

**NAME:** MOHAMMED HAFFEJEE

**STUDENT NO:** 961111355

**COURSE:** MA (Political Science)

**SUPERVISOR: Prof. A. M. Johnston**

**TOPIC: The transformation of South African foreign intelligence in a changing global context: Resources, functions and a case study**

## **Abstract**

The primary focus of this dissertation is the transformation of South Africa's foreign intelligence service. This transformation is seen in the light of the individual histories of the pre-1994 intelligence services (state, homelands and liberation movement) which contributed to the new structures.

The legislation which governs these structures is examined. The role of intelligence in supporting foreign policy is discussed in the context of changing patterns of global politics and security concerns.

The dissertation concludes with an attempt to draw up an 'intelligence agenda' for South Africa's new service and a discussion of the potential and limits of intelligence, using the Zimbabwe crisis as a case study.

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts in the Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Natal, Durban. It has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signed by me on ..... 2001

\_\_\_\_\_ (Student)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Supervisor)

## **List of Abbreviations**

ANC – African National Congress

AU – African Union

BOSS – Bureau of State Security

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

CSIS – Canadian Security and Intelligence Services

KGB – Krcma Gurmanov Bratislavy (Russian Security Services)

MI – Military Intelligence

MK – Umkhonto Isizwe

NIA – National Intelligence Agency

NICOC – National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee

NIS – National Intelligence Services

OAU – Organisation for African Unity

PAC – Pan Africanist Congress

SADC – Southern African Development Countries

## **Chapter one: Prioritising Security**

*'The intelligence services are required to act in the interests of the country as a whole. In this respect, intelligence should enhance national security, and protect and promote the interests of the state and the well-being of its citizens.'*

Intelligence Services Act of 1994

In the Post-Cold War era, the role and functions of intelligence services have had to be extensively rethought. In implementing foreign and domestic security policy, one of the key influences has traditionally been intelligence. Traditionally, intelligence has been conceptualised as that function carried out to aid and preserve National Security by way of gathering information and acting on that information overtly or covertly. We shall see in chapter 3 how this has changed in the South African context. Arguably, the intelligence influence on policy has undergone even more change in the shift from a bipolar world to a multipolar one than other overt forms of security provision, such as armed forces. Regional powers are emerging in the field of intelligence, especially now that the United States and the Russian Federation have to contemplate new roles in multipolar governance, as regional intelligence contributors. This is opposed to their traditional role of superpower intelligence leader and in some cases superpower intelligence dictator. (O' Brien, 1995:170)

One of these emerging regional powers is South Africa, both in the regions of Africa and the "South". South Africa has evolved into a regional power as a result of a peaceful transition from authoritarian oppression to democracy. This example of peaceful conflict resolution gave the new South Africa an influential foothold in international relations. In addition, the peaceful transition ensured the maintenance of a relatively strong economy and durable institutional structures in both military and political spheres. In intelligence, as in other fields this element of continuity has been influential.

This dissertation will elaborate on South Africa's changing security concerns with primary attention to the evolution of South African foreign intelligence capacity in the changing global context. Further to that, it will describe and analyse the legacy of 'pre-democracy' intelligence bodies (both the state and the liberation movements) as well as the

resources (financial and institutional) of the new service. It will also offer a critical analysis of South Africa's foreign intelligence 'needs', in support of the country's foreign policy as a democratic state of the South, in Africa. The study will conclude with a case study of the ongoing Zimbabwe crisis, and the drawing up of an 'intelligence agenda' for South African foreign policy in this regard. Chapter 6 concludes with the need to establish a civilian intelligence body to ensure adequate oversight in the new democratic framework

The emancipation of South Africa from apartheid has had a dynamic effect on the rest of Southern Africa. The debate regarding regional security in Southern Africa since April 1994 has been a difficult and sometimes contentious one. A number of initiatives are under way, several of which have been centred on the Southern African Development Community. This chapter will focus on some recent developments in this regard, within a wider framework of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations (UN). Much of this chapter will focus on common security initiatives, such as the development of the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC) within the SADC. This will set a context for South African foreign policy and the contribution of intelligence to it.

The move from a bipolar to a multipolar and multifaceted world is in some senses very much incomplete. Security concerns in both the developed and developing worlds now reflect intra-state conflict, often with an ethnic dimension, together with problems of weak and even collapsing states. An increase in violent and organised crime has become a worldwide phenomenon. The rules and policies of the old order have lost their impact and legitimacy, but no comprehensive new order is fully in place. This creates a sense of instability and unending transformation.

*"We have entered a time of global transition marked by uniquely contradictory trends. Regional and continental associations of states are evolving ways to deepen co-operation and ease some of the contentious characteristics of sovereign and nationalistic rivalries. National boundaries are blurred by advanced communications and global commerce, and by the decisions of states to yield some sovereign prerogatives to larger, common political associations. At the same time, however, fierce new assertions of nationalism and sovereignty spring up, and the cohesion of*

*states is threatened by brutal ethnic, religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife. Social peace is challenged on the one hand by new assertions of discrimination and exclusion and, on the other, by acts of terrorism seeking to undermine evolution and change through undemocratic means.” -UN Secretary General, 1992 (Cilliers, 1995:192)*

All issues regarding South Africa's security and foreign policy have to be seen in the light of its African context. Africa does not have a definite dividing political feature across the continent, such as is the case of Europe, and which was even more marked during the Cold War. (Buzan, 1988) There are no clear-cut defining lines between stable and peaceful independent countries, and those not yet liberated from instability and the threat or present reality of civil war. Instead, there are confusing multitudes of ethnic, and religious disparities and a gulf between the rich elite and the poverty-stricken masses. These are replicated over most of the continent.

Further to that, Ayoob, points out that security in the Third World should be analysed in a quite different light to that of the West and First World. Ayoob goes on to state that in Third World states, state boundaries and state sovereignty are not at threat, but instead in these states repressive regimes are at threat by internal forces. This is substantiated by a history of civil wars and coups in Latin America and Africa. However, this does not mean that internal threats and crisis within a state does not affect other states at all. Regionalisation has ensured that internal threats to a state do to a large extent impact on various other states in that region. (Ayoob in Krause, 1998:125-6)

In the case of South Africa, Ayoob's perspective is vindicated by the threats to regional stability posed by the internal problems of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe. Although South Africa faces no present military threat to its borders and sovereignty, it is drawn into the internal political and security problems of its neighbours. Inevitably then, in drawing up a foreign intelligence agenda for South Africa, these factors have to be taken into account.

Leaders in regions such as Southern Africa have to realise that global transition, although reducing the risk of conventional and nuclear threat, does not reduce the risk of regional instability. The Iraq-Kuwait conflict, the effective dissolution of Zaire, the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, the Chechen issue, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Somalia and other situations of conflict have made this clear. Similarly, in Southern Africa, the Lesotho crisis, the Angolan instability and the Zimbabwean problem have all contributed to the pressures of instability in the region.

(Electronic Mail and Guardian, 24 November 2000)

South Africa, despite its successful transition to democracy, has itself had a share of localised instability. Internal security problems have included the low level civil war in KwaZulu-Natal which threatened the security of the new state until about 1996, and more recently, the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) campaign in the Western Cape.

The last four decades have seen thirty-five major conflicts and almost ten million deaths in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa's refugees flee wars, famine, socio-economic degeneration, drought and disease such as the AIDS epidemic, while absorbing almost half of the world's food aid. More prone to civil conflict than inter-state wars, Africa is experiencing a new wave of violence in this era of post-Cold War reform from superpower conflict to globalisation. Having been marginalised through colonial oppression and neo-colonial manipulation, Africa is at its most vulnerable. (Harris, June 2000)

This instability is further increased by the ready availability of cheap weapons and the lack of control over the proliferation of small arms. This trade in small-scale armaments is a much greater threat to Southern Africa than weapons of mass destruction, be it nuclear, chemical, biological, or their delivery systems. These problems find expression in various forms, for example, the killing of farmers in rural areas and farmlands, and the drug wars in the cities. As a result, South Africa has to invest heavily in the conflict prevention mechanisms as a realistic and practical approach to its role in the region. South Africa therefore has to set the trend and lead by example by establishing concrete steps in conflict prevention. (O' Brien, 1995:171)

South Africa makes a varied contribution to order-keeping and conflict prevention on the continent of Africa. In terms of traditional diplomacy it tries to broker agreements between warring parties to dispute like the DRC or Great Lakes conflict. It also works to broker progress in resolving tense situations such as that created by the land question in Zimbabwe, involving not only internal parties but extra-African players like Britain and international financial institutions. In the field peacekeeping, South Africa has begun to develop policies and capacities and has pledged contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts in the DRC. Lastly and less conventionally, South Africa has tried to 'export' the conflict resolution skills - notably to Burundi - which were developed in its own transition to democracy. This role as a leading conflict manager on the African continent has placed South Africa as a new and significant actor in world politics. (Simon and Johnston, 1997)

### South Africa: Emerging Middle-Power?

South Africa's increasing role as an actor in global and regional international relations takes place in the context of a changing world which is complex, multi-faceted and at times contradictory. This type of interrelationship substantiates the case for the theory "*which relates the interrelationship between change at the level of world order, the nature of production and the social forces operative in the middle-power's state-societal complex to explain South Africa's increasingly active role in international affairs*" (van der Westhuizen, 1998:435).

Because South Africa's role in the region is becoming more influential, it becomes necessary to evaluate the level of regional interest as opposed to national interest. In guiding policy, Van der Westhuizen argues that the theory of South Africa as a middle power is valid. But, in answering the question of prioritising interests, van der Westhuizen says that middle-powers, and in particular South Africa, further their own interests in their roles as middle-powers and regional leaders.

As a middle power and in the light of its national interest, South Africa's diplomatic initiatives have extended across the globe. Former President Nelson Mandela's diplomatic initiatives with Tripoli to extradite the bombers of the Lockerbie air disaster (Electronic Mail



and Guardian, 20 March 1999) and even more recently, efforts by South African President Thabo Mbeki to urge the Palestinians back to the negotiation table are examples of an emerging middle-power's role in serving its own internal political concerns by external means.

This can be seen by the favourable treatment shown to South Africa, for example the World Bank's positive reaction towards South Africa as a result of its role in brokering an agreement in the Lockerbie saga. Robert Putnam calls analyses as two level games, that is, the interaction between domestic and international politics. This promotes the view that internal security is dependent to an extent on regional security, a view which Southern Africa seems to confirm.

(Van der Westhuizen, 1998:435)

### Regional Security

South Africa shares more than a thousand kilometres of border with Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Lesotho. This allows easy access for illegal immigrants, drugs, arms, contraband and stolen vehicles. Common goals that South Africa would like to foster in the region include sustaining strong democratic ~~ideals~~ and ensuring rapid economic growth. These primary commonalities, difficult as they are to articulate precisely, could offer strong building blocks for greater regional, national and individual security. (Simon and Johnston, 1997)

However, prospects for greater regional economic integration are not favourable. This is mainly due to the fact that African economies are similarly structured, in that they produce, consume and export similar goods. This means that African countries, instead of complementing each other, compete with each other fighting for the same slice of markets in the developed world, mainly in Western European. Unlike the European Union, where each state specialises in products, Africa produces the same products for the same market. Furthermore, the World Bank has indicated in a study that twenty African countries had the lowest complementary levels of all those studied. The bank concluded that the structure of regional trade integration holds little promise for accelerating industrialisation and growth in the region.



(The Citizen, 13 June 1995)

Regional security issues provide a more immediately hopeful basis for regional progress. Although regional integration on the economic and multi-lateral fronts may be a slow process, bilateral security agreements between South Africa and its neighbours are flourishing. Examples include efforts to fight poaching, drugs and arm smuggling, vehicle theft and cattle rustling. On 12 June 1995, South Africa and Namibia signed a comprehensive agreement to counter drugs and arms smuggling, vehicle theft and ensuring effective cross-border policing. This agreement also included provisions for joint border patrols and sharing specialised training and technology. (The Citizen, 13 June 1995)

This type of co-operation has filtered down to provincial level. During June 1995, Mpumalanga Premier Mathews Phosa signed an agreement with the neighbouring Mozambican provinces of Maputo and Gaza. It included increased measures against highway bandits, wildlife protection, organised tourist promotion, agriculture, use of common water resources and training of administrative, cultural and sports staff. (The Citizen, 13 June 1995)

The United Nations charter anticipated the involvement of regions in maintaining international peace and security. Article 53 of the UN charter acknowledges the enforcement ability of regions in maintaining international peace, but clearly stipulates that this cannot be done without authorisation from the Security Council. However, the Cold War limited this type of regional authority. The UN has been overburdened with demands to maintain international peace and security. Furthermore, popular opinion in the developed countries is reluctant to implement foreign intervention, especially in third world states. The richer states continue to question their benefits from the UN in lending their services in terms of the maintenance of security. This has forced states to consider as an alternative stronger regional capabilities in maintaining security.

Since the establishment of the OAU in May 1963, a system of ad hoc arrangements has been used to deal with inter-state conflict, while intra-state conflict has mainly been left to each member state to handle in the way it sees fit. The organisation has only in the 90's been revived in its role as regional peace initiator. Much of this catalytic effect can be

attributed to the fact that the Cold War has ended, and South Africa has been liberated. In 1990, OAU leaders officially pledged their commitment towards peace.

However, in highlighting the OAU's attempt at regionalising security, it is worth looking to the European model as a role model, in the hope of a similar trend in Africa. The reason for turning towards Europe as a role model is due to the slow, but substantial success in establishing a united Europe. These successes include the Euro currency and common policy on a range of issues. At no point in Europe's history has security in Europe affected only the Europeans. In other words, European security initiatives are constructed in terms of the international system. The point is, 'Europe' is a construct whose parameters depend on whoever is doing the constructing. To fully understand Europe's place in the system, one has to first understand what is meant by 'Europe'. (Buzan, 1988:44)

Waeber has argued that there are four types of Europe in terms of security. There is one encompassing the European Community (basically Western Europe); one from Poland to Portugal (non-superpower Europe); one from the Atlantic to the Urals ('Gaullist Europe'); and one that stretches effectively from Vancouver to Vladivostok. All of these 'Europes' are appropriate in context, but each of them represent different elements of political, cultural, historical and geographical areas that form the make-up of Europe. As Waeber puts it, they represent 'competing organizing principles', each with noticeably different security implications for Europe. (Buzan, 1988:44)

During the Cold War, the European Community was built and developed in the context of the alienation of Eastern Europe, due to its absorption into the Soviet Bloc after 1945. It placed both Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union outside Europe. This 'alien' vision was embodied in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). However, this scenario also supported an evolutionary view which looked at a more united Europe, develops from the European Community into the European Union. In terms of the image of European Security, this creates a singular pillar of power in the international system in the sense that regionalisation of Europe implies a new united governance.

During the Cold War period, South Africa was alienated due to its Apartheid policy, similar to the alienation of Eastern Europe. This placed South Africa outside the Organisation for African Unity. Similar to the advent of the European Union and the extension eastwards of the idea of Europe, we have a call for a united Africa after the fall of apartheid. African Leaders such as Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi call for a United States of Africa. By this, Gaddafi means the relaxation of trade barriers and tariffs culminating into a structure capable of ensuring that Africa is not left weakened by the united strength of Europe. Furthermore, in a newspaper article dated 23 November 1998, the Libyan leader together with other prominent African leaders has cited the 'United States of Europe' as the cause of the recent Democratic Republic of Congo crisis involving Laurent Kabila, accusing Europe of using imperial divide and conquer tactics to extract valuable minerals from the region. (Electronic Mail and Guardian, 23 November 1998)

To this effect, it is worth mentioning that the newly founded African Union (July 2001) has introduced a new twist on security control on the continent. Director-general of South African Foreign Affairs Department, Sipho Pityana, has steered the Millenium Africa Renewal Programme (MAP) to address security concerns. MAP is an initiative aimed at changing the African image, from that of conflict and violence to that of democracy and peace. It is aimed at transforming Africa from 'beggars' to partners in the global arena. The G8 summit of 2001 aims to strengthen this move towards partnership between a United Africa, i.e. the African Union and a United Europe amongst other regional players. (Electronic Mail and Guardian, 6 July 2001)

To elaborate on the different types of Europe which will be applied in the African context, let us look at the example from Poland to Portugal, a common European identity which is growing in credibility in post-Cold War conditions. However, in terms of security, the United States had much more affinity towards the region in terms of cultural and civilisation, but unlike the Soviet Union was geographically remote. Historically and geographically, the Soviet Union is closer to this region. Even so, in Europe, United States interest represented a great threat to the Soviet Union in the security sphere.

In the intelligence realm, covert operations aimed at destabilising the Soviet Union were widely used. In Poland, MI6 and CIA operatives used this destabilising

feature to their advantage. Underground publications such as newspapers and magazines were used to spread anti-communist propaganda as well as mobilising anti-Soviet actions. However, Western involvement was always denied when questioned. The idea of Plausible Deniability entered the Cold War. Plausible Deniability in the Cold War context refers to the denying of involvement by both Superpowers, although it goes without saying that one or both of either side was involved. (O'Brien, 1995:436)

Similarly, in Africa, we have different types of security. In the North, we have the Islamic Arab African states such as Libya, Morocco, etc. whose security concerns are governed by religious doctrine. For example, rebel movements exist in Algeria and Egypt trying to promote the goal of establishing Islamic law in these North African states, thereby undermining the security of the existing secular Arab nationalist regimes. In Central Africa, security concerns are mainly intra-state, that is the struggle for power against a backdrop of poverty, struggling economies and lack of resources. In the South, apart from the concerns of crime, regional security is a primary concern. Africa, and in particular Southern Africa, is following Europe's lead in terms of looking at security holistically. This means that national security hinges on regional security, keeping the interests of Africa in mind.

In post-Cold War Europe, initiatives such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) have reinforced the notion of collective security as opposed to selective security, (Ayoob, 1990). Collective security worked well in the international system in the case of Kuwait, where a united front was created in order to drive out the aggressor, Iraq. However, there are doubts as to whether this collective security is something that will enjoy enduring success. The recent Bosnian situation has shown us that there is another aspect of security in the international arena, that of selective security. This means that regions have the option to collectively select security concerns and based on this data act accordingly. The choice of the non-interference by the West destabilised the moral stature of collective security, outlining the total collective choice as the primary aspect of collective security. The selectivity of First World States is seen even more starkly shown in their reluctance to involve themselves substantially in African conflicts. (Ayoob, 1990:Chapter 6 and [www.europa.com](http://www.europa.com))

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has developed the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC), similar to the Europe's CFSP. Similar traits of collective security as opposed to selective security exist in the ISDSC in its approach to Zimbabwe. The ISDCS is a forum where ministers of Southern African states, responsible for Defence, Home Affairs, Public Security and State Security discuss a wide range of issues relating to individual and collective defence and security. It is assumed that the ISDCS will become part of the security sector of the SADC. (Simon and Johnston, 1997)

Established in 1983, the ISDCS initially consisted of seven members. In November 1994, South Africa, Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland joined the ISDCS and it is now an informal structure operating according to practices agreed upon by member states. It has neither an Executive Secretary, nor a permanent secretariat. The Chief of the Zambian Air Force has outlined the objectives of the ISDCS as follows:

- "Prevention of aggression from within the region and from outside the region.
- Prevention of coups d'etat.
- Management and resolution of conflicts.
- The promotion of regional stability.
- The promotion of regional peace.
- Promotion and enhancement of regional development." (Cilliers, 1995:212)

The primary functions of the three ISDCS sub-committees may be summarised as follows:

1) Defence:

- to review and to share experiences on the prevailing military security in respective member states
- to explore areas of further multilateral military co-operation and practical means to realise this objective; and
- to exchange views and propose mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in the Southern African sub-region in particular, and Africa in general.



## 2) Public Security:

- to co-ordinate public security activities in the sub-region;
- to exchange information between member states on public security issues such as motor vehicle theft, drug trafficking, counterfeit currency, illegal immigrants, forged travel documents and arms smuggling
- to explore areas and means of enhancing co-operation among police agencies in the sub-region;

## 3) State Security:

- to review the security situation in the sub-region and to analyse issues affecting respective member states, including political instability, armed conflict, influx of refugees, religious extremism and organised crime;
- to recommend just measures to tackle with relevant threats to the stability of the sub-region; and
- to entertain ways of increasing and expanding co-operation between member states on matters relating to state security. (Cilliers,1995:214)

Previously, ISDCS played a major role in partnership with the various liberation movements in fighting apartheid in South Africa. Its mandate continues to be that of an advisory role in making recommendations for the consideration of the Heads of State and Government of member states. During the ISDCS meeting in Arusha in November 1994, it was decided that the ISDCS would remain unchanged in terms of its functions and duties. However, it was decided then that the ISDCS would not immediately become part of the SADC.

