

Political Pawns or Social Agents? A look at militarised youth in South Africa

Marks, M. & McKenzie, P. (1995). *Political Pawns or Social Agents? A look at militarised youth in South Africa*. Paper presented at the *Confronting Crime* conference, Cape Town, September.

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Monique Marks is a former Researcher at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

Penny McKenzie is a freelance consultant.

The potent combination of state repression, and consequent insurrectionary struggle has resulted in high levels of militarisation within South Africa. It was the youth who bore the brunt of state violence, probably because they were the most active participants in revolutionary struggle.¹ Youth perceived themselves as key agents of social and political change, and as defenders of their communities against the repressive security forces. However, not only were the security forces repressive state agents, but they were also unwilling and unable to police local black communities, and provide a service which aimed to achieve safety and security. This meant that alternative forms of policing arose, and youth were central to these "alternative police and justice systems". In the eighties, most of these activities were organised and executed by underground structures and were accountable to political formations at local, regional and national levels.

In the period following the unbanning of political organisations, and the election of a democratic government, many youth continue to be involved in a variety of defence structures, some of which are highly organised, but others not. However, some political parties have distanced themselves from defence structures stating that security forces should conduct their essential services with the support of communities they serve. Many of the defence structures thus lack the needed political leadership and guidance, and in some instances have been infiltrated by criminal elements. The majority of youth involved in defence structures are armed, unaccountable, and have the potential to disrupt developmental initiatives. However, these young people have, and continue to play, a central role in protecting their communities; in many instances they have forsaken meeting their own basic needs, in particular education, in the interest of the broader community. Perhaps most importantly, their key identities are as "defenders of their communities", and it is this identity which shapes their daily activities, and their hopes and aspirations.

This paper addresses eight themes. Firstly, it outlines the theoretical framework used to understand militarised youth and their defence structures. This is followed by an overview of the history of youth struggles, identity and organisation in the 1980s. The third section deals with defence structures in the eighties. The next section examines the political shifts in the nineties and this is followed by a discussion of defence structures post April 1994. The sixth section seeks to uncover the aspirations and goals of militarised youth. Section seven examines the future of youth defence structures, whilst the final section looks at two programs aimed at integrating former members of defence structures into society.

Theorising Militarised Youth

There are a number of competing definitions of the concept "youth". For the purpose of this paper we have adopted the definition provided by Shaun Johnson:

Its members do not constitute a 'class', but compromise young workers, professionals, students, pupils and unemployed people alike. In its broad sense, the category includes children of pre-school age through to young adults. Youth in this context, refers to an attitude of mind as much as it does to age. It connotes the most energetic, volatile and impatient elements of the black communities. (Johnson, 1989:95)

This paper defines militarised youth as those youth who have been victims of violent acts of the repressive state and contesting political parties, as well as active participants in political and other collective violence, generally perceived to be in the best interest of the communities in which they reside. While many of these youth are organised into formalised defence structures, many militarised youth are not members of such structures, yet engage in acts of "defence". While many of these youth may perceive themselves as "defenders of the community", they are not always part of visible, organised defence structures. Hence the conceptualisation of militarised youth needs to be broader than that of youth who are members of recognised defence structures.

To understand militarised youth one needs to untangle the complex web of interaction between the structural factors which motivate youth involvement in violent activities which

they deem to be political, and the ways in which youth actively shape and transform their social reality. This framework is not only of academic interest, but has direct implications for policy issues in relation to militarised youth. Any policy intervention will have to take into account the material factors which have given rise to youth involvement in paramilitary activities. However, equally critical in addressing militarised youth, is developing strategies which take cognisance of militarised youth identities and consciousness, and are able to offer youth alternative experiences and identities.

Most youth engaged in the above mentioned activities perceive themselves to be part of larger groupings aimed at particular social, political, and economic transformation which could broadly be termed social movements. There are a number of different and competing approaches to understanding collective action and social movements. The four main approaches in the emerging literature are the resource mobilisation approach, the identity oriented approach, the political process approach, and the "new social movements" theories. These different approaches to social movements have different assumptions and emphases, and are often set up as theoretical opponents. There is, however, no reason why these approaches should be seen as mutually exclusive. A synthetic approach, which takes into account the positive contributions of these social theories, is most useful in understanding militarised youth as a collective grouping.

The resource mobilisation approach "examines the variety of resources that must be mobilised, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of social movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements". (Zald and McCarthy, 1987:16) Resources needed and used by social movement organisations, however, may be anything that assists with their functioning, both material and human. The participant in social movements is seen in this approach, as a "rational actor employing strategic and instrumental reasoning". (Cohen, 1985:674) This approach, while useful, has been criticised on a number of counts. Firstly, it does not adequately explain why individuals act rationally in pursuit of interests as groups, since it does not delve into questions of consciousness. Secondly, it does not adequately distinguish between change efforts made by excluded groups and those made by people with power, and assumes that the poor can only bring about change with the assistance of the elite. (McAdam, 1982) Further, there is an assumption that the elite are willing sponsors of social insurgencies; this is problematic in that social movements often threaten these very elites. The South African case is an illustration of this if one considers the strong social movements which operated with the aim of undermining and destroying the apartheid state. Fourthly, the mass base in itself is seen as politically limited owing to their lack of resources. The South African case study demonstrates the enormous power that a mass based movement, particularly with the mobilisation of young social actors, has in creating a new social and political dispensation. However, what this strand of social movement has to contribute, is that limited external and internal resources leads to a weakened social movement. Loss of leadership, for example, may be key to understanding the demise of social movements and their organisations.

Identity-oriented theorists are primarily post-Marxists who argue that:

... theories stressing the primacy of structural contradictions, economic classes, and crises in determining collective identity are inappropriate to contemporary collective actors. (Cohen, 1985:691)

Instead, this group of social movement theorists argues that identity is key to understanding collective action, and that collective action can only be understood through a comprehension of the multiplicity of forces which construct identities. Touraine, a key proponent of this view, argues that "the reconstruction of a social, cultural or political identity by actors in social movements needs to be examined". (Touraine, 1985:752) This view has, however, been criticised for not examining the interaction of the individual participant with the broader group that makes up the social movement, and conflating the identity of the individual participant with that of the social movement. So, for example, while members of defence structures who claim to be members of the African National Congress (ANC) are adamant that youth defence structures should continue to operate, the ANC as a political organisation has called for the disbanding of such structures. Identities of individual members of social movements may therefore differ from that of the broader social movement, but simultaneously impact on these movements' collective and public identity. These movements in turn shape the consciousness and identity of its members. The creation of both a collective and individual identity is a dynamic one which needs to be understood in its totality; one should not assume the identity of one to envelop the other. This paper concerns itself with the identities constructed by militarised youth, and its relationship to the broader social movements in which these young people operate. It shows, it is hoped, that while these participants are always social agents, they can potentially be conceived of as "political pawns".

The political process theorists are concerned with the political contexts in which social movements emerge, and the impact which social movements have on the political environment. Their importance lies in their insistence that the political environment provides the opportunity and space for social movements to emerge and for collective action to occur or for these movements' demise. Conversely, this approach clearly asserts the impact that social movements have on shaping the very political environment in which they operate. As a result, they criticise resource mobilisation theorists for not addressing the relationship of social movements to institutional political processes. They argue that the existing polity is conservative by nature, and will resist loss of power and major change and will seek to prevent groupings marginalised from government from developing solidarity. This approach,

while essential to understanding the dynamic nature of society, fails to examine the existence of reactionary forces outside of government, and ignores the importance of both resources and identity to social movements.

Finally, there are theorists who examine what is called "new social movements" which they believe emerged in a supposedly post-industrial and post-modern era; these include the feminist, peace, and ecological groupings most prevalent in Western Europe and the Northern Americas. These supposed "new social movements" differ from the more "traditional" social movements of modernity which organised around class and national struggles. Actors in these "new" movements are not identifiable in socio-economic terms, but rather on the basis of a presumed common identity. They are inclined toward affective concerns, expressive relations, group orientation and horizontal organisation:

They target the social domain of 'civil society', rather than the economy or the state, raising issues concerned with the democratisation of structures of everyday life and focusing on forms of communication and social identity. (Cohen, 1985:667)

Critics have questioned to what extent these 'new' social movements are in fact inventive, arguing that the distinction between the new and old movements is based on an ideal type, and that all social movements combine elements of the old and the new. (Mainwaring and Viola, 1984) All social movements, it is argued, have a material basis and organise around identities whether they be class, gender, age or any other. In addition, Offe argues that there is nothing new in their demands. He states that:

... that these values and norms are ... firmly rooted in modern philosophies of the last two centuries, and they are inherited from the progressive movements of the both the bourgeoisie and the working class. (Offe, 1985:849)

It has also been suggested that the new social movement theory is not applicable to the context of the underdeveloped world where social movements often take on the identities of being nationalistic, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist and hence are similarly interest based as the old social movements in Europe. (Arrighi et al, 1989) It is questionable whether South Africa in the nineties, is a post-modern society given the high levels of poverty in most communities, the fact that technology is not advanced, and that rural areas lack even basic means of communications. As a result, key social movements have been, and continue to be, organised around questions of nationalism and class although this is not to the exclusion of social movements based on gender, the environment, and peace.

All four approaches can contribute to understanding social movements in South Africa. Marks argues that "it seems to be unproductive to set these paradigms up as contesting approaches to understanding complex phenomena". (Marks, 1993:62) Rather, what is needed is a synthetic approach which takes account of the positive contributions of these social theories.

