maximum self-sufficiency;
- f. the creation of friendly relations and political and economic co-operation with the states of Southern Africa; and
- g. planning total national strategy at government level for co-ordinated action between all government departments, government institutions and other authorities to counter the multi-dimensional onslaught against the RSA in the ideological, military, economic, social, psychological, cultural, political and diplomatic fields." (49)

It is worth quoting this set of objectives in full, since these form, in broad outline, the job description of the State Security Council. However, at the time at which it was written, state action to counter the onslaught was anything but co-ordinated, as we have seen.

However, hubris for Dr Mulder and his allies was not far off. In the course of 1978, the rumours that Dr Mulder was heavily compromised in the misappropriation of state funds in the Department of Information began to gather momentum in the Press, and more accurate accounts were available to the Cabinet by means of the investigations of Dr Reynders and Mr Barrie. These culminated in the resignation, first of

Mr Vorster as Prime Minister, which left the way clear for Mr Botha to assume the premiership, and subsequently, as the Erasmus Commission's investigations revealed the true extent of the scandal, in that of Dr Mulder, both as Cabinet Minister and as Member of Parliament. Now, with his principal rival disgraced, and with access to the instruments of supreme executive authority, the way was open for Mr Botha to implement his long-cherished ideals of establishing the mechanisms to make the total national strategy a reality.

The mechanisms for establishing an efficient system of national security decision-making had been a matter which the top structure of the SADF had been considering for some time, and with more urgency since the Angolan campaign had shown up the glaring weaknesses of the then operative system. General J R Dutton, the Chief of Staff Operations, in addressing a symposium on national security in 1977, showed the sophistication of the staff work which had already been done by that time -

"In accordance with the strategic concepts advocated in my preceding arguments, there would be a requirement for a total strategy on a national level. This would embrace the essential guidelines and parameters for activities in all spheres of action in a co-ordinated strategy directed to converge on the same final goal which would be derived from the political objectives identified as vital to ensure National Security. This would constitute the framework within individual strategies, and strategic doctrines would be conceived and formulated in the different spheres and on the different levels of competence. Within each sphere, and on every level, the total concept would be applicable, with rational adaptation to the means and the scope.

"This process would establish vertical lines of direction. Apart from the co-ordinated planning at national level, there is a further requirement for horizontal co-ordination on the various lower levels, in order to ensure optimum synergism and orchestration.

"The envisaged process would also involve the dynamic horizontal and vertical interaction; and strategies and doctrines would be adapted to obviate contradictions, ensure compatibility and to reconcile that which is desirable with that which is possible. This would

provide the essential base for the identification of priorities and for the balanced allocation of resources, such as manpower, financial appropriation and industrial and technological effort." (50)

Thus it was clear that the net was being cast very wide : it was not only the resources and the effort of the State which, it was being envisaged, needed central control and co-ordination, but "industrial and technological effort" as well.

General Dutton was sensitive enough to appreciate that this was not an easily attained objective in a society which was organised on a democratic basis. He maintained that -

"The only effective strategy to oppose total war is a total strategy. It would be comparatively easy to explain the concept, and even to formulate general guidelines for such a total strategy, but when it comes to its functional implementation in a democratic society, one comes up against formidable problems. The vaunted democratic principles of maximum decentralisation of power, autonomy of competence, free enterprise and consensus present serious obstacles which inhibit the realisation of the desirable strategy."

However, he saw no lasting problem in this connection : "We," he said, presumably referring to the SADF, -

"contend that, where survival is at stake, this can and must be done." (51)

Another significant contribution to this symposium was made by Professor J A Lombard. While his contribution concerned itself with the economic aspects of national security, he dwelt at some length with the modus operandi which any state would have to deal with in maintaining its sovereignty and preserving its security. He was careful to distinguish between two functions which the state performs. The one is an order function and the other is a welfare function. While welfare functions, he argued, can and must be decentralised and democratised as far as possible, order functions

remain the primary responsibility of the central government - "The responsibilities for the maintenance of public order must be centralised in the agencies of the sovereign state". Failure to do so, he concluded, "under present circumstances ... would be tantamount to the destruction of all freedom in Southern Africa". (52) We will see presently how the National Security Management System was able simultaneously to "democratise" the welfare function and to "centralise" the order function.

Subsequent to the acquisition of the premiership by Mr Botha in 1978, the SADF contribution towards the formulation of a coherent and rational conceptualisation of the total strategy increased in tempo and scope. In that year, the Documentation Service of the SADF began to publish position papers, termed "Pointers/Rigtingwysers" which concerned themselves with various aspects of the total strategy and, more specifically, with the role of the military within such a strategy. A "Pointer" written in 1978 by Maj C J Nöthling concerns itself with "Totale Oorlog", and has the following to say about the means to counteract such a total war -

"Strategie kan beskou word as die modus van optrede waardeur 'n land in 'n bepaalde situasie al die middele tot sy beskikking orden en aanwend om 'n konflik in sy guns te beslag. By implikasie is totale strategie 'n alomvattende begrip en daar kan volstaan word met die volgende omskrywing ... 'Strategy (involves) the plans for conducting a war in the widest sense, including diplomatic, political and economic considerations as well as those of a purely military nature'." (53)

"Pointers" soon, however went further than merely to comment on the necessity for a total strategy : by 1979, they were commenting variously on "Non-Alignment in Africa" (No 12), "The Military as a Contributor to National Development" (No 8) and two tomes on "Kommunisme" (Nos 9 and 9b). Later, the "Pointers" became yet more ambitious, tackling such abstruse matters as "Special Operations" (No 14), "The Principles of Modern Warfare : Reflections and Views in Perspective" (No 19) and "Wisselwerking Tussen die Militêre Organi-

sasie en die Politieke Orde" (No 18). Most recently, "Pointers" have become far more immediately relevant, commenting on current events, normally in one or other of the front-line states and customarily in the most mendacious fashion (for example, "Genocide in Zimbabwe : Looking for Scapegoats" (No 40), "Southern Africa's Real Destabilisers" (No 21) and "Jonas Savimbi - Truly a Man for All Seasons" (No 45)).

These were clearly the vehicle through which the SADF expressed its newly found confidence, and they provide a very interesting insight into the prevailing thinking within the SADF at that time. For example, in treating the topic of civil-military relations, Lt (SAN) E M Meyers remarks -

"Betrokkenheid van die soldaat in landspolitiek en dus op die terrein van die burgers is 'n saak wat tans al hoe meer aandag geniet. Die tradisionele onderskeid tussen oorlog en diplomatie was absoluut ... Daar is onder meer gevrees dat die professionele soldaat burgerlike beheer sou bedreig indien hy buitengewone politieke inspraak oor landsake sou verkry. Sedert die einde van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog tot vandag het die politieke betrokkenheid van die professionele militêr egter toegeneem. 'n Nuwe siening wat as politiek-militêre samesmelting bestempel is, het die oue uitgedaag." (54)

Here was an ex post facto explanation for arrangements which the SADF and its personnel had helped to establish; what was worse, in pseudo-academic language, the authors were trying to justify the structures as if they were the norm in states throughout the world.

What was, however, even more chilling was the "Pointer" which dealt with "Special Operations". In this article, the author makes it clear that insurgency is a legitimate basis of modern warfare within the framework of a total strategy, largely since it had "become the principal communist form of warfare". The author argues -

"Because of the politically sensitive state prevailing in the world, the state wishing to expand its power


into another country has to act covertly, by means of infiltrating, organising and training dissatisfied elements of the population into resistance/terrorist movements, so as not to become openly involved. The task of infiltration and organisation of such movements will fall to the special forces." (55)

A little while later, the "Pointer" refines its arguments still further -

"Today, many countries in the Third World find themselves under attack from terrorist/guerilla forces based in neighbouring hostile states. In most cases these hostile states, which are harbouring and supporting such terrorist or guerilla forces, have internal guerilla forces originating from dissatisfied sections of their own populace. These 'friendly' guerilla forces could well be utilised to assist conventional forces in counter-guerilla operations." (56)

We shall see presently how this concept came to be operationalised. However, on taking office, Mr Botha's immediate problem was to operationalise his ideas, and those of his military staffs, on security management. One of Mr Botha's strengths lies, and lay, in political organisation, but the system, not only of security management, but of the entire central government, which he had inherited, was chaotic and the exact opposite of the sleek and co-ordinated structure he needed for the total strategy to be successful. There were 40 government departments and at least 20 Cabinet committees which had been established to monitor various aspects of government activity, and this was only on central government level. Beneath this reposed four provincial departments and no fewer than 952 statutory bodies, employing roughly half a million workers. As often as not, state activity was duplicated or even triplicated by different agencies on different levels of government. (57)

In his speech on the Senate steps, immediately after his election as Prime Minister on the 28th September 1978, and subsequently in his 12 point plan, Mr Botha committed the Government to "clean and efficient



administration". One of his first actions as Prime Minister was to summon the members of the then Public Service Commission and instruct them to undertake an analysis of possible rationalisation which could cause the public service to be more efficient. (58) As a result of this analysis, the number of central government departments was cut from 40 to 18. Although the number of public servants remained constant and nobody was retrenched in the process, for the first time in recent history, the public service was organically arranged so that public servants who had roughly similar responsibilities worked at least for the same Minister.

Far more significant was Mr Botha's re-organisation of the Cabinet decision-making structures. The Public Service Commission recorded the process as follows -

"In October 1978, the Cabinet decided that, with a view to increasing the efficiency of the central consultative and decision-making process, the relatively large number of Cabinet committees then existing should be reduced and placed on a permanent basis. At the same time it was decided to create a Cabinet Secretariat in order to provide a more effective basis for channeling, as well as for keeping record of, Cabinet matters." (59)

The result of this was the reduction of the number of Cabinet committees (which had formerly been appointed on an ad hoc basis as specific needs had materialised), to five permanent sub-committees of the Cabinet, each with very distinct spheres of activity. The five were the Cabinet Committee for National Security (or the State Security Council), the Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs, the Cabinet Committee for Social Affairs, the Cabinet Committee for Finance and the Cabinet Committee for Constitutional Affairs.

Even the operations of these Cabinet committees became formalised. Instead of addressing themselves to ad hoc problems and actions, as had been the case in the past, these committees dealt with specific areas of government activity. Meetings were convened regularly, and

minutes kept. In order to promote greater co-ordination of planning and decision-making, the Directors-General of the relevant departments were also co-opted onto the committees, as were certain other top officials as the need arose. The idea behind this was to ensure that matters of detail were discussed at Cabinet committee level, leaving the Cabinet free to deal with issues of policy, or to decide between options. (60)

None of the re-organisation was, however, as impressive nor as far-reaching as the organisational changes which took place in and around the workings of the State Security Council. Supported by the staff work that had already been completed by the SADF, Mr Botha moved swiftly to implement what has become known as the National Security Management System. This system became effective on the 16th August 1979, and has operated in substantially unaltered form ever since. (61) NSMS = 1979

Apart from the Cabinet itself, which obviously forms as integral part of the Security Management System, the System comprises five major elements. The first of these and the apex of the System, is the State Security Council, whose membership and statutory functions have been described elsewhere. As we saw, the Council's chairman is the Prime Minister, and its membership is the senior Minister of the Republic, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Justice, Police, the Director of the National Intelligence Service, the Chief of the SADF, the Commissioner of the SA Police, and the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs and of Justice. The Security Intelligence and State Security Council Act also provides that the chairman can co-opt additional members from time to time. According to the Secretary of the State Security Council, Mr Botha has made extensive use of the co-option provision so as to enable any Minister who wishes to raise matters of national security to attend meetings of the Council -

"The composition (of the Council) is also as defined in the Act, but has been considerably increased by the present Prime Minister in terms of the co-option provisions of the Act ... Furthermore, any Minister who

at any time wishes to place a matter relating to national security on the agenda can do so and of course then attend such Council meetings." (62)

Grundy has provided some interesting suggestions about the way in which the co-option operates -

"A number of important people not directly responsible to Parliament participate in the decision-making process ... the Ministers who chair the other four cabinet committees are also co-opted attendees. Others in government and in private life may be invited to attend the individual meetings, depending on the subject at hand and the nature of the expertise they might be expected to apply. If, for example, weapons development is on the agenda, the Director of Armscor may be asked to attend. If the topic of regional economic growth as it impacts on foreign policy, the General Manager of the South African Transport Services may be co-opted." (63)

However, according to Geldenhuys and Kotzé, there are different categories of co-option. During 1983, there were eight Ministers serving on a permanent basis on the State Security Council, three Ministers more than the Act makes provision for. Mr Botha himself admitted in Parliament that these three Ministers were the Ministers of Finance, of Constitutional Development and of Co-operation and Development. (64) In addition to these eight "permanent" members, the Prime Minister also allowed Ministers to attend as "observers", but such observer members were not allowed to participate in the deliberations of the Council. This differs from the modus operandi of other Cabinet committees, which are free to co-opt more or less whomsoever they wish. (65)

While the State Security Council existed prior to the election of Mr Botha as Prime Minister, it was merely another one of a number of Cabinet committees. Since the rationalisation of the Cabinet committee system, there is no doubt that the Council occupies a very much more important role than hitherto. Geldenhuys and Kotzé adduce several reasons for the increase in importance. First, they argue,

the SSC is the only one of the Cabinet committees which has been established by law and, as such, cannot simply be disestablished at the will of the Cabinet. Secondly, the SSC is the only one of the Cabinet committees to be chaired by the Prime Minister/State President. The consequence of this is that the decisions of the Council will carry the authority of the Prime Minister/State President, and few, whether in the Cabinet or in the civil service will feel free to challenge the decisions for this reason. Thirdly, they suggest that because of the extraordinarily wide circumscription of the powers and responsibilities of the Council, there is virtually no area of state activity in which the Council would not feel competent to venture an opinion, if not to draw up a strategy.