This change took place in 1998, when the SADC's Inter State Defence and Security Committee intervened in the Lesotho crisis. The Lesotho intervention has made clear the South African government's decision-making about future regional interventions and the feasibility of such actions. Director of Operations in the Department of Defence Colonel Rocklyn Williams's paper at a conference on African peacekeeping offers suggestions. His call for "appropriate standard operating procedures" within the executive and consultation with the responsible parliamentary committees makes good sense. This implies that there is a lack of uniform professionalism at decision-making levels, which highlights the need for

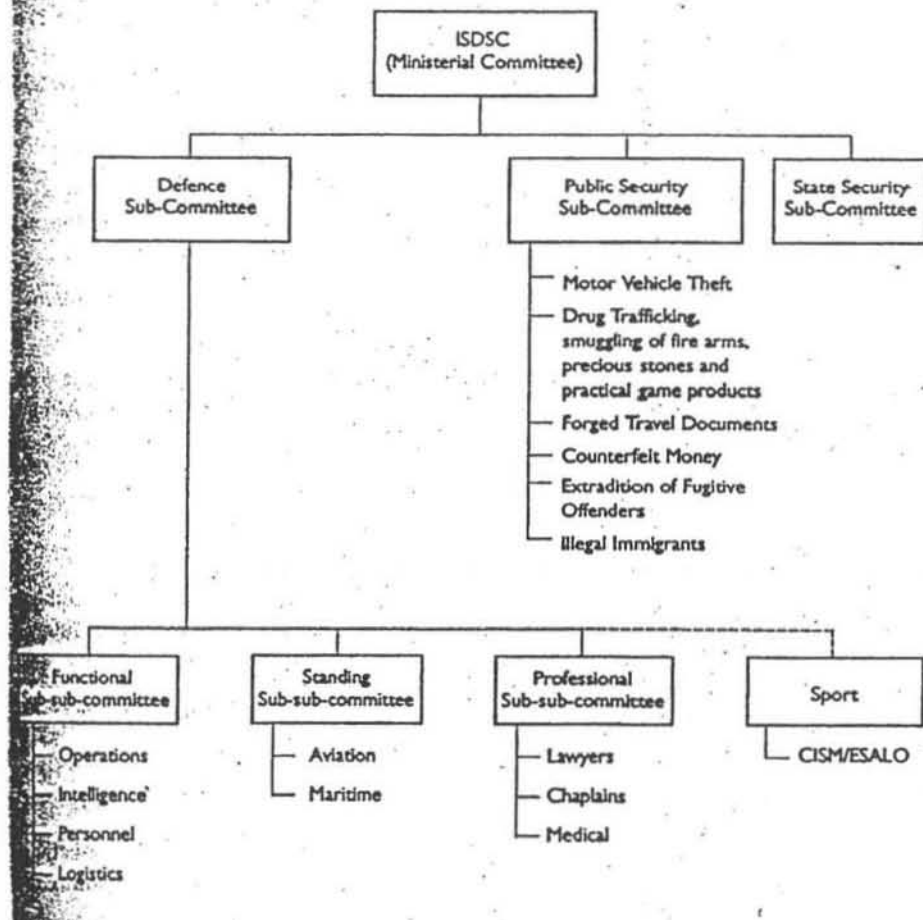
transformation in our security services, in terms of communication and consultation.  
(Electronic Mail and Guardian, April 1999)

The functions of the ISDCS military operations and intelligence components are:

- To promote common understanding between member states on the procedures of operating and planning of each member state.
- To determine what areas of command, tactics, equipment and staff procedures are compatible in order to standardize the field.
- To prepare contingency plans for the establishment of an operational centre in the case of disaster relief operations.
- To co-ordinate the conduct of intelligence and counter-intelligence on military and military related activities from outside the region which may threaten the legitimacy and stability of one or more of the member states in the region
- To co-ordinate the conduct and integration of intelligence and counter-intelligence on military related issues and developments affecting security stability within the region.
- To act as support for strategic planning in the region
- To support combined operations
- To co-ordinate functions of intelligence and counter-intelligence in determined areas of relevance. (Cilliers,1995:215)

The ISDCS lays down guidelines towards the maintenance of security in the region. The transformation of South African intelligence is drawn into the ISDCS guidelines. These include closer intelligence co-operation with SADC member states, unlike in the past when there was an ongoing intelligence dimension to covert conflict. Furthermore, the SADC defence pact, signed in Malawi of August 2001, looks at mobilising forces under the following contingencies; external threats to member states; the prevention of aggression amongst members; and intervention in the case of internal military takeovers. So far there have been loose agreements between member states an intervention in the case of undemocratic takeovers, such as we saw in the case of Lesotho. (Sunday Times, 8 July 2001)

## ISDSC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE





## Domestic Security

The above material serves as an introduction to the broad security issues and concerns affecting South Africa's foreign intelligence, the subject to which this dissertation is directed. However, domestic security is just as important to South African foreign intelligence organs as it is to our national intelligence structures. Thus, it is important that factors affecting domestic security be at least briefly sketched.

Firstly, we have to contextualise the South African environment. The 1994 April elections, in which the African National Congress achieved a clear majority, ended decades of minority white rule. The Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed as co-operative partnership for power sharing between the ANC, the National Party (NP), and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The GNU was to run for five years in terms of the Interim Constitution. However the announcement by FW de Klerk that his party should pull out of the GNU effectively terminated this power-sharing arrangement. This led to a more adversarial form of party-political democracy, albeit in a one-party dominated form. The new Constitution, adopted in April 1996, was marked by vigorous debate and negotiation. One of the toughest issues was the entrenchment of rights and another surrounded the mandates of the security and defence forces of the country in the Constitution itself. Unsurprisingly, given South Africa's history, the conflict between legitimate security needs and citizens' rights surfaced in the constitution making process.

(O'Brien, 1995:171)

Central to these debates were the investigations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Formed in July 1995 and chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, it was initially convened to look into the activities and alleged crimes of the security forces under the apartheid regime. However, under pressure from FW de Klerk, the activities of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), were also called into question. Other liberation movement forces especially the Pan Africanist Congress' armed wing, the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA) likewise came under scrutiny. The TRC's efforts have contributed to the unraveling of security issues in the past which would otherwise have been remained a mystery. The TRC reports were a helpful reminder that transformation of the security establishment, and in particular intelligence structures, had to take into account

promoting human rights, ethics and professionalism within security structures, all of which were lacking in the past.

In South Africa, domestic security continued to haunt the transition process, principally in the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal. The easing of tensions between the ANC and IFP was of key importance in the constitutional development of the security forces, which shall be explained in our next chapter. While much has been done to minimise political violence, criminal and economically motivated violence remains a very serious problem. This can be attributed to the estimated 45% unemployment, the shortfall in housing by more than 1 million homes, and the flood of refugees crossing South Africa's borders daily. These problems are compounded by massive socio-economic degradation and poverty and it is widely recognised that political changes will be meaningless if they are not followed by increasing the quality of lives of the people. While politically motivated crime has been on the decline, there has been an increase in common criminal activities. (O'Brien, 1995:172)

Despite the pressing problems, viewed in continental context, South Africa appears to many as the only nation in sub-Saharan Africa capable of developing and sustaining itself adequately in the near future. As a result, South Africa is a magnet for illegal immigration. Immigration becomes a security issue when organized crime such as Nigerian drug lords or Angolan diamond smugglers use immigration channels as a means of pouring their own resources into South Africa, destroying the fabric of South African society. One way of combating this security concern is the positive use of intelligence networks. (O'Brien, 1995:172)

The White Paper on Intelligence points out that the following, *"...new global political, social and economic problems are filtering South Africa's borders. International extremists have forged links with their South African counterparts, whilst international drug cartels use our country both as a transit route for their trade and as a market, thus corrupting our social system."*  
(Electronic White Paper on Intelligence, 1994)

The White Paper goes on, *"there has been a dramatic increase in foreign intelligence activities in South Africa. Apart from the classic political and military espionage, other activities of foreign/hostile intelligence services and industrial espionage agents have increased markedly in the economic, technological and scientific fields."*

( Electronic White Paper on Intelligence, 1994)

The role of the intelligence and security services in the new South Africa has changed. As part of the upheavals in the national security structure, new mandates have been established, especially for the Secret Service. This paper, in the next chapter, will detail the genealogy of the Intelligence Structures and legacies. This will be followed by assessing resources in foreign intelligence capability, the role of foreign intelligence in legislation and policy, followed by the case study of the contribution of intelligence in assuring a 'soft-landing' in Zimbabwe.

## **Chapter 2: Legacy**

The role and capacities of the present intelligence services cannot be understood without an appreciation of the nature of the various predecessors and the forces that drove them together.

The South African National Defence Force is a result of the amalgamation of defence structures from the Homelands, the liberation movements including the ANC and PAC, as well as the old South African Defence Force. The intelligence services are made up in the same way. This chapter will examine the various defence structures, of the homelands, the ANC, the PAC, and the pre-1994 state structures of South Africa, focussing on their intelligence organs and functions.

The homelands are also described as the TBVC states. These consisted of Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana. Their forces represented an interesting stage of defence in South Africa. The defence forces of these states were initially set up by South African defence personnel, who were responsible for the training, equipping and the initial command of these forces. The Homeland forces lacked the object of an armed force, that is the defence of the homeland, and evolved into over-equipped, under-trained internal stability units dedicated to the maintenance of the overall 'grand apartheid' scheme as well as the collaborating regimes that were brought into being by it. The reason for the homelands meagre defence capability was that their status was protected by the South African Defence Force.

Pretoria spent about 6 billion Rands on these states between the mid-1970s (beginning with the 'independence' of Transkei) and the end of apartheid. At least 500 million Rands of the sum were spent on the armed forces of the TBVC states. In the heyday of grand apartheid, the National Party government expected the homelands to further the apartheid ideology. However, given the dynamics of the homelands, which included developing a sense of their own identity and sovereignty, their regimes developed their own aims, goals and priorities. This politicisation eroded the professionalism of the armed forces, a development that could be said to have been inherited by the 1994 defence structure. As a result the need was which implies the need for transformation of the defence structure from the old order to a more

professional body, responsible to the new democratic government. (Reichardt, M and Cilliers, J., 1996:63)

Arming 'non-whites' to protect and defend white supremacy was always a controversial issue in colonial and apartheid South Africa. Although historical practice seemed to show that loyalty was not a problem for active combatants even if they were non-white, the South African defence personnel chose to limit non-whites to auxiliary roles until the increase of insurgent activities in Namibia and South Africa made it quite certain that white manpower alone was not enough to counter this threat. (Reichardt, M and Cilliers, J., 1996:63)

In 1970, the then Minister of Defence stated:

*"if the Bantu wants to build up a Defence Force, he should do it in his own eventually independent homeland"*. (Reichardt, M and Cilliers, J., 1996:63)

This sentiment reiterates the apartheid regimes aim to keep blacks out of the South African Defence Force. By 1972, however, fully equipped black policemen were serving on the Caprivi Strip in Namibia. The following year, a group of blacks trained as security guards for the SADF, and later became instructors for the first black permanent force members at 21 Battalion base at Lenz in Johannesburg. Under PW Botha, homeland policy was tackled much more vigorously. Although in the mid-80's, it was obvious that the homeland policy was a failure, the 1986 White Paper on defence stressed that the SADF's primary concerns with respect to African soldiers was the *"development of ethnic regional units of the various national states"* and, *"after independence, such units are absorbed by the Defence Force of the independent state"*

(White Paper on Defence, 1986)

## Transkei

The historical description of the Transkei Defence Force (TDF) highlights the evolution of defence structures and intelligence. When Transkei was edging towards independence, the SADF was still toying with the issue of armed black soldiers. The benefit of having an armed force was recognised by the Transkei Prime Minister, Chief Kaiser D

Matanzima, and he argued for his own defence force. After a trip to Umtata by the SADF to assess the officer training potential of recruits, the South African government reached consensus on setting up the Transkei Defence Force (TDF) in late 1975.

In early 1976, Matanzima used the excuse of the refusal of South Africa to hand over additional land to Transkei to sever diplomatic relations with South Africa. Although South Africa and Transkei re-established diplomatic relations in 1981, Matanzima turned to the elite special forces of the former Rhodesian government, when they became available after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. These included members of the Selous Scouts, the Rhodesian Special Air Services and the Rhodesian Light Infantry. These politically suspect white troops were deemed unwelcome in Mugabe's Zimbabwe and were recruited by the TDF to train and equip the TDF against any external and internal aggression. South Africa contributed about 2 Million Rands for this project. (Reichardt, M and Cilliers, J., 1996:65)

Bantu Holomisa, at that time a commanding officer in the TDF, was detained for his criticisms of the policy of employing the former Rhodesian special forces. Lieutenant-Colonel Craig Duli, TDF's Director of Intelligence led an 'Action Committee' for the release of Holomisa, which was achieved on 31 March. Holomisa's resentment towards the Rhodesian influence acted as a unifying factor between Holomisa and the 'Action Committee'. Actions like these proved the active participation of Transkei Intelligence in the defence structure.

On 4 April 1987, members of the 'Action Committee' arrested expelled Rhodesian personnel. This action tilted the balance of power against George Matanzima. Almost a month later, General Mtirara was forced to resign and was replaced by Holomisa. On 8 April, Holomisa disbanded the 'Action Committee' and a week later normalised relations between Transkei and Ciskei. On the 23 September 1987, the TDF installed a new State President, Ms. Stella Sigcau. (Africa Confidential, 1988:2)

While Sigcau's appointment achieved the TDF's main objective of replacing the Matanzima's government, it failed to meet the other main objective, which was to stamp out corruption. It later emerged that Sigcau had accepted bribes from the Matanzimas. When Sigcau went on vacation on 30 December, the TDF carried out a successful bloodless coup,



suspending the constitution and proclaiming martial law, while establishing the country's rule by Military Council. Holomisa promised speedy general elections and the end of corruption, but delivered neither of these. From these actions, it becomes apparent how intelligence structures were abused to facilitate the coup and other power manipulating tactics.

Instead, the Military Council concentrated on entrenching itself politically. The South African government was glad to see the Matanzima era end and hoped that its investment in Transkei would not be subjected to more corruption. It was sorely disappointed, as misappropriated funds went up as high as 120 million Rands after that. (Reichardt, and Cilliers,1996:67)

The disbanded 'Action Committee' acted as an intelligence unit. However, their disbanding only meant a change in name and certain functions. New functions included that of protecting the corrupt interests of the TDF. Qualified and easily available intelligence and defence personnel, such as the TDF, made it easier for the SANDF to make its senior ranks more representative. However, judging from history of Transkei intelligence actions, although their experience is welcomed into the new SANDF, the taint of past political intriguing is worrying. In this sense, the TDF brought a mixed legacy to the new SANDF.

### Bophuthatswana

Chief Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana followed the trend set in establishing the TDF and requested that South Africa establish a similar force in Bophuthatswana. In August 1977, the SADF began training the Bophuthatswana National Guard (BNG). This military force was handed over to Bophuthatswana, together with some military equipment, at independence on 6 December 1977. Subsequently, the BNG fell directly under the Office of the President, while training continued under the directives of the SADF. (Reichardt and Cilliers,1996:69)

The BNG, like most homeland forces functioned as a politicised force in which intelligence roles were carried out. After basic training, BNG officers underwent a specialised counter-insurgency course and this became their area of focus and expertise. With this type of

politicised role, even more so than the other homeland armies, support from the SADF was disproportionately high for the BNG command structure.

The first Officer Commanding of the BNG was Brigadier van den Berg. However, when the BNG was restructured as the Bophuthatswana Defence Force (BDF) in 1979, Brigadier Riekert assumed the new position as Minister of Defence, while another SADF officer, Lieutenant-Colonel H Turner was made Commander-in-Chief. These appointments suggest a high level of SADF penetration in Bophuthatswana and the degree of strong intelligence surveillance of the BDF.

In 1982, to achieve the objective of internal stability a number of new security structures were established. Further to that an intelligence service under a State Security Council was established. In 1985, a Special Forces Unit was set up to be deployed as a rapid-reaction force on the borders of the region. Similar to the Special Forces, a parachute battalion was set up in 1986. The intelligence services worked closely with Special Forces and the parachute battalion to focus on maintaining the internal stability of the homeland. Also, they worked as a support structure for the South African intelligence services in doing reconnaissance work against the liberation movements.

This strong security establishment was intended to show that Bophuthatswana had achieved political stability. Furthermore, Bophuthatswana experienced real economic growth from platinum mining and the establishment of the Sun City casino complex. In 1984/5, ANC activity in Bophuthatswana increased, and in 1986 the assassination of Brigadier A. Molope, the head of the riot police, was met with a major security crackdown. Mangope failed to see that there was growing dissatisfaction from major sections of his security establishment. (Reichardt and Cilliers, 1996:70)

In 1988, BDF Sergeant-Major Timothy Phiri arrested Mangope and other cabinet members. The coup leaders accused the Mangope administration of being corrupt and rigging the 1987 elections. They then handed power over to Mr. Rocky Malebane-Metsing of the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Some of the cabinet Ministers escaped to Pretoria, where they formally requested assistance. That same afternoon, a task force led by SADF Chief,



General Jannie Geldenhuys entered Mmabatho and returned power to Mangope. Pretoria justified its intervention by stating that assistance was formally requested and more importantly the coup was costly in casualties as opposed to Transkei's which was bloodless.

This 'justification' served as a mitigating factor in their actions in turning a blind eye towards the coup in Transkei. The Bophuthatswana coup was indicative of the active role of intelligence in Bophuthatswana in the same way as its Transkei forerunner. This further highlights the need for transformation in the new intelligence establishment, by ensuring a high degree of professionalism, preventing subversion by the intelligence community. This idea of professionalism within the greater context of transformation will be explained later on in this dissertation.

As a result of the coup, Mangope personally adopted the defence portfolio. The last straw for the BDF came in 1994. When civil unrest occurred in Bophuthatswana, the BDF realising their time was up refused to intervene and restore law and order. The white extremist group, the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) claimed that they were requested to restore law and order. The AWB crusade into Bophuthatswana was resisted by the BDF. When a BDF soldier executed two AWB Wen-Kommando members, this broke the momentum of the AWB and right wing opposition to change. Having extensive contacts in the SADF ensured the BDF's incorporation into the South African security establishment, including intelligence. (*Financial Mail*, 18 March 1994)

## Venda

In October 1978, the Venda Minister announced that his army was operating as an 'anti-terrorism' body, functioning on an intelligence-related level. However, the functions of policing, prisons and defence were combined into the Venda National Force (VNF), at the suggestion of the South African Department of Co-operation and Development.

The VNF was commanded by an ex-South African security policeman, Lieutenant-Colonel T.R. Mulaudzi and was seen as nothing more than a surrogate for the South African Defence and intelligence establishment. The SADF entrusted control of a stretch of land across the Limpopo River, bordering Zimbabwe, a source of ANC infiltration into the

Northern Transvaal, to the VNF. This further justifies the argument of TBVC intelligence existed as an extension of the SADF. (Reichardt and Cilliers, 1996:73)

The combined structure of the VNF posed problems in its early phase. As such there was always a need to improve the VNF's organisational structure. In late 1980, Brigadier Malaudzi announced the establishment of a counter-insurgency unit. On 27 September 1982, the Venda Defence Force (VDF) was established as a body separate to that of the VNF. Initially, the VDF comprised of 450 men of three infantry companies, specialising in counter-insurgency.

Brigadier PG Steenkamp, an SADF officer, assumed command of the VDF until a coup in 1990. Dominating the VDF, Steenkamp attempted to play an active role in counter-insurgency measures as opposed to other homeland forces that concentrated on internal stability and repression. These counter-insurgency measures as adopted by Steenkamp included cross-border raids and liaising with other intelligence networks across the border. Other homelands concentrated on the maintenance of power through internal activities. The VDF, from this signifies their experience, although limited, in dealing with foreign intelligence bodies.

The coup of 1990 was led by the VDF's second-in-command Gabriel Ramushwana. It was alleged that Pretoria had encouraged the coup through its intelligence network. This is suggested by Ramushwana's attendance of the SA Army staff course in Pretoria. Ramushwana stated that his government was an interim one and was there to ensure smooth incorporation into the new South Africa. (Reichardt, and Cilliers, 1996:73-5)

### Ciskei

Of all the homelands, Ciskei most lacked legitimacy. The country was created by South Africa, as a personal favour to the Sebe brothers, Charles and Lennox. In order to entrench themselves in power, they opted for the creation of combined security forces.

The Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) was set up in 1981 and formed part of the Ciskei Combined Forces (CCF). The CCF included the notorious Central Intelligence Services. In 1982, a Special Forces unit was established. Led by Rhodesian Selous Scouts was known as 'Ikhele we Sizwe' or Sword of the Nation. Similarly, a youth organisation known as the Pillar of the Nation was set up by the SADF and fell under the CDF.

As Lennox Sebe's ambitions grew, he sought assistance in arms and training from Israel. The 1984 arrival of Israeli personnel into Ciskei was met with much opposition by the SADF personnel in the area. Subsequently, Sebe requested the expulsion of SADF Brigadier Nel from Ciskei who was later followed by the remaining SADF personnel.

A struggle for power between the Sebe brothers came to a head when Lennox arrested his nephew and Charles's security empire crumbled. The intelligence service, regarded as Charles own personal militia, was also disbanded.

Charles fled to Transkei, where he enjoyed the support of the TDF. On the 4 March 1990, the Chief of Staff Intelligence, Brigadier Oupa Gqozo implemented a bloodless coup. A day after the coup, wide scale riots broke out which threatened the stability of Ciskei. And Gqozo declared a state of emergency and requested the intervention of the SADF,

However, Gqozo's anti-ANC stance and alignment with the conservative Concerned South African's Group (COSAG) placed his forces in constant conflict with the liberation movements. The massacre of ANC demonstrators in September 1992 placed the CDF in disrepute and put it at a great disadvantage in terms of integration into the new SANDF.

### Azanian People's Liberation Army

The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) is two years older than its surrogate and armed wing, the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA). In 1959, a group of disenchanted members broke away from the ANC. Believing the concept of African Nationalism in the ANC to be tarnished by cooperation with its white, Indian, and coloured sister organisations, the group formed the Pan Africanist Congress.

