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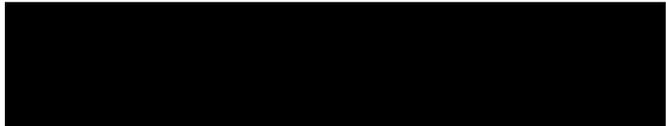
South Africa: Inkatha Scandal May Accelerate Police Restructuring

The scandal over the funding of Inkatha by the South African Police (SAP) may force quicker implementation of reforms begun one year ago as part of an ambitious effort to expand and restructure the SAP into an institution capable of meeting the demands of a "new" South Africa. Changes initiated before the scandal have had no discernible impact on the country's township violence or soaring crime rate. Pretoria has identified many of the causes of the violence and crime wave, but it lacks effective solutions and faces a persistent danger of further polarization, violence, and bloodshed. Although former Law and Order Minister Vlok was committed to transforming the SAP, his reassignment appears likely to accelerate the police reforms.

Factional Violence and Crime Plague South Africa
Despite appeals from ANC President Mandela and Inkatha leader Buthelezi for an end to the fighting, more than 2,000 blacks have died since August 1990 in a bloody power struggle between ANC and Inkatha supporters. [redacted] that violence reached its highest yearly level in 1990, when it was even greater than during the peak years of political unrest in 1985-86.

Violent crime has continued to rise precipitously during the past year, affecting both blacks and whites. Crime increased overall by 9 percent from 1989 to 1990, the sharpest increase in a decade, and 121,000 serious crimes—the highest one-month figure ever—were reported in May 1991, according to press reports.

The Inkatha Scandal at a Glance
Local journalists armed with documents belonging to Pretoria and Inkatha, Chief Buthelezi's Zulu-based movement, broke the story of secret government funding of Inkatha on 19 July. Foreign Minister Botha admitted he authorized disbursement through the police of \$90,000 from a secret fund for fighting international sanctions to pay for two Inkatha rallies, in November 1989 and March 1990, but Inkatha leader Buthelezi denied he knew of the secret payment. Vlok claimed Inkatha leaders acknowledged receipt of the funds but said he never discussed them with Buthelezi. Claiming responsibility for the affair, Buthelezi's personal assistant resigned in an apparent attempt to clear his boss's name. An Inkatha official repaid the money to the government on 24 July, and de Klerk this week reshuffled his Cabinet to move Vlok and Defense Minister Malan to less important portfolios.



The SAP sees the political violence as a phenomenon that it cannot easily control. Police view the situation as a struggle for power fueled by ethnic and ideological differences and aggravated by increased availability of

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firearms [redacted] Rivals include not only the ANC and Inkatha, but also smaller groups and criminals acting for their own aims under the guise of political activity. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The ANC Demands Change

Even before the recent scandal over aid to Inkatha, the SAP had come in for considerable criticism from ANC leaders. Nelson Mandela has charged that some elements of the police are directly involved in the black factional violence. The ANC has also accused the SAP of bias toward supporters of Inkatha and of being prone to stand back and let the fighting between ANC and Inkatha followers play itself out, rather than seek to stem the violence. Government officials clearly recognize that the ANC's negative perceptions of the police threaten negotiations on a new constitution. They also understand that ANC leaders are under strong pressure from supporters to prevent attacks from Inkatha and the security forces. [redacted]

We believe that Pretoria is particularly troubled by ANC plans to create self-defense units in the townships. Government officials undoubtedly recognize that the ANC will use these units to hit back at Inkatha and government targets. According to press reports, members of the ANC military wing are training the units and arming them with a variety of weapons. [redacted]

[redacted]

Proposed Changes to the South African Police

- Establish community/police forums to allow local communities to have a say in police matters.
- Appoint an ombudsman to handle complaints.
- Increase recruitment of black graduates.
- Create a highly trained riot control unit.
- "Civilianize" the police ranks.
- Negotiate a code of conduct for police with political parties and local communities.
- Substantially increase police training facilities as well as integrate existing facilities [redacted]

[redacted]

Growing numbers of other armed groups—ranging from rightwing commandos to private security firms—exist within South African society, compounding the problems faced by police. [redacted]