Fourthly, the SSC is, they say, supported by an awesome machinery responsible only to the Council itself, consisting of the Secretariat, the Interdepartmental Committees and the Joint Management Centres. The Council is therefore in a position to have its dictates carried out promptly and efficiently, which is an ability the other committees lack as they do not command the same bureaucratic infrastructure. Finally, the authors suggest that because the SSC is not free to co-opt in the same way as the other Cabinet committees and that the decisions of the SSC are not subject to confirmation by the Cabinet, the SSC occupies a uniquely more important position than the other Cabinet committees. The position of the SSC is, as they say, primus inter pares, relative to the other committees. (66)

All these factors are very suggestive, but some at least, are not conclusive. If the chairmanship of the Prime Minister/State President is an important factor in elevating the SSC above the position of the other Cabinet committees, why was this not the case while Mr Vorster was chairman of the Council? The same argument could be used regarding the terms of reference of the Council : if these were given statutory format in 1972, why did the wide terms of reference only gain special significance since Mr Botha became Prime Minister? Yet Geldenhuys and Kotzé merely note that "the SSC under Vorster apparently tended to confine itself to security matters in the narrow sense of the word". (67)

The authors might have mentioned a further pointer to the important position of the SSC. The SSC is a body which draws together senior politicians and senior civil servants. The official members in particular are in the unique position to draw on a wealth of experience and expertise, as well as upon the collective wisdom of the NSMS as a whole. They are additionally able to sell their recommendations to the SSC a day before the Cabinet meets. When a proposal emanates from the SSC, based as it is on expert advice and evaluation, it would be a foolhardy ordinary member of the Cabinet who might feel inclined to reject such proposals with no counter-active expertise at his disposal.

Nonetheless, the suggestion that recommendations of the State Security Council are exempt from approval by the Cabinet has been expressly denied by General van Deventer. In his briefing to the media on the 21st September 1983, he stated unequivocally -

"Finally, it must once again be pointed out that whereas the State Security Council is charged with the responsibility for advising the Government on national security, the ultimate responsibility rests with the Cabinet and decisions taken by the State Security Council are subject to final approval by that body."
(68)

Mr Botha himself also denied the contention. Speaking in Parliament, the then Prime Minister said -

"The group (the State Security Council) meets every 14 days, at fixed times. Its recommendations are submitted to the Cabinet in the form of minutes. The Cabinet takes decisions on them. The Cabinet also has the right to change them. After all, we know that in terms of our system, all matters are discussed by members of the Cabinet ..."
(69)

What is true - and this may be where Geldenhuys and Kotzé have been misled - is that the State Security Council meets regularly every fortnight on the day preceding meetings of the Cabinet. (70) The fact

that meetings of the SSC precede those of the Cabinet enables the Cabinet to be presented with fresh national security related recommendations in the form of a series of resolutions or minutes which need only to be endorsed. Further, Mr Botha admitted that there is no formal voting procedure on the Cabinet, leaving him free to interpret the opinion of the Cabinet. (71) If Geldenhuys and Kotzé concerned themselves primarily with the power of the SSC relative to other Cabinet committees, other scholars have sought to evaluate the Council's position in the total power equation. Thus, for example, Dr Frankel has described the Council as "the focal point of all national decision-making and governmental power". (72) Professor Grundy, who describes this as "a bit of overstatement", has himself indulged in something of a hyperbole, arguing that the relationship between the State Security Council and the Cabinet in South Africa is analogous to the relationship between the Politburo and the Council of Ministers in the Soviet Union, (73) and suggesting that politicians regard membership of the SSC as more important than membership of the Cabinet.

Neither of these interpretations seems correct. There is little doubt that the State Security Council is more important under Mr Botha's administration than it was under Mr Vorster's but the answer to its rise in prominence lies in the fact that it is the primary agency responsible for drawing up and implementing the total strategy, as the means of meeting the security challenge facing, or perceived to be facing, the South African state. It is only because Mr Botha himself is a whole-hearted believer in the total strategy concept that the SSC has risen to prominence; another Prime Minister who believed in the centrality of, say, economic development, might have elevated the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs to similar prominence in the central decision-making structures.

Besides, an analysis of the relative importance of the State Security Council vis-à-vis the other Cabinet committees begs the question of exactly what type of decisions or recommendations the State Security Council takes. General van Deventer states that the SSC is

responsible for advising the Government on national security, but omits to mention what the form is which this advice takes.

According to the White Paper on Defence and Armaments Supply 1979, the SSC is responsible for the "national strategic planning process" which involves drawing up "guidelines, total national strategy directives and total national strategies concerning national security". The object of these guidelines, directives and strategies is to effect the necessary planning without which the State would not be able to engage in the "highly co-ordinated action" necessary to counteract the "total onslaught such as is being waged against South Africa". (74) Although this is perhaps vague, General Malan broadened out on the SSC's functions in the following terms -

"Daar is op 'n fondament van gesonde bestuurbeginsels gebou. Dit behels doeltreffendheid ten opsigte van die proses waarvolgens nie-verwante bronne geïntegreer word in 'n totale stelsel vir doelwitbereiking asook die toepassing van die stelselbenadering op die staatsopset. Laasgenoemde gee aanleiding tot die begrip van gesamentlike staatsbestuur." (75)

What all this amounts to is the fact that the State Security Council has primarily a co-ordination function. Security considerations are brought to the Council's attention, either by its membership or by the intelligence community. The Council then decides what appropriate steps are necessary to deal with the situation. As these steps as often as not involve the activities of more than one government department, co-ordination is necessary. The Council then advises a course of action encapsulating this co-ordinated activity. If the course of action is likely to be a once-off campaign, it is termed a directive; if it is likely to re-occur in other guises, it is termed a guideline or a strategy. Should the advice be accepted by the Cabinet, the directive or strategy is then applied, in the requisite co-ordinated fashion, by the executive departments concerned.

It is, however, important to understand that co-ordination is not the only function of the State Security Council. Dr Hough, borrowing

rather liberally from General Beaufre, expresses the various roles of the Council as follows -

"Bo aan die piramide en onder die direkte beheer van die regering is totale strategie ... waarvan die taak is om te bepaal hoe totale optrede uitgevoer moet word. Die oogmerk vir elke gespesialiseerde kategorie van strategie (b.v. ekonomiese, militêre, politieke, maatskaplike en intervensie) moet neergelê word, asook die wyse waarop hulle ineengeskakel moet word ... Op hierdie vlak mag die relatiewe belangrikheid van die verskillende gebiede (ekonomies, militêr, ens.) aansienlik varieër ooreenkomstig die omstandighede." (76)

It is thus clear that the State Security Council has three functions. The first, as we have seen, is the co-ordination of state activity in the area of national security. However, the SSC is also involved in the implementation of total strategies, as well as the formulation of national security policy.

The directives of the Cabinet are normally generalised, and do not spell out exactly what is required. Thus, for example, late in 1981, the Cabinet decided to take advantage of the gains made by the SADF during Operation Protea and thereby create a de facto buffer zone north of the South West African/Namibian border, which would extend SWAPO's logistics lines and which would enable SWAPO movements to be relatively easily monitored. The directive of the Cabinet was -

"om suidelike Kunene Provinsie gedestabiliseer te hou en herbesetting van Xangongo en Ongiva te verhoed sonder om die dorpe fisies te beset." (77)

This was a very wide and inexplicit mandate. The State Security Council was left with the job of determining the mix of departmental strategies necessary to achieve this : obviously the Defence Force was involved, but diplomatic and information initiatives were also required, inter alia to substantiate the claims of the UNITA movement to be regarded as a significant force in the Angolan civil war, to deny in world forums and elsewhere that South African troops were occupying the area, and so on.

Dr Hough has correctly termed the directives of the State Security Council "algemene of oorkoepelende strategieë", since they fuse together a number of disparate activities in a number of fields of state activities. (78) General van Deventer says in this respect that -

"The philosophy upon which the organisation is based is that the Republic is confronted by a multi-dimensional threat - multi-dimensional in the sense that the Republic's enemies attack the constitutional, the economic, the social and the security bases in accordance with a co-ordinated plan or strategy. It is the conviction of the Government that this threat can only be met and turned back by the application of strategies using, in the same way as the enemy, the four main elements : constitutional, economic, social and security. Hence the underlying theme in the management of national security is joint state management involving not only the security services, but also all the other government departments and organisations. These are brought together in the functions of management to ensure that all their energy and efforts are directed towards and focussed upon the achievement of the national security goals." (79)

This integrated approach to state activity carries Mr Botha's endorsement. Speaking of the activities of the State Security Council, General van Deventer stated -

"The Prime Minister believes in team work and in the old adage that the product of a team will always be better than that which is achieved by an individual. He also believes that team work should cover the whole process of management, i.e. planning, development, execution and through to the monitoring of execution and if necessary the replanning." (80)

While Mr Botha described the State Security Council as -

"a body which advises the Cabinet and which co-ordinates matters with regard to the action which should be taken." (81)

It is very clear from these statements that the SSC does not have a

purely advisory function. Some government spokesmen coyly suggest that as the SSC does not have statutory defined executive responsibilities, it must therefore be nothing more than an advisory body. This seems to be splitting hairs unnecessarily: both from the admissions of Mr Botha and General van Deventer, and because Cabinet members do not have to be meeting as the Cabinet before being able to take decisions regarding the actions their departments should be taking, we are justified in inferring that the SSC is both an advisory and an executive agency. Before actually carrying out "total strategy", though, it will - out of courtesy more than anything else - wait for the formal approval of the Cabinet.

The second element in the National Security Management System is the Working Committee of the State Security Council. This body has escaped the attention of most commentators, perhaps because many regard the Working Committee's role to be little more than secretarial. This perception may have been bolstered by the fact that each of the Cabinet committees has its own working committee.

However, the role of the Working Committee ought not to be underestimated. Its basic membership consists of the heads of the government departments represented in the State Security Council and the chairmen of the other working committees of the other Cabinet committees. In the same way as the State Security Council, it is permitted to co-opt additional members as and when the need arises, either on a temporary or a semi-permanent basis. Its permanent membership consists therefore of the Secretary of the State Security Council (who is the chairman) and the Directors-General of Foreign Affairs, of Justice and of the National Intelligence Service, the Commissioner of Police and the Chief of the SADF. By 1983, at least eleven members were attending its meetings, demonstrating that the co-option provisions had been interpreted liberally. (82)

Its functions are, however, far more important than merely secretarial. Like the State Security Council, it meets every fortnight, a few days before meetings of the SSC, and its main function is to

discuss the matters which form part of the agendas of meetings of the SSC and to make recommendations regarding the advice which the SSC should give to the Cabinet. (83) Access to the Working Committee is open to any head of a government department who wishes to place an item regarding national security on its agenda : such head of department is then free to attend the meeting or meetings of the Working Committee at which this item is discussed.

If General van Deventer's statements are correct - and as chairman of the Working Committee he ought to have been able to speak authoritatively on its behalf - it would seem that the Working Committee acts as a type of management committee of the State Security Council, caucussing in advance and making recommendations to the SSC. In fulfilling this task, the heads of government departments are extremely well-placed, since they normally are better able to advise the Cabinet on the capacity of their various departments to carry out "total strategies" than are their political masters. Although the fact that the National Party has been in power for an inordinately long time by Western democratic standards, and this has served to allow Ministers to become more versed in the day-to-day management of their departments, it is nonetheless still true that the permanent heads of departments are far more capable of determining the courses of action which their departments are likely to be able to carry out successfully than are the political heads. It is accordingly very likely that the recommendations of the Working Committee are followed closely.