With the arrest of leaders like Potlako Leballo in 1960 following the pass campaign, the PAC saw a need to intensify militant actions. The origins of APLA can be traced to the formation of 'Poqo' cells in migrant worker hostels in Cape Town. The Poqo movement was responsible for a number of operations to destabilise the state from 1961-67. These operations were made known to the police who intercepted letters written by Leballo from the PAC headquarters in Maseru. Small groups of PAC members aligned themselves with various liberation movements including RENAMO in Angola and FRELIMO in Mozambique. (Lodge, 1996:105)

APLA forces were expelled from Zambia, and took refuge in Zimbabwe where they dispersed into the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu). Later on, APLA was given its own base at Chunya in Tanzania, where members began courses under Chinese military instruction. Chinese instruction proved invaluable to APLA. The following year, Zambians allowed APLA an entry route to carry out raids into South Africa via Botswana. These raids were conducted in conjunction with the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) and the Angolan Liberation movement Uniao Nacional para la Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA). However, APLA was excluded from Zambia for a second time after an APLA soldier was arrested for assault. (Lodge, 1996:106)

Between 1975 and 1976, APLA operated on the borders of South Africa and Swaziland. This came to an end after three APLA instructors were arrested by South African police. APLA had managed to establish networks in East London and Johannesburg, led by Robben Island veterans. From 1975, the first recruits after a decade began the momentum for replenishing APLA troops in Chunya. (Lodge, 1996:107)

In 1978, the arrest of three APLA insurgents who had established an arms cache in Krugersdorp increased fears of an all out guerrilla war by APLA. This was realised when Transkei police captured four APLA operatives who had crossed the Lesotho border and who had remained operational for four months. The death of Robert Sobukwe in 1978 provided the occasion for a leadership struggle between Leballo and APLA commander Templeton Ntantala. Leballo, eventually had Ntantala's supporters arrested by Zimbabwean authorities and handed over to South African police.

Leballo's skirmishes with Tanzanian authorities ensured that the base at Chunya was off limits to APLA members. Mutiny in the APLA ranks continued and many APLA soldiers joined the ANC in Tanzania. Military operations inside the Republic by APLA were suspended until 1986. APLA initiatives revived in the mid 80's with the establishment of various unions, the Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU) and the Pan-Africanist Students Organisation (PASO). These organs acted as recruitment agencies for APLA.

The period from 1990-1994 is of major significance to APLA beginning with the PAC unbanning to the suspension of the armed struggle in 1994. This period marked an increase in APLA operations, for reasons ranging from easier access into South Africa to local training, both facilitated by the PAC unbanning. After its unbanning, the PAC held a meeting in Harare with its shadow body, the Pan-Africanist Movement (PAM) formed a year earlier. There, it was agreed that PAM would merge into the PAC. (Lodge, 1996:110)

The PAC continued to lobby for negotiations to be held outside South Africa and for a new constitution to be debated by a democratically elected constitutional assembly. However, fear of being left out of a political settlement as well as pressure from other African countries prompted the PAC to attend the negotiations held in November 1991. This was after a united front was established with the ANC and other organisations. However, the PAC soon walked out, angered at a bilateral agreement between the government and ANC. It began a mass campaign against the negotiation process and CODESA. PASO began an initiative to drive white teachers out of township schools, which resulted in the closure of five schools in the Katlehong area.

By April 1992, arguments in favour of negotiation by Holomisa and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Umtata brought the PAC back to the multiparty talks. Although refusing to suspend the armed struggle during negotiations, the PAC adopted a new stance, announced by their leader Clarence Makwetu as focussing on gaining power through the ballot. These all took place against a backdrop of wide-scale political violence. Between the unbanning of the liberation movements in February 1990 and the election of a Government of National Unity (GNU) in April 1994, political violence caused over 14 028 deaths, many of



them in Natal, in conflict between ANC and Inkatha supporters. APLA's contribution was the killing of a small number of whites among an overwhelming majority of black casualties.

Limited information is available for APLA activity. Media reports are imprecise and inaccurate. APLA and PAC reports were of equally limited use. APLA's journal, 'Azania Combat' confined its reports on military activity to those reports placed in South African newspapers who in turn got their reports from South African police statements. (Lodge, 1996:111)

In 1992, APLA operations more than quadrupled. APLA reports claimed that more than 200 security forces were killed by APLA forces. Sabelo Phama announced that 1993 would be the 'Year of the Great Storm'. Subsequently, police reports confirmed that there was a major rise in insurgency activities in the Eastern Transvaal focussing on farms. Included that year were attacks in cities such as Cape Town blowing up a local pub and the St. James Church which saw 12 people die and 148 wounded.

Police commented on the lack of sophistication of APLA operations together with their intelligence reconnaissance resources. For example, in April 1993, the killing of a mother and child in Walkerville, Johannesburg occurred when APLA gunmen opened fire on motorists. A four-man APLA unit had questioned local children on the whereabouts of the local school bus. After failing to fire on their intended target, that is the bus, due to the fact that it was empty, they opened fire on motorists. (Lodge, 1996:112-3)

Evaluating APLA intelligence activity within a broader political context suggests less favourable conclusions. The 1990's can be said to have been the militaristic mobilisation of a minority, instead of the gathering of an electorate support. Opinion polls suggested that, by the 1990's, that while guerrilla activity pleased young supporters, it alienated the older voting majority. This was proved in the April '94 elections, when the PAC gained meagre support.

The links with foreign security establishments such as RENAMO in Angola, the Russian KGB, and especially for this dissertation's argument its links to Zimbabwe ensured that PAC integration into the SANDF was necessary for South African foreign intelligence

and national security. This knowledge brought by the PAC is indeed invaluable. However, as illustrated through its actions, the PAC intelligence lacked the professionalism and direction that were needed in a democratic, civilian-controlled intelligence service.

### Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)

From its foundation in 1961, MK has been the military wing of the ANC. Its founding members include Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Wilton Mkwayi, Joseph Slovo and Raymond Mhlaba. MK was established to fight apartheid when all other forms of resistance had failed to bear any fruit. (Motumi, 1996:84)

At first, the armed struggle included the blowing up of symbolic targets such as electricity pylons and other infrastructure. Walter Sisulu announced the manifesto of MK on a clandestine radio station on December 16 1961. The manifesto called for total defiance and resistance through military means. At the same time recruits such as Nelson Mandela were sent to Algeria and Ethiopia to receive military training.

Shortly thereafter, the Rivonia trial saw the entire leadership of the ANC being given life sentences. Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela were amongst those imprisoned. The Lobatse conference in 1963 gave the ANC a mandate to lead the tripartite alliance of the ANC, SACP and SACTU. The hostility of the neighbouring colonial administrations made insurgency efforts difficult and complex to develop.

This prompted a working relationship between the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), the Zimbabwean People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and MK. Frontline members in this campaign included the late Chris Hani, a former MK commissar and later chief of staff, and Joe Modise, the commander of MK, and later the South African Minister of Defence. Initial training was done in Tanzania and Algeria, with the cream of recruits being sent to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and other East European countries.

At the Morogoro conference in Tanzania on the 25 April 1969, a Revolutionary Council was established comprising of senior members of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and other members of the SACP. These included Yusuf Dadoo, who became

chairman in 1972, Moses Mabhida, SACP general-secretary, and Joe Slovo, a leading strategist in the Council and the SACP central committee member. (Motumi, 1996:85)

During the period 1976 to 1988, almost all military training was done in Angola. Instructors included Cuban and Soviet personnel. In 1979, after an air raid by the SADF, the initial MK camp, Nova Katenga, had to be evacuated. The withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, together with negotiations for the independence of Namibia, led directly to the relocation of training camps to Uganda and Tanzania in 1988/9.

General training initially took six months and was followed by a specialisation course for another three to four months. General training included the use of:

- firearms, which concentrated on the use of rifles, especially AK47s and other rifles that are standard SADF/SAP issue like the R1 and R4 rifles;
- engineering instruction for explosives and different types of mines;
- political training to understand the history of the ANC as well as Communist ideology;
- artillery, such as the Grad-P or 122mm rocket launcher;
- communication equipment to communicate secretly;
- map reading, topographical data and navigation;
- obstacle courses as mock battle courses and further fitness training;
- first aid equipment to treat bullet wounds and the evacuation of fellow cadres;
- military drills to increase discipline;
- military combat work focussing on aspects of intelligence and counter-intelligence, and operating on a clandestine basis;
- anti-aircraft training. (Motumi, 1996:89-91)

At first, military and political structures were held separate. However, these two structures were brought together in the Revolutionary Council. The National Executive Committee (NEC) was responsible for issuing directives to MK. It was however the Political Military Council that supervised the implementation of the NEC's directives. (Motumi, 1996:89-91)



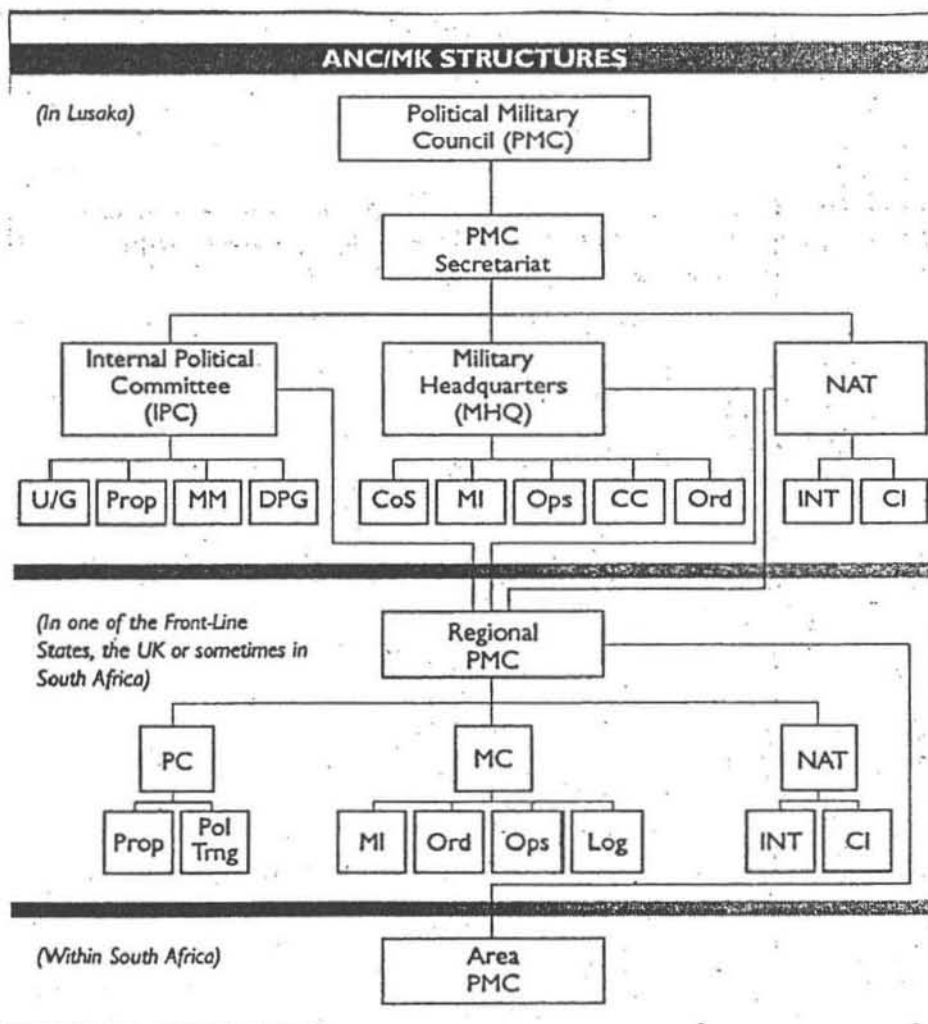
The PMC was chaired by the ANC President and was given extensive power in overall planning. It had its own budget and could make decisions related to its own staffing. It represented a more integrated feature in politico-military structures. The Area Political Military Councils (APMC's) provided the necessary integrated leadership.

This diagram illustrates the co-ordination that took place from the Secretariat (top) down to the MHQ, the Internal Political Committee (IPC) and NAT (Intelligence, Counter-intelligence and Security). Each of these had smaller sub-structures, based in Lusaka. The Regional Political Military Councils (RPMC) existed underground in Southern Africa and the UK. Certain areas inside the country had APMCs, while developed areas had RPMCs.

Military Intelligence (MI) was organised under MHQ for the collection of army intelligence for use by MK as well as the joint planning and execution of operations with other relevant structures. Keith Mokwape headed MI until 1990 who succeeded Ronnie Kasrils in 1987/8. He was succeeded by Mojo Motau in 1992. (Motumi, 1996:96-7)

The overall head of NAT was Joe Nhlanhla, who succeeded Mzwai Piliso in 1987. Nhlanhla later became South African Minister of Intelligence. Within NAT, there was a conventional division between the functions of intelligence and security. In 1988, a division between intelligence and counter-intelligence was announced. The present South African Deputy President, Jacob Zuma, became the head of counter-intelligence in 1987, but later gave up this post in 1993 to help the ANC prepare for the general elections.

Under the Political Military Council, the Military Headquarters, included the Chief of Military Intelligence under its designation. Furthermore, under NAT in the Political Military Council, there was a Chief of intelligence and Counter-Intelligence. The intelligence section had its own lines of communication and control to operatives, although sometimes these overlapped with political channels. For example, someone assigned both political and intelligence work could work as an operative. An illustration of this overlapping was Operation Vula.



President Oliver Tambo conceived a plan to establish a political and military leadership structure in South Africa. It involved the infiltration of senior cadres led by Mac Maharaj and Ronnie Kasrils, and later Siphiwe Nyanda. It was a top secret operation spearheaded by the intelligence division, and commenced in 1986. It was termed Operation Vula. Operation Vula was costly and time-consuming and was later uncovered in July 1990 amidst the commencement of the negotiation process in May of that year.

The integration of the intelligence services of the liberation movements has brought essential experience and expertise to the process. By experiences, we refer to, for example, the interaction between MK intelligence and, for our purposes, Zimbabwe in assisting MK insurgency into South Africa. At the same time, the old South African intelligence colluded with other foreign bodies in maintaining apartheid status-quo. At this juncture, we now turn to the role of the intelligence establishment of the old South Africa. (Motumi, 1996:99)

### South Africa (before 1994)

This section will give a historical account of defence in South Africa from 1912 up to the transition to democracy in 1994. Colonial defence heritage is important, especially from 1912, as it forms the basis of defence evolution in South Africa. We shall begin by outlining the early years of the defence force leading up to clandestine and intelligence operations later on. Special attention will be given to the functions of the intelligence services under de Klerk, as these services are the direct predecessors of the current services in transformation.

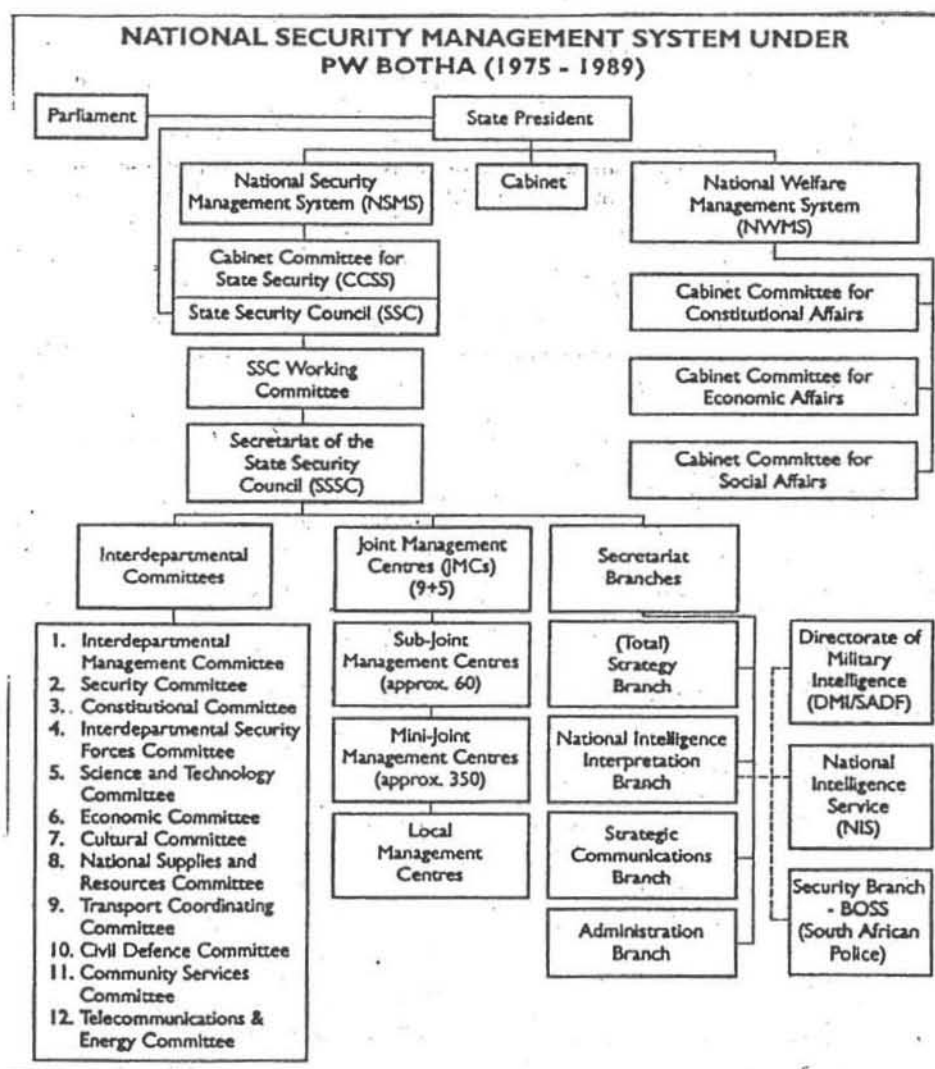
The Union Defence Force (UDF) was established in terms of the SA Defence Act, No.13 of 1912. The varied experiences of irregular warfare which settler regiments and Boer commandos brought to the fore were greatly augmented by the participation in the large scale conventional warfare of the Western Front in World War I as well as the Western Desert and Italy in World War II. After 1945, however, the force faced the twin challenges of budgetary cuts and political transformation in the aftermath of the Afrikaner nationalists' victory in 1948. (Sass, 1996:118)

The 1948 victory of the National Party saw the army become more Afrikaans oriented, for example, the renaming of lieutenant-colonel to commandant, etc. The navy remained British oriented in its customs and traditions. The air force was left somewhere in between. In 1957, the UDF became the South African Defence Force (SADF) in terms of the Defence Act, No. 44 of 1957. The old British military system was replaced by a new South African military legal system. (Sass, 1996:120)

As resistance to apartheid stiffened and spread after the Soweto uprising in 1976, the SADF played a major role in the creation and functioning of the National Security Management System (NSMS). This was a move to tackle the 'total onslaught' and was part of the 'total strategy'. 'Total Onslaught' was a propagandist term coined by the Botha regime referring to the liberation movement's activities aiming at destabilising the state. To counter this threat, Botha initiated extreme measures under the frame of 'total strategy'. The establishment of a State Security Council (SSC) was made through the provisions of the Security, Intelligence and State Security Council Act, No. 64 of 1972. Chaired by the Prime Minister (later President), the Minister of Defence and Chief of the SADF were members. Other members included the Justice, Intelligence and Foreign Affairs departments. The functions of the SSC, in terms of Section 5 of the Act, were to advise the Prime Minister on the security of the country in terms of policy and legislation. (Sass, 1996:128)

Under the NSMS system, Joint Management Centres (JMC) had been set up in major urban areas. The government claimed that the role and function of the JMC were to identify areas of conflict and unrest. The JMC was dominated by the police and army. The JMC was a variation of the British Joint Operation Committee (JOC) system that was developed in the Malayan Emergency and was considered essential in combating a revolutionary war. When FW de Klerk abolished the JMC, decisions requiring urgent action were not met with the same rapid reaction at lower levels as in the time of the JMC.

In his effort to normalise political activities, de Klerk was faced with the option of either changing the security force structure or leaving the heavy influence of the security forces on the government. President PW Botha's 'securocrat' establishment was comprised of the SSC and the NSMS. De Klerk, soon after being elected as President moved the Bureau of



(Cilliers, 1995: 142)

Information (BI) and the National Intelligence Services (NIS) under his direct control. Unlike with Botha, where the NIS reported to the SSC and President, de Klerk expected the NIS to report directly to him. In this way, he had knowledge of all clandestine activities and could co-ordinate them as he saw fit. (Sass, 1996:129)

One of the main items on de Klerk's agenda was the peaceful implementation of Resolution 435, which provided Namibia with independence. It was imperative to the progress of South African political reform, that the United Nations (UN) declare the Namibian elections as free and fair. However, there was also the need to prevent the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) from gaining a two-thirds majority allowing it to draft a post-independence constitution. The then Foreign Minister Pik Botha has admitted that there was funding of anti-SWAPO parties at an estimated US\$40 million from the Department of Foreign Affairs' Special (secret) Account. (Henderson, 1999)

Furthermore, South African Military Intelligence claimed to have intercepted messages by the United Nation Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), describing intentions of SWAPO guerrilla's insurgency efforts. However, these were later found to be fakes passed by MI on to Foreign Minister Botha who relayed these telexes to Western representatives. These were attempts to discredit the de Klerk government by internal insurgency efforts. Insurgency duties were carried out by ANC personnel within the National Party government such as the presence of Sue Dobson, an ANC 'mole' in the SADF public affairs departments. (Henderson, 1999)

De Klerk began a major restructuring of the Security Services in November 1989. This was an attempt to establish his own freedom of action by diminishing the role of the military and to dispel the 'securocrat' image of the Botha years. As mentioned previously, the intelligence community via the whole security structure operated independently to government in that they reported to the SSC and not to government itself.