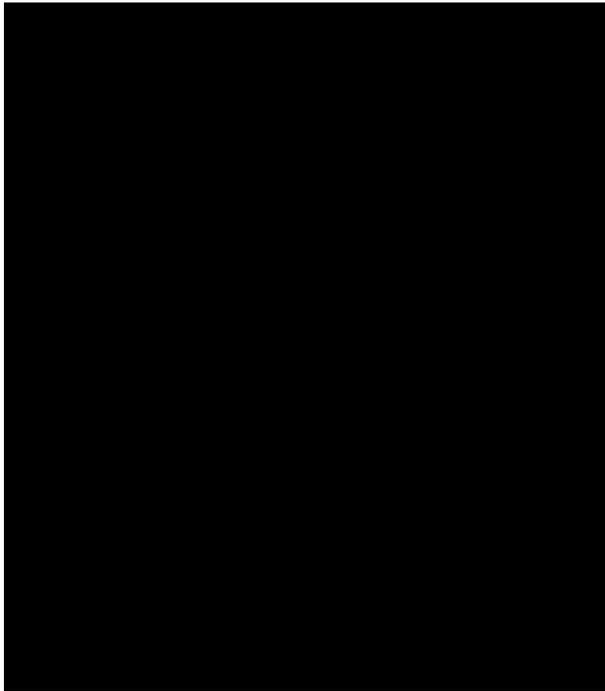
[redacted] these groups have further polarized South Africa and increased the potential for greater confrontation and violence. Police issued over 123,000 new weapons licenses in 1990, bringing the total of licensed firearms to 2.9 million. The white right wing plans to form a "Volk" security network to counter the ANC. Conservative white farmers have called for the establishment of rural protection committees that will cooperate with the military to combat escalating crime, according to press reports. In addition, between 3,000 and 4,000 private security firms exist with more than 100,000 officers. [redacted]

The SAP recognizes the dangers inherent in the growth of warring private armies, but can do little to control their actions short of reimposing a politically unpalatable state of emergency. [REDACTED]

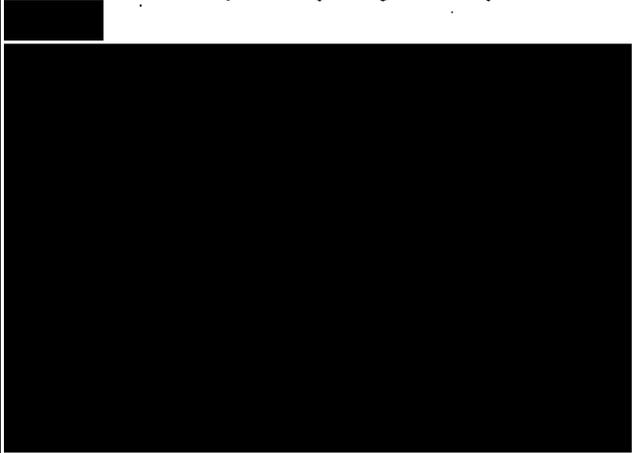
[REDACTED] Pretoria would like to end the violence and proceed with negotiations, but neither President de Klerk nor his primary advisers wish to use violence to undercut the ANC leadership and Pretoria's relations with them. [REDACTED] Vlok strongly implied that the government is no longer willing to bloody its hands in the townships, at least not without greater support from black leaders. [REDACTED]

New Police Force Promised

Although police have taken steps to bring the violence under control, measures taken to date have met with limited success. The police are too few to deal with a crisis of such magnitude and are often reluctant to intervene in the township violence out of fear of being caught in the middle. [REDACTED] most black police in the townships are young and untrained, and worry they will be trapped between the warring groups and killed. In addition, policemen well recall when the ANC considered them a fair target, and many probably conclude that the ANC is reaping what it had sown in earlier attempts to make the townships "ungovernable." [REDACTED]



Even before the scandal, Vlok promised to make the SAP an impartial force that represents and serves all South Africans. Police are now banned from belonging to political parties. [REDACTED] police recognize that their credibility among blacks is low. Vlok pushed to get black officers into the top ranks and nearly half of the new recruits are black. He predicted that the first Colored or Indian police general will be appointed within two or three years. All training facilities will be integrated beginning in January 1992.



Outlook

Pretoria's efforts to improve the image of the SAP have been set back by revelations of secret funding of Inkatha, but the scandal may trigger more rapid police reform. Although Pretoria's bias toward Inkatha has long been an open secret, the revelations have effectively removed any pretense of government evenhandedness in dealings with Buthelezi, and de Klerk must demonstrate clearly his commitment to a politically neutral security force to keep the negotiating process on track. His move to shift the controversial Vlok away from the law and order portfolio is an important first step. Many observers view Kriel as a moderate reformer who will probably be committed to overhauling the structure and image of the SAP. Kriel and de Klerk may well decide that thoroughly purging the security forces could convince their critics that de Klerk is in full control and not operating with a hidden agenda. [REDACTED]

Whatever the consequences of the scandal for police reform, continuing violence, crime, and competing claims by rival political parties of police bias will almost certainly plague South Africa and the SAP for many years to come. Even under the best of circumstances, time will be needed to recruit and train more policemen and investigators, build more police stations, and mount more patrols in black townships. Meanwhile, tensions will remain high, and rival groups will continue to funnel weapons to supporters in the townships. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]