The Working Committee is assisted not only by the respective departments whose Directors-General make up its membership, but also by the Secretariat of the State Security Council, the third element in the Security Management System. The Secretariat consists entirely of civil servants drawn either permanently or on secondment from other government departments. (84) It consists of relatively few officials - probably not in excess of 100 - of which 11% are drawn from the Department of Foreign Affairs, 1% from the Prisons Service, 56% from the National Intelligence Service, 11% from the Security

Police, 5% from the Railways Police and 16% from the SADF. (85) When the Security Management System was first brought into operation, the Secretariat was styled the Security Planning Branch, and resorted under the Office of the Prime Minister. It was renamed the Secretariat of the State Security Council on the recommendation of the Commission for Administration on the 1st August 1981. (86)

From that date, while it continued to report directly to Mr Botha, it has for purely administrative purposes been the responsibility of the National Intelligence Service. (87)

According to General van Deventer, the Secretariat has two primary functions. The first is to ensure that the input of all the agencies responsible for security management is co-ordinated, and that that co-ordinated input is made available to the State Security Council via the Working Committee. This obviously involves obtaining the co-operation of agencies which can make a contribution to the resolution of security problems, and the involvement of these bodies in the identification of security problems and in the suggestion of ways to resolve such problems. This task is, as we shall see, undertaken largely by means of the Interdepartmental Committees.

The Secretariat's second major function is to ensure that the total strategies or strategic directives of the Cabinet are communicated to the executive departments for their action. While these departments get instructions as a matter of course from their Minister or Director-General, the Secretariat ensures that the co-ordination of action which is required to realise specific goals, in fact takes place. (88)

General van Deventer is at pains to point out that the Secretariat as such has no executive responsibility and can only request the required degree of co-operation and co-ordination. Much as was the case with the State Security Council, this disclaimer seems unnecessarily pedantic, since no civil servant would be likely to wilfully disregard the request of a person with direct access, not

only to his Minister, but to the Prime Minister/State President as well. Obviously the Secretariat does not have the staff to act as an executive agency, but a "request" from the Secretariat or its Secretary is likely to be speedily executed.

In its internal organisation, the Secretariat is sub-divided into four branches. The first and least significant of the branches is the administrative branch which simply provides secretarial back-up to the Secretariat and accounts for its expenditure. The others are, however, of cardinal importance.

The National Intelligence Interpretation Branch is, to use General van Deventer's words -

"responsible for meeting the requirements of the Cabinet and the State Security Council with regard to the interpretation of national security intelligence, as well as the provision of intelligence reports on the basis of which strategies and other plans can be formulated." (89)

This branch is crucial, according to the General, because -

"no planning can be done without intelligence. It is therefore a prerequisite that the Cabinet and all decision-makers be provided with timely, unbiased and objective intelligence." (90)

General van Deventer is careful to stress that the collection of intelligence in its raw form is not the responsibility of the Secretariat, but remains the responsibility of the executive departments (the SADF, the SA Police, the National Intelligence Service and the Department of Foreign Affairs) which have always performed these functions. Now, however -

"The interpretation thereof on a national level is ... done by the Secretariat and by a joint effort by members of the intelligence community seconded from their respective departments." (91)

The chairmanship of the National Intelligence Interpretation Branch rotates on a two-yearly basis, and has already been chaired by an individual from the National Intelligence Service, the Directorate of Military Intelligence and the Security Police. The chairmanship will evidently pass in due course to an official from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The necessity of having reliable, objective intelligence organised on a centralised basis has been emphasised not only by General Beaufre, in theoretical terms, but also, within the South African context, by Dr L D Barnard, the head of the National Intelligence Service. He argued -

"dit is broodnodig dat die nasionale inligtingswaardering sentraal gekoördineer moet word; die inligtingsfunksie by staatsdepartemente kan byvoorbeeld subjektief beïnvloed word deur hulle funksionele lynfunksie en hulle inligtingswaardering sal in sodanige gevalle nie vry van die beperking van departementele oogklappe wees nie. Vanweë die feit dat 'n sentrale intelligensiediens geen uitvoerende verantwoordelikhede het nie, en omdat sy hoofsaak 'n bemeestering van die waarheid op grond van veiligheidsinligting behels, is hy minder blootgestel aan die versoeking van subjektiwiteit." (92)

Dr Barnard also warns against decision-makers basing their decisions on raw intelligence, arguing that experts in intelligence evaluation have to interpret this to establish its veracity -

"Lede van 'n intelligensiediens se evaluasiebeen (word) gewoonlik as lessenaarbeampies ingespan, óf op 'n geografiese, land-vir-land basis, óf as deskundiges op funksionele basis, met toespitsing op die staatkundige, die militêre, die ekonomiese of die maatskaplike bedreiging, óf 'n vermenging daarvan." (93)

It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the National Intelligence Interpretation Branch performs this function - providing interpreted intelligence both in terms of the countries from which threats are perceived to emanate, as well as of the threats against what General

Malan (and others) have called the "security bases" - the constitutional, the military, the economic and the social. An interdisciplinary approach to the evaluation of intelligence is therefore facilitated by the simple expedient of having all the experts in various fields evaluating intelligence simultaneously. It also ensures that a "co-ordinated approach", which is continuously emphasised as necessary in the formulation and execution of the "total strategy" also takes place in the crucial area of the evaluation of intelligence.

The efficient and streamlined evaluation of intelligence was, as we have seen, a point over which much controversy has raged in the past. It was precisely the facilitation of this process which was the subject matter of the Potgieter Commission. We saw that despite the recommendation of this commission, intelligence evaluation continued to be a controversial issue, notwithstanding the more explicit delineation of the functions of the Bureau for State Security. How is it possible that the intelligence gathering agencies which were formerly at loggerheads, are now engaged in co-operative co-existence?

In part, as we saw, the problem of the Bureau's poor relationship with the other intelligence organs lay in the personality of General van den Bergh. When, shortly after Mr Botha's elevation to the premiership, he appointed a complete outsider, an intellectual from the University of the Orange Free State, Dr Niel Barnard, to head the newly constituted National Intelligence Service, a new spirit of professionalism and non-partisanship was able to permeate through the by then notorious department. Dr Barnard made it clear from the start that he was not interested in creating a bureaucratic empire for himself; his sole ambition was to provide "neutral", unbiased and factually correct evaluated intelligence to the decision-makers. He expresses himself unequivocally on this point -

"Die evaluering van veiligheidsinligting mag nooit deur politieke oorwegings en/of persoonlike oortuigings

beïnvloed word nie ... geen owerheid sal op die lang duur 'n manipulasie van veiligheidsinligting vir momentele gewin oorleef nie. Die leierskorps van 'n intelligensiediens moet dus onkreukbaar die ware inligting aanbied, wetende dat die boodskappers van minder goeie nuus nie altyd populêr is nie." (94)

One cannot help wondering whether Dr Barnard was not directly referring to his predecessor in advancing this homily. By contrast, his own philosophy is simple -

"Die verhouding tussen die sentrale intelligensiediens, aan die een kant, en departementele inligtingsorgane en die res van die staatsdepartemente, aan die ander kant, is belangrik. In nasionale belang moet die nasionale diens se evaluering van onvleiende veiligheidsinligting op die termeine van inligting wat die ander departemente raak, billik, redelik en korrek wees sodat daar nooit 'n wantroue in die nasionale intelligensiediens ontstaan en van homself 'n beeld gevestig word as sou hy 'n lopende sonderegister byhou nie. Dit is slegs moontlik in 'n gees van wedersydse vertroue en 'n vestiging van begrip vir die belang van veiligheidsinligting." (95)

This broad-minded attitude by Dr Barnard has certainly assisted in breaking down interdepartmental jealousies, but it is also true that Mr Botha would not have tolerated interdepartmental rivalries amongst agencies whose task was so fundamental to the concept of a total strategy. The 'spectre of General van den Bergh, who had within a space of months fallen from being the all-powerful Secretary of Security Intelligence to being a simple farmer minus a passport, testified to the political determination of Mr Botha to crush opponents who came between himself and his cherished ideals. Whatever the reason for the new spirit of co-operation amongst the intelligence agencies, it is manifest in the workings of the National Intelligence Interpretation Branch of the Secretariat, so much so, that Geldenhuys and Kotzé have noted -

"NIS, like the Military Intelligence Section, among others, are supposed to be agents of sorts of the Secretariat of the State Security Council, relaying

intelligence to its National Intelligence Interpretation Branch. It can be justifiably asked whether these other bodies in practice readily convey their sometimes painfully gathered information to the SSSC. Professional jealousies might obstruct the smooth flow of information to the SSSC's National Intelligence Interpretation Branch, the highest body for the collation of intelligence. The SSSC, however, appears satisfied by the 'neutral' way in which the Interpretation Branch discharges its functions." (96)

The third branch is that of Strategic Communication. The purpose of this branch is to devise strategies to counteract what General van Deventer calls "the battle of words" -

"An element of the threat which requires specific attention is the battle of words or, to call it by its name, the propaganda campaign against the RSA. There is no question but that the vanguard of modern warfare is psychological. It is therefore necessary that this matter also be addressed in joint planning and co-ordination ... the Strategic Communications Branch is responsible for advice and co-ordination with regard to the departmental efforts in combating the war of words." (97)

The necessity to counteract a propaganda "onslaught" had, of course, as we have seen, given rise to the ill-fated Department of Information. The collapse of the department, its emasculation and absorption, with what might be termed bijwoner status, within the Department of Foreign Affairs, was the result more of the deliberate political disgrace of Dr Mulder - so essential to enable Mr Botha to consolidate his position as Prime Minister - and of the fact that financial irregularities had been committed by departmental officials, than of denying a role to a central information agency. Indeed, the concept of a "total strategy" accepted unreservedly that there was a propaganda "onslaught" which needed to be counteracted, not only from outside the country, but within it as well. Furthermore, this task needed to be centrally controlled if it was to effect the degree of co-ordination which total strategy demanded. The problem was to find an agency to perform this function which was uncontaminated by the unenviable reputation of the Department of

Information. Hence, when the Security Management System was established, an agency was created within it to perform this crucial task.

The SADF had recognised the importance of good public relations, albeit within tightly controlled parameters. By the early 1970's, and at Mr Botha's initiative, the SADF and the Newspaper Press Union had concluded an agreement in terms of which Defence correspondents of the media could become accredited to the SADF, and thereby obtain authoritative, if classified, background briefings. For its part, the SADF appointed a series of media liaison officers who, again within the constraints of departmental policy, were able to expedite the flow of official information to the public.

This type of liaison had obvious advantages for the SADF, and it was the model on which the Strategic Communications Branch based its modus operandi.

The business of providing clear and factually correct information has always occupied an important place within SADF operations. It is termed communication operations, or "comops" in SADF parlance. Although "comops" involves a great deal more than mere press liaison, this is its most important aspect. Internal corporate communication is also excellent, and by 1983, no fewer than 29 "authorised" publications were being published by the SADF, aiming at target markets as diverse as coloured youths, military academy students and professional historians. (98) "Comops" within the SADF was, however, and still is, a departmental strategy; similar strategies were being conducted by a wide range of other government institutions, and there existed a necessity for co-ordinating these all on what is termed the "total level".

The fourth and last branch of the Secretariat formulates "total strategies". In doing so, it obviously relies on the intelligence provided by the National Intelligence Interpretation Branch, since no "total strategy" can be formulated without a perceived "total onslaught". It is known as the Strategy Branch. (99)

The Strategy Branch's functions are two-fold. According to General van Deventer, it is -

"responsible essentially for the formulation of strategies and development plans and for the co-ordination of monitoring of the implementation of policies by the executive departments." (100)

It is clear that it is the responsibility then, of this part of the Secretariat, to ensure that each government department to which responsibility for an aspect of a total strategy has been entrusted, carries out that portion, within the overall strategy. General van Deventer has stressed that -

"The Secretariat has no executive powers and only co-ordinates the implementation to ensure the realisation of the set goal. This is achieved through a monitoring action carried out with the full support of the executive departments." (101)

It is, however, equally clear that while formally the Branch does not have executive powers - they do not, for instance, have staff who can actually carry out their instructions - the Branch is very powerful on account of their access, through the Secretary of the State Security Council, not only to the political heads of the respective departments, but also to the State President himself. Much as was the case in the examination of whether the State Security Council was an "advisory" or an "executive" agency, the claim by General van Deventer that the Secretariat, and specifically its Strategy Branch, does not have executive functions seems again unduly pedantic : it is clear that its "monitoring" action includes instructions to carry out strategies which have been formulated on State Security Council level.

It is the Branch's second function which is especially interesting, as it is here that the Secretariat slots into the next element in the Security Management System, the Interdepartmental Committees. The Strategy Branch is responsible for the formulation of total strate-

gies, but the formulation of such strategies cannot occur in a vacuum. Only the "executive departments" are in a position to determine the extent to which they can assist in these total strategies.

The Strategy Branch simply formalises the suggestions of the interdepartmental committees for submission first to the Working Committee and thence to the State Security Council and the Cabinet.