Firstly, the NSMS and SSC were to be dismantled from the top down. The initial step was the creation of a Cabinet Committee for Security Affairs (CCSA), which saw the SSC act



more on an advisory capacity to the CCSA. This move re-established cabinet's constitutional role as the highest decision making body. (Henderson, 1999)

Secondly, de Klerk ordered a full investigation into all covert operations and secret accounts. Furthermore, anti-sanction projects had to come to a complete stop. Covert actions were to be limited to a bare minimum and would only be carried out if deemed absolutely essential. As a result, the Finance Minister's authority to suppress information regarding expenditure if he felt it was in the national interest of the state, had to be cancelled.

Thirdly, and more importantly for this study, all intelligence services policy had to change. Services included the Security Branch, the NIS, and the SADF's four intelligence branches comprising of DMI, navy, air force and those sections of the army. The overlapping of intelligence gathering, clandestine operations and covert activity between the NIS, Security Branch and DMI had led to ongoing rivalries between these organs. As such de Klerk decided to regulate these departments by imposing function as responsibilities as opposed to areas or interest based specialisation.

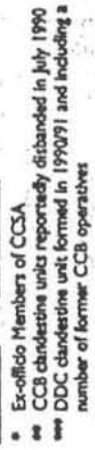
On 10 January 1990, he addressed 500 police Commanders on the need for police to address crime and not anti-state activity, although the security branch was left to tackle issues of internal intelligence gathering and the identification of any internal militant threat. Subsequently, the Security Branch was combined with the Criminal Investigation Division into the Crime Combating and Investigation unit (CCI). (Henderson, 1999)

The civilian NIS retained its role of national co-ordination of strategic intelligence assessments for the State President and the CCSA, though answerable only to the President. NIS maintained its foreign intelligence function, which was to liaise with other African states and overseas organisations. Its role was to provide information exchanges, and sometimes training and equipment.

Fourthly, in the case of DMI, de Klerk ordered a report on the Special Forces. These reports were to include all covert activity. However, de Klerk claims that he had only learnt



(AS OF 1 MARCH 1993)



(Cilliers, 1995: 160)

\* Ex-Officio Members of CCSA

\*\* Clandestine unit reportedly disbanded in July 1990.

\*\*\* Security Branch and Criminal Investigation Branch combined into Combating Crime and Investigation Unit (CCI) in April 1991.



SOUTH AFRICAN SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY  
(AS OF 31 AUGUST 1991)

of the SADF 'death-squad', the notorious Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) through the Harms commission. However, de Klerk's aim was to curb the level of covert activity by the SADF's intelligence relative to that of the NIS and the Security Branch. De Klerk issued a directive that meant that DMI would only operate in internal affairs only if requested by the SAP command. This directive was later proved to be ineffective.

De Klerk was faced with a problem of transforming the intelligence services to aid a negotiation process to reform the political arena. De Klerk began transformation of the South African security and intelligence community with regard to limiting its range of functions and power to act independently. He also sought to replace old commanders with his own reformist appointees. It is thought that de Klerk used intelligence to undermine the negotiations by applying intelligence as a third force. (Henderson, 1999)

To summarize, South Africa had a very active intelligence community that existed in both government and anti-apartheid structures and bodies. On the apartheid government's front, there was a formidable array of intelligence bodies. Among these were the National Intelligence Service, the State Security Council and its National Intelligence Committee. The military bodies included the Military Intelligence division of the S.A. National Defence Force (which included the Directorates of Military Intelligence and Special Tasks) and the Crime Combating and Investigation Division of the South African Police.

The NIS gathered information through the placement of moles in organizations such as the A.N.C. and P.A.C. It possessed information on both the white right wing and extremists in black parties such as Inkatha. The aim of the NIS was to carry out counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism operations. In the past, this was done at both domestic and foreign levels.

Military Intelligence was predominantly involved in the suppression of uprisings from within the state and alongside its borders. From within, we had midnight raids into townships acting in alliance with the police bodies. Cross border raids by special forces and MI personnel were very effective in the control of arms influx and terrorist insurgencies into South Africa.

The Crime Combating Wing of the SAP include police intelligence and in particular the Security Branch at Vlakplaas. Their role included the suppression of any form of anti-state activity within South African borders. Their role, as outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was pivotal in controlling uprisings at key points in time and place.

The ANC Department of Intelligence and Security was formerly known as the ANC National Intelligence Department or ANC-NAT. It included directorates of intelligence, counter-intelligence and security; a military intelligence directorate was attached to the ANC military arm Umkhonto we Sizwe. In 1990, it changed its name to ANC Department of Intelligence Services or ANC-DIS. Others included the Pan Africanist Security Service, the Transkei Intelligence Service, the Bophuthatswana Internal Intelligence Service and the Venda National Intelligence Service.

The National Intelligence Service was disbanded on 1 January 1995 for purposes of facilitating integration and transformation in light of the changing nature of the South African state and global changes. In its place was established, under section 3(1) of the Intelligence Services Act, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). It comprises those former members of the NIS, ANC-DIS, the Pan-Africanist Security Service, the Transkei Intelligence Service, the Bophuthatswana Internal Intelligence Service, the Venda National Intelligence Service, and any other members of any intelligence service either attached to a political organisation or operating in the independent homelands or self-governing territories.

Although the new agency will include members from all of these services, a percentage of these former members will instead become members of the new South African Police Service rather than intelligence. At the same time, the foreign intelligence-gathering department of the NIS was separated and constituted under section 3(1) as the South African Secret Service (SASS), further to its mandate as defined in section 2(2) of the National Strategic Intelligence Act. (Republic of S.A. Intelligence Services Act, Act 38 of 1994)

By dividing the operational mandates of the old National Intelligence Service between its foreign and domestic roles, it is hoped that this will "promote greater focusing, effectiveness, professionalism, and expertise in the specialized fields of domestic and foreign intelligence." There will still be cohesive ties between the two services in that the Directors-General of the NIA and SASS must consult with each other on all decisions regarding operations and plans for the services. (Republic of S.A. Intelligence Services Act, Act 38 of 1994)

This new structure addresses a new agenda and priorities that will be examined in the next chapter. Presently, the amalgamation of intelligence led to the formation of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), South African Secret Service (SASS), SANDF Intelligence Division (SANDF-ID), SAPS National Crime Investigation Service (SAPS-NCIS). Each division has their own priority, but our area of focus is the foreign intelligence body, and will form the backbone of our study in the next chapter.

### **Chapter 3: South African Intelligence today**

The new South African intelligence community has been presented with a new agenda. This new agenda includes the protection of national security by way of policy analysis and advice as opposed to the violent covert operations carried out by intelligence in the past to uphold the apartheid state. This means that new areas of focus are established which are in line with the whole spectrum of security adjustment. In fact, even the defining features of security have been revised. These defining features relate to the functions of each intelligence body in carrying out their duties with regard to their own priorities.

For example, that the functions of 'national intelligence' have been revamped to suit their priority. 'National Intelligence' has been conceptualised as the gathering, collating, analysing, disseminating and the evaluation of information relating to state security. From this, we see the 'national intelligence' defining features of gathering, collating, etc. as opposed to covert NIS activities of the past, which included defining features such as assassinations. The priority of 'national intelligence' has changed from the NIS past, which was upholding apartheid security through aggression and intolerance. "National intelligence" has now prioritised the promotion and protection of a democratic ideal through advisement and consultation.

(O' Brien, 1995:177)

To fulfil these functions, the Intelligence Services Act of 1994, has stipulated, '*The intelligence services are required to act in the interests of the country as a whole. In this respect, intelligence should enhance national security, and protect and promote the interests of the state and the well-being of its citizens.*' The elaboration of the defining of national strategic intelligence stated, '*comprehensive, integrated and estimative intelligence on all the current and long-term aspects of national security which are of special concern to strategic decision-making and the formulation and implementation of policy and strategy at the national level.*'

From the above definitions, it can be determined that the concept of 'national intelligence' encompasses the whole realm of national security, i.e. the protection of the democratic state. By way of implication, national intelligence shall include counter-

intelligence, foreign intelligence, and domestic intelligence. Furthermore, as in the de Klerk era, the President is required to authorise any 'special activities' or 'covert action' carried out by the South African intelligence community.

As mentioned before, the problems of the apartheid intelligence agencies were that they overlapped and legislation did not clearly define the role, function and duty of each service. The National Strategic Intelligence Act seeks to remedy this problem by establishing specific services with the intention and expectation of avoiding such problems and issues. A whole range of questions and concerns arise out of the new structure and its declared objectives. (National Strategic Intelligence Act , 1994)

Firstly, will the new defining and functional allocations really imply an end to the overlapping of the various functions of the intelligence services? or will clashing and conflict over resources and areas of expertise and operations continue to spill over from the past?

Secondly, the terminology of such terms like 'foreign intelligence' and 'foreign military intelligence' is not clearly and separately defined:

*" 'Foreign military intelligence' means intelligence regarding the war potential and military establishment of foreign countries (including their capabilities, intentions, strategies and tactics) which can be used by the Republic in the planning of its military forces in time of peace and for the conduct of military operations in time of war.*

*'Foreign intelligence' means intelligence on any external threat or potential threat to the national interests of the Republic and its people, and intelligence regarding opportunities relevant to the protection and promotion of such national interests irrespective of whether or not it can be used in the formulation of the foreign policy of the Republic. "*

(National Strategic Intelligence Act of 1994)

From the above, it should be clear that the National Strategic Intelligence Act of 1994 attempts to alleviate the problem of overlapping by presenting formulated definitions of



related intelligence matter. However, we also see how difficult this task actually is and that overlapping is a continued concern for the present intelligence community.

Furthermore, there is no clear definition as to what constitutes a threat to the Republic. Unlike its South African counterpart, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act clearly states the nature of threats to the national security of Canada. Section 2b of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act of 1984 clearly defines threats to the security of Canada,

*“(a) espionage or sabotage that is against Canada or detrimental to the interests of Canada or activities directed toward or in support of such espionage or sabotage, (b) foreign influence activities within or relating to Canada that are detrimental to the interests of Canada and are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person, (c) activities within or relating to Canada directed or in support of the threat or use of acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purposes of achieving a political objective within Canada or property for the purpose of achieving a political objective within Canada or a foreign state, and (d) activities directed toward undermining by covert unlawful acts, or directed toward destruction or overthrow by violence of, the constitutionally established system of government in Canada.”*

(O’ Brien, 1995:177)

Thirdly, by creating such broad terms for the definitions of national security, the intelligence acts may have created too broad a mandate to fulfil, meaning more overlapping in terms of functions and responsibilities. There are growing fears that the broadening in defining the national security of the Republic can lead to conflict in intelligence activity across the intelligence community. This problem can only be alleviated once a concrete national security policy is established. (O’ Brien, 1995:177-8)

The framers of the present intelligence structure considered a number of options in terms of restructuring and reformation. The first was ‘absorption’, which meant the absorption of individuals from former intelligence agencies into the full spectrum of the

present South African intelligence arena. Former intelligence bodies included MK-DIS, ANC-NAT, PAC intelligence as well as the homeland intelligence services.

The second option was 'amalgamation' of other agencies into existing structures. As opposed to 'absorption', 'amalgamation' refers to the combining of various agencies and not individual members. Here, also, other agencies include the liberation movements' intelligence services as well as the homeland services.

The third possibility was 'marginalisation', which refers to the limited incorporation of senior intelligence members from the various pre-existing intelligence bodies, while individual force members of statutory and non-statutory bodies have to go through normal recruitment channels. This allows for proper screening and security clearance checks to be performed efficiently and appropriately, as all members have to be screened. (Intelligence Services Act of 1994, Section 8)

Fourthly, and finally, 'integration' implied the complete disbanding of existing structures. In their place would be brand new structures based on equal opportunities and professional standards being observed, for all members of the intelligence community. Professional standards were adhered to by adopting strict procedures in recruitment and the carrying out of special operations. These procedures included getting proper authorisation and accountability in recruiting and performing of intelligence activities. It was eventually decided that the fourth option was the best option to use in light of equality, and democratisation. The reason for choosing the fourth option by the new government was that integration allowed for the establishment of new structures, although keeping old personnel from the various intelligence structures. This allowed for the establishment of a new intelligence structure as well as retaining essential experiences of the past intelligence communities. The effect of this solution is in keeping with the broader ideal of unity in the new South Africa.

(O' Brien, 1995:178)

On 1 January 1995, the National Intelligence Service (NIS) was disbanded, and in its place and under section 3.1 of the Intelligence Services Act, the National Intelligence Agency

(NIA) was established. The new agency consisted of the old NIS, MK-DIS, the Transkei Intelligence Service, the Bophuthatswana Internal Intelligence Service, the Venda National Intelligence Service, and any other members of any intelligence service either attached to a political organisation or operating in the independent homelands or self-governing territories. At this point, it is worth mentioning that integration was based on the legacy of South African security, which implies the unification of the old structures with the new ones.

In an important structural revision, the foreign-intelligence gathering department of the NIA was separated and re-established as the South African Secret Service (SASS). By separating the old structure of the NIS into foreign and domestic, it was hoped that this would promote effective professionalism and expertise in the specialised fields of foreign and domestic intelligence, by improving accountability, stamping out human rights violations and combating corruption.

In 1994, the new head of the NIA was Sizakele Siqwashe, former deputy head of the MK-DIS, while the head of SASS, MJM (Mike) Louw, former Director-General of the NIS. The present Director General of SASS is Hilton Anthony Dennis. To assist in fully understanding the direction of the South African Secret Service policy and ideals, a short profile of the present Director General follows. The profile of Hilton Anthony Dennis suggests that there is a drive towards a higher degree of professionalism as well as experience being directed into the service. Furthermore, his appointment proves that transformation and the legacy of the past intelligence services can compliment each other.

Hilton Anthony Dennis was born on 28 August 1958 in Ixopo, KwaZulu-Natal. After completing his matric at the Little Flower School in Ixopo in 1976, he proceeded to study a BA(law) degree at the University of Western Cape, but was excluded due to his political activities. In 1980, Dennis went into exile, and thereafter joined the ANC. He was trained militarily in Angola, and in 1982/4 undertook various courses in the then German Democratic Republic.

In 1983/4, he was appointed the ANC's Counter-Intelligence representative in Tanzania. In 1984/6, he was deployed in Lusaka as a counter intelligence analyst, a post that included the duties of collating and presenting data to relevant authorities. In 1987/90, he was

appointed the head of Counter-Intelligence Investigation Unit in Lusaka. In 1991, he returned to South Africa and was deployed by the ANC in KwaZulu Natal. In 1994/7, he was appointed as the Deputy General Manager of Counter Espionage in the NIA. Dennis later progressed to general manager of that division. His responsibilities included strategic planning, building effective counter espionage structures, and management. skills will prove. (Statement on Appointment of Directors-General by the Presidents Office)

While many expected the NIS, (both domestic and foreign) sections would be totally disbanded due to its link with the past, this move was strongly opposed by many in the ANC. This was due to a number of factors. Firstly, the ANC acknowledged the importance and pivotal role that the NIS played in the negotiation process. Furthermore, the ANC did not want to lose the assets and superior capabilities of the NIS, which included resources, like information of both the right wing and left wing extremists. Finally, although this was not stated openly (as with much of intelligence activities) the NIS possessed a lot of information about the ANC itself, in particular information regarding high profile leaders and cadres in the ANC. The publication of such information would have seriously jeopardised the GNU. (O' Brien, 1995:179)

Generally, the structure and make-up of the NIA is similar to that of the NIS, with the exception of the separation of the foreign intelligence services. The structure was left intact through consensus and mutual agreement reached by the NIS and the ANC prior to the 1994 elections. This was to allow for the constant flow of intelligence without any interruption.

The mission of the NIA, as defined in the White Paper, is to conduct security intelligence within the borders of the Republic of South Africa in order to protect the constitution. Its overall focus is to ensure the security and stability of the state and the safety and well-being of its citizens. This implies that the NIA will carry out counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism operations domestically, acting alongside the SAPS to detect, deter and prevent terrorism, counter-insurgency, foreign espionage, and other activities that could undermine the state.

The foreign intelligence service, SASS, has a complementary role to the NIA. According to the White Paper, SASS will conduct intelligence in relation to external threats, opportunities, and other issues that may affect the Republic of South Africa, with the aim of promoting the national security and the interests of the country and its citizens. It is expected of SASS to conduct traditional intelligence-gathering roles regionally and internationally, at the same time operating in a diplomatic function in liaising with foreign services.

This being the case, the role of SASS or foreign intelligence also has a strong international diplomatic function. For example, Cedric de Koenig, points out that in some states such as Algeria, the foreign intelligence services are directly responsible for foreign policy development. SASS's role would be to liaise with Algerian intelligence on matters concerning international relations due to the status of Algerian intelligence in policy making. This implies that diplomats play a secondary support function to SASS when it comes to diplomatic relations with military-led Governments such as in the example of Algeria. (Interview 1)

Furthermore, SASS will gather, correlate, evaluate and analyse foreign intelligence, excluding foreign military intelligence, institute counter-intelligence measures within the Service and gather departmental intelligence at the request of any interested department of State. This implies that SASS is an ultimate mechanism for the gathering and dissemination of strategic intelligence, in mutual relations with other agencies, for the National Intelligence Co-ordinator.

(National Strategic Intelligence Act, 1994)

An example illustrates the role of the SASS. Our example relates to the economics division of SASS. It is split up into regions of the world, with researchers specialising on a specific region. Hypothetically, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) would approach SASS requesting relevant economic data on, let us say, Zimbabwe. The appropriate researcher would contact operations to activate the relevant personnel in gathering and correlating economic information on Zimbabwe.



This information will be passed on to the researching staff who will analyse its appropriateness and interpret its relevance. They will then hand over the 'need to know' material to DTI. They will further give advisement to the DTI on how to handle this material in the appropriate way and help. These new methods of gathering and analysing are new areas that have been improved upon to increase intelligence professionalism. This hypothetical example serves as an illustration to the new role of South African foreign intelligence activity. (Interview 1)

The South African National Defence Force Intelligence Division (SANDF-ID) has been greatly downsized, and has been brought under civilian oversight. However, it still operates under the Defence Secretariat. Like all other intelligence bodies, the new Defence Force Intelligence has incorporated intelligence services of the liberation movements as well as the homelands services. Its operational mandate is the gathering, correlating, analysing and disseminating all foreign and domestic military intelligence. (National Strategic Intelligence Act, 1994)

Joe Nhlanhla stated in a speech in June of 1993, that the primary focus of MI will remained that of a tactical nature and will reflect the traditional brief of the armed forces, that is the preservation of the integrity of the Republic. By tactical nature, it is meant that MI will be responsible for the management of operational activities directly relevant to military operations. Also, the SANDF must not engage in internal policing unless mandated to do so under the terms of the constitution. Furthermore, while there is a need for the armed forces to have a clearly defined strategic intelligence function, this should be limited to the acquisition of information on long-term military intentions of adversaries. Strategic intelligence should remain the function of civilian intelligence. He concluded by stating that there is a need for much transparency and oversight in military intelligence. (O' Brien, 1995:180)

Because there is a risk that strategic intelligence can be abused by the military, it is essential that that its functions should be overseen by civilians. Keeping strategic intelligence as a function of civilian intelligence greatly decreases the risk of corruption and misuse of intelligence in the kind of abuse which characterised the homelands and white regime intelligence structures which were discussed in Chapter 2.

The aim and goals of the SANDF-ID are to support political and military decisions with regard to National Security and military-related developments that may have an impact on the strategic interests of the Republic. To fulfil this function, defence intelligence only provides data to the commander, who may choose to ignore the information provided or accept it. This emphasises that defence intelligence is not an operational institution, but a collection-oriented one.

Special Forces, long the eyes and ears of MI, were in the past required to undertake long-range reconnaissance operations to obtain strategic information. Although these Special Forces represent the abuses of the past, they have not been dispensed with altogether in the transformed services. Special Forces in the new intelligence structures will be required to know about strategic intelligence within the required specific area, to disrupt the enemy's or enemies' logistical, communications and administrative infrastructure. These are all, however, subject to Cabinet and Ministerial oversight and approval and all members are bound by a code of conduct.

However, the role of Special Forces in intelligence has declined. The need to engage in cross-border reconnaissance raids and intelligence gathering has almost ceased to exist. This being the case, the role of the Reconnaissance Commando (RECCE) operative has faded into intelligence functions. In an interview with a member of the intelligence community, Mr. Smith outlined that the remaining RECCES in the intelligence community are slowly departing from the service, citing the change towards, as he put it, "a more professional and analytical intelligence community as opposed to an aggressive 'act now, think later' attitude, accountable to no one."

(Interview 2)

This brings forward the issues of accountability and transparency. Generally, in the context of foreign policy, accountability remains a problem. There is a paradoxical situation of 'democratic intelligence'. One assumes and expects that democracy is the champion of full transparency, accountability and oversight. However, intelligence has traditionally been the function of covert, clandestine and beneath the surface operations and functions and therein



lies the paradoxical phenomenon of 'democratic intelligence'. It is difficult to make the two complement each other without one usurping the authority of the other.