Resource mobilisation theorists offer coherent tools for examining the internal workings of social movement organisations, their relationship to the political opportunities and constraints they face, and the problems and potential for social movements when there are sympathisers of those movements who are not necessarily members of social movement organisations. The identity-oriented approach insists on the importance of understanding the collective identity of social movements through the "self analysis" of its participants. It is a more hermeneutic approach than that of the resource mobilisation theorists, and is ultimately concerned with questions of consciousness, ideology, and identity. The political process model highlights the importance of taking into account the interaction between the political context and social movements, and the constantly changing nature of social movements and their environment.

It is impossible to understand militarised youth in South Africa without an examination of broader political processes; organisational formations of youth; and the identities constructed. Most township youth are highly politicised and have in the past been active participants in organisations which were a part of broader movements aimed at creating a new social and political dispensation. In the eighties these organisations were relatively well organised and directed in their struggle against the apartheid state. It was through this involvement that youth came to identify themselves as "defenders of the community". In the nineties, youth organisations are generally in a state of disarray given their lack of direction and leadership, and their more limited role in ensuring social change. However, militarised youth have maintained their essential identities as defenders of the community. It is this identity, the current political context, and the nature of existing organisational formations that is the focus of this paper.

Youth Struggles, Identity and Organisations in the Eighties

In order to comprehend the phenomenon of militarised youth in the 1990s, it is important to understand the political, economic and social context of the 1980s. This can only be done in a cursory manner in this paper. The eighties were a critical turning point in South Africa's political history. There was a massive intensification of the struggle against apartheid state, and the urban terrain was a key site of struggle. This followed some significant developments in the late seventies. During the seventies South Africa witnessed a series of neo-apartheid reforms as regards urban policy "designed to optimize labour flows within a modified apartheid framework". (Lemon, 1992:19) The strategy of the state was to widen the differentiation between "insiders" and "outsiders" by widening the rights of African people with Section 10 rights. It was hoped that "by making the best use of those Africans who already possessed section 10 rights, the need to admit more to the cities could be minimised". (Lemon, 1992:19) Other key policy measures implemented at the time included the granting of 99-year leasehold rights, full land ownership rights to urban Africans, subsidies for first time home owners and the sales of houses campaign as part of the attempt to promote the "stability" of urban African "legals". (Watson, 1986:84)

In addition, there was an attempt to restructure local government to incorporate black demands for political rights in a limited way, so that people could express their grievances, without fully acceding to the demands for full political rights. Community Councils were introduced in 1977, however they had no access to resources and could not make any significant decisions. In addition there were increasing allegations of corruption amongst local councillors. As Grest has stated

Councillors were generally not regarded as the 'real' leaders of the communities they claimed to represent and acquired a reputation for corruption and using their positions for self-enrichment. (Grest, 1988:95)

Rent increases, lack of provision of services, and corruption amongst councillors fuelled the anger of township residents and led them to form alternate civic organisations. Seekings argues that the proliferation of community organisations or civics was one of the most striking features of township politics from 1979. (Seekings, 1990:145)

With the introduction of the Black Local Authorities Act in 1983, there was an escalation of civic struggles. Black Local Authorities were given full financial responsibility and were meant to be financially self-sufficient. However in the face of privatisation of traditional sources of revenue such as the beer halls, declining wages, the contraction of the economy and increasing unemployment and the lack of a tax base within townships, it was impossible

for Local Authorities to be financially self-sufficient. There were hence continued rent increases, evictions and lack of services, which led to residents calling for the resignation of councillors and heightened resistance.

Peaceful protest was often violently suppressed by the security forces. As a result, protests became more violent and confrontational, with councillors homes attacked, as well as administrative offices and sometimes councillors themselves. Violent action by township residents was also directed at the security forces. This action and increasingly repressive tactics of the state, culminated in the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983. Lodge states of the UDF that it:

... inspired an insurrectionary movement that was without precedent in its combative militancy, in the burden it imposed upon government resources, and in the degree to which it internalised hostility toward apartheid. (Lodge, 1991:29)

By 1984 there was an upsurge of resistance in most urban townships. The state met this resistance with increased repression. In 1985 a state of emergency was declared, the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) was banned, and activists detained. From 1985-1989 the state attempted to crush resistance through states of emergencies, banning organisations, censoring the media, and detaining and killing activists. It was the youth who were most active during this period and who were primarily targeted by the state. Both the state and civil society became increasingly militarised. Violence was seen to be an effective means of achieving change (on the part of state opponents) or crushing resistance of any form (on the part of the state). Mann defines the mind set which accompanies the process of militarisation (i.e. militarism) as:

... a set of attitudes and social practices which regards war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity. (Mann, 1987:35)

Militarism became rooted in both black and white communities, albeit it militarism of a differing nature. The repressive response of the state resulted in an assessment of tactics and strategies and a rise in confrontational politics and political violence. The African National Congress (ANC) in exile, after the Kabwe Conference in 1985, called for a strategy of "ungovernability" and "people's power". The aim of the campaign of ungovernability was to render organs of government inoperable through mass action and/or violent opposition. (Swilling, 1988)

Revolutionary militarism became a key part of the discourse and practice of political organisations engaged in "war" with the state. This was the result of local experiences of township residents who began to confront the violent state with their own forms of violence, as well as the result of calls from the ANC in exile. Oliver Tambo, then president of the ANC, stated in a well distributed speech within South Africa that:

Pretoria has carried out its murderous plans to extreme. We must now respond to the reactionary violence of the enemy with our own revolutionary violence. The weapons are there in white houses. Each white house has a gun or two hidden inside to use against us. Our mothers work in their kitchens. We work in their gardens. We must deliberately go out to look for these weapons in these houses. It is a matter of life and death to find these weapons to use against the enemy The lone policeman must be made a target. He must be destroyed so that we can get his weapon We must learn to lay ambushes for the armoured personnel carriers and the police cars that patrol the locations.²

Township youth in particular heeded the call of Tambo and spearheaded the intensification of the revolutionary strategies employed by the mass democratic movement. They identified themselves as "energetic", "flexible" people who were the future of the country. As a result it was their responsibility to use any means possible to ensure a democratic dispensation.

While making use of confrontational politics in "legal" political organisations, they were simultaneously engaged in organised political violence organised in more elusive underground formations.

The majority of these youth were organised under the banner of either the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) which aimed at organising school-going youth, or the South African Youth Congress (Sayco) aimed at organising out-of-school youth. They were, however, also active in civic organisations in their local communities. While other political organisations such as Inkatha and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) also had organisations which mobilised young people, the key movement at the time was the Charterist Social Movement.³ These young people began to identify themselves as the "comrades", and an understanding of the identity of "comrade" is crucial to any real comprehension of youth who have been involved in collective actions against the repressive state.

Being a "comrade" had a number of significant meanings. Firstly, comrades were those people who strove to uphold all that is "good" against all that is "evil". Consequently, being a comrade required being discriminating in one's behaviour at all times thus setting an example to other members of the community. As a result, the comrades came to see themselves as the "moral defenders of the community" who were "disciplined" and whose role it was to try to ensure that fellow residents behaved in an exemplary manner. The fact that many organised youth perceived themselves to be "correct" and "moral" gave them a sense that they should teach "misguided" members of the community "the correct way". (Marks, 1993) War was essentially declared by the comrades on all individuals and institutions believed to be undermining the goals of the Mass Democratic Movement.

Defence Structures in the 1980s

It is within this context that defence structures arose, both as a response to state harassment by the security forces, as well as to inadequate, partisan policing, and the perceived illegitimate justice system. Fink Haysom argues that the South African Police, far from playing an internationally acceptable policing role of law enforcement and protection, were "... a political instrument, a militaristic, secretive, racist and violent institution". (Haysom, cited in Goldstone, 1994) He further states that in South Africa "... the police did not perform their protective function, except for whites. Policing resources and priorities were diverted either to white communities or in line with security considerations. Black South Africans have endured only the enforcement not the protection of the law". (Haysom, cited in Goldstone, 1994) The police, Haysom suggests, were not even able to maintain a minimum level of public safety and security.

It is not surprising, therefore, that local communities became active in both alternative forms of policing and as well as alternative structures of "justice". Most of these activities were coordinated by local civic structures which comprised street, zonal and area committees, whose members were responsible for patrolling the streets and areas in which they were

situated. These structures were simultaneously responsible for both the organisation of insurrectionary activities, and for identifying and punishing individuals or groupings believed to have committed crimes such as theft, murder, and rape. Crimes committed against fellow members of the community were seen to divide the community; this was seen as unacceptable in a period when community solidarity and unity was key in fighting a common enemy – the apartheid state. Furthermore, as already argued, the comrades believed it was important to portray the opposition movement as being exemplary in terms of the morality and daily behaviour of its followers.

Initially methods of defence were simple and rudimentary. As Motumi has stated in examining the history of defence structures in African townships that:

... defending communities was done mainly by setting up barricades and foot patrols, as well as digging trenches to slow down or prohibit the movement of Security Force vehicles. Their weaponry was rudimentary and unsophisticated, what today are commonly referred to as 'traditional weapons'. (Motumi, 1994:7)

Youth played a critical role in these defence activities. A case study of youth in Diepkloof, Soweto provides some useful information about the nature of youth organisations during the eighties. (Marks, 1993) According to Marks, following the formation of the United Democratic Front, youth structures during the mid-late eighties were well organised with rigorous internal processes, and substantive education and training. As one of the youth activists in the area stated:

We would always start meetings with education. We would discuss democracy and how to organise. We would discuss informal and formal repression. Then people would understand. (Lumkile quoted in Marks, 1993:171)

In the eighties, there was also a high calibre of leadership in these organisations who were generally well known, trusted, and respected in the areas in which they operated:

The eighties leadership was determined, committed, loyal and disciplined. Conditions made leadership to be determined in the eighties. To be a leader in the eighties, you had to prove yourself as someone who had knowledge and could be trusted. (Namedi, quoted in Marks, 1993:173)

These organisations, however, were not without their problems. Detentions and arrests meant that the supervision of organisations provided by these leaders was weakened; this in turn led to decreased control over their own membership, and over people who were not members, but participated in the activities and campaigns of these organisations. As resource mobilisation theorists accurately point out, this is a common phenomenon of any large social movement organisation. The fact that leadership could not always have adequate control of their membership and the beneficiaries of the movement, meant that space was created for the entry of criminal elements who operated under the name of political organisations for their own personal gain. These criminal elements are popularly known as the "comstotsis" and while their numbers were limited in the eighties, they grew in size in the nineties to the detriment of the Charterist Social Movement. The entry of less seasoned activists into leadership positions in these organisation, and the departure of some of the best leadership from the late eighties to jobs and tertiary institutions, had a detrimental impact on the youth movement.