We saw earlier that a series of areas of state activity embracing activity from more than one government department had been identified as early as 1977. These have become formalised into 13 areas, each of which has its own interdepartmental committee. The areas cover a very wide field, as follows -

"Manpower
Security Services
Civil Defence
Transport
Security
National Supplies and Resources
Government Funding
National Economy
Telecommunications and Electrical Power Supply
Science and Technology
Community Services
Culture, and
Political Affairs." (102)

These committees draw their personnel mostly from the central government departments, and participation on such a committee is a part-time job, in addition to their normal line functions. However, it is clear that agencies other than central government departments are involved in the deliberations of these committees; for example, the Interdepartmental Committee on Telecommunications and Electrical Power Supply must draw on staff not only of the General Post Office (itself not technically a central government department) but also of the Electricity Supply Commission, a parastatal corporation.

The terms of reference of these committees are vague. When asked what

the terms of reference of the Interdepartmental Committee on Political Affairs were, the Minister of Defence replied -

"The Political Committee provides advice to the Secretariat of the State Security Council on matters pertaining to national security arising from international, interstate and internal political development. The term 'political' has the same meaning as in 'political science' and has no bearing on party-political activities." (103)

General van Deventer is equally vague. He maintains that -

"Co-ordination and planning covers such a wide field that it is impossible for the Secretariat to do it on its own. Co-ordination of the planning and implementation of policies is therefore achieved by means of the interdepartmental committees, which are consulted by the Secretariat at all stages of planning, development and implementation. The interdepartmental committees ... consist of representatives from the government departments which have a direct interest in the particular field of activity concerned." (104)

General van Deventer makes it clear that the interdepartmental committees are an adjunct of the Secretariat, and key in, as we have seen, into the Strategy Branch. The role of the committees must therefore be to devise interdepartmental strategy to deal with specific security threats within the specified fields. But the interrelationship between the committees and the Secretariat is more complex than merely the Secretariat rubber-stamping recommendations of the respective committees. According to one source, a total strategy has been formulated for the security problem of Mozambique. (105) This obviously embraces joint action within a number of interdepartmental areas. Security is obviously relevant, as is Manpower (on account of Mozambican labour on the mines) and Transport (on account of the involvement of the SA Transport Services in the Komatipoort-Maputo rail link and in Maputo harbour). The Telecommunications and Electricity Supply Committee would also be involved, in respect of the Cabora Bassa hydro-electric power project, and the Political Committee, to analyse the political developments within the

State. Each of these are interdepartmental responsibilities, but the strategies these committees derive will only be interdepartmental strategies. The task of the Secretariat is to weave each of these interdepartmental strategies into a total strategy for dealing with a global security threat. It is the task of the Secretariat to conceptualise total strategy, and it is the task of the interdepartmental committees to give concrete form and content to the total strategies.

The five elements of the Security Management System discussed so far - the Cabinet, the State Security Council, the Working Committee, the Secretariat and the Interdepartmental Committees - operate, as we have seen, on central government level. The final element is the Joint Management Centres.

According to General Malan, there are eleven Joint Management Centres which have been constituted in the following centres : Durban, Kimberley, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Walvis Bay, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Potchefstroom, Pietersburg and Nelspruit. Their location is instructive, as they are centred largely in the same places as the headquarters of the SADF commands. (106) It is, however, evidently the intention eventually to reduce the number to nine which will correspond to the nine economic development regions. Beneath the Joint Management Centres are 60 sub-management centres and 354 mini-management centres. (The location of these are reproduced in Appendix A). (107) According to General van der Westhuizen, two further subsidiary bodies, namely local management centres and liaison forums have been constituted, but the number and location of these are unknown. (108) The delineation of the boundaries of the sub-management centres seem to be fairly arbitrary at the moment, but, just as the Joint Management Centre boundaries will change to correspond with those of the economic regions, the intention is to constitute sub-management committees with boundaries the same as those of the still-to-be-instituted Regional Services Councils. (109)

According to Geldenhuys and Kotzé, another four Joint Management Centres have been established with responsibilities for certain Southern African countries, including one for South West Africa/Namibia. (110) While this might have been the case when Geldenhuys and Kotzé wrote their article, it is almost certain that the tasks which these JMC's performed have been taken over by new JMC's which have now been constituted, in line with the re-organisation of the military command structure in January 1984. It seems that the security "problem" constituted by Mozambique, for example, is dealt with by the JMC stationed at Nelspruit, whose chairman, General Paetzold, is also General Officer Commanding, Eastern Transvaal Command.

Each Joint Management Centre appears to consist of between 40 and 60 officials, drawn, according to General Malan, from "all government institutions which may have an interest in the activities of the Management Centres". He added that where community organisations can and wish to make a contribution to the activities of the Management Centre, "the necessary liaison" with such organisations is established. (111) However, it appears as if the liaison takes place primarily on the level of sub- and mini-management centres, and not on the level of the JMC's themselves. According to General van der Westhuizen -

"Die PBS of Mini-GBS'e kan voorts nog skakelforums stig waarmee nie-amptelike geskakel kan word, soos byvoorbeeld vroue-organisasies, Rotariërs, Rapportryers, 'n landbouorganisasie, ouer-onderwysersverenigings en belastingbetalersverenigings." (112)

By contrast, only government officials can become full members of Joint Management Centres -

"Al die lede van 'n GBS is staatsamptenare of amptenare van 'n ander bestuursinstansie soos die Provinsiale Administrasie of die stadsklerk van 'n munisipaliteit. Hulle verteenwoordig die bestuursinstellings in die betrokke streek." (113)

According to General Malan, the chairmen of the Joint Management Centres are (with the exception of the much smaller centre established for Walvis Bay) all at least brigadiers in either the SADF or the SA Police. (114) Despite this preponderance of chairmen drawn from the security forces, General van der Westhuizen maintains that this is purely fortuitous, as elections for the post of chairman take place on a democratic basis -

"Die voorsitters van die GBS'e word almal deur lede van die betrokke GBS verkies. So 'n GBS kan bestaan uit sowat viertig lede. Die feit dat die huidige voorsitters almal weermags- of polisiehoofde in die betrokke gebied is, is omdat die lede van die GBS'e dit tot hulle voordeel vind. So 'n hoë offisier beskik oor verbindings, 'n infrastruktuur en 'n organisasie.

"Tans is elke Weermagslid wat voorsitter van 'n GBS is, die kommandement-bevelvoerder in die gebied. In die geval van die SAP is hy 'n afdelingskommissaris. Maar 'n verteenwoordiger van 'n ander departement kan ook verkies word. Die voorsitter hoef nie 'n polisieman of 'n lid van die Weermag te wees nie." (115)

The fact that there is no impediment to officials of other departments becoming chairmen of the Joint Management System is perhaps reassuring, but the bland assurance does not explain why a non-police or defence representative has never to date become such a chairman. The explanation for this lies not only in the infrastructure which the military or police officer controls, but also in their appreciation of the concept of security management, a quality which is not evidenced to the same degree by representatives of the other departments. We shall see presently the relationship of the Joint Management Centres vis-à-vis the State Security Council; suffice, at this stage, to say that it would not do to have a chairman of a Joint Management Centre who did not believe in the total onslaught, and the necessity for counteracting such an onslaught with a total strategy.

Each Joint Management Centre meets approximately once every three months in plenary session, for formal presentations and for seminars whose aim it is to build up a consciousness of a "total" approach to

Security Management. (116) However, the real work of the Joint Management Centres is done by its standing committees, of which there are three.

The most important of these committees is known as the GIK (Gesamentlike Inligtingskomitee). As was the case in the National Intelligence Interpretation Branch of the Secretariat, the role of the GIK is to ensure that intelligence which is gathered on a local level is properly evaluated, by means of a multi-disciplined approach, encompassing the contribution of the local representatives of the Security Police, the Directorate of Military Intelligence and the National Intelligence Service. Evidently, the quality of the intelligence is extremely high, and through the efforts of the GIK, the Joint Management Centres are able to do planning on the basis of very detailed and accurate intelligence.

The second committee is called the SEMKOM (Staatkundige-, Ekonomiese- en Maatskaplikekomitee). Its task is to formulate joint strategies covering the constitutional, economic and social aspects which counteract any particular local security threat which might have been identified by the GIK. Over and above this responsibility the SEMKOM is required to oversee the implementation of total strategies which might have been devised on the level of the State Security Council, and have been applied on a country-wide basis. Its membership consists of representatives from the government departments which concern themselves with constitutional, economic and social development on a local level. Obviously the Department of Constitutional Development is integrally involved in this committee, but representatives are also drawn from institutions as diverse as the town clerks of certain towns and the Sports Promotion Branch of the Department of National Education. (117)

The third committee is known as the KOMKOM (Kommunikasiekomitee). It performs a roughly parallel function on regional level to the task of the Strategic Communication Branch of the Secretariat - the dissemination of "accurate" information about the activities and intentions

of the Government. It seeks by such information to convince the "reasonable" or "silent" majority that negotiation and consultation with the Government will achieve more durable and satisfactory results than confrontation.

The KOMKOM has, in the past, also overseen the implementation of selective disinformation campaigns, although these are now recognised to be counter-productive. An example of such an attempt at disinformation was the publication in 1982 of a facsimile of the journal Cahac Speaks. While in outward form the two publications seemed identical, key sentences in the version produced by the JMC in Cape Town differed significantly. The headline of the message from the chairman, for instance, read, in the original, "We need to be strong and well-organised", while in the JMC version this headline changed to "We need to be strong, well-organised and responsible".

Similarly, a caption under the picture of a protest meeting in the original read, "We showed at the rally on Sunday, January 10 that we can stand together". In the substituted version, this sentence read "Support your Local Management Committee. You voted them in". Similar bogus pamphlets were employed during the spate of unrest in the Cape Peninsula in June 1980, and on an occasion in 1983, when a non-authentic version of Campus News was produced. In the former case, the Minister of Foreign Affairs admitted that his officials had been involved in the compilation of the pamphlet, which he said, was aimed at providing "correct information to counter false and inciting propaganda". He said further that "whenever the Government considered it essential, for the sake of peace and order, it would distribute pamphlets of that nature. I can add that we have done it in the past and we will do it again in the future." (118)

Each Joint Management Centre also has an executive which consists of the chairman of the Centre itself and the chairmen of the three committees. This executive is regarded as the "dagsbestuur" and meets regularly in order to monitor progress in the implementation of strategies and to enable the chairman of the Centre to report

progress to the Secretary of the State Security Council. The GIK, the SEMKOM and the KOMKOM meet approximately once every two weeks, although in certain situations, for example during the State of Emergency in 1985, the committees met weekly. (119)

The formal terms of reference of the Joint Management Centres have been disclosed to Parliament. In reply to a question in 1983 Mr Botha said that -

"The aim of the JMC's is to ensure the necessary co-ordination on security matters at regional and local levels through the Departments concerned." (120)

While, in 1986, General Malan merely replied that their task was "to co-ordinate joint government action at regional level". (121) It would seem unlikely that the JMC's co-ordinate all government action - more particularly given their structure, outlined above. It is clearly government action in relation to counteracting security threats which the JMC's co-ordinate.

Yet even this more limited description of the terms of reference of the JMC's is capable of an extraordinarily wide interpretation, more particularly, as we have seen, given the wide conception of the "total onslaught". As virtually anything might be included within the ambit of the total onslaught as it manifests itself on a regional level, so virtually anything might technically be the subject of the scrutiny of the JMC's.

It is clear, too, that the JMC's have at least two primary functions which are not specifically mentioned in the terms of reference. First, the JMC's co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of total strategies which have been devised by the Secretariat, and approved by the State Security Council/Cabinet, at regional level. General van der Westhuizen maintains that -

"n GBS vergader om insette van die Staatsveiligheidsraad ... te ontleed, of om optrede te bepaal en te besluit wie dit moet uitvoer." (122)

But it is the second function of the JMC's which is more interesting. The JMC's are the eyes and ears of the Security Management System, and, in order to carry out this task, the JMC -

"ko-ordineer voorts die opstel van die veiligheidsmeesterplan op streekvlak en doen verslag op die toepaslike vlak. Hy stuur situasie-rapporte na bo, hoe dit vorder en watter inligting daar is. Hy doen ook verslag oor hoe met die beslegting van 'n probleem gevorder word." (123)

It seems, then that in addition to their functions as purely co-ordinating institutions, the JMC's are also responsible for determining the security priorities in their own areas and for communicating suggested strategies to deal with these priorities to the "toepaslike vlak", presumably the Secretary of the State Security Council. If this interpretation is correct, it would seem that the JMC's are not merely passive and administrative, but pro-active as well.