Berridge mentions that the most important function of intelligence is to obtain by covert means and then to analyse information which policy-makers cannot acquire by more conventional methods. In this sense, democratic states such as South Africa have the need to acquire information in order to safe-guard the national interests of the state. The acquisition of such information is sometimes, hard to come by. In that way, intelligence services covertly acquire this information, thereby serving to safeguard the democratic state and ideal. (Berridge, 1997:81)

On the other hand, democracy seeks to sway the balance of secrecy in favour of transparency and accountability. The danger of not doing this has been recorded in the numerous Cold War activities and the abuses of intelligence by the apartheid state. In the United States, New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has long argued the case for full transparency. Moynihan states that the secrecy imposed by the United States Military greatly exacerbated the Cold War and its effects, such as the arms race. Transparency and openness, argues Moynihan, by way of open discussions of the military and industrial capabilities of the Soviet Union would have greatly decreased the threat of the USSR, as the West perceived it to be. From this theory, we are able to see the negative role that covert activity plays in the democratic state in terms of foreign policy and international relations.

(Moynihan, 2000)

Similarly, in the apartheid state, secret bodies manipulated foreign policy. South Africa's 'total strategy' and 'total onslaught' are instances that illustrate this. It has been speculated that like the Cold War situation, the apartheid war situation could have, through open discussions, been greatly reduced. This argument is applicable to the South African case using Moynihan's Cold War case study as an example in contextualising and conditioning it to the South African case. It should also be pointed out that the covert nature of intelligence activities, in the past has protected intelligence services that are simply incompetent, even if they do not abuse their powers. There is a strong argument for oversight on the grounds of efficiency. However, South Africa has embarked on a pioneering adventure in the

intelligence field. “Mr. Smith” has related that South Africa has partly done away with covert activity in order to create a situation of transparency and accountability. Furthermore, “Mr. Smith” has stated that South Africa has sought to establish a middle ground as far as covert action and accountability is concerned. (Interview 2)<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, co-ordination of various covert and overt activities is necessary. The middle ground referred to is the acknowledgement of covert activity, but at the same time working towards the decrease of the level of covertness by ensuring full accountability and transparency of the covert actions to the relevant bodies acting as oversight initiatives. The decrease in the nature and level of covertness allows Mr. Smith to claim that covert action and the need for covert action has theoretically been done away with.

In South Africa the need for co-ordination of intelligence activities has been addressed. This function has been attributed to the National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee (NICOC), which replaces the Joint Co-ordinating Intelligence Committee (JCIC). NICOC reports to the President through the cabinet committee on Security and Intelligence and comprises of the Co-ordinator on Intelligence, the Director-General of each service, including the Directors of SAPS-NIS and the SANDF-ID.

The functions of NICOC are:

- to advise government on threats or potential threats to the security of the country and its citizens;
- to act on advisory capacity to government regarding national, regional, and local levels of intelligence;
- to function as initiator on multidisciplinary and strategic approaches to the analysis and assessment of intelligence;
- to co-ordinate the functions of all intelligence bodies;
- to report to the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence, as required;
- to co-ordinate counter-intelligence at a national level;
- to manage and act as mediator for any conflict or competition between the agencies;

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<sup>1</sup> “Mr. Smith” is a pseudonym used in safeguarding the identity of the interviewee as exposing the true identity of “Mr. Smith” could compromise national security.

- to co-ordinate training standards and programmes within the intelligence community;
  - and to co-ordinate the liaison activities with foreign intelligence organs and bodies.
- (Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspectors-General of Intelligence Act, 1994)

To ensure that there is accountability at all levels, SASS and the NIA are responsible directly to the Office of the State President (OSP). The office of Inspector-General has been created for each service, that is the NIA, SASS, SANDF-ID, and SAPS-NIS. The functions of the Inspector-General of each service are to review the activities of the intelligence services and to monitor policy guidelines and other established mandates and principles. They are allowed full access to documents, budgets, reports and all other classified information. Each Director-General is expected to present all matters of interest and concern to the Inspector-General. Furthermore, the Inspectors-General have the authority of the Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence. (Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspectors-General of Intelligence Act, 1994)

Further to this, a parliamentary oversight committee has been established. Similar to the Canadian Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC), this committee has been called the Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence (PCI). The role of the Committee is to receive reports from both the auditors and other evaluators of the services, make recommendations both on legislation related to the services and the activities of the services themselves, order enquiries, investigations and hold hearings on matters relating to intelligence and national security. It must also monitor the services in light of human rights and other rights entrenched in the constitution.

At the same time, section 4 of the Committee of Members of Parliament on an Inspectors-General of Intelligence Act authorises the Committee access to any and all information that it may require in an investigation. The same section makes provision for the services to withhold any information regarding operations in intelligence or counter-intelligence activities. That information may be knowledge of intelligence or counter-intelligence

methods, a source, or any other information that might compromise the national security or interest of the Republic.

A code of conduct has been written into the Intelligence Services Act, as an additional mechanism of oversight and accountability. This code arose out of discussions between the ANC and NIS, in which the ANC wanted a complete code of conduct. This complete code meant full transparency and knowledge of operations and operatives. The NIS opposed this claiming that this would make intelligence work extremely difficult, endangering agents and operations. A compromise was eventually reached establishing a code of conduct in that knowledge regarding agents was limited.

All members of the Secret Services:

- *“Shall openly declare their loyalty to the Republic of South Africa, the Constitution, and the laws of the country,*
- *will be loyal to their organisation and assiduously guard and protect the integrity of their profession, its methods and sources,*
- *shall adhere to the basic principles of their profession, as well as the policies, regulations and directives of their respective services,*
- *shall respect the norms, values, and principles of a democratic society including the basic human rights of individuals,*
- *shall strive, in the execution of their duties, to attain the highest degree of objectivity, integrity and professionalism,*
- *shall strive to be responsible in the handling of information and intelligence, and shall at all costs prevent the wrongful disclosure of national security interests,*
- *shall commit themselves to the promotion of mutual trust between policy-makers and professional intelligence workers, as well as co-operation with all the members of the intelligence community,*
- *shall commit themselves to carry out their duties without seeking personal gain or advantage by reason of the duties, facilities, funds and knowledge entrusted to them,*
- *will conduct themselves in their personal life in a manner which will not prejudice their organisation, their profession and fellow craftsmen, or the facilities entrusted to them, and*

- *shall commit themselves to report any violations of this code through command channels to the relevant authorities.* " (O'Brien, 1995:184)

Contraventions of this Code, as well as other guidelines, were defined clearly in the Intelligence Services Act. However, should violations of the Code occur, then the Director General of the relevant service has the presidential authority to order a board of enquiry into the actions of any member charged with misconduct, and sentence that individual should they be found guilty. These powers are extra-territorial which means that are applicable to members who commit violations within and outside the Republic. Reciprocally, the members have the ability to disobey any order, which contravenes the Code.

The 1994 White Paper on Intelligence clearly states that training is to be regarded as the most important tool in developing a sense of professionalism in order to fully coincide with the new dispensation of transparency and accountability. "Mr. Smith" has elaborated on this by stating that, in order to fulfil the objectives of professionalism and a higher degree of understanding foreign policy in relation to intelligence, numerous academics have been called to facilitate training sessions and workshops for recruits to ensure that members have the necessary up to date knowledge of international affairs.

"Mr. Smith" has mentioned that current issues and world trends allow for the understanding of members in their role in gathering and analysing data to aid foreign policy. For example, the Intelligence Academy hosted Janis van der Westhuizen, of the University of Natal, who presented issues and material as an expert in globalisation. Other specialists, mentions "Mr. Smith", include the police related bodies from the anti-hijack unit used to assist in advanced driving skills education. Further to this, it became apparent that specialists are brought in to the Intelligence Academy where there is a need to attain that skill, be it the knowledge of globalisation or advanced driving skills.

(Interview 2)

Furthermore, an interview with "Mrs. Jones" emphasised the transition of the intelligence bodies to that of a more professional unit. In "Mrs. Jones" role in recruiting intelligence members, she emphasised the need and the objective of the intelligence

community to bring in more academically inclined individuals. As such, recruitment has shifted towards employing individuals with an academic background from the fields of human sciences, economics, technology and international relations.

(Interview 3)<sup>2</sup>

The reason for this is to change the old face of the South African intelligence community, from aggressive action without understanding to that of constructive analysis of information gathering, as illustrated by our hypothetical example on Zimbabwe and the Service's economic division. A second reason, and more importantly, is to cope with the changes in the world such as the end of the Cold War, and developments in modern technology. It is expected that new members will bring fresh and up to date information into the organisation to meet these global challenges facing the intelligence community. Furthermore, there is a wealth of information available through many channels such as the internet, and there is a need for proper analysis, creating the need for trained academic specialists.

(Interview 3)

South African intelligence at the outset seemed to have fared remarkably well, in dealing and addressing the changes that has been presented in the world. The internal change to democracy, coupled with the external multipolar global order has left extensive challenges. However, the present intelligence community has risen to the occasion in establishing measures to grapple with the changes with which it has been presented.

The response of the security structures and the intelligence community to these challenges has been positive. The establishment of NICOC as co-ordinating body has enhanced structural reform by giving the intelligence community a new look needed for re-establishing its legitimacy and morale. Furthermore, the various levels of oversight have also addressed the issue of accountability by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee, the Directors-General, the Inspectors-General and so on. The new issue of professionalism expected of members, as well as the recruitment of highly skilled members all present the intelligence

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<sup>2</sup> "Mrs. Jones" is a pseudonym used in safeguarding the identity of the interviewee as exposing the true identity of "Mrs. Jones" could compromise national security



features of the state as seriously meeting the challenges of the international arena. The meeting of these challenges are further elaborated on in terms of security and defence policy.

After assessing the present state of Intelligence, one is left with the criticism that relates to the need for an Intelligence service in South Africa. This criticism was highlighted by the Democratic Party's call for the scrapping of Intelligence Services to be replaced by crime fighting bodies. DP Intelligence Spokesman, Kobus Jordaan, accused Deputy-Intelligence Minister, Joe Nhlanhla, of withholding the report of the Pikoli Commission on Intelligence Service. The Pikoli Commission was set up by the Justice department in May of 1996 to ensure the continuation of the transformation process in an orderly way into its new civilian body and was headed by Advocate Vusi Pikoli. Nhlanhla claimed the oath of secrecy precluded him from making the report public. Jordaan hit back by claiming that Intelligence was not serving the Country's need, which is, to fight crime. (Hartley, Business Day, 31 March 1988)

From this, it can be argued that an FBI type body would be far more appropriate. The present intelligence resources would be of far greater benefit to fighting crime as opposed to the present function of intelligence, which is promoting and protecting the national security of South Africa. This is deduced from the reasoning that crime is more of an issue and problem as opposed to national security.

Reaction to this criticism has been the claim that intelligence is a source of quality information in the fight against crime. Furthermore, to say that South Africa has no external security threat is naïve, as the complexities of criminal threats cross internationally and overlap into foreign syndicates, for example the Nigerian drug cartels. From this, one is left with the opinion that Intelligence is indeed a vital mechanism in fighting crime.

## **Chapter 4: Policy and Legislation**

Before continuing to analyse present foreign intelligence capacity in the light of defence and security policy, it is necessary to present briefly the similar policy objectives of



the past. This is necessary for purposes of identifying and understanding transformation. For the purposes of this dissertation, the focus is the period just before democracy, that is the Botha and de Klerk era.

*'The security forces will hammer them, wherever they find them. What I am saying is the policy of the government. We will not sit here with hands folded waiting for them to cross the borders ..... we shall settle the hash of those terrorists, their fellow-travellers and those who help them.'* (Minister of Defence, General Magnus Malan, Parliament, 4 February 1986.)

We can see from the above quotation the pro-active response of the Botha administration. Malan emphasises that foreign defence policy at that time was to be more aggressive in its roles and functions. However, foreign security and defence policy is not made up out of thin air, but is a constructive result of its constituent factors. As such we can say that the type of government, economy, population, societal institutions, and natural resources/geography should determine a state's approach to international relations.

In this case, foreign security and defence policy was the response to the 'total onslaught' campaign, as perceived by the South African state. This response was dubbed 'total strategy'. The white minority government manipulated foreign security policy in order to maintain power and to serve the interests of the white minority. For example, policy during the Cold War towards anti-West nations was hostile and aggressive. In adopting such a policy, the apartheid state ensured at least a minimum of continued support of the West and its allies.

Also, the adoption of foreign policy of South Africa was dependent on the economic implications of the policy. However, the apartheid state's number one priority was the preservation of the apartheid ideology. As such, substantial resources were invested to aid this goal. Defence expenditure on material, equipment and investment into anything that would be in the 'best interests' of the state such as the intelligence community formed a major part of this. The direct result of this economic allocation was the lack of basic

resources such as the access to water, lights, etc., by way of deprivation to black areas as punishment for resisting the state.

In the face of a majority opposed to apartheid, the foreign policy of the white minority regime was dictated by an inherently unfavourable position. Societal interests served as measures for foreign policy. For example, the need to keep the minority of society in power presented the need to establish a more powerful internal institutional structure in South Africa. This meant that the minority of society dictated foreign policy.

South Africa's rich mineral resources of gold, diamonds, uranium, coal, etc., allowed it to finance its foreign security policy by way of the acquisition of arms through trade. The reliance on South Africa for these products, by other states, allowed South African security policy to be as aggressive circumstances demanded. Furthermore, South Africa's geographical situation at the southern tip of the African continent emphasised its position in foreign security policy manipulation. For example, the creation of the TBVC states on the South African states' northern borders served as buffer zones in counter-acting foreign insurgency threats from South Africa's neighbours. This also motivated South Africa to hold on to South West Africa/Namibia.

In the latter stages of apartheid, the relationship between 'total onslaught' and 'total strategy' operationalised the basic white minority position into policy objectives and means. Briefly, 'total onslaught' was a construct contrived by the apartheid state to legitimise its anti-democratic campaign. 'Total onslaught' also served as a platform in mustering support from the West. The Soviet Union's support for the liberation movements was used by the white minority regime to describe the opposition to apartheid as 'the communist onslaught', and not a struggle to liberate the majority. The effect of this was consistent, if increasingly reluctant support from the West. (Davies and O'Meara, 1985:183-211)

The 'Total Onslaught' threat was categorised into three forms, which were:

- guerrilla attacks on military and civilian targets within South Africa by liberation movements based outside its borders, but with internal underground organisations, led primarily by the African National Congress, acting in

support roles;

- conventional military attack on either South African territory or areas perceived to lie within South Africa's "sphere of influence" or region of economic hegemony such as South West Africa and the certain TBVC states; and
- the effects of international economic action, sanctions, boycotts, disinvestment policies, pressure on international financial institutions to prevent capital inflows and debt rescheduling.

'Total strategy' was the elaboration of the 'fortress' policy adopted by South Africa. The independence of South Africa's neighbours posed a threat to the white minority government's interest and the creation of the TBVC states served as buffer zones for any hostile, anti-apartheid attack. In this way South Africa drew on Afrikaner ideology and strategy such as basing the fortress principle on the old laager model. Historically, the laager was the placement of the ox-wagon into a circular structure with the inhabitants sealed off on the inside being protected by the wagons from hostile threats. South African intelligence policy at that time was moulded from this type of defence methodology, that is, preserving national security as a component of the 'total strategy' campaign. From chapter two, we saw how this intelligence policy was put into practice, using the TBVC states as intelligence platforms for preserving the apartheid bloc.

The aims of the 'total strategy' campaign were; preservation of territorial integrity and the defence of South African borders; the containment and, if possible, the elimination of Communism within the region; the maintenance of South Africa's position as the dominant economic power of the region; the elimination or, at the least, the neutralisation, of the African National Congress, Pan Africanist Congress and all other liberation movements; and the preservation of white minority rule in South Africa. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-283)

The method used in dealing with threats included pacts and treaties with potential allies. For example, pacts with the western allies ensured that the West supported South Africa militarily and financially in their quest to neutralise the liberation movement's threat

in the region. For the West, South Africa was seen as a vital partner limiting the communist threat in Africa. South African intelligence co-operated with Western intelligence to a great extent in carrying out a common objective, suppressing the communist threat. Also, negotiations with neighbouring states in Southern Africa ensured that the threat of hostility from neighbouring states was limited.

A second method of addressing the threat included military action, both internally and externally. Internal military action included the suppression of threats which rose out of various areas within the country such as trade union movements and other such resistance that the government felt needed military action. Internal military action existed both overtly and covertly. Overtly, South Africa's raids into townships attempted to neutralise any internal threat. Covert military actions, under the realm of South African intelligence, were undertaken by the Bureau of State Security (BOSS), which conducted many assassinations and special operations to undermine the liberation movements in South Africa.

External overt military actions included the suppression of the liberation movement in Namibia, as well as apparent aid to the Angolan issue. In this way South Africa showed its dissatisfaction towards those who supported the ANC by overtly supplying military aid to the ANC's supporters enemies. Covert actions, carried out by military intelligence, included the supply and training for Renamo forces in Mozambique, raids by the SADF on Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Swaziland, Mozambique, Angola and Lesotho in pursuit of ANC personnel, as well as support for coups in neighbouring countries, such as in Lesotho.

Economic pressure had a place in South Africa's security policy alongside military action. South Africa used its economic superiority into manipulating and pressurising other African states into adhering to the apartheid states demands, for example sanctioning other states in the region as a result of support to the liberation movements. This left the states of Southern Africa in a state of chronic weakness and dependence on South Africa. South Africa capitalised on this weakness and used it to serve the national interests of South Africa. An example of this is South Africa's support for the UNITA rebels in Angola, a type of punishment towards Angola for siding with the liberation movements and the communists aided by Cuba.

## Policy Changes

During the 1970's, as a result of greater anti-apartheid resistance, foreign policy was effectively in the hands of the military. In the late 1970's, there was a need for change in foreign policy making from that of being military oriented to that of a more legitimate government structure. Moving into the 1980's, foreign policy advisers pushed for this initiative arguing that South Africa's image was being tarnished in the wider world, which the white minority could ill-afford if they wished to retain power. The implementation of sanctions emphasised this point of view. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-53)

This new policy drive bore fruit in 1982 when South Africa signed a non-aggression pact with Swaziland. South Africa initiated a move to 'normalise' relations in the region through the signing of the Nkomati Accord in 1984. This accord was an agreement between Mozambique and South Africa, agreeing to cancel material aid for resistance movements in each other's countries. This turned out to be a one-sided agreement which South Africa seldom honoured and through its intelligence forces carried on supporting Renamo in Mozambique. Despite this, both countries set up a joint security commission to monitor activities in the region. ([www.sadc-ecf.org/countries/mozambique/overview.htm](http://www.sadc-ecf.org/countries/mozambique/overview.htm))

However, this was not met with enthusiasm from the rest of the region. The rest of the region realised South Africa's public image salvaging operation, after the death in disputed circumstances of President Machel of Mozambique and any possibility of an outside threat from Mozambique, thus still carrying out covert activity in the region. It was believed that South African intelligence had a hand in the air crash that killed Machel. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:255)

Overtly, South African foreign policy adopted a new strategy. South African foreign policy developed and used the policy of 'linkage'. South Africa argued that its presence in South West Africa was justified in countering the Cuban communist threat in Angola. South Africa successfully argued that any settlement in Angola had to be linked to an agreement in Angola. South Africa claimed that South West Africa/Namibia served as a strategic piece of land in monitoring and containing the situation in Angola, ensuring that the Angolan war did



not spread further South. This policy of 'linkage' was realised in 1988 when a resolution to the war in Angola was reached, and this was linked with the implementation of United Nations Resolution 435 in Namibia. This ensured the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola together with the withdrawal of South African troops in South West Africa. (South West Africa and Angola: A Forgotten War: 1975-89)

The domestic unrest that began in September 1984 were one of the principal contributing factors to the change in policy direction from Pretoria. International action by way of sanctions had been considerable. In 1989, the domestic economy was hit hard when 200 companies left the country. At the same time, the economy suffered a negative growth rate, an inflation level of 15%, while domestic spending per capita was down 4% and investment was dwindling. Over the period of state emergency, the situation worsened with the fall in the gold price and decline in commodity prices. These were some of the factors that influenced the South African policy-makers, *the securocrats*. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-83)

### Securocrats

The State Security Council and the National Security Management System were of vital importance in both foreign and domestic policy. In 1972, the SSC was established as a committee of cabinet, with the responsibility of overseeing the formulation and implementation of national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the Republic. This brief reflected the views of the then Defence Minister P W Botha who had in the previous five years of his tenure of the ministry vastly increased the range of the military intelligence capability.

In 1978, Botha reorganised the intelligence structure in line with the policy of "total involvement" to act as oversight to all matters likely to concern national security, military, internal, economic, and to deliver its analyses and findings directly to the State Security Council. The National Security Management System operated on a military cell system through 400 so-called Joint Management Centres. These were intended to be capable of almost immediate reaction to problems anywhere in the system, internally in the townships



or the so-called TBVC states, internationally in conflict areas such as Mozambique or Angola. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-83)

According to Botha, departments of state, through their bureaucrats, were continuously making major and minor decisions affecting national security, and were making those decisions in what Botha believed to be an intelligence and ideological vacuum. Thus, the SSC was used as a weapon to allay Botha's concern about departments of state. Dominated by senior cabinet ministers which included those for both Foreign Affairs and Defence, decisions, and analysis of their ramifications, were thus moved by Botha into the shadow world of the SSC which functioned increasingly as the real government of South Africa. From this type of behaviour, it is quite clear that defence and intelligence organs provided the driving force behind the apartheid regime.

However, the relationship between the security forces and the foreign policy establishment remained paradoxical and ambiguous. On one hand it could appear that the military retained, through the late 1980s, a large degree of autonomy in their decision-making processes; a degree of autonomy so great, indeed, that it has appeared at times that they have been able to act with total disregard for the public relations effect that might impact on the outside world. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-83)

One of the most telling examples of this was on the occasion of the second visit to South Africa by the Eminent Persons (EPG) of the Commonwealth, in May 1986. The group's discussions with the Pretoria government had clearly not been particularly fruitful and it was already evident to Pretoria that the EPG would report negatively to the London mini-summit planned for later in that year.