Youth organisations which were part of the Charterist Social Movement engaged in both "legal" above-ground forms of peaceful resistance as well as more controversial underground violent protest. (Johnson, 1989; Marks, 1993; Sitas, 1992). Collective violence, however, should not be seen as separate from other more peaceful forms of collective action. As Charles Tilly, a theorist of social movements and collective action, asserts, collective violence is part of a continuum of more peaceful forms of collective action; collective violence results when peaceful forms of collective action are unable to achieve desired goals, and are generally met with repressive conduct from the state. (Tilly, 1975; 1978; 1985) Indeed, in the South African case, violence was seen as a last resort after peaceful action on the part of the resistance movement proved unsuccessful in bringing about political and social transformation. Furthermore, collective or political violence

materialised when the security forces responded violently to peaceful protest. As was stated by a young activist in Diepkloof:

I can say the police contributed more to our youth being violent. Its just like the handling of unrest situations, you see. I remember there was a time in '86 there was a stay away organised by Bishop Tutu. So there we organised a march here in Diepkloof. So without provocation our youth were shot, people were arrested and people were brutally assaulted, so now the culture of violence started there. (Lumkile quoted in Marks, 1993)

Township youth were engaged in a number of forms of collective violence which can broadly be termed "political" during the eighties. Objects of political violence could include anyone or anything regarded as obstacles to the goal of "liberation" and the quest for unity. Gangsters, "criminals" and "counter revolutionary" forces such as Inkatha, consequently became targets of collective action. Four broad types of political violence during this period can be discerned: violence against direct agents of the state such as the police and local councillors; violence against those seen as indirectly serving the state such as representatives of capital and vigilantes; violence against "misdirected" members of organisations, or sympathisers of the Charterist Social Movement who were seen to be "undisciplined"; and violence against "ordinary" people who offended the "collective conscience" of the broader community or those who were labelled as "criminals".

The "organising" of political violence by comrade youth is rooted in the eighties' period of ungovernability. The policy of the legal UDF was formally one of non-violence, so the technicalities of carrying out acts of political violence were never openly part of its affiliates such as Cosas or Sayco. The technical planning of these actions would happen outside of formal meetings. Marks states that as part of the tactical planning of violence, a few youth were identified to lead a particular act of violence. (Marks, 1993) Other youth would take the cue from these "leaders". The Diepkloof study suggests that there were two groups of leadership in youth organisations during the period of "peoples war"; those who were above ground and formal, and those who headed the practical organisation of political violence.

Collective violence was highly organised and youth were aware of who the local leaders were in violent operations:

When we talk of targets, we had lectures to identify our aims. But we never in a single meeting said we are going to attack a particular home or such a policeman, because that contradicts our constitution which says we are a non-violent organisation. Such things only happened after our meetings Only a few people knew what was going to happen ... we would separate ourselves. You see in Diepkloof we have zones. Then maybe X is in charge of Zone 1 and M is in charge of Zone 4, and so on. So in that way we were able to make things easier People who knew the targets would be in front after a meeting. They would lead and the rest would follow. They will see the leaders maybe at the police station. And we at the front will start to throw stones or maybe another missile, then they will also start throwing missiles. (Thabo quoted in Marks, 1993)

While there is little doubt that most collective violence during this period was well conceived and organised, it is also true that collective violence did occur spontaneously without the consent of local political leadership. However, the strength and hegemonic presence of youth organisations at the time served to limit this to a great extent. These youths' involvement in collective action served to deepen their identity as "defenders of the community", both physically and morally. It is this identity which has prevailed subsequent to the negotiations process, and even after the democratic elections in May 1994.

Shifts in the Nineties

The 1990s witnessed the decline, but not the termination, of the Charterist youth movement, and the Charterist Social Movement at large. This can largely be attributed to the new political arena in which national negotiations became the order of the day. And, as the political process model suggests, changes in politics in the broader arena, reshape the inner structures and workings of social movement organisations.

With the unbanning of political organisation in February 1990, political organisations, in particular the ANC, moved away from revolutionary politics toward negotiation politics. These negotiations were essentially carried out by national representatives of political parties, with almost no input from activists at the local level:

The unbanning of the ANC and its approach to armed struggle and the lack of consultation, alienated old activists. Activists became demoralised. These people had been committed to a seizure of power. The transition to the ANC had an effect on activists trained in a particular climate.⁴

Youth, who as we have seen, were centrally engaged in the activities of "peoples' war" and "ungovernability", were not entirely convinced by the ANC's new stance on negotiations and the suspension of armed struggle. As the nineties proceeded, youth perceived themselves as less central to processes of transformation. In the early nineties, very few real political opportunities seemed to exist for youth to play a meaningful role in the transition period.

While youth had been the key agents of the revolutionary movement in the eighties, in the negotiations period, they were increasingly marginalised; young activists were left with an uncertainty as to how they could contribute to political change. Ashwell Zwane, a member of the Alexandra Youth Congress since the eighties asked:

What is the role of the youth now? Even the ANC Youth League at national level has not defined a role for us. What do we do in terms of the negotiations process? If we come together at meetings, it is to do

what? The role of the youth has changed because we were in the forefront before and now this has changed and we are in the back seat. Since the 1991 conference of the ANC nothing has been done to address this problem. It was a death conference.⁵

These feelings of impotence, coupled with a loss of seasoned activists who could provide political direction to local youth structures, led to ideological fragmentation, and divergent understandings of appropriate strategies and tactics, as well as some suspicion of more senior leaders of the movement.

Key leaders of the youth organisations in the eighties abandoned local youth organisations for a number of reasons. Some left to work at regional and national levels of the ANC; others felt despondent, believing the ANC had neglected the needs of youth who had given many years of their lives to activism; and finally, there were a number of youth leaders who felt that with the unbanning of political organisations, they could afford to take leave of struggle politics and get on with their daily lives. The departure of key youth activists resulted in a vast down-scaling of any systematic program of action or political education processes:

The loss of eighties leadership has weakened the youth league in the sense that we have a new brand of activists not grinded in congress politics, and with no sense of strategies and tactics. They are not able to broaden its base. Seasoned activists could have helped in this regard. If we still had these activists, they could train new people along this process. There is what we call a leadership vacuum.⁶

New, less politically astute and disciplined youth constituted the majority social base of the Charterist social movement:

In the nineties, youth flocked into organisations. We did not have to go out and organise. A political education program was lacking Some people in leadership lack a clear vision of beyond, and analysis. Political education is not taken seriously. Only a few youth today are committed, others have a basic understanding, but lack the determination to learn and be creative.⁷

This new social base proved difficult to organise and to instil a sense of discipline so central to youth activists in the eighties. The comtotsi phenomenon surged during this period, and collective action (including collective violence) became increasingly disorganised and unaccountable:

No one can condone actions like burning an oil tanker and killing its driver. There must be explanations. These action that are taking place today are not well coordinated. People in leadership are not there when these things happen. If youth feel angry about something they are demanding, they take action which is not defined. (Nemedi, quoted in Marks, 1993)

The negotiations period itself was by no means uncomplicated, nor peaceful. In fact, the period 1990-1994 was characterised by high levels of violence, particularly in Natal and Gauteng. Much of this violence was inter-community; in particular, there was excessive violence between members of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and those of the ANC. There were also numerous attack on local communities by groupings of unknown, armed men. These groupings came to be known as the "Third Force", and it is widely accepted that the "Third Force" was organised and trained by the security forces. (Cronin, 1991) Third Force activities were targeted primarily at informal settlements such as Phola Park on the

East Rand, and Boipatong in the Vaal. The aim of these attacks, spearheaded by reactionary elements in the South African Police and the South African Defence Force, was to create further conflict in local communities, and in so doing, derail the negotiations process.

The severity and frequency of such attacks, combined with the continued repressive role played by the security forces, and inter-community violence, forced local communities once more to develop initiatives for self-defence. Again, it was the youth in these communities who were at the forefront of such activities. Despite the dramatic changes in youth organisations in the early nineties, members of these organisations retained the "comrade identity". Consequently, they believed, that it was their role to defend the community against perceived and actual dangers. They believed that they could not watch passively while violence prevailed in the areas in which they resided:

You know a youth, if you tell a youth about violence like you say, 'hey there's Inkatha coming in this direction', hey they never going to stop to go there. Hey, they are leaving school ... they saying they want to fight ... they say they are going to defend our masses. (Bheki, quoted in Marks, 1993)

However, the involvement of comrade youth in collective violence was generally poorly conceived and organised. This was the result of the structural decline of the Charterist youth movement, and the lack of clarity as to who the 'enemy' was. In fact, in some instances acts of collective violence occurred that contradicted stated organisational principals and policies:

We have now decided in our structures that the hijacking of vehicles must stop. There is no point in doing these things anymore since ungovernability is not our strategy anymore. But, it is difficult to stop these things because some of the youth today are not

disciplined. In fact, I would say that it is mainly thugs are doing these things. (Chris, quoted in Marks, 1993)

But, despite levels of organisational disarray, in the early nineties, political organisations such as the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP) realised the need for communities to defend themselves. This was necessary given the partisan and ineffective police force, as well as the continual threat of attacks from outsiders. In 1991, Jeremy Cronin, a senior member of the SACP, in his document "For the Sake of Our Lives" called on members of local communities to organise their own structures of defence:

In the wake of the ugly violence unleashed against our people by security forces, vigilante groups, and hit squads it is imperative that our liberation movement takes responsibility for guiding and building peoples' self defence units. In the past our attempts to defend ourselves have been spontaneous and sometimes poorly planned, and lacking in discipline. What we need is an organised and disciplined force, guided by political leadership, which will serve both to protect the community and ensure law and order.