This interpretation seems to be substantiated by the example quoted by General van der Westhuizen to illustrate the workings of a Joint Management Centre. A large meeting is arranged by "revolutionary elements" and the possibility exists that this will develop into rioting and public violence. The intelligence of this meeting is acquired by the JMC, who informs the head offices of government departments and the State Security Council. The JMC then co-ordinates the response to the problem with both the civil and security authorities.

Stripped of all their verbiage, the terms of reference of the JMC's are simple. They have been established to counteract what is termed "the revolutionary climate". General van der Westhuizen expresses this aspect of their work as follows -

"Dit gaan hoofsaaklik oor die verlaging van die revolusionêre klimaat, die voorkoming/ontlonting van onrus en die bestryding van terrorisme, en ander revolusionêre optrede." (124)

The "lowering" of "the revolutionary climate" is an extraordinary concept with which to get to grips, more particularly in the light of the example given by General van der Westhuizen, quoted above. It has as its basis the assumption that all action taken by organisations who oppose the Government outside the parameters of "acceptable" opposition (those parameters being determined by the Government itself) is revolutionary action, or at very least action which raises "the revolutionary climate". This, of course, takes on a special significance during a state of emergency, where the "acceptable" parameters of opposition become more heavily circumscribed. Any organisation which then is guilty of operating beyond these parameters is faced with the prospect of joint state action orchestrated by the JMC's.

The power to determine, seemingly arbitrarily, what is and is not raising "the revolutionary climate" makes nonsense of the oft-repeated claim by government spokesmen that the JMC's have no executive powers. While this may be technically true - as we saw it was in the case of the State Security Council and the Secretariat - the same counter-argument is equally valid. The JMC's bring together in one organisation all the top officials within their respective regions, and such officials control formidable executive powers. It seems pedantic to suggest that it is the civil servants, and not the JMC, which determine the executive action, when the same civil servants are all members of the JMC. Of course it is self-evident that between 40 and 60 officials cannot themselves execute action, but those 40 or 60 officials have the ability, through the resources they control, to carry out any strategy a JMC may elect to follow. Besides, General van der Westhuizen makes it clear that, even if the JMC's do not have executive power, they should be regarded as the directors of state activity. He says -

"Die GBS moet self-organisasie en prosedure ontwikkel sodat die volle gewig van die staatsmasjien, met al sy staatsdepartemente, enige situasie in streekverband kan hanteer. Organisasies en prosedure moet op die regte tyd en regte plek aangewend word." (125)

Perhaps this coyness can be ascribed to an unwillingness on the part of the JMC's to disclose the extent of their involvement in the arena of politics, even if this involvement is only to "lower the revolutionary climate". The civil service in South Africa, and particularly the Defence Force, inherited a strong tradition, if not of being non-political, then at least of being non-partisan, from the British. The total strategy applied to external "onslaught" at least provides the civil service and army with the fiction that this is in the interests of all South Africans and is therefore "non-political action". However, "countering" internal "onslaught" or "lowering the revolutionary climate" brings the organs of the State into direct political controversy in a way which makes it very difficult to maintain the facade of formal political neutrality.

The JMC's are, therefore, scrupulous to avoid any personal publicity, preferring to work in the background, and reserving the kudos for "legitimate" politicians. Thus it was that towards the end of 1985, the Joint Management Centre in Cape Town was involved in the provision of food parcels to the unemployed in Atlantis, so as to undermine the influence of Mr Noel Williams' Atlantis Residents' Association, and thereby to "lower the revolutionary climate". However, the JMC was not remotely involved with the physical presentation of these parcels: this pleasant task was reserved for Mr Abe Williams (no relation), the MP in the House of Representatives for the constituency of Mamre, and Defence spokesman for the Labour Party. (126) This modus operandi had at least two advantages: it served to enhance Mr Abe Williams' reputation, and thereby served to emphasise the advantages of working within the system; secondly, it allowed the JMC's role in the provision of the food parcels to pass unnoticed, and thus for them to escape any possible political controversy.

Sometimes the JMC's will be required, as we noted earlier, to carry out the instructions of the State Security Council, and this invariably draws the JMC more directly into controversy. In June 1982, for example, the Natal JMC was instructed by the State Security

Council to assist the campaign to have Ingwavuma incorporated into Swaziland, as follows -

"Natal GBS word getaak om grensaanpassings van Swaziland en veral t.o.v. Ingwavuma gebied d.m.v. komops te ondersteun." (127)

COMMUNICATION OPERATIONS

In carrying out this instruction, the SADF incurred the wrath of Chief Buthelezi, who maintained that armed soldiers were intimidating the villagers in the area. The Chief Minister alleged that soldiers had been telling villagers that the Defence Force had helped them with water supplies during the 1980 drought and with medical supplies when there was a cholera epidemic in 1981.

The soldiers were pointedly asking what Inkatha had done for them. In addition, Chief Buthelezi accused the Security Policy of having attempted to intimidate the local population in Ingwavuma to renounce their membership of Inkatha. Finally, Dr Oscar Dhloomo, the Minister of Education and Culture in KwaZulu, stated that soldiers had been spreading "propaganda" in schools in the area. Chief Buthelezi said that he could not understand the motivation behind these actions, but that he considered them "very provocative". (128)

Chief Buthelezi was no push-over, and after threatening to withdraw his delegation from the Commission of Inquiry set up to adjudicate the proposed land deals with Swaziland, the SADF backed down and withdrew their personnel from the area. Rather lamely, the Officer Commanding Natal Command explained that the soldiers had been going from house to house in the Ingwavuma area to compile statistics which would help to combat the cholera epidemic. Chief Buthelezi replied that such statistics would easily have been obtained from the Department of Health in Ulundi. (129)

The relationship between the local JMC's and the State Security Council is also made more complicated by the domestic political constraints under which members of the SSC operate. During the unrest in the Cape Peninsula in the latter half of 1985, the JMC in Cape

Town suggested that the suburb of District Six should be reproclaimed a group area for coloureds. The idea behind this was that a dramatic announcement of this nature would go a long way towards "lowering the revolutionary climate" in Cape Town's coloured townships and thereby help to restore calm. The suggestion was turned down flat : Mr Botha himself had been responsible, while Minister of Community Development in 1966, for the original proclamation and had no interest in reversing it. (130)

Not all the activities of the JMC's are, however, politically controversial. Some merely aim to facilitate administrative co-ordination in the management of security problems. During the height of the riots in the Cape Peninsula in 1985, for example, the security forces encountered the problem of youths who hid behind the bushes on either side of the N2 freeway outside Cape Town, emerging only to throw stones at passing cars. The removal of these bushes became a tactical necessity, and the problem was brought to the attention of the Cape Town JMC, which sought the co-operation of the roads engineers of the Cape Town City Council, the Divisional Council of the Cape, and the Cape Provincial Administration, all of whom controlled various portions of the road. The bushes were cleared within 24 hours. (131)

It was a little unusual in this instance for a JMC to have become involved with municipal officials, since the interface between local government (whether of "white" or "non-white" areas) occurs primarily when local government officials co-operate with either sub- or mini-JMC's. Like the JMC's themselves, sub- and mini-JMC's are divided into three committees, again known by their Afrikaans abbreviations as the VEIKOM (Veiligheidskomitee), the SEMKOM and KOMKOM. Attached to each is a GOS (Gesamentlike Operasiesentrum), a body of officials which gives practical effect to the decisions of the sub- or mini-JMC concerned. (132)

On this level, the membership of the committees appears to be less rigid than is the case with the JMC's themselves, and officials and

other interested parties seem free to attend the meetings of committees other than that of which they are formally members. In addition, sub- and mini-JMC's meet more regularly in plenary session; depending on the situation, they may meet as often as twice per week. Furthermore, the KOMKOM appears to meet irregularly and usually only to discuss a specific communication project assigned to it.

Further evidence of the flexibility of the sub- and mini-JMC's is the relative weight of membership of the committees themselves. In situations of unrest or large-scale conflict, the sub- or mini-JMC goes into a security mode, and accordingly the security force participation increases at the expense of the officials involved in social, economic or constitutional programmes. However, when "stability" or "normality" - and these terms have specific meanings within the JMC context (133) - has been re-established, the sub- or mini-JMC reverts to a welfare mode, as a consequence of which the memberships are inverted. The transition from the one mode to the other appears to occur effortlessly, and without particular antagonism by officials.

At mini-JMC level, membership of the body rarely exceeds 20, with representatives drawn from the local offices of the Departments of Posts and Telecommunications, Health and Welfare, Manpower, Home Affairs and whatever Education department is appropriate to the area served by the Centre. In addition (obviously), there are representatives of the SAP - normally the station commander and the "field commander" if there are extra SAP units deployed in the area - and the SADF. Parastatal corporations, such as Escom or SATS, are included if appropriate. From the City Council or Town Council some five representatives normally attend meetings of the JMC, usually the Mayor/Town Clerk/Administrator, and a representative from the engineering, technical, financial and law enforcement branches. (Where black local authorities have effectively collapsed, the Administrator will attend instead of the Mayor; however it is accepted that this is a temporary phenomenon, and as soon as the City/Town councils become re-established, the Mayor will return to

his "rightful" place on the JMC). Where circumstances warrant this, a representative from the ambulance services may also be co-opted.

As we saw in the case of the JMC'S themselves, the activities of the sub- and mini-JMC's are aimed at co-ordinating government action with the object of "lowering the revolutionary climate" within their area of competence. Such activities - aside from straight security force action - will normally take the form of improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of the area. This derives from the openly-expressed belief by key security intelligence policy-makers (most recently by General Malan in an interview with Die Suid-Afrikaan (134)) that the disenfranchised sections of the population are not in the first place interested in political rights, but in socio-economic upliftment. Hence a typical programme of action of a mini-JMC attached to a black local authority would focus on the provision of new schools and the upgrading of existing ones, health promotion programmes, the provision of electricity and water-borne sewerage, the tarring of roads, the provision of play parks and a sports-promotion programme, the installation of telephones and training schemes for the unemployed.

However, even within these welfare mode upliftment programmes, participation by the security forces in this process is considered both desirable and, indeed, essential. For, since the NSMS as a whole is intimately involved with security management, as we have seen, it is assumed that socio-economic upliftment programmes themselves form part of wider, security-related objectives.

That means that the security forces are required to create the essential stability it is assumed is necessary for meaningful upliftment programmes to occur. Accordingly, the activities of the SA Police and/or the SADF and/or the municipal law enforcement agencies are similarly co-ordinated, not only to achieve basic stability per se, but also to mesh in with the upliftment programmes. Hence, the security forces may be involved in activities as diverse as manning road-blocks, guarding construction teams and participating in patrols

whose object it is to discover what the local population thinks and to communicate the intentions of the JMC. (135)

The security forces do not confine themselves to this executive function either. As was argued above, the NSMS depends for its efficient functioning on accurate, evaluated intelligence, and the security forces' role, at sub- and mini-JMC level, is to provide raw intelligence for onward transmission and evaluation along the channels the NSMS provides. This enables the higher levels in the System to monitor the progress of the "revolutionary onslaught" and to determine whether individual intelligence reports constitute part of a wider canvas (requiring a country-wide "total strategy") or whether this is a local grievance, the resolution of which can be left to a sub- or mini-JMC in the area concerned.

Such then, are the structure and functions of the National Security Management System. It is a formidable apparatus, drawing together officials and politicians who wield formidable power and influence in South Africa. It is, as we can clearly see, the manifestation, in operational terms, of the ideas of General Beaufre, probably one of the few times that the ideas of a single theoretician have been translated into reality in the modern world. We have also seen that it is effective : it has effected a very high degree of co-ordination within the civil service, which, when Mr Botha became Prime Minister, was widely engaging in disparate pursuits. It has induced a much higher degree of efficiency in coping with perceived security threats, and has infused, in a new generation of public servants, the awareness of a "total onslaught" and a commitment to a "total strategy" as a means of dealing with the onslaught. We will now have to examine whether the institution of the Security Management System has, as many commentators allege, involved a "takeover" by the military, and whether this System is likely to have an enduring effect on policy-making in South Africa in years to come.

CHAPTER 3

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- (77) Interview with senior military officer, 6th June 1982.
- (78) Hough, M, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
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- (82) Van Deventer, A J, op. cit., p. 10.
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- (84) Geldenhuys, D and D Kotzé, op. cit., p. 40.
- (85) House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), vol. 113, 26th April 1984, col. 5241. These percentages must be liberally interpreted. The Minister of Defence on another occasion admitted that the staff establishment of the Secretariat in 1984 was 87 posts. It is difficult to see how the 1% contribution of the Prisons Service was arrived at. See House of Assembly Questions and Replies 1986, 8th April 1986, cols. 913-4.
- (86) Republic of South Africa Annual Report of the Office of the Prime Minister 1981 (RP 23/1982), p. 29.
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- (107) House of Assembly Questions and Replies (Hansard), 8th April 1986, cols. 914-924.
- (108) Die Burger, "GBS nie Geheime Instrument", 27th May 1986.