P W Botha had stated half-way through the visit that his government would not tolerate unsolicited interference in its affairs and four days later, on the last day the group was in South Africa, the South African military launched a series of raids on alleged ANC bases into Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia. This was a clear signal from Pretoria that, on the one hand, when the concessions asked of it went beyond the limits it would allow itself,

international opinion was irrelevant, and on the other hand, that it was demonstrably capable of striking at the Front-Line States as and when it wished. The level at which these raids were authorised has been disputed, but there seems little doubt that the security forces were acting as an arm of the State Security Council and had little if any concern for the effects they would have on the international community which was being so energetically courted by the Department of Foreign Affairs. (Barber and Barrett, 1990:251-83)

This example left little doubt that there was a need for transformation in that defence and intelligence had to be reformed, to return policy making to Parliament and the cabinet. People who understood this need include FW de Klerk.

#### De Klerk

We have already discussed the changes in policy, both the foreign and security policies as initiated under de Klerk, in chapter 2. However, it would be only appropriate to summarise these policy changes. During the de Klerk period, there was a diminution of the power of the SSC.

De Klerk gave clear signals that he saw the continued involvement of the military/intelligence establishment, at the high levels it had achieved under P W Botha, as having unwanted connotations for the new image of South Africa that he was projecting abroad. Military regimes were notorious across the world with examples such as General Pinochet in Chile, Castro in Cuba, and the various military regimes in Africa. The object was for the military to revert to a more traditional role as a defence force rather than its self-defined role of the 1970s and 1980s as the major player in the preservation of white majority rule.

De Klerk initiated changes in policy-making in three vital security areas. Firstly, the SSC and the NSMS implementation structure were to be dismantled from the top down. The first step was the creation of a Cabinet Committee for Security Affairs (CCSA). The CCSA met fortnightly to discuss matters concerning national security, chaired by the President who

also the chaired the SSC. The CCSA comprised of the Ministers of defence, law and order, justice, foreign affairs, finance and constitutional affairs. (Henderson, 1995:146)

The SSC now operated under the decision-making policy of the CCSA, on an advisory capacity. This restructuring restored the cabinet to its constitutional role as the highest decision making body in the country. This further scaled down the powers of departments in legislating policy, including input from the intelligence departments. This created a sense of advisory role of the intelligence structure in policy making, whereas under Botha and the SSC, they contributed in actually making decisions regarding policy.

A number of changes were made to security legislation, including cancelling the previous power of the Minister of Finance to suppress information about unauthorised expenditure if he considered it in the national interest, or to exclude specific amounts from the scrutiny of the government Auditor General. An example of this was the overpaying of 1 billion rands to TBVC public servant coffers over a period beginning in 1991 to last until 1995.

(The Star, 2 August 1991)

With reference to covert operations and special accounts, De Klerk ordered a full investigation into covert security functions. Funding clandestine projects were scaled down to the bare minimum. Covert anti-sanction activities were scaled down as being unnecessary and too costly.

De Klerk sought to iron out clashes that involved the information received in making policy. For example, in the intelligence sphere, the DMI, NIS and the Security Branch often clashed on issues. He wanted to regulate the responsibilities of the intelligence environment in order to avoid overlapping and clashing of intelligence matter. Similarly, new foreign and security policy sought to address these clashes amongst other issues.

Other issues include international trends, perspectives and changes in global governance. This requires responsible and appropriate attention from foreign security policy agenda. For the purposes of this dissertation, these trends will not be discussed in detail as

that is another study on its own, but will be summarised in order to facilitate the understanding of foreign security policy. It is expected that this short, broad approach to South African policy formulation serves as a foundation in understanding our main theme of this chapter, which are foreign security policy and the intelligence structure. These foreign security policy making decisions in relation to intelligence cannot be made in isolation to the rest of the world as it was practised under the Botha administration. Today, new global trends have sparked off new approaches to the formulation and practise of foreign security policy.

### International evolutionary trends

The world has undergone a paradigmatic shift in various areas affecting international relations and international global order. Addressing these trends will require careful and flexible policy approaches.

The economies of the individual states have, partially, merged into one world economy. The lifting of trade tariffs, speedy interaction between role players by new technologically advanced means of communication has allowed for production bodies to operate anywhere in the world. Furthermore, companies are forced to relocate in order to prosper, as a result of the saturation of their own domestic markets. South Africa has to keep aware of this notion in order to facilitate appropriate foreign policy, be it economic, social security policy.

In terms of establishing foreign policy, security is of vital concern as it affects international relations between states and serves to promote the national interests of the state concerned. An example of foreign policy security initiatives as it affects international relations is the SADC Defence Pact. These include closer intelligence co-operation with SADC member states, unlike in the past when there was continued intelligence and covert conflict. Furthermore, the SADC defence pact signing in Malawi of August 2001 looks at mobilising forces under external threats to member states; the prevention of aggression amongst members; and intervention in the case of internal military takeovers. (Sunday Times, 8 July 2001)

Recently, new perspectives and issues have escalated as priority in dealing with international security. These include disarmament, migration and refugees, drugs and arms trafficking, as well as engaging in peacekeeping efforts across the world. These issues and trends directly effect foreign security policy and international relations between states. These issues are relevant to South African foreign security policy in its role in the SADC and the African continent.

South Africa, in redefining foreign security policy, has had to strategize and re-strategize in order to suit the international relations component as well as abide by the national interests of the state. In doing so, there has been consensus on the broad orientation of South African foreign policy. Previous Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo has spelt out South Africa's foreign policy principles in the following terms (Heads of Mission Conference, September 1995, Pretoria):

"The underlying principles which serve as guidelines in the conduct of our foreign relations include:

- a commitment to the promotion of human rights;
- a commitment to the promotion of democracy;
- a commitment to justice and international law in the conduct of relations between nations;
- a commitment to international peace and to internationally agreed-upon mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts;
- a commitment to the interests of Africa in World Affairs; and
- a commitment to economic development through regional and international cooperation in an interdependent world."

(South African Foreign Policy Document, 1996)

From the above, we can take note of the fact that there is an underlying philosophy in foreign policy. This philosophy stems from the fact that the South African government has attempted to make it abundantly clear that it is committed to righting the wrongs of the past, for example the promotion of human rights and the maintenance of democracy in Africa. It is claimed, by government, that this is indeed evident in our intelligence services.

An example of steering the intelligence community towards a greater ethic and moral philosophy has been the appointment of the new Intelligence Inspector-General. Doctor Faizel Randera has found himself in a position that gives him more access to Thabo Mbeki, in his appointment as Intelligence Inspector-General. His main task includes overseeing the nations intelligence services to ensure that there are no more human rights catastrophes, as witnessed in the past. (Independent on Saturday, 14 July 2001)

*"The attraction, if you like, of this job (Inspector-general of Intelligence Services) was that it was seen as part of the checks and balances to ensure the intelligence services work within the Constitution, law and policies (of the country)."*

(Faizel Randera in Independent on Saturday, 14 July 2001)

Having graduated with a medical degree in Coventry, England, Randera acted as former President Nelson Mandela's medical doctor, and accompanied Mandela on international trips, giving Randera a first hand look at the affairs concerning international security and globalisation. Randera later took a job with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as one of the commissioners.

Having no intelligence related background, Randera feels that his integrity is what helped him earn such a high position in the intelligence arena. Furthermore, Randera believes that his role is far more than that of a policing function, but rather that of a sharing of values with members of the intelligence services. This is part of the transformation of intelligence in South Africa, a changing of attitude toward values and ethics. (Independent on Saturday, 14 July 2001)

Randera faces ethical issues such as the allegations that MI have been recruiting senior South African journalists to gather information on other African countries. Also, the issue concerning the use of the NIA in furthering political party interests with regard to the alleged plot to oust President Mbeki led by senior former politicians Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, Mr. Mathews Phosa and Mr. Tokyo Sexwale. (Independent on Saturday, 14 July 2001)



The appointment of Dr. Randeria is an important component towards intelligence transformation. His appointment is a reminder, as claimed by government, and an illustration that human rights and integrity are key in the South African security policy and foreign policy, as laid out by policy makers, including our Presidents and Ministers.

Former President Nelson Mandela, Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad and state officials have made speeches, which have highlighted additional principles and cornerstones of foreign policy.

- 'The present policy and execution of policy represent a break with the past.
- Foreign policy is an integrated part of government policy aimed at promoting the security and welfare of South Africa's citizens.
- Exercising regular choices between available options in the international arena based on South Africa's interests and means is a part of the foreign policy process.
- South Africa is a democratic country and the formulation of foreign policy should be an open and transparent process. However, South African actions must be in keeping with international practice, including the need for appropriate confidentiality. Diplomacy is by its very nature "quiet diplomacy" and not diplomacy through the media.
- Officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and other officials representing South Africa abroad must be fully acquainted with the policies and strategies of domestic departments in order to pursue the national interest in all spheres.
- South Africa must strive to be a responsible global citizen.
- South Africa supports the global free trade system.
- North-South and South-South cooperation will be promoted.
- South Africa must associate itself with international efforts to develop and implement environmentally friendly policies.
- South Africa adheres to the philosophy of non-alignment and friendly, constructive relations with all nations, that is, universality of relations.
- Multilateral cooperation at all required levels is essential and is supported by South Africa. A holistic approach should be pursued wherever possible.

- The United Nations should be reformed and strengthened to enable it to deal with matters such as global economic and environmental challenges and the achievement of sustainable development.
- Foreign policy objective should seek to promote mutual benefits and mutual respect in bilateral relations.
- South Africa should deal with African partners as equals and avoid all hegemonic ambitions. A narrow, short-term approach aimed at promoting self-interest must be avoided.
- Confidence building and cooperation should be prominent trends of South Africa's African policy. Peace making and conflict-prevention should receive priority consideration.
- South Africa will cooperate with all other countries in shaping and defining the new world order and promoting multilateral cooperation in the international community.
- Scientific and technical development and cooperation in Antarctica and globally, will be promoted and environmental protection will be supported.
- As far as South Africa's means allow, all efforts to alleviate the plight of refugees and children in Africa and elsewhere and particularly the work of the UNHCR must be supported.

South Africa should remain actively engaged in efforts to secure world-wide peace, promote disarmament, prevent genocide, restrict proliferation of nuclear and other arms of mass destruction and achieve a new world security regime.' (South African Foreign Policy Document, 1996)

Security or defense policy and foreign policy are two components of a country's approach to the global environment. In the early parts of this dissertation, reference was made to the new world order, to important trends in security-related issues and to the changing dimensions of the multipolar world. Proper coordination of a country's policies on security matters is therefore an obvious necessity.

In the African context South Africa's involvement in conflict prevention and peacekeeping requires harmonized foreign and defense policies. International arms sales by South Africa and the country's commitment to the prevention of the proliferation of

conventional and nuclear arms, also require the overlapping of the defense and foreign policies of South Africa in order of achieving common priority goals to serve the national agenda. This is achieved through committees, at ministerial and official level, which have been created by Government to oversee policies and actions in this regard. An example of a committee or organ that is responsible for overseeing arms procurement includes military intelligence (MI).

MI is responsible for liaising and establishing the nature of deals involving the procurement of arms. MP Patricia de Lille is responsible for exposing an alleged 43 billion Rand procurement of arms deal involving the likes of senior Saudi bankers and South African defence personnel. Toni Yengeni, Chippy Shaikh, as well as other government figures have been named by de Lille as having profited from irregularities in the deal. ([www.mg.co.za/01May.html](http://www.mg.co.za/01May.html))

However, in this type of situation, MI officials would be the appropriate officials to question, on the nature of such a deal, as any procurement of arms has to go through MI. This being the case, intelligence activity in the controversial arms deal is a definite possibility, if not an obvious one. In this scenario, the co-operation between MI and the Department of Defense was necessary for the procurement process to go through. Hypothetically, if MI states that they had no knowledge of the deal, one can assume this to be intelligence failure. This would mean a further restructure of MI.

This raises an important integral part of foreign policy making and implementation, that of co-operation amongst various state departments. The Department of Foreign Affairs regularly interacts, both structurally through interdepartmental committees and on a day-to-day basis, with all those departments with some international involvement. Frequent consultations take place with the Departments of Finance, Trade and Industry, Home Affairs, Agriculture, Health, Defense and with the SA Secret Service, all of which have representatives attached to some missions abroad and with which interfacing with regards to policy and operations is essential.

The Department of Defence maintains international liaison to enable the Defense Force to gather intelligence in order to assess any international military threat that may exist or develop. This goes hand in hand with liaison with defense forces in other countries. The South African Secret Service spearheads international liaison and monitoring services in order to fulfil its function, namely to take overall responsibility for assessing (intelligence and security related) threats to national security. Cooperation between these two Services is provided for in terms of legislation and government policy. The international roles of these two departments are precisely determined and they may not encroach on the responsibilities of the Minister and the Department of Foreign Affairs. Close liaison is important.

There is a new challenge for these two Services, especially in the African context. South Africa, as mentioned earlier in this dissertation, is expected to play a role in OAU and UN peacekeeping and peace-making efforts in Africa. These Departments will, together with the Department of Foreign Affairs, have to play an increasingly important part in drafting and executing the Government's policy in this regard. Interdepartmental cooperation in this area already exists. (Intelligence Services Act, 1994)

The intelligence Acts passed by Parliament marked the formation of a new national Intelligence Service for South Africa. The South African Secret Service (SASS) is responsible for foreign intelligence. The mission of the Service is to gather, correlate, evaluate and analyse foreign intelligence, excluding foreign military intelligence, in order to identify any threat or potential threat to the security of the Republic and to supply intelligence relating to national strategic intelligence to NICOC.

The Secret Service is responsible for counter-intelligence measures within the Secret Service. The Secret Service gathers intelligence at the request of departments of State, and, evaluates and transmits such intelligence and other intelligence at the disposal of the Secret Service and which constitutes departmental intelligence, to the department concerned. (Intelligence Services Act, 1994)

An example was provided in chapter three, however it shall be repeated for its appropriateness at this stage. Our example relates to the economics division of SASS. It is

split up into regions of the world, with researchers specialising on a specific region. Hypothetically, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) would approach SASS requesting economic data regarding the decline of the agricultural economy in, let us say, Zimbabwe. DTI would give reasons for their request by stating that this type of information would be vital in assessing the SADC regional economic growth. The Services' appropriate researcher would contact operations to activate the relevant personnel in gathering and correlating economic information on Zimbabwe.

This information will be passed on to the researching staff who will analyse its appropriateness and interpret its relevance. They will then hand over the 'need to know' material to DTI. They will further give advisement to the DTI on how to handle this material in the appropriate way and help. These new methods of gathering and analysing are new areas that have been improved upon to increase intelligence professionalism. These new methods, as mentioned before, include the appropriate analysis of intelligence data by trained academic personnel. This hypothetical example serves as an illustration to the new role of South African foreign intelligence activity.

From this, it is quite clear to see how the Secret Service contributes to foreign policy. In the same way, general intelligence functions domestically to facilitate the policy making process. Furthermore, the White Paper on Intelligence, 1994 stressed this function of the intelligence community by stating that intelligence seeks to provide policy-makers with critical and often times unique information to warn them of potential risks and dangers. (White Paper on Intelligence, 1994: p 3-4)

The White Paper indicated that intelligence will also serve the purpose of identifying opportunities in the international environment through assessing competitors' aims, goals and capabilities and highlight the errors of government by providing honest and critical intelligence. In this way, intelligence assists in good governance.

For example, hypothetically in the case of Lesotho, it is possible that the Secret Service might have advised government to intervene, as this would put South Africa in a good position in the global arena. South African success in Lesotho would mean respect to

South Africa as the major player in African Affairs. However, underestimating the defensive capability of Lesotho ensured a rough time for South Africa as South Africa suffered military setbacks and loss of life. This could be attributed to intelligence failure, whereby intelligence authorities failed to account for the political and military capability of the Lesotho forces.

It is a fact of our times that many African states are weak in nature. Civil Wars, coups, genocide and oppressive regimes contribute to the weakness of the African state. Reasons for the weakness of the African state include declining economies, lack of government accountability, poor state management and lack of resources, be it natural or constructed. A major factor attributed to the weakness of the African state includes colonialism and its legacy. Unlike the other African states, South Africa can be said to have incorporated colonialism in its 'independence'. This is proven by the willingness of the government to privatise as opposed to nationalising all enterprises, thus slowing down the move from exploitation to sound labour relations, for example, farm-workers who continue to be exploited for their labour.

South Africa is fortunate to have gained a peaceful 'independence' with the advent of democracy in 1994, thereby assuring South Africa of a platform whereby the colonial rule of the past can be used positively in constructing a new South Africa. It should be noted that 'independence' in the South African context refers to the paradigmatic shift from apartheid to democracy.

Using the negative experiences of other African countries, South Africa has opted and committed itself to strong and accountable governance. This being the case, the South African state has incorporated the intelligence structure to suit these goals and aims by instituting security policy to promote a strong government structure.

Accordingly, the mission of the intelligence community has changed to ensure:

- the safe-guarding of the constitution,
- the upholding of individual rights enunciated as Fundamental Rights in the Constitution,



- the promotion of the interrelated elements of security, stability, co-operation and development, both within South Africa and in the region of Southern Africa,
- the achievement of national prosperity whilst making an active contribution to global peace and other globally-defined priorities for the well-being of humankind, and
- the promotion of South Africa's ability to face foreign threats and to enhance its competitiveness in a dynamic world.

(White Paper on Intelligence, 1994: P 5)

Finally, from our analysis of the role of foreign intelligence services in serving foreign and security policy, we can see that the role of foreign intelligence has evolved in the same way foreign policy has changed. In the apartheid era, Botha's 'total strategy' policy served as the foreign and security policy of the time.

Consequently, foreign intelligence was involved in many notorious clandestine operations, to promote the foreign security policy of the Botha administration, which involved the gross violation of human rights and oppressive policies. For example, it is alleged that South African intelligence played a significant role in the plane crash that killed President Samora Machel of Mozambique. His assassination was a direct component of the 'total strategy' policy.

De Klerk sought to legitimize the intelligence bodies by decreasing secret operations and rerouting the issue of intelligence accountability. The creation of the CCSA sought to address the issue of intelligence accountability, where in the Botha SSC accountability was not an issue and the intelligence bodies committed human rights violations whenever they wanted to. De Klerk's foreign policy presented intelligence accountability as an important tool in his attempt of presenting South African policy as legitimate in keeping with global trends, which were the increase of the democratic ideal, and the decline of human rights violations.

Furthermore, de Klerk wanted to change the image of the South African state. The fall of communism and the end of the Cold War prompted the implementation of new foreign and security policies. The unbanning of the ANC, together with the start of the negotiation

## **Chapter 5: Towards a foreign intelligence agenda**

### Intelligence in a changing world

The remodelling of South Africa's intelligence services, which has been the subject of this study, has taken place in two contexts of rapid and far-reaching change. The first context has been the domestic politics of negotiation, settlement and transformation which have shaped what has come to be called 'the New South Africa' over a period of more than ten years. The second context has been one of remodelled international politics, as the political changes consequent on the collapse of the Soviet system in the USSR and the socialist bloc, allied to the economic and social transformations of globalisation have had their effects.

As a result, South Africa's intelligence services have been remodelled at a time when all intelligence services worldwide have had to respond to a changing environment. This environment is a complex and puzzling one, much more difficult in terms of intelligence needs than the relatively simple years of cold war ideological conflict. Now, it is not only states which are targets of intelligence gathering. Criminal gangs and warlords have to be added to the list, not only of targets, but also players and even partners. Environmental and economic issues are important subjects for intelligence gathering and analysis. Intelligence for peacekeeping ([Ramsbotham, 1996](#)) and other multilateral projects is an essential subdivision of intelligence needs, especially for countries like South Africa which have aspirations to be leaders in multilateral institutions.

The problem of coping with a very wide range of subjects and reducing them to a manageable intelligence agenda is compounded by the fact that politics at all levels, especially global politics, take place in an unprecedentedly information rich environment:

'All-source intelligence analysis – made unique by the integration of information derived from intercepted communications, overhead photography, and 'humint' from well-spaced spies located around the world - .. appears at risk in the information age. With the advent of lightning-fast reporting services like the Cable News Network (CNN), government leaders become quickly and well informed simply by turning on their televisions, logging on to the Internet or reading a newspaper. According to various accounts, Western intelligence services were unable to keep pace with open

source reporting in the 1982 Falklands and the 1991 Gulf conflicts, and more recently during the 1999 Kosovo war' (Hadley, 2000:239)

If this is true of the extensive and well-budgeted American intelligence services, we may assume that it is even truer of the intelligence services of a middle rank regional power like South Africa. It is true that the tasks and responsibilities are nowhere near as great and the amount of information available is also greatly diminished. However, these things do not discount the problem completely. Part of the problem concerns the balance of open sources against secret sources. One view is that most, if not all, of the intelligence role can be carried out using open sources:

'Many observers have asked what role is left to intelligence analysts in an information age that makes prodigious amounts of data easily and widely available at low cost. Indeed, one private sector expert recently concluded that in this information age intelligence is less a matter of penetrating secrets, and more a matter of separating useful information ... from open information that is available legally and cheaply (Steele, 1999)

This view is countered by one that stresses the continuing importance of human intelligence – humint – from secret sources:

'intelligence analysts must provide analysis based on information gleaned from all sources – open and secret – and package it in a timely, concise and easily digestible manner' (Council on Foreign Relations, 1999)

And another which is even more emphatic in this direction: 'In the final analysis, it is the analysts' use of secret information that makes their analysis unique and gives it a legitimate claim to the attention of key policy makers' (Hadley, 2000:237).