Township residents, in particular the youth, welcomed this call and embarked on the process of forming units for self defence following the directives stipulated in Cronin's document. Supporters of the ANC formed Self Defence Units (SDUs). Supporters of the IFP, in response to the call by the ANC and SACP, formed their own defence structures called Self Protection Units (SPUs).⁸ There were also smaller groupings of youth who were members of similar formations organised by Azapo and the PAC. SDUs were, like their former more underground structures of political organisations, established to perform both a defence function and to ensure law and order in communities.

SDUs were to have a special command and control system, would take on para-military configuration, and members would be trained by the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). (Cronin, 1991) Motumi, in examining the SDUs during the early nineties argues that:

During this period, the role of the SDUs seemed clearly defined – to defend the communities against the hostel dwellers, mainly seen to be IFP controlled, and the Security Forces, especially the Internal Stability Unit. (Motumi, 1994:8)

SDUs, SPUs and similar such formations mushroomed throughout South Africa, particularly in Natal, the Western Cape and Gauteng. Commanders of these units were for the most part accountable to local political structures, in the early period following their formation.

However, as the negotiation process proceeded, and consequently with the formation of a Government of National Unity, political parties began to reassess the role and function of such structures. The ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in Gauteng, for example, publicly stated in early 1994 that Defence Units should be completely disbanded. The ANC itself argued that members of Defence Units should, as far as possible, become police reservists or form recognised and legitimate neighbourhood watches in their areas.⁹

But, this did not occur for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was, and is not the capacity within the South African Police to absorb the numbers of youth involved in defence activities. Secondly, there is still suspicion and mistrust of the police amongst many members of these defence structures in all provinces. Consequently, there is an unwillingness on their part to become part of police structures, despite a variety of attempts, particularly by non government organisations, to mediate between such units and the police service. Thirdly, in some areas such as the Vaal, members of defence units believe that threats from other forces continue to prevail, and that the police are not adequately dealing with these. Fourthly, the majority of these members are armed either with firearms or traditional weapons (particularly in the hostels and informal settlements), and there is a reluctance to give up these arms given the perceived threats. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, participation in these structures gives these young people a sense of identity and purpose in their daily lives.

Defence Structures Post April 1994

Despite the election of a democratic ANC led government; dramatic decreases in political violence (except for in KwaZulu Natal); and the stated intention of the South African Police to become more accountable and community oriented, youth defence structures have prevailed subsequent to the elections in April 1994. This is as a result of the problems cited above. As Rakgoadi accurately states:

Peace, or at least the long-term guarantees thereof, is not only the curbing of violence or the absence of war, it is the availability and provision of food, health facilities, education, water, housing, electricity, transportation, security, and the promotion and adherence of fundamental human rights. These strengthen democracy, particularly at the grassroots level. The April election did not bring complete peace, nor end conflict. (Rakgoadi, 1995:8)

So, while the apartheid state has ceased to exist, militarised youth continue to legitimate their continued participation in collective violence. Firstly, inequality and deprivation are still the primary experiences of youth at the local level. The RDP, while facing a mammoth task of redistribution, has moved relatively slowly in addressing the problems confronted by the majority of black South Africans. Township residents continue to reside in conditions of extreme poverty, and the provision of education, and job creation is going to be a slow and difficult process. Consequently, for many young people, the only way of achieving any "real changes", or receiving attention from the state, is through their engagement in acts of collective violence. For example, Soweto SDU members from Diepkloof marched to the Orlando police station on 23 July 1995, and demanded integration into the South African Police Service (SAPS). Representatives of this grouping stated the following:

If it means turning to violence and wrecking havoc in order for our grievances to be addressed, then we will do just that. We have done it before, and we got

**listened to. Nothing can stop us from doing it again.
(The Star, 24/07/95)**

Furthermore, and possibly more importantly, the much needed change process within the South African Police Service is far from complete. In a number of areas in South Africa, for example Nyanga in the Western Cape, the police service is still perceived as inefficient and inadequate. In general, however, the police service is still regarded with suspicion by township residents. This is the result of their historical repressive and partisan activities, as well as their current inefficiencies in dealing with crime and other threats to local communities. In Orange Farm (an informal settlement in Gauteng), for example, there is no police station, and no police persons are present in the area after 4pm. Areas of the Western Cape appear to have similar experiences:

Do-it-yourself policing is spreading across the Cape Peninsula as communities organise themselves to do the tasks their understaffed police stations cannot. The Mitchell's Plain Neighbourhood Watch has 10 units in the sprawling dormitory town, with membership currently at 4000 and climbing steadily. Its 400 active members patrol the neighbourhoods in Mitchell's Plain every weekend, some of them armed and ready for any situation. The watch was launched in 1990, in response to local police's inability to deal with local crime. (The Weekly Mail and Guardian, 12/05/95)

The consequence of this is that youth who do see themselves as "defenders of the community" are forced to play the role of an alternative police service. This in itself is problematic since these young people are not formally trained as police personnel; in most instances, their training is para-military. Further, in some instances they are the perpetrators of crime and are part of gang formations. Their legitimacy, therefore, differs from one area to the next. Nonetheless, these youth derive a sense of identity and purpose through their

engagement in "policing activities", largely as a result of the fact that they have historically been marginalised from key social activities such as employment and education, and have been central to defence activities of a variety of forms.

Defence structures at present take on a variety of constructions. They are not uniform but are varied based on local conditions; the experiences of the members as residents of particular townships; the nature of violence in the areas concerned; and the type of political organisational structures that existed in these areas. Consequently generalisations about these formations are made with caution. Members of communities who have been involved in defence activities (whether formally part of defence structures or not) vary in ages. Generally they are young males aged between 16 and 26. Most of these young people are unemployed, and there are a small number of these young people who want to go back to school.¹⁰

At present there is increased attention on the future of defence structures owing to the problems associated with these defence structures.¹¹ These include the infiltration of criminal elements into the structures; the proliferation of sophisticated weaponry; violent clashes within and between SDUs; their ambivalent relationship with the SAPS; and their potential to disrupt developmental processes in broader society.

Firstly, the infiltration of criminals is a major problem facing defence structures. This process, as we have seen, was facilitated by the disintegration of the Charterist youth movement, and the general weakening of political organisations in the nineties. Motumi suggests that SDUs began to be composed of people "... who saw an opportunity to exert power and influence through membership of the SDUs" (Motumi, 1994:8) These people essentially comprise the "comtsotsi" discussed above. Raditapole and Gillespie in examining Self Defence Units venture that:

... at least half of the youth currently involved in SDUs were on the fringes of criminal activity prior to joining the SDU, and may continue such activity outside the jurisdiction of the particular township they protect. This indicates the emergence of a new dominance of criminal, and often gang related, activity under the aegis of community protection. (Raditapole and Gillespie, 1994:1)

As is the case with other youth organisation, the effect of the emergence of these people in SDUs is to weaken internal discipline and cohesion, and often their legitimacy in the areas in which they operate.

Secondly, the weaponry used by defence structures has become more sophisticated and widespread. As was stated by a member of the ANC Youth League in 1993:

There is a big problem of comrades keeping guns. But this problem is a national problem, you see, because everyday comrades are disarming the police, you see. And they are keeping these guns for themselves And, it's true that many of these guns have been misused by our comrades, you see, harassing the community with these same guns and not using them simply for defence. (Thabo quoted in Marks, 1993:207)

Despite the calls by both political organisation and other mass based organisations in areas such as Soweto, for people to hand in their guns, most members are still in possession of arms and appear to have no intention of relinquishing them.

Thirdly, a number of cases have been reported of tensions within and between defence structures, some of which have resulted in violent conflict. For example in Doornkop, Soweto there is currently a power struggle over who controls the SDU unit. It is alleged that members have joined the National Party and are being used to destabilise the community.¹² On the East Rand there have been numerous incidences of infighting between SDU members, some of which have resulted in deaths.¹³

Fourthly, the relationship between the police and defence structures varies from area to area. These relationships are dependant upon the nature and history of the police service in local areas; the role that these youth have historically played; the extent to which defence structures have been infiltrated by criminal elements; the leadership and organisation of these structures; and local perceptions of the community toward both the police and youth defence structures.

In some areas, recognition has been given for the need to include defence structures as important community groupings within the newly established Community Police Forums (CPFs).¹⁴ In some areas the two structures work collaboratively and harmoniously on the assumption that both are necessary to ensure safety and security within local communities. For example, in the Far East Rand, SDU members from an informal settlement, Ivory Park, work closely with the police service. It was reported that SDU members in Ivory Park were responsible for identifying and arresting a number of car hijackers in the area and handing them over to the police. (*The Star*, 4/05/95) The police in this area have publicly lauded these youth for their contribution in combatting crime.