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- (115) Die Burger, "GBS nie Geheime Instrument", 27th May 1986.
- (116) Interview with official attached to a JMC, 27th March 1986.
- (117) Ibid.
- (118) House of Assembly Questions and Replies (Hansard), vol. 110, 1983, cols. 492-3.
- (119) Interview with official attached to a JMC, 27th March 1986.
- (120) House of Assembly Questions and Replies (Hansard), vol. 110, 1983, col. 1986.
- (121) House of Assembly Questions and Replies (Hansard), 11th March 1986, col. 461.
- (122) Die Burger, "GBS nie Geheime Instrument", 27th May 1986.
- (123) Ibid.

- (124) Ibid.
- (125) Ibid.
- (126) Interview with official attached to the Secretariat of the SSC, 19th May 1986.
- (127) Interview with senior military officer, 6th June 1982.
- (128) Natal Mercury, "KwaZulu may shun Rumpff Probe over Soldiers", 15th December 1982; Star, "Buthelezi to Protest over SADF Probe", 15th December 1982; The Citizen, "Buthelezi Warns over SADF Action", 18th December 1982.
- (129) Natal Mercury, "Natal Defence Heads in Black Talks", 15th December 1982.
- (130) Interview with official attached to a JMC, 5th November 1985.
- (131) Interview with senior military officer, 8th April 1986.
- (132) The information on the workings of the sub- and mini-JMC's was supplied during an interview with a senior official attached to a mini-JMC, 15th July 1987.
- (133) "Stability" means that essential services are able to be performed, albeit under protection. "Normality" means that the security forces can withdraw and that civil government - in the form of a black local authority - can function normally.
- (134) Giliomee, H, "In Gesprek met Genl. Magnus Malan", Die Suid-Afrikaan, Winter 1986, p. 12-13.
- (135) These patrols are known commonly, and coarsely, as "gatkruip-patrollies". The name gives some indication of the spirit in which they are undertaken.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

For a variety of reasons, the public pronouncements of politicians are often disbelieved. This, in itself, is a healthy occurrence, since politicians are inclined to the use of hyperbole. Politicians tend to engage in hyperbole because overstatement of a case generally means that half of what they say is accepted, which is, as often as not, what they were aiming for in the first instance.

In South Africa, this general rule is, predictably, somewhat different. Not that South African politicians do not exaggerate; on the contrary, the tendency is probably more pronounced here than in other democracies, whose leaders' statements face a more intensive examination in public forums and in the media. But in South Africa, politicians tend to be absolutely believed or absolutely disbelieved, depending on what side of the political spectrum the recipient of the message is located. This aggravates our already complex problems; political debate is made additionally complicated by the fact that both sides talk past each other, neither accepting the other's basic points of departure.

In no field of public debate has this phenomenon been more apparent than in that surrounding the objective threats facing the Republic.

Official spokesmen have, as we have seen, consistently punted the view that South Africa is the subject of a total onslaught, masterminded by the Kremlin, and encompassing a wide spectrum of fields. Opponents of the Government - both liberal and radical - deny that there is such a total onslaught. Liberals would argue that while there are legitimate security concerns inherent in, for example, the presence of relatively large numbers of Cuban troops in Angola, such security concerns need to be dealt with in a piecemeal fashion and do not, in themselves, constitute proof of a malevolent intent on the part of the Soviet Union. Both liberals and radicals regard the domestic dimension of the perceived total onslaught as little more than an understandable and even legitimate reaction to the policy of apartheid.

Because no consensus exists on the nature and scope of the security threat, none exists on the response of the State. The National Security Management System has, then, for example, been described by Mr Colin Eglin, then Leader of the Official Opposition in the House of Assembly, as "a very sinister political development". (1) General Malan, on behalf of the Government, responded -

"Dit verstom my dat 'n politikus en leier van die amptelike opposisie so naïef en oningelig kan wees ... hy probeer daarvan 'n politieke speelbal maak wat dui op oningeligheid en naïewiteit. 'n Mens sou kon verwag dat 'n man in sy posisie beter huiswerk sou doen voordat hy verklarings soos hierdie maak. (2)

In a very large measure, General Malan's criticism was valid. The Government has never tried to conceal its intention to operationalise the concept of a total strategy, and, indeed, has publicised this intention repeatedly. The problem was that Mr Eglin did not believe that the Government could be serious.

It was the purpose of this study to show that Mr Botha has been wholly consistent and therefore predictable in establishing the National Security Management System. He genuinely and earnestly believed - and still believes - in the concept of a total onslaught.

He has found, in General Beaufre, a theoretician whose ideas match his own, and has adopted Beaufre's ideas seemingly without question, about how to deal with the onslaught. He has, in his public pronouncements and in his departmental publications, striven to expound his theories. Since he became Prime Minister in 1978, he has, in a very single-minded fashion, implemented precisely what he said he intended to do.

This predictability notwithstanding, the institution of the NSMS has been shrouded in a mystique which is substantially undeserved. This mystique has been fuelled both by sensational accounts written about it on the one hand, and by actions of poorly-informed officials on the other. Thus, a recent account, contained in the Weekly Mail, was headlined "The Army's Quiet Coup", and "The Uniformed Web that Sprawls across the Country". The writer of this article maintains that -

"A massive and little known network of over 500 committees, effectively controlled by the military and police, is co-ordinating government and state activity at every level of South African life." (3)

This interpretation, while factually correct in the sense that there are 500 committees and that certainly the more important of these are controlled by the SADF or SAP, is extravagant. Clearly not all state activity is co-ordinated by the NSMS, but merely activity in the area of security intelligence. Admittedly, as we have seen, the inordinately wide definition of the total onslaught has provided avenues for action by the NSMS in areas unrelated to state security, but the point remains that there are areas of state activity which are not regulated by the System.

On the other hand, the official reluctance to disclose details of the activities of the NSMS fuels speculation about the extent of its involvement in civil government. For example, on 9th October 1986, Cllr Tony Leon asked the Johannesburg Management Committee (as he was entitled to do in terms of Section 28(1) of the Standing Orders

governing the conduct of debates in the City Council), whether there was a sub-JMC for the Johannesburg area, and if so, whether any officials of the city served on this body.

The reply of the Management Committee was simultaneously ingenuous and evasive, as follows -

"Section 4 of the Protection of Information Act (No 84 of 1982) makes it an offence for a person to disclose any information knowing that it relates to a security matter, to any person other than a person to whom he is authorised to disclose it, or to whom it may be lawfully disclosed, or to whom in the interests of the Republic it is his duty to disclose it; and provides a penalty on conviction of a fine not exceeding R10 000, or to imprisonment not exceeding ten years, or both. Without any admission that the Council has, or has not, such information, it is considered that the information, in the form requested, would fall within the scope of the prohibition of the aforesaid section." (4)

If this reply had been furnished by any other corporation than the governing body of the largest city in the Republic, its incomprehensibility might be excused. For, earlier in that year, General Malan had told Parliament that a sub-JMC existed for Johannesburg and had told the press that "daar is niks geheim of sinistêr" regarding the NSMS. For the Management Committee to have hidden behind the provisions of the Protection of Information Act shows either dangerous naïvety or equally dangerous ignorance; neither quality is recommended for the City Fathers controlling the centre which produces fully half South Africa's GNP.

In part, however, this reticence is understandable given the controversial nature of the NSMS as instituted. It is all very well for General Malan to say, by way of a press statement, that there is nothing secret or sinister about the System : the point is that the NSMS was designed to co-ordinate the activities of the SADF, SAP and National Intelligence Service, each of whose activities are precluded from being reported by very specific pieces of legislation (the Defence Act, the Police Act and the Protection of Information Act respectively).

What is important is that both sensationalism and evasion cloak the NSMS in an aura of mysticism and intrigue of which the authors of spy fiction might have cause to be proud. Neither approach is useful : both implicitly portray the NSMS as omnipotent and omnipresent. What is lacking in these approaches is a dispassionate account of the structures and an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses, their potential for providing solutions or exacerbating problems.

Also implicit, particularly in the sensational accounts, is the allegation that these structures are new and that they have been activated since the first State of Emergency was declared in July 1985. Part of the purpose of this study was to show that while the large-scale political dissatisfaction which manifested itself before and during the Emergency has thrown the NSMS into sharper focus, the System itself has been planned in intricate detail over a long period. It is tempting to speculate whether the expressed goal of some of the anti-apartheid community organisations of making South Africa "ungovernable" would have succeeded had the NSMS not been in place, or, conversely, whether such organisations would have embarked on this campaign in the first place had they been appraised of the sophisticated nature of the repressive system they were up against.

As it was, the "mini-revolution" South Africa experienced in 1985 and 1986 allowed the security planners to refine the NSMS and make it more flexible. As we have seen, the NSMS, particularly on JMC level, is able to adapt itself effortlessly from a welfare mode to a security mode, depending on the perceived threats to the security of the State. Equally, the structures vary from place to place, depending on local circumstances (for example, such as whether there is a viable black local authority in existence). One implication of this is the difficulty researchers experience in definitively outlining the structures created by the NSMS. What appears to be correct information may apply only to one area at one time; researchers need to be cautious of uncritical generalisation or extrapolation.

Nonetheless, it is clear from this study that certainly within the security intelligence structures and, given the all-embracing nature of the total strategy, probably within the central government decision-making structures as a whole, a fundamental shift in the locus of power has occurred. This has had important implications both for the style of government, and for civil-military relations in South Africa.

Many commentators have suggested that what has occurred has been a de facto coup by the military. Not surprisingly, government spokesmen have been at pains to play down the influence of the military in central government decision-making. In an interview during 1986, General Malan stated unequivocally when asked whether a coup had in fact taken place -

"In Suid-Afrika is die konsep van militêre regimes totaal taboe. Dit is nie by ons ingeburger nie. 'n Militêre regime is nie 'n oplossing vir ons probleem nie - dit is 'n ontwyking van ons probleem. 'n Staatsgreep is totaal on-Suid-Afrikaans en vreemd aan ons geskiedenis en lewensfilosofie." (5)

General Malan's view about the relationship between the State and the Defence Force was equally clearly expressed in the same interview -

"Ons model is dié van 'n veiligheidsmag wat sy volk en die regering van die dag - maak nie saak wie die regering is nie - met lojaliteit moet dien en nie in die verleentheid stel nie." (6)

Similar sentiments have also repeatedly been stated by the Chief of the SADF and the Chiefs of the service arms, a recent example being Admiral Syndercombe, in his "Message from the Chief of the Navy" in Navy News. (7)

These eloquent disclaimers are as predictable as they are superficial. It is true that the outward manifestations of a coup are absent. It is also dubious whether the SADF would be able to mount an effective coup given the small professional component of the SADF.

Something like 88% of the Defence Force consists of recruits and members of the part-time forces; (8) to involve these people in an overthrow of civilian government would be risky, since the "generals" could never be sure of their allegiance in an exercise so controversial.

If a formal coup has not happened, what precisely has occurred? Is South Africa perhaps drifting towards the "garrison state" model outlined by Harold Lasswell? Lasswell was, of course, writing at the time of the Fascist and Nazi dictatorships, but his analysis appears as apposite to South Africa in the 1980's, as it was to Italy and Germany in the 1930's and 1940's.

Lasswell identified five elements which characterise a "garrison state". First, the military authorities, or "specialists on violence", must assume power, not as a temporary phenomenon, such as during a war or emergency, but on a fairly permanent basis. Importantly, this assumption of power must carry the blessing of the civil government.

Secondly, these military rulers normally possess skills more traditionally associated with civil government and/or technical management. These skills are superimposed upon the basic training of the soldier making him an expert not only on violence, but on aspects of civil management as well.

Thirdly, there needs to be "a deep and general sense of participation in the total enterprise of the state", (9) and for this to be accomplished, it will be necessary for the rulers of the garrison state both to master techniques of propaganda, as well as to promote the "socialisation of danger", so that all citizens become identified with the "destiny and mission of the state". (10) However, as Lasswell cynically, if correctly, points out, "war scares that fail to culminate in violence eventually lose their value", (11) and it is then necessary to go to war, in order to preserve "those virtues of sturdy acquiescence in the regime", (12) from which the rulers thereof so richly benefit.

Fourthly, there needs to be discipline, consciously promoted, to ensure the internal cohesion of the garrison state. The most effective means of discipline is by early socialisation, but, obviously coercion is an integral part of the process.

Finally, the rulers of the garrison state will find it necessary to change the fundamental principles and means by which the state is run. Decisions will tend to be made autocratically; democratic practices will fall into desuetude -

"Government will be highly centralised, though devolution may be practised in order to mitigate 'bureaucratism'. Not only will the administrative structure be centralised, but at every level it will tend to integrate authority in a few hands." (13)

As part of this bureaucratic political control, the rulers will have to have a monopoly on the dissemination and interpretation of news.