#### Foreign policy and intelligence: towards an agenda for South Africa

In the specific case of South Africa, drawing up the foreign policy priorities - and hence the intelligence agenda which will support it – is conditioned by two factors.

The first might be summarised in a characterisation of South Africa's security position 'no enemies but many threats'. In this sense, South Africa is threatened not so much

by the hostile policy choices of other states, but by the structure of the environment that it finds itself in. In this scenario, it is not armies and arms races that pose security threats for a state like South Africa, but finding itself on major drug trafficking illegal immigration and money laundering routes. Even worse is the spectre of dysfunctional or even collapsing states. This carries with it the danger of neighbouring states drawn into competitive intervention and the humanitarian problems of refugees, the failure of disease control measures and the end of progress on human rights, democratisation and economic renewal fronts. Such effects cannot be easily contained in one a particular state but may be felt across the whole Southern African sub region or indeed the continent of Africa.

The second aspect of South Africa's position in contemporary international relations which shapes its foreign policy and security agendas is a product of the fact that it occupies responsibilities and leadership roles far beyond those of a middle income emerging market of no particular global strategic significance. South Africa has aspirations (and has them thrust upon it) to be a leader of the developing countries of the South. In the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the UN itself, South Africa has important leadership responsibilities. In addition, South Africa is quite widely seen by the developed countries of America and Europe as an important partner in doing business in the South. This is despite serious differences with the West – over issues of world trade for instance – which make for a complex relationship that is both adversarial and collaborative.

The result is a foreign policy and intelligence agenda in which the difference between competitors and collaborators is not always clear-cut and priorities are not always obvious. Under these circumstances, an intelligence agenda to support foreign policy could be configured in several ways. Given the interconnectedness of issues and areas, there is no perfect way of dividing and sub-dividing intelligence concerns. Neither exclusively geographic focus (into regional 'desks') nor functional divisions (political, military, economic, crime) can be entirely rational when a problem like the Great Lakes nexus of conflict draws in players and issues from many areas of responsibility.

At a minimum, however, it might be useful to distinguish two broad 'bands' of concern in a hypothetical intelligence agenda for South Africa. In the first place there is a

'traditional' agenda of political and security issues focused on states and arranged more or less hierarchically according to proximity to South Africa's own concerns for its integrity, security and political influence. Secondly, there is a 'globalisation' agenda with an economic and social focus, which includes players and targets outside the traditional conceptions of national interest and state-centred international relations.

#### South Africa's national interest: regional and continental perspectives

The key to understanding South Africa's national interest and hence its foreign policy, as well as the intelligence agenda needed to support it, is that it cannot be conceived of in isolationist terms. There are probably many reasons for the adoption of the African Renaissance as the guiding idea for South African foreign policy (Vale and Maseko, 199?). However, behind all of them lies a calculation that, for better or worse, South Africa's development and progress depends on a general revival of Africa, politically, economically and socially. For this reason, it follows that there should be an emphasis on gathering, collating and analysing information on African states, regions and issues in any South African intelligence service agenda.

Central to this should be the identification of potential partners and collaborators as well as competitors. Three examples of key states in this regard include Algeria, Nigeria and Libya. Algeria and South Africa have drawn together recently and share outlooks as well as leadership ambitions both inside and outside Africa. Central to the latter is a desire for reform of the global economy in favour of developing countries. However, Algeria's vicious and long-running war of counter-insurgency with Islamist political forces could prove an embarrassment if South Africa revives its earlier commitments to a human rights based foreign policy (Johnston, 2001). On this basis, good information and analysis is required on the domestic, as well as the foreign policies of partners as well as those states that pose threats or are competitors.

Nigeria, by virtue of its size and wealth, is, like South Africa one of the few states taken seriously outside the continent. As a result, it is potentially a competitor as well as a partner. For example, since both are members of the Commonwealth and regarded as leaders in Africa, they are at the forefront of diplomatic efforts to solve the Zimbabwe crisis (Business Day 21.8.2001). As with Algeria, good intelligence on its domestic as well as its



foreign policies is important to support South Africa's dealings with Nigeria, especially in view of its history of corruption, coups and undemocratic practices.

Libya is an important enough player in African international relations to merit the same kind of special attention. Under Gadaffi, Libyan influence has been felt in sub-Saharan Africa in Chad, Sudan and in the Great Lakes conflict. Relations with Libya pose interesting challenges for South African policy makers. Gadaffi can be a useful reminder to the West of Third World grievances, but too close involvement with him can complicate relations with the G7 countries. More importantly, his determination to be an active player in all African conflicts and issues, makes him a factor to be cautious of. The double-edged role of Libya in the Third World and global politics, the ANC's history of comradeship with Gadaffi, as well as the leverage which Libya's oil wealth gives to his personal schemes, all make the country and its leader important subjects on the intelligence agenda.

Moving from the continental to the regional, all SADC members are especially important for South Africa's foreign policy agenda and hence as subjects for intelligence gathering. Probably the two most important are Angola and Zimbabwe. The latter will be dealt with in a section of its own below, but some remarks on Angola are relevant here.

Angola, by virtue of its natural resources (oil, diamonds) and agricultural potential could be a significant regional power. However, its recent history of conflict makes it a potential centre of regional crisis. On both counts it merits sustained attention from South African policy makers. Perhaps even more important, Angola represents perhaps the closest example to South Africa's interests of a phenomenon that has become common in post-Cold War Africa. That is, 'the economic opportunities available as a result of weak regulation and disorder in fragmented or conflicted states – and thus some actors' preference for a continuation of such conditions because of the profits available' (Net, 2001:471). As Cilliers and Dietrich (1999) point out, the players in the scramble for Angola's resources are not only states and state enterprises. In addition, Angola is a good example of the 'privatizing' of security, with the involvement of free enterprise security firms and private armies. Given apartheid South Africa's considerable clandestine involvement in Angola and the reappearance of former operatives in new, civilianized, entrepreneurial guise, the range of military and economic targets for South African intelligence needs in Angola is wide indeed.



## **The Great Lakes: Holistic Perspectives**

Up to this point, South Africa's intelligence agenda in support of foreign policy has been sketched in traditional terms, as answers to the questions: What states are important to us? What are their capabilities? What are their intentions? What implications will the answers to these questions have for our interests?

Arguably however, under present conditions, this traditional, state-centred approach is not always appropriate. Sometimes issues, geographical areas and states involved in them have to be looked at holistically. One such case might be what has come to be called 'the Great Lakes' area in central Africa. This is a geographical area and a group of issues, drawing interventions from several states and non-state actors, so that they present a transnational complex that should be treated as a whole. The Great Lakes Crisis encompasses ethnic genocide in Rwanda and large-scale killing in Burundi as well as a prolonged struggle for power in the decaying, but richly-endowed Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). International peacekeeping and legal policing of human rights (through the International Criminal Tribunal in Arusha) as well as complex humanitarian emergencies add new dimensions and players to the tangled web of state interventions.

'Six outside states are fighting inside Congo alone, with at least 35 000 soldiers, men and boys, battling for a bewildering number of reasons. Some armies are allied with rebel groups to oust President Laurent Kabila of Congo. Others are protecting him. Nine rebel groups in Congo are fighting to overthrow governments in neighbouring countries. Nearly everyone carts off Congo's riches' (Fisher, 2000).

The problems of central Africa can be viewed in several ways. One is to treat each issue (power-sharing in Burundi, prosecutions for the Rwandan genocide, illicit diamond sales, the interventions in Congo) in a piecemeal fashion. The other is to think of large geopolitical configurations of power and interest. For instance, Tshiyembe refers to the shifting power struggles of the region in terms reminiscent of the era of colonial expansion:

'The new configuration, stretching from the Indian Ocean (Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam) to the Atlantic (Luanda, Matadi, Libreville and Douala), redrew the map of that part of the continent which German 19<sup>th</sup> century strategists referred to as *Mittel Afrika*. "Middle Africa" lies at the confluence of the African mining region (which

extends from the Cape to Kinshasa), the African oil region (from Luanda to Lagos) and the African Agricultural region (from Dar-es-Salaam to Massawa) (Tshiyembe, 1999).

Perhaps it is unnecessary to view the Great Lakes in this way, as the geopolitical axis about which the whole of Africa turns. But the situation does touch on a wide range of South Africa's interests. At an absolute minimum, no fewer than seven states are intimately involved in the military, political and economic dynamics of the area: the DRC itself, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Angola, Namibia and Sudan. The instability in the region affects issues like South Africa's participation in peacekeeping, humanitarian missions, conflict resolution, human rights policing and crime prevention. South Africa's policies on arms sales have been called into question in the area. Trade and access to the rich natural resources of the region give an important economic dimension. The political dynamics of SADC are greatly affected by Zimbabwe and Angola's military intervention in the DRC, which began in support of then President Kabila's regime and continues, despite his assassination. Above all, Zimbabwe's intervention has a direct bearing, as we shall see on what is perhaps South Africa's greatest current foreign policy problem, the internal instability of Zimbabwe itself. For all these reasons, there is a good case for treating the Great Lakes crisis as the greatest challenge to president Mbeki's vision of an African Renaissance – the organising framework for South African foreign policy. For all these reasons, there is a good case for recognizing the centrality of this linked complex of issues and players and treating it as a whole, both for foreign policy and intelligence purposes.

### **Global Perspectives: the Great Powers**

Several factors should potentially influence the places occupied by the industrialized countries of the West (or North) on South Africa's intelligence agenda. In the first place, these countries – which are South Africa's major trading partners – pose no credible threat to South Africa's political and security interests. Indeed, in many ways they are close partners.

This is shown in several ways; direct military assistance (training of the SANDF for transformation by the British Army); supply of armaments (the great majority of South Africa's arms procurement programme came from European suppliers); projects like the

African Crisis response Initiative (ACRI), sponsored by the USA in support of African peacekeeping.

Secondly, these states of Western Europe and North America are relatively open in their societies and political systems. This openness makes it relatively easy to collect the kind of information with which to back up foreign policies and – for a state like South Africa – to downgrade, relatively speaking, the need for secret intelligence sources.

These two factors do not mean, however, that intelligence is irrelevant to South Africa's relations with these countries. In some politico-diplomatic situations – for instance, South Africa's 'constructive engagement' or 'quiet diplomacy' role in relations with Zimbabwe – South Africa may find itself 'on the same side' as western countries, but in disagreement with how affairs would be handled. In such circumstances, the seductive possibility of sharing intelligence with the much better resourced western agencies would have to be treated with even greater caution than normal prudence would require.

Even more problematic is the economic dimension of today's intelligence world. Despite the close relations between South Africa and the West, there are times when hard bargaining is the order of the day. The negotiating of the EU/South Africa trade accord is a case in point. Others include the ongoing issue of North/South relations in world trade negotiations, for example questions of intellectual property especially in the pharmaceutical industry:

'As officials from around the world gather to discuss global trade in Doha, Qatar .. many are challenging one of the towering achievements of American industry during its economic boom years: an unprecedented expansion of intellectual property rights. Brazil, India and other developing countries argue that America's devotion to the sanctity of patents puts drugs for AIDS and other diseases beyond the reach of the poor and costs millions of lives.' (New York Times 11 November 2001).

As this quotation implies, South Africa, both for its own interests and for the sake of its role as a leader of the South, needs high grade economic intelligence to back up its bargaining positions. As the failure of a court case, brought against the South African government by international pharmaceutical companies in early 2001 makes clear, such

issues can be considered in terms of national security when a country like South Africa faces such devastating consequences from the AIDS pandemic.

### Global Perspectives: conflict issues

If Africa and the great powers of the West should loom large in the foreign policy and intelligence agendas of South Africa's policy makers, they cannot remain completely indifferent to other issues and areas. Two cases in point are the conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia. Both are sufficiently high profile for them to appear on South Africa's agenda less in terms of any obvious security or other interest, but as likely to arise in a divisive way on the agendas of multilateral organisations in which South Africa has actual, or potential leadership roles.

In this way, the Middle East dimension came close to paralysing and making ineffective the United Nations Conference Against Racism that the South African government hosted in 2001. Similarly, the conflict and nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan, threatened to compromise the 12<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (1998) which again was hosted by South Africa. These are fresh examples of how South Africa's external agendas are moving from traditionally conceived security dimensions, to an emphasis on national interest conceived in terms of ambitions in multilateral diplomacy.

### The globalisation agenda: diamonds as a case study

It is probably true to say that the distinction between the 'traditional' and 'globalised' agendas of foreign policy and intelligence is a somewhat artificial one. The inclusion of matters of trade and intellectual property in calculations of national interest points this way. So do the complexities and confusions of dissolving states like the DRC where crime, privatised security, humanitarian activities and the 'black economy' all expand the conception of what it is necessary for policy makers to know for them to make sound policies.

Nevertheless, it is worth making the distinction to emphasise the point that a state-centric agenda for security, national interest and hence for intelligence, is no longer enough or even, in the case of parts of Africa, no longer the predominant concern. Perhaps the best example to make this point is the case of the diamond trade in Africa:

'The diamond trade, most of it illegal, plays a major part in the wars or shaky peace in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola and Congo, but the actors reach far beyond west Africa....Diamonds are a magnet for organised crime..' (Guardian, 13 January 2000).

Diamonds figure prominently with other raw materials in the development of 'gangster economies' in Africa's conflict areas:

'By the end of the 1990s, Liberia had become a major centre for massive diamond-related criminal activity with connections to guns, drugs and money laundering throughout Africa and considerably further afield' (Partnership Africa Canada, quoted in Guardian 13.1.2000)

The importance of diamonds in African economies can be both constructive and destructive:

- 'When they are mined responsibly, as in Botswana, South Africa or Namibia, diamonds can contribute to development and stability. But where governments are corrupt, rebels are pitiless and borders porous, as in Angola, Congo or Sierra Leone, the glittering stones have become agents of slave labour, murder, dismemberment, mass homelessness and wholesale economic collapse' (Harden, 2000)

It has been estimated that the trade in 'illicit' diamonds – broadly speaking, those which are mined in territories under the control of insurgent groups and/or criminal interests - amounts to \$700 million annually (New York Times, 28 October 2000). It is not difficult to see why they are so valuable for these groups:

'While market manipulation guaranteed their price in world markets, the portability and anonymity of diamonds - millions of dollars worth can be smuggled in a sock, and identifying where they come out of the ground is often impossible – have made them the currency of choice for predators with guns in modern Africa.' (Harden, 2000).

Another source emphasises the direct link between diamonds and weapons:

'From the fields in Africa, diamonds reached dealers in Belgium, Israel and Ukraine, where the unscrupulous turned the ready cash into weapons. The largest weapons pipeline into Africa was controlled by Russian-organised crime figures who worked with diamond brokers' (Independent Business Report 12 August 1999).

The issue of conflict diamonds is a very complex one, involving businesses, both legitimate like De Beers as well as shady and outright criminal operations, rebel groups, governments, international organisations and human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs). An important aspect of the issue is the marketing of conflict diamonds through third party states:

'Tanzania has appeared on the list of over five African countries used as a third conduit country in exporting Angolan rebel movement UNITA's "blood diamonds". Other countries named alongside Tanzania are Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burkina Faso and Togo.' (BBC Monitoring Service 23.10.2001)

A coalition of four NGOs, led by the Global Witness group, is attempting to publicise the case for regulating conflict diamonds:

'...an international campaign has been launched calling on consumers to boycott diamonds used to finance some of the bloodiest wars in Africa.. The "Fatal Transactions" campaign, opened last week in the diamond centres of London, Antwerp, Milan and New York, hopes to make the public aware that many diamonds sold in jewelry shops originate from Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia, where they finance rebel armies." (Sunday Times 10 October 1999).

At the same time, attempts are under way to control such sales, aimed at achieving a UN-sponsored treaty which will require certificates of origin for diamonds. By Resolution 55/66 of December 2000, the General Assembly recommended this as an aim (BBC Monitoring Service 1.11. 2001). There has been some competition between Britain (Financial Times 20.9.2000) and South Africa (Financial Times 24.10.2000), to lead the process, with the latter's 'Kimberley Process' focused largely, though not exclusively on the problem of conflict diamonds in Angola's civil war.



South Africa's interests in the conflict diamond issue come from several sources. In the first place, legitimate diamond production is an important part of the South African economy. There is also the question of South Africa's relationship to other producers, notably its SADC neighbours Botswana and Namibia, as well as Russia. Obviously, South Africa's wider interest in order keeping and conflict resolution in Africa (particularly Angola and the DRC) are greatly affected by the conflict diamond issue. Just as important is the question of smuggling networks which work through South Africa's own territory. It is worthwhile quoting at length from a newspaper account of a UN report on the subject:

'The report names the De Decker brothers, one of whom is a prominent diamond dealer based in Johannesburg..... (and) claims the two .. ran a back-to-back diamonds for arms operation from 1993 to 1997. Joe, who in 1987 was a De Beers trading associate and who now runs Johannesburg-based De Decker diamonds, handled the financial side of the operation while his brother Ronnie, who used the code name Watson arranged the arms deal, the report said. "Typically, the De Decker brothers would travel together to Andulo (Angola) ... once Watson had finished negotiating the arms component of the deal, Joe De Decker would sit together with UNITA's own diamond experts to assess and value the diamond packages that UNITA presented for payment".. The packages were typically worth between \$4 million and \$5 million and Watson would then buy mortar bombs, anti-tank weapons and small arms from eastern Europe' (Independent Business Report 16 March 2000 See also Daily News 16 March 2000).

According to the report, further South African involvement came through smuggling flights from Lanseria airport (near Johannesburg) to UNITA controlled territory and 'laundering' UNITA diamonds through the production of small mine operators in South Africa.

The conflict diamonds issue suggests that now it can be very difficult to disentangle the economic, political, criminal and security dimensions of intelligence. The use of diamonds as a 'currency of conflict' by various players in African international relations impacts on all these areas of South Africa's foreign policy concerns. This makes the issue a prime candidate for inclusion on an intelligence agenda which has to be expanded and much more flexible than in the past.

One last point needs to be made on this topic. It is a point that has wide relevance across the whole subject of intelligence for policy making. The wide range of sources available on the conflict diamonds issue – from media, NGOs and international organisations among others - has both positive and negative features for South Africa's policy makers. On the one hand, much of the information which policy makers need is available 'off the shelf' as it were, with obvious benefits for cost-effectiveness. Nevertheless, two potential negative effects should be borne in mind. The first is that it can be easy for governments to look wrong-footed by the release of reports by international organisations and NGOs and forced into action – as South Africa was over the report on the involvement of South African citizens and territory in smuggling. This danger is heightened by the effects of media coverage of conflict situations based on sources like humanitarian organisations, or development lobbyists based in wealthy countries. For instance:

'Terry Crawford-Browne, the co-convenor of anti-arms lobby group Coalition for Defence alternatives has accused the government of ignoring evidence, long supplied by activists, linking South Africans to violations of UN sanctions against selling arms to Unita in Angola' (Sunday Tribune 19 March 2000)

What has come to be known as the 'CNN effect' – pressure on governments to act because of media coverage – applies mainly to rich countries, but it is a warning to countries like South Africa to remain well informed as well.

The second is the danger, which is always present, of a state's policy makers relying on information which is gathered by anyone other than its own intelligence agencies. For these reasons, it is even more important that the expanded intelligence agenda alluded to above should be serviced as fully as possible and covers issues like conflict diamonds.

#### Case Study: Zimbabwe: information, analysis and the limitations of intelligence

The focus so far has been on identifying issues and actors in international relations which are of concern to South Africa's interests and hence are, or ought to be, subjects for the attention of South Africa's intelligence agencies in support of foreign policy makers. As we have seen, these issues and role players are no longer confined to states. This is an important point to emphasise, but at the same time, it should not be forgotten that states and the problems they pose for other states remain the core business of intelligence. This is

particularly true of neighbouring states. However, what has changed is that the matters for concern are less questions of traditional concepts of power rivalries, whether economic or military or both. What are more often at issue now, especially in Africa, are questions of the internal political health of neighbours.

For this reason, it will be useful to conclude this chapter with a discussion of some important intelligence issues with reference to the developing political crisis in South Africa's neighbour, Zimbabwe.

Up to this point, intelligence has been largely treated as a question of information. What needs to be emphasised now, is the role of analysis, which provides an opportunity to conclude by noting some cautionary assessments of the role and limitations of intelligence in policy making.

Robert Jervis defines the role of intelligence in foreign policy as the function of discerning other states' intentions and capabilities (Jervis, 1991: 165). He sees the information provided by intelligence as one of the shapers of the policy makers' beliefs about these intentions and capabilities. In the case of Zimbabwe, the primary problem is that internal political developments in that country threaten to affect South Africa's interests. It is important to note at the outset that this is a different situation from one in which Zimbabwe's foreign policy might impinge on South Africa's interests. The latter would be traditionally be considered a more legitimate intelligence concern, but, more importantly, would be an easier 'target' to monitor. When Zimbabwe's internal politics are the concern there are more actors and interests to track.

The problem of political instability is conventionally understood in terms of the following scenarios:

- Frustration over the slow pace of land reform and the continuing situation of unequal access to land, in which a small minority of (mainly white) commercial farmers own the vast majority of productive land. According to a United Nations report in 1998, inequitable land distribution 'constrains the human development of at least 60 per cent of the population of 12.5 million people' (Financial Times 23 April 2000) The question of land is complicated by the state's dependence on these 4 500 commercial farmers for at least 10 percent of GDP, well over a third of exports and a quarter of

formal sector employment (Financial Times 23 April 2000). This frustration has been used as a populist issue in which large numbers of 'white' farms have been occupied by 'war veterans' using violence and intimidation, with the connivance of the police and the encouragement of the government.