In this same area, a structure called the North East District Joint Structure has been set up which represents defence structures from all political parties, together with the police and political leaders. The objective of this joint structure is to initiate community policing between and within the various organisations/structures. Members of community organisations were nominated to enrol on a voluntary basis to serve as reservists in the SAPS. These selected individuals will, it is hoped by both members of the SAPS and defence structures in the area, be trained as police reservists, and work for the police service as representatives of their respective structures in the community.¹⁵

The case of the North East Rand, however, cannot be generalised to the Gauteng province. There are still many areas where defence structures are in conflict with the police. For example in Katorus¹⁶, clashes have taken place between SDU members from Mandela section in Tokoza and Twala section in Katlehong which led to death of two SDU members. (*The Star*, 01/05/95) Some of these youth are paid reservists of the SAPS.¹⁷ They have firearms from the police service which are in their personal possession even while they are not on duty. Some of these youth follow lines of authority of the police while on duty, yet follow commands of the SDU while off duty. The two lines of command at times conflict with one another. These problems were identified by Obed Bapela, spokesperson for the ANC in Gauteng. (*Sunday Times*, 06/05/95)

While members of defence structures have in the past, and in some instances continue to play a central "policing" role in their communities, these very activities could prove to be obstacles to formal policing in South Africa. In Gauteng, even where defence units work collaboratively with the police in community police forums, they constantly place on the agenda their own plight and need for recognition. Often this concern overshadows the discussions of key policing issues in local areas, which are the concern of such forums. In most areas of Gauteng, but also in the provinces of KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape, youth who are part of defence structures are demanding either full integration into the police service, or to become part of a reservist program as is the case in Katorus.¹⁸ Whilst these youth have the right to raise their concerns and hopes for the future in these forums, it is unlikely given the current internal problems facing the SAPS that their grievances can be dealt with adequately by the police service or the Ministry of Safety and Security.

These problems mean that defence structures, while there are often legitimate bases for their existence, have the potential to destabilise society and undermine the Reconstruction and Development Program. Eldred de Klerk asserts that:

... disillusioned youth are the greatest threat to safety and security in our country. This is a known fact but has not been made a priority by the government to date. This problem needs to be firmly placed on the national agenda.¹⁹

While the problems discussed above are central to understanding the nature of youth defence structures in South Africa, these should neither be cause to dismiss these structures, nor should they provide a justification for not providing future programs for these young people. Perhaps even more importantly, central to understanding appropriate future programs for militarised youth, is a proper understanding of their own hopes for their futures.

Goals and Aspirations of Militarised Youth

A central theme which emerged in interviews with members of youth defence structures in Gauteng was that these youth feel disregarded by the new government. As Rakgoadi has stated, "the liberators of yesterday have become today's rejects or social outcasts". (Rakgoadi, 1991:7) Reverend Dandala of the Central Methodist Mission who has worked extensively with SDU/SPU structures in the Katorus area notes the following in a memorandum sent to MEC Jessie Duarte in February 1995:

The cry for someone to care for them is critical. I believe that if such a person were from the Government structures it would help them not to feel that the status they enjoyed and the contribution they made are being ignored as worthless ... the crisis of having no immediate income is making itself severely felt in their predicament.

These sentiments expressed by Reverend Dandala were echoed in all areas of Gauteng, and are undoubtedly resonated in other provinces at the present.

The following represent some of the key concerns of militarised youth in local areas of Gauteng which emerged through a process of interviews with participants of defence structures:

1. While the majority of members of these structures want to become members of the police service, their main concern is for some form of employment which will generate income. As Kiba Kekane from the Pretoria area stated:

Many do not necessarily want to become part of the security forces. However, no alternative was given. People are not able think beyond their limits. Everything has become an issue of income.²⁰

A similar sentiment was expressed in the Soweto area:

The central issue that these members want is some form of money. Some have engaged in gangster activities as a basic means of generating income.²¹

2. The dire need for employment is directly linked to the need for education and training programs for these youth. SDU commanders in the Vaal stated that:

We want skills that at some point will lead to employment. Members want to further their vocational opportunities in some way or another. Any course they do should have a certificate which is of value in terms of job seeking.²²

Similarly, Musi Ziqubu from Alexandra township stated:

SDU members require training. Some would like to become policemen while others simply want any form of employment they can get. Training should ultimately be aimed at employment. Many are interested in being trained as bricklayers, security company workers, or plumbers.²³

3. While many members of defence units felt that they were too old to go back to school, a number of these young people wanted an opportunity to pursue formal education. As commanders from the West Rand stated:

We want to be educated and have the opportunity to go back to school. People want to further their studies.²⁴

The need for basic adult education for some youth was strongly conveyed. Ziqubu from Alexandra argued that:

It would seem that for those youth who are illiterate, basic adult education would be the most appropriate starting point.²⁵

Aside from the Vaal area, most of these young people had a poor track record in terms of formal schooling. Most had some level of secondary schooling, but a very small minority had matric certification.²⁶ Whilst many of these young people lacked formal educational experience, they possessed a number of important skills which need to be taken cognisance of in developing programs. These included, negotiating skills; communication

skills; organisational skills; paramilitary training; and often insightful understandings of power relations and community needs and problems.

4. Many youth were both perpetrators and victims of violence. Consequently, these youth experienced severe trauma and are in need of psychological counselling. Jabu Dlamini argued the following of youth who have been involved in defence activities in the Katorus area:

Firstly, they need counselling with regard to trauma particularly since they were involved in very violent situations. They have seen people being killed and have killed people.²⁷

Reverend Dandala also expressed strong views in this regard:

Clearly a process aimed at helping communities to reach appropriate 'closure' on the past (as opposed to the denial that we currently see) will need to operate at both a macro and a micro level. In communities where violence has been particularly protracted and intense, we can perhaps look at individualised solutions such as the establishment of individual and group counselling programmes. At a community level, it is my strong contention that community leaders should go through a program aimed at providing basic counselling skills as well as information about information about the available social services and resources to which people can be referred.²⁸

Commanders in the Vaal area suggested that youth from defence units be trained in peer counselling and be assisted in setting up their own advice centres to assist the community.

5. In undertaking any work with these young people, it was stressed that attention needs to be given to both the historical role that these youth have played in their communities, as well as their self-identities as "defenders of the community". As an ANC Youth League executive member in Soweto stated:

The only reason why SDU members want to become part of the police is because they believe they have been doing police work for many years. Part of their identity is as defence workers.²⁹

Members of the defence units in the Far North East Rand believed that:

Many members of defence units want to become part of the police or military. This is because they are prepared to address crime and in doing so, risk their lives.³⁰

A similar sentiment was expressed by Kiba Kekane:

These youth feel they have been involved in war activities. They see themselves as having being a part of military or policing structures.³¹

This key identity held dearly by young defenders was central to their daily lives. They had given up their time, energy, and even schooling opportunities for what they believed to be in the best interest of their communities. This led to resistance amongst these youth in giving

up this central role which they believed themselves to have played both historically and currently. As Reverend Dandala noted:

Commanders are reluctant to give up the roles they have played within their communities. The requirement that they project themselves into a future in which they are not commanders implied the loss of this identity (and all that comes with it) with no clear sense of what might replace it. It seemed to me that this prospective loss also resonated with the multitude of losses that these men have already experienced What emerged was a sense that the contribution that they had made to the past (and the losses and sacrifices that this had required) was not recognised and that in the quest for a new future there was no opportunity to come to grips with and mourn the losses of the past.³²

Comprehensive programmes aimed at addressing the needs of militarised youth need to take as their starting point the very aims and aspirations of these young people. As a result, educational, psychological, and employment components need to be developed. Further, acknowledgement needs to be given to the role that these youth have played in defending their communities, and their resistance in giving up deeply entrenched identities.

The Future of Youth Defence Structures

Political parties, as well as concerned individuals and organisations, have argued strongly for the disbandment of youth defence structures. However, it is important to understand the reasons for the continued existence of SDUs. The material factors explored above which gave rise to defence structures, for the most part, have not changed, despite a changed political terrain. Of equal importance, the identities of the young people (constructed primarily through their engagement in key social movements) who constitute these formations as "defenders of the community" or "alternative police people" is still foremost in

their consciousness. Unless these underlying considerations are addressed, no number of calls for their disbandment is likely to have effect. Any comprehensive demilitarisation process will only succeed if the following are addressed:

- the creation of a legitimate and representative police service;
- the establishment of effective and accountable policing;
- a decrease in inter-community violence;
- a development program which provides youth with a range of both educational and employment alternatives;
- processes which allow these young people to have a sense of self which is purposeful and meaningful, and not constructed around defence and violence.

However, at present there are very few, if any alternatives posed to these young people, either by government, or the private sector, or civil society at large. As a result, the armed forces seem to be the most logical possibility for these young defenders. Consequently, in the Western Cape, youth defence structures have demanded full integration into the South African Police Service. Non governmental organisations in this province have been asked to play a mediating role between the police and the SDUs.³³

Similarly, in KwaZulu Natal, representatives from both Self Defence Units and Self Protection Units came together (with the facilitation of non-governmental organisations) in July 1995 to discuss their future roles in the province. A clear demand emanated at this summit: members of both formations wanted immediate entry into the SAPS as reservists with the hope of becoming permanent members of the service. Pule Zwane in a discussion document for this summit, comprehensively argues that are many advantages of such an integration process:

... the introduction and restructuring of the reserve program can contribute in reducing both unemployment and skills deficit within the countries economy. Reservists can benefit both from their allowances and a range of other incentives The geographic location of reservists both legitimises the

police service in the eyes of local communities and provides sound police/community relations. The reservists live in that specific community they are serving. (Zwane, 1995:3)

While there are a number of advantages to some form of integration of members defence structures into the SAPS, this is not a feasible solution nor should it be the only alternative available to these young people. Youth themselves do not necessarily want to enter into the security forces but are unaware of other opportunities. As Kiba Kekane from Pretoria stated in speaking about the aspirations of youth who have been active in defence activities:

Many do not necessarily want to become part of the security forces. However, no alternative was given. People are not able to think beyond their limits.. The same relates to ex-MK members. Many do not want to be in the military, but there were no alternatives. Most youth want marriage and cars, they want to develop as young adults.³⁴

Since these youth have played such a key role in defence activities (whether defined in military or policing terms), their participation in reservist programs seems logical, and should be explored where possible. However, this in itself will not address other of their broader needs discussed in the paper explored through the very consciousness of the youth who are the focus of this work.