Many of these features appear to have occurred in South Africa. Military men, suitably qualified, have tended to assume important responsibilities within civil government, and this appears not merely to carry the blessing of elected politicians, but indeed to have been facilitated by them. Moreover, by an unrelenting diet of "total onslaught" propaganda, the white population have become convinced that their security and the existence of the State are inextricably interwoven. In addition, the repressive nature of the State, more particularly during the Emergency, has ensured that the wider population are, if not disciplined, then at least cowed into submission. Finally, as we have seen, the shift in power brought about by virtue of the institution of the NSMS has meant that more and more political decisions are made within bureaucratic forums, excluding thereby both traditional democratic accountability by the Executive to Parliament, and scrutiny by the press.

Yet throughout Lasswell's thesis, he refers to military officers, or more broadly to "specialists on violence", as being the key actors

within the "garrison state". How would one then explain a new generation of civil servants from specifically non-military backgrounds who are achieving prominence within the NSMS? One could refer, for example, to officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs, such as Neil van Heerden and David Steward. How does one explain the emphasis on the welfare mode in areas which are being upgraded, and the back seat which many of the specialists on violence are having to take during these upliftment activities?

In posing these questions, there is no attempt to deny that the military have become more influential in South African politics. This is incontrovertibly true. This can, however, in large part be attributed to the fact that, as primary exponents of the concept of total strategy, military officers - and particularly those who had completed the Joint Staff Course at which the works of Beaufre were extensively aired - were uniquely placed to take advantage of posts which were created when Mr Botha effected the implementation of the structures which General Beaufre had outlined. However, the relative preponderance of military personnel has declined over time, as more and more bureaucrats from other departments became familiar with the total onslaught/total strategy concepts and began to take a more active role in security management.

The other indicator often advanced by the military coup advocates is the fact that the "specialists of violence" are numerically preponderant in the institutions central to the Security Management System, and particularly on the Secretariat. This is, however, probably more attributable to the fact that, as the primary intelligence clearing-house, the Secretariat employs more specialists in intelligence evaluation. As we saw, the four line departments involved in intelligence evaluation - the NIS, the SAP, the SADF and the Department of Foreign Affairs - constitute 94% of the staff establishment of the Secretariat. Given the chaotic state of intelligence evaluation which Mr Botha inherited from his predecessor, it seems reasonable that he would have created institutional structures which have forced these agencies to co-operate. Simply to

adduce as evidence of a military coup the mere membership of the Secretariat seems somewhat unconvincing.

Besides, there is a great congruence between the SADF and the politicians. Both recognise that the "struggle" in which South Africa is involved cannot be won by force of arms : indeed, the evidence suggests that it was the SADF which sold the 80% political/20% military argument to Mr Botha, and through him, to the political establishment in South Africa. If anything, the SADF top structure might regard the pace of reform to be too slow; certainly, the chance of the SADF embarking on a right-wing counter-revolution, such as was attempted by the French in Algeria, is beyond the realms of possibility.

It would appear, then, that the NSMS represents a more subtle and sophisticated phenomenon than merely a takeover by the military. When the National Party was returned to power in 1948, the new government inherited a bureaucracy which, in classic British tradition, was formally politically neutral. While the Government was careful to preserve this appearance, it set about moulding the thought-pattern of the civil service corps within its own ideological parameters. Thus, for decades after 1948, the civil service engaged itself in making apartheid work, and in "selling" the concept both internally and internationally.

The problem was that, from the mid-1970's onwards, it became apparent that the ideology of apartheid was not working, nor could it be induced to work. This realisation became apparent to the civil service unevenly; those with the most exposure to world opinion (for example, officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs) appreciated it first, and the military command structure realised it after Angola. It became urgently necessary, therefore, to provide a new ideology to replace apartheid; an ideology, moreover, which would, like apartheid, guarantee continued white domination, even with a hostile world environment and a changed geo-political equation in Southern Africa. This ideology was found in the total onslaught and

total strategy. It was operationalised not necessarily entirely by the military, but by a class of politicians and civil service mandarins (which initially included large numbers of SADF personnel) who saw in it the potential for a much more sophisticated form of white domination than apartheid had been able to provide.

The aims of this new "ideology" - if so it can be called - are as simple as they are ambitious. On the one hand, the total strategy, manifested in the NSMS, must guarantee internal stability by a judicious mix of security action and socio-economic reform. On the other hand, it must secure regional domination for South Africa, so that neither the national liberation movements, nor the OAU, nor the Soviet Union and its allies can tip the balance in favour of an internal revolution. Thus the two legs of the strategy hang together: denied the prospect of invasion from outside South Africa's borders, the political leadership of the internal resistance movements must either face the rigours of a highly sophisticated security establishment, or else participate in structures which effectively co-opt them.

It is in the context of this paradox that the "reform" policy of Mr Botha's government needs to be understood. The relationship between political reform and the total onslaught continues to be an important consideration of the security planners attached to the NSMS. The System, as we have seen, is designed to identify not only purely security problems, but also political and socio-economic problems which may affect security.

It stands to reason that evaluated intelligence must show the extent of social and political dissatisfaction in South Africa, particularly amongst those communities to whom access to the central decision-making structures has been denied. Furthermore, while the official view is that the organisations which most vehemently articulate these dissatisfactions are part of the onslaught (whether wittingly or not), the security planners cannot be blind to the fact that the mere denial of full political rights to those communities either

constitutes, or else has the potential to contribute to, a security problem which needs to be redressed. Yet, as we have argued, domestic political constraints demand that reform is addressed in a particular manner.

General Malan has been unambiguous in stressing the need for political reform, without it, the war against the onslaught will be as good as lost. Speaking about the nature of a revolutionary war, he said -

"Jy verloor nooit hierdie soort stryd militêr nie. Jy verloor dit staatkundig, polities, ekonomies en op sulke terreine. Die militêre of veiligheidsoptrede is eintlik 'n geringe deel van die stryd." (14)

By contrast, when he was asked what importance the SADF attached to a political solution, he replied -

"Dit is die kern waarom dit draai. As daar nie 'n staatkundige of politieke oplossing moontlik is nie, kan die Parlement maar spreekwoordelik mōre sluit. 'n Staatkundige oplossing is die kern waarom dit draai ... Jou staatkundige faktor is die bepalende faktor, terwyl die ekonomiese, finansiële, militêre en ander optrede ondergeskik is en ondersteunend bly om daardie doelwit te bereik." (15)

It seems, then, that within the SADF, the necessity for a political solution is self-evident. The key considerations are obviously what kind of political solution, and in what way the political solution is arrived at.

In the speeches of both Mr Botha and General Malan, there is a pre-occupation with "orderly" change. People who operate beyond the parameters of "orderly" change are, as we saw earlier, contributing towards "the revolutionary climate". According to General Malan -

"As jy revolusionêr wil verander, is jy 'n radikalis of 'n ekstrems. Of jy 'n linkse of 'n regse ekstrems is, maak dit nie saak nie. As jy met revolusionêre geweld

wil verander, is dit vir die Weermag en die Veiligheidsmagte onaanvaarbaar ... Die Parlement is besig met evolusie; evolusie wat sigbaar is. Geen drukgroepe kan die saak van hervorming op die oomblik beter dien."
(16)

Thus, the only acceptable political activity to the SADF and, by implication, to the Security Management System is that which occurs either within Parliament or else within bodies Parliament has created. The total strategy demands that political change occurs in an orderly and evolutionary way.

But, as we argued above, the intelligence reports which the Security Management System receives must demonstrate that the maximum which Parliamentary institutions can deliver by way of political reform is too little to match the aspirations of the vast majority of the population. This is evidently something which General Malan misunderstands, despite his belief in the cardinality of a political solution. He argues, for example -

"Die groot vraag is ook hoeveel van die swartmense eintlik net in die bevrediging van hulle materiële behoeftes belangstel - behuising, opvoeding, werksgeleenthede, klere, brood en botter, ens. Daar is tans net 'n beperkte gedeelte wat werklik in politieke deelname belangstel. Ek dink vir die massas in Suid-Afrika is die demokrasie nie 'n relevante faktor nie. Vir hulle gaan dit oor die bevrediging van hul eie behoeftes. Hierdie behoeftes verander van tyd tot tyd en word nou deur revolusionêres uitgebuit." (17)

This is a truly revealing statement, since it assumes that the only attraction which "revolutionaries" have for the population is in the exploitation of socio-economic grievances.

It is against these sentiments that the large-scale upliftment programmes, outlined earlier, have to be judged. It is often pointed out, correctly, that the upliftment programmes are not in themselves sinister. Nor can one find fault with the sincerity and patent dedication of the officials involved in such programmes. Many of

these officials see themselves as a new generation of missionaries whose task it is to undo the harm which Verwoerdian policy has caused, and to bring relief to oppressed communities. One needs, however, to look beyond this dedication to the political motives which lie behind the NSMS. The touchstone in assessing whether a community needs upgrading is not necessarily what the people want, but whether it will keep the people quiescent and therefore not amenable to the exploitation of "revolutionaries".

There is, of course, a further motive, as we have seen. That is simply to bolster the legitimacy of constitutional structures created by the Nationalist government. For example, when it became clear that black local authorities, established in terms of the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982, were to be the only constitutional mechanism outside the homeland structures provided for the political aspirations of the so-called "urban blacks", the broad democratic movement decided to boycott these authorities, and to create alternative structures in their place, more representative of township opinion. While large-scale intimidation and violence was undeniably part of this campaign, the Government's primary concern was not in the first place directed at the attendant loss of life - although this was obviously gruesome - but more particularly at the challenge which this constituted to the local authority structures themselves, and by implication, to the constitution as a whole.

It was thus essential to keep the local authorities viable; if the councillors were, either out of fear or conviction, unwilling to co-operate, then council officials had to be induced to provide services effectively. The NSMS provided the means of providing such services, and thereby, of securing the legitimacy of the very apartheid institutions the communities were rejecting.

The Government's strategy of "broadening democracy" is as plain as it is chilling. Those who co-operate within the structures which the Government itself had created get handsomely rewarded, not necessarily personally, but by means of access to resources which can then

be distributed, enhancing thereby not merely the politicians' personal reputations, but also the advantages of co-operation per se.

Thus, despite the apparent naïvety of General Malan's statement, he and his security planners know all too well that, provided the repression is brutal enough and the rewards for co-operation are sufficiently lucrative, the absence of legitimacy by the present regime, or the structures it spawns, is essentially immaterial. The anti-apartheid community organisations, and, for that matter, the ANC, enjoy considerable political legitimacy amongst the disenfranchised population, but mere legitimacy has proved to be a poor substitute and weak challenge to the control exercised by the State. As we have seen, this control is both direct and indirect; it relies on straight repression and on co-option.

What, then, are the prospects for a change in the status quo? For decades, international commentators in particular have hopefully and yet confidently predicted the imminent collapse of the apartheid regime, only to be confounded by its apparent durability. One of the few sober correspondents was Johnson, who, writing in the heady post-Soweto days, ventured to predict (at the same time as others such as Legum, (18) were making five-minutes-to-midnight prognostications) that -

"To put it bluntly : if the Pretoria regime adopts a sufficiently ruthless and brutal policy at home it may be able to repress black rebellion well into the twenty-first century." (19)

Undoubtedly, he was one of the more prescient observers, and undoubtedly the NSMS provided the vehicle through which the "ruthless and brutal policy" could be carried out.

Yet the regime does have its vulnerabilities. Chief amongst these is its inability to wage war both internally and externally at the same time. (Johnson was careful to stress that "Pretoria" should not, under any circumstances, commit its forces outside its borders). The

reason for this is obvious. The SADF relies very heavily on white conscriptees for its manpower provisioning, and as a source of manpower, the white group is at best demographically static. Indeed, if current tendencies are anything to go by, the birthrate of whites is actually declining; added to this is the fact that more whites are emigrating than are settling in the country.

A counter-revolutionary war demands vast reservoirs of manpower, and, faced with this declining source of recruitment, one might expect the regime to become more and more vulnerable as a result. Yet the prospects of a successful guerilla war are by no means certain. South Africa is not Vietnam or even Mozambique, where the terrain lent itself to the prosecution of a guerilla war. Nor is the SADF the US Army or that of Portugal, whose conscripts were waging a war on foreign territory with a conspicuous lack of enthusiasm. The SADF has been waging a counter-revolutionary war in northern South West Africa/Namibia for twenty years without SWAPO, its chief adversary, being able to set up an alternative administration in any part of that territory. What is more, the SADF is able to refine its operational strategies and to test its equipment in that war, with the consequence that if the theatre of war was to change to (say) the northern Transvaal or northern Natal, it would be able to field highly experienced commanders and battle-tested equipment against cadres who, however well-motivated, would be comparative novices.