- Dissatisfaction on the part of business, civil society and labour with the country's economic and political stagnation under the virtually one party rule of ZANU-PF and president Robert Mugabe. This has led to what is effectively a revolt of the urban and developed classes, principally through the medium of the opposition political movement, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).
- These two factors should be seen in the context of increasingly dictatorial and violent personal rule by Mugabe, backed by those who have benefited from ZANU-PF patronage and/or who have something to fear from democratic change, including prosecution for corruption and/or acts of violence.

The intersection of these three things has had consequences that are already very serious and are potentially catastrophic, as the following quotations indicate.

'Mr. Mugabe and his associates have ignored rulings by the Supreme Court and forced the Chief Justice to resign, illegally occupied hundreds of (white-run farms, killed prominent farmers and their supporters, closed radio stations, bombed the only independent daily newspaper, arrested leading opposition figures, legislated to prevent the MDC from receiving funds from abroad, and rebuffed Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations, the president of Nigeria, and the British and American governments.' (New York Times 14 May 2001)

'At this point, the crisis in Zimbabwe remains intense. The Zimbabwe economy is in free fall, the urban population is hostile to the government, and the rural areas remain anarchic. . A nationwide survey has shown that aggregate crop production has dropped by 40 percent in the 2001/2002 season.' (Freeman, 2001:13)

'Mr. Mugabe's erratic policies and thuggish behaviour in the past few years have severely damaged confidence and Zimbabwe's economy is now tottering on the brink of collapse. GDP fell by 6% last year despite an unusually good tobacco harvest, says the Economist Intelligence Unit. Things are much worse this year. An estimated 400 factories and small industrial businesses have closed in the last 12 months. Rumors are rife in Harare, the capital, that flour will be rationed and that general food shortages are imminent. Farmers are being prevented from planting for the new season and the government has little hard currency to pay for imports.' (Economist, 15 August 2001).

Right from the beginning of the Zimbabwe crisis in 1998, concerns were expressed in the media that the effects of instability there could not be confined to the country itself and that there would be regional implications. By now, according to Freeman, the crisis has:

'moved beyond national borders, tarring southern Africa and the continent with an image of violence, instability and the abandonment of the rule of law. The contagion effect has been seen in a decline in foreign investment, a lack of confidence in local currencies, particularly the Rand and a decrease in tourism' (Freeman, 2001).

Until relatively recently, the South African government has tended to deny the 'contagion' effect – explaining falls in the value of currency and sluggish investment as the results of other factors – but although continuing to deplore the 'Afro pessimism' which the contagion effect represents, it is now more likely to admit its importance. Even if cabinet members have not been vociferous, Governor of the Reserve Bank, Tito Mboweni has had no such inhibitions, condemning Mugabe's policies in a widely reported speech which admitted that South Africa's interests had been damaged.

In line with the changing (or more open) realisation by government figures that the Zimbabwe situation has costs for South Africa, foreign policy and diplomacy have obviously been under review as well. South Africa's policy towards Zimbabwe has universally been identified with President Mbeki, rather than with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It has been characterised as 'quiet diplomacy' (or sometimes 'constructive engagement') and has had the following main features:



The issue of land redistribution is at the heart of Zimbabwe's problems: the country will return to normality when enough land has been redistributed to landless people. The way to achieve this end is through multilateral funding provided by Britain and/or any other interested party who can be persuaded to contribute. South Africa should play a central role in facilitating the terms under which such funding may be made available.

- The ZANU-PF regime should be treated as a legitimate government in international good standing. Any criticism of Zimbabwe's internal politics should be made in private.
- The bona fides of the MDC are suspect. ZANU-PF remains the only credible political force in the country
- Any other policy- especially one based on open protest and sanctions against political repression and failure to respect the rule of law – is likely to be counter-productive in Zimbabwe itself and to risk significant costs for South Africa.
- Whatever happens in Zimbabwe can be kept separate from South Africa's interests and standing in the world.

It is outside the scope of this work to analyse in detail each of these policy foundations, to assess their problematic features and to chart the South African government's growing awareness that the policy has been inadequate. It is highly likely in any case that although the government has admitted policy shortcomings, these foundations will remain largely in place. No government (except perhaps in times of war) completely abandons its policy framework, even when policy failures become evident.

Nor is it necessary at this point to document the policy debate – conducted mainly in the media – which has surrounded the controversial policy of 'quiet diplomacy'. But listing the elements of policy in this way, helps to give clues as to the intelligence agenda that accompanies the overall policy problem. This is especially so if it is borne in mind that in this issue, as in any foreign policy problem, there is only a limited number of scenarios that may come out of the situation. These include:



- 'Soft landing' – the resolution of the problem through peaceful political evolution, either through Mugabe's painless removal internal to ZANU-PF politics or an election defeat which he accepts.
- Continuing repression and economic decay, in which ZANU-PF cannot either reform itself or be removed from power.
- Implosion in violent upheaval, triggered by food riots, rebellion at a rigged election.
- A military take over either as a result of implosion or to ward it off.

#### The parameters of the policy problem

The policy problem which Zimbabwe represents for South African policy makers and for which they require intelligence support essentially turns on the desirability of achieving a 'soft landing' in Zimbabwe's internal politics. At best, this requires a return to political stability - preferably through democratic means – and sustainable economic policies. At a minimum it requires warding off political and economic collapse with all the unquantifiable threats of violence, food shortages and other side effects which could precipitate a humanitarian emergency and the outflow of refugees across South Africa's borders. Both of these are necessary to prevent further damage to South Africa's economic and political interests through the 'contagion' factor and from incurring costly commitments in restoring order.

This policy problem has two significant features which make it impossible to contain the intelligence function within the traditional conception of 'discerning other states intentions and capabilities'.

The first is that the threats to South African interests come not from any consciously willed strategy of another actor towards South Africa. In other words, South Africa is not the target of any policy or strategy whose purpose, motive and means of carrying out can be 'discerned' in terms of the definition. In other words, South Africa's policy makers and the intelligence personnel who serve them, have to try and calculate the likely direction of events

and the nature of perceptions which guide them, in a situation in which South Africa scarcely figures at all in the 'target' actors' own calculations.

The second is that the range of actors concerned is very wide. It embraces all role players in Zimbabwe's internal politics as well as other states like Britain, the USA, and fellow SADC members. Other African states like Libya, which has recently come to the rescue of the Zimbabwe government with a one year deal to supply 70% of the country's oil requirements, have to be taken into account (Financial Times 26.8.2001). Not only the range of actors, but also the combination of internal and external players, makes analysis and prediction of relationships difficult

Perhaps a third factor should be added. That is the increasingly personal nature of rule in Zimbabwe, with power concentrated in the hands of Mugabe. This has clear implications for the ability of policy makers and intelligence analysts to gain access to information relevant to the target's policies.

#### Intelligence as information

Despite these problems, it is not too difficult to draw up a structured list of information that would be useful to South African policy makers in shaping decisions on the Zimbabwe problem.

If we accept the general policy framework and the range of possible outcomes, it ought to be possible to construct an intelligence agenda. The simplest and arguably the best way to do this, is to divide the information needs to back up policy according to the types of information and to further divide them according to the actor involved. That is, the dynamics of the situation are, political, economic, military and diplomatic. That is, what will move the situation from one set of circumstances to another and, in the end, to one resolution or another, will be political, economic, military and diplomatic factors.

However, such a classification misses the point that these factors can only work through actors, who are the principal political forces in Zimbabwe, neighbouring and other interested states, business corporations, international financial institutions and other economic actors and the military forces of Zimbabwe and other states. Essentially the issue for intelligence assessment is to evaluate how the 'capabilities and intentions' that Robert

Jervis referred to are structured by economic, political, military and diplomatic considerations.

Political information is necessary to build up a picture of comparative influence among the main actors in the situation. A good example of what is usually understood by this is an article in the periodical *Africa Confidential* – which is itself a kind of ‘open’ intelligence service available to subscribers (*Africa Confidential*, 2000: 1-3). This article analyses ZANU-PF on the eve of a special congress (December 6-9 2000) and offers an assessment of powerful individuals in the party and claims to identify four factions. These are a reform group, a group (based on the south of the country) set up to counter the reformers, a group close to the armed forces and a group based on Matabeleland allegedly pushing for an Ndebele successor to Mugabe. It is on similar assessments – which trade in personality, ethnicity and geography, ideology, careerism and other factors – that political intelligence is universally based. There are many limitations to this kind of information of which two are particularly relevant to the Zimbabwe situation.

The first is a universal problem also and it is that it is difficult to translate information on ‘position’ to information in ‘action’. In other words, information on a person’s or a faction’s position in the party, need not necessarily be a guide to action. Secondly, information on a long-established party which has been in power for a long time, like ZANU-PF is easier to gather and analyse than on a new, opposition grouping like the MDC. It is easy to underestimate the potential of such a group and arguably the South Africans have done so until recently. Thirdly, a related point, it is very difficult to judge ‘public mood’, especially in the face of intimidation and government repression. All the intelligence in the world on corridor intrigues and party factions might be irrelevant if we are on the brink of popular uprising or electoral upset.

Economic information is of course closely related to political. Much of the public debate around the Zimbabwe crisis, in South Africa and further afield, is discussion of the economic impact of the political turmoil. The most obvious ways in which economic information contributes to intelligence assessment relate to the Zimbabwean economy itself. The likelihood of poor harvests and consequently food shortages, as a result of turmoil in the commercial farming sector may be the crucial factor influencing political developments in the run up to the presidential election in 2002. In the longer term, the effect of the conversion

of Zimbabwe's export-oriented commercial farms into subsistence plots will seriously affect the country's ability to earn foreign exchange. In addition, information regarding Zimbabwe's import needs, especially in the energy sector, is also important. This is especially true of Mugabe's ability to find alternative sources – Libyan oil is a case in point – when the prospect of sanctions is considered. In short, information over the whole range of economic activity – agricultural output, employment in manufacturing, the entrepreneurial activities of the Zimbabwe army in the DRC – is necessary to help predict 'capabilities and intentions'

Military information In any situation of political uncertainty like the Zimbabwean crisis, military power may turn out to be a crucial factor. The Zimbabwean armed forces are about 40 000 strong, well enough equipped to cope with any potential internal crisis. The army has some combat experience in Mozambique and the DRC. Aside from questions of strength and equipment, however, there are factors that are more difficult to assess. These include morale. This may have been affected by an unpopular intervention in the DRC, although the ability of at least senior officers to make entrepreneurial gains may balance this. Another factor is whether the army, which, despite reports of coup plots, seems to have been loyal to Mugabe, will be able to maintain cohesion in the event of political breakdown. Another question is whether it will remain loyal if international pressure on Mugabe increases and whether it will allow itself to be used for direct political repression. It has done so in the past – in the notorious Matabeleland massacres of the 1980s – but whether or not it would do so again, over the whole country instead of an ethnically defined region, is definitely something for intelligence assessment.

Diplomatic information Although South Africa is at the forefront of the Zimbabwe crisis and, whether the government likes it or not, in a leadership role, there are several other important players. From the beginning, the dynamics of SADC membership and relations have been important. The involvement of Angola and Namibia alongside Zimbabwe in intervening in the DRC shows that South Africa has to have reliable assessments of the capabilities and intentions of the other SADC countries. At the same time, Britain, in its role of former colonial power remains important and it is necessary to be able to predict the level and likely direction of Britain's commitment to the problem. For instance it would be useful

to be able to predict the level of aid that could be expected if South Africa were faced with a huge influx of refugees from Zimbabwe, many of them no doubt British passport holders.

### Analysis and the limitations of intelligence

This section has laid out two of the main components of the intelligence situation; firstly identifying problems and areas in which South Africa's intelligence needs arise; secondly showing through a case study how these needs may be classified. However, intelligence involves more than information which, especially in the 'information rich' context of today's global politics is relatively easy to collect. It is in the realm of analysis that difficulties are more likely to arise, as well as in the relationships between the intelligence establishment and the politicians who make policy. To illustrate these things, it will be useful to look in conclusion at a critical and cautionary source on contemporary intelligence issues.

Jervis (1991, 165-181) doubts the effectiveness of intelligence in contributing to sound policy:

'While bad intelligence can sometimes ruin a policy that would otherwise succeed, only to some extent can good analyses compensate for weaknesses at other stages of the policy making process' (Jervis, 1991: 168).

According to this authority, there are several reasons for the limitations on intelligence's effectiveness. In the first place, 'the state's goals and animating values' are beyond the influence of intelligence organisations. 'If these are foolish, anachronistic or vainglorious, even the best sources of information about what others are likely to do will have limited effect'. Indeed intelligence, 'is very likely to share most of the characteristics of the nation in which it is embedded' (Jervis, 1991: 168). For this reason, 'Only rarely will intelligence challenge the basic premises and cornerstones of the state's foreign policies' (Jervis, 1991: 170). The fact that in a democracy the credibility of the government may hang on policy-making and the opposition may pose radical alternatives to the policy adds to the difficulties. In an atmosphere of inter-party dispute over policy, it will not be easy for the intelligence agencies to put forward assessments that favour opposition policies. Or to put it another way:



'Even when the policy does not deal with countries about which decision-makers have deeply ingrained beliefs, it will be difficult for intelligence to persuade its masters that its basic political judgements are incorrect. This will be especially true after the policy is set in motion and both intellectual and political costs have attached to altering it.' (Jervis, 1991: 171).

This resistance on the part of policy makers may be hardened when the top leaders compare their own experience and judgement with the intelligence operatives reporting to them. Jervis reports the judgement of a top US foreign policy official:

'A policy maker usually has some expertise of his or her own, after all, I use the intelligence community as a resource for factual information but I don't need it for opinions. I have my own.' (Jervis, 1991: 172).

Another problem is that 'good' information is not always the best guide to an adversary's intentions:

'There are (sic) a number of cases in which states have been misled because, knowing that certain moves would lead to disaster, intelligence analysts concluded that they would never be made' (Jervis, 1991: 172).

Pearl Harbour and the Tet Offensive in Vietnam in 1968 fall into this category. A related problem is the general one which intelligence officials and policy makers are both subject; that of having to match the adversary's mind set and world view to their own.

Jervis's outline of the problematic relationships between information and analysis and between intelligence agencies and political decision makers is suggestive of possible difficulties in the case of South Africa's Zimbabwe policy. Arguably all the problems identified by Jervis which are listed above, could apply to this situation.

South Africa's foreign policy – at least in the case of Zimbabwe – is executed at the highest level. The policy has been widely and sharply questioned by the media and the opposition, both in South Africa and overseas. Indeed it has become a major test of credibility for President Mbeki. Under these circumstances, the scope for information and analysis by intelligence agencies to fulfil a questioning role is likely to be narrow, while the pressures for conformity to prevailing political orthodoxy are likely to be correspondingly



heavy. The apparent inability of South African policy makers to see beyond the narrow focus on the land issue to the wider crisis of political authority in Zimbabwe, as well as the tendency to be suspicious of the MDC and underestimate it, could be symptoms of this.

Jervis's other cautionary notes are probably also relevant. It would not be difficult to believe that South Africa's top policy makers – with their long and wide experience of face to face contact in liberation movement and regional diplomacy – would be inclined to relegate the contribution of intelligence in the same way as the State Department official quoted by Jervis. Lastly, the conclusions drawn by Jervis from the Tet offensive and Pearl Harbour experience are likely to be true of the South Africa/Zimbabwe situation too. That is, when an adversary seems determined on an irrational and ruinous course of action, it is difficult for intelligence agencies or policy makers to attune themselves to his view of the world and predict his intentions accurately.

#### Conclusion: Constructing the agenda

Material presented in this chapter seems to point to two levels of task for South Africa's newly reconstituted foreign intelligence service. Each of the levels has its own problematic features. The first task is to draw up an international agenda that fully takes into account the changing – and widening - parameters of global politics and security concerns. The problems are what to include and what to leave to other agencies (especially police forces) as well as how far to re-conceptualise the agenda, downgrading traditional conceptions of interstate rivalry at the expense of new, non-state, cross-border threats, including the phenomenon of decaying and collapsing states.

The second level of task is to assign a place in policy-making to intelligence that does not usurp the position of political decision-makers, but equally does not reduce the intelligence function to the role of 'yes-man'.

## **Chapter 6: Concluding remarks**

This dissertation has been concerned with the changes that have taken place in the structures, role and functions of intelligence in support of South Africa's foreign policy since democratisation. The main thrust of the work has been to show how it was not only the new demands and limitations of the new democratic order which have shaped this aspect of policy support, but also a changing context outside the country's borders. Despite this, the main challenge has been to rid the intelligence services of the pathological conditions that had grown up in the apartheid era, as part of the defence of white minority rule. As this work has demonstrated, the challenge had three main dimensions. The first was to rid intelligence of its action orientation and association with special forces. The second was to strengthen the civilian dimension of intelligence and to keep the military functions of intelligence within narrow, functional boundaries. The third was to make sure that oversight would curb the independence of action that had come to characterise intelligence under the white minority regime.

These things have been provided for by attempts to place intelligence services on a thoroughly statutory basis, formulate clear lines of responsibility and function between intelligence services and to support these things with retraining and reorientation. In doing these things, however, the needs of transformation have been balanced – probably for both good and ill – by the needs of continuity. As with all political aspects of democratic transformation, intelligence has been a negotiated commodity. The need for experienced personnel and the need to accommodate all political interests who participated in the settlement were both pressures in the direction of continuity.

Aside from the particular conditions of South Africa's transformation, there have also been, as we have seen, some aspects of contemporary global politics that have caused all states to rethink the intelligence function and the foreign policies which it traditionally supports. Among these things have been the broadening of the security agenda and the loss of traditional certainties about the nature and role of military force, as well as the confusion of crime with political instability and the phenomenon of 'collapsing states'.

It is against this kind of background that any assessment of South Africa's intelligence transformation has to take place. However, two things stand in the way of even an interim judgement on the success of these developments. The first is that it is somewhat early to make assessments with great confidence. The seven years of democratic government which South Africa has experienced is no more than a moment in the life of a state. And in any case, much of it has been taken up with negotiating and putting in place the new structures. The second obstruction is the secrecy, which attaches itself to the intelligence function of a democracy. This obstruction continues to make debate about intelligence matters thoroughly speculative, even in democracies and in an age in which the heads of intelligence in the major democracies are public figures and their agencies openly recruit. It is not only the fact that sources are hard to come by for any hard discussion of intelligence matters, it is also that we simply do not know what contribution intelligence makes to policy making.

For instance, it is widely believed (though inevitably contested by the government) that the Lesotho intervention by South African armed forces was a policy act, which reflected poor political judgement. What is less clear is whether this poor judgement was the result of no intelligence, misguided intelligence or good intelligence which was ignored, or – as has often happened in the widely-studied phenomenon of 'intelligence failure' in powerful states – 'lost in the system'.

Despite these difficulties of assessment, it is possible to flag potential problems that will influence future debate on the role and function of foreign intelligence in South Africa. In the first place, there is an issue, which cuts across all areas of government. In a 'one-party dominant' state like South Africa, the ruling party carries such inertial weight that it can be difficult to see any issue or problem from outside its own views and perspectives. Conceivably, the failure of South Africa's 'quiet diplomacy' policy towards Zimbabwe owes something to the failure to recognise the MDC early enough as a genuine and legitimate alternative to Mugabe. An intelligence service worth of the name ought to be able to provide the objective analysis, which arms a government to avoid such a mistake.

However, there is a corollary to this, which emerged in the discussion of Robert Jervis's sceptical views on intelligence and foreign policy. That is, the universal problem of the political relationship between analysts and policy makers. As Jervis clearly shows, it is not only in South Africa that this relationship is problematic. The difficulty is for intelligence to find a voice, which is sufficiently in tune with its political masters to be heard, but sufficiently independent of them to provide genuine alternatives and early warnings of misguided assessments. No political leader wants to be merely the front man for faceless (and unelected) backroom analysts. Yet stubborn refusal to recognise independent evidence cannot be the basis of good policy. Obviously a compromise has to be found between these extremes. The outward evidence of South Africa's Zimbabwe policy suggests that such a compromise is not yet fully evolved.

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<http://www.fas.org/irp/world/rsa/index.html>

17) Zimbabwe Profile in  
[www.newafrica.com/profiles/profile.asp?countryID=54](http://www.newafrica.com/profiles/profile.asp?countryID=54)



## ***INTERVIEWS:***

### **Interview 1**

Interviewee: Mr. Cedric de Koenig (ex Foreign Affairs Serviceman and currently with African Centre For Conflict and Resolution of Disputes)

Date: 10/6/2000

Venue: Durban, South Africa

Interviewer: Mohammed Haffejee

### **Interview 2**

Interviewee: Mr. Smith (member of Intelligence Community)

Date: 19/10/2000

Venue: Pretoria, South Africa

Interviewer: Mohammed Haffejee

### **Interview 3**

Interviewee: Mrs. Jones (member of Intelligence Community)

Date: 30/10/2000

Venue: Telephonic interview between Durban and Pretoria

Interviewer: Mohammed Haffejee

### **Interview 4**

Interviewee: Tokyo Sexwale (former government MP)

Date: 16/8/2001

Venue: 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree – Actuality programme on e.tv

Interviewer: Ms. Deborah Patta

**MISCELANEOUS**

- 1) Hansard: Parliamentary Debates; Appropriation Bills, Howard College Law Library
- 2) Harris, G. Workshop on Peace and Conflict resolution, University of Natal, Durban. July 2000