Current Attempts at Reintegration

There are few programs we are aware of aimed at reintegrating militarised youth into society at present. This paper has chosen to look at two of the most well developed initiatives which have been implemented in Gauteng: the police reservist program in Katorus, and the Thuso Tourism Academy based in Pretoria. The rationale for selecting these case studies was to compare a program which reinforced youths' identities as "defenders", with one which attempted to transform such identities.

The Katorus Police Reservist Programme

The Katorus area in the East Rand, consisting of the townships of Vosloorus, Tokoza and Katlehong, witnessed some of the highest levels of violence in the country in the 1990-1994 period. This violence took the form of both "third force" violence and intra-community conflict for example between ANC and IFP supporters. This resulted in the SANDF being deployed³⁵ in the Katorus area in support of the SAPS, who due to a variety of factors, including inadequate person power, were unable to deal with the situation.³⁶ Colonel Du Toit who is in command of Group 41, the SANDF unit deployed in Katorus, contended that;

It had reached the stage by November 1993 that there was a civil war between the IFP and the ANC. By November, there were 75 murders per month. The training of the police and their make-up was not adequate to deal with a civil war, and military training was more in line with the conflict we had to manage.³⁷

As a result of these high levels of conflict, the democratic government targeted Katorus as a key area for socio-economic development. In October 1994, a three billion Rand Presidential lead project was launched in Tokoza. (*The Sunday Times*, 23 July 1995) Part of this project included prioritising the integration of members of defence structures into the police as paid police reservists. Approximately 1945 members submitted their names for both the reservists and permanent services. Of these only about 500 were trained and deployed as police reservists in the Katorus area since many failed to reach the basic requirements for training stipulated by the SAPS.³⁸ They were trained for 4-6 weeks, are paid R26 per shift and issued with SAPS service pistols which they retain when they are off duty. Since they are paid, unlike other reservists who operate on a purely voluntary basis, they have come to call themselves "community constables", and are only deployed in the Katorus area.

Despite attempts to stabilise the area through such programs as this, there is however still conflict, albeit much reduced from 1994. One way in which violence manifests itself, is infighting within and between SDUs, and between the SDUs and the community. Youth defence structures in this area have become a source of both debate and concern. For example, in Tokoza residents claim that since late 1994, 11 people accused of witchcraft have been murdered by members of a self defence unit. (*The Weekend Star*, 22-23 April

1995) Colonel du Toit suggested that much of this violence is rooted in personality clashes and power struggles over reservists, territory and resources.

SDUs now don't exist to defend areas, their existence now is not because of inadequate policing. In the past they collected protection money and with the high rate of unemployment, this was a source of income. Also they gained power in the community. That's why some have become more radical because it's not so easy to give away your power The issue is a power struggle of who is in command Each one has got their own area where they exercise control, if anyone wants to expand their area then they can't.³⁹

These power struggles impact on the police reservist program and are but one of a number of difficulties associated with the reservist program. Firstly, concern has been raised at the short length of training that is provided to the former defence structure members. It is widely believed that one month's training is inadequate to equip anyone as disciplined and effective police reservists. According to Colonel du Toit, in some areas police reservists are not perceived as neutral and become embroiled in community conflicts, and in his view, this can to some extent, be attributed to inadequate training. Furthermore, Colonel du Toit argued that the attitude of former defence structure members to the police service is often not adequately addressed in this training. He elaborated:

If you take these guys, they have been involved mentally and physically in the struggle. They have been mentally conditioned in a particular way, they have been part of opposing the regime and part of another structure and system. On the psychological

terrain there needs to be something more constructive, a changing of attitudes, culture and approach toward a positive one to the police force.⁴⁰

Secondly, there also appears to be a complex relationship between former members of defence structures and those who remain active participants in defence structures. Some of the commanders of the SDUs did not go into the reservist program, and hence the leadership of these SDUs are outside of these programs. This creates the conditions for increased tensions with leadership outside of the program and membership within the reservist program. According to Colonel du Toit, the police reservist program is seen by some SDU members as a way to gain access to weapons and training and thereby increase their power and control of areas. The results in the problem of double, and sometimes conflicting, command structures, which has been addressed elsewhere in the paper.

They came to the SAPS station to be registered. They came with the idea that each one would get a weapon. In Katlehong after 2 days, they demanded weapons and each was issued with a 9 mm, not all policemen are issued with 9mms, they take home their weapons and there have been lots of problems with that They do duty in the day as reservists and go home with their weapon and do patrols as part of the SDU In Tokoza the SDU leader says: 'I have so many reservists under my command'.⁴¹

Thirdly, the reservist program in the Katorus area has caused discontent toward the government in areas where such programs have not been established. Youth in Soweto expressed the following "warning" in response to what they perceived as the ad-hoc response of the government to the problem of militarised youth.

Youth and SDU members in Soweto have seen what has happened in the East Rand with regard to the police reservist training. They are angry that the focus was only on the East Rand. Soweto is currently seen as a neglected area. While Soweto has always been seen as the forefront of struggle, they are no longer a focus point and have been neglected in terms of resources and programs of development. This appears to be making youth in Soweto angry at what could be called relative deprivation. We are sitting with a time bomb with regards to Soweto. The government is seen as acting as firefighters. They react as opposed to act. In order for attention to be given to a particular area, dramatic action has to proceed this.⁴²

The police reservist program has however had its successes. In particular it has assisted in giving legitimacy to the police service and increasing the person power of the service.

The one major success is the increased visibility of the police, they have more person power and are more visible. From the psychological point of view there has probably been more success than physically on the ground. The SDUs in the past had legitimacy in the community and now they are part of a police structure, this has meant positive acceptance of the police by the community and

brought legitimacy to the police and I wonder if that is not why they were brought in.⁴³

This case study highlights some of the difficulties of relying on the police reservist program as a solution to the issue of militarised youth. Firstly, there is almost no possibility of the police service having the capacity to absorb these young people concerned, given the lack of material resources in the police service and the de facto cut in the police budget in 1994. Generally police reservists are volunteers and unpaid, and thus it will be impossible to replicate this program of paid reservists in other areas. If this is the only viable option available to youth then it is likely that there will be conflict because some youth will inevitably be excluded due to the lack of resources. Secondly, the option of reservist training does not deal with the basic problems that most of these youth confront – unemployment and lack of purpose in their day-to-day lives. Thirdly, despite the attempts to demilitarise the police, the reservist program could potentially be seen as "re-militarising" these youth rather than demilitarising them. A demilitarisation process would involve providing them with new skills of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation, and the chance to engage in activities which are not structured around defence and violence.

Thuso Tourism Academy

The Thuso Tourism Academy is a program which aims to train former members of defence structures for the tourism industry. It is a non-governmental program which is funded by the private sector. It was started by Busi Radebe, a resident of Katlehong. She was a teacher at a Katlehong high school and some of her students participated in defence activities. She was motivated to begin the Academy because she had witnessed first hand the hardships and sacrifices which these young people had experienced, and she also felt indebted to them for the role that they had played in defending the community. She felt she had intimate knowledge of these youth and the problems which they faced, and wanted to assist in building their self esteem and developing their skills:

My objective was to bring hope to them that things are not as bad as they think, to look at themselves as individuals with potential, to emphasise that they are valued human beings. I tried to show them that

tourism can be of benefit to them and how they can create jobs in tourism.44

The goals of the program identified by Radebe were to:

- provide these youth with immediate skills and employment;
- bring hope to the youth;
- promote a spirit of reconciliation;
- give former SDU members a sense of self-esteem;
- demonstrate the ways in which the tourism industry can benefit these youth.

The first training course for SDU members was administered by the Academy in 1995, and targeted youth from the Katorus area. Advertisements were placed in the Sowetan, the Business Day and on Radio 702 for the program, in addition, the director met with commanders in Katorus to discuss the program. Due to lack of resources, not all people who applied could be trained; 85 SDU members were selected for training. The training involved lectures on various aspects of the tourism industry and its benefits. There were also excursions to various tourist venues such as Gold Reef City so that the youth were able to experience the tourism industry first hand. The final part of the course was the creation of tourism projects by the youth themselves. For example some of the youth were involved with planning for an exhibition centre which would provide community members with a venue to sell arts and crafts and local cuisine to tourists.

The program thus provided these youth with the opportunity to learn skills and enter into a world which is completely different from their former experiences. They experience a different reality which builds their confidence and self respect. As Radebe pointed out:

I tell them about tourism and its benefits, it is one industry with no aggression. It's nice going into hotels, it doesn't remind them of what happened before They have been exposed to so much

aggression, but we need to make them feel like they are human beings, not just carriers of AK47's.⁴⁵

One of the youth participants poignantly summed up his experience of the course,

I am so happy that there is someone who respects me, who sees my potential, but I feel depressed because I want to go home and tell my people how excited I am about this, but they have all died.⁴⁶

Interestingly, Radebe does not think it is appropriate to discount the experiences of youth in acts of violence. In fact, Radebe emphasised the positive role which these youth have played in community defence.⁴⁷ The program does not emphasis disarmament or demilitarisation. Rather, it attempts to change these youth through giving them different experiences as well as alternative careers to those of defence.

We are saying that it is important that there is no violence, because if we have violence it affects tourism But some still had weapons with them. They said, We still have Aks with us, we are not going to hand them over, we don't feel safe, what options do we have?" I'm not going to say to them they must hand over their weapons. However some of those who did the training were arguing for disarmament. They did have a changed attitude.⁴⁸

The key strength of this program is that it is multi-faceted. It addresses skills development; acknowledges the past role of youth; emphasises building self esteem and confidence; and provides youth with opportunities to experience life in roles other than those of "defenders

of the community". and confidence. The positive feedback which these youth gave at the end of the course would suggest that not all youth want to continue with their policing role. Many may pursue the reservist option because their daily experiences have been so intimately linked to defence and they have not been given the choice of other alternatives such as those provided by the Thuso Academy.