However, as we saw, it is implicit in Beaufre's thesis of an exterior counter-manoeuvre that one's enemies should not be permitted to engage one on one's own territory. The total strategy, by integrating defence and foreign policy, has been able to shape a regional response to the problem of infiltration - one which has popularly become known as destabilisation.

It goes beyond the scope of this study to chronicle the development of the destabilisation policy in any depth. Other scholars, notably Geldenhuys, Price, Jenkins and Davies and O'Meara, have done so in commendable detail. (20) However, a persistent flaw in some accounts

of the destabilisation controversy - particularly as reflected, for example, in Parliamentary debates - is the conclusion that a semi-permanent conflict exists between the "hawks" in government (broadly represented by the military) and the "doves" (the staff of the Department of Foreign Affairs). We have sketched at some length the rise and current preponderance of the military in central decision-making structures under Mr P W Botha, and it is true that the military typically have a more blunt approach to the resolution of foreign policy problems, but this approach is only half valid. It assumes that central government decision-making is ad hoc and unco-ordinated, which, as we have seen, is very far from being the case. Mr Botha likes precise determination of policies and he demands that they be carried through exactly as planned. He has, furthermore, created the institutional framework which allows this co-ordination and execution to occur.

In part, the confusion about the roles of the institutional actors derives from confusion about the goals which the policy aims to achieve. The goal is very simple - regional domination of the sub-continent - and this goal has remained substantially unchanged since Verwoerd's days. What distinguishes the era of total strategy under Mr Botha from that of his predecessors, is that despite a very different geo-political equation, the same results have been able to be achieved.

Regional domination has been necessary to achieve some very specific policy objectives. Firstly and foremostly, it is designed to create a series of politically compliant buffer states to the north of South Africa, with the objective of preventing, or at least vastly complicating, the infiltration of ANC/PAC guerillas through these states to the South African hinterland. To be sure, there are other objectives, too; stemming the tide of communism, fulfilling the role of regional Leviathan, creating a Constellation of Southern African states and so on, but the primary goal, if and when successful, ensures that the security forces can deal with internal threats to the status quo without a simultaneous threat of terrorist infiltration.

This policy, too, has been conspicuously successful. The formal non-aggression pacts concluded with the Kingdom of Swaziland in 1982 and the Peoples' Republic of Mozambique in 1984; the collapse of the Jonathan regime in Lesotho after a mere 19 days of economic blockade, and the continued support of the UNITA movement in southern Angola, at vast cost to the government of that country, point to the single-handed determination by the Botha government to achieve regional domination and their success in achieving it. Even the front-line states hitherto spared large-scale destabilisation (although sufficient isolated events have occurred to suggest a malevolent pattern), such as Zimbabwe and Botswana have been at pains to stress that their territory is not used for guerilla incursions into South Africa.

This tends to suggest a superficial durability of the apartheid regime. Up to a point, this must be true. Bolstered by an internal security management system which simultaneously co-opts clients and cowers critics and pushes sources of infiltration far from its borders, the regime is indisputably secure in the short and even medium term. Yet, there are weaknesses.

First, from a pragmatic point of view, the NSMS - both in its internal and external dimensions - is inordinately expensive. Upgrading a deprived township is as expensive an operation as the development of a new generation of armoured car; the one is essential to "win the hearts and minds" while the other is necessary to keep the front-line states in thrall. Ultimately - inflation notwithstanding - there is a limit on the amount of taxation which can be imposed on what is a relatively small wealth-producing base, and, while there are undoubted savings that can be effected within the context of a siege economy, the Government will eventually have to face the classic dilemma of opting for either guns or butter, but not both simultaneously.

Secondly, as we argued earlier, the South African government is critically short of legitimacy. What legitimacy it does accrue, comes from the majority of the whites, who see in it the vehicle which will

guarantee their continued survival, identity, prosperity and privilege. Should the Government fail to deliver these qualities, or should the costs (say, in taxation used for upliftment operations), outweigh perceived benefits, one might expect the white electorate to opt, in increasing numbers, for a right-wing alternative whose appeal is more simple and more direct. Merely the perceived possibility of this occurring might induce the politicians to resort to more basic, cheaper, but ultimately less effective, forms of repression.

Thirdly, the international context within which the South African government operates, and in terms of which it has to trade, continue to deteriorate markedly. While it tends to be true that, under conditions of enforced protectionism, most reasonably diversified economies experience a short-lived boom, the ultimate effect of tolerably comprehensive sanctions is a shrinking productive base, increased unemployment, and consequentially, less state revenue.

Fourthly, the sheer weight of numbers militate against a minority regime being able to rule effectively in the face of popular dissent. However effective the regime might be in co-opting and intimidating, the vastness of the demographic imbalance is such as to suggest that ungovernability will occur, not necessarily as a coherent revolutionary strategy, but more plausibly because there will simply not be sufficient manpower to exercise effective internal and external domination.

These factors cumulatively suggest a scenario of degenerative collapse. This implies an increasingly desperate, and probably vicious, regime faced with a series of worsening and seemingly insoluble political crises. While the NSMS, in both its internal and sub-regional aspects, is likely to win the regime breathing-space, it seems highly unlikely that the political system will be able to deliver the type of political reform which would win it, on a permanent and durable basis, the very "hearts and minds" which the Security Management System is intended to secure.

CHAPTER 4

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APPENDIX A

Sub-Management Centres

Newcastle
Vryheid
Pietermaritzburg
Kokstad
Greytown
Durban South
Port Shepstone

De Aar
Kimberley
Upington

Pretoria Central
Moot

Port Elizabeth
Uitenhage
Cradock
Queenstown

Bloemfontein
Kroonstad
Ladybrand

Graaff-Reinet
Middelburg (Cape)

Johannesburg
West Rand

Cape Town
Vredendal
Stellenbosch
Saldanha

Potchefstroom
Rustenburg

Letaba
Soutpansberg

Nelspruit
Ermelo

Dundee
Eshowe
Ladysmith
Durban North
Durban Central
Durban West

Vryburg
Kuruman

Pretoria North

Grahamstown
East London
Aliwal North

Welkom
Bethlehem
Southern OFS

Beaufort West
Oudtshoorn

Soweto
East Rand

Worcester
Paarl
Springbok

Lichtenburg
Klerksdorp

Waterberg

Middelburg (Transvaal)
Standerton

Mini-Management Centres

Utrecht
Dundee
Dannhauser
Paulpietersburg
Eshowe
Melmoth
Empangeni
Plessislaer
Howick
Ladysmith
Bergville
Kokstad
Ixopo
Greytown
Stanger
Kwamashu
Westville
Chatsworth
Isipingo
Wentworth
Port Shepstone
Harding

Kimberley
Herbert
De Aar
Britstown
Hopetown
Witdraai
Kakamas
Groblershoop
Stella
Kuruman
Sishen

Laudium
Verwoerdburg
Eersterus
Silverton
Brits
Akasia
Atteridgeville

Port Elizabeth
Uitenhage
Humansdorp
Kareedouw
Grahamstown
Bathhurst
Kenton/Boesman
Adelaide
Somerset East

Newcastle
Glencoe
Vryheid
Magudu
Nyoni
Mtubatuba
Pietermaritzburg
Camperdown
Richmond
Estcourt
Matatiele
Himeville
Kranskop
Wartburg
Durban North
Verulam
Mayville
Pinetown
Umlazi
Amanzimtoti
Scottsburg
Margate

Barkley West
Vaalharts
Phillipstown
Prieska
Upington
Keimoes
Pofadder
Vryburg
Pomfret
Griekwastad

Pretoria City
Mamelodi
Bronkhorstspruit
Soshanguve
Schoemansville
Pretoria North

Port Elizabeth North
Kirkwood
Jeffreys Bay
Koega
Alexandria
Fort Beaufort
Cradock
Bedford
East London

Komga
King William's Town
Queenstown
Indwe
Tarkastad
Barclay East
Lady Grey
Ugie

Winburg
Brandfort
Hertzogville
Bloemfontein
Welkom
Henneman
Theunissen
Bultfontein
Viljoenskroon
Bothaville
Heilbron
Steynsrus
Koppies
Vredefort
Clarens
Harrismith
Frankfort
Tweeling
Vrede
Reitz
Clocolaan
Paul Roux
Ficksburg
Ladybrand
Tweespruit
Zastron
Petrusburg
Koffiefontein
Trompsburg
Reddersburg
Fauresmith
Rouxville

Aberdeen
Jansenville
Murraysburg
Steytlerville
Beaufort West
Fraserburg
Prins Albert
Victoria West
Burgersdorp
Hanover
Middelburg (Cape)
Noupoort

Stutterheim
Cathcart
Dordrecht
Sterkstroom
Aliwal North
Elliot
MacLear
Jamestown

Boshof
Dealesville
Excelsior
Botshabelo
Virginia
Ventersburg
Odendaalsrus
Hoopstad
Wesselsbron
Parys
Lindley
Kroonstad
Edenville
Bethlehem
Kestell
Warden
Villiers
Cornelia
Memel
Marquard
Senekal
Fouriesburg
Rosendal
Hobhouse
Wepener
Jagersfontein
Philippolis
Luckhoff
Edenburg
Dewetsdorp
Springfontein
Smithfield

Graaff-Reinet
Klipplaat
Pearston
Willowmore
Carnarvon
Laingsburg
Sutherland
Williston
Colesburg
Hofmeyr
Molteno
Richmond

Steynburg
Albertinia
De Rust
Great Brak River
Joubertina
Ladismith
Oudtshoorn
Riversdal
Uniondale

Soweto East
Krugersdorp
Springs
Benoni
Germiston
Soweto West

Cape Town
Athlone
Worcester
Robertson
Touwsrivier
Wolseley
Prince Alfred Hamlet
De Doorns
Barrydale
McGregor
Brandvlei
Clanwilliam
Klawer
Loeriesfontein
Middelpos
Nuwerus
Vredendal
Malmesbury
Moorreesburg
Franschhoek
Klapmuts
Porterville
Redelinghuys
Philadelphia
Springbok
Port Nolloth
Hondeklipbaai
Kamieskroon
Steinkopf
Stellenbosch
Strand
Stanford
Gansbaai
Napier
Caledon
Riviersonderend
Greyton

Venterstad
Calitzdorp
George
Heidelberg (Cape)
Knysna
Mossel Bay
Plettenberg Bay
Stilbaai

Roodepoort
Vaal Triangle
Brakpan
Heidelberg
Kempton Park (Transvaal)

Wynberg
Bellville
Ceres
Swellendam
Rawsonville
Tulbagh
Montagu
Ashton
Bonnievale
Calvinia
Citrusdal
Doringbaai
Lambert's Bay
Lutzville
Nieuwoudville
Van Rhynsdorp
Atlantis
Piketberg
Paarl
Groot Drakenstein
Wellington
Eendekuil
Darling
Riebeeck West
Alexander Bay
Kleinsee
Garies
Nababeep
Vioolsdrif
Somerset West
Kleinmond
Hermanus
Elim
Bredasdorp
Grabouw
Genadendal
Villiersdorp

Hopefield
St Helena Bay

Potchefstroom
Klerksdorp
Hartbeesfontein
Lichtenburg
Schweizer-Reneke
Ottosdal
Bloemhof
Zeerust
Koster

Phalaborwa
Tzaneen
Messina
Warmbad
Naboomspruit
Thabazimbi

Barberton
Nelspruit
Loskop (Groblersdal)
Middelburg (Transvaal)
Secunda
Standerton
Wakkerstroom
Ermelo

Laaiplek
Langebaan

Gatsrand
Noordvaal
Wolmaransstad
Delareyville
Christiana
Coligny
Rustenburg
Marico

Pietersburg
Louis Trichardt
Nylstroom
Potgietersrus
Ellisras

Lydenburg
Onderbek
Witbank
Belfast
Bethal
Volksrust
Piet Retief
Carolina

APPENDIX B

THE NATIONAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

CABINET

Committee on Economic Affairs	Committee on Social Affairs	STATE SECURITY COUNCIL	Committee on Constitutional Affairs
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WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

SECRETARIAT OF THE STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

National Intelligence Interpretation Branch	Strategic Communication Branch	Strategy Branch	Administrative Branch
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INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

- Manpower
- Security Services
- Civil Defence
- Transport
- Security
- National Supplies & Resources
- Government Funding
- National Economy
- Telecommunications & Electrical Power Supply
- Science & Technology
- Community Services
- Culture
- Political Affairs

JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES
Executive : Chairmen of Committees

Communications Committee (KOMKOM)	Joint Intelligence Committee (GIK)	Constitutional, Economic & Social Committee (SEMKOM)
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SUB-JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES

MINI-JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES

LOCAL MANAGEMENT CENTRES

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