One of the central problems of the program is that it is not linked to formal employment opportunities and that it rather relies on the youth to create their own employment opportunities. In a context of scarce resources and limited skills this will be difficult for most youth. This is related to the fact that initiatives such as Radebe's are not coordinated with developmental processes of either the state or the broader private sector. Furthermore, despite some success at demilitarisation, it is clear that many youth do not feel secure, and feel they need to continue their roles as defenders of the community.

Conclusion

At present in South Africa, there are many thousands of young people who are actively engaged in acts of collective violence, deemed to be defensive. They have come to see their key social identities as "defenders of their communities" irrespective of their relationship with the South African Police Service. This is despite changed political terrains, and calls from political organisations and parties for the disbandment of youth defence structures. (These very parties and organisations, it can be argued, are in large part responsible for the creation of these structures and identities.) These structures therefore operate with poor internal capacity and little, if any, political support and guidance. While the youth who constitute such formations were at one point in South Africa's history portrayed as key social and political agents, they are at present being severely neglected by the government of the day. Once mobilised by key political organisations, they are now labelled as problematic elements. This is not surprising given their potential as armed agents, to undermine peace processes and development. However, these young people should not be left feeling political pawns, but should continue to be portrayed as the important social agents they are and have been.

These youth, if not given the necessary attention, could continue to be marginalised from mainstream society and as a result will continue to be disadvantaged. They may even at some point become severely disaffected with the new government whose existence they were so central to founding. This, in turn, could potentially pose a threat to safety and security, given that many of these youth are armed. Militarised youth need to be targeted as a key grouping for development and re-integration, and comprehensive programs which include job creation, education and training, psychological services, and basic health and welfare. However, any programs implemented need to take account the self-identities of these youth as "defenders of the community", and give recognition to them for the key role which they have historically played. Such programs should aim to demilitarise these youth, and in so doing help them to develop alternative mechanisms for dealing with conflict, and

reshape entrenched identities to allow them the opportunity of lives which are not constructed around violence, death and pain.

These "defenders" should be conceived of as young adults who wish to pursue normal lives where they are able to be productive, establish their own families, and deal constructively with their traumatic and deprived pasts. This needs to be done regardless of political affiliation, and organisational membership or status. Their futures are now at stake, and the future of our society is inextricably bound with theirs.

Appendix One

Overview of Defence Structures in Gauteng – August 1995

This overview of defence structures in Gauteng examines

- the history and organisational structure;
- the people active in the structures in terms of numbers involved, their gender, age;
- educational levels and employment;
- the relationship between the defence structure and political formations.

The Vaal Area

In the Vaal there is a co-ordinating body of SDUs called the Vaal Commanding Unit of SDUs. This executive/co-ordinating body consists of ten members who oversee the activities of all SDUs in the Vaal area which includes Sebokeng, Boipatong, Evaton and Sharpeville. According to commanders from Sebokeng, these units were initiated by the ANC Youth League in 1990. Youth in this area were mobilised in response to threats from the "third force" and Inkatha activities. For example, defence structures were mobilised after the Boipatong incident in 1990 in which 35 people brutally slaughtered by an unknown grouping. However, a number of members active in this unit are from other political groupings such as the PAC and AZAPO. The majority of active members are aligned to the ANC.

None of the informants was certain of the number of youth engaged in defence activities in the areas but it was estimated that there are about 600 active members of the defence unit. It is mainly men who are active in these units. At the executive level, a woman holds the position of secretary. The majority of youth in the SDUs are in their twenties. These youth are either school-going or unemployed. Most members have a standard eight or nine pass. Commanders interviewed were unaware of any members who had matric certificates in the

area. According to the commanders, for the most part, these young people in the Vaal are not keen to return to school as they feel that they are too old for school and want to develop their lives as independent young adults.

While the ANCYL initiated this structure, this organisation no longer controls and manages the unit in the area. The executive body is responsible for co-ordinating activities of the units. The executive holds meetings for all members once a month. Apart from Sebokeng, defence unit structures are disorganised and there are no clear lines of authority and accountability. By 1994, defence structures and activities were largely "self controlled" with little or no input from political organisations in the area.

Soweto Area

Soweto is comprised of approximately twenty townships and a number of informal settlements. Defence structures exist in those townships where there are hostels nearby residential areas. Defence structures are prevalent in the informal settlements because these areas have often come under attack in the period 1990-1994. There are 13 visible defence structures in the Soweto area. These exist in Senoane, Dlamini, Meadowlands, Pimville, Emdeni, Dobsonville, and in the informal settlements at Chicken Farm, Kliptown and Power Park. Initially many of the members of defence structures were members of the Cosas and the ANCYL although is not true for all townships.

An interesting aspect of defence structures in Soweto is that some of these units were operative on the trains during the period of commuter train attacks. These units organise on the trains but do not have commanders at a local level.

In the entire Soweto area there are only about 200 people (the majority of whom are male) who would openly declare themselves members of SDUs. Many of the members of defence structures are Xhosa speaking people who have been forcibly removed from the hostels, and there is consequently antagonism toward Zulu speaking people in the area. Most SDU members are between the ages of 16 and 25 although the units on the trains involve older men. The majority of youth in defence structures have no secondary schooling experience at all and there are youth in the structures who are illiterate.

There are defence structures linked to Inkatha but there is no formal contact between these units and the SDUs in Soweto. It was argued by a commander that a conducive environment had not been created for meetings between defence units linked to different political parties.

While the majority of members of SDUs in Soweto are members of the ANC, there is no central command system in the area. Members of defence structures often do not take instruction from political structures. According to local youth in the area, most of the members of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) who initiated these units in 1990 are now in the new SANDF and are not available to give guidance and training.

The East Rand

The East Rand is probably the most publicised area with regard to SDUs. In this area there are large numbers of youth who are organised into defence structures. In most townships in the East Rand there are both active SDUs and SPUs. In Katorus (consisting of Katlehong, Tokoza, and Vosloorus) there is a presidential program which aims to integrate members of defence units into a police reservist program, and in the long term, to reintegrate them into the community. This program was initiated as a result of the high levels of conflict amongst youth from different political groupings, as well as between youth from SDUs.

Because of the informal manner in which these units operate, no-one is sure how many youth belong to defence structures. In 1993 when the integration program began, 1 986 youth were targeted for the reservist program. This number included members of Inkatha aligned SPUs. However despite these large numbers, there are still many youth claiming to be part of defence structures who have not been incorporated into the program. On the North East Rand, active members of defence units are aged between 17 and 30. Most members of Defence Units have standard eight or nine certificates and a few have matric certificates.

In the Katorus area, there are command structures through which SDU members are supposed to operate. However there have been disciplinary problems as the paper outlined.

There seems to be a split between Katorus, and what has come to be known as the Far East Rand, which includes areas such as Tembisa, Ivory Park and Rabie Ridge. Programs developed for Katorus have not been extended to include the Far East Rand. This has created tension between the Katorus townships and the Far East Rand.

In Tembisa, an SDU structure exists and operates in all zones of the township. The overall unit is known as the Tembisa Self Defence Unit. According to members of the unit, it has historically been influenced by Umkhonto we Sizwe. This means that most members have been trained to use weapons. Some MK members are still leading the SDU.

It is not possible to state how many youth are active in the unit. There is both an above ground and an underground structure. When there is violence in the area, the majority of youth who reside there take part in "defence activities". The majority of members of the unit in Tembisa are members of either the ANCYL or Cosas. Tembisa is an ANC stronghold and the commanders are activists in the ANC.

Whilst there are individual youth who are identifiable as commanders of the SDU the SDU was formulated with no clear rules or proper structures. An element of independent activity takes place in these structures. There are links with other organisations in the township and when the SDU faces a crisis in terms of activities to be taken up, they turn to organisations like the local civic and ANC for assistance.

Within Tembisa, there are a number of other defence structures operating. There is a Task Team which is aligned to the PAC. However, very few people are part of this structure and members of the Task Team tend to participate in SDU initiated activities. There is also an IFP aligned Self Protection Unit in Tembisa. The SPU is mostly led by elder men who are hostel residents. The relationship between the SDU and the SPU in Tembisa is an antagonistic one. It is only commanders from these two structures who meet; in general the two structures do not have a collaborative working relationship.

The West Rand

The key SDUs operating in this area are located within the informal settlements such as the Lusaka squatter camp. In the Lusaka area, an SDU was established in 1990 by the ANC as a result of Inkatha violence in the area. It is argued by commanders that this unit continues to exist as a result of potential threats from Inkatha.

There are about 100 people active in the SDU. There are commanders in the area, and the unit holds general meetings once a week. These meetings are meant to establish whether any action needs to be taken by the SDU. Members are between the ages of 18 and 40 but the majority are between the ages of 30 and 40. They are mostly unemployed. However, there are people who want to go to school but are unable to because of lack of finances. The majority of defence unit members have only primary school education. Youth in the area were trying to set up a night school.

The unit in Lusaka has strong relationships with the ANC branch in the area; in fact, most SDU activity falls under the "safety and security department" of the ANC branch. Members of the unit are willing to take orders from the local ANC branch.

There are also very small units operating in Swaneville and Bekkersdaal on the West Rand. All members of these units belong to the ANC. At times, however, members of these units become "dissidents" and do not want to take direction from the political structures in the area. Control mechanisms of these units is unclear and any control that historically did exist, appears to be slowly disappearing.

The Pretoria Area

In Pretoria there appears to be no real defence structures. The non-existence of structures is linked to the lack of violence in the area and that Pretoria is perceived as a safe place with no real need for defence structures. Furthermore, the hostels in Pretoria are not controlled by Inkatha. People who occupy the hostels in Pretoria are generally from the Northern Transvaal and the Cape Provinces. These hostels are seen as part and parcel of the communities in this area. Even the civic structures have included hostels in their forums and in decision making. In Mamelodi township, defence is discussed, but there are no formal organisational structures. Youth take initiatives which may involve violence, but these are generally not coordinated efforts.

Youth involved in defence activities are mainly in their early twenties. They are mostly unemployed and are perceived as "anti-schooling". This is due to the fact that many have little experience of formal schooling, coupled with the breakdown of the family unit.

In the Pretoria area, defence units were not encouraged by political organisations. Any so-called SDUs in the area are considered to be "self governed" and undermining political structures in the area. Political leadership have never been part of any defence units that may exist in Pretoria; when these formations did occur, they were spontaneous in nature. It is argued that if groupings in this area refer to themselves as SDUs, they are generally constituted of "tsotsi elements" who make use of the word SDU to legitimise their possession of arms.

Alexandra Township

In Alexandra defence units were never formally set up by the ANC. Youth became involved in defence activities, particularly when informal settlements, such as Beirut, were attacked. There is an executive portfolio in the local ANC branch to co-ordinate defence activities in the township. There are about 30 people who are coordinated by this body. An executive member suggests that most defence activities are organised through underground mechanisms which usually occur as a result of an incident of violence.

Women are not involved in defence activities. People involved in defence activities range in age from 18 to 50. However, the majority, are in the age bracket of 18 to 22. Most young people in defence structures have some secondary education. However, there are people involved in defence in Alexandra who have never been to school and are unable to read or write.

There are also Self Protection Units which are primarily based in the hostels in the township. No-one could give any estimation as to the number of people who are part of these units. The relationship between the "SDU" structure and the SPU structure is very conflictual and there have been violent clashes which have resulted in deaths.

Notes:

1 This paper focuses primarily on youth who were members of or perceived themselves as part of the social movement aligned to the politics of the AND, both while it was banned and later when it was unbanned.

2 This quote is taken from a tape that was widely distributed amongst youth activists in the eighties and even into the early nineties. It is part of an opening address given by Oliver Tambo at the Kabwe Conference of the ANC in exile in 1985.

3 The Charterist Movement encompassed all organisations whose membership adhered to the principles of the Freedom Charter, the guiding document of the African National

Congress. Cosas was the first organisation to adopt the Freedom Charter in 1979 after its banning in the 1960s.

4 Interview with Mogamotsi Mogadire, a key youth activist in Soweto throughout the eighties and into the early nineties. Mogadire was also a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League at the time of the interview in 1993.

5 Interview with Ashwell Zwane in 1993.

6 Interview with Mogamotsi Mogadire in 1993.

7 Interview with Neil Thobojane, 1993. Neil was one of the founder members of the youth congress in Diepkloof in the eighties. At the time of the interview he was a regional executive member of the national Health and Allied Workers' Union. He is currently the General Secretary of NEHAWU.

8 While little is known about these SPUs, they seem well organised and armed, particularly in the hostels in Gauteng. A member of military intelligence from Group 41, currently employed to back up the SAPS in parts of the East Rand provided interesting information in an interview in July 1995. He stated the following:

"Members of Self Protection Units in the East Rand have become increasingly well organised since the national elections. Their patrols are happening, they are disciplined, they have not lost members, and they are better armed. Inkatha defence people from Gauteng are going to KwaZulu Natal for training and people from Natal come to speak to these units weekly".

Even more alarming, it was reported in the *Sunday Times* (17/09/95) that Inkatha Self Protection Unit members were being secretly paid by the KwaZulu Natal government. It was estimated that about 5 000 recruits were being paid R1 000 a month over a period of seven months. This indicates not only that such structures are highly organised, but that their operations are clandestinely supported by political organisations and groupings in government. Payment of youth for their engagement in such activities can only give rise to increased resistance to calls for disbandment of such structures.

9 "The ANC's call to the SDUs to cease their operations was supported by various civil, business, and political organisations. The South African National Civic Organisation, in support of the ANC's call, maintain that circumstances and conditions have changed, and therefore communities should influence the government to formulate laws which will make it possible for those who deservedly need weapon licencing to obtain such without the red tape which existed previously. The IFP's Youth Brigade also welcomed the phasing out of SDUs because of the establishment of a democratically elected government, and also because the South African Police Service are now there to protect every citizen in the country." (Rakgoadi, 1995: 9)

10 See Appendix 1 for a detailed account of defence units in all areas of Gauteng in 1995. This information was obtained through interviews with commanders of these structures in local areas, and youth leaders of political organisations.

11 While most public attention has been focused on these structures of defence, it is crucial to recognise that there are large numbers of youth who continue to perceive themselves as "defenders", but are not organised into these seemingly above-ground structures. Individual youth in the townships continue to be armed and participate in a range of violent activities, some of which is criminal. In areas such as Alexandra and Pretoria, for example, there are no formal defence structures which can be identified. This does not mean that a large proportion of youth in these areas are neither armed, nor participate in what they believe to be the defence of their communities. In fact there are a large proportion of township youth who are militarised, even though they are not formally members of defence structures.

12 Interview with Crooks Mhlopo. Mhlopo is a member of the executive committee of the Soweto sub-region of the ANC Youth League.

13 Interview with Jabu Dlamini in March 1995. At the time of the interview, Dlamini was a field worker at Peace Action. Her work was mainly centred in the East Rand. Dlamini is currently working closely with defence units in this area for the Central Methodist Mission.

14 The key mechanism which has been proposed to ensure that community policing takes place is the Community Police Forums (CPFs). Section 221 (2) of the Interim Constitution provides for the establishment of CPFs at station level. These forums are meant to promote accountability of the police service. Forums also have the right to suggest policing priorities and investigation into individual police officers, or the service as a whole in local areas, and to make recommendations for changes which are believed to be in the interest of the community concerned.

15 See document entitled "North East Structures Combined Effort in Community Policing" which was submitted to the Gauteng Ministry of safety and Security.

16 Katorus is a section of the East Rand consisting of the townships of Tokoza, Katlehong, Vosloorus. Katorus has been identified as a key area for development by the RDP and the President's office as a result of excessive inter-community violence in the area.

17 As part of the Presidential Lead Project in Katorus, youth from defence structures have been integrated into the SAPS as reservists. They are the only reservists in the entire country who are paid.

18 Information regarding these structures in the Western Cape is from interviews with Eldred de Klerk, Policing Coordinator at the Centre for Conflict Resolution; Professor Wilfred Scharf of the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town; and from Stef Snel of the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee.

Similar information regarding KwaZulu Natal is from interviews with Pule Zwane, a researcher at the National Association of Democratic Lawyers; and Libby Dreyer from the KwaZulu Natal Peace Secretariat.

19 Interview with Eldred de Klerk, March 1995.

20 Interview with Kiba Kekane in February 1995. Kekane works at the Get Ahead Foundation in Pretoria and is a member of the Executive committee of the sub-regional ANC structure in Pretoria.

21 Interviews with Dada Marera in February 1995. Marera is a member of the ANC Youth League sub-regional executive in Soweto.

22 Interview with Tsepho Molla in February 1995. Molla at the time of interview was the Chief Commander of the Vaal Commanding Unit of SDUs.

23 Interview with Musi Ziqubu in February 1995. At the time of the interview, Ziqubu was an executive member of the ANC branch in Alexandra, and had been involved in defence activities in the area. At the time he worked full time at the provincial Gauteng ANC office.

24 Interview with Thandi Mhobo and Boyc Maneli in March 1995. Mhobo was the treasurer, and Maneli and deputy chairperson of the Lusaka branch of the ANC. Lusaka is an informal settlement on the West Rand, near Krugersdorp. Both Mhobo and Maneli were active participants in the Self Defence Units in the area.

25 Interview with Musi Ziqubu in February 1995.

26 The fact that in all areas there are members of defence units who are functionally illiterate, is cause for concern.

27 Interview with Jabu Dlamini in March 1995.

28 Memorandum by Reverend Dandala to Gauteng Minister of Safety and Security in February 1995.

29 Interview with Crooks Mhlopo in February 1995. Mhlopo was a member of the sub-regional executive of the ANCYL in Soweto.

30 Interview with Chilly Magagula in February 1995. Magagula was a member of the ANC executive committee and member of the Self Defence Unit in Tembisa.

31 Interview with Kiba Kekane.

32 Memorandum by Reverend Dandala.

33 Interview with Stef Snel, director of the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee (UMAC), an NGO in the Western Cape.

34 Interview with Kiba Kekane.

35 Between February and August 1994, two and a half to three thousand soldiers were deployed in the area.

36 In fact from February to July 1994 the military was in charge of operation and the police acted in support, which is not normally the case.

37 Interview with Colonel du Toit, July 1995. Colonel du Toit has been in Katorus since 1989 and has worked with defence structures as well as participated in Community Police Forum activities.

38 Kathorus Simunye News.

39 Interview with Colonel du Toit, July 1995.

40 Interview with Colonel du Toit, July 1995.

41 Interview with Captain Marais, July 1995. Captain Marais is a member of military intelligence within Group 41.

42 Interview with Dada Merere, March 1995. Merera was a member of the ANCYL sub-regional executive in Soweto.

43 Interview with Colonel du Toit, July 1995.

44 Interview with Busi Radebe, Director of Thuso Academy in May 1995.

45 Interview with Busi Radebe in May 1995.

46 Interview with Busi Radebe in May 1995.

47 Interview with Busi Radebe in May 1995.

48 Interview with Busi Radebe in May 1995.

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